Text

Description automatically generatedText

Description automatically generated with medium confidence

**Midlothian Communities Mental Health and Wellbeing Fund – Year 2 Evaluation extract with a narrative on impact**

**Background to the Funding**

As part of the [Mental Health Transition and Recovery Plan](https://www.gov.scot/publications/mental-health-scotlands-transition-recovery/), the Minister for Mental Wellbeing and Social Care announced a new Communities Mental Health and Wellbeing Fund (the Fund) for adults on in October 2021, with £15 million being made available in 2021-22. This was planned to be the first year of a two-year fund to support mental health and wellbeing in communities across Scotland to ensure delivery of the commitments set out in the [Mental Health Transition and Recovery Plan](https://www.gov.scot/publications/mental-health-scotlands-transition-recovery/). This funding came in response to evidence of mental health issues arising from the pandemic and lockdowns.

It also intended to benefit the full agenda for mental health and wellbeing in line with the four areas of key needs, set out in the Plan.

1. Providing and supporting the conditions for good mental health and wellbeing at population level.
2. Provide accessible signposting to help, advice and support.
3. Providing a rapid and easily accessible response to those in distress.
4. Ensuring safe, effective treatment and care of people living with mental illness.
5. The commitments in this Plan span these different types of need from the importance of reducing stigma, to the provision of specialist services where necessary. The fund focuses on community provision as opposed to the clinical and one to one treatment.

It reflected the importance we place on community support as part of our overall mental health infrastructure and the commitments given by Scottish Ministers to increase direct mental health investment in both the NHS Recovery Plan.

In April 2023, it was formally announced by the Cabinet Secretary for NHS Recovery, Health and Sport that £15 million for a third year of the Communities Mental Health and Wellbeing Fund for Adults would be made available for 2023/24.  In Year 3 the main focus remained the same however different approach was introduced to move on from the responding to the issues arising from the pandemic and lockdowns towards prevention and early intervention**.** This approach was put in practice via **community-based** initiatives that promote and develop good mental health and wellbeing and/or mitigate and protect against the impact of distress and mental ill health within the adult population. Currently we are in the Year 4 funding at the early stages of collecting applications and advising on projects.

**Mental health provision in Midlothian**

In Midlothian, the Community Planning Partnership set 3 main outcomes for the years 2023- 27.

These are:

* Individuals and communities have improved health and skills for learning, life and work**.**
* No child or household living in poverty**.**
* Significant progress is made towards net zero carbon emissions by 2030**.**

The Vision for Midlothian is to, by working together as a Community Planning Partnership, individuals and communities, be able to lead healthier, safer and greener lives by 2030.

All the above are closely related to good condition of mental health of the local communities and individuals within them. It is important to recognise the interdependency of the desired outcomes and the enablers such as: good mental and health and wellbeing, confidence, security, safety, sense of belonging, resilience and local capacity in a form of lasting legacy for community support and partnership working. More information about the Midlothian landscape can be found in the Partnership Plan document.

**Mental Health data for Midlothian**

* Between 10% and 25% of people attend Midlothian GP practices in relation to mental health issues (Mental Health Collaborative 2019).
* In 2018/19, 18.7% of the Midlothian population (17,110 people) were prescribed drugs for anxiety/depression/psychosis - slightly lower than Scottish average (ScotPho).
* The most deprived areas have 31% more people prescribed medication to help treat mental ill health (ScotPho 2018/19).

There has been a rise in referrals to adult social work services over the past decade in Midlothian and a significant proportion of these are mental health related referrals

**Midlothian area - demographics**

* Midlothian is the second smallest local authority in mainland Scotland but also the fastest growing.
* There are 90,600 people in Midlothian this is an increase of 16.1% from census 2011.
* Midlothian’s current population can be characterised by 19% being over 65 years of age, 63% between 15-64 years of age, and 17.8% under 14 years of age.
* The largest percentage population increase will be in those aged 75+.
* Less than 2% of Midlothian’s population is black or minority ethnic (Census).
* SIMD deprivation rating varies -the largest group is in SIMD Quintile 2.

In the Year 2 End of project evaluation, we asked: Please you are particularly proud of or that demonstrate the difference made to individuals? For the purpose of this report only one example / case study per project to demonstrate an impact.

