

“It is never too late to be who you want to be” George Eliot

Designing Carr Gomm’s future

**carr
gomm
futures**

There is something exciting going on within Carr Gomm at present. We’re working in partnership with Snook, a Scottish service design agency, to trial a new process for

We are currently working on three exciting mini-projects: innovation and feedback, service design, and repackaging our services. Each project has a dedicated project team, made up of staff from across the organisation.

The innovation and feedback team are developing new ways of gathering and responding to feedback from people we support – including a new online tool, which was on show at the AGM. At Merchiston, the service design team are exploring new ways of improving our supported living services. Finally, the repackaging services team are developing new materials to improve the way we market our services.

We are using the learning from these projects to create a toolkit to guide future problem-solving projects that will help change Carr Gomm for the better.

To find out more about this exciting project and share your ideas, visit our BRAND NEW Carr Gomm Futures website: <http://futures.carrgomm.org/>.

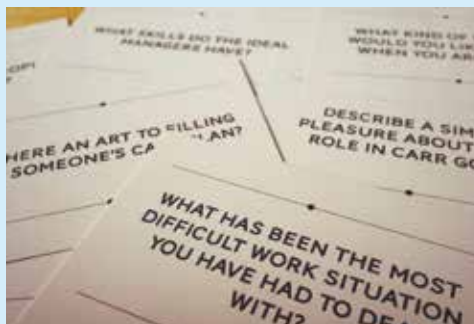
developing new ideas, projects and services within the organisation. This project is called ‘Carr Gomm Futures’.

Carr Gomm Futures is an experiment for us. We want to improve the ways we communicate and use feedback in Carr Gomm; both internally and externally. This project is about trying out a new process for developing ideas and putting them into practice. These ideas might be solutions to problems or things we want to do to improve our services, to make the experience better for the people we support.

We live in fast-changing times so it’s really important that we are able to respond quickly and effectively to new challenges and opportunities as they arise. Carr Gomm Futures will help us to do this, by bringing together people from across the organisation to develop and implement new ideas.



Working together to design the future



Some interesting prompts to encourage conversation

From African drumming to jewellery making, enjoy the highlights from our 2014 AGM



To see more from our 2014 AGM turn to page 6-7

Being who we want to be is important for us all. It helps to increase our confidence and enables us to be comfortable within our own skin.

As an organisation, we work hard to help individuals identify their goals and plan ways to help achieve them. Our philosophy and values are incredibly important to us. They help us to be the organisation that we want to be and are reflected in all the work that we do. From our person-centred planning to our community development initiatives, we work hard to find ways for each individual to be who they want to be.

It was great to see so many people come together for our 2014 AGM. The theme this year was ‘being who we want to be’. It was all about celebrating the various ways that we have supported people over the last year to be who they want to be. It was great to see some of the projects, services and activities that are happening right across the organisation, and I know I certainly learnt something new.

In this edition of the paper you can:

- Read about the projects and initiatives showcased at our AGM
- Discover how Carr Gomm Futures is changing the way we use your feedback and ideas to help develop our services
- Learn about Dreams Can Come True and how it helps individuals to achieve their personal goals
- Marvel at the fantastic fundraising efforts of our Sahara trekkers
- Celebrate the exceptional staff recognised through our Time to Shine staff awards.

I hope you will join me in saying a huge ‘well done’ to everyone who helped to make the 2014 AGM such a success. I look forward to seeing what exciting plans and projects 2015 has to offer. Thank you for your continued support and involvement in the Carr Gomm journey.

With warm wishes,
Lucy Wren, Chief Executive.

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Sometimes dreams do come true

We believe that everyone has the right to follow and pursue their hopes and dreams. In 2007, our Board of Directors helped to establish Dreams Can Come True (DCCT). This is designed to help encourage the people we support to make their dreams a reality. DCCT provides funding to individuals to help them to pursue their dreams and is just one of the ways that we can help people to be who they want to be.

Stuart applied to the DCCT fund so that he could attend a 'conquering the fear of flying' course. He had always wanted to go abroad on holiday and visit new places, but because of his fear, simply didn't think this would be possible.

After completing the course, he told us, "I felt relieved and had a real feeling of achievement. My only regret - I wish I had done it sooner. I want to thank Dreams Can Come True for helping me to achieve this. I can now look forward to the future, hopefully traveling by plane for holidays and seeing places I never thought I would visit."

Over the years, the DCCT committee has received hundreds of applications from across the country. Funding has been awarded for painting classes, photography equipment, a hot air balloon ride, a football stadium tour, a beauty pamper day, a fishing trip on the River Clyde and even a trip to see the WWF World Wrestling Championship. Read on to discover how DCCT helped one



Stuart salutes the pilot after a safe first flight!

man from Glasgow fulfil a lifelong dream.

