

Community Development Team Report 2012-13

Building Community Capacity –

Community Development

Community Development involves bringing people together to discover the interests or issues that create common links, building effective and sustainable community organisations and enabling everyone to take part in them on an equal basis.

Community Development releases and builds upon the strength and assets that communities already possess. Communities will and should set their own agendas. By increasing their own cohesion and resilience, taking action themselves and making their views known, they can:

- ★ Improve the lives of those involved, promote social justice and environmental sustainability
- ★ Engage with public agencies in ways which help them to deliver their services more effectively
- ★ Build a better, more supportive environment that can prevent social issues from turning into expensive crises.



Going from Strength to Strength!

The registered charity Dumbarton and District Disabled Children's Forum recently celebrated the purchase of their new caravan at Craig Tara in Ayr! The Dumbarton and District Disabled Children's Forum was formed in 1996 to relieve the needs and to promote the benefit of children with a physical, sensory, or mental impairment within West Dunbartonshire.

Derek Barrowman, Chairperson said "The forum have been very successful in obtaining a range of funding from a range of sources over the past year ranging from Lloyds TSB Foundation Awards £2,500, Shared Scotland's Better Breaks fund £20,292 and more recently West Dunbartonshire Council's Dumbarton Common Good Fund £17,000. This funding has allowed the forum to enjoy some well earned respite which has saved 242 sessions of need from services in West Dunbartonshire and allowed the purchase of a new caravan with improved access which will benefit the local community. Without the assistance from West Dunbartonshire Council's Community Development team and other local partners and agencies from across West Dunbartonshire we would have struggled to be in existence, access much needed training and support or obtain the funding required to be in our current position".

Community Capacity building is key to the work done by the Community Development team and this forum is a great example of what can be achieved when partners and agencies from across West Dunbartonshire work together in order to support and nurture groups during their various stages of growth.

The forum also received generous donations from local businesses like the Laughing Fox, Dumbarton and Alexandria Masonic Lodges, Diamond Power Physic Church and Dalreoch Day Care.

Visual Voices (VV) Group, Clydebank

Visual Voices are a group of visually impaired (VI) people who meet together to share their experiences of being visually impaired.

Community Development's role within Visual Voices is to assist the group to identify common issues relating to visual impairment and to clarify how problems can be tackled collectively.

An example of this arose from a discussion at the group about some members' growing feelings of social isolation due to their sight loss. The group agreed that fewer opportunities were available to them to be part of a social gathering. Looking at the opportunities available to the wider community and at the barriers preventing VI people taking part in these moved the discussion to library services. The Library Service was invited to a meeting of VV and from this the idea of a Book Group for visually impaired people began to take root.



A Book Group is people meeting as a group to discuss and debate a book they have read. A Book Group for the VI will be the same except the book under discussion will be distributed as an audio book to be listened to.

Visual Voices made a successful grant application to the Voluntary Action Fund to buy audio equipment suitable for VI people. They are now planning a pilot VI Book Group in partnership with the Library Service.

International Women's Day - 8th March 2013

Community Development worked with the Ethnic Women's Group and ISARO - Social Integration Network to develop a special day to celebrate International Women's Day. CL&D's contribution included providing funding advice, sign posting, programme development and identifying providers for stalls.

Local groups were encouraged to attend and participate in the event. CL&D supported groups to advertise and promote their services - one group embraced this opportunity and successfully secured orders for clothing alterations as well as attracting a lot of interest in their activities!

The therapists and beauticians were high in demand. Hair, nails, hands and feet were all pampered or decorated with lots of smiles as a result. A jewellery workshop facilitated by a local community group was a popular and busy stall.



The theme for the day was to highlight women who have made a positive impact in the world. Participants contributed by adding their choice names and why they admired them to the talking wall, names included Mother Theresa, Margaret Thatcher and Rosa Parks along with mothers, sisters, nurses and other women who had touched lives in a positive way.

A delightful luncheon made up of foods from around the world was enjoyed by all. Many of the dishes were homemade by the Ethnic Women and included foods from Asia, Africa, Poland, Italy and Scotland. Multicultural dancers and a local singer song writer entertained the audience in the afternoon. The audience were encouraged to join in with the singing and did so with style!

Local women went away beautified, entertained and nourished in more ways than one! Lots of networking was experienced between individuals, cultures and organisations. It was certainly a good example of how active citizenship is thriving in West Dunbartonshire!





Travellers Pick Up Top Tips on Council Cookery Course

Members of the local Gypsy and Traveller community in West Dunbartonshire are one step closer to a career in the catering industry after completing a specialist course run by Community Learning and Development.

The 15 residents from the Dennystoun Forge site in Dumbarton earned certificates after passing the eight-week course on healthy living, which included learning about exciting new recipes, the use of herbs and spices to flavour food and using numeracy skills through the use of weights and measures.

The course was organised by the Council's Community Development Team and funded by the Council's Community Planning Partnership. It was led by Chef Paul Williamson, from Café Knowes in Clydebank, and was hosted at the Council's Skill Seekers training kitchens in Dumbarton.

The course was a great success and brought together different generations from within the Gypsy and Traveller community. The group learned how to cook healthy meals for their families and give them basic skills needed to apply for roles in the catering industry.

The group worked really well together and helped to inspire and encourage each other to experiment with different ingredients and recipes. Of those who chose to take the final exam, all passed with flying colours. The feedback from those taking part was really positive and many felt their newly-found skills could help them find a job in the future. Different generations are sometimes seen as living completely separate lives, but by bringing people of different ages together, we have a powerful force that can often contribute solutions to many of the challenges to be faced and strengthen our communities.

Councillor Kath Ryall, Convener of Corporate Services, said: "Across Scotland more work needs to be done to engage with the Gypsy and Traveller community. I'm very pleased to see West Dunbartonshire Council being open and supportive and also providing the sort of assistance that the community actually wants. Hopefully this catering course will give individuals the confidence to apply for related jobs and possibly begin an exciting new career".



10 of the 15 learners undertook the Health & Hygiene examination paper and all 10 passed.

They will now be accredited with certification for the Elementary Food Hygiene Certificate.

Well done!

Committee Skills Training



This training was designed by the Community Development Team for community groups who have either little or no experience of being a committee or have recently undergone changes to their committee.

Committee Skills training continues to be one of the most popular choices for groups. It can assist individuals and groups to develop a range of skills required to function efficiently and promote good practice.

This training provided the opportunity for participants to have a clearer understanding of the roles and responsibilities of committees and increase individuals' confidence in their ability to contribute to the work of the group.

This course comprised of eight participants who were representatives from four local community groups:

- ★ Dumbarton District Disabled Children's Forum
- ★ Kinship Carers
- ★ ADHD Unplugged
- ★ Linnvale Lifelong Learners

Eight participants (100%) were presented with a WDC Community Learning & Development Certificate in Committee Skills.

In addition, Adult Learner Passports were registered and the learners' accreditations were recorded.

Additional outcomes from the training were:

- ✓ Group networking – participants had the opportunity to share information about services provided and ongoing issues/challenges.
- ✓ Chance for individuals and groups to showcase achievements and success stories.
- ✓ Participants requested Committee Skills resources activity pack for their groups. The intention being to cascade this learning through activity to other members of their committee or wider group.
- ✓ Groups were familiarised with Community Development Team resources and how to access this free service.

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