



 **changes**

**Annual Impact Report
2021 – 2022**

Welcome

Caitlin Rodgers, CEO

The past year has been one of our busiest yet. We celebrated 25 years of Changes and looked back on our journey since we first opened our doors in 1996. Since then, we have expanded to a team of 17 staff, 5 trainee therapists and over 50 volunteers, collectively supporting over 1000 people annually. Our growth has helped meet demand for mental health and wellbeing support, which has risen by 400% since we began.

Over the past year we have continued to see the after effects of Covid-19 and the impact that loss, fear, uncertainty and isolation have had on our mental health, resulting in increasing demand for our services. We now anticipate the impact the fuel and cost of living crisis will have on mental health and wellbeing as we enter the winter months. In the face of these challenges we have seen the power of community, with local people requesting training to support others who are struggling and an increasing number of people seeking volunteer opportunities, often with the goal of 'giving something back' and



Caitlin Rodgers and Christine Knight

helping others the way they were helped. We constantly witness the compassion, support and camaraderie shared amongst peers in our groups and courses. This coming together and supporting one another is what Changes is all about. As our organisational values highlight, we're here to **welcome** and support members of the **community** with **compassion**.

This report tells the story of our work over the period April 2021 to March 2022. This work would not have been possible without the commitment and care of our staff team, therapists in training, volunteers, our Board of Trustees, funders and supporters in East Lothian and beyond. We look forward to the year ahead with confidence in our expanded staff and leadership team, strong governance from our board and healthy funding streams. Changes is in an excellent position to meet the upcoming demands.

Christine Knight, Chair of Trustees

Changes East Lothian continues to grow from strength to strength. In spite of the challenges of the pandemic, an increasing number of East Lothian residents are benefitting from our services. Successful grant applications have led to increases in core services and new and innovative provision, which is described in the report.

On behalf of all the trustees I would like to pay tribute to Caitlin (CEO) and all the staff and volunteers, who work with such enthusiasm and commitment to make Changes so successful.



Strategic Priorities

01

Infrastructure and Income Generation

We have secured additional funding enabling us to expand our core services and enhance our programme. We have restructured roles, creating a senior management team and seven new paid posts. We have undergone an external analysis of our processes and systems and have commissioned the design of a new Client Resource Management system which will be implemented by the end of 2022.

02

Service Development

We continually develop and improve our existing services and have introduced a multitude of new provisions in the past year, as outlined in this report, with further additions planned for the year ahead.



03

Communications

We have employed a Communications and Engagement Officer who has focused on increasing Changes reach both online and offline. For an overview of our communications work, see page 32.

04

Environmental Sustainability

We have re-launched our cycling project, attracting beginner cyclists, encouraging returning cyclists back on their bikes and promoting cycling for leisure as well as active travel. We have a series of litter pick events planned in the year ahead and our nature project encourages participants to enjoy and look after the local environment.

Why We're Here

Our Mission

Changes has developed from the community to enable people to achieve and maintain good mental health and wellbeing through; support groups and courses, therapy from experienced therapists as well as therapists in training, wellbeing activities and training our community to support others.

Our Vision

is that everyone in East Lothian enjoys positive mental health and wellbeing.

Our Values

with feedback outlining how participants experience these

community

I felt so isolated at the beginning.... I am now able to get to groups I didn't even know existed before and feel part of the **community** again

compassion

I felt **compassion** from every member of staff I interacted with

welcoming

Everyone is extremely **welcoming** and friendly which made me feel comfortable talking about my issues

Snapshot of Success

1,000  People supported

570  New people supported

500  Hours of groups and activities

1,146  Therapy hours

70  Volunteers

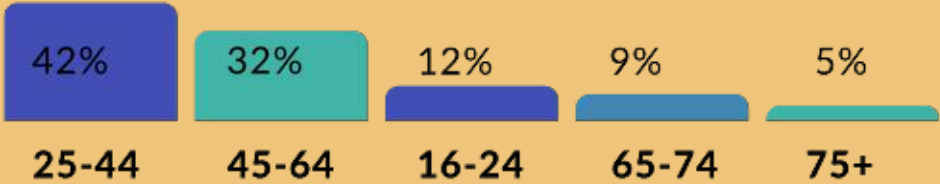
1,800+  Volunteer hours

350+  Support calls (including men's support service)