Do you have a dream? If so, Dreams Can Come True could help!

To find out more about DCCT, talk to your support worker.

Alternatively, you can call Lynne Harvie on 0131 656 6270.

From Cassiltoun to Canada, on the journey of a lifetime



From Banff to Vancouver - all aboard the Rocky Mountaineer

For many years Charles, who is supported by our Cassiltoun service, had dreamed of taking the Rocky Mountaineer train across Canada. But it was a distant dream; one which he never thought he'd be able to achieve.

In late 2012, Charles was diagnosed with cancer and was very unwell. He required urgent surgery and further treatment to try and halt the spread of the disease. The whole experience had a profound effect on Charles, both physically and emotionally.

Charles' Support Worker, Murdo Maclean, explained:

"It was a really challenging time for Charles and, at times, he was incredibly low. But he managed to get through this adversity and started focusing more on his future and making plans."

As soon as Charles began to feel better, his thoughts once again turned to his grand ambition. Perhaps it wasn't such an impossible dream after all?

With the support of his team of workers, Charles began to plan his big adventure. After getting the go ahead to travel from his doctor, the preparations stepped up a gear.

Finally, after months of careful planning and organising, and with

support from the Dreams Can Come True fund, Charles boarded the plane with Murdo and Relief Support Assistant, Graham Crombie.

They flew from Glasgow to Calgary and then on to Banff, in the heart of the Canadian Rocky Mountains. After a few days of sightseeing, it was time to board the Rocky Mountaineer train for the 309-mile journey to Vancouver, on Canada's west coast.

Charles explained that:

"I saw a programme about the train trip when I was a boy and remember saying to my parents that I was going to do it. It has been an incredible journey."

After leaving the train in Vancouver, the group enjoyed some more sightseeing and had a great time discovering the city's best breakfast and coffee spots. A fine end to a fantastic adventure!

Margaret Duffy, Convenor of the Dreams Can Come True Panel told us:

"The panel are thrilled to play a part in helping Charles to fulfil a lifelong ambition. This story shows that with a bit of determination, and the right 'can-do' attitude of the folk involved, pretty much anything is possible!"

The three amigos - Graham (left), Charles (centre) and Murdo (right)



Enjoying the sights and sunshine of Vancouver



'Let's get going!' Graham (left) and Charles (right) ready for take-off at Glasgow airport



Community matters: Carr Gomm and community development

Community matters; it helps us to build relationships and gives us a sense of belonging. Poor health, lack of self-confidence or unease with meeting new people are some of the barriers that can make accessing the community and community projects extremely difficult for people.

Carr Gomm's Community Development team works to address these barriers. We have delivered projects across Scotland, working

closely with individuals to help them to become part of their communities.

We work hard to encourage and promote inclusion by establishing different projects such as gardening or cooking lessons, by working with individuals to help them to navigate and access the different activities available within their community and through shared partnership schemes such as community growing.

All of these activities help to strengthen communities and give people confidence and new skills which enable them to be who they want to be.

To find out more about our Community Development approach, please contact Eilidh MacDonald, Community Development Manager on 0131 659 4780 or email eilidhmacdonald@carrgomm.org

Community Compass: navigating life's challenges together

Since October 2013, a small group of staff from our Community Development team have been working with doctors to provide a new kind of support to residents in the Craigmillar area of Edinburgh.

The project is called 'Community Compass' and is funded by the Alliance and the Scottish Government. The project is designed to support people to connect with local services and help them overcome challenges they are facing, using an approach known as social prescribing.

The team works in partnership with Craigmillar Medical Group, taking referrals from people experiencing issues that can't be addressed clinically such as debt, unemployment, or isolation. Community Compass project workers get to know each individual and what is important in their lives. Working together, plans are created to help each person reach his or her goals.

As well as working closely with Craigmillar Medical Group, the Community Compass team are able to take referrals from other agencies and organisations such as the Thistle Foundation and hold regular community drop in days for individuals.

On 19 November, the Compass Team held a special afternoon tea event to celebrate the project's successes and to share their future plans. Since the project began, it has received 149 referrals and supported 102 individuals.

A GP from Craigmillar Medical Group explained that, "the support the Compass team give is tailored to each individual's needs, this makes it much more likely to succeed than a 'one size fits all' approach."

Leah has been supported by the project for seven months. For her, "having Community Compass in my life is like having a safe harbour. They always have time to listen and offer solutions which might help."

As well as working closely with individuals, Community Compass have established a number of community activities including a cooking group, a gardening group and a Men's Shed project. These groups provide additional activities for individuals within the Craigmillar community and enable people to come together in a safe, relaxed and friendly environment.

