

grassmarket  
*community project*

ANNUAL REPORT  
2020



# Letter from the Chair

Welcome to a new world and to a flourishing and thriving Grassmarket Community Project!

I cannot stress enough how proud and inspired I am by the manner in which the entire team of staff, members, volunteers, supporters and board members have adapted to the situation we found ourselves in last March. The resilience, kindness and commitment of so many people have carried the organisation through and there are grounds for realistic optimism about the future.

The financial situation of GCP is more robust at the end of this year than we could possibly have imagined when our enterprise income stopped and we, like so many other organisations, went into financial free-fall as social enterprise activity dried up. But the team adapted, continued to offer support in creative ways, raised funds and carry on building community. We find ourselves in a position, as we approach the end of this year, of feeling optimistic about the future. So, I want to say a huge THANK YOU to absolutely everyone at GCP who has done their bit to get us through this extraordinary time.

There have been some tough decisions that have had to be made along the way and we have had to say farewell to some people we love and care deeply about. But I have been so impressed with the compassionate and just manner with which these challenges have been faced. Not only have we had to lose people we value, we have also lost one of our key staff members to 'early' retirement. Tommy Steel, our furniture workshop manager and I have been working together for at least 15 years! He took forward an idea that I had cherished for years as I began collecting old church pews back when I was still a minister in Aberdeen and transformed a dream into a thriving social enterprise that has done so much over the years to journey with people into growing self-confidence. Early next year our Finance Director Jane Kelman will be retiring and we are so grateful to her for the steady hand she has brought to our financial management. We wish all those who have left us our very best wishes and offer our gratitude. It is people who make the Grassmarket 'a great place to be'.

We have also had the joy of welcoming new people onto the staff team. Mike Redgrave has been so invaluable, all be it that he could never have imagined what he was getting himself into as he joined us just before Lockdown. We are also delighted to welcome Jon Slight as the new furniture workshop manager.

On the radio this morning, I heard someone say that an unprecedented number of new terms have been introduced into the language over these last few months as we have coped with the Pandemic. I didn't hear anyone include the phrase, 'you need to unmute yourself', however!

There is another phrase that I discovered during Lockdown and it is a bit technical, it is 'neural plasticity'. The term refers to the ability people have to adapt to radically different circumstances. I think that one of the things we have seen amongst many of our people at the Grassmarket Community Project is that remarkable ability to adapt and even thrive in spite of hardship and challenges. That has been an inspiration and I suppose that it is down to the fact that, for many of the people we journey with, hardship and challenge is nothing new. There have been so many instances where people have reached out to others and been a source of encouragement and help. We may not have been able to stretch out our hands in these uncommon times, but people have opened their hearts, and I salute that. The human mind has an amazing ability to adapt.

The term 'neural plasticity' can also apply to some organisations, though not all. What we have witnessed in the Grassmarket Community is a remarkable ability to adapt and re-imagine the organisation during this time. I have seen other organisations almost paralysed into a state of inaction by existential anxiety. That is not the case at GCP. The world we left behind in March has gone and it is unlikely that it will ever come back. For many of us, that pre-Covid-19 world feels like an age ago. But at the Grassmarket Community Project, we know that the need to support people who struggle with so many challenges is greater than ever. We are resilient, ready and well placed to move forward with exciting plans in the new year as we face the new world that is emerging, post pandemic.

My thanks and heartfelt gratitude to all.

**Richard Frazer, Chair**

## Mike – A Staff Member's story . . .

My name is Mike Redgrave and I am the service manager with Grassmarket Community Project with the responsibility for members support within the community.

It's fair to say that this year has not been as – or anyone – expected! I started with GCP just two weeks before full lockdown in March. Before I started, I had heard about GCP from the work I did with other organisations. Other support workers had told me that GCP had a good vibe about it. I'd also heard from people I worked with who had come back from GCP and told me that they really enjoyed their time there. I remember them telling me that they felt it was a place that they could walk into and be part of without having to conform to anything. They were able to be themselves. That was one of the main reasons that I wanted to work with GCP – it seemed different, welcoming and a bit of a challenge.

