



north west glasgow
recovery communities

2024/2025

ANNUAL IMPACT REPORT



Scottish Charity No: SC051587

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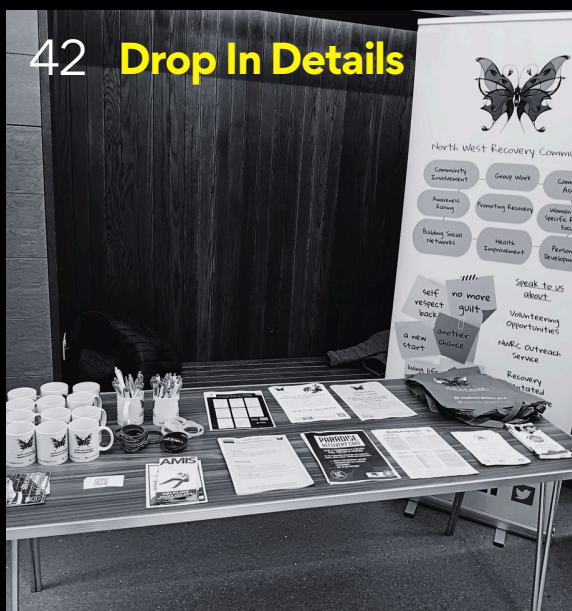
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INTRODUCTIONS

As Chair of North West Recovery Communities, I want to extend my heartfelt thanks to our incredible volunteers and dedicated team. Your passion and commitment have allowed us to grow this thriving community and forge powerful partnerships that positively impact lives.

We remain committed to a Recovery Oriented System of Care, demonstrating ambition and resilience in our work. I want to acknowledge our growing network of 100 partners— when working together, we achieve more.

A special thank you to the almost 8,000 individuals who have engaged with us through cafes and activities. And to our 27 volunteers who achieved qualifications and pursued further education or employment—all of your journeys show us that recovery is possible and happens every day.

We welcomed 330 attendees to our workforce development sessions, designed to empower those in support roles with a deeper understanding of the critical importance of recovery community engagement. By equipping them with additional knowledge and skills, we enable them to become powerful advocates for our programmes within their own organisations. This initiative not only helps combat stigma and discrimination but also addresses rights-based inequalities, fostering a culture of inclusion and support. This year, we welcomed three new board members, enhancing our governance as we prepare for growth into 2025/26. We're excited to launch our organisational values and strategy, co-produced with volunteers and stakeholders, building on our past achievements.

While we've made progress, we recognise that drug and alcohol-related harm still affects many in our communities. Thank you to everyone who keeps our doors open, offering warmth, connection, and hope without judgment. You are the heartbeat of North West Recovery Communities.

I am proud to present our third annual report since achieving charitable status, showcasing the commitment, creativity, and compassion that define our organisation.

With gratitude,
Louise Stewart
Chair, North West Recovery Communities

BRIAN MCCARTHY - PROJECT MANAGER

Another year, and the pace with which the months are passing is really something I hear more and more. I think we all feel that at times, seems there is not enough time to get all the things done but in saying that, as I look through this report and over the year's newsletters, it shows clearly what has been done. Maybe we need to find time to reflect more and see the great work being carried out by the NWRC team and all the people connected with us that make it possible to deliver our strand of the recovery oriented system of care model across the north west of Glasgow. When I think of all the personal stories involved it shows that the message "recovery is possible" is still very true and people are finding and staying in recovery, daily.

I am also well aware of the gaps and the stories that are not positive and the destruction addiction is still having on the people, families and communities across the NW sector and the city. It shows so clearly that there is a lot of work to do to give hope to those needing the message recovery is possible for you too!

I have some amount of respect for the dedication shown by the NWRC team here, our volunteers and our partners who are in my opinion making every effort to support those who we come into contact with, to show recovery is possible and that finding the right supports at the right times can make all the difference to people looking for support. I hear and see daily the impact all the organisations, services and groups available to engage with are having on those people they support. It is not exhaustive but there are different models of recovery and people do have options but they are useless if people don't know what they are, so we as organisations, services and groups must be unified and keep collaborations real and meaningful so people can navigate the journey. Together we can. ROSC does work when WE work it.

We are witness to so many stages of the addiction/recovery journey – we see first hand the challenges that people face to even just get started and also we see how people's journeys progress, so I think we are and can be a good starting point to allow those conversations to be had. We have got to be thankful to all the wide range of experiences people have and the benefit of the shared experiences as it help us all keep moving forward and coming back from setbacks. We have had our fair share of witnessing what happens with relapses and setbacks and we have lost our fair share of people through these experiences. We must pause and remember those we lose and then continue in our endeavour to keep the recovery message alive, even when we feel the hopelessness of it all. It is crucial to the people looking for a way out from their addiction and crucial to those maintaining their recovery journeys to hear these shared experiences. So just thanks for sharing people, keep on keeping on.... We all have a story that can help someone.

CONT...

The range of partners delivering group work has been great and the orgs hosting pop ups to share what they do as we build the network of pathways people can engage with has been great to see in action, the recovery orientated system of care becomes real as people go to other groups and services to build their support networks bolster their own recovery capital and start to make the lifestyle changes they want to see in their lives.

It's been some year! I'm impressed with how the North West team have progressed through the year. We have seen many of our team overcoming challenges that life and being in recovery brings, all the while delivering meaningful change and supporting people at the same time. We have acted on the ROSC principles to the best of our ability through our partnerships in action and I can only thank the people working at the orgs, services and groups we have linked in with to support the people we support, it is just not possible to make any meaningful changes for people without these partnerships, and of course for people making use of what we offer. It's good to see that when they engage the magic can still happen for them and of course what may have been only a dream for them becomes a reality as recovery becomes real for them. So, thanks one and all, its a privilege to be involved with NWRC and I will continue to play my part and thanks for you playing yours...

TAM CHAWNER - VOLUNTEER DEVELOPMENT WORKER

I feel that from our last AGM in April 24 till this year's AGM, I am seeing a recovery focused development in NWRC. The board is starting to take shape and develop ways of improving NWRC for the future all the while involving our volunteers in this process, which is exciting. We as a team continue to develop great working partnerships with other organisations in ways that will not only benefit our amazing volunteer team but the community as a whole through our ROSC model. Our 6 weekly ROSC workforce development meetings have built great relationships with many organisations that we now work with closely. The cafes and groups we run are all in partnership with other community organisations without which we wouldn't have such a full timetable each week. A massive thank you to Knightswood Community Centre & Possilpark Parish Church for hosting our Cafes & Groups each week, With You, Healing for the Heart, City Writes, Elevate, Children 1st & The Second Chance project for their continued support and attendance at our groups and helping us to promote that Recovery Is Possible through a number of different recovery pathways and to all of the organisations that have come along to the cafes to give information on their service - there is far too many to mention !!

The yearly training schedule has mainly been made up of training delivered by partner organisations. We try to base the training around topics that our volunteers may deal with in a recovery setting which gives them confidence to deal with any situation that may arise whilst offering peer to peer support and ensure they feel supported by staff at the settings. The volunteers have the chance to have their say on their role, the training they would like and their general wellbeing through supervision and at our yearly residential trip. Through this we are able to support the volunteers achieve their personal goals whether that be their personal recovery plan or return to education & employment. Sometimes this support will come with challenges and set backs for some of our volunteers but we are always there by their side to get them on the right track for them at whatever stage they are at.

In 24/25 we have strived to develop our offerings further to all in our community throughout the North West of Glasgow. Having been asked to return to Drumchapel after a couple of years away and in Partnership with G15 Thriving Places we did make a return in the form of a Recovery Group that was run for 12 weeks and was well attended. This group was developed through feedback from a Drumchapel Community Event. The survey results expressed that the community would like to see more recovery based work back in their area. The group has now ended but at the time of writing this we have just launched a SMART Recovery group facilitated by one of our SMART trained Volunteers and our hope for the future is that we can grow a SMART community in the North West of Glasgow.

Speaking of volunteers, I would to thank them for continued development of North West Recovery Communities as a whole not just at our own events but activities such as the group work programme, delivered by them in Aspire & Penumbra, their attendance at the Family Learning Hub, Humanising Healthcare conversation Cafes, Pharmacy Presentations, Residential presentations. All of this wouldn't be possible without the growth in your self development and pushing yourselves out of your comfort zone to deliver recovery in the wider community .

The year ahead for me will be about further development in not only the volunteers but for North West Recovery Communities as a whole.

We have plans to create a solid counselling pathway for not just the volunteers but the participants of the cafes - a much needed resource in our community. At the start of the 25/26 financial year we have started a Recovery Through Nature Pilot with Phoenix Futures & The Claypits Nature reserve that we hope after evaluation and funding will be able to be a permanent offering at North West Recovery Communities. We also hope to expand our office space with the addition of group space to again allow us to offer more to our communities through the week with not only groups delivered by ourselves but through volunteer development & facilitation training and other partner organisations bringing their own programs & services to our spaces that the community can access.

Yet again a big thank you to our volunteer team who make NWRC a valued recovery network in our community!

OUR VALUES

Community

We work in our community, with our community for our community. We use community spaces and partner with other community organisations to deliver the best service possible



Connection

One of the main building blocks of recovery is having connection. Whether this is with peers or services. We recognise the importance of relationship building and provide safe spaces to allow these connections to happen and flourish



Unity

Our Board, Staff Team & Volunteers work and learn together then share this learning with our partner organisations and our participants. Everybody connected with our organisation is united in sharing the message of recovery



OUR VALUES

Support

Anybody accessing our service will be provided with the support, tools, resources and encouragement to achieve their personal & recovery goals. This of course includes our staff and volunteers as well as the participants.



