

A young girl with glasses and a pink jacket is jumping rope in a park. She is wearing a pink puffer jacket over a light blue jumpsuit, pink leggings with small black dots, and pink sneakers. She has her hair in braids and is wearing a pink face mask. In the background, there is a wooden fence, a chain-link fence, and other children playing. The sky is blue with some clouds.

Kingsway Community Connections

Annual Impact Report

2021/22



**Charity Registration
Number**
SCO30788

Company Number
SC375922

Registered Office
Block 50
Kingsway Court
Glasgow
G14 9SR

Chair
Joseph McGurk

Vice-chair
John Doyle

Company Secretary
Stephanie Coyle

Treasurer
Carine Carr-Gordon

Managing Director
Lainy Bedingfield

Auditors
Brett Nicholls Associates
Herbert House (3rd Floor)
24 Herbert Street
Glasgow
G20 6NB

Bankers
Co-operative Bank plc
PO Box 100
1 Balloon Street
Manchester
M60 4EP



Our vision for Kingsway

Our **Vision** is one of a Proud, Capable and Confident multi-cultural community. Our **Mission** is to build social capital to address inequalities and improve health & wellbeing.

Increasing people's confidence, connectedness and sense of belonging is the most effective contribution our organisation can make to addressing these inequalities and improving health and wellbeing within the community.

Personal Growth and Wellness is reflected in all aspects of our programme to encourage positive, sustainable change.



Introduction from our Chair

At the time of writing, Scotland is beginning to feel much more like itself again. We have relaxed all, if not most, of the lockdown restrictions implemented following the national emergency that was the COVID-19 pandemic. This has been a year characterised by the response of individuals, groups and communities. With the availability of widescale vaccination, there is hope that we are now in a much better position as we look to move forward and not backward.

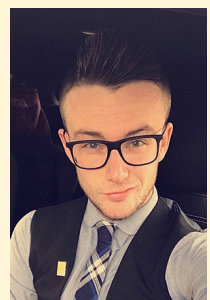
Throughout a year characterised by uncertainty, the role played by Kingsway Community Connections in supporting our residents and community has been constant, consistent, and invaluable relevant. The flexibility and agility that comes with being an independent charity, combined with a strong Board and staff team, allowed us to react quickly and flexibly in Scotstoun.

The board, but far more importantly, the staff team have shown their own resilience through this period. Maintaining morale and productivity at undiminished levels despite the challenge of remote working whilst balancing domestic and caring responsibilities as well as focusing on compliance with the regulations and ensuring personal welfare. Despite this very challenging operating environment, we have managed to take forward our organisational improvement and maintain momentum on many key projects.

I, and the eight other directors, along with the inspiring all female staff team, stand steadfast and ready for another year of fantastic community engagement.

Thank you,

Joe McGurk
Chair



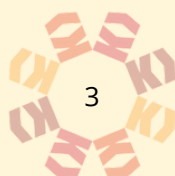
Opening Remarks

My first report as Managing Director will document another extraordinary year for Kingsway Community Connections (KCC) and the people it serves. When I took over this position in April 2021, I remember being so very proud to have the opportunity to lead this organisation. This feeling has grown as the new staff team has developed it's style and we have had the chance to deliver services once again.

While I refuse to adopt the term 'new normal' as it suggests the pre-pandemic 'normal' was acceptable for all (which it absolutely wasn't), I am hopeful that lockdowns and the worst of the utterly heart-breaking affects of the pandemic are behind us. If the past 2 plus years have taught us anything it's how much we all value human interaction. I am delighted that we have been providing opportunities for friendships to be re-established and new ones to be formed.

You will see from this new way of reporting, we are prioritising impact as told to us by the community. I hope you enjoy the pictures, quotes and stories I have included, for me, they clearly represent the work KCC has undertaken on behalf of our residents during 2021/22.

Lainy Bedingfield,
Managing Director



Goodbye!

We began the year by saying fond farewells to two long serving members of staff.

The Trustees would like to record their appreciation to **Martin Coyle**, Managing Director (retired) and **Jackie McWilliams**, former Administrator and Facilities Manager for their years of dedicated service to the organisation.



