

A note from our Chief Executive

It is always exciting when I get the opportunity to talk about what is amazing about being part of Carr Gomm.

I always start by saying it is a privilege to work with people who really understand the values that are attached to having good relationships with others. We mutually understand that having a good relationship and having empathy for another is built on enabling the other to be an equal to ourselves.

That means ensuring someone always has some choice and control of their life, and that our relationship is built on openness and honesty which will lead us to trusting one another.

Only when we build trust can we create an interdependent relationship that recognises that we need each other to benefit and grow from the respectful exchange we will have between us. We can then show our compassion and kindness in our interactions, wanting the other person to be as happy and well as they can be, while listening carefully to and understanding their needs and wishes.

In Carr Gomm I can see this interaction in our relationships every day. I know when you read the articles in this newspaper that you will also see those Carr Gomm values on display.

For me, this is what makes me proud to be part of Carr Gomm. We are simply creating good relationships every day.

Lucy Wren



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Caroline's story: What our values mean to me

Caroline Barnes is a Support Practitioner in our Edinburgh Visiting Service.

After reflecting on our Carr Gomm values, Caroline got in touch with the Futures Team with the brilliant idea of including a new value.



Our Carr Gomm values are the cornerstone of the organisation, explaining our common purpose and defining who we are. Having strong shared values guides us, helps us develop trusting relationships and builds confidence and commitment.

Last year, I attended a Scottish Government Health and Social Care roadshow as part of my Continuing Professional Development. At the event they spoke about a renewed emphasis on compassion and how it ran throughout the updated Health and Social Care Standards.

I felt that while our values were committed to upholding people's rights and freedoms and had professionalism and integrity at their core, they didn't acknowledge the kindness and compassion which is the 'beating heart of care'. Social care is something you do because you believe in its worth and capacity to improve lives.

I approached the Futures Group with the suggestion to include compassion as a value. After discussion and consideration by the group, compassion was added to our values.

For me, compassion is the alleviation of suffering through kindness. Kindness and compassion are values which spread. When you've been treated with kindness and compassion you want to pass that feeling on!"



Each year, the Carr Gomm community comes together across our many services to talk about an issue which impacts the support Carr Gomm provides.

These events are called 'Forums' and they are Carr Gomm's way of having one big conversation across Scotland about what matters most to people we support.



We like to have a lot of fun at our Forums.

In the past Forum organisers have hosted the Great Carr Gomm Bake Off and have sent pots and seeds for people to grow their own plants.

This year our Forums have been taking place in-person and online, to make sure that they remain accessible to as many people as possible.

We're capturing a wide range of views and suggestions on what we can do as an organisation to put our values into action for the benefit of the people we support.

Make sure you read our next magazine to hear from our Carr Gomm community about their experience of this year's Forums.

The Forums have been on the topic of our values this year. We've been discussing questions like:



When have you seen our values in action during your support?



Have there been times when you have not felt this. What would have helped?





What goes into a Forum?

We caught up with Mandy before their forum began, to hear what goes into planning and running a forum for the East of Scotland Visiting services.

Once we have the theme for the forums, the managers of the services get together to begin planning. We ask questions like: Is it going to be in-person or online, will the date and location be accessible and how do we make it easy for people supported to give feedback?

We split each of the values between our managers and they each came up with creative and interactive ideas to help people talk about what each value means to them and the support they receive.

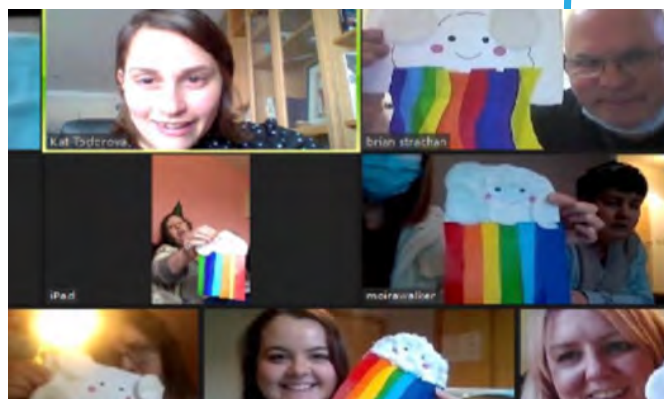
Some people who aren't able to come to the forum will be sharing their feedback over a pre-recorded video so that their feedback is reflected. We'll also be working hard to arrange transport for people supported to get to and from the forum as well as for staff to be available to support them throughout the day.



