

Recovery 2:

Peer support in West Dunbartonshire 2011



**West Dunbartonshire
Mental Health Forum**
moving ahead...

West Dunbartonshire Mental Health Forum

Who we are

West Dunbartonshire Mental Health Forum represents people with mental health problems and their carers.

- We raise awareness about the issues that affect people.
- We work with many organisations to improve the services that provide care and support when people are unwell.
- We also work to improve the opportunities for people to have a good quality of life and be part of their community.
- The Forum has good working relationships with many organisations. We are part of Working Groups that help plan and take forward local and national policies and services.

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Where to find out more

West Dunbartonshire Mental Health Forum
Room 2, Benview Resource Centre
Strathleven Place
Dumbarton, G82 1BA
Tel: 01389 742294
Email: wd.mhf@btconnect.com
www.wdmhf.co.uk

About this event

What we did

The Recovery 2 event was organised by the members of the Forum and people from a wide range of organisations. It built on a successful event which we had held in 2010.

The focus this year was on Peer Support.

We had a mix of speakers to share good ideas that we are developing locally and hear about national research and good ideas from other places.

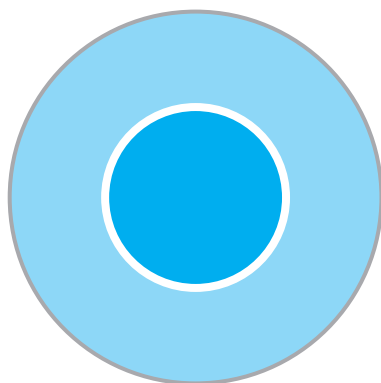
These are the main topics that we covered

- Peer support and Recovery.
- Ways to have meaningful activities.
- Employability.
- Being part of the community.

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These are some of the organisations who worked with us:

- West Dunbartonshire Community Health and Care Partnership.
- Goldenhill Resource Centre, Work Connect, Stepping Stones, CAOS and other groups in West Dunbartonshire.
- Mental Health in Mind Forum Theatre and Buddy Beat.
- Scottish Recovery Network and Breathing Space.



We want to thank everyone who helped with the planning and on the day, and everyone who took part.

What people said



“You need to remember all the good things that are happening in West Dunbartonshire.”

Richard Leckerman, Breathing Space

“Last year’s event got a lot of people thinking. Today is again about showing what is possible and making us think differently.”

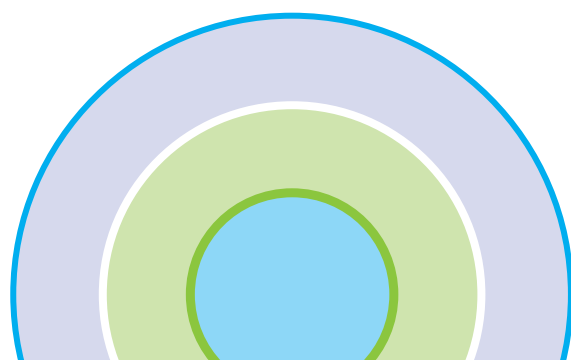
John Russell, Head of Mental Health, Learning Disabilities and Addiction services, West Dunbartonshire Community Health and Care Partnership

“Very well put together. Held interest throughout.”

“Good to have range of stalls with information from local and national organisations as well as the speakers. It makes recovery something real.”

“Conference was even better than last year’s.”

Some of the quotes in this report came from speakers and we’ve noted who they were. All the other quotes are from people who took part in the event.



Peer support

What it is

Peer support is any situation where people who have a shared experience or situation give support to each other in a way that is built on respect, shared responsibility and a shared agreement about what is useful in that situation.

There are different types of peer support and relationships.

- Informal support.
- Self-help and mutual aid groups.
- Volunteer befriending.
- Peer support workers.

We heard about examples of several types of peer support at our event.

Scottish Recovery Network

Lesley Smith from the Scottish Recovery Network talked about the Peer Support Workers, who are based in mental health services across Scotland and share their experiences around Recovery with people at an earlier stage in their recovery journey.

This is the record of what SRN are doing:



Where to find out more

The Scottish Recovery Network has material about peer support workers, including the evaluation of the pilot posts and the development of formal qualifications for people taking on this role.

