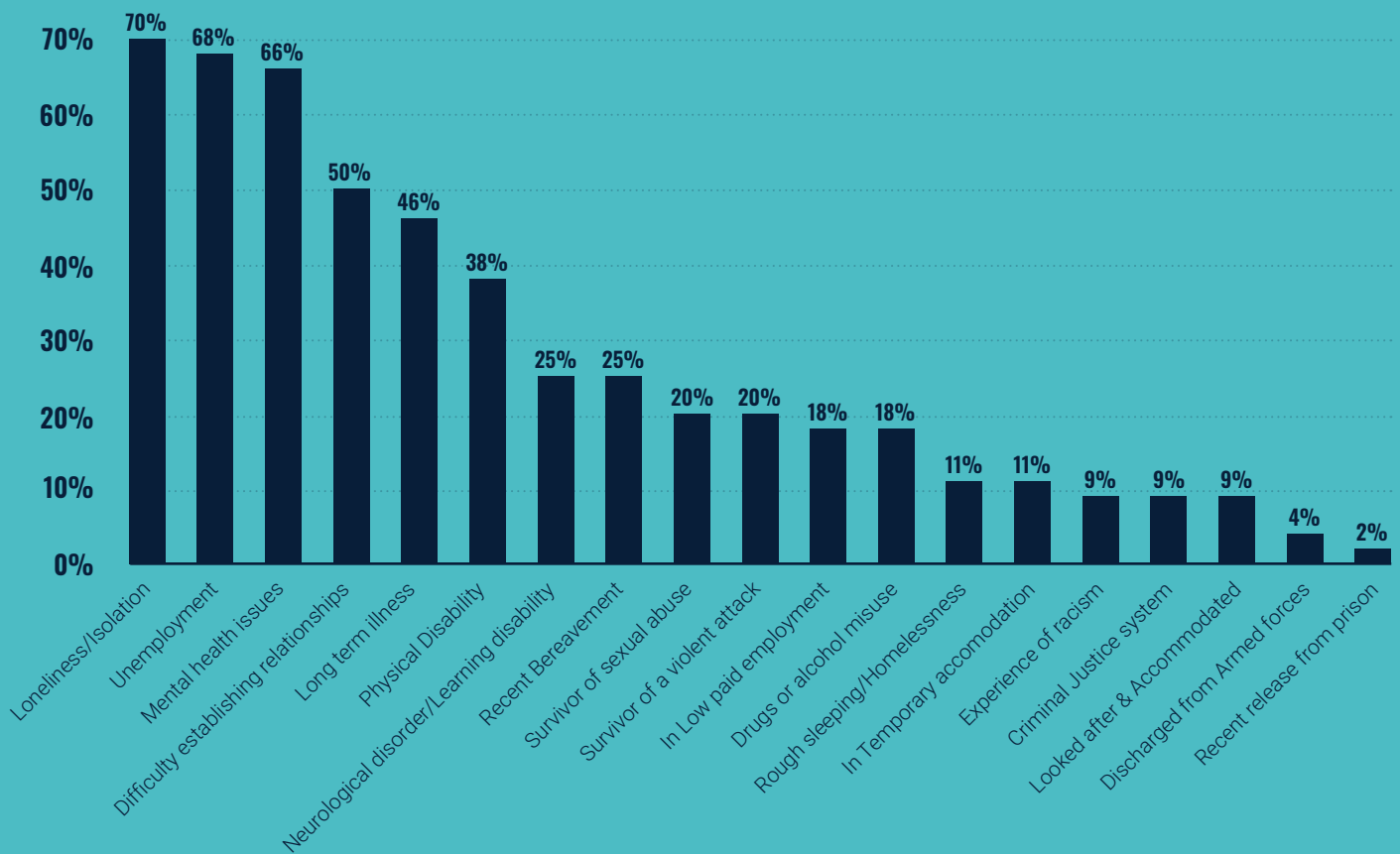




Grassmarket Community Project

# **SOCIAL IMPACT REPORT 2021**

# WHAT ISSUES OUR MEMBERS FACED AT REFERRAL/SELF-REFERRAL



## ESTABLISHED

9th Social Enterprise: Coffee Saints Café

## WINNER

Employer of the Year 2021  
Edinburgh Chamber of Commerce Business Awards

## WINNER

Peter Cargin Award for Outstanding Individual:  
Rohan Crickmar (GCP film Staff/volunteer)  
UK Cinema For All Awards

