

Borders  
Care  
Voice



# Annual Report

2018-2019

We work with people and providers to promote equality  
and support change in health and social care

It has been another busy but productive year for us all at Borders Care Voice. We've worked hard to maintain the role of providing a voice for people who use health and social care services, their carers, and the third sector too.

Over the summer, we worked with the new staff at Alzheimer Scotland to establish their ongoing support for the Borders Dementia Working Group, with our Chief Officer Jenny Smith continuing to facilitate. We are pleased to say that this partnership is working well.

In August 2018, we published 'Speaking Equally' - a guide for those who chair meetings with public involvement. It offers practical advice to make the public, in any role, feel welcome and able to participate fully in meetings. It was written by the Service User and Carer Working Group.

## Chair's Report

The same month, we attended a meeting of the Audit and Scrutiny Committee at Scottish Borders Council to submit our Welfare Benefits Service Petition, which had received over 200 signatures. The petition made a number of requests, mainly about ensuring availability of services and gathering evidence of the impact of the changes, with a view to revisiting or increasing resources if new services could not cope.

We also wanted the committee to acknowledge and monitor the new demands that have been placed on Citizens Advice Bureaux and their volunteers. The Director for Neighbourhood Services was instructed to work with us to compile the required evidence, and the council acknowledged the mistake in a lack of any public consultation. Whilst we didn't expect to see the reversal of the decision, we counted this as a small victory!

In March 2019, we established a more formal training offer for people in our user groups who wish to represent Borders Care Voice, their groups and their experience at meetings. Setting three sessions per year means that we can bring on a steady stream of new representatives, ensuring they understand our approach to confidentiality and good conduct. It also allows existing reps to meet up and support each other, encouraging peer learning.



In 2019, our Learning Network celebrates 10 years since it was established. Since then, it has continued to innovate and meet workforce needs.

In addition to the twice-yearly programme, we were approached by SB Cares to deliver training for managers and new supervisors, which we devised and delivered from February of this year. We also decided to offer our training in house and for non-relevant sectors at cost, in order to generate income.

We are grateful to Scottish Borders Council, both for its ongoing support for the Learning Network over the last decade, and for core funding the organisation. In addition, we thank NHS Borders

for their continued support of our work, and the People's Health Trust (Active Communities Fund) and Robertson Trust who funded our new collective advocacy project.

My thanks also go to the staff and trustees, for their hard work throughout the year.

Last but not least, many thanks from us all to Meg Roper for her hard work and commitment. Our Training Programme Co-ordinator, Meg retired in July 2019 after many years' involvement with the organisation, first as a volunteer then as a member of staff.

The team will miss her professionalism, skills, experience and calm nature. Fortunately, Meg will continue as an independent trainer with the Learning Network.

**Gordon Forsyth, Chair, Borders Care Voice**

## Collective Advocacy project

We were successful in finalising the funding for our collective advocacy project in 2018, funded by People's Health Trust (Active Communities Fund) and Robertson Trust.

We advertised and ran a selection process in February-March 2019. The new worker, Corrina Beighton, started in April, with the aim of setting up groups in 2019/2020.



## Highlights 2018-2019

### Welfare Benefits Service petition

Our petition to Scottish Borders Council, following changes to its Welfare Benefits Service, was considered by the Audit and Scrutiny Committee in August 2018.

The petition called on the council to ensure that the most vulnerable and deprived people in the Borders were not unfairly disadvantaged or face inequality of access to support services because of the redesign of the service.

It was the result of concerns raised by members, and particularly the Mental Health and Wellbeing Forum.

Councillors agreed to formally refer the matter to the service director to advise on whether the petition's demands, which were mainly on the measuring, reporting and mitigation of the changes, could be implemented. They also called for better consultation and communication in future.

### New mission statement

We developed a new mission statement, as a result of discussions within the team. It was felt the statement needed to be short and more accurately reflect what we do:

"We work with people and providers to promote equality and support change in health and social care".

We do this by:

- bringing people and providers in health and social care together to identify common issues and form collective voices and actions
- supporting them to speak with that voice, or representing them where required
- keeping them informed and up to date
- supporting their learning and development through training
- identifying gaps and developing new ideas to address them
- by supporting co-production at all stages in the design and delivery of health and social care in the Borders.