It has been a great privilege to serve this fantastic company all these years and it has been an absolute honour to work with so many great people over my time here. Like anything worthwhile in life it was never easy, there were as many challenges and setbacks as there were fantastic, life-affirming successes. So many happy days and cherished moments.

For me, the Kingsway centre has always been about bringing people together. Connecting people. That is when good and great things happen. People are stronger and more resilient when they are connected to others.

People can be so powerful and yet so fragile, they can be so good and so bad, but when they come together the energy created can be quite magical.

We are survivors. We are resilient – even more so in times of despair.

Martin Coyle, Managing Director (Retired)



Welcome!



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We were thrilled to support our former Community Development Worker, **Lainy Bedingfield**, as she successfully took on the role of **Managing Director** in January 2021.

Since then, Lainy has worked tirelessly to embed the new staff team, reconnect with our community following lockdown, and develop our Personal Growth and Wellness approach. An advocate for the community and North West Glasgow's third-sector, Lainy is truly dedicated to narrowing inequalities, challenging attitudes and practices that disadvantage communities like ours.

We were delighted to welcome **Beth Reid** as our **Programme and Development Coordinator**. Beth took up her post in April 2021 and in the past year has had a number of successes, most notably, securing joint funding from The National Lottery Community Fund and The Roberson Trust for a three-year Welfare Officer post, taking the total amount of funding she has secured in her first year to **£125,366**. Beth has also developed our youth work, piloted the Six Weeks of Wellness programme and she is an active participant in the local networks.

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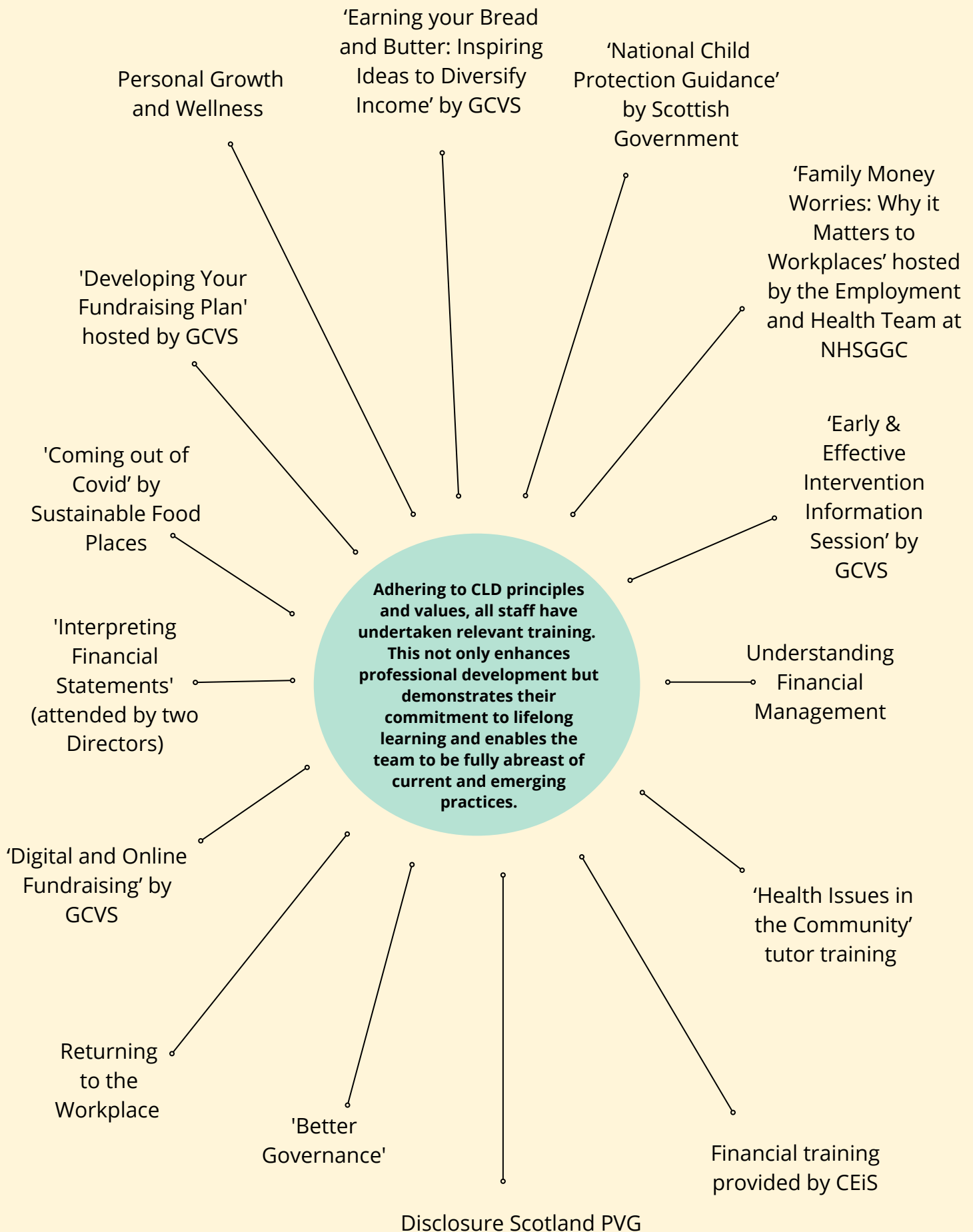
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Our new **Administrator & Facilities Manager Stephanie Coyle** joined us in April 2021. Stephanie is a fantastic addition to the team and has fast become invaluable.

