

ANNUAL REPORT

2021-22



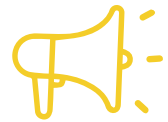
A message from our Chair

"It has again been a year of challenges, but Ceartas has continued to connect with people creatively and support them to make changes to their lives."

A year with unique challenges

"Despite the easing and eventual lifting of restrictions, there has been a significant impact on the lives of those we support; from the ongoing social care crisis, to the detrimental effect on health and wellbeing following a period of extended isolation."
Chief Officer's Report.

OUR SERVICES



Independent Advocacy



Outreach



Group Work



Information Services

CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT

Welcome to our 17th Annual Report.

It has again been a year of challenges, but Ceartas has continued to connect with people creatively and support them to make changes to their lives. Hopefully, this annual report will give you all a flavour of the work we have been involved in.

On behalf of the the Board of Trustee/Directors, I wish to thank all of the Ceartas team for the way they have provided high quality support to those needing advocacy services within East Dunbartonshire.

I would also like to thank my fellow Trustee/Directors for their continuing support and for helping to ensure that Ceartas remains a well-respected provider of quality services.

A big thank you to the many partner organisations operating within East Dunbartonshire. Working together, we have been able to help ensure that those needing support and information have been able to access relevant services where these are available. However, I am concerned that the financial constraints faced by us all are making it more difficult to access all the necessary support required by many individuals. In such circumstances, it is even more vital that people are able to access quality, relevant and accessible advocacy support when this is needed. These services also need to be provided in the ways that people prefer, and not in ways that result in services being viewed as remote or insubstantial.

Lastly, I would like to thank those organisations that have provided us with the funding necessary to support people within East Dunbartonshire. With their continued support, Ceartas will continue to explore ways in which we can provide advocacy support in East Dunbartonshire.



David Wiseman

David Wiseman
Chairperson
Ceartas Board
November 2022

CHIEF OFFICER'S REPORT



Sharon Bairden

It has been an honour to lead Ceartas over the last 12 months as we moved out of the pandemic and into a period of continued challenges and opportunities. We are grateful for the continued support of funders – East Dunbartonshire Council (EDC), Life Changes Trust, National Lottery Community Fund, Community Mental Health and Wellbeing Fund, as well as a variety of Trust Funds and individual donors who have enabled the organisation to continue supporting individuals across East Dunbartonshire.

Throughout 2021–22 we have continued to develop service delivery post pandemic. Despite the easing and eventual lifting of restrictions, there has been a significant impact on the lives of those we support; from the ongoing social care crisis to the detrimental effect on health and wellbeing following a period of extended isolation. To meet those needs, Ceartas has continued to adopt a creative approach in how we continue to connect with individuals, advocate for and with them, and to link them into their wider communities.

While all of our service delivery – from independent advocacy provision to peer-support and group work – has moved back face to face, we continue to offer a hybrid model of support via online platforms, email, telephone and WhatsApp, for those who do not feel comfortable in meeting face to face to ensure the service remains accessible. We have adapted our service delivery to meet the online requirements of statutory services, such as supporting individuals to participate in remote Mental Health Tribunals, Adult Support and Protection Case Conferences and Child Protection Meetings, by ensuring that digital participation is not a barrier. We also continue to support people to access services and supports across all partner agencies and to have their voices heard.

In our bid to strive for best practice, advocacy staff are undergoing a Professional Practice Award in Independent Advocacy (SCQF Level 7). A review of advocacy reporting for legislative casework is taking place, and regular reflective practice meetings are held across the whole team.

We have continued our long-standing partnership with Learning Network West to offer Student Social Work placements throughout the year. This year, we have partnered with East Dunbartonshire HSCP Newly Qualified Social Workers Forum to offer additional support resources to students, as well as opportunities to share good practice between social work and independent advocacy, therefore increasing referrals into our service and raising awareness of the role and benefits of independent advocacy.

