



OUR CONNECTIONS



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A Note from the Chief Executive

You will see from this magazine that we have been busy over the last few months with lots of events and opportunities to get together and connect.

It is always important that we find ways to connect with each other, whether in person or sometimes online. When we connect with each other, we learn so much about life and its challenges, the good and the bad.

It gives us the opportunity to listen and understand the changes we may be able to make or how to do more of something that is good.

“Connecting, listening, hearing, and understanding”

Respect, empathy and compassion

When we listen carefully, we are showing our respect, empathy and compassion, we are putting our values into practice, helping someone else feel valued and understood. We are richer as people from connecting with each other and therefore, richer as an organisation.

When we listen to the feedback from the Forums, AGM, the Time to Shine Awards, questionnaires, or by simply chatting, we are then able to work together to apply what we learn to influence good change in our work and wider society.

Connecting, listening, hearing, and understanding creates social justice and inclusivity, reducing isolation and loneliness, what can be more important.

Lucy Wren

Lucy Wren.

Carr Gomm Forums



Dundee

People we support in Dundee came together to share ideas and feedback and reconnect with each other at this year's Dundee Forum! This year's theme was My Connections, which inspired some great discussions and activities.

There were fun activities exploring the connections that people have in their communities; we celebrated 20 years of Dundee services with a birthday cake, and a local musician performed original songs about Dundee.

Forth Valley

Forth Valley kicked off Forum season with a bang! At this year's forum, there was dancing, sweets, a special performance from Elvis, art therapy, a cinema, a birthday and even a chocolate fountain!

Everyone had an amazing time connecting and sharing their thoughts about Carr Gomm. We cannot wait for the next one!



Glasgow

People supported and staff from across Glasgow came together for an afternoon of fun and socialising, and even featured a few musical performances!

We were delighted to be joined by Give a Dog A Bone charity, officers from Police Scotland, Citizen's Advice Scotland, and individuals from Carr Gomm's International Collaborations and Involvement Projects.

Everyone had a great time making connections.



Argyll

People supported in Oban and Helensburgh recently came together, both in-person and virtually, for their annual forum. The people in attendance shared their experiences and ideas, bridging the gap between locations.

As part of the session, each person created a "chain of connection," illustrating what connection means to them. The feedback was that people felt a sense of belonging with the connections they have made. They felt listened to and understood—a powerful reminder of the difference genuine connection can make, both in our work and with each other.



Edinburgh and Lothians

Edinburgh concluded this year's forum series, with people travelling from across the East to enjoy the day and share their feedback about Carr Gomm.

There were activities exploring this year's theme 'My Connections', live performances by Graeme the DJ and the Midlothian Music Group, a raffle with top prizes, and even a magician! Everyone had a fantastic time, making it a wonderful way to wrap up this year's forums.

Carr Gomm AGM

In a year where Carr Gomm provided over 1,000,000 hours of support, the Annual General Meeting was a time for reflection, connection, and celebration. It was fantastic to see so many wonderful people from the Carr Gomm community present. As always, the "Time to Shine" awards were the highlight of the event, showcasing the incredible achievements of the brilliant Carr Gomm staff.

This year's AGM also had an extra special touch with Special Recognition for Mavis Kelly.



Time to Shine Award Winners!

At our AGM, we announced the winners of our Time to Shine staff awards! After receiving an incredible 46 nominations across the 5 categories from all areas of Carr Gomm, we are excited to share that the winners are...



Innovation Award
*Stephen Murray,
Midlothian Visiting Team*

Stephen supported Graeme in upgrading his DJing equipment by working together to find the perfect digital music platform that would give Graeme access to unlimited music. Previously having to rely on CD's, Graeme's new music platform has enabled him to work as a DJ at various events.



Team of the Year Award
Edinburgh Visiting Team

The team showed tremendous dedication and care in the support they provide to a gentleman in Edinburgh. Their support has enabled him to not only achieve but to exceed his outcomes and he is now looking to achieve more.

The team are an excellent example of Carr Gomm's key values and desire to always be better.

Most Inspirational Person

*Nicola Symons,
Borders Service*

Nicola was recognised for always going above and beyond what is required to ensure the people she supports are living their best possible lives, including home-baking for the people she supports, creating a vegetable garden in the service, and always putting others first.