Stephanie's knowledge and attention to detail is second to none. She quickly realised that we could streamline our administration saving us time and money.

She is also keen to develop her skills, the Board were happy to support Stephanie's ambitions and have fully funded her HND in Accountancy that she is currently undertaking at City of Glasgow College.





Let's go outside!

Although some restrictions had eased in Scotland during summer 2021 our Centre was still closed to groups and the public.

Adapting how we delivered activity seen us once again taking things outside. In the main this worked well and people were happy to be connecting once again. The great Scottish weather played its part as expected but as Billy Connolly said:

"In Scotland, there's no such thing as bad weather, only the wrong clothes."

We were well prepared...



"This is so much fun, I don't want to go home"



70 young people enjoyed our **outdoor holiday activity programme** during the Summer & October holidays, funded by Inspiring Scotland. This fun-filled club was a supervised, safe activity which allowed young people to re-establish friendships and connections, benefitting their physical, mental and social wellbeing.

"I love this club, it's so nice to meet new people"



"I wish everything here
was made of fruit,
even this, even this
desk, even me!"

"[my favourite thing
about this club is]
being out in the sun
and the rain"



"(I enjoy) the company, exercise and scenery"



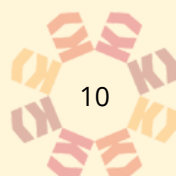
"Martin is knowledgeable about the places we go, it's interesting"

We were keen to re-establish our **summer walking programme** that had been on a hiatus since 2018. **Seven** walks were scheduled throughout August and September. Walks were not as well attended as we had anticipated. We believe this was due to a number of factors, most notably, the Centre was still closed to the public and people's anxiety around the pandemic. However, those who did attend the walks, had some lovely days out and were happy to be making connections again.

"I like the views and my fitness level is getting better"



"I feel fitter, more accomplished"





Over **60** people attended our **Harvest Festival** in the Community Garden in September. We had activities for all ages including a cycling obstacle course run by Glasgow Eco Trust, tombola fantastically organised as always by Jean, Charlotte made her famous soup and we gave away soups kits full of fresh ingredients so people could make their own at home. We recruited six volunteers in partnership with Volunteer Glasgow who asked people their experiences of Lockdown. A case study is included on page 19 of this report.



Jean and the tombola



Charlotte and delicious veggie soup

"Festival was [a] time to come together with some of my friends I had not seen. I liked it and would like to see it next year."



Glasgow Eco Trust team

"Good to be back out with the community!"



