

So...

enjoyable
understanding special
active entertaining
fertile informative
healthy supportive
patient creative
trusting funny talented
tasty friendly
encouraging helpful
fit
reliable practical

*welcoming
belonging
achieving
Annual Report
2013*



the encouragement health project

welcoming

This year has been another good year for Stepping Out with so many things taking place and so many positive outcomes.

Stepping Out's Beliefs are: *Everyone should have the opportunity to live the best life they can. We believe that a person should not be defined by their illness, but by the qualities they have. We believe that people deserve to be encouraged to develop skills and interests that improve the quality of their lives. Mostly we believe that people deserve to have FUN and the above is something that we can be very proud of for achieving. I have always maintained since becoming involved with Stepping Out that it is a truly unique Project and what it so is first and foremost the dedicated staff team led by 2 Nicky Fox and ably assisted by **Katriona Dove our Lifestyle Motivator, Sally Hetherington our Admin, Ann Williams our Bookkeeper***

and our Tutors, *Karin Chipulina, Janet Harkness and Lyndsay Campbell. It is also very important to thank the people who fund us for being able to carry out all the various things they do, so to East Lothian Council, Choose Life, The Robertson Trust and Henry Duncan Awards we say a very BIG thank you. We have also been very fortunate in receiving financial assistance from the North Berwick community which we are firmly embedded in. The Rotary club of North Berwick paid for an outing to the Falkirk Wheel which included the transport there and back, a trip on the boat and a meal. We also received a very generous donation of £500 from Liz McColl which allowed us 3 to carry out other activities. Also to North Berwick Rowing Club for their support A sincere thank you to you all and all our other supporters. I would also take this opportunity to thank my fellow*

Management Committee members for the work they do. Last year our long serving Treasurer Alison Hall stood down and we are so grateful for all the hard work and effort that Alison gave to the Project. We are also extremely grateful to Douglas Whiteford who has stepped into that role. We continue to receive great support from the North Berwick Community Centre Management and Staff and also Caroline Davis from the CLD Team in Musselburgh for helping us secure the Gatehouse at Musselburgh. Thanks also to Kevin Fitzsimmons for the assistance he gives us with the garden. Sadly, we have still not been able to secure funding for the Yurt Project although there is still a demand for its use and once again it operated as a Craft tent at the Museum of Flight Airshow. We will continue to seek funding for this. As always in Stepping Out, we look forward to new challenges and opportunities and this year Nicky Fox became a Trainer in Suicide Prevention through Choose Life. This training will be rolled out throughout East Lothian and it shows the diversity of work that is undertaken. My report contains much use of the word thanks and I make no

apologies for that. Without all the people mentioned above and many more that are not, stepping Out would not be and would not have achieved what it has. I know that we will continue to develop and build to ensure that all users of our service will continue to benefit from our beliefs.

James Bruce

CHAIRMAN, STEPPING OUT



“I used to love cooking then lost it. Since coming I’ve tried new healthy recipes at home”



S STEPPING OUT *healthy*

A vital part of what we do is encouraging people to look at their physical and mental health and what helps – for instance diet, exercise, healthier lifestyles and creativity. Supper and lunch clubs have encouraged people to learn practical cooking skills, recipes, measuring, presentation, weighing, kitchen and food hygiene and budgeting. The emphasis is on wholesome nourishing food and a sociable welcoming environment. We try to encourage people to try new foods they haven't tasted before and give out recipe sheets to people to make themselves at home. Our local walks help people to discover new places while enjoying light exercise in the company of other members. People continue to enjoy walking out-with our sessions. Art classes help people explore and develop their creative skills.



“we are making progress together”

S STEPPING OUT *respected*

OUR AIMS

Stepping Out is a mental health project, based in East Lothian. We work with adults suffering from mental health problems, offering a wide range of activities and support, encouraging confidence building, decision making, independence and well-being, improving quality of life. We work with people who are in hospital or at home, helping them to create their own programme of activities and interests. We have engaged with 35 members over the last year who have all benefited greatly from the project and made good personal progress. Stepping Out is dedicated to the advancement of public education and understanding of mental health issues.

RECOVERY

Recovery is not about peoples illness going away - for many that Stepping Out works with, their illness could be a lifelong condition. Recovery in this sense is about living the very best life possible with their existing condition. That means helping each person to find out more about what helps them, and just as importantly, what doesn't. This leads on to learning to take more control of their illness and responsibility for their own well being. Feeling valued and respected, having activities to look forward to and enjoy, all helps this process.