The Community Compass project is just one example of how Carr Gomm is ready and willing to try different approaches in order to support people. Over the next year, we look forward to continuing to develop our learning to enable new partnerships and funding. This will help us to extend the project to other areas in Scotland.

To find out more about Community Compass, please contact Helena Richards, Community Project Manager on 0131 659 4736 or email helenarichards@carrgomm.org



Community Compass Project Manager Helena Richards (left) with MSP Kenny MacAskill and local councillor Maureen Child at the Community Compass project launch



Jamie enjoying our cookery group



Celebrating a year of successes



Liz and Shareen make vegetable soup in the Wauchope Community Garden

Community Contacts : understanding SDS together

On 1 April 2014, the Self-Directed Support Act (SDS) came into law. SDS allows people to choose how their support is provided, and gives them as much control as they want over their individual budget. But it is early days for SDS and many people are finding it difficult to access the information and support they need.

Our Community Contacts project in Argyll is designed to meet this need, by providing independent information and support to people and their families at every stage of the SDS journey.

The team of staff and trained volunteers work with individuals, finding out what is important in their lives and helping them to think about what support could be useful into the future.

Over the last year the project team has worked hard to recruit and train a group of local volunteers. They have held events across Argyll to help raise awareness of SDS and are working hard to build community connections.

Community Project Manager Becs Barker told us that:

“In a year, the whole team have worked hard to really get to know our communities and have built up good relationships with other people and organisations.”

Catriona is just one of the people that the Community Contacts team have supported this year. She saw a poster about the project in her local shop and thought that it may be able to help her. Catriona explained:

“I felt a bit stuck, not sure where my life was going and thought the team could help me to plan for the future. The team really listened and helped me to think about what was important in my life and what goals and ambitions I wanted to achieve. After the whole process, I feel much clearer about my future. I know how to get in touch with the social work department to request an assessment for SDS, but with the comfort of knowing that Community Contacts can help along the way.”

The Community Contacts project currently works with more than 20 individuals and families in Dunoon, Helensburgh, Oban and Mid Argyll. Over the next year the team will be seeking new partnerships and funding to help

extend the project to other parts of Scotland.

For more information on the Community Contacts project, contact Becs Barker, Project Manager on 07766 925388 or email becsbarker@carrgomm.org

If you want to find out more about SDS or are unsure about how it could affect you, please speak to your Key Worker or contact us on 0300 666 3030.



Working together to navigate Self-Directed Support

Growing communities together

Our community growing initiative in the Craigmillar area of Edinburgh offers local people the chance to come together, learn new skills and enjoy spending time outdoors. We caught up with Project Worker Karin Chipulina to find out more. She explained,

“Community growing allows people to come together to learn about gardening through planting and growing fruit and vegetables. We hold different sessions in the garden, doing things such as learning how to make a hanging basket or how to cook an affordable and healthy meal with the vegetables you can harvest.”

Our project in Craigmillar has really helped to boost people’s confidence and given individuals the chance to make friends and socialise. Liz attends the garden every week and she explained,

“If the garden wasn’t here I would just be sitting in the house. Here I’ve got company and I am out in the open air.”

Projects like this are just one way that our Community Development team can work with communities. We are currently looking for opportunities to provide similar projects across the country.

If you would be interested in finding out more about community growing, please contact Karin on 0131 659 2949 or email karinchipulina@carrgomm.org



A warm welcome meets you at the garden



Shareen designing some colourful signs for the garden

No man is an island...

...We all need company from time to time

What is a Men's Shed?

A Men's Shed is a place where men can come together to pursue practical interests. A Men's Shed offers members a safe and friendly space to work on projects of their choice, at their pace, sharing the tools and resources they need.

Where are they?

There are Men's Shed projects all over the world, from Sydney to Southampton! More and more projects are starting across Scotland and the UK.



Is Carr Gomm involved?

Yes! We recently recruited a project worker to work with local men in the Parkhead, Dalmarnock and Camlachie areas of Glasgow and have also received funding to set up a Shed in the Craigmillar area of Edinburgh.

Why is Carr Gomm involved?

As an organisation, we are committed to developing an understanding of the importance of relationships, networks and stronger communities. We hope that the Men's Shed projects will enable us to successfully work with men who may be experiencing isolation and related mental health problems.

To find out more about our Men's Shed projects please contact Eilidh MacDonald, Head of Community Development.

T: 0131 659 4780

E: eilidhmacdonald@carrgomm.org

Shared interests: the key to friendship

Love snooker, but hate soaps? Despise the theatre, but adore the cinema?

Everyone is interested in different things; that's what helps make us unique. At Carr Gomm, we recognise that not everyone likes the same things, and try to find ways to help each individual pursue hobbies or interests that they really enjoy. We do this informally across the country, but earlier this year we developed a more formal project to help link people to others who share similar interests.