Empowerment

We provide our participants with the information and volunteers with the skills and confidence to enact meaningful change in their lives, recovery and in their communities

Hope

We believe Recovery Is Possible for anybody. Whether its our outreach team or volunteers at our recovery cafes, we share this message by sharing our own journeys and experiences, fostering hope to all who attend our settings



**“THE MEN’S GROUP IS REALLY
GOOD, IT HELPED ME. I MET GOOD
PEOPLE. IT’S GOOD FOR MY HEAD
BEING IN THE MOMENT. PEOPLE
HELPING & SUPPORTING EACH
OTHER”**

SK Men’s Group Participant

OUR YEAR AT A GLANCE

27

Volunteers



6844

Hours given by
volunteers at
cafes & events

1804

Training hours
completed by
Volunteers*



07

ROSC
Workforce
Development
Sessions Held

330

Attendees at
Workforce
Development
Sessions *

63

Organisations
Represented at
Workforce
Development
Sessions



207

Cafes &
Groups Ran

7948

People signed
in to all cafes &
drop ins*



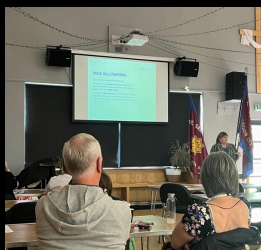
70

Outreach
Referrals **



98

Partner Orgs &
ROSC
Network



*Figure Recorded

** To date - Outreach runs Oct to Sep

VOLUNTEER MILESTONES

In the 24/25 year our volunteers continued to hit their own personal goals and milestones

**6 of our
volunteers hit
& passed their
18 month
abstinent mark**

**2 of our
volunteers
started
facilitating a
SMART recovery
group**

**1 Volunteer is
reducing down
off of their OST**

**1 of our
volunteers
continued in their
part time
employment**

**2 of our
volunteers
secured work
placements
with the SDF**

**1 of our
volunteers hit
their 6 year
abstinent
mark**

**1 of our
volunteers hit
their 3 year
abstinent mark
and 3 hit their 2
year mark**

**1 volunteer
opened a
new faith
based cafe**

**1 of our
volunteers
reduced off of
buprenorphine and is
over 6 months
abstinent**

**1 of our
volunteers
completed the
Back on the Road
program**

**We are so proud of all of our
volunteers and the amount of work
and dedication it has taken for them
to achieve not only what you see
here but lots of other personal goals
throughout the year !**

OUR VOLUNTEERS

First and foremost, our volunteers enable North West Recovery Communities to operate in our community spaces throughout the week. They are the recognised, friendly and familiar faces our participants see when they nervously enter for the first time or the comfort to somebody who knows that when they come through the door for the 30th time this year, they are in a safe space amongst people who care.

Training Tuesdays are a mandatory part of being a volunteer at NWRC. Each Tuesday the Volunteers, staff and outreach workers come together to train and learn together. We believe that the training we provide is an invaluable resource to the volunteers for their own personal development, for working within the cafes and groups, representing North West at events and would look amazing on any CVs they create for any future employment or volunteering Opportunities they undertake.

This year the training provided to our staff and volunteers has been

SDF - Understanding Drugs, Alcohol & Stigma, Drug Specific training on cocaine, benzos, Cannabis, Heroin & Alcohol, Mental Health, Trauma & Substances, Multiple Risk & Young People

The Spark - Mental Health Awareness, Coping With Change, Conflict & Resolution, Dealing With Difficult People, The CLEAR Program (5 Weeks).

NHS - Suicide Contagion, Wave after Wave

Healing for the Heart - CRIMS Model (6 Weeks)

Heatwise Workshop

Alcohol Focus Scotland - Focus Group

Penumbra Self Harm Network Training

Open Arms Therapy - CBT Training (6 weeks)

NHS - Dietician

WEA - Maths Anxiety

First Aid Skills

4 Boundaries, Safeguarding, Confidentiality & Zero Tolerance Training

On top of this mandatory training, in 24/25 a number of our volunteers put themselves forward to train to be group work facilitators. Over a number of weeks the volunteers attended the training delivered by the project manager Brian and Volunteer development worker Tam. Once competent the volunteers took this group work program into Aspire and The Penumbra ARBD Unit. Both programs were successful and even gave two of the volunteers the confidence to deliver the group work program to the woman's group at Street Soccer. We are so incredibly proud of our volunteers for their unmatched dedication to not only their own development but their continuing work in bringing the recovery message to all in our community inside and outside of our cafes.



OUR VOLUNTEERS

Where possible and to thank our volunteers for all they do for us, we had a few team building days throughout the year as well as our residential trip.

The first of the team building days was to the beautiful Loch Lomond for some cold water therapy and then back to the Kilmarnock Hall for Mindfulness & a Sound Bath followed by a delicious chippy! We couldn't have been luckier with the weather, a luck we have been blessed with for so many of our events !



In September we went to Aviemore for our residential trip. The weather wasn't just as good on this trip but it didn't dampen our spirits. Staff, board members, partner orgs staff and volunteers took part in more mindfulness & sound bath sessions along with some yoga. Then it was outdoors for fishing, cold water therapy and some beautiful hiking trips taking in the amazing scenery that Aviemore had to offer. There was never a dull moment with many hilarious attempts at the VR headset and the end of trip quiz & mocktails night. Let's just say there were some raised voices and claims of corruption . We all left Aviemore still friends with each other so all's well that end's well!

Then for Christmas is was a firm favourite with the volunteers - 2 games of bowling followed by a plate or 4 at the world buffet. All just small tokens of our appreciation for our amazing volunteer team.

JOLEEN DUNN - VOLUNTEER

"What North West for me is an anchor, the volunteering gives me structure, routine & connection. I don't know what I would do without my volunteering role. Through volunteering I have done some incredible things that I don't think I would have got the chance to ever do without it. Highlights for me are going into the Lillias Women's prison and being able to speak to women who might not have any hope and be able to tell them from my experience, there is hope! I am able to give the ladies some connection for when they are released, so they will know where they can go for support and connection. Through the group work facilitation training I received at North West, myself and Catey one of the other volunteers were able to deliver some group work to the participants of the Street 45 program at Street Soccer. This helped me massively with my own confidence and self esteem and showed me that I am able to do these things. I have been given the opportunity to be part of a new Pilot starting in 25/26 which will be a recovery through nature program. I am looking forward to this as being out in nature is where I feel I thrive and it helps my own mental health so I am really looking forward to being part of this course and this is thanks to North West that i have been given this opportunity. Throughout this year I have also taken part in a number of the Humanising Healthcare Conversation Cafes. I really enjoy going to these as I feel I am contributing to the up and coming doctors that will be the next generation that will be helping other addicts and how to treat them like humans. The other thing that has stood out for me this year is all of the team building trips we have. Aviemore and the days out. It helps us as volunteers connect with each other outside of our volunteering roles in the cafes. It helps us to bond. It is important for me to do this as my volunteer group are also my own personal support"

OUR VOLUNTEERS

The charity is funded to deliver the recovery communities in the North West of Glasgow. Naturally throughout working with the community we identify gaps in support for people outwith our own groups and settings and we are so extremely fortunate that when we propose an idea to try and plug a gap or find new ways to try and reach people in the community, our volunteers are right behind us !

The volunteers have given time outside of their NWRC cafe commitments to take part in a number of different groups and visits throughout the year to give their own lived experience and act as peer support to spread the message of recovery that may be a help to people.

Having being halted by the COVID pandemic, we returned to the Partick & Drumchapel DWP offices where every 2nd Wednesday, 2 volunteers would be on hand to give support to anybody struggling with their addiction who were attending their DWP appointments that day. The volunteers were able to pass on so much valuable information and where wanted, took outreach referrals to ensure more one to one support.

Numerous volunteers throughout the year gave up their time to share their lived experience at both the Pharmacy Presentations & Humanising Healthcare Conversation cafes. You can read more about this on pages 19 & 20.

4 volunteers went through to Edinburgh for a conversation cafe for lived experience input held by public health Scotland on Benzodiazepines. One of the volunteers spoke to the room about their own experience with them all participating in the discussions in their groups. One of our volunteers were also asked to provide their experience for this to be used for future work.

Some of the volunteers took part in a Scottish Government Stigma focus group with 2 volunteers becoming part of the bigger Scottish Government Anti Stigma Campaign working group.

They have attended Residential Rehabs in the North West Locality to share the work of North West and their own personal recovery.

A number of the ladies have attended the Lillias Centre Women's Prison. You can read more about this on page 44

The volunteers from the Knightswood Cafe have even been the tea & coffee servers at a number of the Knightswood Community Centre events outwith our own cafe.

There is never enough praise that can be given to our volunteers for their dedication!

RECOVERY STORY

GERRY'S STORY

I was brought up in Easterhouse with a respected and loving family. In my early teens I moved to a nicer neighbourhood. I started using drugs at 12 to fit in with my peers.



Drugs became my way to cope with life events. From 16 years old the drugs got harder and harder as life continued to throw things at me and I continued to use harder drugs to cope with them. My path from then on was between jails and rehabs. I tried to manage my addiction through methadone - 27 years always using drugs on top, the methadone was just the starter for the day. I lived in a constant state of fear and was totally isolated. I just felt dead inside, in fact death actually seemed like the easier option!

At Christmas time in 2021 I went into the Stabilisation unit for 6 weeks. To me, this was just a way to try and pacify everybody around me. It was Covid time, people couldn't get out to meetings, not that I would've went anyway. One day a friend in the unit physically put me in the lift to get me to the CA meeting. Something happened in that meeting !