**Evaluating and sharing impact of Year 2 – Midlothian and Nationally**

A standard set of evaluation questions were shared by Scottish Government with TSIs and completed by projects by March 2024. Some TSIs commissioned feedback on their own versions of evaluation questions. Midlothian TSI followed the questions proposed by SG to provide consistency in reporting across regions and allow comparison across the continuous years of funding.

Midlothian alongside other TSIs submitted end of year report to SG in excel format by April 2024.

Alongside quantitative and qualitative information spread across various themes and target groups. we were required to supply three examples of successful case studies. We decided to provide samples from each strand: micro, small and large projects.

The reporting included details of each funded project including target groups, the number of projects in total, and numbers of projects for each target group awarded, as well as the number of applications. It also provided information on the size of grants given out, the size of groups applying, and their geographical reach.

Qualitatively the feedback consisted of details on partnership working, the use of the administration grant and involvement of lived experience and best practice and feedback on what has worked in terms of the distribution of the fund.

SG acknowledged that some projects may be running past the reporting date however, it was vital to have a record of impact at this point in time. Only two projects in Midlothian ran over the usual length of 12 months and extended till the allowed 18 months mark. TSIs were encouraged to share examples of emerging impact as they arose, by sending to the SG Communities team and sharing these with the National Network. Midlothian TSI shared anecdotal information on local trends and ‘popularity’ of addressing needs of certain groups. It became clear that there was an underrepresentation in relation to: target group: men, LGBT+, and BAME communities. In terms of the themes, bereavement and suicide addressing projects were in minority. This had been reflected in nationally in smaller Local Authorities and the trend was showing that even though these groups and trends were in minority, they were proportional to the needs of the local population.

Local processes should be adopted to monitor individual grant awards and progress. These should aim to be light touch.

Some examples of projects with emerging impact, for example testimonies from project users ‐ To ensure quality non-tokenistic target group work, TSIs should provide some evidence of how some projects have meaningfully worked with target groups (e.g. removed barriers).

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Organisation Name | **Access to Industry** | **Small** | |
| Project Name | Access Wellbeing | Reached 24 people | Year 1, 2, 3 |
| Main Beneficiaries | Building confidence and motivation (Living Life To The Full (LLTTF) course, action planning, referring to groups and classes which focus on mental health and building strategies.) | | |
| Achievements | We are proud of all activities and the increased presence that the Wellbeing worker has built in Midlothian but 2 of the group activities have had outstanding results. Men’s Wellbeing group. Therapeutic learning.  • Weekly space to talk about any issues, their personal recovery and mental health. • Built on a gender-based approach; men feel safer discussing mental health in men only environment. • Therapeutic writing group has given a creative space and outlet. • A Showcase of works was held in September 23 and the Recovery Road booklet of works was produced. • The space is also a way for clients to address underlying literacy needs in a non-confronting way. Weekly Cookery group • Focus on budgeting and healthy eating. • Weekly participation in menu choice and planning has allowed people to explore new foods and make healthier choices. • Reducing isolation: Sharing a meal together at the end of group. • Increase wellbeing.  Case study : A Last summer, ‘A’ was referred to the Midlothian team by the DWP as he was looking for some structure in his week. ‘A’ struggles with fragile mental health and has a background of complex convictions. Due to this he was not keen to engage with any group activity but, after assessment, was happy to meet with the wellbeing worker regularly . ‘A’ attended appointments weekly, working on a disclosure letter and seeking advice on how to talk about his convictions. His appointments would coincide with a group finishing so he would chat to the group as they were leaving the venue and he then started asking the wellbeing worker what groups were coming up in the next few months. After a few conversations, ‘A’ decided that he would like to join the Cookery Group as he thought this would be very relaxed. In the first few weeks he was very quiet but soon started to settle in and at times take the lead in the kitchen. ‘A’ is diabetic so the group would always take his dietary requirements into account when they were choosing the menu for the following week, and this made him feel accepted and part of things. ‘A’ was then referred to another Access to Industry project specifically designed around learning and he joined the SQA Employability class at Edinburgh College. A class on campus was something he never thought he would be able to do. He attended regularly and has now completed his first qualification. ‘A’ has also completed the REHIS Health and Safety Certificate and First Aid, both of which were very out of his comfort zone as he had to work closely with others whom he had never met before the course. ‘A’ is doing well but his mental health continues to be a barrier. The Wellbeing worker has been supporting with some resilience support to help him manage his anxiety and manage his feelings a little more. Despite this, when he becomes overwhelmed, sometimes by taking too much on, he disengages and does not contact the wellbeing worker. This is often a huge concern. Despite this, he always turns up for the Cook Group as this is where he feels most comfortable and, as it is on a Friday, it sets him up for the weekend when he may not have any plans. | | |