People attended support groups	209
People attended wellbeing activities	218
People received therapy	151
Attended training	94

Equality & Diversity Monitoring

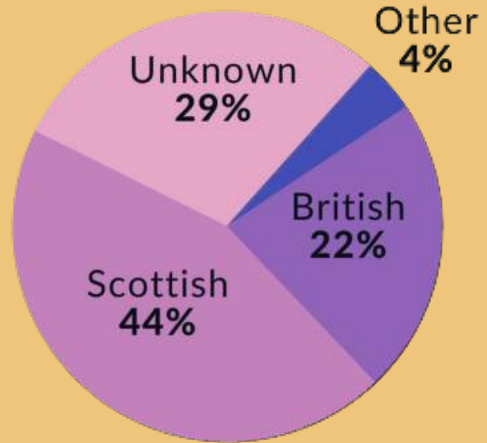
Age Group



Ethnicity

- 64.6% White
- 33.5% Unknown
- 0.5% Mixed or multiple ethnic group
- 0.5% Mixed or multiple ethnic group
- 0.5% Asian, Asian Scottish or Asian British
- 0.4% African
- 0.4% Other ethnic group

Nationality



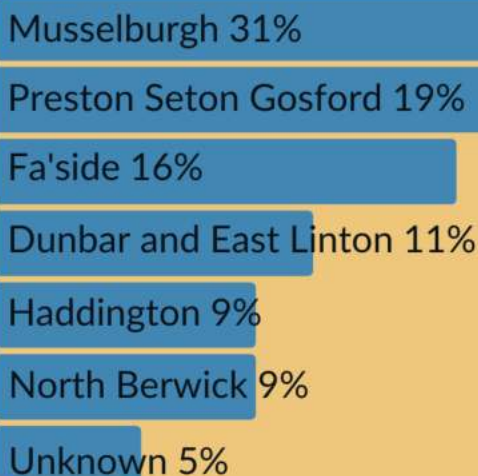
Gender Identity

Female
67%

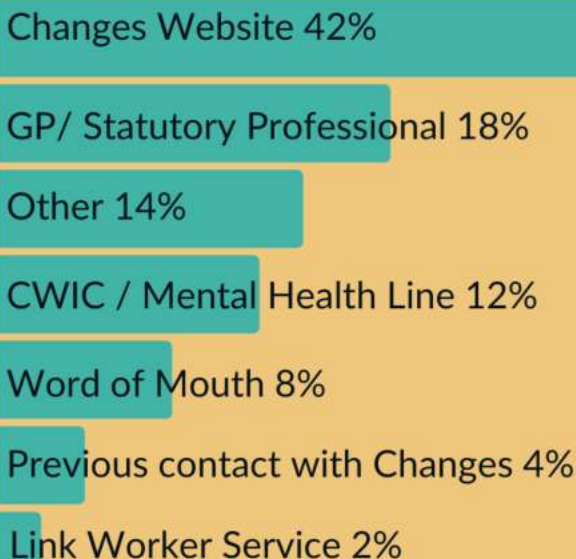
Male
32%

Identified in another way 1%

Where Participants Live



How People Found Us



Impact - Support

Buddy Walks

Through buddy walking we match trained volunteers with people who want to walk but would struggle to be in a group setting.

Where possible we match pairs within their local community, so they can continue to walk together after the ten weeks of their match, if both parties wish.



100%

Report a positive improvement in physical health, mental health and feeling more connected*



Walking with my volunteer has made me like me again.
(Buddy Walker)

Seeing the difference in another person from start to finish is such a rewarding feeling.
(Buddy Walk Volunteer)

26

Buddy Walk pairs

260+

hours of buddy walking and chatting

80%

achieved personal goals

'Over the wall'

Sitting on a stone, perfect for sitting on and in front of a tall old brick wall that I cannot see over.

Ivy leafs rest along the top, tendrils clinging to the wall face and reaching down to the bottom and touching the ground.

If I were a forest fairy I could hold onto those roots and climb over the wall.

I try to imagine what is over the wall. Is it a view of a green expanse of grass and field with the sea view further afield?

Or is it a view of buildings, the town or something entirely different?

The ivy roots cling to the wall and are like a rope ladder - sources of support for you to climb further - to help you reach upwards.

