



grassmarket

community project

ANNUAL REPORT
2021



“Grassmarket is a family which has been there to support me.”

Member, 2021

Letter from the Chair

This year marks another significant moment in the life and development of The Grassmarket Community Project. Once more we have had to move out of our building in order to enable further building work to accommodate our ever increasing activity. We have begun construction of the pavilion building in the courtyard. There are all sorts of benefits we anticipate will emerge from this development, in spite of the short period of disruption.

The new pavilion will provide a designated space for our café and allow the foyer in the centre to be less congested at busy times. It will revert to being a space for members, whilst, when the café is not in use, the pavilion will be available for members' activities.

The location of the pavilion adjacent to the pavement should also attract people as they pass. I am sure that many of you over the years will have noticed people walking by a peering into the building curious to know what the Grassmarket Community Project building is and whether it is open to the public. Our new pavilion should make that welcome clearer.

In addition to this exciting development, we have enjoyed the opening of Coffee Saints, our latest social enterprise in the undercroft of the Catholic Cathedral and opposite the new St James Quarter. I have to say that the energy, hard work and creativity that has gone into this new venture is quite extraordinary. Catherine Jones and her team have to be congratulated for a wonderful and promising start to this wonderful enterprise. I am also very excited to see what emerges as we enter more full into a partnership with the Edinburgh Remakery, a fine social enterprise based in Leith, using our new warehouse in Granton.

There is so much to write about and commend in the energy of the people of the Grassmarket Community Project. It is not possible to list everything or everyone in this brief letter. I continue to be humbled by the way in which our community has coped with and overcome the restrictions and challenges of the Covid-19 Pandemic. It feels as though we have come out of this grim time stronger than ever.

When I came to be minister at Greyfriars Kirk in 2003, I had a very clear vision of

what we might be able to achieve. My journey of faith had led me to believe that whatever the church is about, it should first and foremost be about building loving, supportive relationships, enabling people to flourish and feel a sense of belonging discovering that all our lives can be of use to others. I also believe that our task is to build a community of justice where no one is discarded or written off and that we can stand in protest against forces that work against human and environmental flourishing and actually embody that alternative 'social' economy.

At the beginning of our journey in creating the Grassmarket Community Project, I was always a bit hesitant about speaking of faith. I didn't want people to think that there was any ulterior motive other than those I have just described above. So many church based activities seem to be about capturing people for the church. I have actually heard a fellow minister say that he set up a mother and toddler group in his church in order to try to get more young people coming to his services on a Sunday. He then went on to express his disappointment that this didn't work out. I didn't say this to him, but I wasn't surprised. If you have hidden motives for doing something, people will see right through them.

I feel proud of the entire Grassmarket Community team, members, volunteers and staff, some of whom may be people of faith and others not, but who share the values with which the project was founded. What always intrigues me is the extent to which, over the years, I have seen profound spirituality, compassion and love emerging in our community. Something of what religious people mean when we talk of the presence of the Spirit is at work in the Grassmarket Community Project, even though we have not set out to 'catch' people for the church. And, when I say I had a clear vision of what we might be able to achieve all those years ago, I couldn't have dreamt of just how far and gloriously things would develop. What a team of stars we have!

Thank you to everyone over the years who has any part to play in creating this wonderful, creative and purposeful community.

**Rev. Dr. Richard Frazer,
Chairperson, Board of Trustees**

“GCP has been a lifeline to my sanity during lockdown.” Member, 2021

“You guys saved me both physically and mentally and I cannot thank you enough.” Member, 2021

Nigel – A member’s story . . .

Although describing themselves as being in recovery, living with adverse childhood experiences, having PTSD, dyscalculia (a persistent difficulty with numbers), and other cognitive impairments such as short-term memory issues, to us, Nigel is a much loved and appreciated member of GCP. Nigel tells us what the GCP means to them:

Many of my friends are from the homeless community and they all strongly recommended the GCP and for me to give it a try, so I joined in August 2021. Since then, I have found the GCP a godsend. From the moment I came in for my induction I felt safe, respected, and reassured. This was significant/important to me as I have previously had a lot of negative experiences in Recovery Groups which made me even more nervous about coming to the GCP. I am so glad that I was brave enough to make that first step and give the place a shot. I think the place is awesome. It is a very good and open place. In fact, I have even recommended it to a friend.