I realised from the start that working with GCP was different. It is an ideas first environment where we are constantly looking at ways to support and facilitate our members to access the support they need as individuals.

Of course, when I started, I had thought I would have the usual time to settle into a new role, get to know folk and find my feet before we started to think about the project and how I may help with new things. Within about 5 minutes that all changed because of COVID-19! The first week was relatively calm but by the end of the first week, the other senior managers and I met with the Board to talk about how things may have to change. From the very start, there was a can-do attitude from everyone. The discussions were all focused not on what we cannot do but on what we were able to do and how we would do it. It was brilliant that the Board had faith in the team and we all took a creative and flexible approach about moving forward.

My experience during the pandemic with GCP has not been all negative – far from it. Yes, it's been really difficult at times but we constantly try to pull the positives out of it all. We knew from the start that if we lost engagement with our members early on, we would lose them completely and so we really needed to focus on keeping that contact going. We also had to think and plan for our colleagues who worked in the social enterprises that were directly impacted by the lockdown. It was all really

busy and stressful but my memory is of a time where we didn't have time to be stressed – we were too busy thinking of ways to help everyone.

What I am most proud of this year is how we got the food delivery service up and running so quickly to so many of our members. For over four months, we delivered a hot lunch and dinner for heating up three days a week to our most vulnerable members. I was amazed about how we got the volunteers to cook and deliver the food so readily. Everyone was so keen to help. It wasn't just about the food, though. By delivering the food, it allowed the members to have safe contact with another person on a regular basis. The food was delivered to people's doors but then we could stand back and safely have a chat with them. It was often the only social contact time these members had as so many were isolating for various reasons and I know (as I did deliveries) what a huge difference this made to people's lives.

We were also really quick in setting up the online activities with members. We had never done this before but quickly realised it was a way to keep contact going. Our first sessions were focused on mental health support around lockdown and loneliness but we realised that if we could do that, we could do more and started doing art classes and lots of other things. I am sure that even when we get out of the pandemic, we will still do online sessions because people engage well with them. It also helps folk who are struggling to get out or have transport or mobility issues as it gives them an opportunity to be part of a real community with us.

I know it sounds clichéd but I have loved the experience over the last year with GCP. It has been a real challenge coming in but it's been amazing being with staff, members and volunteers to do this. What I was told is right – there is a really positive vibe around this place. I am really looking forward to continuing to be part of this community. It will be great to help folk move forward so that they can feel it is still worth trying to achieve something. That's what needed more than ever just now as so many people feel in light of COVID that there's no point in doing anything anymore. That is what GCP is about – it recognises what people can do, it is supportive of them and we are all around for each other as a community.

## Alfie – A Member's story . . .

My name is Alfie and I have been a member of Grassmarket Community Project for a few years now.

I came along to GCP on the advice of my health worker. They recommended a number of different initiatives and projects to help me with my anxiety, to help me socialise and get involved in a number of things. Before I came along, I had a number of life experiences where I was made to feel really small – made to think that the things I was trying to achieve were things to hide rather than be proud of. It took away a lot of my confidence and I became ill because of it.

What surprised me the most about when I started with GCP was how easy and quick it was to get involved. People were really friendly and you didn't need lots of training to get on with things. GCP is a great place to be part of. It doesn't matter who you are, where you come from or what your experience is – you are treated as a person here. It makes it a very special community. Its not that folk are intrusive – they just ask you how you are and it all feels really personal. It feels like a really caring place.

Obviously, I came along to GCP long before COVID was even a thought. What I liked then was learning and doing new and different things. I was taken out of my comfort zone in what I could do but I was never made to feel uncomfortable about what I was doing. I've taken part in lots of the different activities but I particularly like the creative ones. What I really like is that I have developed skills in areas that I never knew I had. Not only that, now that I have those skills, I can help other people develop them when they ask me questions. It makes me feel good to help people and gives me a sense of community. It helps bring me out of my shell. I have always been someone who liked to help other people and I can do

that here. This is a place where its not just about being here, its also about being able to give back. I don't feel that I'm just using a resource, a service. I feel that I can make a positive contribution to the community.