Kingsway Community Garden

Donna from the Glasgow Community Food Network (GCFN) visited the garden with **seven people** interested in discovering local food growing in March. This was part of a 'Walk to Grow' series, showing food growing in a community setting. Connections were made with our gardener, Eric, as a result.

"It was a lovely day, very relaxed and informative. Thank you!"

Our community beds were tended to by our **18** community gardeners, even through lockdown. The benefits, both mental and physical, were so great that outdoor gardening was one of the only community activities allowed throughout lockdown.

'Walk to Grow'

"Eric was great; he really knows his stuff!"



Donna from GCFN hosted an Urban Growing Day in October. This was part of a series to showcase Glasgow's many growing spaces. There were talks and tours throughout the day, demonstrating the many and varied agroecological growing methods that are good for food, and good for the climate.

Our **12** community beds were tended to by Eric and members of the community. Eric uses these beds to teach gardeners and the community how to plant and grow.



Groups we support

We were delighted to offer **Active Seniors** a home. The group hold monthly committee meetings at the Centre and we provide access to office space for their Development Worker as well as on-going support as required.

In partnership with Glasgow Clyde College, we provided another term of English for Speakers of Other Languages. **24** People attended **134** sessions of Community based **ESOL**. Delivered in a hybrid fashion, **52** sessions via zoom and **82** face to face.

Homie Development Group

We have continued to support the aspirations of the group who's aim is to develop the piece of land known locally as the Homie. The group is made up of local residents, community activists, horticulturists and friends who believe the space can be more than it currently is and with the support of KCC and the local community can be transformed.



While the Centre was closed to groups, the **Kurdish Women's Group** continued to meet via on-line platforms. When we re-opened they resumed meeting face to face. The group has **147** registered women, children and young people. The main purpose of this group is to reduce isolation and to promote integration of asylum-seeking/refugee women. Particularly Women are coming from Iraq, Syria, Turkey and Iran. The group is a peer support group without any paid sessional workers.

Our **Coffee Morning** and **Bite, Brew & a Blether** (lunch club) are volunteer-led groups aimed at reducing isolation and loneliness in our community.

The Coffee Morning takes place on a Tuesday. We have a group of around five community members who are regulars.

Bite, Brew & a Blether takes place on a Thursday and is mainly led by one of our volunteers and Board Members, Charlotte.

Charlotte cooks a two-course lunch for attendees and its another great example of our community coming together in a peer support group.



Six Weeks of Wellness

Monday 7 February – Friday 18 March



100% of attendees said they'd attend a similar session at the Centre

100 people attended
34 sessions

63% of people signed up to get out the house more

With thanks to funding from the NHS North West Health Improvement Team, we hosted six-weeks of wellbeing activities, at the Centre and further afield. It was a great chance to reconnect with the community and we learned more about what they'd like to see in the area which will help them recover from Covid-19 and lockdown.



76% of people signed up to improve their health



"For the first time I felt I could begin to disconnect from everything that has happened [experience of domestic abuse] and start to move forward."

Attendee at Mary Elizabeth McConnell Wellbeing Workshop

Six Weeks of Wellness

Monday 7 February – Friday 18 March

The most popular activities were wellbeing workshops, tai chi, Mind & Draw and walking group.



9 people attended two walks with Martin. Walks were so popular that a volunteer-led walking group has formed.

A huge **thank you** to the facilitators who provided their expertise, making the sessions engaging and encouraging the community to try something new. Thanks to Barbara (Bargo Services), Cindy (Glasgow Eco Trust), Danny (Men Matter Scotland), Frank (Glasgow Eco Trust), Gary (Tai Chi), Garry (Mind & Draw), Martin (Winter Walks), Mary (Mary Elizabeth McConnell – Wellbeing Therapist) Paul (Glasgow Eco Trust), Sheila (Aromatherapy), Stephanie (Craft Pottery Scotland), Nev (Men Matter Scotland), and Zora (Glasgow Eco Trust).

"I love the historical lessons, fun and the number of us walking [small group] helps me understand the Scottish accent."

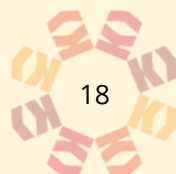
Attendee at Health Walk with Cindy



Participants told us they'd like a Women's Group with volunteering opportunities. This has **led to our Women's Group restarting**, with new members and volunteers.