### Wellbeing College

We were involved in supporting and facilitating consultation events and promoting the new Wellbeing College.

The College offers a wide range of courses to support wellbeing and resilience.







## Disability Confident

We signed up to be a Disability Confident employer.

This Government scheme works with employers.

The purpose is to ensure that people with disabilities and long term health conditions have the opportunities to fulfil their potential and realise their aspirations.

We want to let everyone know that Borders Care Voice is serious about equal opportunities for disabled people.

## Highlights 2018-2019

### Mental Health Providers Forum

We worked with provider managers to set up this group.

The group meets around six times per year, timed to be ahead of the Mental Health Board in order to offer feedback. Representatives of the Health and Social Care Partnership attend as commissioners.

### Living Well in the Scottish Borders: A Plan for Carers

We helped to write the local draft plan for carers, which aims to support the health and wellbeing of carers and to help make caring more sustainable for carers.

The partnership consisted of Scottish Borders Health and Social Care Partnership, Borders Carers Centre and the Scottish Borders Carers Advisory Board.

## Christmas Drop-in, MacArts, Galashiels, December 2018





## Carers Week, June 2018

Our annual Carers Week event was held on Tuesday, 12th June.

Once again, it was at the Waverley Castle Hotel in Melrose and hosted in partnership with Borders Carers Centre. Almost 100 people attended.

The day included a presentation by Rob McCulloch-Graham (left) and a round table discussion on short breaks.

After lunch there was a range of activities and a chance for people to chat.

In general the feedback was good, and we listened to constructive criticism to seek to improve future events.

Borders Carers Centre agreed to host the event from 2019.

## Options Appraisals

We participated in three Options Appraisal Workshops for the Crisis Team, Liaison Team and Community Mental Health Teams.

We also supported members of the Mental Health and Wellbeing Forum to attend and participate in the Crisis and Liaison Team sessions.

## Distress Brief Interventions

We were involved in the development of the Distress Brief Interventions (DBI) Project.

It became apparent during the course of this work that DBI was a positive experience for individuals who had used the services, especially those linking into SAMH.

There were some challenges in relation to the involvement of some services.

The age group was lowered to include 16-17 year olds.

## Relatives and Carers Mental Health Group – Rehab Service

With Borders Carers Centre, we met a representative from the Rehab Service to discuss the way forward with the group.

It was agreed that it would become a working and educational group, with an element of support.

The group will have the opportunity to discuss any issues, and will receive the relevant support.

Using the 'Triangle of Care' objectives as an action plan, the group will discuss and suggest solutions to be taken forward.

There will still be an opportunity for invited guests to attend, part of the meetings, and will be selected by the group.

**Highlights  
2018-2019**

## Integration Joint Board (IJB)

The IJB commissions health and social care services in the Scottish Borders. The Health and Social Care Partnership is tasked with delivering the services the IJB commissions, in line with the Strategic Plan for Health and Social Care.

We attend the IJB to represent the third sector. Unpaid carers and users of services were also represented. The Board met monthly in 2018-2019, with some meetings taking the form of development sessions.

## Strategic Planning Group (SPG)

This group meets quarterly in order to advise the Integrated Joint Board. We represent users of social care on the SPG.

With the Health and Social Care Chief Officer, the SPG revised the Health and Social Care Strategic Plan in 2018, simplifying its aims and objectives. Overall, the change was welcome, but there are concerns about the focus on hospital admission and discharge.