If you should slip, the forest carpet of leaves of green and of early autumn will soften your fall.

The tree to the right of me as I sit here, has a beam of sunshine lightening it's rough bark - I can place my hand on it to help myself stand up again.

As I look around me, the wood is a kaleidoscopic of light and shadows; shades of greens and brown on the ground and glimpses of the blue skies through the pattern of the leaves and branches as I gaze above.



To the right of me a squirrel has just climbed down a thick tree trunk with an acorn in it's mouth - preparing for the winter ahead.

How might I prepare?

What will give me comfort and joy, to feel hopeful that I will see over the wall one day.

To a new day ... when grief no longer grips my heart, but gently wraps me with the love of you, keeping the good memories alive - no longer hiding in the shadows of the painful ones and the loss of you no longer physically by my side.

A new life of opportunity could be over that wall, allowing me to make changes in my life that need to be changed.

In the meantime, I will sit on this solid stone in the wood and let the promise of that 'new day' caress and comfort me.

When I am ready, I will climb over that wall with an ease I least expected and a passion for life that I had forgotten.

Thank you Nature. Thank you 'Changes'.

By Amanda Armstrong

Amanda, a participant on Changes 'Nurture by Nature' project, wrote this poem during a journalling in nature session



Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT) 1-1

In May 2021 we started the process of transitioning from a 1-1 CBT provision to a Group-work Therapy Service, with our NHS colleagues providing 1-1 CBT for East Lothian residents.

We provided 1-1 CBT to all clients who opted to remain on our waiting list:

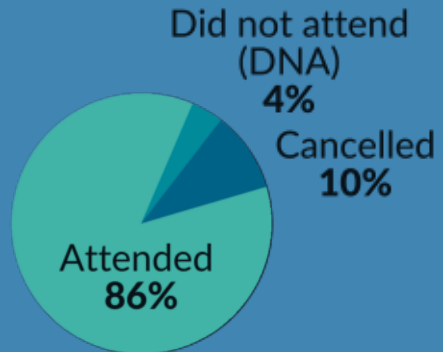
90%

Respondents reported improved wellbeing*



539 hours of therapy provided to 44 clients

26 average wait for CBT in weeks (increase on previous year)



*of participants responding to end of course evaluation

Counselling 1-1

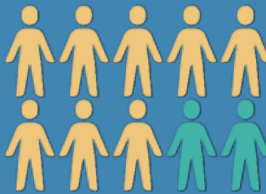
We created a new Therapy Coordinator post allowing us to strengthen our service, overhaul systems and processes and ensure they are fit for purpose.

We received additional funding from the Scottish Government allowing us to increase therapy hours. We provided training placements to 8 trainee therapists.

Demand for 1-1 counselling has risen by

157%

78%



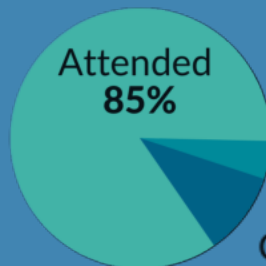
reported improved wellbeing*

607

hours of counselling provided to 107 people

23

average wait for counselling in weeks (decrease on previous year)



Did not attend (DNA) 4.7%

Cancelled 10.3%

First Steps to Positive Mental Health

We delivered a revamped and refreshed **First Steps to Positive Mental Health** course **6** times over the year, reaching almost **100** participants.

“

An excellent course. The team were lovely, very genuine and welcoming and engaging which really helped make us feel comfortable (First Steps Participant)

”

First Steps to Positive Mental Health is run by a Changes staff member, alongside two Peer Volunteers



First Steps to Positive Mental Health course facilitator Rachael with volunteers Jocelyn and Keith

Mindfulness Courses

We offered 8-week Mindfulness Based Cognitive Therapy (MBCT) courses. MBCT has a variety of applications including working with negative thinking, preventing depression relapse, helping those with anxiety, panic, self-criticism, lack of self-compassion and acceptance.

We expanded our audio meditation resource bank, available on our website, including a colourful **Rainbow Meditation** to mark **Pride Month 2021**, a warming **Autumn Mindful Moment** shared at our **AGM 2021**, a **Festive Mindfulness Meditation** and a calming and peaceful **Hot Air Balloon Meditation**.