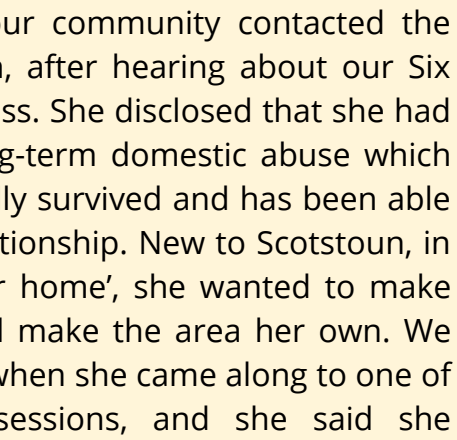
What did you like about today's session?

"The ease of confiding in the peer group."
Attendee at Men Matter Scotland

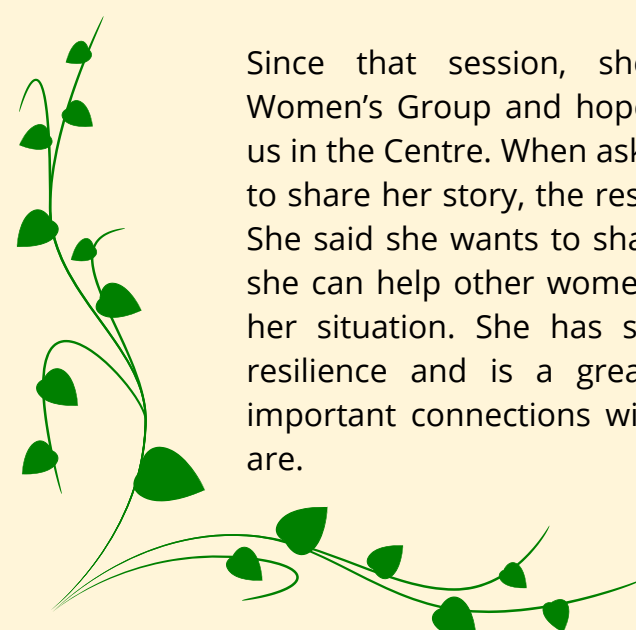


Six Weeks of Wellness

A Case Study



A member of our community contacted the Centre in March, after hearing about our Six Weeks of Wellness. She disclosed that she had experienced long-term domestic abuse which she has thankfully survived and has been able to leave the relationship. New to Scotstoun, in her wee 'forever home', she wanted to make connections and make the area her own. We were delighted when she came along to one of the wellbeing sessions, and she said she immediately felt at ease in the Centre, with the support of other women around her. She said that for the first time since leaving the abusive relationship, she felt able to open-up about what she had experienced.



Since that session, she has joined our Women's Group and hopes to volunteer with us in the Centre. When asked if she'd be happy to share her story, the resident was delighted. She said she wants to share her story so that she can help other women who have been in her situation. She has shown strength and resilience and is a great example of how important connections within the community are.

Further Highlights

In September, we were invited to present to **Glasgow People's Health Inquiry**. The aim of the inquiry was to stimulate dialogue between community groups, policy makers and politicians on health and health inequalities in light of the pandemic. We discussed the unique barriers that exist for people living in high rise flats and how this was exacerbated during Lockdown. We used two residents stories to highlight the issues faced. You can access the report, '**All in this Together? The impact of COVID-19 on Health Inequalities in Glasgow**' on Peoples Health Movement Scotland's website.



In December, we distributed over **150 gifts to young people** in the area. Thank you to the Area Partnership for funding and staff from Balfour Beatty for helping out on the day.

We took our **annual fundraiser** online for the first time in December. Reflective of the new way of working, we did an online quiz and raffle. We raised a whopping **£666.13!** Thank you to the small businesses who donated and those who bought a raffle ticket from us.



We delivered around **1250 newsletters** to local residents in May and December. Our newsletter was more important than ever as it was our only way (other than social media) to connect with the community through lockdown.