Involvement Award

*Muirhouse & Corstorphine Teams,
Edinburgh*

The 2024 Involvement Award recognised these two teams for providing unique and personalised support to people with different communication needs. We are so proud of their hard work and dedication to providing the best support possible.



Special Recognition

Mavis Kelly, Forth Valley Service

Mavis Kelly received a Special Recognition Award for her considerable service to Carr Gomm.

Mavis worked tirelessly to provide the best support for people throughout Forth Valley and has been a source of knowledge and guidance for colleagues across the organisation. In 2024, she retired from Carr Gomm after 25 incredible years of service.

Partnership Award

*East Recruitment with The King's
Trust (Formerly The Prince's Trust)*

The King's Trust worked closely with us to promote the important and rewarding work that Support Practitioners do, and helped to bring several young people to work at Carr Gomm.

Attend next year's AGM by becoming a Company Member!

As a Company Member you can:

- contribute to Carr Gomm's direction
- participate and vote at the AGM
- stand to become a Director
- receive communications from us
- be informed of any major changes in our organisation

Visit our website to find out more and apply:

www.carrgomm.org/become-a-company-member

Questionnaire Results

Carr Gomm is committed to providing the best support possible.

As part of checking that we are having a positive impact in people's lives, we use a bi-annual survey to gather feedback and to understand what improvements, if any, need to be made.

Here are the results of the August 2024 questionnaire.



Results and actions

321 questionnaires were returned.
(A 29% return rate)

92% of people who responded said their service is working for them.

89% of people would recommend Carr Gomm to others.

Out of a maximum score of 6, all services received at least a 5 (of the services who received one or more responses).

Detail of % responses

89%

I am involved in decisions about my support.



92%

The people who work with me understand my needs.



94%

Staff listen to me.



94%

My service is well organised and managed.



96%

My support is making a positive difference to my life.



93%

If I had a suggestion to help improve my service, staff would take me seriously.



94%

If I had a concern or complaint about my Carr Gomm service, staff would take me seriously.



What are the things you most like about your Carr Gomm service?

265 respondents shared a compliment about their service:

- “I like how it is tailored for me personally.”
- “Nothing is too much trouble, and they are reliable. They arrive on time and get the job done.”
- “Because of their help, I can go on living in my wee house, not have to go into a 'Home'.”
- “Carr Gomm's service is reliable, always open for improvement, and has reasonable communication.”

What improvements would you like to see in your Carr Gomm service?

122 people shared an improvement suggestion for their service:

- “Try to have regular carers to build trust and relationships.”
- “Better communication. If there are any issues with my mother and I am not present I would like to know immediately.”



Making Connections in the Community

Alan's sunny jaunt
up Calton Hill.



Go Ape Adventure

People supported in Oban had an amazing day out at Go Ape! This treetop adventure was part of their Get High, Drug-Free program, funded by the Alcohol and Drug Partnership.

The group worked together, cheering each other on to conquer the challenging obstacles, climb higher, and zip-line through the trees.

It was a day full of laughter, teamwork, and new achievements.

Sean's been keeping busy
sightseeing around Edinburgh.



Donna enjoyed a wild day
out at Edinburgh Zoo.



A Chat with Lorraine and Leanne



Lorraine, who lives in Caithness, sat down with Leanne Wells, Operations Manager, for a chat about her favourite activities to do with her support.

Lorraine shared how much she enjoys going swimming, shopping at Tesco, and having lunch out. It's always great to hear what makes each person's support time special.



The Glasgow South team enjoy a Halloween feast.



Glasgow South Walking Group ventured across the Govan - Partick bridge

Coming Home

Helping people identify what is most important in a home

Our Coming Home project is supporting people to live their best life.

We are working with people originally from Argyll & Bute who now find themselves living elsewhere throughout the UK.

Our person-centred conversations identify what people living with complex support needs believe is most important about their home.

For some people, this may mean coming home to Argyll.

It's a Knockout

Last August, we were delighted to be invited to a fun event celebrating the range of day supports available for citizens of Argyll & Bute.

We had the opportunity to learn about achievements and impact, as well as some of the challenges the Council is experiencing.

If people choose to move back home, then it is important that we are fully informed about the range and diversity of supports that already exist so that people can make good choices.



A Milestone Year for Dundee

In 2024, we celebrated 20 years of Carr Gomm providing support in Dundee, and opened two new services, Coldside and Derby.