Our group work has returned to face to face, and this has been received with great enthusiasm from participants:

- Dementia Cafés, our peer-support groups delivered across four locations in East Dunbartonshire.
- Dementia Voices, a group looking at issues affecting people living with dementia and their carers. This group has carried out an accessibility study of local venues; partnered with DEEP, the national dementia network to host an event around living well with dementia; and members have participated in a number of events raising awareness about dementia and Ceartas.
- Our Connect Create Change Project continues to work with individuals at risk of loneliness and isolation through a programme of health and wellbeing activities, drama, confidence building and sport, while linking them into advocacy support where required.
- A Bite and A Blether, a partnership project with East Dunbartonshire Citizens Advice Bureau, offering peer-support, access to services and support for people living with long-term conditions.
- Songs from Here, a partnership with Acorn Shed Music and The Village Storytelling Centre using interactive storytelling and song writing to encourage, support and enable people living with dementia and their carers to share stories, express themselves, and talk about issues that are important to them. This two-year project will culminate with participant's songs being recorded onto CD, and a series of celebratory events.
- Creative Writing Group, supporting participants to find their own voice, express themselves and increase in confidence.

Partnership working has played a large part of our work in the last year as we have maintained and developed partnerships across statutory and third sector agencies - OPAL (partnership between Ceartas Advocacy, Carers Link and East Dunbartonshire Citizens Advice Bureau); DEEP Network, Creative Sparks; CAB; Community Support Teams, Local Area Coordinators and East Dunbartonshire Leisure and Culture Trust. HSCP: Adult Support and Protection Committee; Autism Strategy Group; Self-Directed Support Business Group; ASP Quality and Development Partnership; Treatment and Recovery Strategic Group.

Our development review with staff and trustees is now underway with our new three-year strategy focusing on:

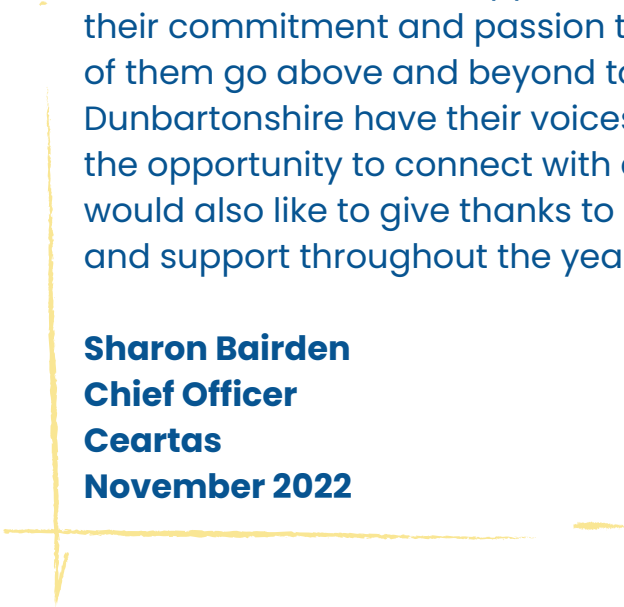
- Increasing the reach of independent advocacy services.
- Developing different models of independent advocacy.
- Improving accessibility of the service.
- Best practice in independent advocacy.
- Partnership Working.
- Improving efficiency and effectiveness of organisation.

In the year ahead, Ceartas will continue to explore ways in which we can enhance good practice, recognizing the current and future challenges in service delivery, and we will strive to ensure that the organisation is best placed to assist more people to access independent advocacy and have their voice heard in an ever-changing landscape of post pandemic changes and economic crisis.

Ceartas will continue to work as an established and reputable organisation, successful in actively engaging with individuals across East Dunbartonshire to have their voice heard.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all of the team at Ceartas for their commitment and passion to the work that we do. Each and every one of them go above and beyond to ensure that people across East Dunbartonshire have their voices heard, their rights upheld, and are given the opportunity to connect with each other and their local communities. I would also like to give thanks to our trustees for their hard work, guidance and support throughout the year.

Sharon Bairden
Chief Officer
Ceartas
November 2022





Muleya Mundemba

Advocacy Lead



Susie Martin



Jacqueline Noble

OUR ADVOCACY WORKERS

★ **2022** ★



Aileen Wright



Alex Doherty



James Christie

INDEPENDENT ADVOCACY

In 2021-2022:

Ceartas has had over 700 active independent advocacy cases across East Dunbartonshire.