## IJB Reference Group

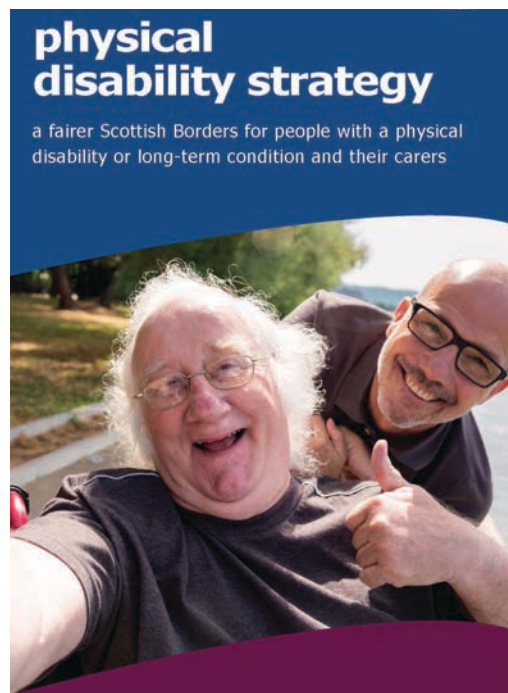
We send out the IJB papers and offer to meet or discuss with a group of interested providers, as well as The Bridge, before each meeting. Take-up has been low, so a fresh approach is needed. There has been an initial discussion with BAVS for the Third Sector Interface about setting up a Third Sector Health and Social Care Forum in 2019/20.

## Locality Working Groups (LWGs)

We were a member of the Eildon Locality Working Group (LWG) until funding for the locality managers, who supported the groups, ceased. Members were invited to attend Local Area Partnerships instead, but the groups felt this was not feasible. As a result of concerns voiced by Borders Care Voice and some of our members, the Health and Social Care Partnership agreed to look at re-establishing and supporting the LWGs.

We represented the health and social care third sector and/or users of services on the Mental Health Board and Self-directed Support (SDS) Board.

# Member and Third Sector Engagement



## Physical Disabilities

We continued to represent the sector on the Physical Disability Strategy Group, which held a consultation on the new draft strategy. A reference group made up of service users and carers was set up as part of this process and the strategy and action plan were updated as a result of those discussions.

We supported Ability Borders in organising and promoting a series of roadshows, with six events taking place across the Borders in April and May. We attended two of the events to promote our work.



## Autism Strategy Group

We attended meetings of the group and an event in October, aimed at professionals. It included an update on recent developments relating to the strategy, including an e-Learning and an evaluation on the Transition Pilot, for young people and parent carers.

### Meeting with MSPs

Our members had their annual meeting with Borders MSPs in February. Christine Grahame, MSP for Midlothian South, Tweeddale and Lauderdale, and Rachael Hamilton, MSP for Ettrick, Roxburgh and Berwickshire, attended the Q & A event.

They are pictured below with Gordon Forsyth, our Chair. Claudia Beamish, South Scotland MSP, was unable to attend but submitted responses to questions in advance.

Our members raised a number of issues that affect people locally in relation to health and social care. They included welfare benefits, care alarms, community transport and care at home.

## ALISS (A Local Information System for Scotland)

Three members of staff attended ALISS digital standards training and we continue to promote the use of ALISS to members.

The ALISS (A Local Information System for Scotland) Programme is funded by the Scottish Government and delivered by the Health and Social Care Alliance Scotland (the ALLIANCE).

Its aims include increasing the availability of health and wellbeing information for people living with long term conditions, disabled people and unpaid carers.

Sessions took place in the Borders, to enable organisations to upload information about their own services, so that they will be found by people searching the database at [www.aliss.org](http://www.aliss.org)