**Operations Manager,
Ekaterina Todorova, shared:**

"This year marks the 20th year of opening our very first service and we celebrated in style with the people we support and staff at our most recent forum in Dundee. 20 years of working in the community is a remarkable milestone.

It represents the impactful connections we have made and the dedication that our teams have shown. We are looking forward to developing our new services and continuing to make an impact in people's lives."

Kieran gives back to his community through volunteering with Save the Children.

We're proud to share that Kieran has started to volunteer at his local Save the Children charity shop, making a huge difference in his community. Kieran spoke to us about his experience as a volunteer so far:

"I'm really enjoying my volunteer role at Save the Children. One of the things I love most is meeting and chatting with new people—it's a fantastic way to connect with others who share the same passion for helping others. Every shift feels fulfilling, and I appreciate how the role keeps me active and engaged. Staying busy while making a positive impact truly makes this experience special."

Well done Kieran!



International Collaborations

Our Global Ambassadors travel the world!

The first of our Global Ambassadors have ventured out across the globe to gain knowledge and experience of social care in different countries.

Attending conferences in Antwerp, peer-learning visits in Sweden, peer exchanges in Utrecht and an immersive trip to Taiwan, our Global Ambassadors have been proudly representing Carr Gomm by networking internationally and bringing back key skills and learning to improve our services back home.

Making International Connections



Peer Learning Visit to rural Sweden

Anne-Louise and Andrew travelled to Sweden, and after visiting a social care provider in Hoganäs, they found more similarities with Scotland than differences – but there was still learning to be had, and thanks to the visit, we're piloting a new project through digital inclusion that we hope will improve people's lives.

"The experience I have gained from my time in Sweden has been amazing. The generosity of our hosts in sharing their hospitality, experience and learning has been extremely powerful."

Anne-Louise
Senior Operations Manager Rural services

Thanks to the Council of International Fellowship, the Scottish Government and the European Social Network for financial support of our travels.



CIF Professional Exchange to Taiwan

Andrew had a jam-packed 2-week visit to Taiwan through CIF International, visiting the national government, local government, and a whole range of community-based social care providers supporting people to live their best lives. He referred to his experience as a 'life highlight'.



www.youtube.com/@cif_international

Visit our YouTube channel to hear more from Andrew about his experience and takeaways from the trip.



Global Leadership Exchange in Utrecht

Jess and George attended the week-long event, which brought together leaders in mental health, disability, and substance use from around the world and offered the opportunity to share knowledge and ideas with peers from around the globe.

"What a great learning experience! It has aided my own professional development and broadened my understanding of mental health approaches across mainland Europe."

George, Service Manager, East Lothian

"For me, the most valuable part of my international experience was the opportunity to meet people from all around the world, and given the time and space to step back and think about how we can improve our services through tackling shared problems, no matter where we are."

Jess, Specialist Link Worker, Edinburgh



European Social Network in Antwerp

Kevin and Asiya were invited to the conference to give a presentation about the Glasgow Integrated Service.

The audience of over 60 people from across the world heard about our great work and were impressed by our innovative approach to supporting people to live their best lives.

"The most valuable part of my international experience was hearing and seeing more about lots of good work going on all over the world to support people to lead better lives. Sometimes it can feel that things are falling apart but there are still lots of reasons to be hopeful."

Kevin,
Operations Manager,
Glasgow





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Join our weekly lottery for just £1 per week, and you could be our lucky jackpot winner.

By playing our lottery, you are in with a chance of winning every week, while we receive all important funds.

It costs just £1 a week and the draw takes place every Friday.

You have to be in it to win it
– so scan the QR code, or visit:

[www.carrgomm.org/support-us/
play-our-lottery](http://www.carrgomm.org/support-us/play-our-lottery)
to find out how to play today!



unity

1ST PRIZE
£25,000

Match 6
numbers

2ND PRIZE
£1,000

Match 5
numbers

3RD PRIZE
£25

Match 4
numbers



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Take a photo with the magazine, send it to:
communication@carrgomm.org and YOUR photo could be
shown in the next Carr Gomm Magazine.

Share your story!

Something exciting coming up over the next 6 months that
you wish to share with people from across Carr Gomm?

Then send us an email at: communication@carrgomm.org