

Impact Report 2023-2024

25
YEARS





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Welcome

As you will read in this 2023-2024 Impact Report, we have had an amazing year developing and consolidating the support we deliver to so many people and completing the goals of the final year of our 2021-24 Strategic Plan.

We have continued to focus on working in partnership with the people we deliver services to and with the many other organisations, agencies and funders that enable us to do our work. This ensures that we reflect what people tell us they want in their support and deliver services which enable people to live their best possible life.

The variety of services you will read about in this report, which we deliver all over Scotland, reflects that different people need different kinds of support, delivered in unique ways.

Our person-centred approach means we see each person as an individual and it is our role to find the correct fit for each of them; we flex our services to be responsive to each person we are working with in their environment. Our staff are trained to find this fit by complementing and supporting people's abilities to live happy, meaningful and safe lives within their chosen communities.

This was also a special year because we celebrated Carr Gomm's 25th birthday together. We have supported many people for much of this time, and there are lots of staff who have committed most of their working life to helping Carr Gomm grow and develop. So, it was fantastic to get everyone together and have a celebration, during which we remembered, reflected, laughed and shed a few tears.

It is with enormous appreciation and gratitude that I want to thank all the staff and Board members who have both today and, in the past, worked so hard to deliver our organisation's philosophy, values and approaches. In doing so they have changed lives.

Lucy Wren,
Chief Executive



Our Values in Action

Carr Gomm is a leading Scottish social care and community development charity. Our qualified staff provided person-centred support to over 4,600 people this year so that they could live their best possible lives. This included supporting people with day-to-day living, planning for the future and realising their dreams. Across 2023-2024, we marked our 25th birthday with a year of celebration and fundraising.



In over 25 years of supporting people and communities, we have seen how connection and interdependence can transform people's health and wellbeing. This is why Carr Gomm fundraises to tackle isolation and loneliness in our communities through projects and activities across Scotland.

Over 300 people came together for our Carr Gomm Festival. It was a day where everyone enjoyed their best life together, with carnival games, food trucks, Therapets and a special Carr Gomm's Got Talent show.



This year we fundraised over £25,000 for our #BigCarrGommChallenge, as people walked, ran, jumped, baked, sang, danced, hiked, quizzed, raced and even tested their luck in prize draws, lotteries and raffles. This money will ensure that more people across Scotland feel connected to others, and not isolated within their communities.

Our impact across Scotland

In 2023-2024 we:

- Provided over 1 million hours of direct support
- Supported over 4,600 people
- Employed over 1,200 staff
- Maintained our 0% gender pay gap
- Invested £29 million in supporting people and staff
- Received over £700,000 in fundraised income
- Started two new supported living services in Dundee
- Expanded our Mobile Homecare team to Oban
- Launched a Mental Health Discharge Support Service in Glasgow
- Started working with Argyll & Bute Health and Social Care Partnership, leading on their Coming Home Project

We provided over
1,000,000
hours of direct support



We supported
4,679 people

Community Development (351)
(Community and Specialist Link Working, and Community Contacts)

In the words of people we support

Our bi-annual questionnaire shows how Carr Gomm continues to get it right for people we support.

Do you agree with the following statements?	% of people responding	
	July 2023 (294 returns)	February 2024 (324 returns)
I am involved in decisions about my support.	89%	92%
The people who work with me understand my needs.	96%	96%
My support is making a positive difference to my life.	92%	95%
My service is well organised and managed.	92%	91%
If I had a suggestion to help improve my service, staff would take me seriously.	91%	93%
Staff listen to me.	92%	94%
If I had a concern or complaint about my Carr Gomm service, staff would take me seriously.	92%	94%

“
My Support Practitioner is very kind, caring and understanding me very well and very good listeners. Honest and respectful.
”

“
The respect and dignity shown to [the people they support], the relationships with both [people] and their families. The on-going training and the amazing management team.
”

National Involvement Group

Carr Gomm is committed to amplifying the voices of people we support so that they can influence good change in Carr Gomm and in social care across Scotland.