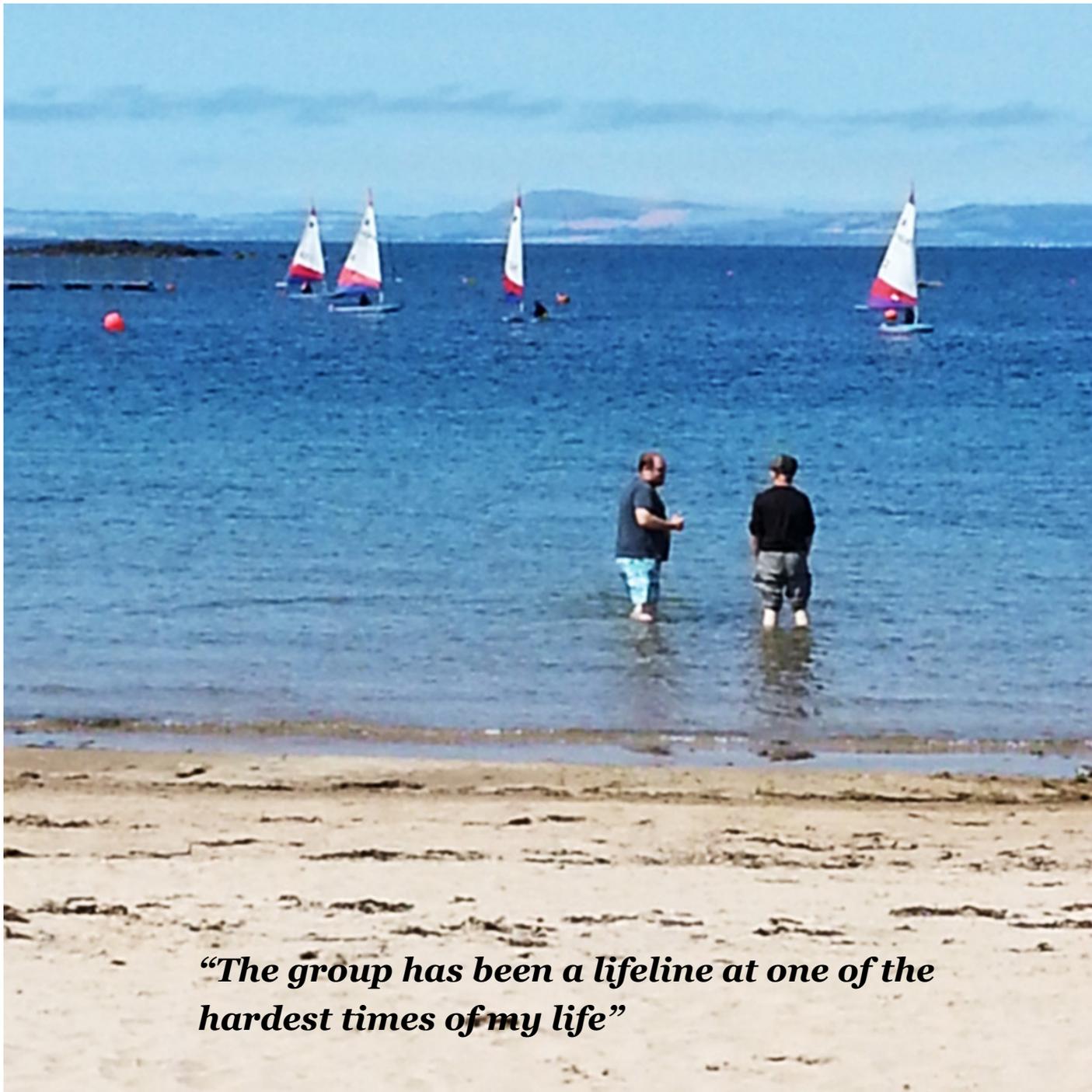
"It's a safe place here -I feel safe."