Over 700 active advocacy cases.

44% supported for issues relating to Mental Health Act.

We have supported individuals subject to the Mental Health Act (44.44%) to exercise their legal right to independent advocacy. This empowers them to fully participate in their Mental health Tribunal hearings and planning for their future care and support.

42% supported for issues relating to Adults with Incapacity Act.

We have supported individuals subject to the Adults with Incapacity Act (41.80%), empowering them to participate in choices and decisions made about their future care plan.

9% supported for issues relating to Child Protection.

We have provided parental advocacy to individuals affected by Child Protection proceedings (9.29%).

Ceartas are currently working in partnership with Kelvinbank Resource Centre to establish a Collective Advocacy group for adults with learning disabilities. We are looking to expand the collective advocacy model in the upcoming year.

CASE STUDY

Below, we have outlined one of our case studies from 2022, illustrating independent advocacy, and what the outcome can look like for our advocacy partners:

Patricia* has used advocacy services and received support from Ceartas at different times over the years. The current issue was that she had been in homeless accommodation for almost a year. Patricia had been offered – and accepted – a tenancy, but three months later she still had no date of entry and was told it wasn't possible to be given a date.

Patricia contacted Ceartas to explain the issue, and the Advocacy Worker overseeing her case initially contacted housing regarding the date of entry. The Advocacy Worker was also told that work was still being undertaken and that no date could be given.


The Advocacy Worker then contacted the local Councillor, and they contacted Head of Service. As a result, Head of Service then stated that work would be completed, and Patricia would be contacted by housing within 5–7 days to sign the tenancy agreement. She was – Patricia is now residing in the property, and all of the repairs have been completed.

Outcome:

Patricia was supported to understand her rights, have her views heard throughout the process, and was supported to challenge decision makers.

**name changed.*

CASE STUDY

 AWI – Adults with Incapacity
ASP – Adult Support and Protection

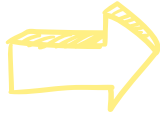
Below is an illustration of the process our independent advocacy workers go through when working with an advocacy partner.

FACTS

What is the experience of the individual?

Is the individual being heard, and if not, do they require support to do so?

What are the important facts to understand?



- Man in his early seventies admitted to hospital, deemed to be lacking capacity, having issues with dysphasia and swallowing.
- He was unable to process or retain information and was made subject to AWI procedures.
- There were also concerns surrounding financial matters, as allegations were made against a family member. An ASP investigation was being carried out.

ANALYSIS OF HUMAN RIGHTS AT STAKE

What are the human rights or issues at stake?

Can the right be restricted?

What is the justification for restricting the right?

Is the restriction on the right 'proportionate'?



- His right to liberty and privacy are at stake. These rights can be restricted.
- The justification for restrictions is the concern surrounding his capacity and lack of insight.
- The man disagreed with medical professionals regarding his ability to consume anything orally and on receiving a medical procedure such as a PEG feeding tube.
- Health and social care services questioned this and felt that he lacked insight into the severity of matters, as it could be fatal.

IDENTIFICATION OF SHARED RESPONSIBILITIES

What changes are necessary?

Who has responsibilities for helping to make the necessary changes?



- The health professionals must inform the man of his medical options, but also respect his choice if he is able to instruct.
- Advocacy provided easy-read information on the recommended medical procedure to him so that he had a better understanding of it.
- Advocacy supported the man to express his views at an AWI case conference.

REVIEW ACTIONS

Have the actions taken been recorded and reviewed and has the individual affected been involved?



- Prior to the AWI case conference taking place, the man was in agreement to have a PEG tube fitted.
- The man was then reassessed and deemed to have capacity. AWI proceedings were all lapsed.
- With advocacy support the man was fully involved in the process, and his views were taken into account at each stage.