Carr Gomm's National Involvement Group is a network of people supported by Carr Gomm, who contribute to the strategic direction of the organisation and who influence change affecting the social care sector.

Through the bi-annual questionnaire and the Involvement Group, Carr Gomm is able to shape our practises and processes with the people we support in mind. Some examples of changes within Carr Gomm due to feedback from people we support include:

- The questionnaire highlighted that people we support want greater involvement in local initiatives. As a result, Carr Gomm has recruited an Involvement Development Manager to explore opportunities for greater local engagement
- Carr Gomm heard through the National Involvement Group that there is discomfort amongst people we support about the inherent unfairness that where you live determines your level of support. Carr Gomm has spoken out against this 'postcode lottery' approach to social care, including our own Becs Barker, speaking on this topic to the Scottish Parliament
- Carr Gomm received feedback that the bi-annual questionnaire for people we support was not as accessible as it could be. The result was a revamp of the questionnaire to provide greater accessibility. Carr Gomm continues to work alongside people we support to ensure our resources are as accessible as possible



Spotlight on our services

Short-term Mental Health Discharge Support Services in Glasgow

Our team supports adults with severe and enduring mental health issues transitioning from Psychiatric Hospital back into their community.

Over 6-8 weeks, the service:

- Facilitates timely hospital discharges by collaborating with health and social work teams to build strong relationships
- Begins supporting individuals in the hospital and provides immediate post-discharge assistance, ensuring connection to local networks and suitable housing
- Helps individuals manage their mental health by understanding their unique challenges and working together to develop methods of ongoing support

Without this service, there is a risk people will:

- Stay in the hospital longer than needed
- Struggle with community reintegration, facing isolation and loneliness
- Have difficulties managing their mental health, increasing the risk of relapse and readmission

Grant's Story*

Grant's time in the criminal justice system meant that strict measures were needed so he could safely return to living in the community. Following discharge from the Intensive Psychiatric Care Unit, he received support in his own home.

With encouragement from two Support Practitioners, Grant gradually developed trust and began exploring safe activities like Tai Chi, visiting the Men's Shed, and attending a workshop to build his own bike.

Through collaboration with social work, Carr Gomm provided consistent, person-centred support, giving Grant more control over his life.

Now, Grant no longer needs support, lives safely in his community, engages with social workers and clinicians, and is rebuilding his relationship with his family.

**Grant's name has been changed to protect their identity.*



Long Term Support: Corstorphine Service

Since its launch in 2009, the Corstorphine Service has supported five individuals in West Edinburgh, with four of the original people still being supported today.

Service Manager Susan Gaunt, who has been with the service since it was established, has built lasting relationships with individuals and their families, gaining a deep understanding of their support needs and what living their best possible life looks like. “When someone trusts you enough to assist with personal care, it’s truly rewarding.”

The people we support have a range of complex physical and learning disabilities, from using walking aids or wheelchairs to using systems like EyeGaze or Signalong to communicate. Their individuality is reflected in their homes, with specialist equipment to enable them to live safely as well as furnishings that match their personal style and interests.

Support staff are highly trained in areas such as epilepsy management, Signalong, and enteral feeding, enabling them to provide person-centred care.

“

People don’t realise how skilled the staff are, and sometimes, neither do the staff themselves, it’s a great place to work.

”



In our communities

Our Community Contacts project has been running in Argyll & Bute since 2013 and in Highland since 2018. In that time, it has supported, informed and advised over 16,000 people on their right to access the social care support of their choice.

Community Contacts provides:

- Guidance on Self-Directed Support (SDS) legislation, helping people understand their rights, responsibilities, and SDS limitations
- One-on-one support for developing personal outcome plans, accessing services, and making community connections
- Assistance with managing direct payments and connecting to additional services when needed

Community Contacts in numbers: Oct 2023 – Mar 2024

1,843

people were given 'light touch' advice. This is in addition to casework.