S STEPPING OUT *safer*

Many of the people referred to Stepping Out have been isolated and marginalised. Having social contact, friends and a sense of community is vital to everyone's mental health and wellbeing. All of the groups we offer help to develop new positive supporting relationships, where people feel accepted and welcome. Whether it is sitting round a table sharing food that everyone has helped to make, gardening together or a visit to the cinema – it is always a social occasion. Peer support and learning is a natural result, people share insights and knowledge with each other and feel less alone and 'different' – encouraging each other to get through difficult times. Often when it can seem as though no one understands, at Stepping Out they can find people who are on a similar journey. Contributing in some way,

for example volunteering, expands social networks and interaction, further building confidence. Over 50% of our members are now volunteering with local organisations, including the North Berwick museum, the British Heart Foundation charity shop, The Gullane Day Centre, volunteer driving and Riding for the Disabled. This is 10% increase from last year.



“The group has been a lifeline at one of the hardest times of my life”

S STEPPING OUT *together*

Confident Parents Confident Children – This project began as a response to members concerns about the impact their own mental health was having on their families. Local Health visitors community learning and development and Stepping Out staff came together to offer a pilot project which would focus on the whole family’s mental health and wellbeing. A weekly parenting skills course run by Sandra King and Health Visitors is currently being delivered using Raising Children With Confidence training. Further developments include a planned funding application to offer group support to mums with post natal depression which will include crèche facilities and additional counselling support. This will be delivered by Ann Richardson and Nicky Fox. The group will initially cover the Dunbar Cluster (North Berwick, Haddington and Dunbar) taking referrals from psychiatric services health visitors and GPs. The group will focus on how to manage and improve their mental health, coping techniques and peer support. We will design the course content around individual needs.



“I am doing artwork every night at home it’s stopping me feeling sorry for myself”