94%



felt less stressed, anxious and more in control*

“ The course helped me relax, and share my thoughts and experiences, and also listen to other course participants' thoughts and experiences, which was all very helpful. (Mindfulness Participant) ”

62 Hours of Mindfulness

88% Felt more connected to others*

54 Hours of online courses

3 MBCT courses, each course including a taster

8 Hours of drop in sessions

40 Mindfulness attendees

Men's Peer Support Group

Changes Men's Peer Support Group continued online, numbers gradually increased. We held a **Men's Open Event** to attract new members.

12 men attended the group

300+ telephone support calls to men

11 men received weekly telephone calls

66 hours of Zoom Peer Support Sessions, over 33 weeks

Changes Men's Telephone Support Calls continue to offer an accessible service, ensuring there were options for people who couldn't join the online group.



Support Group facilitator John with participants

We asked participants to sum up what they liked about the men's group in a word: **openness**, **respect**, **understanding**, **no pressure**, **listen**, **talk**, **think**, **reflect**, **no judgement**, **small**, **like-minded**.

Peter's Story

“For almost the last 24 months I have taken part on a Monday evening with the men’s group. I almost didn’t. The first meeting was on Zoom. The window of opportunity to join or not join the call was fleeting. I had already been working with my mental health for about 10 months. One on one, with trained professionals. Why join the call? There’s no point. It’ll make no difference. They don’t know anything. How can they help? Why not join the call? Fear. Embarrassment. I joined. It was easier to not, in the moment. I’m glad I did. The men’s group has given me a known in my life. I know I can attend, listen, talk, laugh, cry, stay silent, offload. The list of benefits, of worth, of value increases week on week. I need consistency, a base, a reference in my life. One that expects nothing yet can give so much. Mondays’ men’s group is my mental health anchor.”

- Peter Morris, Men’s Peer Support
Group Participant

Support Calls

Changes offers 1-1 support calls on an ad-hoc basis. As a community organisation we are often the first place people turn to when seeking support.

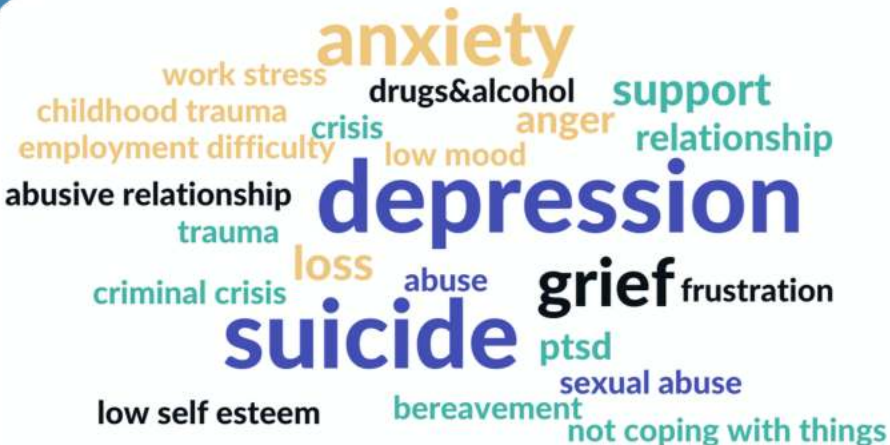
This service is a stepping stone into other sources of support (from Changes or elsewhere). This is not a crisis service and if someone is in crisis, we support them to access the urgent support required.

50+ Support calls

50+ hours of support

(The worker) helped me put my feelings into straightforward, down to earth language and I really appreciated this. (Support Call Recipient)

Common issues discussed within support calls:



Understanding and Managing Anxiety

Understanding and Managing Anxiety is a five-week course offered online 4 times a year. The group work is based on CBT.

“ Thanks for the structured approach to understanding anxiety and some very practical tools to manage a variety of situations, including a relaxation exercise each week and materials that I can refer back to. Facilitators were skilled and empathetic but provided appropriate challenges at times too. (Understanding Anxiety Participant) ”

56 participants attended

90%

reported improved wellbeing*



*of participants responding to end of course evaluation

Impact - Activities

Creative Changes

Through our volunteer-led online sessions we provided **44** hours of creative tuition, offering a space for exploring ideas and sharing creative work with input and guidance from our talented Creative Volunteer, Gary.