I completed the 6 weeks. When I got home I flushed any drugs I knew I had in the house down the toilet. When I next attended the chemist I had been attending for the previous 20 years, the lady who I seen everyday asked me what I would do now? I wasn't sure what she meant. She meant what I would be doing with my time now? She suggested I do something to help people. I went back the next morning as normal and she handed me a piece of paper, it was an address, SISCO's address. I attended SISCO for the next 9-10 months. This gave me something to get up for everyday and somewhere to be other than the chemist. Through speaking to my peers at SISCO I heard about Buvidal.

GERRY'S STORY CONT...

I worked with my care manager and I transferred on to Buvidal towards the end of attending SISCO. I was still being prescribed Valium but I was free from the everyday chemist trips, I could start to get more meaningful activity into my weeks. Participating at SISCO, we attended the NWRC cafes. I attended every Friday and spoke with the staff and volunteers. I took part in the MAP group for months. I was building up a support network at the cafes and believed that I could trust this group of people. I felt comfortable and it was a safe space where people shared their own recovery stories. It took me a few weeks to pluck up the courage to ask Tam if I could become a volunteer. From then on, I attended the cafes and every training Tuesday completing training on subjects from Suicide Awareness to being part of focus groups on drug and alcohol legislation .

I was on Buvidal for 5 months. I had heard about abstinence through attending 12 step fellowship meetings. I knew this is what I wanted for myself. There was still a bit of fear about making that final step, I would delay going for my jag and be full of anxiety thinking something bad would happen if I didn't get it. I did it though and 2 weeks after that, having reduced myself down on the Valium - I threw the remaining 5 boxes of them in the bin. I was done!

At North West I got the support, the space & time to talk through my fears and concerns of letting go of something that I had loved for so long. Most of all I felt love. Having this support behind me I was confident enough to recognise what I needed to do for myself to continue my personal recovery. I reached out to a counsellor and attended CBT sessions for 9 months and I completed COSCA counselling through Elevate.

My stubbornness was one of the biggest things that kept me coming back to 12 step meetings and got me to where I am just now. I celebrated 2 years abstinent on the 24th May.

“Helping others is the best way to get well” is something I heard and learned at both SISCO and North West Recovery Communities. That is what I try to do everyday now and I am living a life beyond my wildest dreams, a life I didn't know existed after going through a 12 step program.

NWRC EDUCATES

In February we welcomed our third placement student Abbie

Abbie who is studying Education & Social Services at City of Glasgow College was with us for four weeks during her placement and spent time at all of our settings as well as completing the CLEAR program with the Spark during the five training Tuesdays during her placement.



“During my placement at North West Recovery Communities, I gained invaluable insight into the world of addiction recovery and the vital role that community support plays in the process. The staff were incredibly friendly and supportive, always willing to share their knowledge and experiences, which made me feel welcome and encouraged throughout my time here. One of the most impactful aspects of my placement was the recovery cafés, which provided a safe and inclusive space for individuals in recovery to connect, share their experiences, and support one another. Seeing firsthand how these cafés fostered a sense of belonging and purpose for attendees highlighted just how crucial peer-led support is in sustaining recovery. The dedication of the volunteers, many of whom had their own lived experiences with addiction. Their passion, commitment, and willingness to give back to others on their recovery journeys was truly admirable and inspiring. Additionally, I learned about the Recovery-Oriented System of Care (ROSC), which emphasises a person-centered, long-term approach to addiction recovery that goes beyond treatment and focuses on sustained community support and personal development. Initially, I hadn’t considered a career in addiction services as I didn’t know much about it, but after seeing and learning about the positive impact of this work and how much I enjoyed engaging with individuals on their recovery journeys, I am now definitely open to exploring opportunities within this field. Lastly would like to just say a massive thank you to Brian and the team at NWRC for this great opportunity”.

NWRC EDUCATES

Pharmacy Presentations

For a number of years North West Recovery Communities volunteers have been attending the Pharmacy Presentations. This is a session with Pharmacy students about to start work in community pharmacies. The volunteers attended the Lived Experience Seminar again in 24/25. Gillian Allison & Natalie Weir a lecturer from the University of Glasgow and the organiser of these events, shared a report from the seminar detailing that the learning the students took from the seminar included, having a greater understanding of stigma surrounding patients accessing opioid-replacement therapy, effective signposting for recovery and support communities, how pharmacists can effectively help these patients, the importance of staying up to date with local services and news affecting this patient cohort, their role in patient's recovery from substance misuse and that treating patients with kindness and respect is key to helping patients through their recovery. Some of the students also identified that some of the stigma surrounding patients can come from within their own pharmacy team and that stigma can be a barrier to a patient's recovery. These learning outcomes from our future care and treatment services is why it is so important that the lived experience voices are heard.

Creative Industries

The creative industries course from New College Lanarkshire is a main feature on our weekly timetable. Even though it runs during a normal school term time there is continued interest in the course as it offers our community something different than the cafes to bring meaningful activity to their week. The course is so well facilitated and welcoming that there is always such a great blend of people who are able to come together despite any barriers they might have. Where some of the Monday cafes and groups we have tried have not been successful, this course has brought people who had previously been very isolated to our offices every Monday morning and ensured connection and purpose at the start of their week. We love hearing what each group create each term and all of their work can be listened to on our website

“Over the last year, and based on the interests of the attendees, the group decided to tackle a podcast project, taking a lighthearted approach to nostalgia from the 80's onward with some laughs along the way. They composed original music to support the track, as well as creating supporting imagery. Each year we see progress with all group members, and this year was no different, with returning students going from strength to strength, getting more involved with new projects and technology, as well as some students moving to study Radio Broadcasting as a result of the NWRC and New College Lanarkshire partnership..

Stuart Coleman - Course Facilitator

NWRC EDUCATES

Humanising Healthcare

Throughout 24/25 staff and volunteers from North West Recovery Communities continued to support the Humanising Healthcare conversation cafes. The conversations allow the voice of lived experience to sit face to face with trainee doctors to try to shape how they will practice and treat future patients in addiction and recovery. It is also a really important opportunity for our lived experience volunteers to have their voices heard and share their stories either good or bad about how they have been treated by GPs. It can be a really cathartic experience.

“Humanising Healthcare is particularly thankful to NWRC. Their members attend conversation cafes at all of the medical schools and help ensure their success. Humanising Healthcare has been expanding since last year and we are providing guided conversation cafes to Aberdeen University, Dundee and also Glasgow. We have developed the sessions around educating the students by mixing lived experience and community members including family members who have experienced addiction from loved ones etc bringing them together to look at addiction and recovery. These sessions have been great and we have produced a few reports. What they have highlighted mostly, is that the joining together of lived experience and students has proven to be highly advantageous in learning outcomes. The North West Recovery Communities have been involved with us from the initial sessions and continue to be one of our main supports. Their input is invaluable, from providing support by sharing, to helping set up and run the sessions. The experienced facilitation at the tables from Brian and



the team has been delightful to see. You almost feel the benefit to all in the room with the very animated and lively conversations happening. We count Brian and the team as part of the recovery focused work we take to medical students. We are now on the curriculum and have employed a new co-ordinator Romy who has continued to develop strong links with NWRC. NWRC, we couldn't do this as effectively without your continuing support and encouragement, thanks and well done on another fabulous year, making it even clearer that “Recovery is possible for all”

Allan Houston - Humanising Healthcare

Humanising Healthcare recognises the consistent support and engagement from North West Recovery Communities. Since the beginning of the conversation cafe project 4 years ago, in which people with lived experience of addiction become medical educators to students in a series of guided round table conversations, NWRC have supported us with a regular commitment of time and their knowledge from experience. We are incredibly grateful for that. Their voice at the tables has helped educate the future generation of doctors to understand addiction and recovery in a new light, and that will have contributed to more compassionate and effective healthcare in the years to come.

Hugo Jobst - Humanising Healthcare

NWRC EDUCATES

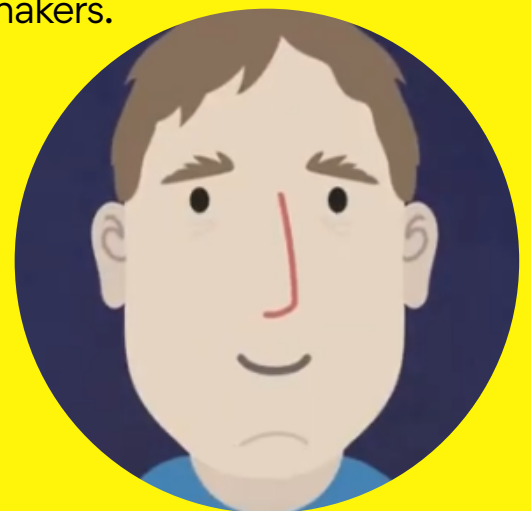
Glasgow University

Following on from the work that the staff and volunteers contributed to in 23/24 with Glasgow University “The Systematic Project” and the personas generated from all of the stories given from the group. This year, one of our volunteers Chris was selected to be the voice of the persona, Robert in the animation created to accompany the work. Chris went along to record Robert’s voice and the finished product was premiered during our February ROSC meeting. Through this work we were able to introduce Nic and her colleagues from the university to Allan & Hugo at Humanising Healthcare. This has developed into “The Conversation Cafe Project” where Nic is now creating a public information comic book that captures the lived experiences of individuals overcoming alcohol & drug dependence.

