



Winter Magazine 2025-2026

Our DNA: Person-centered Impact



Featuring your feedback, news, stories, our annual forums, and much more!

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Introducing our new Chief Executive

Andrew Thomson became Carr Gomm's Chief Executive in September 2025. Andrew first started with Carr Gomm in April 2005, and this is his sixth different job role over the last 20 years.

Before trying to revolutionise social care in Scotland, Andrew worked in Malawi and Ghana and also upgraded the alarm system of Sizewell B power station.

As Chief Executive, Andrew is responsible for developing innovative and impactful ways to support people to achieve their potential. He also feels obliged to influence the decisions made by the Scottish Government and other organisations so that people's lives are changed for the better in Scotland.

Away from work, Andrew enjoys growing his understanding of how the world works, as well as following the highs and lows of Scottish football.



A Note from the Chief Executive



As winter settles in, different celebrations and festivals bring people together. But the colder months can also lead to some of us feeling disconnected or even isolated.

Staying connected with each other is so important. A conversation, shared activity, or check-in can make a meaningful difference to someone's day.

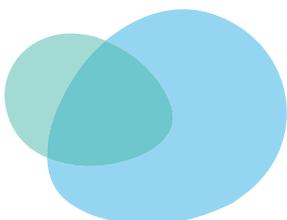
Our winter magazine shines a spotlight on some of the powerful, person-centred connections that strengthen wellbeing, build confidence, and remind people that they are valued.

Also in this edition, we highlight the importance of connecting with MSPs and officials from the Scottish Government as we approach the Scottish Parliamentary elections.

I believe that we have an obligation to help politicians understand more about the incredible impact we have and the importance of prioritising social care when making political choices.

Whoever you are connecting with, let's look out for one another this winter, and ensure that everyone feels supported and included in our communities.

Andrew Thomson
Chief Executive



Carr Gomm's Biannual Survey

Every six months, we survey the **people we support** and their key contacts to gather feedback on the services we provide. This means that we can **keep improving**.

91% of respondents said their service is working for them, and **88%** said they would recommend Carr Gomm to others.

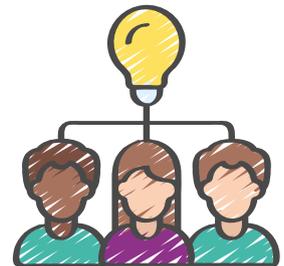


91% I am involved in decisions about my support

"The staff are wonderful people and care about me. They help me develop my life and culture."

92% The people who work with me understand my needs

"The workers accept me for who I am"



92% Staff listen to me

"I appreciate the supportive staff who treat me with respect."



92% My service is well organised and managed

“Carr Gomm staff always turning up on time. Morning and teatime routine is always completed accordingly.”

92% My support is making a positive difference in my life

“I am very grateful for all the support I receive; my main support worker has been a big part of enabling me to live the life I am living now and continues to ensure that I am safe and well. He encourages me on a regular basis to remain focused on my goals and I am fully involved in all of my support.”

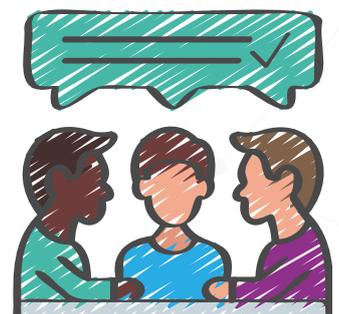


92% If I had a suggestion to help improve my service, staff would take me seriously

“Approachability. The level of care...they make everyone feel an individual.”

90% If I had a concern or complaint about my CG service, staff would take me seriously

“Empathetic, non-judgmental attitude.”



Carr Comm AGM

At this year's AGM, we recognised the amazing work of our Carr Gomm staff and the achievements of the people we support. There were special shoutouts to our National Involvement Group, retiring trustees from our Board, and to Lucy Wren, for all the work she did as Chief Executive and Co-founder of Carr Gomm.

If you'd like to join us at our next AGM, become a Company Member by scanning the QR code



[tinyurl.com/
company-member](https://tinyurl.com/company-member)

Time to Shine 2025

We are proud to announce the winners of our Time to Shine staff awards! After receiving an incredible 40 nominations across 5 categories, we are excited to share that the winners are...

Most Inspirational Individual, Innovation

*Vadim Zolotukhin,
Forth Valley*



Lucy Wren Team of the Year

*Argyll & Bute
Responders*

Involvement Midlothian Visiting Team



Partnership

*Dundee Services and
Queen Margaret
University*

To hear from our incredible winners, scan the QR code:

tinyurl.com/Time-to-shine-25



Did you know that Carr Gomm does more than social care?

In Craigmillar, Edinburgh, we run a Men's Shed for local men in the community to learn new woodworking skills and make friends. In Inverness, we have the Carr Gomm Charity Shop, where we sell preloved items to raise funds for community projects across the Highlands!

Meet the team behind the projects in our exclusive interviews below...



Tell us about yourself!