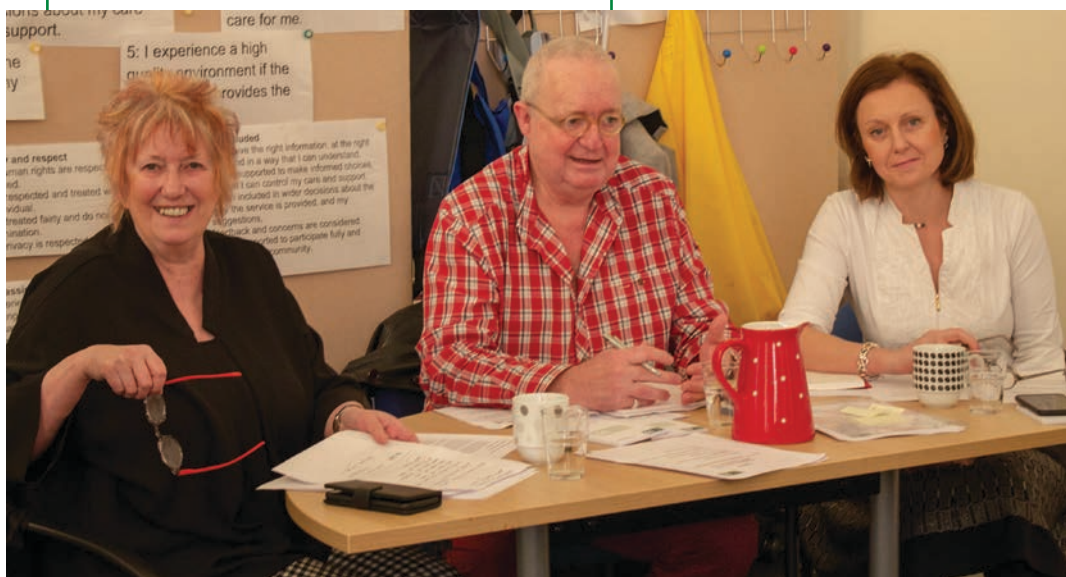
### Community Capacity Building for Older People (Steering Group)

We attended meetings of the Steering Group, which receives updates on progress.

We were also involved in planning sessions for an Older Person's Seminar, led by Health Improvement, in March 2019.

### Community Led Support ('What Matters' Hubs) Steering Group

We are now regular members of the CLS Steering Group. The group considers the development of the local hubs, training, etc and is attended by SBC social work, customer service and training staff as well as third sector representatives and members of the public.

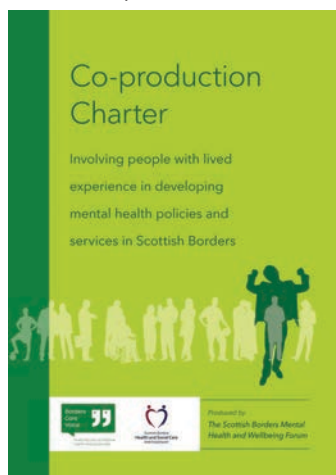


### Borders Older People's Forum

We began attending meetings of the Forum, which includes representatives from a range of third sector organisations as well statutory services and local councillors.

## Mental Health and Wellbeing Forum

The Forum published a Co-production Charter. It was the result of a need identified by the Scottish Borders Mental Health Partnership Board. The document sets out how people with lived experience of mental health



issues and their carers will be involved in co-production in relation to mental health policies and services.

Members were asked for their views on the Mental Health Pathway to Care

triangle, and it became clear that there was a need for further consultation. We organised a Consultation Café on the subject, which was well attended.

Philip Grieve, Operational Manager for Mental Health, attended the July meeting to discuss the progress and future of the Scottish Patient Safety Programme (SPSP) in mental health services.

Forum members will be invited to sit on relevant groups to ensure SPSP work is continued in all areas.

Julie Waddell from Mental Health and Addictions gave an update on Mental Health Care Pathways work..

The group worked on creating its Terms of Reference.

### Scottish Borders Carers Advisory Board

The Borders Carers Centre took over facilitation of this group and we continue to be connected,

The group has formed a small core of around seven carers and led on drafting the Carers Strategy and the Short Breaks Strategy.

## Working Groups

### Service User and Carer Working Group



A core of around 8-10 members regularly attended meetings of the group.

At the April meeting the group gave feedback as part of the Physical Disability Strategy consultation.

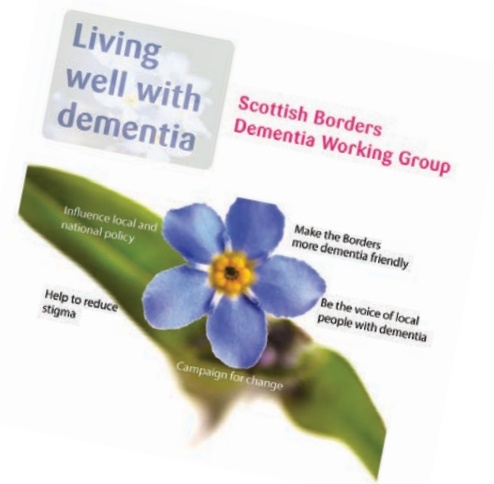
The group produced A Chair's Guide, which offers guidance on how to involve the public in meetings....