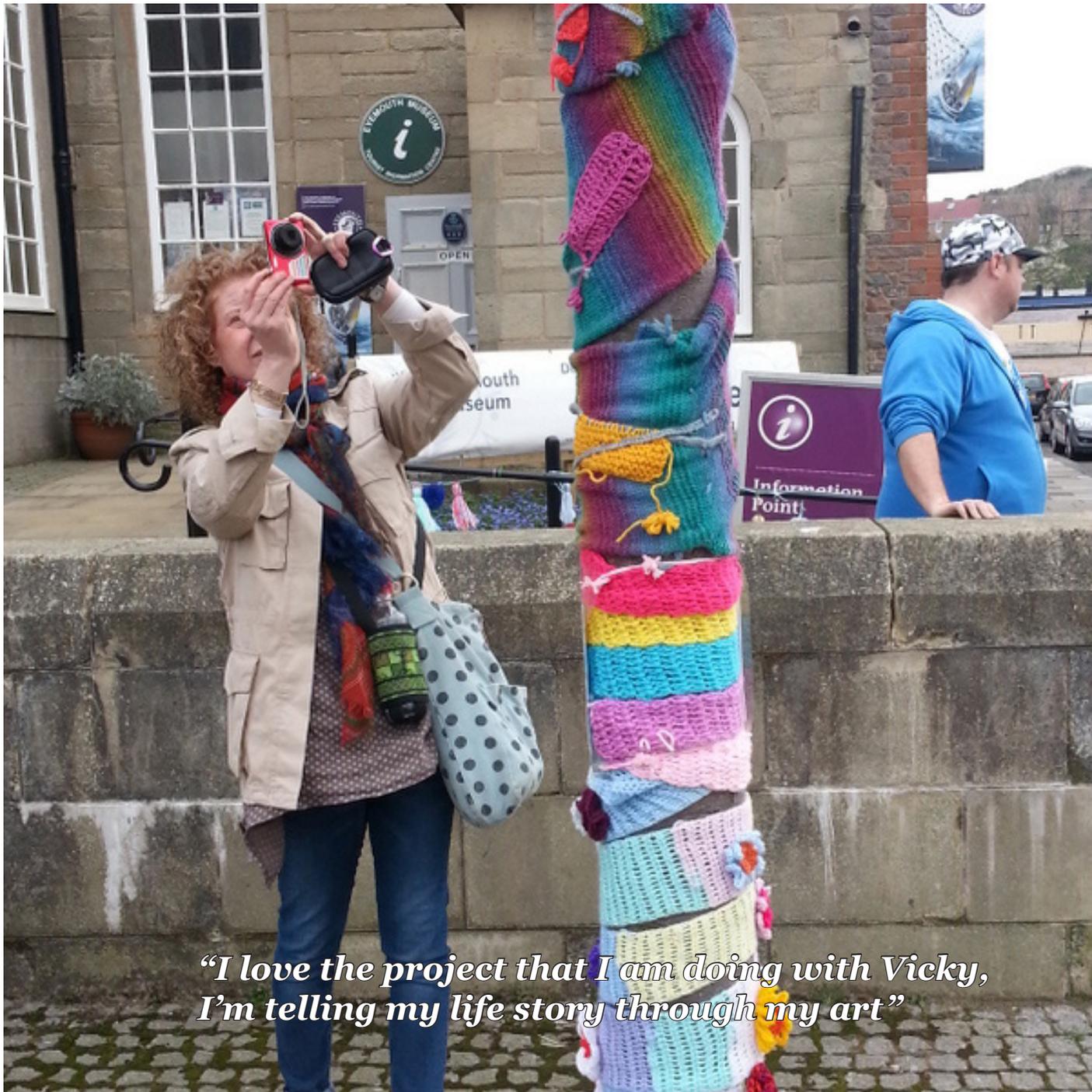
artistic

The Monday Art group had the exciting opportunity to be involved in the Scottish Mental Health Art and Film Festival. With funding from CAPS to help with the costs of materials and framing we were able to exhibit our artwork at Potterrow in Edinburgh.

Together we spent weeks planning, painting, framing and hanging. Two of our members, Robert and Catherine were able to attend the opening event, the rest of the group then visited during the week. Seeing our work hanging in a big public space with so many people viewing it was really positive.

Throughout the year we have invited different artists to come and share their talents to inspire us. A local sculptor came for several sessions and taught us how to carve wood. A local artist showed us printing on wood and fabric using an image transfer method. Everyone enjoyed learning these skills using completely new tools and techniques.

One of our members has recently exhibited work in a local shop and has even sold some pieces which was a huge confidence booster.



“I love the project that I am doing with Vicky, I’m telling my life story through my art”



supportive

The Healing Garden Art Group is a collaboration between Stepping Out and East Lothian Community Mental Health Peer Support.

Peer Support is a way of providing people who have lived experience of mental health challenges with support that is founded in mutuality, which is support that works both ways. For the individual receiving support there is the opportunity to share experiences and explore recovery pathways with a workers who has themselves experienced, and may still be experiencing mental health issues; for the support worker such relationships allow space and opportunity to continue with their own recovery, discover new approaches to managing symptoms and build on resilience.

There is huge value in sharing experiences. In most areas of our lives this is how we build our relationships with other people, and sometimes, through mental ill health and difficult life challenges we lose confidence in ourselves and in our ability to picture ourselves in a hopeful future. In this project we have been focussing on creativity as a pathway to hope. We have explored different ideas and different techniques as ways of expressing our connections to ourselves, each other and to the world around us. Each member of the group tries to keep a sketchbook; essentially a kind of visual diary in which ideas, feelings and observations can be recorded and referred to either for later artwork or as discussion points. Often the art work itself is a vehicle for conversations about recovery and moving forward. Through developing our artistic skills we build on other strengths and skills continually improving our sense of self and discovering new potential for growth and recovery.

On the whole people follow their specific interests within the group, often tackling long-term projects. With support, tutoring on technique and encouragement to pursue artistic ideas people develop confidence in their abilities, not just to produce art work but to persevere when things don't go to plan.

The occasional visits to galleries and arts events reinforce the variety of artistic endeavour and encourage people to pursue their hopes and dreams for the future – whether that is the creation of an important piece of art work, the pursuit of learning new skills, or the self – belief that we can all aspire to a hopeful active and purposeful future.



“Stepping Out helps me get out of bed in the mornings”





creative

My key role of working within the Healing Garden sprouted a new idea of using film, photography and video as a creative way of gathering information and telling people's stories. The project became a good way to remember highlights and learning and everyone was enthusiastic and keen to take part.

Through the filming project we completed, we were invited to the Second Helping Community Food and Health Scotland event in Dundee to share our learning and what we had accomplished. By filming at lunch and supper clubs, we used the footage to create some short recipe videos with the goal of producing easily followed instructions for anyone who may wish to replicate the dishes that they had enjoyed. Using the combined footage of this, photographs and short clips filmed throughout the year, we also formed ways of evaluating projects and forming digital libraries of media in order to document the positive outcomes of trips and

activities at Stepping Out. Myself and Robert shared these ideas with other Mental Health projects from all over Scotland to inspire them to develop their own creative ways of using feedback and evaluation.