NEW IN 2022

Throughout 2022, Ceartas welcomed 3 new members of staff to the team:



Lynne Donoghue

Group Facilitator



Eleanor Huggan

Fundraising &
Finance Assistant



James Christie

Advocacy Worker

In August of 2022, Tegan joined us from the University of Strathclyde to complete her 80-day student placement with Ceartas:



Tegan Cook

Social Work Student

Welcome to each and every new member of the team!

GROUP ACTIVITIES

In 2021-2022:

Thanks to our generous funders, we launched some new projects:

PROJECTS

DETAILS

AIMS

Connect, Create, Change

Funded by the National Lottery Community Fund and facilitated by Ceartas.

To provide peer-support group activities to those that are isolated or vulnerable.

Songs From Here - Stories and Songs

Funded by Life Changes Trust Legacy Funding and The National Lottery Community Fund, and facilitated in partnership with Ceartas, Acorn Shed Music & The Village Storytelling Centre.

To provide a space for those living with dementia to tell their stories and turn them into songs.

A Bite and A Blether

Funded by the Community Health and Wellbeing Fund, and facilitated by Ceartas in partnership with East Dunbartonshire's Citizens Advice Bureau

To provide a safe space for those that are lonely or isolated to connect with others over lunch.



East
Dunbartonshire
Voluntary Action



DEMENTIA LINK WORKER



Michelle Candlish

As part of our work to support people to live well within their communities, our Dementia Link Worker, Michelle, runs a series of groups and events across East Dunbartonshire. This includes our De Cafés, as well as Ceartas Dementia Voices, 1 of around 80 'DEEP Network' groups running across the United Kingdom.

2022 has been a busy year, with the launch of the new Songs From Here project, various community events, and our regular groups all providing us with lots of magic moments.

DE CAFÉ

At our De Cafés, those living with dementia, those worried about memory loss and their carers can come along to meet others who are in the same position. De Cafés are an opportunity to access support in a friendly environment, access information on dementia, and provides a place to socialise and share experiences with others. As of November 2022, we have **107 members** who attend our De Cafés across East Dunbartonshire. We run De Cafés in Bearsden, Bishopbriggs, Kirkintilloch & Lenzie.

DE CAFÉ

DE CAFÉ MAGIC MOMENTS



A lady brought her dad along to our 'Moving On' Wednesday walk. We invited them along to their local De Café, as they disclosed his recent diagnosis of dementia. They participated in our filming project where, after playing a game of bowls, the daughter said **"my dad came alive"**.

Bowling was something he used to do but no longer participated in. Since building relationships with the family, they now come along to our De Café regularly, and are very much enjoying it.

A picture can say a thousand words. One of our couples, just being a couple, on one of our organized walks.



Seeing joy in someone's expression when you know they are having struggles.



CONNECT, CREATE, CHANGE



Kenny Ritchie

In 2021, Ceartas launched our Connect, Create, Change (CCC) project across East Dunbartonshire, funded by the National Lottery Community Fund.

CCC delivers a wide range of peer-group activities for adults, with priority for those who use health and social care services, or whose circumstances make them vulnerable. The project's aim is to reduce loneliness, social isolation, and provide routes into advocacy.

Our Development Worker, Kenny, has set up various groups across East Dunbartonshire through 2021 and 2022. This includes health walks in areas in Auchinairn, Bearsden and Kirkintilloch; environmental art groups; confidence building courses; drama groups; football sessions; Tai Chi classes, and CrossFit classes.

Since launching in 2021, Connect, Create, Change has had **2081 attendances** as of November 2022.



CCC GALLERY



Eco Art Course



Drama Group



Wednesday Health Walk



CrossFit Group



Drama Group Performance



Monday Football Group

A BITE AND A BLETHER

Following COVID, we secured funding from the Community Mental Health and Wellbeing Fund to develop a new project in partnership with ED Citizens Advice Bureau.



Lynne Donoghue

A Bite and A Blether is a peer-support group offering a relaxed and informal setting, where people come together over lunch to socialise and access support. Here, we provide a range of activities and information to enhance people's mental health and wellbeing, with the overall aim of reducing loneliness, social isolation, and providing routes into advocacy.