35

young people were supported with their transition to adult life.

Our Community Contacts team offered 'casework' (more intensive work) to

351

people and families

17%

of people supported were between 0-17 years.

49%

were 65 years or older.

Susan's story

Susan needed to have emergency surgery and could not manage her caring responsibilities for her son, Nathan, when she came home. Community Contacts helped Susan self-advocate to the local authority to gain an SDS budget. She was then able to recruit Personal Assistants with Community Contacts' help to support Nathan during her recovery.

Contributing to self-directed support Post-Legislative Scrutiny

Carr Gomm, the National Involvement Group, and Community Contacts participated in the Scottish Parliament's consultation on the effectiveness of self-directed support legislation 10 years on.

Our feedback highlighted that Carr Gomm has consistently provided quality, person-centred support, despite the legislation. However, it is important that the rights and principles of Self-Directed Support have been enshrined in law.

“

The Self-Directed Support law has made a difference to me. To know my rights are there in law is really important to me.

National Involvement Group response

”

“

A level social care playing field is urgently needed. People often don't know that they are entitled to independent advice and support for Self-Directed Support, or the range of support that is available for them – including the four Self-Directed Support options.

Community Contacts Response

”



Following this response, Becs Barker, Carr Gomm's Operations Manager, gave evidence in person to the Scottish Parliament's Health, Social Care and Sport Committee on behalf of social care providers on the effectiveness of SDS. Watch clips from this evidence session on our website or by scanning the QR code.

Filling the gaps

At Carr Gomm we fundraise to reduce loneliness and isolation in some of Scotland's most vulnerable communities by creating opportunities for connection and relationship-building.

Through public grants and community-based fundraising, Carr Gomm can run community projects above and beyond our council commissioned services. These projects are focused on combating loneliness and isolation. Each project is based on the needs of the community and aims to go the extra mile for our communities.

Our work in Craigmillar

In 2013, Carr Gomm began innovative social prescribing work in Craigmillar, an Edinburgh community very near our National Service office which experiences severe health inequalities. By listening to the community, we developed community link working and launched Craigmillar Community Grows and Men In Sheds to fill service gaps. Eleven years later, these projects continue to meet community needs.

Our Community Link Workers:

- Worked in five GP practices in south-east Edinburgh
- Took 520 referrals from GPs and made 811 referrals to organisations ranging from debt advice to walking groups to counselling support
- Raised £4,355 in small grants for essential items for people they were supporting



Our Rivers Service:

In 2023-2024, Carr Gomm's Specialist Link Workers in Fountainbridge provided vital support to 166 individuals through group sessions, referrals, access to services, and evaluations, significantly enhancing community well-being.

This team continues to innovate in trauma support, delivering open-access, community focused care. This approach, which began in 2017, has evolved to reduce waiting times and offer more person-centred support.

If I hadn't been referred to [my community link worker] I would still be sitting in my house not doing anything.

My Specialist Link Worker helped me by making me feel welcome. I'm getting great support and my mental health is getting better. We are working on me getting a place on a training course.

In partnership with Sandy's Community Centre, our Craigmillar Community Grows (CCG) Project:

- Worked with over 250 people of all ages in Craigmillar
- Continued our regular activities, including our walking and foraging group and Community Cook Club, and ran new activities, including outdoor project, Branching Out, and an intergenerational photography project in partnership with Castlebrae High School and Caring in Craigmillar



“

You don't know how much difference you make. You save lives. I've been coming to the Cook Club for a while now and it's done so much for me. For my confidence and for my whole life. Without it I might not be here.

”

Keep Warm Kits:

In 2022, Support Practitioners in Argyll & Bute noticed the impact of rising energy costs and power cuts on people that they care for. In response, they put together Keep Warm Boxes which contain essential items to help people stay warm during the Winter. These boxes continue to have an impact in our community and 103 were provided last winter.