Members were asked to become involved in the design of the Dementia Strategy. They were also asked for feedback on a leaflet designed for carers of people with dementia in Tweeddale.

A response to the consultation on the Carers Plan for the Borders was completed in January, and in February it received an update on the work of Ability Borders and discussed examples of care at Borders General Hospital.

The group was saddened to learn of the death of one its longstanding members, Tony Brown, and agreed to be represented at his funeral service.





## Borders Dementia Working Group

This group was established to give a voice to local people with dementia. It looks at campaigning on important issues, tackling stigma, raising awareness, and feeding back to service providers, including the Health and Social Care Partnership.

Dementia activist and speaker, Agnes Houston, visited the group in November to discuss some of her recent work. This included getting the views of people with dementia to inform a guide on changes to the senses with food and dementia.

Some of the members attended an event at Selkirk Rugby Club for people with dementia and their carers, when there was an opportunity to promote the group and provide information. Borders Care Voice co-sponsored the event.

## Parent Carer Action Group

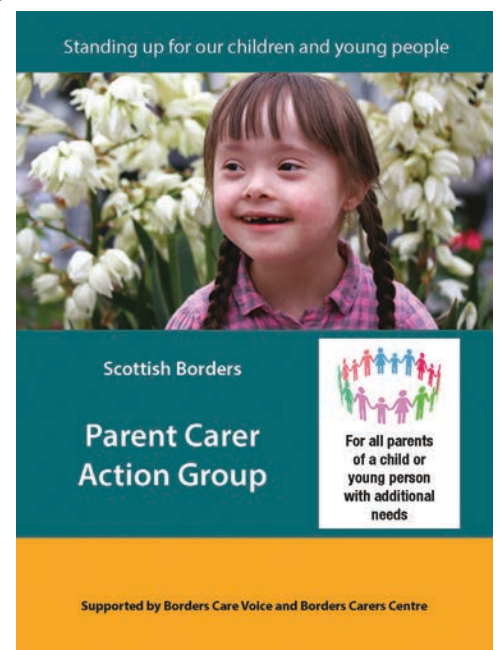
The group, which we facilitate in partnership with Borders Carers Centre, continued to be viewed by policy-makers as the main link to parent carers in the Borders.

Christine Cochrane and Rogan Jeffrey from Children's Services attended the April meeting to give an update on developments. They will be looking at the consistency of decision-making, and every child's SDS package will be reviewed. An update was given to the group at the February meeting.

The group held a development day in September, to consider where the group is now, how it operates and its membership and priorities.

It later agreed to change the name of the group from the Working Group to Action Group, agreed terms of reference and discussed how to increase membership, including developing a new promotional leaflet.

The group was very saddened to hear of the death of Ann Blackie, Head of Children's Services, following a short illness. The group agreed to send a donation to the Margaret Kerr Unit in memory of Ann, who was a strong supporter of the group, and was represented at her funeral.



The Learning Network introduced some new courses and worked with new partners during the course of the year.

The Roxburgh Landward Benevolent Trust commissioned us to develop a new dementia workshop that was aimed at helping family carers.

We came up with a unique model covering how memory is impaired by dementia, combined with key skills aimed at supporting and minimising distress. It received excellent feedback and was embedded into the dementia strand of the programme.

We also piloted a half-day Stress and Distress - Skilled Level course and a full day Medication course.

We continued to roll out the core care training. Emergency First Aid, Moving and Handling (refresher) and Scotland's Mental Health First Aid were always full, with a waiting list.

Again, we worked with partners including Health Improvement, Alzheimer Scotland and Arthritis Care to deliver courses.

With the Adult Protection Unit, we revamped its Level 2 training, reducing it from a day to half a day, and co-delivered this with the unit's dedicated trainer. We ran a session within our own training programme, which was fully attended.