My name is Mark Carr, and I'm the project worker at Carr Gomm's Men's Shed.

Can you tell us a little bit about the Men's Shed?

The Shed is a drop-in project for men to socialise and build woodwork projects, chat or just visit for a while. We currently build benches, planters, and various other garden things.

What does a typical day look like for you?

Typical day? Every day is different! Usually, men will arrive, there will be chat and coffee, then those who want to will get active and build something or continue with a project they started.

What is your favourite part of your job?

My favourite part of the job is woodworking and making.

If you could have one superpower, what would it be?

Super power? The ability to make people tell the truth!



Tell us about yourself!

Hi, I am Ania, and I am the Carr Gomm Shop's manager, based in Inverness in the Victorian Market. I run the shop together with one staff member, Amy, and with a bunch of very nice, fun and committed volunteers.

Can you tell us a little bit about the Carr Gomm Shop?

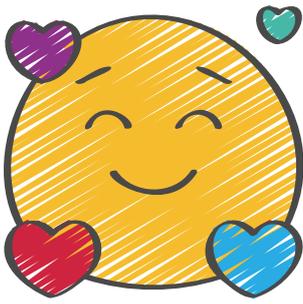
Our shop looks more like a boutique charity shop - no mess, as we always aim to have nicely laid out goods, grouped neatly together in specific sections, easy to find what anyone may be looking for. The shop staff offer a very welcoming atmosphere, you never know who walks in the door, but Scottish banter happens on a daily basis, and we love to chat to everyone who is in for it.

What does a typical day look like for you?

We get donations in, we sort, price, sell. We merchandise, change the shop around. It all depends on how busy we are. A wee secret to let you in on - there are days when it's absolutely quiet, and all the jobs are done, seriously, that is possible.....then we do a jigsaw at the counter. The customers get engaged, which makes it sometimes more fun.

What is your favourite part of your job?

Seeing my volunteers, I would say. As every day I have someone different in to help, and that comes with different tasks for each day, so my week is never boring. We have lots of fun, banter and laughter together.



Carr Comm Forums

Forums are one of the key moments in the year where people connect with each other and share valuable feedback on what they like and what can be improved.

This year's theme was **Person-centred Approaches**, which asked individuals what good support looks like to them, what helps them to feel part of their community and what is important to them.

Forums are a chance for people we support to meet new people, get creative, and be involved in their support.

Here are some of the highlights from this year's forums.





“These (forums) are great because they bring people together from different projects that would never normally meet each other, and we all have one thing in common; we all need support, and that’s a great thing.”

Rab, supported in Glasgow



Get ready for the Scottish Parliament elections

How to vote

In May, we'll have the chance to vote for who we want to represent us in the Scottish Parliament.

You must register to vote. You can do this online or by post.

You can vote in person at a local polling station, by post or by getting someone else to vote for you (a proxy vote).

If you need support with voting, speak to your Support Practitioner.

Who you will be voting for

You will have 2 votes in the election. One vote to elect a Constituency MSP (Member of the Scottish Parliament) and one to elect a Regional MSP. Every person in Scotland is represented by 1 constituency MSP and 7 regional MSPs. Each MSP is either part of a political party or independent.

Why vote

MSPs represent the people in their constituency or region in the Scottish Parliament for 5 years. In that time, they will be making decisions in the Parliament that affect you and your community. Voting is a way of telling people who make decisions about what matters to you.

Carr Gomm's hopes for the next Scottish Government

Carr Gomm is neutral regarding political parties. However, we do want politicians to understand the importance of social care as they make decisions that affect our organisation and the people we support.

We are encouraging the next Scottish Government to:

- **Invest in the adult social care workforce**
- **Recognise the importance of not-for-profit providers like Carr Gomm**
- **Improve the system so everyone can access person-centred support**

Over the next year, we will be sharing these messages and working with politicians to ensure that people who have social care in their lives are given greater priority by the next Scottish Government.

Speaking about the importance of social care with politicians

We met with Tom Arthur MSP, the Minister for Social Care and Mental Wellbeing.

He learned about our services helping people across Scotland live independently and achieve goals. We discussed the importance of good conversations among politicians, social care providers, and the public about the future of social care. We highlighted barriers to accessing quality social care and asked for his help to remove them.

Mr Arthur heard that we need to understand the importance of adult social care and ensure it receives the funding it deserves. When this happens, more people will be able to access truly person-centred support wherever they live in Scotland.



The National Involvement Group: Having our voices heard by the Scottish Government

The Scottish Government invited our National Involvement Group and anyone supported by Carr Gomm to provide feedback on important social care issues.

Members of the Involvement Group were excited to accept this offer and have been meeting regularly with key Civil Servants to share their views on current policies and explore improvements to ensure everyone in Scotland gets the right support to live well. Their input will help shape the future of social care in Scotland.

There's still time to get involved!

Are you supported by Carr Gomm?
Join these online meetings until March.