Within weeks I was really understanding the place and making friends. I now feel like home here and that it is going almost too well, you know. I have never been to a place like this, where I have never been laughed at or made fun of.

I have taken to 3 or 4 groups but hope to try more soon. My favourite group is Art as that is my passion and because it provides a safe and welcoming space for me to express myself and to be creative. Other groups I enjoy are Health and Wellbeing, Reading and Writing, and IT.

I find Health and Wellbeing is extremely helpful for improving my sleep. I love the Reading and Writing group as it's such a peaceful class and it has given me the confidence to now try to combine my writing with my art. While IT has been a miracle group for me. Everyone is so understanding and supportive which is great as I have a real fear of using computers and phones. Thanks to everyone at the GCP. I hope to give something back in the future by becoming a volunteer one day.

Financial information 2020

Financial Income 2020	2020	% of Total	2019	Difference	% Increase or Decrease on 2019
Enterprise Income (£280K/ 35%)					
Catering Sales	£199,086	25%	£511,479	-£312,393	-61%
Events Sales	£20,163	3%	£120,302	-£100,139	-83%
Furniture Sales	£50,970	6%	£73,375	-£22,405	-31%
Textile Sales	£4,389		£4,963	-£574	-12%
Other Income	£5,774		£11,226	-£5,452	-49%
Grants & Donations (£517K/ 65%)					
Grants	£315,166	40%	£323,840	-£8,674	-3%
Donations	£92,092	12%	£189,686	-£97,594	-51%
Gift Aid	£3,172		£3,538	-£366	-10%
Investments	£1,439		£694	£745	107%
Coronavirus Job retention scheme	£105,210	13%			
Total	£797,461		£1,239,103	-£546,852	-36%
Financial Expenditure 2020					
Salaries and staff costs	£454,740	58%	£490,576	-£35,836	-7%
Project Delivery/Support Costs	£81,855	10%	£154,848	-£72,993	-47%
Direct Costs	£102,090	13%	£226,678	-£124,588	-55%
Premise Costs	£77,579	10%	£94,487	-£16,908	-18%
Administrative Costs	£40,100	5%	£82,610	-£42,510	-51%
Depreciation	£23,955	3%	£25,241	-£1,286	-5%
Irrecoverable VAT	£1,784		£1,079	£705	65%
Legal Fees	£403		£187	£216	116%
Audit Fee	£3,184		£3,084	£100	3%
Accountancy Fee	£628		£482	£146	30%
Total	£786,318		£1,079,272		
Surplus	£11,143		£159,831		

Restricted funds £167,310 (£214,712 in 2019)

Unrestricted funds £294,698 (£236,153 in 2019)

“Thank you for taking time to check up on me.” Member, 2021

Acknowledgements

Firstly and mostly we thank our members – without you there would be no community and no safe, supportive, and nurturing environment to welcome people. We also thank our founders Grassmarket Mission and Greyfriars Kirk and hope they remain proud of how far we have come and what we have achieved with their foundation and support.

A huge thank you to the hundreds of people who have, and continue to, volunteer with us. From serving at the Open Door Meals, assisting our activities, facilitating our community cinema, lending a hand during our move, leading creative writing, mindfulness, and history classes, supporting our social enterprises, to safeguarding our mission and being on the Board of Trustees. Thank you for helping, welcoming, cooking, driving, teaching, supporting, encouraging, planning, and promoting our values – you are critical to our success and survival.

Thank you to our many donors, customers and core funders (listed below). Especially in the light of COVID-19 we would not survive and thrive without your continued support and your recognition of how critical our community is to the most vulnerable.

Finally, thank you to our incredible, dedicated, and professional staff team who frequently astound us with their commitment, flexibility, and contribution to this community.



Thank you to our funders

Agnes Hunter Trust
Arnold Clark
Augustine United Church
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Baird Trust
Bank of Scotland Foundation
Barcapel Foundation
Basil Death Trust
BFI Intermission Fund
Binks Trust
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Faith in Community Scotland
Foundation Scotland/Resilient Scotland
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Garfield Weston Foundation
Gloag Foundation
Grassmarket Mission

Greyfriars Kirk
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William Grant Foundation
Wolfson Foundation

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"a good place to be"