Our Interest Sharing Project is a pilot project running in Edinburgh until March 2015. Its aim is to link people together through shared interests such as learning Mandarin or listening to Motown music. Through these shared interests, friendships can develop which help people to feel less isolated or lonely and a greater part of their communities.

Since it began, the project has already received over 20 referrals and is working hard to recruit more volunteers who want to share

their interests with others.

Do you live in the Edinburgh area and have an interest or hobby that you'd like to explore?

Perhaps you would like to find someone new to share your interest or hobby with?

Why not get involved?

Contact Sam Collins, Community Project worker on 07730 646 669 or email samcollins@carrgomm.org

Helping to make Christmas

Christmas can be a stressful time, with families coming together and so much to get organised. Often all the little things from presents to decorations can really add up and begin to cost a lot of money. Some of the people that we support in Argyll & Bute told us that they wanted to get in the festive spirit, but were struggling

to afford trees or decorations. Anita, one of our Support Workers from Oban, decided to do an appeal for unwanted Christmas decorations. She explained,

"I wasn't sure whether we would get anything, but thought we could give it a try."

Imagine her surprise when donations started to arrive at the office. In total they received seven trees as well as lights and decorations.

Anita added,

"The trees have been distributed to the people we support and they can now get into the holiday spirit. Thank you to everyone who made a donation."



Anita surrounded by festive donations

In 2013, **£2.4bn** was spent on unwanted Christmas gifts.

This year, donate your unwanted gifts to the Carr Gomm charity shop. We can turn your unwanted items into cash to enhance the lives of the people we support.

With your help, we can do so much more!

To find out your nearest collection point, please contact Ania Couston, Shop Manager on: 01463 242 735 or email shop@carrgomm.org



New Directors welcomed into the organisation

At our AGM we were delighted to welcome Caroline McInnes and Jessica Pearson into the organisation as Company Directors.

Caroline McInnes

Caroline has many years experience in the nursing profession, both in hospital and community settings. She was keen to join Carr Gomm's Board because of her personal experience with the organisation.

"My first introduction to Carr Gomm was six years ago after the organisation successfully won a tender to deliver a supported accommodation service in Edinburgh. My son had been in a hospital environment for many years and as a mum, I was anxious and apprehensive about how he would cope in a very different care environment.

Carr Gomm put my mind at ease, I was given many opportunities to attend meetings, ask questions and meet with staff. This gave me the chance to see how different Carr Gomm's support really was. I knew this was an organisation that did things differently."

Caroline has been heavily involved in a number of other voluntary opportunities from helping at local hospices to providing befriending services for the elderly. She hopes that these experiences alongside her professional nursing background can be shared with the Board.

Jessica Pearson

Jessica was interested in joining Carr Gomm's Board because of the approach that the organisation takes. She explained that,

"I was impressed by Carr Gomm's values and the way the organisation is innovative and creative in their ideas. But most importantly I have seen first-hand how they always put people at the heart of what they do. That is important to me."

Jessica has many years experience in the health sector as a registered nurse, but has also had personal experience caring for elderly relatives and recognises the importance of working in a person-centred manner. She hopes that through these experiences she will be able to contribute to the ongoing development of the organisation.

We hope you will join us in welcoming both Caroline and Jessica onto the Board.

To find out about becoming a member of our Board, please contact Maggie Dowe on 0131 659 4789 or visit our website: www.carrgomm.org/get-involved/become-director.

Coming together to celebrate

On Friday 28 November, we welcomed more than 300 guests to the Edinburgh Corn Exchange for our 2014 AGM.

Our information and activities fair offered everything from African drumming and yoga to trialling a new online feedback system and a Sahara-themed caption competition.

John, one of the people we support in Falkirk, explained:

"The African drumming was really good, I have never done anything like that before, but it was such fun. It's got me thinking that perhaps I could take up a musical instrument."

After a delicious lunch, our second 'Time to Shine' staff awards ceremony got under way. This gave guests the chance to recognise and celebrate the exceptional work that our staff do across the organisation. This was really emphasised by the fantastic videos of our finalists that left many people teary eyed. You can find out more about our Time to Shine awards on page eight and nine of this edition of the paper.

We were lucky to be joined by guest speaker Nick Thorpe who took to the stage and shared tales of his adventures. From sailing to Easter Island on a boat made of reeds to exploring 2,500 miles of Scotland's canals, lochs and coastal islands, Nick has certainly lived a life less ordinary!

For Nick, taking calculated risks and doing something out of the ordinary really helped give his life meaning and purpose. Nick's experience reminded us that we sometimes need to look at things differently and approach challenges we face with a can-do attitude. As an organisation this is something that we continually strive to achieve so that we can really help people to be all they want to be.