We have now commissioned local artist, Lynn Fraser, from [Fantoosh Sketching](#), to run a range of activities for Changes 2022-2023 programme.



Sketch and Wander session led by Fantoosh Sketching



Artwork created by participants of Sketch and Wander

Tai Chi

Working with certified Tai Chi instructor, Christine Dodson, for the fifth year running, Changes continued to offer our popular weekly Tai Chi classes. We delivered **45 hours of Tai Chi to 46 participants** through Beginners Tai Chi and Qigong and Continuers Tai Chi Groups.

Gentle Exercise

12

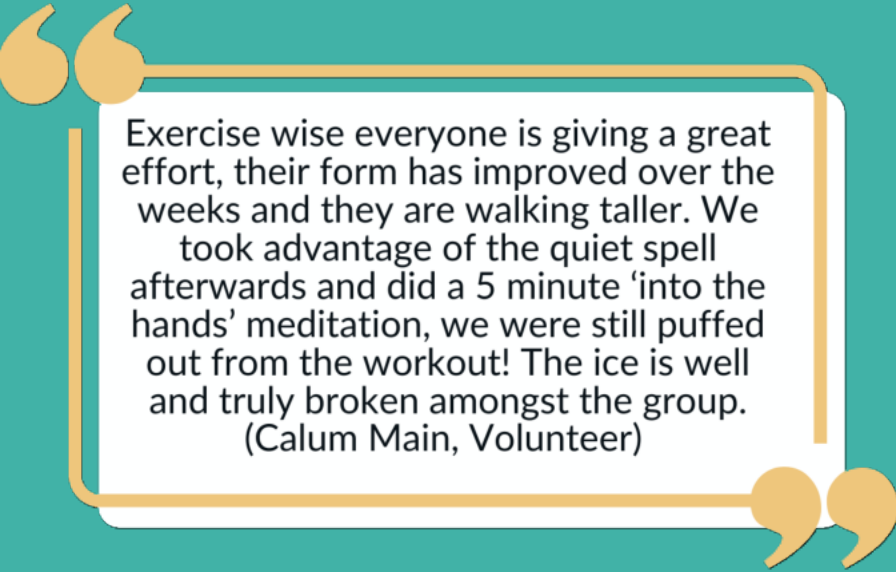
Hours of Gentle Exercise delivered online

17

People attended Gentle Exercise classes

Fitness and Football for Wellbeing

Thanks to funding received from [Corra Foundation Henry Duncan Grants](#), we launched Fitness for Wellbeing sessions, aimed at under 25s but open to all ages and abilities. These sessions combine fitness activities with a supportive wellbeing check in.



Exercise wise everyone is giving a great effort, their form has improved over the weeks and they are walking taller. We took advantage of the quiet spell afterwards and did a 5 minute 'into the hands' meditation, we were still puffed out from the workout! The ice is well and truly broken amongst the group.
(Calum Main, Volunteer)

We delivered **9** hours of Fitness for Wellbeing to **8** participants.

Nordic Walking

We led **50** hours of Nordic Walking to **46** walkers, attending level one groups, led by a trained walk leader who teaches the technique of using Nordic poles and level two groups, led by Changes volunteer walk leaders, for those already familiar with the technique.

A participant joined the Nordic Walking group after a difficult period in their life. They remarked after only 6 weeks how the walks had changed their life. They had become motivated to get out more, pick up other forms of exercise and were delighted to have connected with their community again.



Changes Nordic Walking group

Open Book Group

We partnered with [Open Book](#) who provide relaxed and informal shared reading sessions. Working alongside a Volunteer Lead Reader we offered **10 hours of shared reading sessions**.

Sessions were popular amongst a core of readers; however we took the decision to discontinue the activity due to low numbers. We hope to revisit this in the future.

10

Hours of shared reading sessions



Relaxation

Changes Relaxation workshops, led by volunteers, Jennifer and Gary, restarted in September 2021 after a hiatus since March 2020, offering:

18

hours of relaxation

6

average number of participants per session

Cycling Groups

Our cycling groups were brought to a standstill in 2021 after three recurrent break ins of our former bike hut located within Lewisvale Park.

We launched a community campaign and were touched by the support of local people, offering donations of used bikes.

