



annual report year 08-09





providing advocacy in east dunbartonshire

CEARTAS STAFF

Gordon Thomson, CEO
Sharon Bairden, Team Leader
Susie Martin, Advocacy Worker
Aileen Peter, Resource Worker (Choose Life)
Beverley Lockhart, Advocacy Worker
Patricia Ovens, Office Coordinator
Lyndsey Macdonald, Information Worker
Gemma Graham, Advocacy Worker
Andy Williams, Advocacy Worker
Charlie Slater, Administrator
Lynn Macdonald, User Involvement Worker (Addictions)

CEARTAS BOARD

Alasdair Lightbody, Chair
Martin Brickley, Vice Chair
Allan Geekie, Treasurer
Pauline McHugh
Valerie Breck
Jennifer Roe
Charlie Murphy

MISSION STATEMENT

Ceartas provides an advocacy service for people in East Dunbartonshire irrespective of their cultural background, gender, beliefs or sexuality. We are committed to providing a service based on the principles of equality, fairness and justice. We strive to ensure that the views and opinions of individuals are heard and respected, affecting in a positive way the lives of people using the service.

We have a responsibility to provide this service, ensuring the rights of individuals are always central, while in compliance with national advocacy standards

Welcome to our 5th Annual Report. It has been another challenging year but yet again it has been a year of achievement.

Last year East Dunbartonshire Council led many of its peers by committing to the development of an enhanced advocacy service locally which Ceartas is proud to deliver. My thanks go to East Dunbartonshire Council for their continued support, I believe they deserve great credit for their foresight in designing this model. I hope that other authorities in Scotland will share East Dunbartonshire's commitment for advocacy development.

Chairman's Report

The “new” service was available and utilised by the public from the first day and it has been tremendous to see the way in which staff have coped with all the changes and have continued to ensure that the service has developed both in the numbers of people represented and in the quality of services delivered.

It has been a personal journey for me as well. In 2003, I was invited to chair an advisory group for the small Alzheimer Scotland project which at that time employed 3 staff, focussed solely on people with dementia and didn't even cover the whole of East Dunbartonshire. Now we are at the point 6 years on where we are an independent provider working with all care groups in East Dunbartonshire employing 11 staff and have a number of volunteers involved in our work.

We have come a long way and it is a time which has given me much pleasure and satisfaction however my time of leading has come to an end as unfortunately and much to my frustration, my work commitments will prevent me from devoting the time necessary to be a director of Ceartas.

The work ethic, commitment and enthusiasm of staff, volunteers and directors has been exemplary. I will certainly miss being as closely involved with Ceartas which has been an important part of my life over the last few years but of course I will maintain my membership and watch with interest the development and growth of this excellent charity.



Alasdair Lightbody



Susie Martin
Advocacy Worker



Sharon Bairden
Team Leader



Charlie Slater
Administrator



Gordon Thomson
Chief Executive Officer



Gemma Graham
Advocacy Worker



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Information Worker



Beverley Lockhart
Advocacy Worker

This year we were set with the considerable challenge of establishing the enhanced service. The task was to merge the three existing advocacy services for older people, mental health and learning disability in the area and add additional services for other care groups without interrupting the provision or availability of advocacy for potential service users. It was a tough challenge but one which we met and I think that the organisation should be proud of that achievement.

The greater range of services also demanded us to increase staffing and move premises.

I'm delighted in the way that all the change has been absorbed and the way that the organisation has continued to develop. That is a credit to the staff who have all pitched in and worked well together.

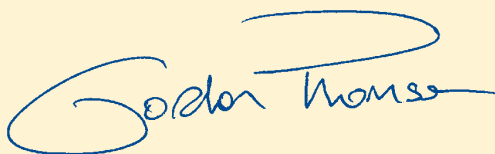
The move to our offices in McGregor House was significant. The move provided the organisation with

chief executive's report

a purpose built office base, private meeting rooms and a training room that has allowed us to continue to be creative in the group-work that we offer and has been greatly utilised. The move away from the "high street" premises has not been detrimental in regards to people accessing the service, the office suites are fully accessible and many service users are pleased with greater anonymity that a location away from the main road can provide.

Hopefully this report will give you a flavour of the work we have achieved to date. It has been encouraging to see us in a position to assist more people in a variety of different circumstances and we are determined to continue to develop our approach to ensure that advocacy in East Dunbartonshire continues to thrive.

So once again we reflect on what has been a year of change but we can also look forward to the opportunities for the service to develop further and I believe we are well placed to do just that in the coming year.



Gordon Thomson



case studies

CASE STUDY 1 Mrs A requested advocacy support to help her raise a complaint with a statutory organisation. Mrs A had already completed Stage One of the complaint and I began supporting her with Stage Two. The organisation refuted the complaint and Mrs A felt things were quite hopeless.