Carr Gomm's Patron, Richard Holloway, opened the business meeting with a welcoming address, highlighting some of our many achievements over the last year.

We hope that everyone enjoyed the day! It was great to see so many familiar and new faces coming together to celebrate our achievements over the last twelve months.



"This certainly beats a day in the office!" Carr Gomm staff enjoy the African drumming workshop



Designing the future
Futures stall



Kiera, a Therapist therapy dog, enjoying the attention



Carr Gomm board member
Flint enjoying the African
workshop



Relaxing in the Yoga v



Pam and



Guest speaker Nick Thorpe sharing inspiring tales of his risk taking



Enjoying each other's company and conversation



Raising a toast to Carr G
throughout 2014



, all in a day's work at the Carr Gomm



Getting creative at the jewellery making workshop



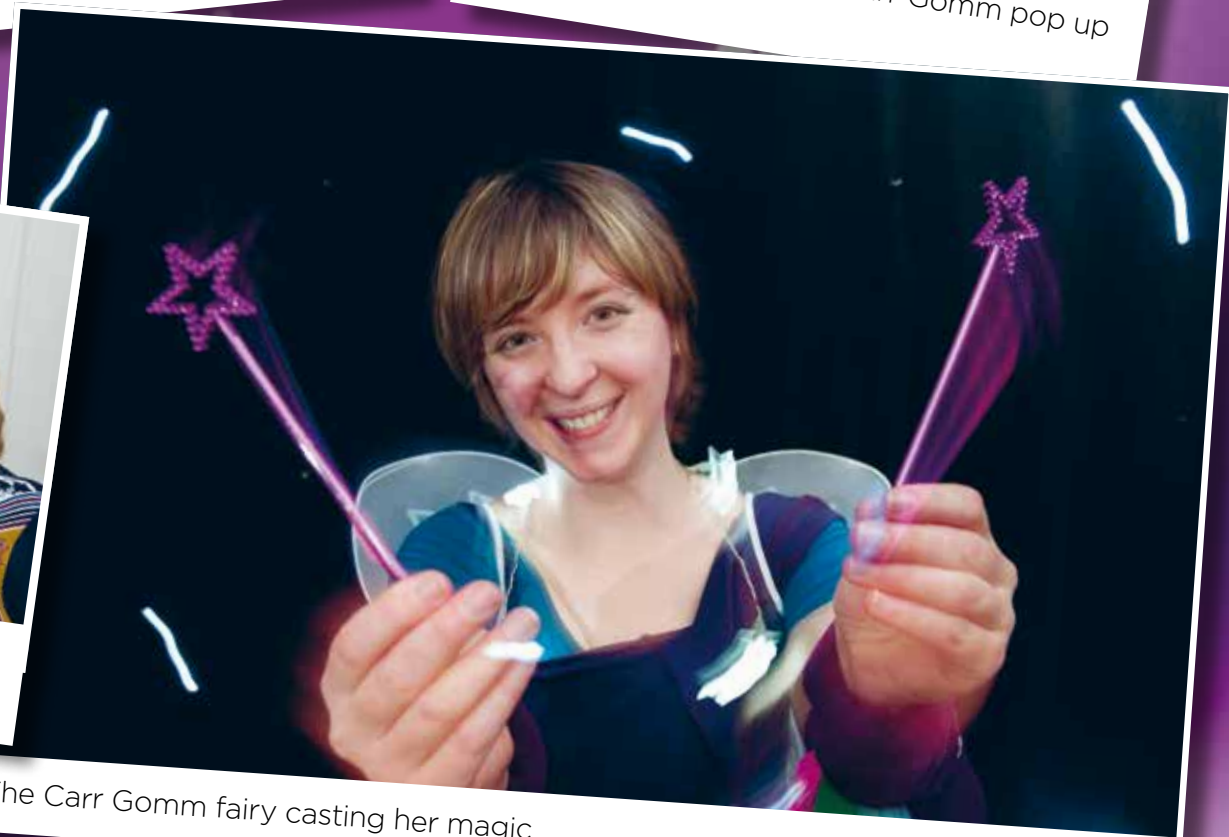
Bargains to be had at the Carr Gomm pop up shop



ber Laura
drumming



Lyn Ryden, Carr Gomm's Mindfulness Guru shares the ACT approach



The Carr Gomm fairy casting her magic



workshop



Making beautiful brooches at the jewellery making stall



"What have I won?"



d Ella catch up over a coffee



Gomm and our achievements



Anne Austen launching the 2014 'Making an Impact' report

2014 was their 'Time to Shine'

It has been described as the "best bit of the AGM." It's our very own Oscars style ceremony to celebrate the extraordinary achievements of our staff. This year's Time to Shine awards certainly did not disappoint.

