



All
People
One
Community

**LINKES Annual
Report 2023/4**



LINKES

LINKES Annual Report 2023/4



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A Letter From Our Chair



I'm delighted to present our annual report to you and hope you enjoy reading about what we have achieved over the last year.

As always, it's been a busy year at Linkes. We've delivered a vibrant programme of services, activities, and support for the local community on the Lincoln Avenue estate and surrounding areas. Sadly, the needs of the estate have continued to grow due to the cost of living crisis and increased demand for our services. Our support and signposting drop-in supported 215 people this year, dealing with 511 enquiries, more than three times the number of people we saw in the previous year. Over 100 people are on our waiting list for ESOL classes. In the summer of 2023, we had unprecedented numbers of children hoping to access our play sessions, which resulted in a review of our play sessions and changes around how to access them. Like many voluntary organisations, our challenges are around our capacity to respond to the increased demand and securing funds within a challenging context. However, despite the difficulties, we are extremely proud of what we have been able to achieve.

Our group work programme has gone from strength to strength, supporting people through a women's group, men's group, lunch club, ESOL classes, computing classes, and fitness classes. Our children and young person's project has delivered a vibrant programme of holiday and term time activities for children and young people, including our new Youth Social Action Project, which is all about enabling young people to identify issues and take action on them. It was also really exciting to see six young people participate in our first ever Linkes residential to an outdoor activity centre. Our community support work has delivered regular support and signposting drop-ins, with Arabic interpreting, and we are also delighted to be working with Wheatley Homes and Feeding Britain to open a community shop on the estate. Watch this space for more details! Lastly, it's been great to see our small team of volunteers continue to plan, design, and nurture our forest garden project.

I'm also delighted that our staff, board, and volunteer team were able to carry out community engagement activities in October 2023, through questionnaires, focus group discussion, and engaging with people in the foyers of the blocks. Through these activities, we spoke to 144 people, mainly face to face, which has enabled us to have a good understanding of the needs of the estate and the services that are most important to the local community. It was also encouraging to see that many of the services and activities that we are currently delivering were identified as high priorities for the local community.

Lastly, I'd like to express my gratitude to our brilliant team of staff, board members, and volunteers, as well as partner organisations and funders. We couldn't do what we do without the contribution that every one of you makes so thank you!

On behalf of the Board
Robert Smith | Chairperson



Our Board

Our Board

LINKES is a registered Scottish Charity (since 2006) and a Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation (SCIO). Membership is free and is open to everyone who supports our aims. Linkes is directed by a board of local people who meet bi-monthly to oversee the running of the organisation. For 23/24, the board members are as follows:

Chair	Robert Smith	Member	Claire Lyall
Vice Chair	Fatima Mohammed	Member	Toni Spencer
Treasurer	Salma Ishaq	Member	Samraa Mohamed
Secretary	Susan MacAskill	Member	Fatemah Ghanem
Member	Euan Girvan	Member	Zamzam Ghanem
Member	Paul McCann	Member	Dania Aljader
Member	Heather Merry (elected Sept 2023)	Member	May Simpson (co-opted Jan 2024)
Member	Robert Geddes (stood down Sept 2023)	Member	Fatma Alnagem (stood down Sept 2023)

Our Staff



Rachel Ferguson
Senior Development Worker
Job Share with Elaine Connelly



Elaine Connelly
Senior Development Worker
Job Share with Rachel Ferguson



Tina Loewe
Community Development Worker
(Group Work)



Sarah Tirado-Bowers
Community Development Worker
(Community Support)



Heather McGill-Crawford
Children & Youth Development Worker



Sunshine Wood
Finance Officer

Sessional Staff

Play Workers

Ashley McRae (resigned July 2023)
Esther Olaleye
Sehar Shabbir
Heather Mann

Group Workers

Fatima Mohammed
Thomas Cheyne



Our Volunteers

LINKES Volunteers

At Linkes, we are lucky to have volunteers from across our community who support a wide range of our work. This year, 17 volunteers contributed to the delivery of our Food Hub, Play Sessions, the Forest Garden, our Lunch Club and our Food Group. We couldn't do the work we do without them so we would like to wish all our fantastic volunteers a huge thank you from everyone at Linkes.