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Organisation Name | **Artlink Edinburgh and Lothians** | **Small** | |
| Project Name | The Social Programme | Reached 120 | Year 1, 2, 3 |
| Main Beneficiaries | *People with learning disability.* | | |
| Achievements | Creating events which enrich a social life for learning disabled and autistic people, particularly those with complex needs is something we couldn’t do without the partnerships we’ve built. We are extremely proud of how social care and community organisations can work together to make change with relatively little financial resource and pressures on time. We’ve filled church halls, community rooms and social clubs with dancing and laughter which is surely a valuable currency of life. We hugely value our relationships with day services residential and outreach support providers with whom this work has been achieved. The social programme would not exist without the support staff who accompany people to events and help spread the word about this programme. As we look into the future of devastating public sector cuts, we hold onto those achievements and networks as ways to continue to explore a different way to provide social opportunity to those who rely on others to engage in a colourful life. We’ve asked four people if we could show you what this has meant to them. | | |

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Organisation Name | **Autism Initiatives** | **Small** | |
| Project Name | Midlothian Resilience Project | Reached 64 | Year 2, 3 |
| Main Beneficiaries | *Autism late diagnosed Midlothian residents, including LBGTQI+ community.* | | |
| Achievements | Project participant feedback: “It’s been great getting out of the house, to explore my identity, in a safe space and be able to express myself”. Project participant “I feel my mental health has improved considerably since attending the project”. Project participant “I now know the importance of rest and recovery after difficult social interactions to prevent meltdowns”. Project participant “I’ve come to realise some of the bad choices I’ve made in my life. I now know what a healthy relationship looks like, especially after hearing other women’s experiences”. | | |

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Organisation Name | **CAPS Independent Advocacy** | **Small** | |
| Project Name | Independent Individual Advocacy for the LGBTQIA+ community | Reached 8 | Year 2, 3 |
| Main Beneficiaries | *Dedicated advocacy service to LGBTQIA+ adults in Midlothian* | | |
| Achievements | We supported a young trans woman who was in the early stages of her medical transition. She initially came to our service for advocacy around housing however later disclosed that she was experiencing sexual and verbal (transphobic) abuse in the family home. She had been concerned about admitting the abuse as she was worried about housing costs if she left the family home, and the impact these costs would have upon her ability to save up for gender affirming surgeries. Safeguarding concerns were raised as there was evidence she could be considered an Adult at Risk. We supported her to have her voice heard, explore her options and make choices that were right for her during this difficult process, never leading or judging her regardless of the concerns and strong views of others involved. We continue to support her around this and other issues. We also worked with someone exploring their gender identity for the very first time. In this instance, due to the person’s family circumstances, it felt easier to speak to CAPS about these issues than a dedicated LGBTQIA+ organisation. Our LGBTQIA+ casework so far has taught us the crucial importance of confidentiality to this group, particularly crucial when it can even impact their physical safety. It was a huge privilege for us that this person came out to our advocacy worker having never spoken to anyone about their identity before. We supported them to access resources and explore options for future support, and offered support at appointments if and when the person felt they wanted to take this forward. We continue to support this person, and others in similar situations. Some have taken up this support and begun socially transitioning and others have decided against this. Our non-judgemental, non-directive approach in advocacy gives space for our advocacy partners to explore their views and wishes at their own pace and make the choices that are right for them as individuals. This person said “this is making me feel so much better… I’ve just needed a conversation about this for so long… and there was no one I could turn to…I honestly can’t thank you enough…” | | |