<http://www.scottishrecovery.net/Peer-Support/peer-support.html>

The SRN Narrative Research project gathered personal stories from many people about their recovery. For many people, peer support was a large part of their recovery. You can read the personal recovery stories on the website:

<http://www.scottishrecovery.net/Stories-from-the-narrative-research-project/>

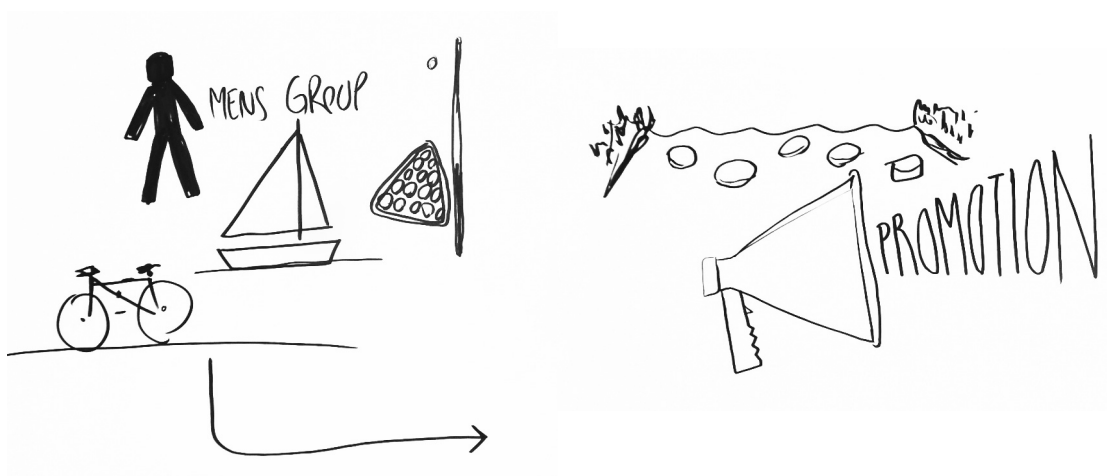
Stepping Stones

Fiona Gray, Supported Peer Support Worker, and Jackie Sroka, Support Worker, described what happens at Stepping Stones: members supporting each other, the men's group and the development of new peer support groups.

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Stepping Stones now has a peer support group where people encourage and support each other around employability.

Stepping Stones has developed a community resource that lists all the community activities in West Dunbartonshire, such as community centres and leisure facilities, as well as groups providing support. This was part of the peer support project.



Where to find out more

There is a lot of information about the work of Stepping Stones on their website.

Stepping Stones
Unit A10, Whitecrook Business Centre
78 Whitecrook Street
Clydebank
G81 1QF
Tel: 0141 941 2929
Email: stepping-stones@btconnect.com
www.stepstones.org.uk

Other examples

The groups which had information stalls included many examples of people helping others in similar situations.

People talked about their experiences and what had helped them.

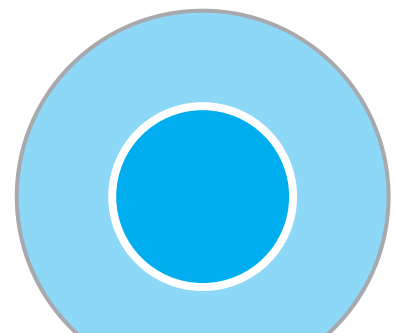
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"We all need to identify with people who are like us. It's about sharing tips and hints, our experience of what is helpful and not so helpful." Lesley Smith, SRN

"Peer support is absolutely crucial."
John Russell, West Dunbartonshire CHCP

"Inspiring stories were just fab."

"Enjoyed SRN talk. Very informative regarding history of peer support."



Looking after ourselves, making a contribution and keeping busy

What we did

Having meaningful activities to do is as much part of the recovery journey for many people as getting the right treatment and care.

People described the benefits they get from being part of involvement groups - the Forum, the groups based at the Goldenhill and Riverview Resource Centres, and more.

We had lots of information about services that people living in West Dunbartonshire can use. There were stalls from local organisations and groups, including those co-ordinating information and support on volunteering and for family carers.

Breathing Space is the national telephone helpline that is available at evenings and weekends. Anyone can ring them or use the resources on their website to help keep themselves well.

The Breathing Space national helpline is 0800 83 85 87.
The website is www.breathingspacescotland.co.uk

Research by Goldenhill Task Group

The task group from Goldenhill Resource Centre told us about research with people who use services there. People were asked about a range of issues, including what they did in their community, who gives them support and their views on services.

On activities to help people keep well and support their recovery.

- 46 people contributed their views and experiences.
- 26% of people did not identify any activity or contact outwith time with family and friends.
- For 26% of people their main contact is with mental health organisations.