It was great to share the successes of those achieving their SVQ awards, to recognise the dedication of those collecting their 12 years service badges and to hear about the astonishing work that our staff do across the organisation.

The award categories this year were:

- Team of the Year
- Most Innovative Team or Individual
- Involvement Innovation Award
- Most Inspirational Individual

Caroline King, who organises the event explained,

"The Time to Shine Awards really are the highlight of my year. It is such a special occasion. I feel

truly humbled when I see the nominations come in; each and every one demonstrates how our staff go that extra mile and do that little something special to make a difference in the lives of the people we support."

Congratulations to everyone who received an award and many thanks for everyone who nominated, took part or helped to organise the event.

We look forward to seeing you again next year!



Team of the Year

Galashiels Team

The Galashiels team was nominated because of their unswerving commitment to the people they support and to Carr Gomm's values. The team was created only 18 months ago and has worked hard to transform the lives of people with severe and enduring mental health problems living in the Scottish Borders.

Planning for the service took a long time and the expectations of the NHS and the local authority were very high. Respected and experienced mental health professionals were sceptical whether such a tightly funded service could have any real impact on people's lives. The Galashiels team have proved them wrong. They have shown that with passion, energy and a belief in what is possible, lives can be transformed.

By working well together and being flexible, the team are able to provide exceptional support. They have helped to facilitate a regular badminton group, have enabled individuals to once again enjoy previously loved hobbies or interests and have helped to rebuild relationships with family members and friends.

The Galashiels team really have enabled individuals to be who they want to be. They represent all that is good about the organisation and have helped to put Carr Gomm's name on the map in the Scottish Borders.



Most Innovative team or Individual

Christine Nichol

Christine has worked tirelessly to help establish the out of hours Social Work Emergency service in Argyll & Bute. She has developed excellent relationships with individuals within Argyll & Bute council as well as other agencies such as the police, GPs and the social work department.

These strong relationships have led to Carr Gomm developing and implementing a new Appropriate Adults scheme in the area.

Christine was nominated by Sylvia who explained,

"Christine played such a central role researching and preparing information for the Appropriate Adults service as well as training staff. I am sure that without her it wouldn't have been so successful."

Christine has approached opportunities creatively and innovatively. Through both the Social Work Emergency service and the Appropriate Adults scheme, Christine and her team have helped to promote Carr Gomm in a positive way across Argyll & Bute and beyond.



Involvement Innovation Awards

Madge Kelly and George Furey

Madge and George have been instrumental in promoting involvement across all of our Dundee services. They organise monthly meetings that provide an opportunity for all of the people that we support to put their ideas forward for ways to enhance or improve their services.

George and Madge were nominated by Victoria who explained,

“They make such a good team and have developed really good relationships with the people we support. This has helped to keep everyone interested and encouraged people to get involved.”

Through their hard work and ability to bring elements of fun to the involvement meetings, Madge and George have managed to increase attendance levels. Their dedication has really helped to bring all of the Dundee services, and the people they support together.



Most Inspirational Individual

This year's entries were so exceptional that the judges decided that there would have to be joint winners.

Sharon Archer and Marnie Baird

Kirstine was diagnosed with Motor Neurone Disease and her one wish was to remain living at home, rather than go into a hospice. Sharon and Marnie helped make this wish a reality.

The support that Kirstine required was very complex, but both Sharon and Marnie worked hard to ensure that she was comfortable and safe. They advocated on Kirstin's behalf, ensuring that she was involved in decisions about her support. Everything that both Sharon and Marnie did helped to ensure that Kirstine maintained her quality of life.

Lynda, who nominated the pair, explained,

“The support they gave to Kirstine, each other and the rest of the team was really humbling. Marnie and Sharon displayed real leadership qualities and were excellent mentors and role models to less confident staff. Although they were working in a very difficult environment, both physically and emotionally, they managed the situation in a way which Carr Gomm should be very proud of.”



Susan Colin-Lane

Susan really has shown how a bit of creative thinking and determination can make a huge difference in the lives of the people we support. Through Scotrail's 'Adopt a Station' scheme, Susan has helped to establish gardening projects at both Oban and Connel Ferry stations.

These projects offer a safe, therapeutic environment where people supported by the Housing Support service can use their gardening skills for the benefit of the whole community by creating pleasant, welcoming environments at the stations.

Susan has ensured that the gardening projects work for as many people as possible, offering quiet times where individuals can work on their own as well as providing group activities. Susan really has thought of all of the people that we support.

Susan was nominated by Ellie who explained,

“Susan deserves to be recognised for the skilful way that she has managed to be completely person-centred, ensuring that each individual's needs are met, even as the project expands. The projects simply wouldn't have been possible had she not jumped at the opportunity and made it work.”