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Organisation Name | **Dalkeith and District CAB** | **Large** | |
| Project Name | UMatter | Reached 70 | Year 1,2,3 |
| Main Beneficiaries | *CMHWb-supported Men’s Well-being project. Men, especially those isolated and vulnerable due to trauma, being at risk of suicide, facing loss or grief, experiencing long-term illness or are disabled, living in poverty, having care responsibilities and/or being from marginalised communities (eg. migrant, BAME, minority faith, LGBTQ+).* | | |
| Achievements | We have assisted 3 vulnerable men with disabilities to move home. This involved advice/support and representation to other statutory agencies to assist them for this to happen. These guys were vulnerable and isolated by their accommodation - which was impacting on their mental health and general wellbeing. | | |

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Organisation Name | **Equal Futures** | **Micro** | |
| Project Name | Combatting social isolation and improving mental health in Midlothian & Establishing Circles of support. | Reached 15 | Year 1, 2,3 |
| Main Beneficiaries | *Address social isolation, mental wellbeing, and inequality among individuals with learning disabilities and autism, and their family carers in Midlothian, we aimed to co-produce person-centred plans tailored to their specific needs.* | | |
| Achievements | Updating the circle of resources has brought about a very positive change. Members have become more engaged with the process, which has become more accessible and inclusive following our refreshed approach. By incorporating additional communication methods and frameworks, our individuals feel more in control of the outcomes and better "heard." | | |

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Organisation Name | **Families Outside** | **Small** | |
| Project Name | Supporting families affected by imprisonment in Midlothian | Reached 49 | Year 2 |
| Main Beneficiaries | *To relieve poverty, hardship, suffering and distress among partners, children, families and dependants of persons who have suffered a legal restriction on their liberty in any penal or correctional establishment or through any means whatsoever.* | | |
| Achievements | We engaged with 18 families from Midlothian throughout the course of the fund.  The positive responses from the families we supported would probably be the main thing that we are proud of. These are families who often prefer to remain anonymous due to the stigmatisation of having a family member in prison. But to hear feedback like the following makes us feel proud of the work we do and the need that is there and which we are meeting: "You gave me space to talk and the information I needed. I wish I had known about Families Outside earlier in my Dad’s sentence, this support would have been good then." | | |

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Organisation Name | **Horizons Recovery Cafe** | **Small** | |
| Project Name | Citizens Advice Bureau Drop in Service | Reached 130 | Year 1, 2 |
| Main Beneficiaries | People recovering from substance misuse / addictions. Vulnerable and marginalised people seeking to overcome addiction and stay on the road to recovery. | | |
| Achievements | |  | | --- | | Client contacts: 130 | | Client Financial Gains: £175,000 | | Most common issues: | | Benefits – 61% | | Energy related -18% | | Debt 12% | | 52% Female clients 48% Male |   Case study: Initial assessment of needs: The client is a vulnerable person with mental health issues and some brain damage, he is 49, single, living alone in rented council housing- 2 bedrooms- he has 4 children which come to visit but do not stay with him. He is not paying for maintenance but helps his elderly mum by paying her from £80 to £150 a month as she requires towards food, toys and clothes for the grand-children, she shares their care with their mother when their mum asks. He is also providing some level of care to his mum with shopping, housework and DIY when she asks. The level of care varies from a few hours a month to a few hours a week to some daily.  Assessment post intervention: The client is actively looking for work and looking to start a small business making bagpipes or wood turning and is undergoing further training in matter to return to work soon as he refuses to have anything to do with Universal Credit. Client is currently not engaging in matter to deal with his business debt. | | |

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Organisation Name | **Into Work** | **Small** | |
| Project Name | Financial Inclusion for Personal Wellbeing | Reached 57 | Year 2 |
| Main Beneficiaries | *Work to improve life for disabled people and those with long-term health conditions to have equal opportunity to take up employment, receive fair pay, fair treatment in work, maximise their income and improve their mental health and wellbeing.* | | |
| Example of Impact | The removal of a huge weight for almost all attendees, in terms of actual financial gains but the feeling of empowerment and relief expressed by many at having been heard and made aware of missing entitlement and other benefits explained in straight forward easy ways. Enabling people to 'ask' and expect more in future. “Thank you so much for explaining things so clearly, far easier to understand than going online. The extra Universal Credit will really help me out, great help, thanks again.” | | |

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Organisation Name | **Lasswade High School PHAB Club** | **Micro** | |
| Project Name | Lasswade High School PHAB Club | Reached 30 | Year 2 |
| Main Beneficiaries | *To improve the quality of life and enhance the independence of some of Midlothian’s most vulnerable adults through lifelong learning.* | | |
| Achievements | We continue to advance education by bringing disabled people into closer association and integration with able-bodied people so that the former will have opportunities for overcoming their disabilities and the latter will benefit from such association and integration. | | |