- Community groups, employment and voluntary work are all important for some people. But community groups and employment were raised by only 16% of people and voluntary work by 9%.

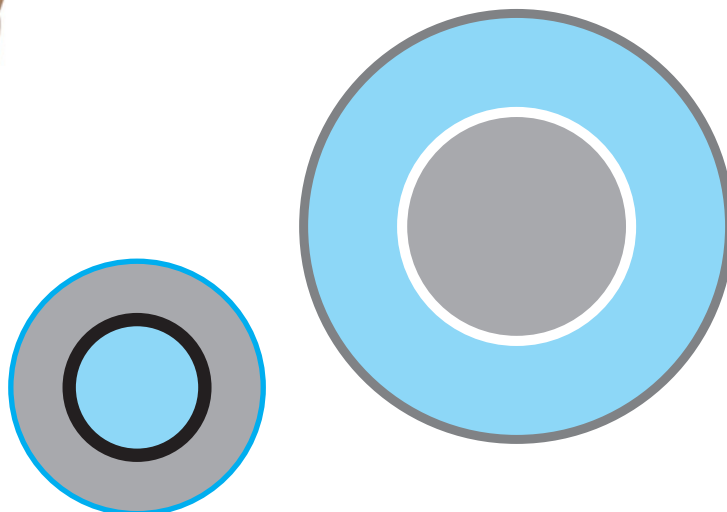
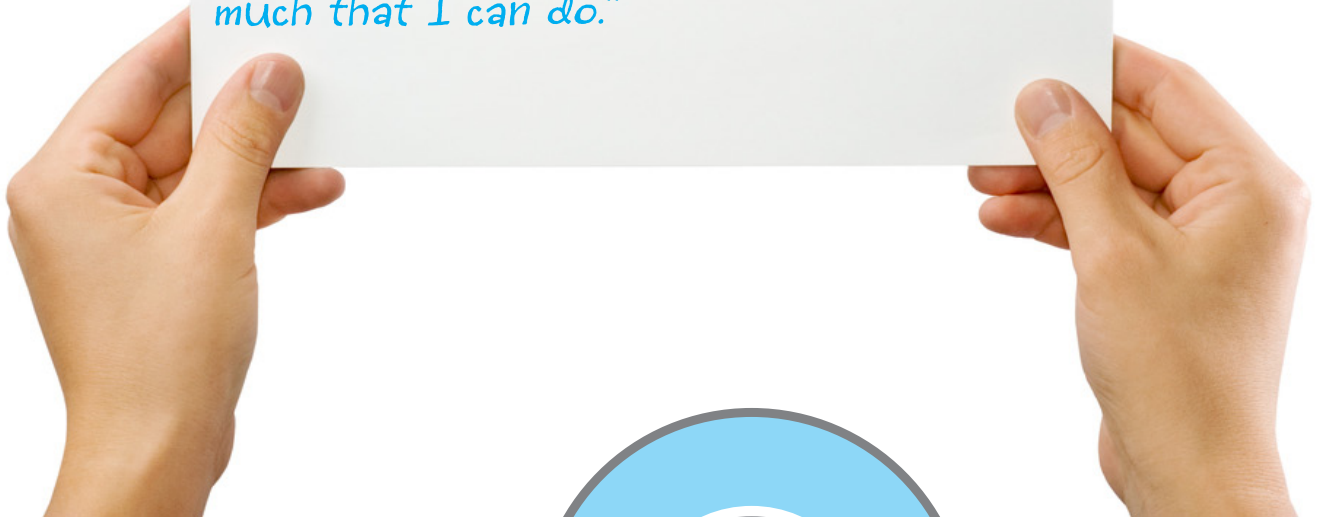
There is more about the research by the Goldenhill Task Group later in this report.

There is a copy of all the slides from the Goldenhill presentation on the Outside the Box website - look on the page for the West Dunbartonshire Mental Health Forum.

"You can get lots of help from CVS - where to volunteer and support to get you started."

"Have you seen the community resource that Stepping Stones have? I never knew there was so much going on in our area, and so much that I can do."