## DIVERTED

Approximately 2,679 metres [809m<sup>2</sup>] 17 tonnes of waste wood into stunning furniture. [approx. equiv. to 30.1 tonnes of CO<sup>2</sup>]

## WINNER

Best Digital Participation Programme 2021  
UK Cinema For All Awards

## WINNER

Most Ethical Home Furniture Makers in Scotland 2021  
Build Magazine Home & Garden Awards

# HOW GCP HAS IMPACTED THE WELLBEING OF OUR MEMBERS

Using the Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Well-being Scale we asked Members to indicate how GCP impacted their wellbeing. The follow % of Members experienced these 'more often' or 'almost all of the time' as a result of GCP:



## GCP HAS ENABLED ME TO...

(Top 5)

32%

Reach my potential

34%

Be me and know myself more

61%

Leave the house more often

53%

Make friends

27%

Volunteer

# A MEMBER'S STORY...

**I left school early as I did not enjoy it and became an Electronic Technician Apprentice. Eventually, I started a full-time technician job while taking on a part time electronic engineer course.**

Just as I was on the launch pad of my adult life - working, married with a family - I started to get immense headaches – the wave of pain was intense. Something broke and my body collapsed. The more I forced myself, the worse I got. Exercise resulted in excessive fatigue. My nervous system was shot to bits causing me a lot of anxiety and panic attacks, which are still there today. I think this was from a lot of unresolved traumas from when I was growing up.

**“My nervous system was shot to bits causing me a lot of anxiety and panic attacks, which are still there today.”**

I loved sports, working, studying, playing the guitar but all this was taken away from me. It was life changing. It was as if my life had been detonated underneath me. The fatigue and pain were debilitating and soul destroying, and still are. Basically, I was at the bottom of the barrel, bedbound with my body unable to fix itself. Thought I was going insane.

It was and still is like my main electric power supply has been cut off and only the emergency lighting came back on. I am running only at 5-10% power levels. Consequently, I was prescribed tranquilizers which helped me return to work but were very addictive. In the end, I took

early retirement with an 11 year tranquilizer addiction. It was at this point I stopped taking tranquilizers, despite the horrific withdrawal symptoms. Leaving me feeling permanently damaged with a life of severe depression and anxiety with a lot of physical fatigue and cognitive impairments.

Most dangerous part of my life was the 11yrs I was addicted to tranquilizers. Ever since I have refused drugs and have been looking for a non-pharmacological avenue to getting well. I have attended numerous local agencies over the years – some let me down, others cast me adrift. Plus so called friends turned on me and bullied me – felt like I was open wound always being poked at. It was cutting me up inside – tearing me apart. Being treated like I didn't exist. This left me very isolated – on my own - and I couldn't cope. I had lost confidence with people and travelling, my world shrank down till it became just my bedroom as I was too anxious to venture outdoors.

**“My world shrank down till it became just my bedroom as I was too anxious to venture outdoors.”**

Covid lockdowns only exacerbated my symptoms and feelings of social isolation. Then in February 2020 I discovered the GCP. Really didn't know too much about the GCP but soon discovered it to be a place that really agreed with me. It provides me with a safe space to make new friends and try new groups. The staff and volunteers were and are great and very supportive, advising that I just go at my own pace at first.

**“It provides me with a safe space to make new friends and try new groups.”**

I started with the Intersci group as this was the smallest group and I am interested in science and learning. (I absorb information very quickly, I think I am on the autistic spectrum, a bit of autism about me) This group was invaluable to helping me gradually build up my confidence to join the bigger Writing group.