More further highlights

In September, Beth met with **local elected members**, Chris Cunningham and Eva Murray, to discuss issues raised by residents. The issues included dog fouling on grassy areas, lack of bins, the poor quality play park and lack of outdoor meeting spaces. As a result, Glasgow City Council provided additional bins we will continue to work on the other issues.

In October, we hosted Aimee from the UK Parliament who delivered a helpful workshop on the asylum and refuge process. The event was supported by the Scottish Refugee Council and our MP, Carol Monaghan. Carol helped **two attendees** with enquiries relating to their resettlement.

The Tamil Coordination Committee used our main space in November to **prepare food for around 1000 people** who came to protest the Sri Lankan president who committed war crimes back home.

Josh and The Iconic Studios team hosted a coffee morning to raise funds for KCC in November. Customers received discounted beauty treatments and took part in a raffle. A huge thank you to all involved for the impressive **£595** raised!



We are acutely aware that the pandemic has affected everyone on such an individual and personal level. With that in mind, we have asked lots of people the question:

'How has Lockdown been for you?'

People were more than happy to talk to us and we are thankful to them for allowing us to share some of their thoughts and stories with you.

"Didn't mind it much but **having to do things online more than in person bothered me** a little - more screen time."

"Just stayed at home. Didn't mind it. Watched TV and had calls with friends and family every now and then."

"Furlough and grant scheme was helpful to many but so many slipped through the net."

"I was **stuck indoors** with family all day. No exercise, no chat, no family gatherings."

"Clarity with government decision making would have been good."

"Good as **spent time with family** particularly my husband who would usually have been at work."

"**Volunteering kept me going** & got me out of the house."

"Was good to be **home and safe** with family but children got very bored and discontent at the situation."

"Bad because not being able to see family and friends. Bad because **fear** of family and friends getting Covid especially parents."

"It was a hard time. Had to do **same thing every day** so that got boring."

"Spent a lot of time cycling so that was good. Helped out in community gardens."

"It was **harder to keep connected** with people I know through the Internet or social media"

"I **volunteered**, kept busy which kept me healthy. I found ways to be **proactive and help the community.**"



Keen to learn more about how local people were impacted by lockdown, we spoke with a long-time friend of KCC, volunteer and Kingsway resident.

This is her lockdown experience.

Well, I'm 80 now and I find the stairs quite a challenge. Unfortunately, during the lockdown they [housing association] replaced the lift on the even numbers, and I am on floor 14. So that means, that when I come out, I have to walk down two flights of stairs and when I come back, I have to climb again from floor 13. So, as you see, it's added a lot of difficulty to coming in and out and that affected me quite profoundly.

I must say that for the first time in my life, I began to feel very depressed. I'm lucky because I have two boys and they stay with me, so they were the ones who started to notice, and they took good care of me. I found myself quite a few times becoming very much a recluse, even the boys were saying to me, "mum, what's wrong with you?" but how do you explain to someone... I felt like I wasn't myself.

And when the community centre [Kingsway Community Connections] closed down [due to lockdown restrictions], that was a big social thing for me, and it hit me hard. It was a real shame, because you get to be around other people. So we had a coffee morning and a lunch club once per week, those were big things and you'd look forward to that and I felt like that was taken away from me as well. So it added up and I never before in my life felt depressed.

This shows just how important connections are.

Words can't describe how happy we are to be safely delivering activities once again!