Play Volunteers

Khatera Ainy
Khatera Kohistani
Susan MacAskill
Rohey Conteh



Food Volunteers

Dania Aljader	Zamzam Ghanem
Euan Girvan	Laurie Hutton
Fatima Mohammed	Marie Smith
Paul McCann	Albert Fielding
Toni Spencer	



Forest Garden Volunteers

Laurie Hutton Michelle Woods
Monika Scott Jaymo Cruzy
Ben Scott



Community Engagement

Community Engagement

In October 2023, a team of staff and board members carried out community engagement activities on the estate, delivering a questionnaire to every household, speaking to people in the foyers of the flats and carrying out focus groups. We wanted to find out their needs and what community activities were most important to them.

We engaged with 144 people, with the vast majority taking part in face to face discussions and a small number responding to the questionnaire. Men, women, young people and children living on the estate voted and prioritised the community activities that were most important to them, as well as making a range of comments.

High priority



Children & Youth activities



English Classes



Activities for Women



Support with Food



Support & Welfare Advice

Medium Priority



**Classes & Courses
to develop skills**



Community events



**Activities for
Parents & Toddlers**



Activities for men



Forest Garden



**Activities for
Older People**

Lower Priority



**Health & Wellbeing
Activities**

All of the data gathered is being used to plan, prioritise and further develop our services.

Thanks to everyone who took part!



Activities & Learning

Group Work

Women's Group

70 women participated in our women's group across 30 sessions, with an average of 18 women each week. Women enjoyed information sessions, pumpkin carving, art activities and a Bring and Share meal. Up to ten children attended our creche every week.

92%

92% of women who participated in evaluation said they had made friends through the group.

"Before I attended the Women's group, I saw the other women around the local area and the play park but I never spoke to them. [Through the Women's group], I got to know my neighbours."



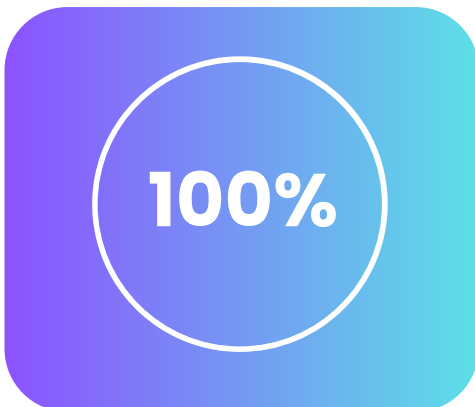
Through our Whatsapp group we keep in touch with 122 local women.

We have also been able to offer some women spaces in our ESOL classes to improve their language skills and furthering their opportunities for social connections. 23 women also accessed our support and signposting drop in. Two women continue to volunteer in our play project.



Lunch Club

Our Lunch club is for local people aged 50+ and meets on a weekly basis providing a freshly cooked three course meal to local community members. This year, 25 people enjoyed a three course lunch and bingo, over 36 sessions, including a festive lunch.



Of the 14 of people who completed our end of year questionnaire, 100% stated that they had made friends within the group. 86% of participants chose 6 and above in response to being more connected to local services. People stated they appreciated the support, both from Linkes and each other as part of attending the Lunch Club.

“The people are lovely, if you have a problem you can speak to any of them.”

It’s a nice group of people here. It’s good to get a wee blether.”

“Very friendly.”



Men's Group

Our Men's group is made up of 7 local men who met over 47 weekly sessions to build a model rail way. Over the year the men visited six model railway shows in Perth, Paisley, Ayr, Kyle, Greenock and Glasgow, enjoyed a lunch together and worked with a volunteer to make a film of the railway in action.



“Good bunch of guys who get on really well together while constructing something that everyone can get involved in.”

“There is a lot of banter but we talk about more serious things too.”