The forums are important because they **generate conversations**

The people we support should have the opportunity to discuss our values and share whether their support reflects or doesn't reflect these values.

We are ready to receive feedback from everyone so that we can continue to keep improving our supports and services.



Dundee Virtual Forum



Out in the open

with Glasgow South

People supported in Glasgow South have been putting on their trainers and casting their line as they take part in the walking and fishing groups set up by the Glasgow South Service.

These groups are the inspiration of Support Practitioner and Involvement Champion, Jackie Frew.

“When I joined the Involvement Group, I heard about the games groups other services were running. I wondered how we could run something similar and how we could run it outside”, said Jackie.

Jackie received support from her team to set up two weekly walking groups and a fishing group for people supported and recently supported by Carr Gomm.

The Tuesday Walking Group enjoys a stroll along a local route and is run by Support Practitioner, Evelyn. Jackie runs the walking group known as ‘Tea in the Park’. In August they had 16 people join for a walk to and from the park, where they enjoyed refreshments, home-baking and games.

The fishing group is run by Support Practitioner, Bob, who is a keen fisher and who shares his knowledge with the people who attend.

These groups have provided a space for people to have meaningful connection with others, while enjoying the great outdoors.

It’s a lifeline for many people we support, and I’m so uplifted from conversations people have. Some people talk about life in general and a lot of people are open with each other.

People are supporting each other and pulling each other up. They have ownership over these groups. Some even meet up with each other outside these groups”.

Support Practitioners also benefit.

“Usually we provide 1 to 1 support so this is totally different” said Jackie. “The groups are a bit of a chill-out for us. It allows us to relate to each other better and do stuff together, as staff and people supported.”

So what should you do if you have an idea that would make a difference to people supported in your service?

“Put it forward to your team and see what happens”, Jackie recommends. “I need a team behind me so that we can look at the idea together and see what we could do with it.”





Going for green

In the aftermath of COP26, record summer temperatures and rising fuel bills, it seems like everyone has been talking about the climate.

Carr Gomm doesn't extract fossil fuels, charter flights, or produce food. But many of the things we do still impact the environment.

The good news is that there are ways we can make a difference and influence change.

Carr Gomm's green agenda.

We have a responsibility to consider how we can be more sustainable as a business and as an employer.

This is why we are working with Business Energy Scotland to find out Carr Gomm's carbon footprint and to deliver Green Champions Training. But change is also happening across our services.

Everyday changes

There are lots of ways we can measure our impact on the environment as individuals.



Why not calculate your environmental footprint on the WWF website.



Here are some questions you can ask yourself to help you make greener choices.

- ✓ **Can I access a destination by walking, cycling or using public transport?**
- ✓ **Can I switch to a renewable energy supplier?**
- ✓ **Is there a sustainable alternative for the product I want to buy?**
- ✓ **Can I recycle or reuse a product at the end of its life?**
- ✓ **Can I grow food, either in a garden, an allotment or on my windowsill?**

Do you have an idea that would help Carr Gomm go green?

Maybe you could suggest it to your Support Practitioner or you can share it with Futures by emailing renatekrieglerr@carrgomm.org



On your bike



Carr Gomm staff in Rothesay, Lochgilphead and Campbeltown have moved from cars to electric bikes to visit people at home throughout their communities.

Delivered in partnership with ACT NOW and Cycling Scotland, Support Practitioners were given Essential Cycling Skills training and e-bikes have been made available for staff to use.

George Sparrow, who manages our Firrhill Service in Edinburgh, shared his desire to make Firrhill cycling friendly with the Futures Group. Since then, he has worked hard alongside Daniel Currie, our Healthy Living and Wellbeing Coordinator, to get the whole of Carr Gomm cycling ready.

Cycling Friendly™

In July, Carr Gomm received its Cycling Friendly Employer Award from Cycling Scotland.