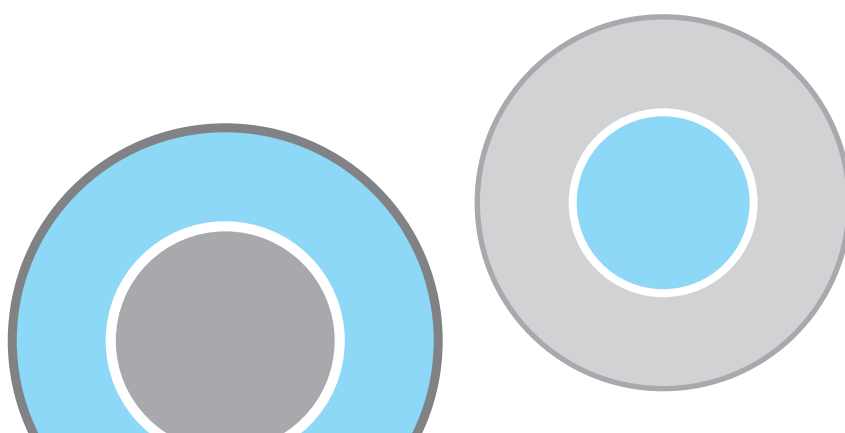
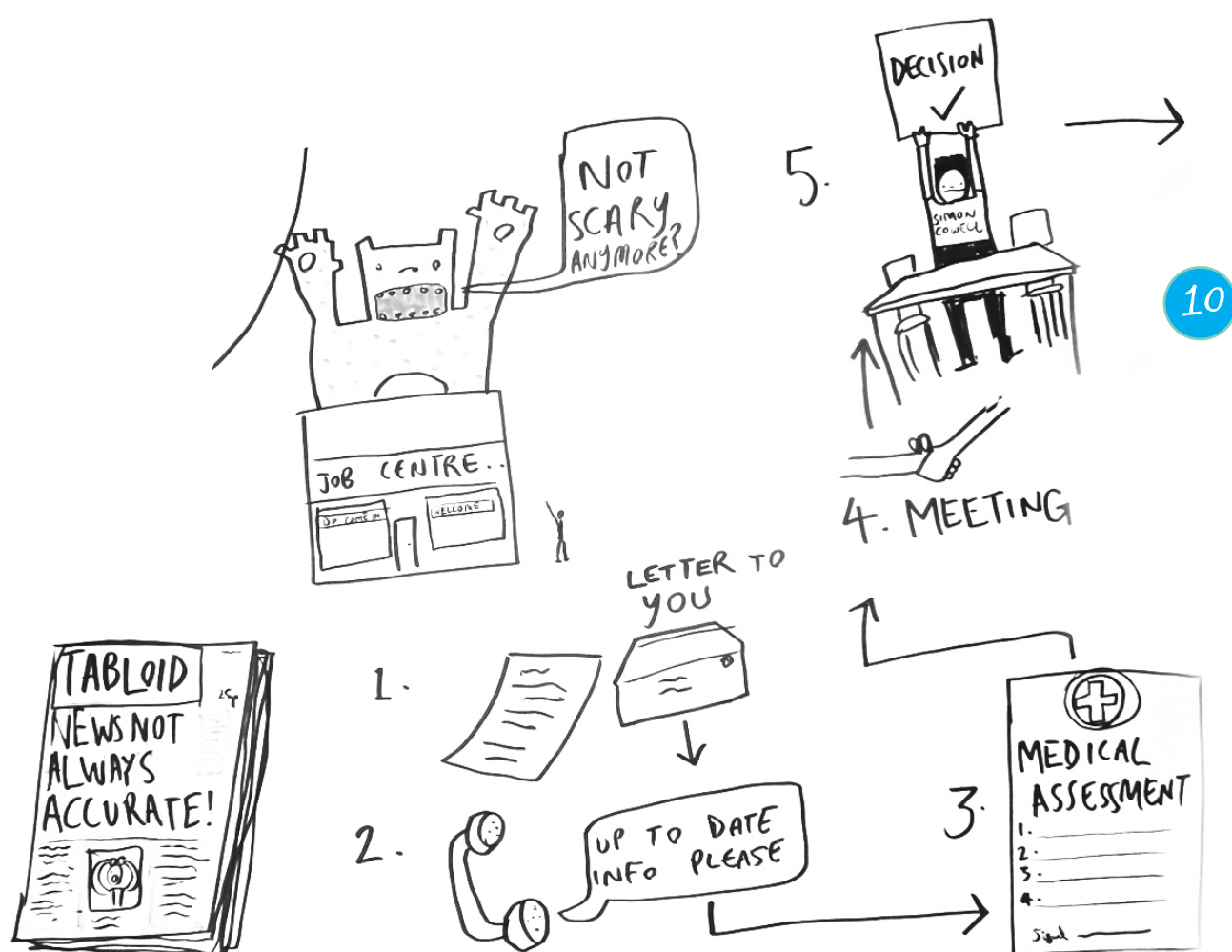
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Employment, employability and welfare benefits