I suggested that if Mrs A was unhappy with the final decision of the organisation she could ask the Ombudsman to look into the complaint. Mrs A decided to take this action and with my support, Mrs A filled out some forms and gave the Ombudsman all relevant documents. Mrs A felt quite overwhelmed by the proceedings; therefore, I offered to be the main contact for all communication with the Ombudsman. Mrs A felt great relief with this and we met regularly at the Ceartas office to discuss the progress of her complaint.

The Ombudsman found that the statutory organisation had not followed normal procedure when dealing with Mrs A's complaint. This prompted the organisation to offer Mrs A what she had requested initially and carry this out to her satisfaction.

By giving Mrs A all her options and supporting her to challenge the organisation, she felt she had the strength not to accept their initial decisions.

CASE STUDY 2 Ceartas were approached by a Mental Health Officer appointed to a young woman recently detained under the Mental Health (Care & Treatment) (Scotland) Act 2003 following the birth of her baby.

The advocacy worker met with Ms X a number of times prior to the Mental Health Tribunal to discuss the process, her rights and to help her prepare for the hearing. The advocacy worker also supported Ms X to appoint a solicitor to represent her at the Tribunal. The advocacy worker also worked with Ms X to prepare a statement to read at the tribunal to support her case.

Professionals involved in Ms X's case felt that detention under the act was required to stabilise her condition. While Ms X agreed that she required treatment and support she felt that detention was excessive as she was willing to engage with the treatment and support offered.

The advocacy worker supported Ms X to put forward her views to the tribunal. After consideration the Tribunal agreed that detention was not required and that treatment on a voluntary basis was appropriate.

CASE STUDY 3 Ceartas were contacted by a carer who had removed her father from a care home due to serious concerns over the level of care he had received while placed there. The carer had made the decision to care for her father at home and was looking for the local authority to provide her the support required to allow her to do this while continuing with her part time work. She was also looking at Direct Payments as a means of providing her father with a support package which would meet all their needs.

The advocacy worker met with the gentleman at home (prior to this the advocacy worker had worked with this gentleman while he was in the care home). Although the gentleman had little insight into his condition or his care needs it was clear to the advocacy worker that he was very happy being cared for at home by his family and his wellbeing had improved dramatically compared to how he had been in the care home.

The advocacy worker was able to contact the local authority in writing on the gentleman's behalf to request that they look at the best way to provide the family with the support required to enable them to continue to work as well as care for their father in his home environment. The family contacted Ceartas shortly after the letter was received by the local authority to advise that they had agreed to put in a temporary care package allowing her to return to work part time, while she pursued the option of Direct Payments.

CASE STUDY 4 During one of the Dementia Information Support Group(s) Mr & Mrs P came to the attention of Ceartas. Mr & Mrs P became known to Ceartas after dropping into the office one day and since that meeting they have been referred to our DISG and De Café.

During their attendance at the DISG it became apparent the strain that the diagnosis of dementia was placing on Mr & Mrs P. During the Access to Services week the couple were particularly interested in the Day Care services available in East Dunbartonshire.

Since their involvement at the group the couple then went onto apply for a place at day care (for Mrs P). However, there was a long delay in the application being processed and so Ceartas made a referral for Mrs P for advocacy support. With the support of Ceartas Mrs P was able to express her need for Day Care.

Since their involvement with the DISG Mr and Mrs P are fully aware of the services available in the local area and have since accessed Day Care facilities and Homecare facilities. They have also become regular attendants at De Café.

Mr & Mrs P have been involved in all aspects of the services Ceartas provide. Their involvement in our DISG resulted in their involvement at De Café an enquiry into local services which then came to Ceartas as a referral for advocacy.

DEMENTIA INFORMATION AND SUPPORT GROUP The Dementia Information and Support Group (DISG) is celebrating its second birthday. DISG is a group run in partnership with Ceartas and the Community Mental Health team at the Woodlands Centre in Kirkintilloch.

The group provides information and support for people affected by dementia, their families and/or carers. It is a six week programme giving people an opportunity to listen to different speakers on a variety of relevant topics chosen by those in attendance.

This year the groups have covered topics including: What is a Power of Attorney?, Communication and Supporting Relationships, Access to Services and Welfare and Benefits. There have also been particularly powerful presentations from members of the Scottish Dementia Working Group, who spoke of their own experiences of dementia and their involvement with the SDWG. The group has been a huge success.