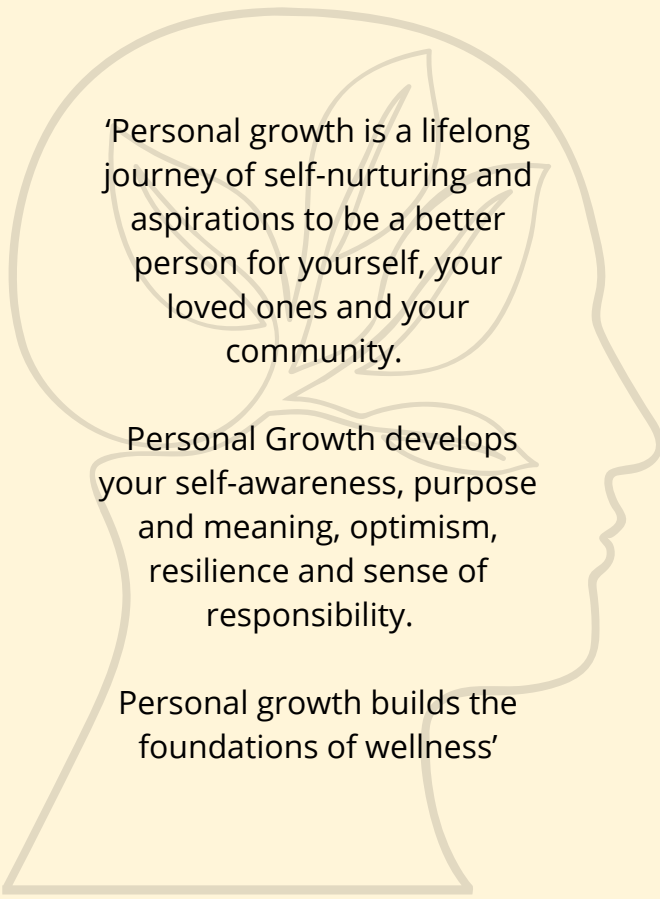
Personal Growth and Wellness

We have been developing our Personal Growth and Wellness approach since 2017 alongside our Board of Directors, staff team and community members.

Personal growth and wellness involves **creating** and **maintaining** new, healthy habits to positively impact your life.

The approach can act as a guide for individuals on their personal growth and wellness journey. It can also be used as an evaluation tool and we have successfully used it when evaluating our youth activities and Six Weeks of Wellness.

Our definition of Personal Growth and Wellness



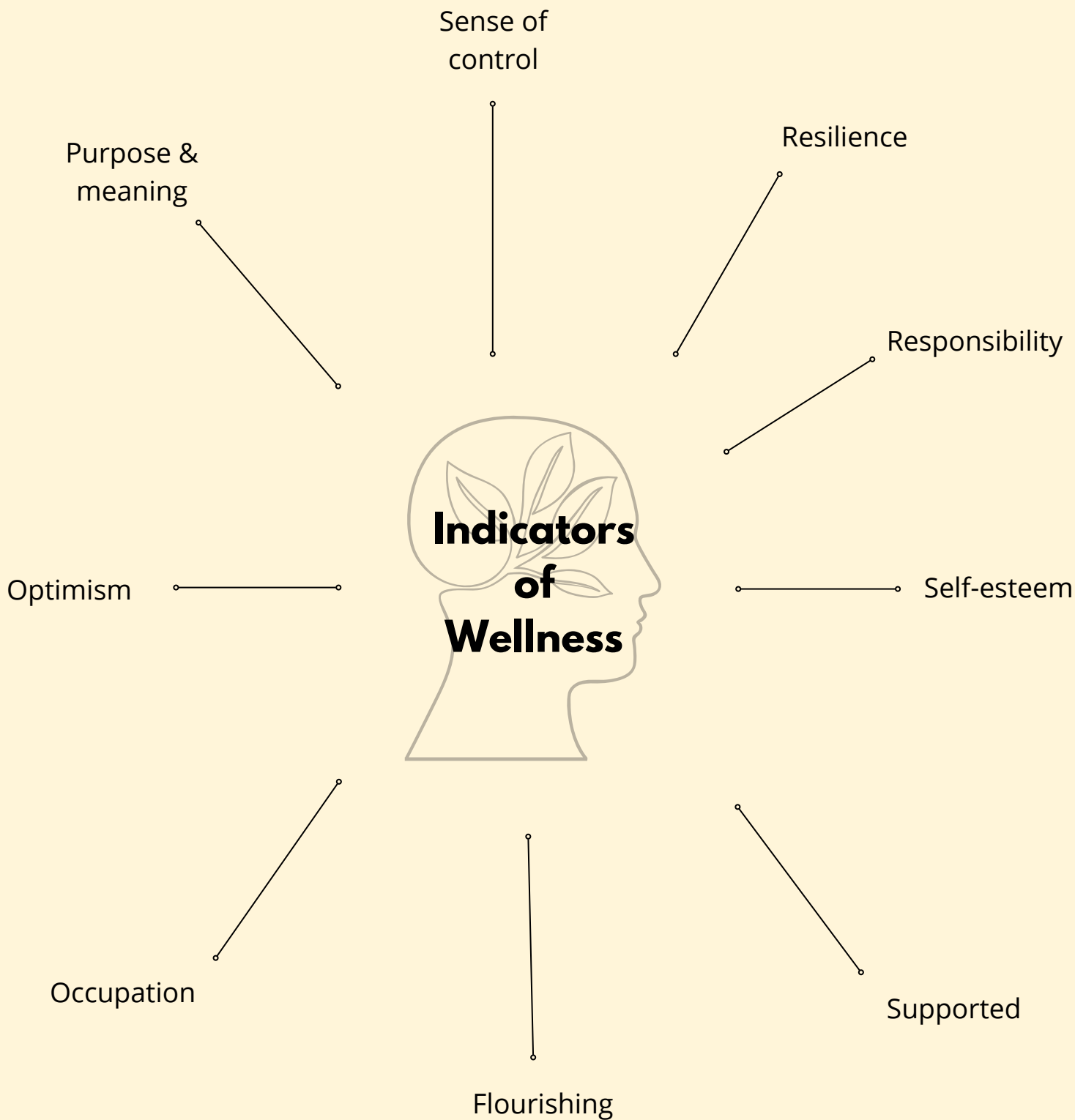
'Personal growth is a lifelong journey of self-nurturing and aspirations to be a better person for yourself, your loved ones and your community.'