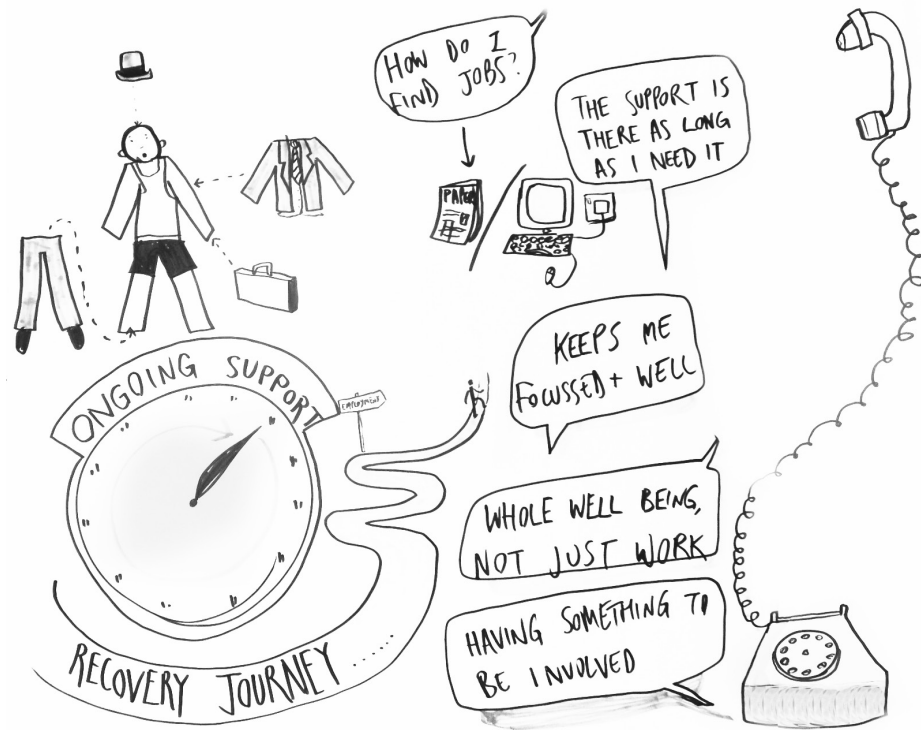
Department of Work and Pensions

Yvonne O'Hara, Partnership Manager at DWP, told us about the changes that are being made to the way people get access to benefits when they are not able to work because of their mental health problems or other disabilities.



Work Connect

Work Connect provides support to people when they are planning to get back into employment and continues this once they are in a job. It is an employment support project and part of West Dunbartonshire CHCP. Fiona Gray described the support she gets from Work Connect to help her in the post as a Supported Peer Support Worker at Stepping Stones, which was her first paid job after many years of living with serious mental health problems.



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"For a lot of people, working is good for your mental health. I believe many people who live with mental health problems could go on to have a career." Fiona Gray

"There is still a lot of stigma for people going back to work when they have had a mental health problem."



“West Dunbartonshire Council provide training for other staff in WDC to raise awareness about people with a mental health problem going into or back to work and the contribution staff can make as good colleagues. This is another type of peer support.” Mike Foley, West Dunbartonshire Council

“Sometimes you think, ‘I can’t work. I can’t do this.’ Then you look back and see how far you’ve travelled.”

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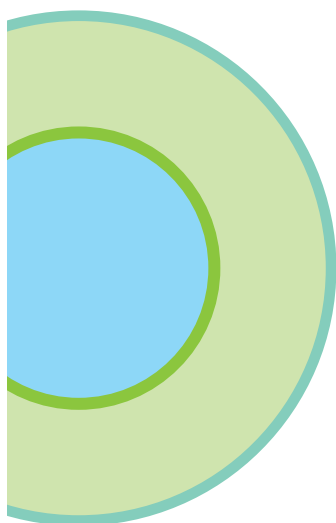
Where to get more information

There is up to date information about benefits on the Government website at www.directgov.org.uk

Work Connect is at
Unit 5, Beardmore Business Centre
9 Beardmore Street, Dalmuir
G81 4HA
Tel: 0141 562 2445

West Dunbartonshire Credit Union had a stall at our event. People in West Dunbartonshire can also get advice on benefits and other money matters from the welfare rights team.