Our Men in Sheds Project:

- Was attended by 18 men, 13 regularly
- Made and sold garden planters and benches, and bat boxes for CCG's Branching Out course
- Installed new handwashing facilities, funded by the Edinburgh Health and Social Care Partnership

“

I really enjoy my time here. Just getting here can be hard for me. So the fact I am here says I like it.

”

Futures:

Founded in 2014, our Futures Project allows staff to share ideas for reducing social isolation in our communities, improving support and enhancing staff satisfaction. These ideas are implemented using fundraised money.

The Midlothian Music Group, Something to Believe In, received £1,000 in funding after Support Practitioner Ross McVie proposed it. Every Tuesday, Ross facilitates the group in Loanhead, where members of the Carr Gomm community sing, dance, play instruments, and connect with others.



Influencing good change



Carr Gomm has a history of sharing our values and approaches so that everyone has access to good, person-centred social care. This year, we went even further to influence change in our health and social care sector.

The National Involvement Group shared their pandemic experiences with the Scottish COVID-19 Inquiry, highlighting key points about accessing social care:

- Some staff contracted COVID-19, leading to shortages, but Carr Gomm managed these absences effectively
- Many experienced changes in routines due to service adaptations, which, while understood, were distressing for some
- We recognised the necessity of staff wearing PPE to prevent cross-infection and felt reassured by these protective measures



Changes to Scottish Social Service Council (SSSC) Fitness to Practise factsheet

Senior Operations Manager Paul Marshall led discussions with the SSSC to enhance their Fitness to Practise factsheet, which is sent to employers at the start of social care worker investigations.

Our contributions ensured the factsheet now states that the SSSC may consult individuals using the service for witness statements, ensuring that the process will be necessary, proportionate, trauma-informed, and that the person's Social Worker or preferred contact will also be consulted.

Carr Gomm on the BBC

Carr Gomm was proud to feature in the BBC documentary 'Darren McGarvey: The State We're In'. The episode looks at the UK's health and social care system, and featured Tiffany and Alison from our Dunoon Mobile Homecare Team, as they hosted Darren on a day of supporting people around Cowal.

Viewers across the UK saw how Carr Gomm's services are supporting people to live safely and independently in their own homes, through joined up working between the health and the social care sector.

A year of influencing

Here's how Carr Gomm engaged with and responded to developments happening in our sector.

- We welcomed seven Members of the Scottish Parliament to our services. This included the First Minister, the Cabinet Secretary for National Health Service Recovery, Health and Social Care and two party spokespeople for Health and Social Care. In these meetings we shared our hopes for the National Care Service (NCS), our position on Fair Work in social care and the positive impact we have in their constituencies.

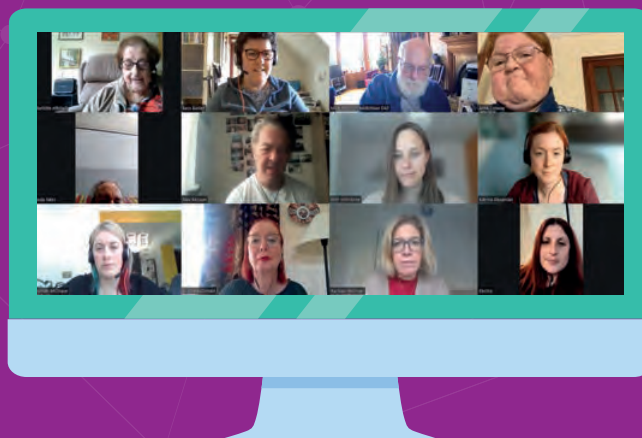


- We continued to press the Scottish Government for Fair Work throughout the Scottish Budget setting process, joining our voice with fellow third sector providers
- Established a NCS Working Group in Carr Gomm to coordinate our response to this piece of legislation
- The National Involvement Group welcomed Rachel McGruer, Deputy Director, Social Care and National Care Service Development, to an Involvement Group meeting to share their calls and reflections on the NCS