This work and our continued partnership with Kirkintilloch's Regent Gardens surgery, where staff work alongside GPs in providing information and access to advocacy, continues to demonstrate Ceartas' commitment to supporting and representing individuals with dementia. We will continue to develop this work, which is consistent with the aims of the local dementia network action plan, as we see it as vital in ensuring that more people access advocacy at the appropriate time.

groups

CEARTAS MEN'S GROUP PHOTOGRAPHY GROUP Through funding from the Choose Life campaign, Ceartas have been running a photography group for men, along with a documentary photographer from Street Level Photo Works gallery.

The photography group has brought together men from different areas in East Dunbartonshire and from different walks of life, to work together in producing a finished piece of work. The majority of men involved in the project were current and former service users of Ceartas. The work uses photographs and audio interviews with members of the public, which brings a story telling aspect to the work.

The group have focused on some areas of regeneration, including the Marina and canal in Kirkintilloch and Low Moss prison near Bishopbriggs.

The majority of the men have never used a camera or computer, and none have used sound recording equipment, but they have all risen to the challenge, have been enthused and built up confidence in their ability to try new things and achieve goals.

The work is near completion and will be exhibited, as well as being shown on the Ceartas and Street Level web sites.



Kirkintilloch Marina
Photograph taken by Ceartas Men's Photography Group

case statistics

SERVICE USER UPDATE 2008-2009

ADVOCACY

Active cases	283
New cases	233
No of issues	438

SERVICE USER BREAKDOWN

Dementia Diagnosis	39%
Older People	13%
Mental health Issues	23%
Acquired Brain Injury	1%
Learning Disability	18%
Physical Disability	6%

UNDER 16

16 - 30	9%
30 - 39	6%
40 - 59	20%
60 - 69	8%
70 - 79	19%
80 - 89	33%
90+	5%

ISSUES

Assessment/Review	10%
Abuse	13%
Care Home	11%
Hospital	5%
AWI/MHA	34%
Housing	10%
Access to Services	6%
Other	11%

REFERRERS

Service Users	9%
Carers	5%
Care Home	2%
EDC SW	59%
Health	7%
Other inc Vol Orgs	18%

OUTCOMES

Issue resolved	72%
No other action possible	18%
Referred to 3rd Party	5%
Died	5%





statement of financial activities

Including Summary Income and Expenditure Account for 15 Months to 30 June 2009

	RESTRICTED FUNDS			UNRESTRICTED FUNDS		
	Dementia Information	Choose Life	User Involvement	ROA	Advocacy	Total
INCOMING RESOURCES						
Charitable Activities	39,367	15,000	8,820	13,365	322,487	399,039
Other	-	-	-	-	3,065	3,065
Total Incoming Resources	39,367	15,000	8,820	13,365	325,552	402,104
RESOURCES EXPENDED						
Charitable Activities	20,832	10,227	6,578	13,983	268,962	320,582
Fundraising and publicity	882	-	-	364	7,199	8,445
Governance	759	759	759	759	1,522	4,558
Total Resources Expended	22,473	10,986	7,337	15,106	277,683	333,585
NET INCOME/(EXPENDITURE)	16,894	4,014	1,483	-1,741	47,869	68,519
FUNDS BROUGHT FORWARD						
FUNDS CARRIED FORWARD	16,894	4,014	1,483	-1,741	47,869	68,519
Free Funds at 30 June 2009					47,869	
Working Capital Requirement					75,000	(3 months)
Surplus/(shortfall)					-27,131	

Income during the course of the EDC Advocacy contract (2008-2013) is fixed with no contracted uplift and it is anticipated that operational costs will rise in conjunction with the increased demand in service.

In addition there will also be a requirement for investment in the infrastructure of the service in Years 3-5 of the contract e.g IT, in order for the organisation to continue to meet the needs of its' Service Users

BANKERS

BANK OF SCOTLAND
100-102 Cowgate,
Kirkintilloch
Glasgow, G66 1JQ

AUDITORS

FRENCH DUNCAN
Eldon House
74 Townhead
Kirkintilloch, G66 1NX

Ceartas will continue to review its structure and develop its practice in order to reflect the needs of its service users and ensure that the service has the appropriate reporting mechanisms and infrastructure in place to comply with national standards.

future

As part of our desire for continual improvement at Ceartas our plans include:

- To produce a three year business plan for the period 2009-2012 with identified aims in promoting and delivering advocacy
- To develop targeted campaigns alongside partner agencies to improve uptake of the service
- To review protocols with key agencies in East Dunbartonshire in order to promote a greater understanding of advocacy
- To undertake a review of user involvement practice with Ceartas
- To review our internal quality management systems so that we can improve how we measure our performance

"I valued getting together in groups and meeting people with similar problems".

"I had things explained in laymen's terms".

"I know where to go for further information".





*Kirkintilloch, Regent Gardens
Photograph taken by Ceartas Men's Photography Group*



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