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Organisation Name | **Lothian Veterans Centre** | **Small** | |
| Project Name | Heat, a Seat and Something to Eat | Reached 889 | Year 2 |
| Main Beneficiaries | *Armed forces veterans and their immediate family members in the Lothians.* | | |
| Achievements | This funding has helped us make a real difference to the Veterans' Community during the ongoing cost of living crisis. We combated social exclusion and loneliness, this was particularly helpful for our more elderly veterans and family members who likeminded people can shared experiences, gained professional and peer support. | | |

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Organisation Name | **Mayfield and Easthouses Development Trust** | **Large** | |
| Project Name | MAEDT Together | 115 | Year 2,3 |
| Main Beneficiaries | *The project was intended to appeal to a wide variety of people with a focus on those who would not usually buy/eat/enjoy "healthier" food options. We also had a particular focus on men, particularly younger men, who were/are experiencing low mood/isolation been affected by suicide.* | | |
| Achievements | We have built up a small, group of 4 men who have all experienced (or are currently experiencing) low mood/isolation/suicidal ideation/addictions at some point in their lives . These men are working together to build up our bike repair offering. We have trained one as a bike mechanic and the others will soon be undertaking training to qualify them as bike mechanics too. This funding has enabled us to build and support this group to work together to help us to provide a service for the wider community. The group is vulnerable because of the needs of the participants, but they are getting stronger | | |

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Organisation Name | **Midlothian Cancer Peer Support Group** | **Micro** | |
| Project Name | Midlothian Cancer Peer Support Group (MCPSG) | 80 | Year 2 |
| Main Beneficiaries | *To protect or preserve the health and wellbeing of current or former cancer patients their supporters (family and friends).* | | |
| Achievements | We are very proud that we are continuing to have our regular monthly peer support group meetings and our ‘Wee walk’. Offering a safe and supported environment to provide peer support to those impacted by cancer - either those with cancer or those supporting another person with cancer. We’ve also supported individuals at the end of their cancer journey / end of life and their relatives. | | |

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Organisation Name | **Newtongrange Development Trust** | **Micro** | |
| Project Name | Lunchtime Tai Chi | 47 | Year 1,2,3 |
| Main Beneficiaries | *Adults over 60, though there was one in 20s, 40s and some in their fifies (retired people and working people) with various health conditions – mental and physical.* | | |
| Achievements | We are proud that the class has been accessible to all and that people come with their support workers and carers can attend with the person they care for. One carer, cares for someone with Parkinson's. The carer is able to advance more quickly in Tai Chi than their spouse, with one being in the top group in the class with others at their stage. That group is taught by the Instructor and gets most of his attention. Their spouse is taught in the lower/intermediate groups (relative to if any brand-new people attend each week) and gets teaching attention from the volunteer class helper. Thus, there is a health and social activity which both carer and cared-for can attend and be themselves, at their level, and have positive interactions with others, and have a break from the potential monotony of having to always be together interacting together. We are also proud of how people in the class are able to help each other. The person in their twenties is often asked by the older attendees to demonstrate the Tai Chi moves as she remembers them better. The Instructor asks different, more capable people to stand at different corners of the class so that when people turn to the right or left they still have someone knowledgeable of the moves that they can see and follow. People within the class help each other. The Tai Chi moves help increase focus and ability and the class is a beautiful synthesis of everyone's abilities. It seems unusual and special that people of so varied abilities can be so effective at learning together. It fosters genuine personal connections which we are very proud of facilitating. There is an evidence of an improvised mental wellbeing and mutual support. | | |

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Organisation Name | **Pathhead Wednesday Group** | Micro | |
| Project Name | Wednesday Group | Reached 50 | Year 2 |
| Main Beneficiaries | *Older people between 60 and 90 years old affected by loneliness and bereavement.* | | |
| Achievements | We consistently have a busy meeting, full of smiling, engaged individuals who would otherwise have limited opportunity for social interaction. | | |