Stepping Out strongly encourages the growth of personal interests and any ideas given by clients are always taken into consideration when planning sessions. I was able to introduce music lessons including violin and guitar. Every day has been completely different and can vary from playing violin, to digging potatoes, a physical session at the gym to a nice relaxing walk enjoying the fresh air.

Every client, friend and visitor who I've had the pleasure of meeting during my time at Stepping Out has made a massive impact on my life and I hope that my contribution has had a positive effect on them as well.

Alex Hodgson, Project Worker.



"I am calmer here, less stressed and I can focus"



S STEPPING OUT *busy*

Art – encouraging creativity and self-expression with new materials and techniques

Walking – exploring new places and geared to the individuals abilities

Cinema – a popular group activity creating anticipation and excitement around the choices of film and which results in lively critical discussion long after the event.

Lunch Club – sharing the planning, preparation and cooking of good food where everyone sits down to enjoy a well-balanced community lunch at a set table.

Reflexology – four sessions of one to one relaxing therapy during lunch club, decided very democratically on who needs it most that day.

Supper Club – evening sessions with the focus being on individuals cooking a course from start to finish developing skills to be used at home. Encouraging people to value themselves enough to cook for themselves and have fun.

The No'Mads Tent - although we have not secured the funding for the project we were able to accommodate the repeat bookings with the existing staff and volunteers. Bookings have included the Scottish Airshow and Trad on the Tyne. The Yurt has been used for community projects and events. We will try to attract funding for the coming year.

The Healing Garden - growing our own vegetables and herbs for our supper and lunch clubs. People get out and active with productive manual labour /exercise. When the work is done the space is used creatively and enjoyed to relax in.

Outings – chosen by group members to reflect their interests and passions to offer challenges and new experiences.



*“I feel like myself when I am here.
Self-esteem is not an issue here it is everywhere else”*



individual

Motivation can be a real problem for many people who are experiencing mental illness. A combination of the illness itself, medication, and inactivity can cause real difficulties and obstacles. Finding something that interests, challenges or inspires is the key to regular participation and commitment. The variety of the groups and classes that we offer helps to ensure most people's interest can be stimulated. Getting out of a comfort zone and trying something new, with new people can be daunting and we try to make joining in as easy as possible. Whatever the activity chosen, coming along for the first time can be very scary. Without challenges and goals though, people's lives tend to shrink until doing anything at all can present a problem. Being proud of achievements helps build confidence and inspires participants to gradually do more and more. All of the groups and activities help people to explore what they enjoy doing most and from there, to develop their own programme.

We make every effort to remove barriers that prevent people from taking part including the provision of transport to and from activities or groups and we choose venues where we will be comfortable and welcome. All activities, groups, classes, equipment, food and refreshments are provided to our members free of charge.

Learning and applying new coping skills and strategies is a very important aspect of coming to Stepping Out. Understanding how to avoid becoming unwell, the triggers and stressors, how to get help appropriately and when all help people to feel more in control of their illness. Peer learning and support is particularly useful to help people find what works for them. Having people who understand what it feels like can often be a comfort. Being able to talk about suicidal/self-harming thoughts without a panic can help a person get through bad times, or get emergency medical help when needed.



*“For the first time in my life I feel alive –
Thank you Stepping Out.”*





positive

There were **746*** deaths by suicide in Scotland in 2013. Based on three-year rolling averages there was an 19% fall (21% for men and 14% for women) in suicide rates between 2000-2002 and 2011-2013.

In 2013, the suicide rate for males was more than three times that for females. Behind these statistics are so much mental anguish, stigma and suffering that we need to do everything we can to try to redress the balance. It is important to remember that not everyone who is suicidal is ill, and not everyone who is ill is suicidal. However, people who have experience of mental ill health are at increased risk. Some years ago Stepping Out staff attended the three day ASIST suicide prevention course, and we still agree that it is some of the most useful training we have ever attended. It has given us the confidence to talk openly and calmly with members who expressed suicidal feelings, and helped us to help them effectively when they needed it most. Being listened to calmly and without judgement or panic is a huge relief.

Nicky completed the Safe Talk training last year and has successfully delivered three sessions in East Lothian, including one to North Berwick GP's nurses and practise staff.