“The North West Recovery Community has an established and significant partnership with Researchers from the University of Glasgow’s School of Health and Wellbeing in 2024-25. In 2024, this collaboration has resulted in a short animation titled "Robert's Story: Juggling Short-Term Health Conditions." A Member of the recovery community provided the voice for the character of Robert. The animation was designed to reflect the collective lived experiences of a person living with multiple long term health conditions. It is a valuable educational resource for students, stakeholders and policy makers.

In 2025, Dr. Nic Dickson invited NWRC to help create, support and promote the co-production of a public information comic that addresses the realities faced by individuals in recovery. This comic is being developed with insights gathered from the Conversation Café, where recovery community members engage in discussions with medical students. The participants’ contributions are essential for a nuanced understanding of the challenges related to health and wellbeing. The idea to create the comic came from a conversation between Nic and the NWRC volunteers; we are deeply grateful for the connection we have with the organisation and look forward to sharing the Comic in the Autumn.”

**Dr Nic Dickson - Research Associate,
University of Glasgow**



Robert the persona brought to life in the animation. If you are viewing this digitally you can click Robert’s face to be taken to the animation. Or you can contact us to be sent the link to view this.

(this animation is shared with permission from the SysteMatic team, from the Universities of Glasgow and Liverpool. Please contact Dr Nic Dickson @nic.dickson@glasgow.ac.uk for more information about the project and process.)

NWRC EDUCATES

York University

“My name is Natalie Avlonitis, and I am a PhD student at the University of York. My research focusses on pathways to drug dependency and how gender and police contact impact these pathways in Glasgow. I have spent the last 11 years living on and off in Glasgow, so when I began my research, I wanted to really focus in on these experiences within the city, and to connect my research with the work that was happening on the ground to support people struggling with addiction and drug dependency. I first got in touch with the North West Recovery Communities when I was at the start of my PhD. Brian graciously gave up an hour of his time to have a phone call with me where he gave me the names of several different contacts at different organisations in Glasgow, and he also invited me to come along to the Possilpark Recovery Café on a Friday.

I have been attending the Recovery Cafe on and off now for close to a year now. When I first got to the Café, I was kindly welcomed in by Tam, who took the time to sit down with me, have a cup of tea, and talk to me about my research. We also talked about how the Recovery Cafes work and what might be beneficial for my research. I was keen to learn more about the Recovery Cafe and Tam encouraged me to stay for the day, have some lunch, and attend a MAP session and a sharing in the afternoon. Prior to coming along to the Recovery Cafe, I had only really engaged with more traditional alcohol and drug treatment services. I was amazed and slightly in awe of the way the Recovery Cafe operated. Offering a space where the primary focus, to me, seemed to be connection, felt quite radical. I really enjoyed my first day at the Recovery Café – I met lots of people, had interesting conversations, and despite initially feeling a bit nervous about being a newcomer, was really welcomed into the space.

The Recovery Cafe feels like a real showcasing of what peer led support can offer. There is an embedded sense of understanding that is shared across the space, and a palpable sense amongst the people who attend of being understood. This kind of environment can only be fostered through non-judgemental approaches, of which the Recovery Cafe offer in abundance. The Recovery Cafe are built around systems of care, support and, from what I can see, genuine friendship. People can come and socialise, drink tea and coffee, have a home cooked meal, play table tennis and listen to music – there feels to be a real privileging of hospitality and welcoming within the space. Other supportive services also attend and there are opportunities for people to engage in recovery sessions and have engage with peer support. However, there is no pressure to engage with these if people do not want to. At the Recovery Cafe, people have the agency and autonomy to decide what their recovery looks like. In this way, the Recovery Cafe feels like a truly radical space, where non-judgement, empathy, and acceptance are privileged, and anyone who shares in these beliefs is welcome to join and attend.

NWRC EDUCATES

York University Cont...

I have not only been welcomed into the Recovery Cafe, but the team have been incredibly influential in helping me build connections and have introduced me to lots of people working in the drug recovery field. The generosity of the space has also been reflected in their support of my research and their offers of assistance to help me broaden my networks in this area. Through this I have been able to make invaluable connections for my PhD. I have made connections with people from organisations such as We Are With You, SISCO, Scottish Drugs Forum and the GCA. I have also made friends from attending the Recovery Café, with people I now meet regularly for coffees, walks and catch ups. This has undoubtedly enriched not only my project, but my understanding of the work going on in Glasgow in the field of addiction and dependency and highlighted the interconnected nature of the work going on.

Coming along to the Recovery Café has been revelatory for me, both in terms of the research project and personally. It can be difficult to remain positive when so many things appear to be getting harder and more difficult for so many people, however, I always leave the café on a Friday with a sense of optimism and positivity. In a time when our senses of community are continually under threat, the Recovery Café feels to me like an amazing example of community building. The way the space is set up and operates provides a welcoming sense of community and togetherness that could serve as an example for broader community building efforts that can extend beyond the recovery community. I hope I will be able to continue attending long after the project has ended.”

Other Educational Presentations

Throughout the 24/25 year NWRC also delivered presentations to a number of organisations and services. Brian spoke to the new workers in the North West Alcohol & Drug Recovery Service Access Team, giving them information on different recovery models and the different organisations that support these models and use this learning when working with their supported people.

We were asked to deliver training the team at the North West Foodbank as they wanted to ensure they knew how best to support anybody they supported at the foodbank suffering from addiction.

Brian also attended a session with students from Glasgow University who were part of a project called Community Diagnosis, where they were learning about the population served by the Broomhill GP Practice as well as the social detriments of Health and were able to quiz Brian on the work of NWRC in the community and why it's so important!

RECOVERY STORY

JOHN'S STORY

I was caught up in active addiction for over 40 years of my life, using different substances throughout those years until just after the pandemic 2022, when I had overdosed multiple times in such a short space of time and I realised that I had to do something to change my life and my circumstances or I was going to die.



I sought support from my ADRS worker who told me about a recovery café being held at St. Marks Church in Drumchapel. I attended the café and met up with a NWRC outreach worker who spent time listening to my situation and contacted the Glasgow Crisis Centre and supported me to an assessment there. I was admitted after a short period of time and was detoxed from street Valium and left after three weeks on 120mls of methadone and stable.

I was supported by the outreach worker to access We Are With You who supported me by doing group work sessions and one to one work and all the while attending NWRC Cafes, building up a support network and getting to know people in recovery. These days were difficult due to being shut down emotionally, highly anxious and not knowing how to communicate with people.

I was encouraged to keep attending the recovery cafés and asked if I could start to volunteer with the NWRC Volunteer team. I was really apprehensive about it as I struggled with confidence, low self-esteem and low self-worth. Once I started volunteering I found myself in a team for the first time and was supported by my peers and encouraged to take positive steps in my recovery.

JOHN'S STORY CONT...

I started to detox from my methadone knowing that this was going to be a long process but I had the determination and willingness to see it through. I managed to get down to 25mls and transferred over to Buvidal. I wouldn't have been able to do this without the support of NWRC and my peers encouraging me throughout this time and keeping me focused on my goal to be free from any substances for the first time in many many years.

I got my first day clean on the 29th October 2024 and celebrated this with my peers. I am now writing this over 7 months abstinent and feeling proud of myself for achieving this with the support of the people around me. I have grown in confidence, my self-esteem is improving, my self-worth is the best it's been for years, I can now hold my head up in my community.

The things that I have done in my recovery so far amaze me such as, traveling through to Edinburgh to represent NWRC at a MAT standards conversation café where I facilitated a table on benzo detoxes, I was asked to promote recovery in my community at the DWP office in Drumchapel, I have took part in many recovery days at NWRC, and most importantly I am now depended upon within my family and trusted with supporting my sister by looking after my parents.

I have so much gratitude for NWRC and my peers who have supported me through this recovery journey so far and now I feel in a place where I can start to give back to the recovery communities and my own community as whole, so thank you to you all for your continued support and encouragement.

COMMUNITY WORK

COMMUNITY EVENTS WE HAVE TAKEN PART IN THIS YEAR



**WHEATLEY
GROUP -
STRONGER
VOICES**



**SOUTH
COMMUNITY
RECOVERY
NETWORK ROSC
EVENT**



**THE PHOENIX
CUP**



**RECOVERY
CONNECTS**



**DWP PARTNERS
HEALTH &
WELLBEING EVENT**



**G20 YOUTH
EVENT**



**SPRINGBURN
FESTIVAL**



**RECOVERY
WALK**

COMMUNITY WORK

Other events we have taken part in this year were

The Wise Group Mental Health Event
North East Recovery Communities Women's Recovery Walk
Heart of Scotstoun Gala day
Knightswood Gala Day
Recovery Walk Barlinnie
Clydebank College Partners day and Freshers Week
Men's Toxic Masculinity Event
Women's International Day - G15 Thriving Places

We are thankful to all of the organisers of these events for continuing to invite us or inviting us for the first time. It is testament to not only the ROSC model but also the relationships that we have formed and the reputation of North West Recovery Communities that we get invited to so many of these events. Most importantly each of these organisations want our message of recovery to be shared at their events!

Throughout the year we held a number of our own smaller events & groups in the community

At the start of the year we trialled a Walking group at the Claypits Nature Reserve. Unfortunately for us it was horrific weather for 10 days out of the 12 weeks we ran it. On the days that the walks were able to go ahead, we were able to do good support work with some supported people open to the outreach team.

On Friday 30th August we marked Overdose Awareness day at our Possil Cafe. The team and participants came together to do a balloon release in remembrance of loved ones lost to overdose and suicide. There was also an overdose awareness group in place of the normal MAP group held by With You and Healing for the Heart were on hand for support to anybody affected by loss. The volunteers also carried out naloxone training throughout the day.



COMMUNITY WORK CONT...