The member lunches are really appreciated by the members. For myself, I like the chance to chat with people. It's a good opportunity to share and also give support. It is nice to be there when someone wants to get something off their chest and in the lunch setting, you are able to do that. I was anxious about going to the Christmas meals but it has been very enjoyable.

Like everyone, COVID has had a huge impact on me and my lifestyle. I was amazed how quickly GCP rallied round and was able to do things so quickly when it all started. I am involved in other activities in other places and GCP was the first to do anything. Some of the others are closed even now.

I particularly liked the zoom events that were set up so quickly – it was great to still be able to take part in sessions. I particularly liked that GCP reached out to members straight away and asked what we can do to help and improve things. I hope the zoom sessions keep going as its really good to be able to attend from home. I think it's opened the door to activities from home as well as at the Grassmarket.

I'm also really glad to be able to come back into the building. It forces me out and that can be so hard with all the pressures of COVID. I know the numbers that can attend aren't the same as before but that and all the safety things like sanitiser and masks helps me feel really safe when I come along. That's really important to me.










GCP is a place where members can suggest and the staff try their best to accommodate where possible. You are made to feel like a valuable member. I find it hard to look forward into the future but I can say that I am still here, I am still taking part and GCP is a valuable part of my life. That is such a huge achievement for me. While I've still got a way to go, it has given me things which I can build on.

GCP will allow me to take bigger steps in the future and to develop my confidence. No matter what I do, I would like GCP to be a part of my life. It allows me to take time out for things that are important for my needs. A big thanks to everyone involved in the GCP.