I was very anxious around company in my first writing group and was agitated at first, but everyone was so welcoming and friendly which helped me a lot. I soon got over my initial anxiety and with each passing week felt more and more comfortable with sharing my work and receiving feedback.

Reading out loud to people used to be a shaky business but that little push of encouragement to put myself out there really helped. That space and interaction to receive peer feedback was and is invaluable to my development. No other agency I've been to does that. Taking on a group at a time, acted like a step up or a ladder each time.

Every group let me just sit in the first few weeks to allow me to test the water without any pressure being put on me.

**“No other agency I've been to does that. Taking on a group at a time, acted like a step up or a ladder each time”**

# 327

Members engaged in positive activities and support

295 (80%) sustained<sup>3</sup> engagement 53 (18%) of these new referrals in 2021

# 1,294

Free meals were served to people who are vulnerable housed/destitute<sup>5</sup>

# 4,410

Free two course lunches were served to Members

# 104

An average of 104 Members attended<sup>5</sup> each month

Highest attendance 138 – lowest attendance 83 unique individuals in a month

# 4,220

Hours of activities and classes were run

29 engagement activities a week for 48 weeks plus 12-day trips & 1 three-day residential

# 98%

Of Members said<sup>1</sup> they would recommend the Project highly

# 95%

Rated the sessions 'good/  
excellent will definitely return'

4.5% rated them 'ok, will try again'

# 70%

Of Members said<sup>1</sup> they have  
learnt something new

64% feel significantly less isolated & 53% feel they  
now have someone they can trust in their life

# 74%

Of Members demonstrated  
increased confidence

64% felt significantly less isolated & 53% felt they  
now have someone they can trust in their life

# 97%

Of Members demonstrated  
improved mental health  
or wellbeing

As a result of attending the GCP

# 16

New jobs were created this year

9 of these are trainee positions (pre/Modern  
Apprenticeships & Kickstart) benefiting from  
additional training & targeted at young people  
thanks to funders, partners and customers.

**2021** Reporting on November 2020 to October 2021 inclusive  
throughout this report unless otherwise stated

- 1** 'Members said' feedback was obtained from 65  
Members consulted anonymously in our Members  
Consultation June 21
- 2** 'Members demonstrated' was obtained from analysing  
the 729 Evaluations Forms completed by activity leaders  
in consultation with Members
- 3** Two terms or more attendance or requested to be kept in  
touch with weekly
- 4** Vulnerably housed/destitute includes people who are  
roughsleeping, homeless, in temporary accommodation,  
isolated or have no recourse to public funds
- 5** Attended includes both in-person and on-line classes  
or activities

# WHAT OUR MEMBERS TOLD US THIS YEAR ABOUT GCP:

**“It is a mental and physical lifeline. I’d simply fade away without it.”**

“It has given me the opportunity to acquire new gardening skills and provided me with a place that I can study in.”

“It is a social hub for the most vulnerable people to connect with the community. As someone recovering from a very traumatic past I can personally attest to this fact. I think the model of social integration should be transferred up and down the breadth of Scotland.”

“It gets me out the house.”

“It has opened my mind and now I have many happy memories where I previously had none.”



"It is an excellent organisation where staff and volunteers helped me get through the covid experience."

"It has been essential for my mental health."

"I love, worship and adore. The people are diamonds shining brightly."

"It brought me to other people, to meet other people and brought me strength."

"It's a place of genuine goodness which helped me get going."

"It has provided a safe space for me to meet new people."

"It's been a critical contact during lockdown."

"It's good, it's like a part of my family for me."

"GCP aligns very closely with my own belief in community. It confirms that I am not living in a bubble."

"It's brilliant, it helped me talk and come out of my shell."

"It's made me feel happy, confident and more respectful of other people's opinions."

"It's an amazing place that at once gave me confidence and made me feel good."

"It's helped me with healthy eating and health and wellbeing and now I have started going swimming - learning to be more active all because of GCP."