Each of our cafes have a steering group ran by the volunteers where they discuss the activities they think would work at the cafes or organisations they would like to invite in to support the participants based on the conversations they are having. During a steering group meeting it was discussed that they would like to see the Knightswood cafe hold a bigger event as these mostly fall to the Women's Group & the Possil Cafe and so we held the Recovery Week Event at the Knightswood cafe in September. Healing for the Heart facilitated a conversation cafe, 3 of of volunteers shared their own recovery story and participants were able to choose from some handmade mocktails and a delicious buffet lunch.

After the success of the events held throughout 23/24 with funding from Foundation Scotland for our Women's Group. We continued these events through 24/25. In October 24 we held the Halloween event. The event had optional dress up but so many of the ladies pulled out all the stops in their costumes. The group took part in bounce bingo, had great food and had Freed up DJs playing the tracks all day.

In the run up to the Christmas party the women had made sleighs made out of candy canes, and a stack of different chocolates wrapped up in to a lovely gift, plus hot chocolate reindeer pouches and a decorated Christmas bag to put it in.

For the Christmas event, the ladies were served a 3 course meal cooked and delivered by Possibilities another local community organisation. Then it was on to Karaoke with the staff and volunteers kicking things off with their own rendition of Do they know it's Christmas. The Karaoke turned out to be a major success with most of the ladies taking a turn either for a solo or else a group piece. They were all amazing !

In March the ladies held a Women's International Day event. At the event we were joined again by the Freed up DJs, there were some recovery shares and inspirational stories from guests and volunteers, along with lots of information stalls tailored to women specific organisations and supports in our community



**“COMING TO WINGS I WAS ABLE
TO COMMUNICATE WITH OTHER
WOMEN, ENJOY & CONNECT
WITH OTHER WOMEN. THE FOOD
PROVIDED WAS ALWAYS
DELICIOUS. I ENJOYED
CONNECTING WITH THE
VOLUNTEERS ALSO AND LIKE
THE GROUPS THAT ARE PUT ON
BY THE VOLUNTEERS. I ALSO
ENJOYED TILLY’S GROUP. THE
EVENTS ARE ALWAYS GOOD ”**

S - Women’s Cafe Participant

OUTREACH

Our 2 outreach Workers are employed directly by the North West Recovery Communities Charity, funded by a grant from the Corra Foundation. Referrals to this service can be done by obtaining a referral form by contacting us or from our website. The outreach team get referrals from a number of different organisations & services such as the North West Alcohol & Drug Recovery Service and The Turning Point Stabilisation Unit with some people choosing to refer themselves in to our service.

As our relationships grow with other organisations, the organisations that refer their supported people into outreach grows. Most notably is after our volunteer's time spent sitting in the DWP offices in Drumchapel & Partick to offer recovery support to people visiting the DWP, Work Coaches and staff from these offices will now identify if their clients may need support with their addiction/ recovery and will refer them into us.

The outreach team work between our offices and on the road visiting their supported people throughout the week, taking part in the training with the staff and volunteers where applicable whilst also completing training linked to their own personal development for their roles.

In 24/25, outreach worker Joanne successfully completed her SVQ 3 in Health & Social Care. With our new outreach worker Jamie starting his next in 25/26.

The outreach team will work with their supported people on their own personal & recovery goals. It is testament to our outreach team that we continue to see more and more positive outcomes for their supported people, as the team are armed with the knowledge to join the dots to ensure they are linked in with or supported along to not only our own drop ins and groups but the other organisations and services required to meet the needs of the individual person at that specific time.

There is no getting away from the fact that whilst we have a lot of positive outcomes, there can be a lot of non engagement and dis-engagement. We recognise that despite having lots of information and contacts, sometimes not all of the services and organisations can align at the right time for the supported people or other life events can make stepping into the world of recovery too big of a step at that time. Thankfully we are able to open a referral back up as soon as the person makes contact again when they feel they are ready.

Throughout the year the outreach team will attend events and forums to use their lived experience and professional experience of what they are seeing with their supported people and the challenges they are facing to try and bring about change.

The work the outreach team do with their supported people really cannot be overstated. They have a vast knowledge of different services and information on critical resources that could help give hope to the person they are supporting at that very moment in time. Somebody getting that support or a solution to an issue that has kept them stuck could be the difference in lowering the barrier to them seeking recovery or maintaining recovery.

OUTREACH

I have faced a number of challenges in my role this year, the biggest one being working solo for part of the year. However, I received great support from the North West staff team and volunteers. I love my job and being able to connect with my supported people, watching their journeys and seeing them find the strength to come away from chaotic alcohol & drug use. As part of my role I am also a safeguarder at the Women's Wings group and I love supporting the volunteers, watching them come and take part and then move on in their own journeys. **Joanne Rollo - Outreach Worker**

Case Studies

A 40 year old male attending DWP Job Centre, was referred into NWRC by work coach with his consent. The presenting issues were bereavement and loss of purpose. Outreach worker and supported person met with ADRS care manager to discuss detox options. Outreach worker also supported male to look at introducing other community supports to give the male meaningful activity throughout the week. This support continued for some time. The supported person attended the NWRC groups and drop ins and worked with both NWRC outreach and With You worker, resulting in maintaining their goal around sobriety.

Referral made into NWRC for a 46 year old women. Presenting issues where illicit drug use, family breakdown and community justice DTTO. NWRC outreach spoke with person to discuss pathways and options for support, reducing illicit use and relapse prevention. Outreach then agreed on next steps that involved residential rehabilitation options and working on continuing reducing the use of illicit drugs. Outreach spoke with workers from other organisations through phone calls and referrals were made to access a detox centre. This was achieved during the continuing support between the person and the outreach worker as well as support to manage feelings of anxiety and stress that come along with reducing drug use and working with Community justice staff on the restriction of liberty. The terms of this order impacted recovery opportunities in the evening due to having curfews. Person was supported to attend day time groups. Outreach then supported the person to link in with other partner organisations With You and Hope Connections to continue their recovery.

LERO - LIVED EXPERIENCE RECOVERY ORGANISATIONS

“The LERO group has been set up by Scottish Recovery Consortium to connect the work of recovery communities and LEROs from across Scotland. In the context of this group when we refer to the term recovery communities and LEROs we are referring to organisations that are predominately made up of people with lived experience of the issues and services they provide support for in their local community. By coming together and sharing ideas and experiences of best practice within our organisations we create a national voice for recovery communities and LEROs and build a recognised national group that supports the development of such organisations now and in the future, creating environments where recovery can thrive and grow” - Taken from the LERO terms of reference

Another great year sitting on the LERO group and hearing how the rest of the country's lived experience organisations are getting on with their own developments and delivery of their recovery focused agendas. It is always good to hear what they are delivering in their local areas. We at NWRC sit on a few local groups to hear what goes on locally and we do our best to join the dots to ensure pathways can be formed and people can move on and use recovery pathways to further and maintain their journeys. This principle has also been applied by us in regards to the national picture. Where one of our supported people has been moving on from the Glasgow area and with some local knowledge shared through the LERO group we have been able to connect them with a lived experience group near the area they are moving too, as we have had that intel through the shared stories we hear in the LERO group. This helps individuals connect in their new area or when they return to an area after completing residential rehab or being liberated from prison. We created a page on our website to allow people to access information on recovery communities throughout Scotland and have access the national picture. There are 27 organisations on it at present but much more to add I am sure. We hopefully will be able to add to this after the SRC national conference in June. It will be good to see more of these organisations come to the LERO group... as nothing beats the shared experiences and promotion of good work being delivered.

It has also been an opportunity for me to hear about developments at strategy level and hear about policy changes that can affect our communities. A few things we discussed this year were the Alcohol Focus Scotland's work on alcohol marketing, the launch of SRC's 'Using Human Rights in Recovery - A Guide', the changes to the PVGs with disclosure Scotland, bus travel and access to travel or the National charter consultations and so much more...

I get a great feeling of unity across the country as we hear the good work being done by the other groups in attendance or the speakers that come to share how they overcome challenges, the great programs they deliver and how they help people families and communities recover.

I want to say thanks to all the folks that have shared with us and for SRC for hosting the group. I appreciate how hard it is to be at all the groups, forums, steering and strategic groups expected to be attended by the recovery community and I will always try to get along to these forums to hear what going on. It's always a challenge making the diaries work but I feel it's worth it and as I will repeat again from last year, the message is still the same. There is nothing better than sharing the good news - recovery is possible, we believe that for everyone ... -

Brian Project Manager

LERO CONT...

Brian's highlights of the year from the LERO group

Restoration Fife and how they are aiming to reach more rural areas in fife and are setting up a group in Cupar and how they are also running a group focused on cocaine use.

Kirsteen at Recovery Rhythms has built a community with men and women's wellbeing at her hub, with cold water therapy and movement based activities at the core

The great work Natalie and co at SISCO are doing in prisons, how they made a film, hearing about their community hub and their work with the Celtic foundation at Parkhead.

John and co at South Communities Recovery Network are developing alcohol recovery focused groups, gender specific work and working with the Rangers Foundation to deliver recovery programs

Robert from GRACE in East Dunbartonshire on how their social media volunteer is updating their socials with all activities available whether it the recovery walk, the bowls or snooker groups, their play and a film screening

Donna from Freed Up CIC sharing how all of their events are going, comedy nights, raves, supporting community events with stages, equipment and tunes and the DJ workshops and work in the prisons

John sharing on North Lanarkshire Recovery Community and how they are opening new cafes and moving to new premises

Julie at the Terrance Higgins Trust – again the great work for people being supported with living with HIV and the Women's support also available with an online community for people living with HIV.