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Organisation Name | **Pathhead Men's Café** | Micro | |
| Project Name | Pathhead Men's Café | Reached 16 | Year 2,3 |
| Main Beneficiaries | *Socially excluded and isolated retired men, some affected by suicide.*  *The main beneficiaries are elder men, most who have retired; many who are in their 70s and 80s; some who are carers for chronically ill partners; some who have disabilities; lack of movement, poor sight hearing etc.* | | |
| Achievements | Our group of men attend regularly and many have said it is now a fixture of their week. Our attendees often send apologies, if they can’t make it, and or will make an extra effort to attend in part if they are otherwise busy. Some attendees have admitted that if they did not come to the cafe they might not speak to anyone outside their family during the week. Men ask after and contact attendees who have not appeared for awhile and send messages to those who are ill or in hospital. Pathhead is a rural village with a population of around 1000, but there are limited activities for anyone in the village and the immediate surrounding area. The bus service has greatly reduced since pre-lockdown and finishes early evening. It is also much more expensive than services in Edinburgh or other rural areas of Midlothian. Travel in out and back to the village is not always easy. There are no other cafés or regularly open drop-in venues in the district for men. Without the café the only weekly activity would be a trip to the pub, which doesn’t necessarily address isolation. Social exclusion and isolation is a real issue for the all elderly in Tynewater, but especially retired men, who might not make active efforts to go to meetings, activities as much as, e.g., their wives. Many men, who retired before lockdown, lost access to their social networks, which they have struggled to regain and the café helps them connect with others in the district. Many men have commented the cafe has allowed them to reconnect with old friends or make new friendships. Several members of the café group have restricted movement, hearing or sight and so other activities in the village may not always be suitable or accessible for them. The attendees actively look to include all other attendees. Several of the men in the group are long term carers and so the café allows for a short, but welcome period of respite. Much of the conversation at the cafe is focused on the village history and attendee’s memories. An effort has been made to record some of these, especially about shops along Main Street, which were much more numerous than now. This has kindled some attendee’s interest in local history, and they are keen to see other’s collections of photos etc. Some attendees are keen and successful gardeners who have helped others to grow more (especially leeks!). Several wives, partners and children of the attendees have confided that they really appreciate the café providing a social event for their partner, dad. | | |

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Organisation Name | **Penicuik Community Development Trust** | Micro | |
| Project Name | Penicuik Heritage Crafters  Tutor | Reached 20 | Year 2 |
| Main Beneficiaries | *People who suffered trauma in some form in their lives (e.g. bereavement, long term illness, covid related trauma, and mental health challenges brought about by life situations).* | | |
| Achievements | We are proud of seeing how the participants have been thrilled by what they have succeeded in making, thanks to the expert guidance of the tutor. These sessions have been a huge boost to confidence and self-esteem. | | |

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Organisation Name | **Penicuik Storehouse** | Small | |
| Project Name | Recruitment and support programme focused on inclusivity for new volunteers and peer support groups | Reached 85 | Year 1, 2, 3 |
| Main Beneficiaries | *Individuals classed as vulnerable (physical or learning disabilities, or mental health difficulties), retired people, people with specific mental health issues, parent and child, business skills students.* | | |
| Achievements | We are very happy to be able to provide a safe space for volunteers with assisted support needs. We are also proud that we are becoming known as an inclusive destination for volunteers, demonstrated by the large number of assisted needs individuals who now volunteer with us. Also, that we have managed to recruit and retain a total of 73 volunteers throughout the period of the project, in challenging times, such as the cost of living crisis. Two of our vulnerable volunteers shared their stories for our website to inspire other volunteers to join Penicuik Storehouse (summary below): J had to stop working due to chronic illness and became isolated. She started volunteering at the Storehouse and says that the staff always treat her needs as a priority. She struggles with fatigue and pain but the staff offer her a seat and time out if she needs it. What she enjoys most is meeting new people and she says that her self-esteem has returned and her confidence is being rebuilt. L started volunteering at the Storehouse to get out of the house and meet people. She says that she has gained confidence since volunteering with us. She has learned how to write café orders, and feels more confident speaking to customers when working on the till. She now likes trying new things and is currently attending a numeracy course to help deal with money at the till. | | |