We continue to call for the Scottish Government to:

- Recognise the positive impact of excellent person-centred support provided by Carr Gomm
- Support equally enhanced recognition and reward for all social care workers, regardless of employer
- Pause all competitive tendering; explore collaborative and ethical commissioning approaches; and ensure SDS is a real option for all eligible citizens

Carr Gomm and the people we support are not broken; we need better resourcing to ensure that everyone else can experience person-centred support which enables them to live their best possible life.



The future of Digital Inclusion

We are exploring how new technologies and training can empower people to access the internet safely and meaningfully.

Carr Gomm's Digital Inclusion Research Project (DIRP) began in 2021 during the COVID-19 pandemic, addressing the needs of those at risk of being left behind as the world shifted online.



Over two years, Digital Inclusion Development Manager Shannon McNee worked with people we support and staff across Scotland to create tailored education and access approaches, helping over 100 people get online.

In 2023, the project evolved into the Digital Inclusion Development Project, reflecting our commitment to making digital inclusion and choice a fundamental human right and a marker of high-quality social care support.

“

Carr Gomm's leadership and expertise in digital inclusion has provided valuable learning to developing approaches to digital inclusion across wider health and social care.

”

Dr Tara French,
Digital Inclusion and Design Lead (Digital Health & Care Division, Scottish Government)

Our Digital Inclusion Programme shows how we are establishing a future that embraces opportunities for providing person-centred support in creative, innovative and meaningful ways, in an ever-changing world.

Putting our learning into action

Connected Lives

Our Glasgow Integrated Services were awarded £54,677 by the Scottish Government's Digital Pioneers Mental Health Fund to provide digital inclusion support to 60 people. The project, Connected Lives, supported people in Glasgow by providing:

- Access to a device and 12 months of unlimited internet connectivity
- Person-centred support to build digital confidence
- The opportunity to take part in activities via a weekly online peer network

Through the project, many people got online for the first time; building independence through online food shopping, applying for college, securing volunteering positions in their local communities, and accessing NHS support groups.

“

It's been a great help with my mental health, giving me access to things to help with how I feel and access the things I enjoy.

”

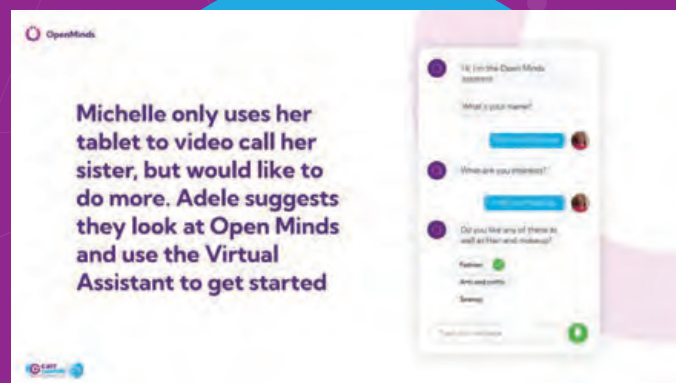


Open Minds

Open Minds is an upcoming innovative online platform designed for the people we support to connect, prioritise their wellbeing, and learn new skills. This platform is the first of its kind in the social care sector.

In co-design sessions with people we support, staff, and our technical partner, Ember, we shaped the concept of Open Minds.

Ember produced video walkthroughs showcasing various ways users can engage with the platform, which we believe will attract investment for its technical development.



Example of Open Minds video walkthrough

Carr Gomm meets the world

Carr Gomm's International Collaboration Project took off this year, as we explored how our experience fits within the wider world. We sought to learn from others doing similar work in different contexts and share our own knowledge and experience.