LGBTQ+ Network

Support Practitioner Wolfie (a.k.a Erin) got in touch with Futures and suggested we form a group for LGBTQ+ staff members and people we support. From this forward thinking suggestion, the Carr Gomm LGBTQ+ Network was formed.

Respect is a core value of ours and we want everyone who works with us or is supported by us to feel valued for who they are.

How to get involved:
 Since forming we've had some really fun events such as a craft session in Forth Valley and attending Pride in Glasgow! This network is open to all Carr Gomm staff and people supported. It is a safe space created by LGBTQ+ people for LGBTQ+ people and allies are welcome.





Wolfie's story:

Tell us about yourself:

I'm 25, and aside from being LGBTQ+ I'm an animal lover and video gamer. Over the years I've explored many labels from under the LGBTQ+ umbrella. I am asexual, although romantically gender has never played a part. I'm also non-binary, which for me is being neither male nor female, but a mix of both as well as something different entirely.

These micro-labels have enabled me to connect with others and realise that these parts of me aren't weird and aren't something I should try to hide or destroy, but parts worthy of love and acceptance.

What's the aim of the network:

The aim of the network is to build a supportive space for LGBTQ+ staff and supported people alike. It is a safe, accepting space for all LGBTQ+ individuals, where they can connect and support each other.

What was the process of getting this idea through Carr Gomm Futures like:

I've always described myself as an advocate for LGBTQ+ rights, and I realised within Carr Gomm I might finally be able to make a difference and improve people's lives by making my voice heard.

The Futures process was a little nerve wracking at first. I was put in touch with Renate, and we had a great chat and developed the idea further. She was able to help give it shape and more tangible goals. The hardest part was waiting to hear back if Futures wanted to go forward with the idea or not.

I was bouncing off the walls and driving everyone bonkers because I was so excited. It was Renate who told me the idea was going forward, and that was so huge. It was the best thing to wake up to, and I didn't stop smiling all day.

What are some of the challenges you've faced being an LGBTQ+ person in social care:

The biggest challenge I've faced is hiding my identity. It is such an important part of my life, and when I pretended to be straight and cisgender, it feels like I'm only half a person. There is the challenge of communicating with the people I support as well, who often have very heavily ingrained heteronormative ways of thinking.

Everyone in Carr Gomm that I have met is so wonderful and accepting. I realised that having something concrete that said "Yes, we see you, we support you and you are loved."

What are practical things organisations like Carr Gomm can do to support LGBTQ+ staff members and service users:

The best thing Carr Gomm and other organisations can do for LGBTQ+ people are to be vocal and visible. Before people are even involved with the organisation let them know that this is a welcoming and friendly place for them, which goes for both staff and supported people. Creating a safe space is perhaps the biggest thing an organisation can do. It tells us that we are supported, we matter, and we are loved.



Control Your Future:



Beccy Barker, our Involvement, Quality and Innovation Manager, said:

The impact of Futures is to change people's worlds for the better- simple, small changes that have big impacts. We each hold that ability to make people's lives better, even if it's only small or for a moment in time."

Carr Gomm Futures is a unique staff innovation programme that demonstrates our commitment to listening to our team, learning from each other, and maintaining our leading edge in social care.

Both Caroline and Wolfie's stories in this paper evolved through Futures and have had a real impact on the organisation.

If you have an idea, let us know and make a difference. Every idea or suggestion is welcomed.



Tell Your Story

At Carr Gomm, we love stories and hearing about the differences, both big and small, that our people make in the world.

If you have a story you'd like to share, get in touch with stories@carrgomm.org and you could be featured in our next magazine!



Our new brand

We hope you love Carr Gomm's new look, including our brand-new logo. We've kept our Carr Gomm purple but given the logo a bolder and fresher look.

This vibrant design will help raise awareness of Carr Gomm's work in delivering social care services and community development projects across Scotland and help us influence change in the sector.

Choose Carr Gomm

Become a Company Member with Carr Gomm and contribute to the choices we make.

Company members have a say on major changes in the organisation. All we need are people who genuinely want to support our work and who choose to participate in our Annual General Meeting.

Our members come from all walks of life and include people we support, their relatives, staff and interested members of the public.

If you are interested in becoming a Company Member get in touch at info@carrgomm.org