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Organisation Name | **Volunteering Matters** | Large | |
| Project Name | Grandmentors Midlothian | Reached 30 | Year 2, 3 |
| Main Beneficiaries | *Young people (16-25) who are care experienced or have multiple Adverse Childhood Experiences, and mature adults 50+ (generation apart) often retired who lost sense of purpose.* | | |
| Achievements | The Grandmentors programme makes a significant difference to the lives of young people we engage with, supporting them to achieve their goals and reach their ambitions. A specific example of this in recent weeks is the success story of a young, female mentee in Midlothian who secured a job within the Health and Social Care sector. The young person attributes her success to her relationship with her Mentor who offered her bespoke help and support including around boosting confidence and self-esteem, identifying transferable skills, preparation around interview technique, and offering invaluable insights and hints and tips throughout the recruitment process. Amazingly, this accomplishment was achieved within just 8 weeks of the start of the Grandmentors mentoring relationship. A young male in Midlothian has recently seen his mentoring relationship come to a successful conclusion, after a 10-month match with a Grandmentor. This care experienced young person has now finished secondary school and is on his way to a positive destination. Mentoring provided this young person with stability during a difficult period in his life. The mentor said “We reflected on our journey together… which has seen him move from his dad’s house, to foster carers, to his sister’s house. I feel like I have given him a stable relationship throughout this disruptive time, and he says that I have made a difference to his life. His mother is now back in his life following recovery and has said to me “Thanks for having his back whilst I haven’t been able to”. These examples, just 2 of many, highlight the impact of mentoring relationships on transforming young people’s lives, creating real and tangible outcomes for the young people that we support. Furthermore, our recent Volunteer Snapshot Survey shows the impact that volunteering has on mentors: • 92% of volunteers agreed they had a sense of purpose from their role • 95% of volunteers agreed they felt they were making a real difference • 87% of volunteers agreed they had a sense of personal achievement | | |

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Organisation Name | **Women’s Aid East & Midlothian** | Large | |
| Project Name | Prescribe Nature | 111 | Year 2, 3 |
| Main Beneficiaries | *Women who had been subjected to domestic abuse.* | | |
| Achievements | WAEML has been able to create a new approach to recovery by working with women to create a healing meadow that is mutually beneficial to women and the local community and wildlife. By ensuring that staff have achieved a qualification, this creates some sustainability for this work as we can now work to embed this approach as part of our core service. | | |

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Organisation Name | **Health in Mind** | Large | |
| Project Name | Peer Connecting BME Midlothian | Reached 70 | Year 2 |
| Main Beneficiaries | *People who experience barriers to access community resources, who are isolated with a low self-esteem, depressed, facing language and cultural barriers as well as stigma - BAME communities.* | | |
| Achievements | One of the achievements that we are proud of is that one of our clients successfully applied for to volunteer with a local organisation. It is a big achievement, as she, when first met, did not believe in herself at all. She had a difficult relationship at home, with the family. She said she’d like to feel needed and like she makes the difference. We looked at several options, and finally she decided that she would like to become a volunteer at her favourite cafe. Despite the language barrier and initially feeling self-conscious, she is enjoying her role. Another person we supported, found the courage to apply for an Access Course at College after sharing her dreams and fears with us. With small steps we supported her with application and a couple of visits to the college. She is now a proud student, and she plans to continue to become a nurse. | | |

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Organisation Name | Health in Mind | Micro | |
| Project Name | Football Peer Group and Listening Space | Reached 30 | Year 2 |
| Main Beneficiaries | Football Peer Group – for people experiencing poor mental health and wellbeing. | | |
| Achievements | Peer Support Coordinator and our Recovery Justice Volunteer lead the group creating a safe space to have a coffee, ask questions and receive mental health support. Staff, volunteers and footballers/ clients got involved together on nonjudgmental terms building trust. | | |

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Organisation Name | IMPACT - Improving Midlothian Parents and Caregivers Time | Micro | |
| Project Name | Wellbeing, personal and family safety, developing new skills, growing confidence and enabling caregivers – peer- co- facilitated sessions | Reached 10 | Year 2 |
| Main Beneficiaries | Parents and Care givers impacted by poverty, cost – of living crisis, peer support to equipe people with skills and strategies and inspire them to improve their time and to sign post. Creating a community of interest and mutual support. | | |
| Achievements | Parents supported in grown confidence in socialising and normalising the challenges they face within local communities, schools and circle of friends and family. Reporting lower level on anxiety and feeling lonely. We now support two separate groups. This developed as a response to different types of need. | | |

In the year 2021 the total population in Midlothian was approx.: 90 600, where 82% equates to 74.300 adults. Total number of people who benefited directly from the project activities was 2120. This means that approximately **1 in 35 people in Midlothian** have been positively affected by the Fund in one or more ways.