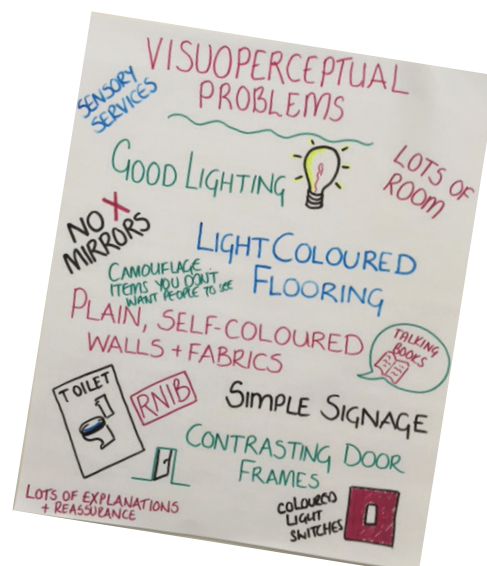
Learning Network

We were commissioned to develop a three day Introduction to Management Course for SB Cares.

This was aimed at giving newly promoted managers leadership and management skills.

We were commissioned to deliver this six times (18 days) between February and July 2019.

Having developed the materials, we will also offer the programme to the wider care sector.



## Meg retires

Meg Roper, who has been involved with Borders Care Voice in a variety of roles, retired in July 2019.

Meg was a member of Borders Voluntary Community Care Forum (BVCCF) which became Borders Care Voice, and also vice-convenor and convenor before joining the staff team.

Initially, Meg came on board to fill the post of Mental Health Development Worker and went on to become the Borders Learning Network Programme Co-ordinator.

While we will all miss Meg, a much-valued colleague and friend, we wish her a long, happy and fun-filled retirement.



## Training participants by sector 2018



## 612 attendances at Learning Network courses in 2018

I would just like to thank you sincerely for the Scottish Mental Health First Aid course. I really did enjoy it and got so much from it.

I've been on many a course in my lifetime and can honestly say that yours was up there with the best.

Not just in terms of the content, but the pace and tempo you maintained was perfect and the level of expert knowledge and experience that you added to the basic course material was invaluable.

Your wide range of knowledge, coupled with the more unique and intense experience of individual sufferers is a recipe for great knowledge and understanding.



We were approached by other organisations asking us to develop and or deliver training for them.

There is a considerable need for mental health and suicide prevention training.



## Organisational members

Ability Borders  
Addaction Scotland  
Alzheimer Scotland  
Berwickshire Association for Voluntary Service (BAVS)  
Berwick & District Friends of Dementia  
Borders Additional Needs Group  
Borders Carers Centre  
Borders Citizens Advice Consortium  
Borders Independent Advocacy Service (BIAS)  
Borders Samaritans  
Borders Talking Newspapers  
Borders Wellness Retreat  
British Red Cross  
Brothers of Charity Services (Scotland)  
Carr Gomm Borders  
Central Borders Citizens Advice Bureau  
Chest, Heart and Stroke Scotland  
Cheviot Youth  
Eat, Sleep Ride CIC  
Eildon Housing  
Encompass  
Health in Mind  
Interest Link Borders  
Nature Unlimited  
New Horizons Borders  
Outside the Box Development Support  
Penumbra  
PND Borders  
Queen's House (Kelso) Ltd  
Scottish Borders LGBT Equality  
Seton Care  
Streets Ahead  
Survivors Unite  
The Bridge  
The Food Foundation  
The Physiotherapy Trust  
Think Thrive! CIC  
Trust Housing Association  
Victim Support Scottish Borders

Corporate Members - 35  
Unincorporated Members - 4  
Individual Members - 57

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## Trustees

Chair - Gordon Forsyth  
Vice-Chair - Kathryn Peden  
Treasurer - Pippa Dickson  
Graeme Nisbet  
Jane Douglas  
Susan Green (resigned 11th September 2018)  
James Aitken (resigned 11th September 2018)

## Staff

Mental Health Development Worker - Shirley Barrett  
Office and Finance Administrator - Nicola Glendinning  
Training Administrator - Ellen de Groot  
Chief Officer - Jenny Smith  
Depute Chief Officer - Kathleen Travers  
Training Programme Co-ordinator - Meg Roper

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