We provided 60 hours of organised cycle rides to 17 regular cyclists.

What's next?

In April 2022 our Asgard

Police Approved bike storage unit was installed within Prestonpans Group Practice grounds, thanks to funding from [Sparewheels CIC](#). Prestonpans Community Council approved funding for new tools, plus a Velotech Silver Maintenance course for volunteers.

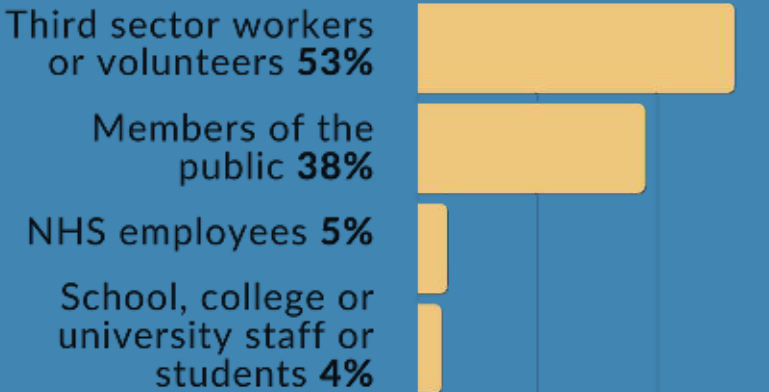


Volunteers celebrating the launch of our bike hut

Training

We provide free training for anyone who lives or works in East Lothian on behalf of the Health and Social Care Partnership. Our suite of training includes Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training (ASIST), Scottish Mental Health First Aid (SMHFA), safeTALK and Changes Crisis Handling Awareness Training (CHAT).

94 participants attended



1 SMHFA

course with **7** delegates attending

1 ASIST

course with **8** delegates attending

7 CHAT

courses with **79** delegates attending

“

(ASIST is a) really informative and important course for all those in the helping professions or with any exposure to working with people who are at risk.
(Training Delegate)

”

“

Very informative and enjoyable training (SMHFA).
(Training Delegate)

”

“

You will be pleased to know the course (CHAT) helped already. I was contacted yesterday by a colleague... thanks to the course I felt totally comfortable talking, reassuring, and simply letting them offload.
(Training Delegate)

”

Volunteering

As Changes grows and develops and new activities are offered within the community of East Lothian, this presents unique volunteering opportunities.

We are delighted to have new cycle ride leaders, cycle maintenance volunteers, peer support volunteers for our outdoor fitness sessions, befrienders in training and nature project volunteers (to name but a few of our roles).

Morrisons Construction kindly funded a Volunteer Event at The Fraser Centre, where we celebrated our volunteers and said a heartfelt 'thank you' for the time they put in to support our work.

We are delighted that Ann Smith won an award for Lifelong Commitment to Volunteering. Jennifer Fleming was nominated in the Wellbeing Volunteer category as part of Volunteer Week.

A quote shared on the night, which rings very true is:

“Volunteers do not necessarily have the time; they have the heart.
(Elizabeth Andrew)”



Changes volunteer Ann Smith won an Inspiring Volunteer Award for Lifelong Commitment to Volunteering

Call to Action

We are keen to hear from local people with an interest in the following voluntary roles: Buddy Walk Volunteers, Befriending Volunteers and Members of the Board of Trustees.

Communications

We employed our first ever Communications and Engagement Officer! This new post has allowed us to promote and publicise our services, increasing our reach, raising awareness and getting people talking and thinking about their mental health.

When someone is struggling, it's not always easy to ask for help, and sometimes people simply don't know that help is available or how to access support. People frequently come to Changes because a friend or family member told them about our services.

We also wanted to say a special thank you to **East Lothian Courier, Radio Saltire, East Coast FM Scotland**, for amplifying our voice and helping us spread awareness.

In this period Changes website had **8,986** sessions and **8,593** users, which is **1,402%** up from the previous period.

36,880 people viewed the Changes website, an increase of **1,294%**.

In 2021 Changes launched monthly newsletters! The issues of the newsletter published in that period have been opened **3,364** times.