Dumbarton Credit Union is at
Glencarin House
95 High Street
Dumbarton
G82 1LF
Tel: 01389 768585
Email: enquiries@d-c-u.co.uk
www.d-c-u.co.uk



Enjoying ourselves

What we did

Our event was an opportunity for people to enjoy themselves as well as a way to find out what is happening.

We planned the event to give people time and space to enjoy each other's company over coffee breaks, lunch and throughout the day.

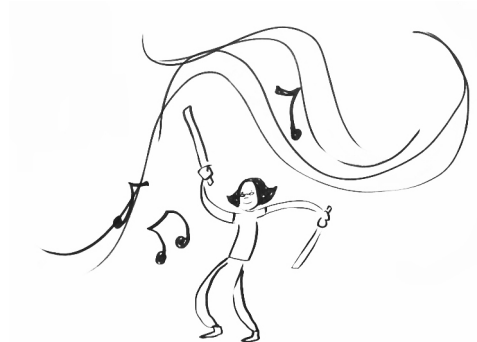
We had nice food which was prepared and served by volunteers and staff from Work Connect.

CAOS is a community arts project that is based in Clydebank. They had information on the range of visual and performing arts that people can do through them.

We had Buddy Beat, who are a great drumming group led by people who live with mental health problems. They are based in Renfrewshire and can be contacted through Acumen.

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Acumen
Room 2015
Mile End Mill
12 Seedhill Road
Paisley
PA1 1JS
Tel: 0141 887 9103



"Excellent day. Food was lovely".

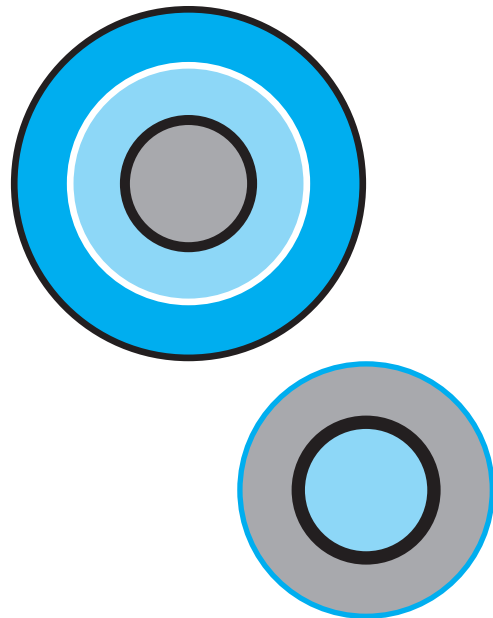
"Venue excellent. Nice bright enjoyable space."

"Fantastic! Thanks for looking after us."

"CAOS are second to none - excellent."

"Buddy Beat rock! I want a drumming baton."

"Forum theatre and drumming were fantastic. More!"



