

GLEN URQUHART CARE PROJECT

NEWSLETTER NOVEMBER 2017

Welcome to our November newsletter, in which we will bring you up to date with all that has been happening here at GCP since our last AGM. It has been another challenging year for our staff and the Board of Trustees, but we are confident that we are putting things in place to take the Glenurquhart Centre, and all the services associated with it, forward, and to continue providing a valuable service for local people.

AGM. The AGM will be held on Wednesday 22nd November, at 2.00pm. It will take place in the Centre, and all are welcome to attend and hear what has been happening and how we are planning to go forward in the next year.

What we do

For anyone who doesn't already know, it's worth reiterating what we see as our purpose: put simply, it is to support older adults to live independently within our community, through day care and care-at-home services, and to support carers.

In the last year, we have been host to around 42 clients each week, who come along to the centre to enjoy company and chat, and get involved in some of the activities on offer. We have also been able to provide care at home for around 15 clients each week, enabling people who might otherwise have to be in hospital or other care to remain at home.

We couldn't do all this without our great team of staff. Thanks to them, for their dedication and enthusiasm, and to the community and the Friends group for all their support and assistance during the past year.

What's been happening?

It has been a challenging year for GCP, financially. We are dependent on our NHS contracts and funding to enable us to provide our core services, and this means that we have to manage our finances very carefully in order to meet our commitments.

However, we do recognise that there are other vulnerable people within our community and we have been thinking about how we might be able to extend our services,

in the longer term, to help this wider group. We also know that the current system, which is very dependent on the NHS referral process, doesn't suit everyone and so we have also been looking to expand the range of services clients can purchase from us directly. Our initial focus has been on day care and care at home, but we do hope to be able to offer additional services in the future.

Meanwhile....

- We are investing in a new car, to help with transporting our clients. Our thanks to the Friends group, and individuals, for their donations to help us do this.
- We have been assessing our staffing requirements, and staffing structure, and will be taking the first step towards a stronger organisation with the appointment of our new Business Manager.
- We have further improved our energy efficiency, since installing Solar PV panels, by increasing roof and other insulation, and seeking a 'greener' main electricity provider.
- We have made good progress with our Housing Project, which will eventually allow us to offer much needed homes for vulnerable members of our community. See the next item for further information on this project.

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Housing project

In 2016 GCP bought land adjacent to the Glenurquhart Centre, using funds obtained from the Scottish Land Fund. Our aim is to build 12 houses for elderly or vulnerable members of our community, which will be available for rent.

The past year has been busy for the housing project. We have received planning consent and have a building warrant. Our thanks go to those in the Stakeholder Group who helped with some of the critical design decisions. Work has now commenced on the main site for the new housing in the field behind the Centre, and as part of this, initial preparation of the site for the GCP Housing is being undertaken. This involves a new road alignment into the staff car park and relocation of the parking spaces, along with the installation of the sewer for the site.

We carried out some early archaeological surveys during the year, and although nothing was found on our site, another cist, and pottery, have been found on the main housing site.

The main construction works for GCP's housing will not start until late spring 2018. This is dictated by our funding applications, as we are trying to fund as much as possible through grants. We are hoping that the houses will be ready for occupation in spring / summer 2019.

We already have a waiting list for the houses, which demonstrates there is a real desire for housing like this. The GCP housing will be allocated using the agreed policy. If you, or someone you know, from the area, would like to be put on the list then please contact the Centre.

Next steps

We believe that there is real scope for GCP to expand its role in the community, and try to meet a wider range of needs for its clients. We shall continue to look into how we might achieve this, within the challenging financial constraints.

We see the Housing Project as an important step towards strengthening GCP's position and we will be working hard to ensure the scheme can be completed as soon as possible.

We will continue to assess the organisational structure to ensure we have the most appropriate team in place to deliver the service the community requires.

Membership

GCP now has a membership of around 160, but there is plenty of scope for growth. Membership is free and members will incur no financial liability. Please help us to spread the word by letting your friends and neighbours know about the Association. Membership forms can be obtained from Neil MacInnes, the Glenurquhart Centre office, or the GCP page on www.glenurquhartcentre.org.uk

Board of Trustees

We will be making changes to the GCP Board at the AGM, and as ever, we are looking for potential new Board members. If you would be at all interested in joining the Board and helping deliver the valuable services provided by GCP, please talk to David Fraser or Neil MacInnes.

www.glenurquhartcentre.org.uk