Braving sun, sand and scorpions for Carr Gomm



The Sahara trekkers with their furry friend Gizmo



Nervous smiles before the group set off. Lauren (L), Andrew (Centre) and Kenny (R)



Ready, steady go! The group at the starting point



Yusuf (L), Willie (Centre) and Kenny (R) ready for a day's trekking

This October eight hardy souls took off from Edinburgh Airport, bound for a gruelling ten-day fundraising trek in the dust, heat and isolation of the Sahara desert. This was all to raise money for our Catch the Dream programme.

The group set off from Ouarzazate, travelling deep into the desert to their starting point. Leaving their support vehicles behind, they ventured into the wilderness and began their trek. Each day they walked for six to eight hours in the searing heat with only some Berber guides and camels for company.

Willie, Sahara adventurer explained,

“It was thirty degrees in the shade and there was no shade!”

Kenny, a worker in our Rosebank Garden service added,

“You don't realise how difficult walking on sand is. It is really hard going on your leg muscles and you tire very quickly. Before

leaving I did a lot of practice walks and exercise, but nothing can really prepare you for what it is like.”

We were all tracking their progress, keen to find out how they were getting on. Many of you will have seen our updates on Facebook.

On day five, we received the news that the trekkers had become ill with a virus and were unable to keep going. The group travelled for 13 hours, through a sandstorm to reach civilisation where they could rest and try to recover.

Andrew explained,

“Nearly everyone was ill. It is horrible being ill when you are in your own house, so you can imagine just how awful it was in the desert. It took a long time for us to get back to our

starting hotel which was incredibly tiring. We were all drained, exhausted from being so ill and bitterly disappointed.”

Thankfully, after a couple of days resting and receiving medical attention the group were beginning to feel a little better. They travelled to Marrakech before flying home and being reunited with their loved ones.

The Sahara trekkers went through so much. From scorching heat and blisters to becoming very sick. It is often said when times get tough, people's true character comes out. This couldn't be more true of our

trekkers. They showed incredible compassion and kindness, looking after each other when they were at their lowest.

They might not have reached the finish line, but we could not be prouder of their efforts.

“It was thirty degrees in the shade and there was no shade!”



The group crossed varied terrain including a lot of sand dunes



Camp at last!



Yusuf with the groups' Berber guide and the camels

Transforming lives through fundraising



Enjoying a pamper day in Glasgow, thanks to Catch the Dream



Looking good! All smiles at the Glasgow pamper day

In the last couple of years, fundraising has become a regular feature within the newspaper. From trekking the Sahara to running marathons and holding bake sales, our supporters have thought of interesting and unusual ways to raise money for us.

All of the money that individuals raise for Carr Gomm goes towards our Catch the Dream programme. This enables us to provide life changing experiences and group activities for people across Scotland. Catch the Dream is one of the ways that we can help people to achieve their goals and be who they want to be.

In the last year, we have provided accessible sailing lessons, beauty pamper days, activity sessions for older people at risk of isolation in Argyll & Bute and social events

such as themed dinners and musical performances. These activities were chosen following suggestions from people we support.

All of our fundraised income is used to enhance the lives of the people that we support. Through your fundraising, we really can transform lives.

Thank you to everyone who has organised or taken part in fundraising events over the last year. We really appreciate your support.

We are currently developing our fundraising plans for the future. If you have any ideas or would like to get involved, please contact the Fundraising Team on 0131 659 4790 or email fundraising@carrgomm.org



Smooth sailing at Clyde Muirshiel Park



Unleashing their inner Tarzan! A group from Argyll & Bute spend the day at 'Go Ape'

Smooth sailing for Sean and Wilf

Sailing across crystal clear water, in the open air with the wind in your hair. Sounds idyllic? With help from Catch the Dream, we were able to provide this experience for a small group from Glasgow and Falkirk.

We caught up with Service Manager, Mavis Kelly, who helped organise the day. She explained that they had heard about the sailing and thought it could be a great opportunity for some of the people they support at the Broomage service.

As some of the people supported at Broomage have very complex needs, the first step was to check out the facilities at the centre.

"The staff there talked us through how it would work, explaining that they had a hoist to enable people to get in and out of boats," said Mavis.

After hearing about how great the facilities were, Mavis thought

that two individuals, Sean and Wilf would enjoy the activity. "Sean just loves adventure. The team regularly take him to the cinema and the louder and more action packed the film is, the more he enjoys it! Wilf is a little calmer, but loves to be outdoors. The sailing just seemed like a great opportunity for them both."

Sean and Wilf, accompanied by support staff Winnie, Sheena and Gillian, travelled to the lakes. After being kitted out in their life jackets, they were helped onto the boat before going out onto the water for the afternoon.

"The whole experience was great, the staff at Clyde Muirshiel Park took the time to make sure that both Wilf and Sean had a great day. Sean couldn't stop laughing the whole time we were on the water and even when we came home, he was still so excited by his day's activities," said Mavis.