Our Group Facilitator, Lynne, currently runs A Bite and A Blether in two locations across East Dunbartonshire – Kirkintilloch and Milngavie. Since its launch in June 2022, the group has seen a total of **155 attendees** across both locations as of November 2022.



OPAL: East Dunbartonshire Information Line



Ronnie Whiteside

OPAL is an information service that was developed in partnership with various organisations across East Dunbartonshire. This includes

Ceartas, East Dunbartonshire Citizens Advice Bureau, and Carers Link East Dunbartonshire.

OPAL is a free information, advice and referral service for adults (aged 16+) in East Dunbartonshire who may need a bit of help and support, but don't know how to access it.

Ronnie, previously our Marketing and Fundraising Assistant, took on a fantastic new role as OPAL Coordinator in December of 2021. Since, Ronnie has been working hard to raise awareness of OPAL within the community. Ronnie has developed a new OPAL website, a new case management system for OPAL enquiries, and an OPAL volunteering programme. Currently, there are a team of 3 fantastic Volunteer OPAL Advisers – Michelle, Michael and John.



OPAL VOLUNTEER:

★ MICHELLE ★

Volunteer OPAL Adviser

Why I decided to volunteer:

I had been out of work for some years due to mental health issues and having to become a carer for a family member. My mental health issues had made it extremely difficult for me to leave the house without a person to support me and even then, I struggled in busy public places. This really affected my confidence and made it difficult for me to return to employment, so I decided to volunteer to improve my confidence, develop my existing skills, learn new ones and to ease me back into a workplace environment. I'd volunteered with Ceartas in the past and had enjoyed my time there, so I decided to contact them again to enquire about available opportunities.

Why I enjoy volunteering with Ceartas:

I enjoy volunteering with Ceartas because it has helped to improve my confidence and helped me to feel much more comfortable with returning to work. I've also benefited from training, including dementia training and First Aid, which will help me in the future.

The volunteering role is interesting and varied, and I've learned a lot about local issues, advocacy and disabilities. The staff are all, without exception, incredibly friendly, kind and supportive and are always willing to assist me if I have any problems or would just like to know more about a particular issue or concept. Ronnie has been extremely supportive, and I always feel that nothing is too much trouble for him, and I feel confident that I can raise any issues or concerns I have and that I'll be listened to. It's the most supportive volunteering environment I've ever experienced, and I've volunteered with several organisations over the years.

FEEDBACK

We gather feedback from our service users for monitoring and evaluation purposes. We also do this to ensure that our support is tailored to, and led by, everyone that accesses our services. Here are some examples of feedback we've collected in 2022:



You meet new friends, and the food is absolutely delicious, homemade soup and lots of sandwiches and biscuits, and everything's just... thumbs up. My family like to see me going because I was in a mess before, I just sat in the living room looking at four walls, and that is not good for you. I need people in my life. All kinds of people. I just love it. That's all I'm saying!" – **B&B attendee.**



97% want their group to keep running in the future.*

97% feel that their group improved their wellbeing.*

93% feel that the group improved their relationships with others.*

**Statistics from the CCC project.*



I'm sure we'd all be rather lost without our Wed meet up. I wish it was twice a week, in fact! Doing days out as a group, for instance, would be good. – **Health walk attendee.**



“

This group is like a lifeline for me. It gives my week meaning and a focal point which I can look forward to. – **Health walk attendee.**

”

87% feel they are now more connected to other local services.*

83% feel more connected to their community.*

67% feel that they've had the opportunity to shape their group.*

**Statistics from the CCC project.*

“

I really enjoyed the group and would like to do something like this again. I have never done anything like this before but now feel confident enough.” – **Drama course attendee.**

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SOCIAL MEDIA



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THANK YOU TO



WE COULDN'T HAVE DONE IT WITHOUT YOUR GENEROUS SUPPORT



Thank you to all of our staff, service users,
volunteers and donors!



info@ceartas.org.uk



www.ceartas.org.uk



Suites 5-7, 10 Donaldson Crescent
Kirkintilloch



0141 775 0433