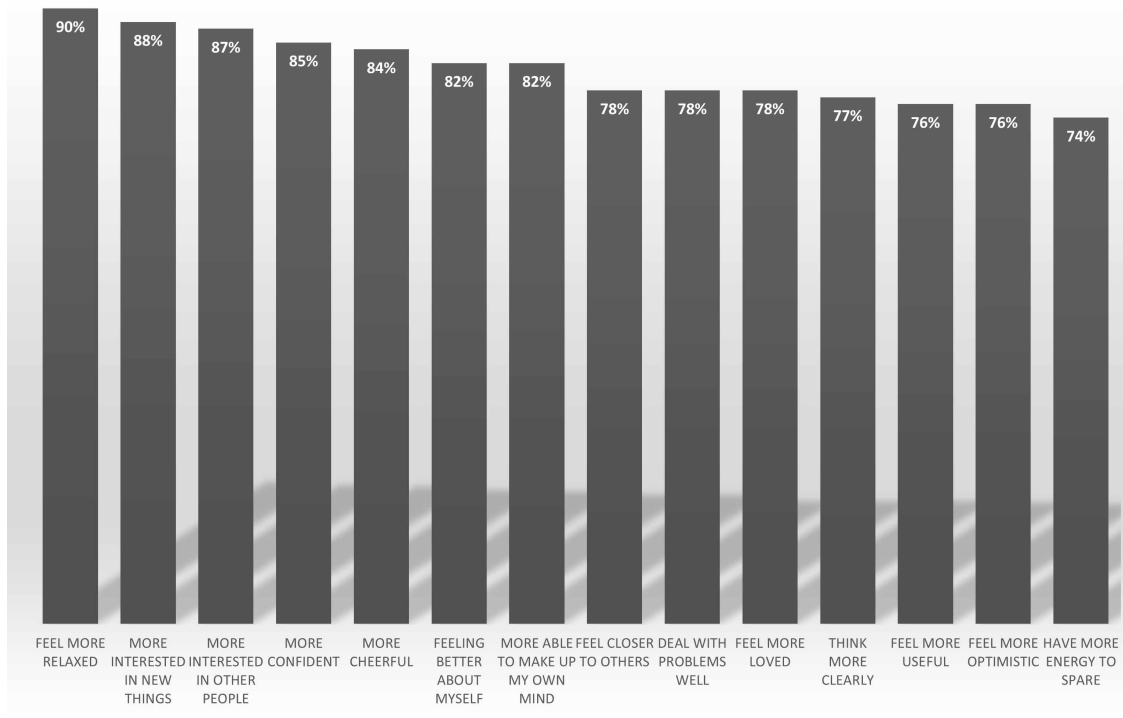
## GCP in numbers Nov 2019 to Oct 2020

	<p>5,643 meals delivered to people's homes over 16 weeks</p> <p>49 members fed 3 times a week (6 meals a week) over lockdown</p>
	<p>5,270 meals served to members at our centre over 34 weeks</p> <p>838 meals served to people who are homeless, rough sleeping or vulnerably housed over 29 weeks (highest attendance 60 in 1 night)</p>
	<p>1224 activities held in the centre (69% pre C19 and 31% post August)</p> <p>195 members attended activities at the project pre and post C19 with 154 activities delivered since partial reopening on site</p>
	<p>561 vulnerable people registered or attended (including our members and drop in meal attendees)</p> <p>285 remain engaged in activity, receive support or wish to return post shielding.</p>
	<p>852 hours of on line engagement with 142 individual members connected on line (highest attendance 64 members online at our Birthday party)</p> <p>272 online activities delivered during lockdown (16 weeks)</p>
	<p>711 letters sent to members since April</p> <p>173 wrote back to us using our freepost address!</p>
	<p>17 members received a home visit/support during lock down</p> <p>8 have received home visits since partial reopening</p>
	<p>278 walk n talk (virtual walks) completed involving 40 members</p> <p>37 members taken part since re-commencing August in person walks</p>
	<p>69 members phoned every week of the lockdown</p> <p>403 in total 'support' (30 minutes or more) phone calls made (48 members received one or more phone call for one hour or more)</p>

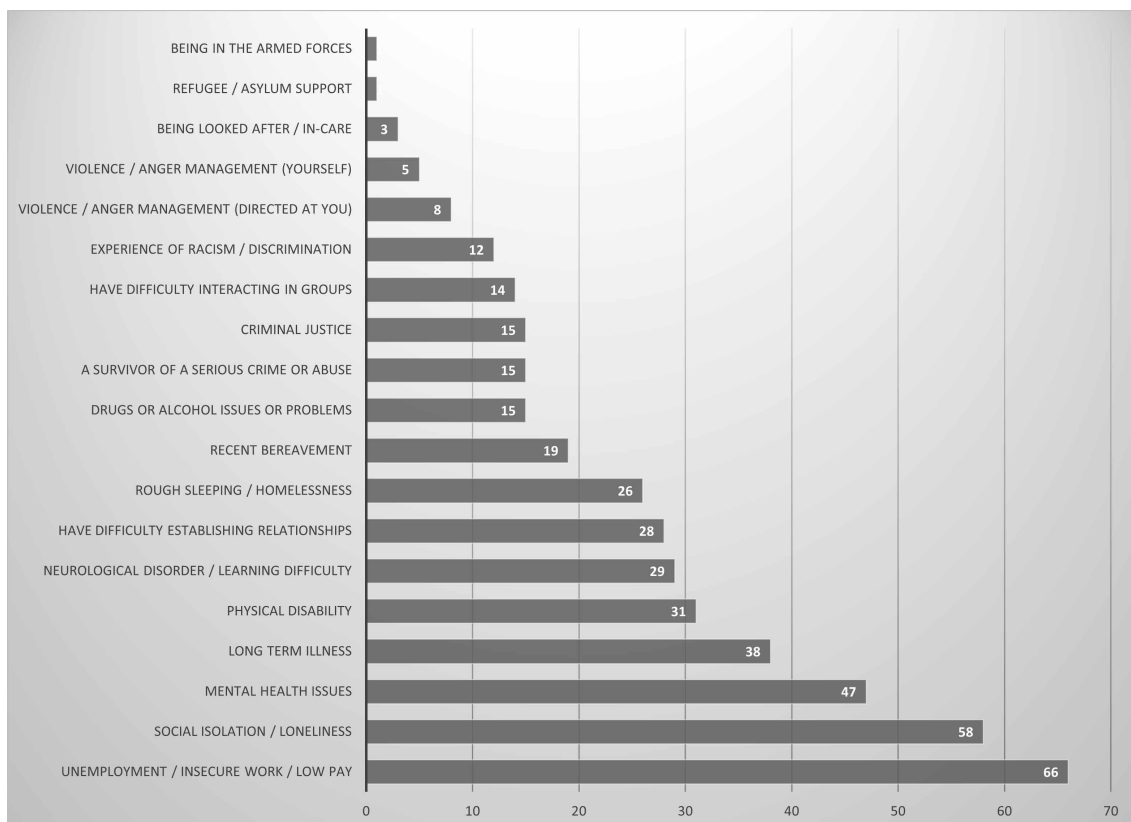
## Members Comments . . .