Classes & Courses

Accredited ESOL Classes

32 students participated in our two accredited ESOL classes, a Beginners/Literacies class and an Elementary class, delivered by Glasgow Clyde College, which ran two mornings a week for 32 weeks. Eleven children were looked after by Big Voices creche throughout the year.

32
Students

Conversational English Class

90
Learners

In partnership with Glasgow ESOL Forum and Big Voices creche, we ran a 33 week conversational ESOL class which was attended by 90 learners over the course of the year.

100% of students who took part in the evaluation said that they felt more confident to use English in everyday situations, 70% said they felt more confident when they read and write, and 80% felt that they had learned more about life in Glasgow and Scotland.



"I feel good. I can read and write more confidently in English and I like seeing my friends."

Computer Classes

Glasgow Life delivered a six week block of beginners computing classes to six students, with a view to helping people develop confidence and basic skills.

6 students took part in the course building their skills and confidence.



Dance & Fitness Classes

We delivered a six week block of dancing attended by 13 women and a six week block of gentle exercise classes attended by 23 women.



A total of 36 women took part across our dance and fitness classes .



Community Support

Support & Signposting Drop Ins

Our regular support and signposting drops in, with an Arabic speaking sessional staff member, supported people to understand their rights and entitlements, and access vital local services.

215
people

215 people attended our Support and Signposting drop-ins, across 119 drop in sessions.

We supported people with 518 enquiries, with the most common being around benefits, housing and food poverty. 65% of people used the drop in multiple times.

518
enquiries

44%
people

44% people benefited from using an interpreter at these sessions.

Addressing Food Poverty

Between April and July 2023, we delivered sixteen weekly food hubs, distributing free food to on average 30 households each week and supported 110 people directly. Our partners St Vincent De Paul and The Invisibles delivered Lincoln Community Kitchen every week from April until November 2024, providing hot meals and access to clothes, household goods and toiletries.



The Foodhub distributed free food to 110 people across 16 weeks.

We are delighted to be working in partnership with Feeding Britain and Wheatley Homes to open a community larder on the estate – coming soon!



Forest Garden

The four fruit trees and 58 shrubs, previously planted by community members in the community orchard, flourished over the past year with the first fruits appearing on our cherry tree and blackberries on the brambles. Our long term hope for the garden is that it will be a space for everyone and that the fruit and veg produced will be shared with the wider community.

Forest Garden Volunteers worked to maintain the garden by watering, weeding and mulching the bases of the fruit trees and shrubs.



Children & Young People

Holiday Programme

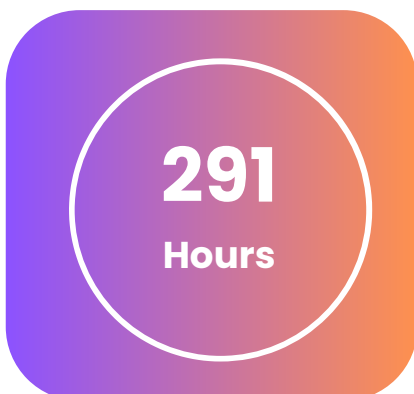
We delivered a vibrant holiday programme for primary school aged children providing free activities including arts & crafts, sports, outdoor adventure, cycling and trips.

101 children benefited from activities over 9 weeks of school holidays. During this time we served 297 breakfasts, 870 lunches, 1151 snacks and 479 dinners.



"Linkes is the best club ever."

"Linkes gave me the confidence I need to be positive within myself."



7 peer volunteers (aged 12 - 16) contributed over 291 volunteering hours to our children's holiday programme.

Term-Time Programme

We delivered 75 fun after school play sessions (football delivered by On the Ball, art sessions and street play) at Lincoln Avenue and Kirkton Avenue.

150
Children

Across our after-school play sessions we played alongside 150 local children.

34 children learned to ride bikes safely through Bikeability, delivered in partnership with Glasgow ECO Trust.



34 young people participated in 40 youth club sessions throughout the year, including outdoor activities.