The team didn't think that either Sean or Wilf would ever experience sailing because of how complex their support needs are. "I still can't believe that both Sean and Wilf were able to take part. The Catch the Dream money enabled both men to try a completely new activity and something that they probably would never have done otherwise.

It really does show you that no matter what challenges you might have there is something for everyone, you just need the opportunity to come along. Catch

the Dream gave us that opportunity. Wilf and Sean aren't able to communicate verbally, but I know that they would like to say a huge thank you to all of the people who have fundraised towards the Catch the Dream programme."

Thanks to Mavis and her team for sharing this fantastic story! If you would like to see your story featured in the newspaper, please contact the Marketing Team on 0131 659 4734 or email marketing@carrgomm.org



Sean (right) and Wilf (left) out on the water at Clyde Muirshiel Park

Friendship and fun in Argyll

Autumn can be a dreich and depressing time of the year, as the nights draw in and temperatures drop. Not so for residents in three sheltered housing complexes in Mid-Argyll who've recently enjoyed two activity days thanks to Catch the Dream funding.

In October, residents from Lochgair Place in Tarbet, McCracken Court in Lochgilphead and Caledonia Court in Ardrishaig came together for an activity afternoon. They enjoyed a hearty lunch, followed by some pampering sessions and a winter bulb planting activity.

In November, the group came together again to mark St. Andrews Day with a fantastic two-course lunch followed by music from across the decades.

Carr Gomm organised these events in partnership with Argyll Community Housing Association. Jacqueline Paton of ACHA told us:

"These events give people something to look forward to and the chance to socialise with others. Carr Gomm offered us funding, so the tenants don't have to pay for anything. That makes a huge difference."

First Minister backs Carr Gomm's Click Go tool



Former First Minister, Alex Salmond takes to Twitter to show his support for Carr Gomm

It is often said that when opportunity comes knocking, you should seize it. This summer, we did just that. We entered Click Go, our online tool to help people have more choice and control over their support, into a major UK wide competition run by Google. Little did we know just what would lie in store after the application was submitted.

Andrew Thomson, Head of Business Development, explained,

"We knew that there would be lots of amazing projects entering the competition. Click Go is life changing and we have already seen its impact. It was thrilling to be a finalist."

But reaching the finals was just the beginning. We wanted to secure the top prize and this meant either winning over the Dragon's Den-style judging panel or coming top in a public vote. We worked hard to try and generate as much publicity for the competition by finding unusual ways to catch people's attention on social media. We started a selfie campaign and submitted press releases to newspapers across the country. The highlight of the frantic two weeks was former First Minister Alex Salmond taking to Twitter to show his support for us.

Whilst all the excitement was taking place, a cool, calm and collected Andrew Thomson prepared his pitch for the judges. After travelling to London and seeing the other finalists deliver their pitches, Andrew took to the stage and gave a knockout performance,

impressing the judges with his enthusiasm and pride for the project.

Unfortunately, the competition was just too stiff and we just missed out on the top prize of £500,000. But all was not lost! As finalists we had won a massive £200,000 and support from Google.

We've got exciting plans for phase two of Click Go. With support from Google and our technical partners, Planys Cloud, we will be transforming Click Go into an online tool that's affordable to everyone.

Chloe, Carr Gomm Project Officer, explained:

"It is incredibly exciting to be working with Planys Cloud. They have already had some amazing ideas to improve Click Go. I've seen just how much of an impact Click Go has had for the people we support, helping to improve confidence and giving people back control. With support from them and Google, we really can revolutionise social care for thousands, tens of thousands, maybe even millions of people!"

If you would like to find out more about Click Go and how it could help you or someone you know, or if you are currently using Click Go and want to share your feedback and experience, please get in touch.

Contact Chloe Burton, Project Officer on 0131 659 4738 or email chloeburton@carrgomm.org



The team at Carr Gomm's National service wishing Andrew 'good luck' for his Dragon's Den style pitch to the judges



Jess shows why she voted for Click Go to win the Google Impact Challenge

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For an application pack and a full list of the posts currently available, please visit our website: www.carrgomm.org/workforus

All successful candidates are subject to a Protection of Vulnerable Groups (PVG) check.



Our Broomage team share why they love working for us

Dates for your Diary

Midlothian: Drop-in, Thursday 11am-2pm, Croft Centre, Minders Club, Loanhead

Gorbals: 'Tea Party' on the last Thursday of the month

Cathkinview: 'Tea Party' on the last Thursday of the month



Submit a story

If you would like to submit a story for the newspaper, please contact Nikki Lowry, Marketing and Communications Officer. Telephone: 0131 659 4734 Email: newsdesk@carrgomm.org