Personal Growth develops your self-awareness, purpose and meaning, optimism, resilience and sense of responsibility.

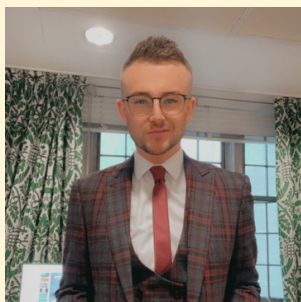
Personal growth builds the foundations of wellness'

What does personal growth and wellness mean to you?





Board of Directors



Chair - Joe is passionate about collaborative working for social equality and is keen to ensure KCC continues to meet the needs of its thriving and diverse community.

Vice Chair - John is a retired tradesman and local resident with over 15 years experience as a community activist.



Treasurer - Carine is a local resident and promotes a community-led approach to services and activities. Currently supporting the Kingsway Woman's Group and part of the Community Garden group.

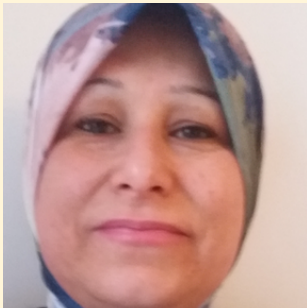
Director - After 14 years working as our Administrator, Jackie joined Police Scotland. She was keen to stay connected to the Centre and is now a Director.



Director - Charlotte is our longest serving Board member. She has been a community volunteer, activist and campaigner for over 40 years .

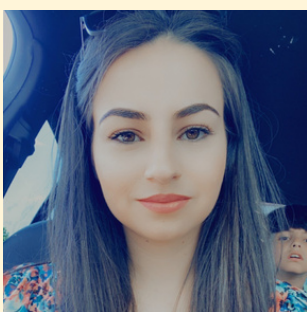


Director - Trisha is a local resident with a keen interest in the work the Centre does. She has volunteered in our parent and toddler club and community events.



Director - Gesya supports asylum seekers, refugees and families through her work with the Red Cross. She supports the Kurdish Women's Group alongside Soma.

Director - Johnny is passionate about us having enough growing spaces and food that we will never need to talk about child or food poverty in the future.



Director - Soma is active in supporting the Kurdish community in Glasgow and co-founded the Kurdish Women's Group with Gesya.

Our funders and supporters

None of the fantastic work could be achieved without the support of our funders and supporting organisations.

Thank you.