How the folks at The Ridge hosted the Recovery Festival

Shivon from Next Chapter Scotland SCIO sharing how they are supporting people who have criminal records and face a variety of barriers and stigma surrounding this

Joan reported that Aberdeen AIR had some open days to celebrate the new premises. The events were a fantastic networking opportunity and brought lots of new people through the door, and how the SRC and Aberdeen AIR piloted the new Recovery College

RECOVERY STORY

FAYE'S STORY



I am from a small fishing town called Fraserburgh and I moved to Glasgow in 2014. I got involved in recovery when I moved to Glasgow and had my first period of sobriety in many years.

For the next eight years my addiction was chaotic again after a relapse, my life was far from perfect. I thought that I could drink and be sociable, but I was wrong. My drinking got gradually worse and then it was a case of what can I take when I'm drinking. I was drinking every day whether it was sunny or raining.

I was so depressed, and I didn't want to be here but felt as I had recovery before then I could have it again and I didn't want to keep going round in circles with my addiction. I went into hospital as I wanted to be somewhere safe.

Whilst in hospital I linked in with Navigators, I went to fellowship meetings on zoom and I reached out to people from my past that were in recovery. I was welcomed back with open arms!

As much as I was shy and full of fear I kept going back to the meetings. Someone I met took me to other meetings they were going to, and I felt that I was starting to get more support from people.

Then I started going to the Recovery Cafes all over Glasgow, I was building new connections through my recovery. I was making new friends and found a home group so I could give service back to the fellowship.

I felt like I was getting my life back and I felt like I belonged!

I got linked in with With You and I got a female worker who I felt that I could be honest with, and she gave me the support that I needed.

Over that period of time, I was going to the North West Recovery Community Café's and I put in a note of interest into becoming a volunteer with them. I got to know some of the volunteers, and I wanted what they had. I was a nervous wreck my first day volunteering but excited at the same time! Karn, another volunteer took me under her wing, and she showed me what to do and what my role would be. She showed me what information to put out at the info stalls, and I gave other people advice on what services and groups were out there. I would chat to woman and support newcomers to get involved in the groups at the cafes. All the staff and volunteers at the North West made me feel welcome.

Since I started volunteering with the NWRC, I have more confidence, and I have built up friendships. I have learned new skills that allow me to support people in recovery at the cafes. I have completed training courses, and I am now confident enough to give the right advice to people about the cafes, the North West Recovery Community and other services that might be useful to them. I help in the group activities at the cafes and help other volunteers and staff in the cafes. I get help, support and training from the NWRC staff on a regular basis and I get support from City Writes for my reading and writing. I have also linked in with Move On and Elevate.

I completed a 6 week fitness and nutrition course and a 12 weeks essential course. I have just been accepted for doing my SVQ level 3 in Health and Social Care through Elevate. I go regularly to the gym to improve my physical and mental health

So much has changed in my life and I will be 18 months abstinent from all mind and mood altering substances in July this year. My family has got their daughter back, sister and auntie back and I feel that I have got the real me back. I can help and support my family anytime they need me now. I'm building a better version of myself and I'm doing things that I would never had dreamed of doing. Big thanks to all the people that's supported me on my journey YOU KNOW WHO YOU ARE

The best is yet to come!

**“I FIND THE GROUPS TO BE
ENJOYABLE AND INFORMATIVE
AND FIND THE VOLUNTEERS AND
STAFF TO BE HELPFUL AND
FRIENDLY. I ENJOY THE
CREATIVE WRITING CLASS THE
MOST AND FIND THE MEDITATION
A GOOD WAY TO START THE DAY”**

Knightswood Cafe Participant



OUR PARTNERSHIPS & ROSC NETWORK

VENTURE SCOTLAND

MOVE ON

GAMCARE

CITIZENS ADVICE NW & GAMBLING SUPPORT

GLASGOW COUNCIL VOLUNTARY SECTOR

NORTH WEST CARERS

NORTH WEST VOLUNTARY SECTOR

SAMH

THE ADVOCACY PROJECT

MARTHA'S MAMMIES

MEN MATTER

WAVERLY CARE

HOPE FOR ADDICTION

PHOENIX FUTURES

CROSSREACH

BLUE VALE HUB

RECOVERY RHYTHMS

POSSIBILITIES COOK & CARE

NORTH WEST ADRS

WITH YOU NORTH WEST

GLASGOW COUNCIL ON ALCOHOL

ELEVATE PSP

KINDER STRONGER BETTER

ALCOHOL & DRUG PARTNERSHIP

SALVATION ARMY - HOULDSWORTH STREET

SOUTH COMMUNITY RECOVERY NETWORK

NORTH EAST RECOVERY COMMUNITIES

12 STEP FELLOWSHIPS

SCOTTISH DRUGS FORUM

FASS

SFAD

CHILDREN 1ST

HEALING FOR THE HEART

THE SECOND CHANCE PROJECT

HOPE CONNECTIONS

FREED UP

KNIGHTSWOOD COMMUNITY CENTRE

CITY WRITES

POSSILPARK PARISH CHURCH

IN CAHOOTZ

HEART OF SCOTSTOUN

THE SIMON COMMUNITY

SMART RECOVERY

ASPIRE

CLAYPITS NATURE RESERVE

STREET SOCCER

SCOTTISH RECOVERY CONSORTIUM

THE CROFT

THE LILIAS CENTRE

OUR PARTNERSHIPS & ROSC NETWORK

HUMANISING HEALTHCARE

G15 THRIVING PLACES

ALCOHOL FOCUS SCOTLAND

ALLIANCE SCOTLAND

GLASGOW CLYDE COLLEGE

TEEN CHALLENGE

JOBS & BUSINESS GLASGOW

CLUTTER CHAT

UNIVERSITY OF GLASGOW

DRUMCHAPEL CITIZENS ADVICE

SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT

PARTICK HOUSING ASSOCIATION

GLASGOW STREET AID TEAM

NHS - SMILE 4 LIFE

CONCRETE GARDENS

WHEATLEY GROUP

FLOURISH HOUSE

SOCIAL SECURITY SCOTLAND

GRACE

SANCTUARY HOUSING

MARYHILL RUCHILL PARISH CHURCH

POLICE & FIRE SERVICE

SISCO

STREET CONNECT

BACK ON THE ROAD

V.I.N.E

DELIVERING REAL CHANGE YOUTH PROJECT (DRC)

BLUE TRIANGLE

POSITIVE OUTCOMES PROJECT

SAFE AS HOUSES

SALVATION ARMY - HOUSING 1ST

NAVIGATORS

DWP

THE WISE GROUP

MONEY MATTERS

SHELTER

THE METHODIST CHURCH

TURNING POINT

HOME ENERGY SCOTLAND

NORTH WEST HEALTH IMPROVEMENT TEAM

GLASGOW & CLYDE RAPE CRISIS - HEAL TO THRIVE

G20 YOUTH

NEW COLLEGE LANARKSHIRE

OPEN ARMS WELLNESS

WORKERS EDUCATION ASSOCIATION

THE RECOVERY COLLECTIVE

HOLLISTIC HEALTH SCOTLAND

APEX SCOTLAND

RENFREWSHIRE ADP

PARTNERSHIP WORK

At North West we have been so lucky to build up relationships with over 90 organisations. We know that on any given day we could pick up the phone or ping over an email to our friends at one of these organisations and they would furnish us with the information we need or help us with a referral for somebody we are supporting. Their attendance and presentations at our ROSC workforce development meetings means other organisations are able to connect with our network or connect us with theirs, ensuring our full range of contacts and relationships grow each year.

We wouldn't be able to bring such a variety of recovery activities and supports to our participants if it wasn't for the partners we work with each week. We thank them for their continued support this year.

HEALING FOR THE HEART

In 24/25 Healing for the Heart delivered groups in both our Knightswood Cafe and Possil Cafe. The Knightswood cafe groups are a mixture of wellbeing and resilience subjects. The Possil group was the Compassionate Conversations group. The aim of the partnership with Northwest and the Compassionate Conversations was to provide a safe, nurturing and supportive environment for people in recovery who have lost a loved one by suicide, drug or alcohol misuse. Participants were taught healthy coping skills, resiliency tools, strategies to stay safe, relapse prevention in addition to tools and opportunities to build connections with people in the community.

The Conversation cafe group ended in the 24/25 year after 2 years. It will leave a lasting legacy of helping so many people in our community and giving them the tools to navigate through their lives and recovery after losing their loved ones

“This group helps me with my confidence and to interact with people, it gives me structure to my day and helps me to learn more about my emotions and feelings I have to deal with on a daily basis, it teaches me about triggers and more healthier coping mechanisms. “

Attendee of the Knightswood Healing for the Heart Group

“I now feel that I have the strength to talk about other trauma I have experienced with my friend who took his own life and another family member that died with drug addiction. I have less guilt and feel relieved that I have the peer support group in healing for the heart to attend.”

Attendee of the Possil Compassionate Conversations Group

PARTNERSHIP WORK

CITY WRITES

“City Writes has been facilitating Music, Mindfulness and Creative writing workshops in partnership with the NWRC for two years now. These workshops look at music, mindfulness and creative writing through artists such as David Bowie, Paul Weller and the Beatles along with mindfulness practices and recovery focused conversations. The sessions are designed to support people in recovery and give people a chance to try out or improve their creative writing skills.

This year we have also provided blocks of Anxiety and Early Recovery workshops; these workshops are done over a period of four weeks and allow people in recovery to look at sources and causes of anxiety and how we can manage our anxiety in recovery. City Writes workshops allow people to build on their self-awareness and find new tools to support their recovery.