# SOCIAL ENTERPRISE

Thanks to our amazing customers and partners (especially St Mary's Cathedral for Coffee Saints premises and the Hub Foundation for young person-specific funding) we now employ 21 staff in our social enterprises. 9 (42%) of these were previously unemployed and have additional learning needs or supported characteristics as GCP is passionate about giving young and vulnerable adults a better chance in life to realise their potential, especially those with fewer opportunities.

Despite COVID lockdowns, forced closures and restrictions in numbers of staff and trainees that can safely work in our social enterprises in 2021 we achieved (see right):

## £221,000

Of combined sales from social enterprise commercial activity [Nov 20-Oct 21]

## 3,432

Hours of work experience delivered in Woodwork & furniture making

## 1,295

Hours of Textiles skills development delivered

## 650

Hours of Catering accredited Modern Apprenticeship experience

## OUR ACTIVITIES & SERVICES

Ranking	Activity/service	Number Benefitted	Ranking	Activity/service	Number Benefitted
1	<b>Telephone Support</b>	317	13	Tartan Skills	55
2	IT Skills	284	14	<b>History</b>	52
3	Art	161	15	<b>Yoga</b>	36
4	Walking	129	16	Herb Garden	35
5	Woodwork	121	17	<b>Open Book</b>	33
6	Reading & Writing	116	18	Tartan Enterprise	32
7	Wellbeing	106	19	Home support	23
8	<b>Creative Writing</b>	67	20	Day Trips & Residentials	14
9	<b>Guitar</b>	63	21	Engagement Group	13
10	<b>Coffee Break</b>	60	22	<b>Cooking</b>	10
11	<b>Walk &amp; Talk (Virtual walking)</b>	60	23	Steering Group	9
12	Choir	56	24	<b>Cinema Chat</b>	5

**Bold** = online or phone-based (some partial)

# YOUNG PEOPLE & TRAINING

12

Young people have been engaged with in 2021  
8 since July our enhanced Young Persons employability programme

106

Hours of accredited training have been delivered  
6 young people have gained industry accredited certificates  
or qualifications

## COURSES HAVE INCLUDED...

- Microsoft PowerPoint
- Effective Communication
- First-Aid
- Microsoft Excel
- Microsoft Outlook
- Nutrition & Healthy Eating
- LGBTQ+ Awareness
- Equality & Diversity
- Resilience Training
- Environmental Awareness
- COSHH
- Customer Service Skills

## YOUNG PEOPLE TOLD US THIS YEAR..

“Every course gives a good, brief understanding and if it’s something I know or have done before, it is still informative because the content is a refresher or sometimes an update, which is easy to access, a not too complicated and everything is altogether.”

“I have gained confidence in the workshop and the programme has helped in other areas of my personal life, like organisation, punctuality, social interaction and mental health.”

“It has helped me gain more confidence and gain a routine.”

# VOLUNTEERING

Volunteering is critical to GCP's success. Volunteers are vital to our being able to assist Members in their recovery, reconnection to themselves and others, adopting a healthier lifestyle and taking care of their mental and physical health.

Volunteer roles are diverse and spread across the city and our activities. Investing in Volunteers is not only essential so people feel appreciated and appropriately skilled but also as means of meeting other volunteers across the wider project and supporting one another.

Volunteers told us this year...

"I have always got back more than I contributed – I have experienced the best interactions that human beings are capable of."

"I really enjoy Volunteering for the project. I find it rewarding and satisfying to see people change. I love being part of the team. Well done for all your hard work in making this project so successful. It is like one big family. A lifeline for Members and they clearly get so much out of it."



grassmarket  
community project

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Design by Ruth Kirby Organ

# 165

Volunteers on our active database of people with time, skills and compassion. 37 are Members (20%) who volunteer as part of their support to increase their confidence.

# 2,242

Hours collectively volunteered despite the COVID-19 restrictions

# 66

New volunteers out of 121 enquiries have been put through their induction

# 35

35 Volunteers have participated in training in First Aid, Mental Health, group management and walking group leader.