Keith Milligan,
Operations Manager in Edinburgh,
**spoke at the European Social Network
Conference in Barcelona.**

“

Talking at seminars isn't an everyday occurrence in my role so I found the opportunity to be worthwhile from a development perspective.

I was given the topic of detailing the transition from acute hospital ward to a community setting to present on.

I enjoyed participating and it was quite clear from the off that we can offer our European counterparts the benefit of our experience and expertise in supporting people to leave acute and continuous care settings.

Participating broadens our opportunity to influence others, explaining how we manage hospital discharge and speaking at length with different organisations about the support we offer.

”



International Collaboration

Over this past year, the International Collaboration project has continued to grow the Carr Gomm DNA across the globe. Some highlights include presenting at the European Social Network conference in Belgium where we became part of their library of 'best practice' and were invited to submit to the EU Commission's guidelines on deinstitutionalisation. We've also welcomed international visitors from Germany, Sweden, Greece, Catalonia and Denmark to our head office.

As well as sharing our work, we've also learnt from best practice across the globe. Carr Gomm staff have explored digital innovations in home care in Sweden, received an International Foundation for Integrated Care training award, and through the launch of the new Global Ambassadors exchange, travelled to learn about social care in the Netherlands and Taiwan.



Cara Davis,
Marketing and Communications Officer,
attended the Social Enterprise World Forum in Amsterdam.

“

Attending the Social Enterprise World Forum in Amsterdam was a real eye-opener for me. I had the chance to meet people who are helping others overcome barriers in creative ways, such as a museum offering tours from guides who are visually impaired and a vineyard providing work for people with a distance to the labour market.

The discussions on AI for social good, inclusive leadership, and resilience will certainly strengthen my work with Carr Gomm.

”



Healthy Living and Wellbeing Programme

Our Healthy Living and Wellbeing Programme is part of our commitment to establishing a future that embraces opportunities for providing person-centred support in a holistic and meaningful way.

It's been one year since we launched our Carr Gomm App, a health and wellbeing platform built for Carr Gomm staff, in partnership with Health by Science. Through this fantastic employee benefit, colleagues can access lots of support for their health and wellbeing journey. The impact has been transformational, helping colleagues achieve their goals and thrive at work, while enabling them to better support others to flourish as well.

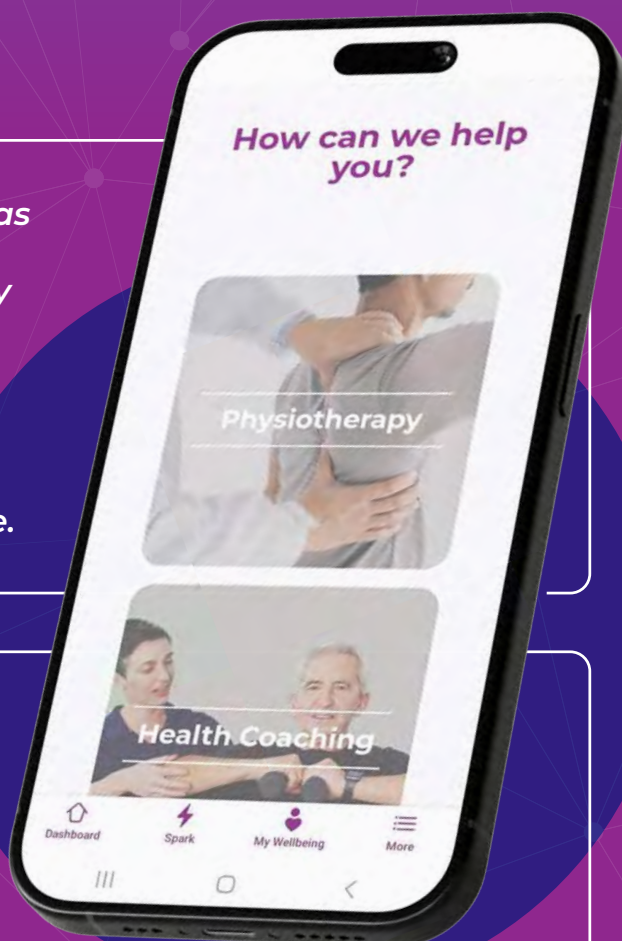
- **100 workers** have signed up for free physiotherapy and health coaching in the last 12 months, delivered by our expert partners at Health by Science
- **93% of people** reported lower levels of stress as a result of speaking with a qualified counsellor via our free Counselling Service