We are currently working with the North West Recovery Community to pilot another set of workshops on Assertiveness and Confidence Building with the first set of workshops being later this year. It’s been great working with the NWRC and all their staff and volunteers over the last few years!

Thanks and here’s to the future!! “ **Stephen McGuire - Founder, City Writes**

“I am constantly amazed by at the varied creative output of a room full of people with different inspirations of the same source material.”

“Writing can be used as a therapeutic tool, and I can be creative even when I don’t feel like it.”

“I was able to open up in front of others and discover that we all share similar fears.”

“I’m finding its good to talk and I am relaxed and enjoy the atmosphere at the City Writes Group.”

Participants of the City Writes Groups

“ Working in partnership with North West recovery communities is so beneficial to the people we support. I have a long history of being involved with NWRC as I volunteered myself for several years and they supported me to gain invaluable experience and to gain qualifications and training to enhance my personal development. I currently facilitate the men’s mindfulness group, co deliver a 12 week recovery skills group at the Knightswood recovery cafe and I facilitate a mutual aid partnership group every week at the Possilpark recovery cafe. I have been working with the With You service for nearly 9 years and throughout my time there the organisation consistently encourages people to attend NWRC drop in services for support. There have been countless brilliant outcomes for people who have engaged with both services, from people reducing isolation, reducing on alcohol and other substances, some people have managed to gain abstinence for the first time in years, others have went on and completed the COSCA counselling course, SDF placements, Elevate placements and gained accredited qualifications, some others have gone on to gain employment as a result of working with both organisations. I am extremely passionate about NWRC and the service I work for as I have the privilege of supporting people with my colleagues and partners to watch people recover from poor mental health, substance use problems, social isolation and a host of other difficulties.

At every cafe there is a member of staff from the With You service onsite as a safeguarder to work in partnership with NWRC staff. We all have a great working relationship as both services have the same common goal which is to provide the people who attend a safe space where people can meet, talk and participate in the many activities that are on offer. I feel the welcome that people receive is absolutely critical to the success of NWRC as, if people are welcomed in a friendly and non judgmental manner the chances are that the person coming for the first time is going to have a positive experience and that they will continue to attend the recovery drop in services. I am proud to say that the volunteers are exceptional and go over and above to support people attending the drop in services. There are numerous other brilliant examples of community based work that NWRC are involved in, including the many local events each year to promote the service, the medics conversation cafes, group work in external services and the ROSC events.

Well done NWRC for another brilliant year!”

James Simons, community engagement coordinator for the With You service based in the North West of Glasgow

ROSC IN ACTION

Between our ROSC 6 weekly workforce development sessions and the networking events we attend, we have spread our net far and wide across Glasgow and beyond to be connected to a number of different organisations. At North West we firmly believe ROSC is the best way to work and it can be implemented in any sector who support individuals.

Throughout the year, alongside our workforce development sessions, we have held a number of ROSC networking & education sessions.

Following on from a previous networking event where we asked for feedback on what workers would like to see more of, one of the highest responses was organisations dealing with homelessness due to the housing crisis we are currently facing. We were thrilled to be able to host a homeless rights awareness session that was presented by workers from Shelter. They went through different aspects of the rights people hold if they are homeless and how they can access resources and templates to ensure they are being treated correctly when entering the homeless system.

In December and just in time for the festive period, again following the previous feedback, we held an Alcohol focused ROSC networking event. As well as a number of stalls, we were joined by Alcohol Focus Scotland who gathered the opinions from the attendees on alcohol marketing in Scotland. We were also joined by a colleague from the Alcohol & Drug Partnership who was gathering opinions & experiences on the MAT Standards.

We were also invited to take part in the Partner's day at Barlinnie.

In 24/25 we formed a new partnership with G15 Thriving Places in Drumchapel. Starting with their own networking family fun day. G15 sought feedback from the participants of the event on the services they would like to see in Drumchapel. A return of the recovery community was high on the returns and so the Drumchapel Recovery Group was launched in January with G15 providing the funds and space to do this through the Drumchapel Community Centre. We look forward to continuing to work with G15 throughout the next year.



OUR DROP INS

WINGS (WOMEN IN NORTH WEST GLASGOW SUPPORT)

THE WINGS GROUP RUNS FROM THE POSSILPARK
PARISH CHURCH - 124 SARACEN STREET,
POSSILPARK, G22 5AP

EVERY WEDNESDAY

10:30AM TO 2:00PM

MEN'S GROUP

THE MEN'S GROUP RUNS FROM
THE KNIGHTSWOOD COMMUNITY CENTRE
201 ALDERMAN ROAD, G12 3DD

EVERY WEDNESDAY

5:15PM TO 6:45PM

KNIGHTSWOOD

THE KNIGHTSWOOD GROUP RUNS FROM
THE KNIGHTSWOOD COMMUNITY CENTRE
201 ALDERMAN ROAD, G12 3DD

EVERY THURSDAY

11:00AM TO 3:00PM

POSSIL

THE POSSIL GROUP RUNS FROM THE
POSSILPARK PARISH CHURCH - 124 SARACEN
STREET, POSSILPARK, G22 5AP

EVERY FRIDAY

11:00AM TO 3:00PM

DRUMCHAPEL

DRUMCHAPEL RECOVERY GROUP
320 KINFAUNS DRIVE
DRUMCHAPEL, G15 7HA

EVERY WEDNESDAY

2:00PM TO 4:00PM

OUR DROP IN NUMBERS

WINGS

in 24/25, 1925 ladies attended our WINGS cafe. Throughout the year the ladies benefitted from visits from organisations focusing on women's health & wellbeing, relaxing activities such as reiki and massage, Arts & Crafts, recovery activities & group work. We are so lucky to have specialist Volunteer Tilly who has been attending every week to deliver Somatic dance sessions and also sessions on creating aromatherapy sprays and rollers tailored to the lady's senses. A massive thank you to Tilly for everything this year !

MEN'S GROUP

in 24/25, 467 men attended the group. The men's group focus on Mindfulness and meaningful discussions by picking a word each week and speaking through what that word means to them. The quieter group is a better option for men who prefer a less busy setting with a core group who have been attending through its over 10 year history !

KNIGHTSWOOD

in 24/25, 1795 people attended the Knightswood Cafe. At the Knightswood drop in the participants were able to take part in taster sessions of SMART recovery delivered by Blue Triangle and our volunteer Jim, groups delivered by Billy at the Second Chance Project and group sessions delivered by Healing for the Heart on subjects such a resilience and confidence. Also available to the participants was The City Writes group with the creative writing group and new for 24/25 the Anxiety and Early recovery group.

POSSIL

in 24/25, 3598 people attended the Possil cafe. The mixed group were able to take part in a MAP (Mutal Aid Partnership) group delivered by James Simons at With You, Healing for the Heart delivered their weekly Compassionate Conversations group for the most part of the year, moving to resilience and wellbeing groups at the latter part of year. We were also able to offer Reiki for part of the year at the Possil cafe along with Table tennis & bingo.

DRUMCHAPEL

The Drumchapel group ran from January to March. During this time 163 people attended the group. After the initial 12 weeks the decision was taken to trial a smart Recovery group to offer something different again to the community. We continue to work with the participants on what the future holds for the group.

THE NWRC IMPACT

At North West Recovery Community we believe recovery is possible for everybody. As we share this message, we are building networks to ensure we are getting this message to as many people as we can. Through this work, we are leaving a lasting legacy in our communities. Helping those still to come and honouring those we have lost.

ROSC (Recover Orientated System of Care) 6 Weekly Workforce Development Sessions

Our workforce development sessions are open to workers and volunteers either working for addiction services or who have a shared interest in helping our community. Throughout 24/25 we have had over 34 presentations ranging from Social Security Scotland giving guidance on the changes to the benefits in Scotland to a support charity for hoarders. We know that by having this varied network, we know who we can contact when supporting the people in our community. The ROSC network grows literally by the week as people hear about the sessions and ask to be added to the mailing list to be invited to the next session.

“I started attending the ROSC meetings at the end of last year and they've been incredible. The connections I've made, the relationships I've built and, the meetings I've been able to set up wouldn't have been possible without these events. I've also went along to various drop-in sessions at recovery cafes hosted by NWRC, where I've had the opportunity to speak with people informally. Through these chats, we've been able to offer people support for their problem gambling. I had the opportunity to speak at one of the ROSC meetings and, the feedback was fantastic. As a result, I was invited to visit several different organisations. Brian, Charlotte, the other staff members and all the volunteers do an amazing job of keeping us informed about what's happening. The speakers they arrange for these events are always engaging, and I walk away from each meeting with something valuable.”

Lorraine Hannah - Gamcare

The Lillias Centre

After the opening of the Lillias centre in 2023. Brian was on a number of groups where the centre was discussed in conversations around community justice and rehabilitation and how this centre would hopefully change the cycle of reoffending. Brian reached out to the Lillias centre to discuss bringing recovery into the centre after the volunteers voiced their desire to be part of this. After initial meetings we agreed on a partnership where we would deliver 5 sessions over the course of the 24/25 year to ensure that when the ladies were liberated they would have the peer support during their continued recovery in the community and allow them to build recovery capital.

The first session was bringing a recovery cafe into the centre. The ladies took part in art & crafts, groupwork and a recovery share. The second session was a holistic day where we took some other organisations & specialist volunteers with us to the centre. The ladies took part in holistic therapies and DJ workshops. From this, FREED Up CIC has continued to work with their own partnership with the Lillias Centre to provide opportunities to the residents. The third session was a Christmas event where the ladies took part in arts and crafts activities to make hot chocolate pouches, photo frames and Christmas boxes for their loved ones. Through speaking to the residents at all of the sessions, it was clear that some of the residents did not have clear pathways for when they were liberated. The fourth session then was a Pathways to Liberation ROSC event where we took even more organisations in to the centre such as Shelter, DWP and prison to rehab organisations to ensure that the ladies not only knew their pathways but also their rights when liberated. The final session was a Women's International day event. We are keen to continue this important work in 25/26.