Listening to each other and thinking differently

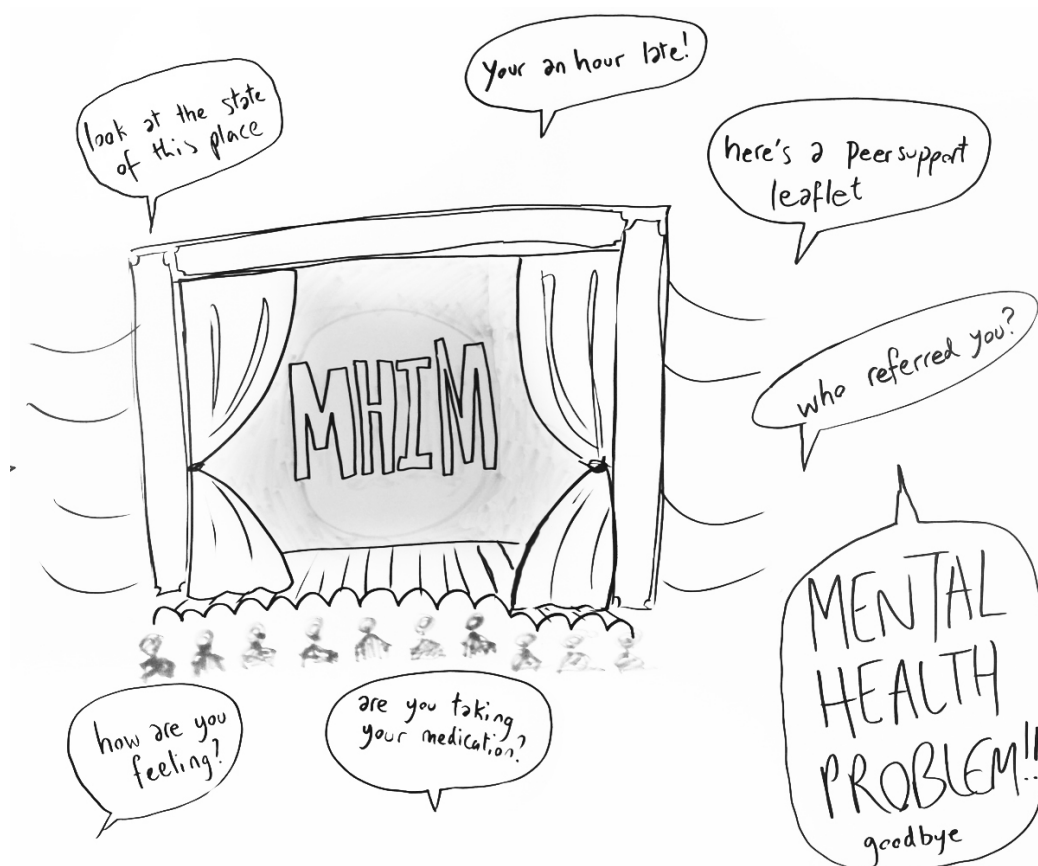
Mental Health in Mind

Mental Health in Mind is a Forum Theatre group. The members are people from West Dunbartonshire who live with mental health problems who have worked together for a year, with training and support through CAOS. They act out scenes that are based on people's experiences – the types of situation that many people recognise. Later, they repeat the performance, but members of the audience can stop the action and take over one part.

Mental Health in Mind showed what it is like when someone is trying to move on in their life but other people are not being very supportive. At the end of the afternoon we saw how even a few people behaving differently can help someone feel they have more opportunities.

Mental Health in Mind can be contacted through CAOS.

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Research by Goldenhill Task Group

The Goldenhill Task Group had asked people about their experience of stigma.

- 70% of people said they had experience of feeling stigmatised or discriminated against.
- They had experienced this from their friends, family, from care professionals and people who work in services as well as from the public.
- Stigma from friends (20%), family (22%) and care professionals (22%) were all mentioned more often than stigma from the public (18%).

The team at Goldenhill also asked people about being involved in their care and their views on the service at Goldenhill.

- Care plans are an integral part of people's Recovery journey. But only 55% of people at Goldenhill resource Centre said they had ever been involved in planning their own care.
- Only a quarter of people had ever been involved in planning a recovery-focussed individual care plan.
- The majority of people did feel that the contact with the Resource Centre staff was good or very good, and they had good information on aspects of care such as medication.

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Gathering people's views

We used a different type of recording and evaluation. Jon Bishop from CAOS did the drawings that recorded what had happened. We looked at this on the day to reflect back on what we had heard. These are the drawings that you see throughout this report.

CAOS is a community arts project that is based in Clydebank. They had information on the range of visual and performing arts that people can do through them.

CAOS is Community Arts; Open Space
Centre 81, 2 Braes Avenue
Whitecrook, Clydebank
G81 1DN
Tel: 0141 952 2117
Email: info@causingcaos.org.uk
www.causingcaos.co.uk



"The Mental Health Forum and the work they do with services are built on partnership."

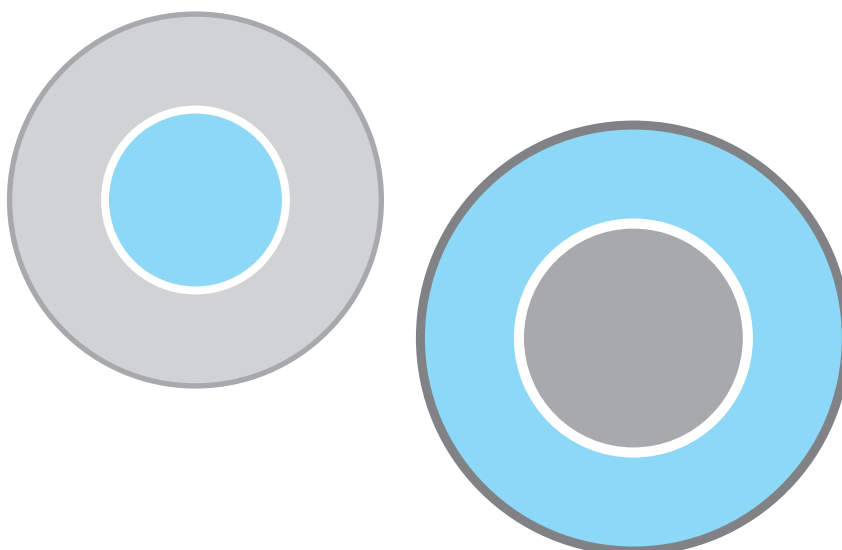
"Good to be reminded of why I'm doing my job and a great opportunity to consider things from a service users' point of view."