“I like the fact that you can talk about anything to the play workers.”



Boogie Babies

Over 32 weekly sessions we delivered Boogie Babies to local parents and carers and their pre-school aged children. The classes are a fun way for young families to engage with music and movement.

63 families participated throughout the year, benefitting 78 pre-school children.



Youth Social Action Project

This exciting new project brought together local young people to identify key issues on the estate and to consider what action to take. This included meeting with Wheatley Homes Glasgow and Glasgow City Council to discuss repairing the play park.

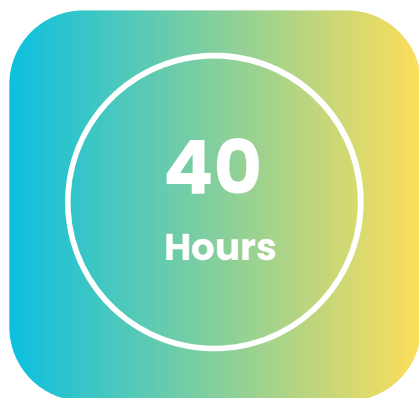


Six young people participated in our first ever Links residential, enjoying rock-climbing, canoeing, hill-walking and cooking.

The Youth Social Action Group took a range of actions which included litter picking, planting the forest garden, designing and spray painting graffiti on the container and within the youth club.



The group developed skills and confidence through participating in training on Child Protection (LINKES), First Aid (British Red Cross), Coping with Challenges (British Red Cross) and Health in the Community course (Glasgow Life).



Four of the group will also receive their Community Achievement Award Level 4 which means that they contributed 40 hours to meeting new people and improving the community.

"I learned how to communicate with others and improved a lot of skills like patience and understanding as well as teamwork."

"I enjoyed trying new things, even if it scared me a little."

"I made new friends and more. I also gained skills and I think I improved as a person. As well as making work that improved the community."

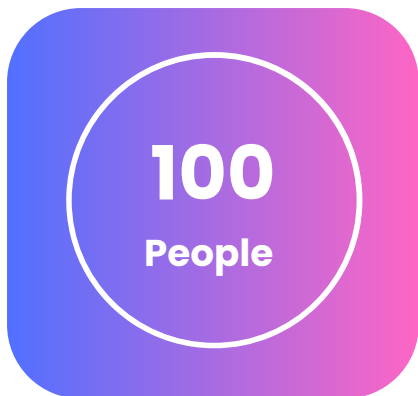




Events

Community Events

Across the year we hosted a number of successful and well attended community events giving people from our diverse communities an opportunity to meet and get to know one another.

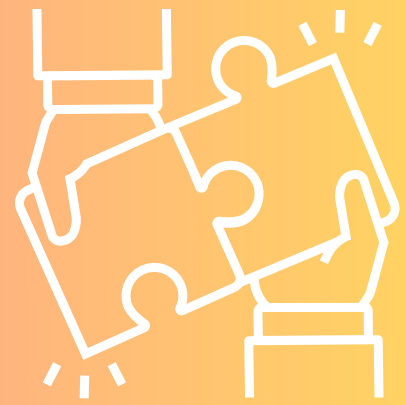


Over 100 people participated in our Winter Wonderland Event which included music, art & crafts, face painting, a puppet show & a photobooth.

90 women and their children took part in our International Women's Day event, sharing food and enjoying music, massage, games and dancing.



Partners & Funders



Partners

Big Voices Creche
Born to be Alive
The Caravan Project
Clyde College
Drumchapel Money Advice Centre
Fareshare
Feeding Britain
GCHSCP
GCVS
Glasgow ESOL Forum
Glasgow Eco Trust
Glasgow Life

Kelvin College
Knightswood Connects
Knightswood Congregational Church
Knightswood Community Centre
Mismak Catering
NGWVS Network
On the Ball
The Orchard Project
The Invisibles
The Trussell Trust
St Vincent de Paul
St David's Church
Wheatley Homes Glasgow

Funders





**Thanks to all our supporters,
volunteers, partners & funders!**

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