The Fund aimed to reach communities through promotion, prevention or provision for good mental health and wellbeing and all of the organisations are 3rd sector, **non- profit making** legal; entities which in itself suggests good value for money. The majority of the projects went to micro and small projects with an attached requirement for capacity building.

All of the projects are either of preventative or early intervention nature. They are designed to either maintain and nurture good mental health, and connections, support or stop the deterioration of mental health problems which would otherwise require one to one, clinical interventions. The fund scoring process reflects this requirement.

Number of people reached by the Micro and Small projects was 1725. The allocation of funds to micro and small projects equated to £106,245.25 which points to the **good value for money of £61 per year per person.**

The £61 per person / per year is in the contrast to otherwise expensive one to one, clinical interventions and/or therapeutic session. The interventions mostly last up to 12 months.

Most of the projects lasted 12 months, two extended to 18 months. Three projects begun work later then planned due to volunteer recruitment, but this did not affect the declared numbers of people they ultimately reached.

**Twelve Year 2 projects were either continuity of the Year 1 funding or continued into year 3.** Midlothian TSIs has well-established process to support capacity building for micro and small projects. Capacity building as part of the fund supports the economic effectiveness of the projects. This should be viewed in the context of three themes [(Source](https://www.mentalhealth.org.uk/sites/default/files/2022-06/MHF-Investing-in-Prevention-Full-Report.pdf)):

* ‘Cost benefit analysis:
* Cost-effectiveness analysis and
* Cost-utility analysis: A form of economic evaluation. The benefits are assessed in terms of both quality and duration of life and expressed as qualityadjusted life years (QALYs)’. These three aspects can be used in future analysis.

In 2022, 6588 people died by suicide in Scotland 7625 ( [Source](https://www.mentalhealth.org.uk/about-us/news/mental-health-problems-cost-uk-economy-least-gbp-118-billion-year-new-research#:~:text=Mental%20health%20problems%20cost%20the%20UK%20economy%20at)). National data states that one death by suicide cost on average £1.46 million (March 2021) – [Source.](https://media.samaritans.org/documents/The_economic_cost_of_suicide_in_the_UK_-_web.pdf#:~:text=The%20cost%20of%20a%20suicide.%20In%202022,%20the) In Year 2 – Midlothian project funded by the CMHWF supported 16 men who expressed suicidal thoughts – via Micro grant – up to £2k.

“A growing number of studies report on the significant return on investment from parenting programmes. Methods and costs vary, but those assessed in this way cover a long-time frame and report positive returns of up to £15.80 in long-term savings for every £1 spent on delivering the programme.” ([Source](https://www.mentalhealth.org.uk/sites/default/files/2022-06/MHF-Investing-in-Prevention-Full-Report.pdf))

In Midlothian in Year 2 we funded (as shown in the case studies above) projects such as: Equal Futures (Micro fund), IMPACT (Micro Fund), Families Outside (Small Fund) - these projects benefited 74 people.

Similarly, a review of workplace interventions found savings of £5 for every £1 invested in supporting mental health. [Source](https://www.mentalhealth.org.uk/sites/default/files/2022-06/MHF-Investing-in-Prevention-Full-Report.pdf)

There are limitations regarding accessibility of current cost of particular intervention and its societal cost. For the purpose of this report, I have received the most up to date UK data on Return on Investmet (ROI) in relation to mental health and wellbeing interventions at the workplace. With a understandable caution I am keen to use the estimated figure on return on investment as it reflects the types of interventions rolled out to the local communities.

Recent updated review found that on average there is a positive ROI of around £5 for every £1 invested in mental health investment in workplace.

Allocation Figures for the Fund in Midlothian was a total of £243,981.87 provided by the Scottish Government for distribution during the 2022/23 financial year. The Fund was more than 60% oversubscribed in Year 2, with 17 proposals from 14 organisations not funded.

We distributed the total amount of funds allocated to Midlothian. Using the ROI the funded projects with a total value of £243,981.87 brought five time more in investment in mental health and wellbeing.