Changes Website Key Stats

Views **36,880** ↑ 1,294%

Sessions **8,986** ↑ N/A

Total users **8,593**
↑ 1,402%

Session source	1-day active users	Engagement rate
Google	3,617	46.38%
(direct)	2,423	39.54%
Facebook mobile	1,554	49.2%
Bing	391	44.67%
Twitter	123	28.77%
Facebook	83	63.16%
eastspace.org.uk	51	47.69%

Changes Facebook Key Stats



page reach
56,965 ↑ 123%



page visits
2,331 ↑ 302%



new likes
263 ↑ 119%

Top towns/cities



Looking Ahead

As demonstrated in the previous pages, 2021-2022 was a year of substantial development and growth. In 2022-2023 we aim to:

- Strengthen our **impact evaluation**, focusing on the longer-term impact of support.
- Implement a **new Client Resource Management system**, creating streamlined processes and automated communications where appropriate.
- Consolidate an **accessible hybrid service**, where almost all support will be offered as a choice of face to face or online/telephone. Restart **Mindful Retreat Days** running three times a year, inviting former participants to join current participants for a full day of mindfulness.
- Resume **Ukulele** classes, having found a wonderfully enthusiastic volunteer.
- Introduce **‘Nurture by Nature’**, a community co-produced programme of nature-based activities for adults across East Lothian, promoting physical and mental wellbeing, including forest bathing, sketching in nature, nature photography, bird watching, foraging and much more.

- Launch ‘**Well-Connected**’, a befriending programme for mental health and wellbeing, matching East Lothian residents with people who are experiencing loneliness and isolation and struggling with their mental health.
- Expand our **Groupwork Therapy Service** with additional staff hours to be provided from NHS East Lothian thanks to a Changes-NHS Groupwork Therapist post to be located within the Changes team.
- Promote and publicise Changes services, spreading the word as widely as possible across the community and reducing barriers to access, through the new post of **Communications and Engagement Officer**.
- Strive to ensure fair and inclusive services which celebrate and value the diversity of the community of East Lothian. Changes welcomes opportunities to **improve equality, diversity and inclusion** within the organisation and we will continue to review our progress and champion equalities.



Finances

Income	2021/2022	2020/2021
East Lothian Council Covid Grant	-	£10,000
Health and Social Care Partnership	£189,579	£189,579
East Lothian Council First Response	-	£9,008
Corra Foundation	£19,881	£2,000
Foundation Scotland	-	£4,926
Volunteer East Lothian	-	£3,000
Tesco	-	£500
Cycling UK	£565	-
Sparewheels	£2,909	-
Action 15 - Scottish Government	£112,500	-
Alpkit Foundation	£300	-
Scotmid	£400	-
Other grants	£750	
Donations	£15,215	£2,131
Employment Grant	-	£4,000
Earned Income	£4,610	£1,586
Interest	£5	£15
Total Income	£346,714	£226,745

Expenditure		
Staff and Freelance Costs	£194,334	£173,255
Property Costs	£24,613	£20,396
Administration Costs	£20,357	£17,196
Accountancy Fee	£1,800	£750
Service Delivery Costs	£18,866	£222
Total	£259,970	£211,819

Restricted funds carried forward (to spend 22/23) -
£107,462

Designated Fund (to support investment or development work) - **£30,202**

General Reserves - **£96,344**

Thank you

We thank our core funder, **East Lothian Health and Social Care Partnership** for their continued support.

East Lothian Health & Social Care Partnership



We are also very grateful to the following funders and supporters:

Spare Wheels CIC



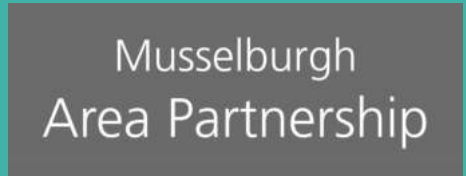
St Martin's Mens Group



Support the Makers

Special thanks to HR Dept Edinburgh, Mid and East Lothian for their ongoing HR support and to Jean Ferguson for her support in our transition to our new Client Resource Management System.





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Changes promotes positive mental health and wellbeing through free support services for over 16s living, or registered with a GP, in East Lothian.

info@changeschp.org.uk | 0131 653 3977
Company Limited by Guarantee No: 230098
Scottish Charity No: SC025130

Changes East Lothian
108 Market Street
Musselburgh, East Lothian, EH21 6QA
www.changeschp.org.uk