"A place that feels safe"; "Its is a family to me and made me feel it mattered if I was alive"; "I can't imagine my life without the Grassmarket project it gives me a purpose to carry on, knowing there are people here I can depend on and that also depend on me."; "As long as I have GCP I know I am not alone."; "A wonderful, caring community."

## This is what our members have told us they have felt because of attending GCP in person or on-line this year



## These are the issues that face our members





## In the last 12 months, we have . . .

- Established our 7th social enterprise at Meadowbank Stadium – a canteen service for Graham construction
- Delivered accredited First at Work Courses to 4 apprentices and 2 Volunteers
- Delivered SQAs (Craft Skills) to 2 woodwork apprentices & Reading/Writing (Communications) to 3 members
- Delivered a 3 night residential over Christmas to 9 members thanks to Mercat.
- Supported 3 young people apprentices (75%) into employment
- Upcycled £27,457 worth of Church pews and disregarded wood
- Registered 561 members on our GDPR compliant database [with 287 choosing to receive email bulletins & texts every week reaching out to many of the most isolated]
- Engaged 23% of our members in social enterprise activities
- Funded 9 members to attend 10 week Counselling Programmes
- Supported 4 university student placements/interns as well as supported 6 members to deliver an online workshop to 67 social work students In partnership with Edinburgh Uni Community Social Work
- Engaged 87 volunteers including: members, local volunteers, local school pupils, businesses, corporations, international students and Erasmus EVS volunteers.



# Financial Information 2019

## Financial Income 2019

### Enterprise Income (£721k / 58%)

	2019	% of Total	2018	Difference	% Increase or decrease on 2018
Catering Sales	£511,479	41%	£336,793	£174,686	+ 52%
Events Sales	£120,302	10%	£135,828	- £15,526	- 11%
Furniture Sales	£73,375	6%	£85,849	- £12,474	+ 15%
Textile Sales	£4,963		£4,648	£315	+ 7%
Other income	£11,226	1%	£12,192	- £966	- 8%

### Grants & Donations (£518k / 42%)

Grants	£323,840	26%	£217,792	£106,048	+ 49%
Donations	£189,686	15%	£70,089	£119,597	+ 171%
Gift Aid	£3,538		£3,351	£187	+6%
Investments	£694		£513	£181	+ 35%
<b>Total</b>	<b>£1,239,103</b>		<b>£867,055</b>	<b>£372,048</b>	<b>+ 43%</b>

## Financial Expenditure 2019

Salaries	£490,576	45%	£479,550	£11,026	+ 2%
Consumables & Non Consumables	£217,660	20%	£141,062	£76,598	+ 54%
Project Delivery/Support Costs	£154,848	14%	£71,397	£83,451	+ 117%
Rent & Rates	£31,857	3%	£23,495	£8,362	+ 36%
Members, Staff & Volunteer Training	£31,569	3%	£13,717	£17,852	+ 130%
Repairs, Maintenance & Cleaning	£29,451	3%	£36,495	- £7,044	- 19%
Travel & Expenses	£28,453	3%	£4,625	£23,828	+ 515%
Depreciation	£25,241	2%	£19,426	£5,815	+ 30%
Heat & Light	£21,470	2%	£16,255	£5,215	+ 32%
Administrative Costs incl Stationary	£19,179	2%	£13,691	£5,488	+ 40%
Small equipment	£8,065	1%	£7,174	£891	+ 12%
Marketing	£5,909	1%	£12,025	- £6,116	- 51%
Legal, Audit & Accountancy Fees	£3,753		£5,448	- £1,695	- 31%
Insurance	£3,644		£2,653	£991	+ 37%
Telephone	£3,409		£2,519	£890	+ 35%
Transport	£3,109		£2,412	£697	+ 29%
Irrecoverable VAT	£1,079		£3,222	- £2,143	- 67%
<b>Total</b>	<b>£1,079,272</b>		<b>£855,166</b>		
<b>Surplus</b>	<b>£159,831</b>		<b>£11,889</b>		