So when the opportunity came up for me to learn to train other people in SAFE Talk skills, I knew this could be a very practical way to help. Brian Glass, training co-ordinator for East Lothian Choose Life has been a great mentor and patient trainer, supporting me greatly.

Brian Glass. Training Co-ordinator, Choose Life – East Lothian “This past year has seen an increase in Stepping Out’s involvement with suicide prevention. As part of the Steering Group, Nicky Fox is invaluable giving us insights and ideas in promoting and progressing initiatives that aim to reduce suicide in the County. So when Nicky agreed to become a safeTALK trainer we were delighted. Nicky has co-delivered one course and singly delivered another. SafeTALK is designed to give anyone the confidence and skills to help with someone experiencing suicidal thoughts. We are more likely to help when we know what to do. We will be actively seeking opportunities in the coming months to involve Stepping Out in delivering this valuable course in and around North Berwick as well as the rest of the County”.





thankful

*We walked through the door our heads bowed low
What would we do and where would we go
The world looked so dark our dreams shattered too
What will happen to me and you
A glimmer of light did come our way
A voice in the dark to guide us to stay
Nicky and Alex, Katriona too
Stepping Out for me and you
A place of safety, a place to go
Especially when we're feeling low
We laughed and we cry and do gardening too
A place of joy for me and you
So always remember and never forget
All the people that we have met
Our lives are more full and enriched too
What would we do without you.*



encouraging

“When I was young I was in a class for kids that had learning difficulties and for that reason I got picked on and made to feel like an outcast, this made me feel very alone and depressed on and off as I got older. I have had many attempts on taking my own life but now thinking back I thankfully failed. When I was thirty I had a stroke which left me with a speech impediment, now I am forty nine I am a lot better and I don't stutter anymore. I have been working as a kitchen porter most of my adult life and I still am. I am now in a great group called Stepping Out it's helping me with my mental health and it's really boosted my confidence and made me feel I am never alone. Through them I have got a better way of finding new skills I never knew I had. I have got new friends I now think of as my brothers and sisters, we go out a lot together with Stepping Out and it's really helped me. To everyone I know who has helped me THANK YOU”

Euan Macmichael.

This year's winner of the Onwards and Upwards Award in memory of Jonny Galloway is Euan MacMichael. Since joining us Euan has embraced every opportunity, discovered new interests and talents, making many friends along the way. Highlights have included art classes, visits to historical places, lunch clubs, music, trips, outings and helping with the Yurt. Through his art Euan discovered that despite being badly dyslexic (causing him many problems with literacy and numeracy) he has a real talent for and love for poetry. While using a calligraphy pen he discovered that he could write much more easily than with an ordinary pen or pencil. Since starting he has had his poetry shown at the First World War exhibition at the Coastal Communities Museum along with some of his model aeroplanes. Sharing his love of history with June Douglas Hamilton at the museum, they worked together to trace his genealogy as far back as the 1700s. Having no images of his family beyond the last two generations he was amazed to find his 7th Great Grandfather was the Earl of Blackness and had been painted by Sir Henry Raeburn - a very exciting find! He now has a print of this painting proudly displayed at home. This new interest has also encouraged him to begin learning computing skills and he is looking forward to joining a local writing group. We have watched Euan embrace and enjoy new opportunities and interests and wish him continued success in the coming year. Congratulations Euan.



2013	£
income	80,352.00
expenditure	77,753.00
unrestricted fund	33,248.00
restricted fund	57,276.00
2012	£
income	83,912.00
expenditure	72,895.00
unrestricted fund	36,661.00

SCOTTISH CHARITY NUMBER: SCO:32371 24

RESERVE POLICY: It is our policy to maintain 8 - 12 months operating costs wherever possible.

A full copy of the accounts is available online at www.stepsingout-eastlothian.org.uk or on request from Stepping Out, North Berwick Community Centre, 8 Law Road, North Berwick, EH39 4PN

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THANKS TO:

East Lothian Council

Lloyds TSB Foundation Henry Duncan awards

Haddington Bridge Club

North Berwick Community Centre

The Robertson Trust

Choose Life

Support from the Start

Stella Moffat Trust

North Berwick Rotary.

Stepping Out could not function without the support
we receive from funders, local organisations and individuals.

Our sincere thanks to all.



the encouragement health project

www.stepsingouteastlothian.org