Jenny's persistent foot and ankle pain was disrupting her daily routine. When she turned to the online physio, the Health by Science team created a tailored rehab programme, and she began to see significant improvements. Jenny went a step further and enrolled in the Strength Programme, helping her become fitter, stronger and more confident than before.



My Counsellor has been very supportive and non-judgmental throughout my sessions. I've felt comfortable opening up and I've told my Counsellor things I've never told anybody before. I've went from feeling lost in life to now starting university and following my dreams.



Move to Improve training

Our Move to Improve training, delivered by Health by Science, equips staff with the skills to incorporate small amounts of physical activity into people's daily routines and support plans. This helps people we support grow in their confidence and independence, and increases opportunities for social connection.

In 2023-2024:

- **19 Move to Improve Workshops were delivered**
- **237 workers completed Move to Improve training**

“Robbie has in the past disliked walking, but on different occasions recently, he has taken the initiative to suggest to staff to go on short walks...this has indeed demonstrated his commitment to maintaining an active lifestyle. Robbie's improved balance and confidence are undoubtedly assets that will continue to positively impact his overall well-being.

– Edozi Emordi, Support Practitioner, after Move to Improve training.



“I am currently implementing Move to Improve with someone I support to complete arm and foot stretches each day. It makes her personal care easier, and she seems happier and healthier.

– Chinwenwa Uhunamure, Support Practitioner.



As we look to the future, we are excited to see the Carr Gomm App benefit the wider social care sector and to expand and share the learning from our Move to Improve training within Carr Gomm and beyond.

Our finances 2023-2024

Income:

£29,446,441

Earned Income: £28,512,537

Grants: £642,647

Investments: £178,918

Donations and Fundraising (including shop income): £99,761

Other Income: £12,578

Expenditure:

£29,181,170*

Staff Costs: £24,855,427

Other Staff Costs: £787,303

Direct Costs: £1,671,188

Property Costs: £1,303,684

Indirect Costs: £563,568

*Expenditure includes £403,000 taken from designated reserves.

A note from the Chair of our Board

Looking to the future, the need has never been greater for an innovative, person-centred, values driven organisation such as Carr Gomm.

We are all living longer in a world that is uncertain and rapidly evolving. The economic environment and the associated funding challenges for social care require us to think differently to ensure that we can continue to support people throughout Scotland to lead their best lives every day.



In recognition of these dynamics, Carr Gomm is focussing on advocacy for the sector bringing our expertise and lived experience to a wider audience. We are shouting from the rooftops to help shift the debate and promote more informed, future-focused decision making.

To maximise our impact, it is imperative that we remain true to who we are, to be of maximum benefit to the communities in which we operate. We never settle for "good enough"; we exist to innovate, to dare greatly and to design and deliver the services of tomorrow, today.

We are blessed to have a fantastic team located throughout Scotland; we relish the challenges and opportunities ahead; and we will continue to celebrate our achievements together.

Greg Mackay,
Chair of our Board of Trustees

Thank you to our supporters

We are grateful to funders who have supported us over the last 25 years as we've strived to fill the gaps in our society. Your generosity and support has reduced the impact of social isolation and loneliness on some of our most vulnerable communities in Scotland through projects large and small.

Thank you to our grant funders from 2023-24.



Edinburgh Health and
Social Care Partnership



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Scottish
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na h-Alba

INSPIRING
SCOTLAND

CREAR
HOTELS