**Restricted funds £214,712 (£46,516 in 2018) – Mostly courtyard extension**

**Unrestricted funds £236,153 (£244,518 in 2018)**





# Acknowledgements

Most importantly we would like to thank our members: without you there would be no community and no safe, supportive and nurturing environment to welcome people. Thank you

We would also like to thank our founders Grassmarket Mission and Greyfriars Kirk. You are the rock upon which we stand, our 'parents' and we hope you're proud of how far we have come in 10 years.

A huge thank you to the hundreds of people who have volunteered with us over the last year – many of them joined us during the lockdown and have stayed. From teaching sewing or photography, to grafting away in our busy kitchen or delivering food across the city, to calling members and offering support, undertaking admin tasks or going on a walk n talk, to running our creative writing or history classes, to being on our Board of Trustees and safeguarding our mission – you are critical to our success and survival.

**Finally, thank you to our incredible, dedicated and professional staff team who frequently astound us with their commitment, flexibility and contribution to this community. Many of them volunteered for us or took a reduction in pay to help us in the COVID crisis or have been through staffing consultations or had their hours reduced. It has been an exceptionally tough year for you and yet you stood beside our charity, supported the most vulnerable and remained supportive and encouraging of the SMT, the Board and your colleagues. Thank you.**

## Thank you to our funders

Action Earth – Grab a Grant

Andrew McAlpine

Augustine United Church

Awards for All

Baird Trust

Baldoukie Charitable Trust

Balfour Beattie

BAM

Bank of Scotland Foundation

Barcapel

Binks Trust

Castle Chorus

Central Edinburgh Quaker Meeting

Christine Price Clark Charitable Trust

Church of Scotland Church & Orchards Fund

City of Edinburgh Employer Recruitment Incentive

Clothworkers Foundation

CMS Cameron McKenna Foundation

Compulsion Gamers

Co-op Local Community Fund

Cyrenians

Edinburgh & Dean Dance

Elsbeth Crawford

Erasmus+ European Commission EU

Faith in Community

Foundation Scotland

Grant McLennan

Grassmarket Mission

Greyfriars Kirk

Hope Trust

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James Cook

Janie Conlon

John Lewis Partnership

Katie Walker

Kevin & Sally Robinson (Kiltwalkers)

Kirsty McLachlan

Lankelley Chase

Linda Kirby

Longniddry Parish Church

Madeline Squire

Mamas/O'Oliverio

Marshgate Charitable Settlement

Matthew Barrowcliffe

MBM Commercial

Mercat Tours

Micah Trust

Michael Glienecke

Mungoswells Malt & Milling

Nancy Massey Charitable Trust

Neighbourly Community Fund

NHS Lothian

Penpont Charitable Trust

People's Postcode Lottery

Remakery & Leith Housing

Resilient Scotland

Robertson Trust

Rotary Club of Edinburgh

Rutterford Holdings

Sahara Boutique

Sainsburys St Andrews Square

Scotch Whisky Experience

Scottish Tech Army

Sir Tom Farmer Foundation

Social Bite

Social Economy Growth Fund

[EU/ Scottish Government]

St Columba's by the Castle

St Giles' Cathedral

Tesco Bags for Help

The Gloag Foundation

The MacDougall Kiltwalkers

The National Lottery Community Fund

The Orchard Project

The Ryvoan Trust

The Scottish Government

The Society of High

Constables of Edinburgh

Thomas Findlay

Transformation &

Growth Fund

Viewforth Trust

Waitrose Morningside

William Grant Foundation

Wolfson Foundation

Zest Café

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