To get involved, please speak to a member of staff, your Service Manager, or Operations Manager, Becs Barker, on 01546 886285 or by email: heard@carrgomm.org



Ant's Day by the Sea

Ant absolutely loves spending time by the coast! With a little support, he's able to soak up the fresh air, stunning views, and the peaceful atmosphere of the beautiful Highlands beaches.

When the sun shines in Scotland, you have to make the most of it.

Ant and Support Practitioner Tegan did exactly that with a quick slushie stop on the way home.



Celebrating 25 years of our Muirhouse Service

In October, friends, family and staff came together to celebrate 25 years of our Muirhouse Service. We celebrated with music, dancing and a very special cake!



Muirhouse is a service comprising of 4 people we support, two flats, and 32 staff. We support people with many areas of their lives so that they live meaningful, fulfilling lives and maintain their wellbeing. All four of the people supported at Muirhouse have lived here for the full 25 years.

"The highlight of the party for me was seeing the staff, people supported, and their families all dancing and smiling together, as it is these people that make Muirhouse truly special."

Daisy, Service Manager

Dundee Winter Ball

By Michael Prevost, Support Practitioner

"In November, the Dundee Visiting Service hosted its inaugural annual winter ball. The evening was filled with enjoyment, featuring ample singing, dancing, and numerous joyful faces.

Our very own Jason Maclean and his exceptional band, The Peculiar Clan, entertained us throughout the night. Additionally, the talented Chris Tolmie served as our DJ, complemented by karaoke.

We also had several raffle prizes donated by generous local businesses and delicious food provided by Sunny's in Dundee.

We would like to thank Pauline Maclean and her daughter, who voluntarily took professional photographs of the event and all who joined in."



A huge thank you to Kerri, Chloe, Michael, Jason and Heather for their hard work and help bringing the night together.

Find out how Kevin is 'Making Memories' in Falkirk!



Support Practitioner **Kevin Reilly** has created Making Memories - a thoughtful and inclusive guide to planning person-centred outings for people who are supported in Falkirk. Inspired by conversations with colleagues who weren't sure where to start with planning days out, Kevin's guide is all about creating joyful, meaningful experiences for everyone.



Kevin shared:

"This guide was inspired by my love of supporting people to get out and about to live their lives, and the joy that comes from seeing those experiences make a difference.

I also recognise that, for some staff, planning outings can feel a bit daunting — especially when balancing different needs, preferences, and support requirements.

Making Memories is here to help. Inside, you'll find reflections on why going out matters, practical tips for planning meaningful and person-centred days out, and a collection of outing ideas that I've used myself — all tried, tested, and ready for others to use too."

Thank you, Kevin, for all your creativity and hard work!

Fundraising Success in Midlothian



In November, our Midlothian Music Group **raised over £1,300** at their very first fundraising concert!

The day was full of fantastic performances by three local bands, as well as a special set by the Midlothian Music Group, who debuted their first original song, **“Something to Believe In.”**

A huge thank you to Ross, whose hard work and organisation brought the whole event together, and to our incredible volunteer Ricky, whose support this year has been invaluable. The fundraised money will be used by the Midlothian Music Group to continue meeting weekly, connecting with one another, playing music together and learning new instruments!



Get Involved in Kiltwalk 2026!

The Kiltwalk is back for 2026 in Edinburgh, Dundee, Aberdeen and Glasgow! Every year people from across Carr Gomm don their tartan and come together to fundraise at the Kiltwalk. The money raised is used across Carr Gomm for community projects and activities that bring people together.

Why not get involved in 2026 and take on a Kiltwalk near you? Speak to your Support Practitioner to get involved, or get in touch with our friendly fundraising team at fundraising@carrgomm.org.

Our DNA:
Person-centred Impact
Wordsearch

Can you **find all the words** in the wordsearch that have been inspired by this edition of the Carr Gomm Magazine?

Words are hidden: ↓ →

M	F	I	K	I	L	T	W	A	L	K	D
U	W	G	I	M	P	A	C	T	C	S	F
S	K	M	E	M	O	R	I	E	S	V	O
I	W	C	O	M	M	U	N	I	T	Y	R
C	A	W	A	R	D	S	L	W	F	D	U
C	E	L	E	B	R	A	T	I	O	N	M
B	E	A	C	H	S	H	O	P	N	A	S
I	N	F	L	U	E	N	C	E	Y	C	E

AWARDS BEACH CELEBRATION COMMUNITY DNA FORUMS
IMPACT INFLUENCE KILTWALK MEMORIES MUSIC SHOP

Coming up
in the next issue of the Carr Gomm magazine

- **International Collaborations**
 - Carr Gomm connects with Europe!
- **Expanding our services**
 - Supporting new people in East Lothian.
- **King’s Trust Partnership**
 - Encouraging younger people to work in social care.

Look out for the next issue coming in Summer '26.



Be Featured In The Next Issue

Do you have a story or photo you want to appear in the next issue of the Carr Gomm Magazine?
 Email it to stories@carrgomm.org