"Very inspiring. Learned a lot about new, innovative ways of working."

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"Drama was powerful and true!"

"Fantastic - definitely made me think about my practice."



What next

We asked people about their ideas for next year's conference. This is the list of suggestions they gave us.

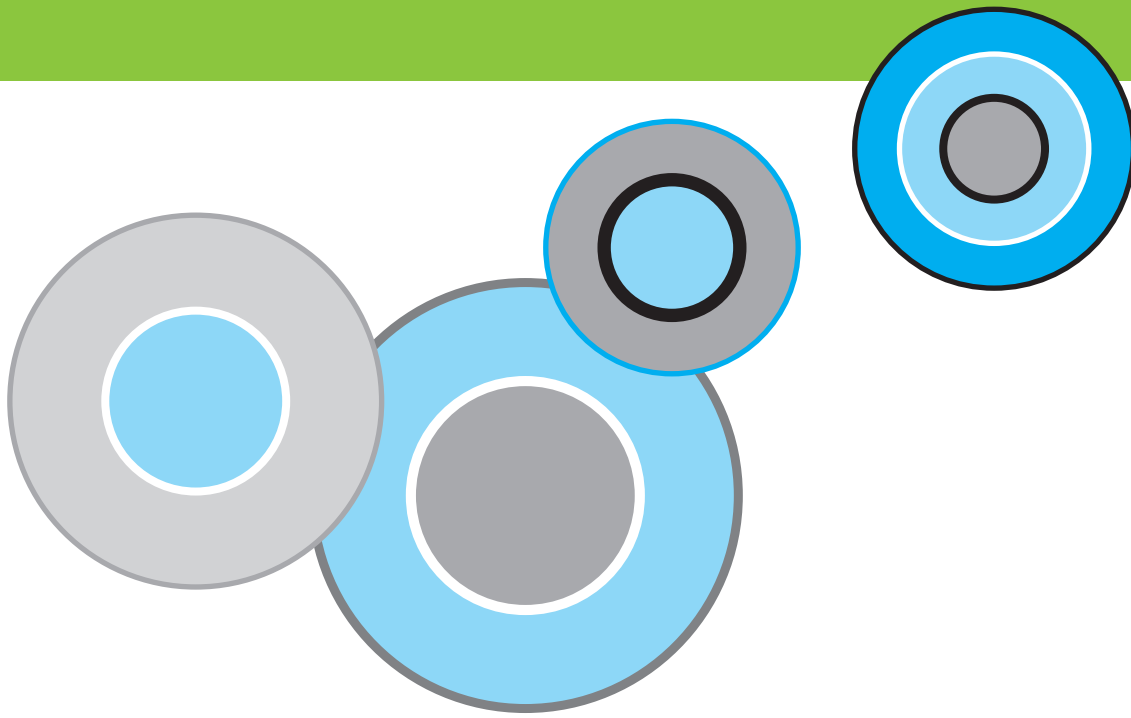
- Addressing stigma of mental health and discrimination - this was the topic that people mentioned most often
- Maintaining well being - this was also raised by many people
- Mental health and addictions - this was raised by several people
- Financial inclusion and Benefits
- Mental Health In Mind working with services
- Moving beyond 'Recovery'
- Connections across sectors
- Domestic abuse and violence against women
- What can we do to protect services in future to ensure they continue?
- Do services make a real difference?

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Conclusions

"Mental Health Recovery is a priority in WD CHCP and we are making progress. There are good examples of peer support across WD. Now we need to extend it further." Mike Foley, Mental Health, West Dunbartonshire Council

"Good to remind ourselves of all the good things we are doing in West Dunbartonshire. And then you inspire us to do even better! Thank you."



The event was planned and organised by West Dunbartonshire Mental Health Forum and its partners; Goldenhill Task Group, Goldenhill Resource Centre, Riverview Resource Centre, West Dunbartonshire Carers Centre, Richmond Fellowship, Stepping Stones, Acumen, West Dunbartonshire CVS, CAOS, West Dunbartonshire Community Health & Care Partnership.

This report was written by Anne Connor of Outside the Box.