THE NWRC IMPACT

Claypits Family Fun Day

In 2023 we held the first family fun day in partnership with the Hamiltonhill Claypits Nature Reserve. We recognised that more people were looking to nature as part of their recovery and wanted to highlight the opportunities for people to do this in their own area and within the city. The day was filled with a mixture of activities for the full family such as pond dipping and mindful walking and information stalls from different community organisations again, using the ROSC model. We were also able to give opportunities to people in the community to perform on stage. In the first year we had performers from the local residential rehab, showcasing work they had created and produced during their stay. The event was a massive success and the board of the Claypits were happy for us to make this an annual event, reporting that their usual visitors



who would not necessarily be familiar with the recovery communities, were speaking about the event for weeks and months afterwards. 2024 was a bigger event with the addition of bouncy castles, more stalls and an even bigger stage! The staff and volunteers of the Claypits were fully involved in the day, helping us transport equipment up and down, serving teas & coffees and performing on the stage. At our Claypits event, families can come along to enjoy a free day out but also seek any support they might need in an informal way that does not put any pressure on anybody or indeed break any anonymity. Our event breaks down barriers and stigma that still exists in the addiction & recovery world by holding the event in a public space with a number of other supporting organisations and visually seeing & hearing the message of hope and that Recovery is Possible in an area that has a high percentage of drug and alcohol use. Both years brought crowds of 200/300 participants. At the time of writing we are planning for our 3rd year with the commitment being cemented from the Claypits by way of them securing funding to put towards the event. We thank the team at the Claypits for allowing us to take over their beautiful space for one day of the year and supporting us with our recovery message.

Christmas & Festive Booklet

Christmas can be a hard time for lots of people. Its much harder when services and organisations close over the festive period. In 2024 we created a festive booklet that was given out at our cafes and sent around the Citywide ADRS and to our sister organisations in the North East & South. The booklet contained the opening and closing dates of important services, phone numbers and addresses of organisations that would be open including foodbanks, meals on Christmas day and QR codes to wellbeing resources to ensure our communities had the support they needed over the festive period. All of our drop ins had their own Christmas celebrations.

Our Possil Christmas event had well over 100 people who were served a 3 course meal and lots of Christmas party games. We also held our first family Christmas party where we were able to give out over 100 presents that were gifted due to the generosity of the participants of the Spirit of Christmas Initiative and Sunny Govan Radio



**“THE WOMEN’S GROUP IS GOOD
FOR CONNECTING WITH OTHER
WOMEN. IT GIVES YOU A
PURPOSE TO GET UP AND OUT
THE HOUSE. IT HELPS BUILD
SELF-ESTEEM & CONFIDENCE”**

ACCOUNTS

North West Recovery Communities
(A Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation)

Receipts and Payments Account
For the year ended 31 March 2024

	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Total Funds	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Total Funds
	Year ended Mar-24	Year ended Mar-24	Year ended Mar-24	Period ended Mar-23	Period ended Mar-23	Period ended Mar-23
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Receipts						
NHS funding	80,000	-	80,000	70,000	20,000	90,000
Corra Foundation	-	63,500	63,500	3,250	65,000	68,250
Glasgow City Council	9,000	-	9,000	-	-	-
Glasgow Council on Alcohol	2,419	-	2,419	-	-	-
Hope Connections	220	-	220	-	-	-
ADP	-	-	-	40,000	-	40,000
Donation from unincorporated association	-	-	-	4,922	25,000	29,922
WINGS	-	-	-	-	2,000	2,000
Other income	-	-	-	6,445	-	6,445
Bank interest	53	-	53	245	-	245
Donations	660	-	660	2,602	-	2,602
Total receipts	92,352	63,500	155,852	127,464	112,000	239,464
Payments						
Materials	(5,144)	-	(5,144)	(4,100)	(1,671)	(5,771)
Salaries	-	(30,238)	(30,238)	(708)	(60,000)	(60,708)
Training and development	(3,458)	(3,720)	(7,178)	(4,619)	(3,720)	(8,339)
Insurance	(565)	-	(565)	(491)	-	(491)
IT costs	(9,226)	-	(9,226)	(6,185)	(20)	(6,205)
Telecommunications	(530)	-	(530)	-	-	-
Room hire	(21,386)	(408)	(21,794)	(38,589)	(272)	(38,861)
Food	(19,045)	(3,284)	(22,329)	(19,148)	(2,037)	(21,185)
City Writes	(1,060)	-	(1,060)	-	-	-
Membership fees	(342)	-	(342)	(88)	-	(88)
Entertaining	-	-	-	(1,052)	(613)	(1,664)
Consumables	(2,890)	-	(2,890)	(1,773)	-	(1,773)
Services	(3,008)	-	(3,008)	(8,311)	(536)	(8,847)
Sundry	(207)	-	(207)	(425)	(11)	(436)
Cleaning	(2,988)	-	(2,988)	-	-	-
Utilities	(536)	-	(536)	-	-	-
Team Building	(10,279)	-	(10,279)	-	-	-
Accountancy	(960)	-	(960)	-	-	-
Equipment	(193)	-	(193)	-	-	-
Outreach Expenses	-	(8,527)	(8,527)	(134)	(2,601)	(2,735)
Volunteer Expenses	(619)	-	(619)	(1,737)	-	(1,737)
Office Supplies	(883)	-	(883)	(1,113)	-	(1,113)
Stationery	-	-	-	(24)	-	(24)
Event costs	(9,027)	(519)	(9,546)	(809)	(500)	(1,309)
Donations	-	-	-	(59)	-	(59)
Bank charges	(173)	-	(173)	(92)	-	(92)
Total payments	(92,521)	(46,696)	(139,217)	(89,458)	(71,981)	(161,438)
Excess of receipts over payments/(payments over receipts)	(169)	16,804	16,635	38,006	40,019	78,026

ACCOUNTS

North West Recovery Communities
(A Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation)

Statement of Balances
As at 31 March 2024

	<u>General</u> <u>Fund</u> £	<u>Restricted</u> <u>Fund</u> £	<u>Total</u> <u>2024</u> £	<u>Total</u> <u>2023</u> £
Cash and Bank Balances				
At 1 April 2023	38,007	40,019	78,026	-
Excess of receipts over payments/ (payments over receipts) for the year	(169)	16,804	16,635	78,026
Balance at 31 March 2024	37,838	56,823	94,661	78,026

Liabilities

Accountants' fee 2024: £1,080 (2023: £1,080).

Approved by the Trustees on 20/12/24 and signed on their behalf by:

Louise Stewart
Trustee

LOUISE STEWART

ACCOUNTS

North West Recovery Communities
 A Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation
 Receipts and Payments account
 For the year ending 31st March 2025

UNAUDITED

	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Total Funds
	£	£	£
Income			
NHS Core Funding	80000		80000
Corra Foundation - Outreach		68250	68250
Bank Cash Back	87.46		87.46
Donations	2928.83		2928.83
Rent from rent of office space	90		90
GGC for Family Learning Hub		6000	6000
Donation from Reo Stakis Foundation for Blether Media		10000	10000
Donation from GGC from Public	3000		3000
	86106.29	84250	170356.3

*It should be noted that the funds from GGC for Family learning Hub & the donation from the Reo Stakis Foundation for Blether Media were funds using the North West Recovery Communities as a holding account and are not funds that are used for the running of any of the North West Recovery Communities services or activities.

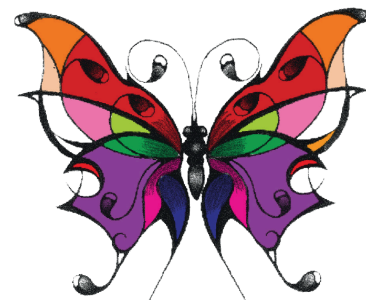
Operational Cafes	28762.06		28762.06
Special Cafes	4084.06		4084.06
Volunteers	20598.81		20598.81
Contractual Costs	37391.91		37391.91
ROSC	14070.65		14070.65
General NWRC Operations & Events	28524.11		28524.11
Family Learning Hub		5873.78	5873.78
Outreach		67988.88	67988.88
Secretary Wages & Associated Costs	1083.35		1083.35
Board Expenses	419.49		419.49
Payment to Blether Media		10000	10000
	134934.4	83862.66	218797.1

Statement of Balances - As at 31st March 2025

Cash and Bank Balances	General Funds	Restricted Funds	Total
Balance at 1st April 2024 Including Petty Cash	89146.45	5513.59	94660.04
Bank Balance at 31st March 2025			47246.09
Funds Including Petty Cash at 31st March 2025	10529.88	37121.67	47651.55

CONTACT US

North West Recovery Communities



north west glasgow
recovery communities

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TikTok/ @nwrcglasgow

**“COMING TO THE NORTH WEST
CAFES GIVES ME A SENSE OF
STRUCTURE WHERE I CAN GET
SUPPORT FROM VOLUNTEERS &
STAFF IN MY RECOVERY, ALSO
FREE FOOD & A SAFE PLACE TO
GO. POSSO RECOVERY CAFE IS A
GREAT PLACE WITH GREAT
STAFF & VOLUNTEERS. I WOULD
HIGHLY RECOMMEND ANYONE TO
USE THIS SERVICE”**

Possil Cafe Participant



north west glasgow recovery communities

