



Annual Report 2013-2014

Borders Voluntary Care Voice is a Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation (SCIO): SC043731

Borders Voluntary Care Voice Annual Report 2013-2014

Chair's Report

Welcome to the first Annual Report of Borders Voluntary Care Voice. This marks the end of the first year of a time of transition for the organisation, during which we changed our name, our charitable status, our brand and our structure. The only thing we didn't change was the staff!

Since becoming Borders Voluntary Care Voice, previously known as Borders Voluntary Community Care Forum, we have been busy building foundations to get the organisation fit for the future. This last year has been a time of consolidation, during which we established our Board of Trustees and introduced new governance, policy and management systems, and reviewed our engagement with members. It has taken time for all that to happen, and now we are looking forward to taking the next steps.

There are exciting times ahead, with the integration of health and social care, the further roll out of Self-directed Support, the transfer of the Independent Living Fund (ILF) to Scotland, and the ever increasing importance of the role of volunteers and the third sector in health and social care.

As a result of the work that has gone on over the last year I believe we are now in a strong position to fully support these developments and to further enhance our engagement with our members, service users and carers, the wider health and social care third sector, statutory services and our funders.

Under our former mantle, we gained a reputation for providing high quality, flexible, independent services. It is our intention to continue to do so, but we will always be looking for ways in which we can be even more effective and efficient.

We want to talk to our members and ensure that they are fully included in what we do. This will include an evaluation to get the views of members on our work and on the future direction of the organisation. We hope our membership will engage in more of these opportunities in the near future.

We also remain wholeheartedly committed to ensuring that we can give a voice to service users and carers— a key component of our work, which is reflected in the organisation's new name.

The Board would like to thank service users, carers, members, partners and funders for their support and encouragement during this time of transition. We are delighted that the funders, Scottish Borders Council and NHS Borders recognise our role and value our input. Last, but of course never least, the Board would like to thank our staff for their hard work and commitment.

Finally, it is with some sadness that I sign off this annual report as I am standing down from the Board after being involved with the organisation since it started in 1991. I would like to take this opportunity to wish the organisation and its members the very best for the future. It has been a privilege to be part of the history and growth of this vital organisation in the Scottish Borders.

Margaret Simpson, MBE

Strategic planning groups and partnership work

We represent our members and the wider health and social care Third Sector on a range of strategic planning groups, including:

- Reshaping Care Board Physical Disability Strategy Group
- Self-directed Support Project Board
- Dementia Steering Group
- Sensory Services Strategy Group

We were asked to be part of the commissioning and locality planning work stream (now the Strategic Planning Group) of the local Health and Social Care Integration Programme. The group's remit is to create the joint strategic commissioning plan, pulling together all the existing commissioning plans and strategies for adult services by April 2015.

We were represented on the shadow Pathfinder Board (now the Shadow Integration Board), which will replace the Community Health and Care Partnership in 2015.

The Third Sector Partnership has been working to try to improve third sector representation and engagement with the Community Planning Partnership (CPP). A terms of engagement document has been drafted and will enable other key third sector umbrella organisations, including us, to attend CPP meetings where relevant.

A Disability Working Group comprising representatives of NHS Borders, Scottish Borders Council and the third sector started working on a proposal to co-produce a new disability organisation, following the closure of the Borders Disability Forum. The first steps included a survey to get the views of disabled people and their carers about the priorities and structure of the new organisation.

We were involved in re-writing the Homecare Strategy with Scottish Borders Council.

We took part in work with SDEF and Sense Scotland in a project to improve employment for disabled people.



Scottish Borders Council and NHS Borders, in collaboration with Scottish Care and Borders Voluntary Care Voice, launched an Older People's Joint Commissioning Strategy in April 2013. The document was developed following an extensive period of consultation with service users, carers and members of the public. Information about the future make up and needs of the Scottish Borders population and the services provided were also reviewed as part of the process. In the Borders the number of people aged 75 and over is expected to rise by 100 per cent in the next

25 years. Planning needs to take place now to make sure services will be able to cope in the future. A consultation on the strategy ran until June.

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Members' Network

Our first Members' Network meeting under our new structure took place in July, to establish the role and remit of the group. It is open to all members, with each user group able to nominate two user/carer representatives. It is planned to meet up to four times a year as well as hold the annual meeting with MSPs and the AGM.

In November, as a result of concerns about social work charging among members and user/carer groups, Scottish Borders Council was invited to come along to hear about the issues and inform members about plans to address them.

Integration and involvement



Elaine Torrance, Joint Programme Director for Health and Social Care Integration with Scottish Borders Council and NHS Borders, was the guest speaker at our 2013 AGM.

Elaine outlined plans for integration of services in Scottish Borders.

She stressed the importance of ensuring that Borders Voluntary Care Voice, its members, service users and carers were involved in the process.

Fun and fundraising



We held a **Back to the 80s** night in aid of the October Borders Challenge, organised by the Melrose branch of Arthritis Research UK, and raised £200. Thanks to the generosity of local people and businesses, we collected so many prizes for the raffle on the night that we decided to have another for the same cause. We ran a Christmas raffle throughout November, which brought in another £200, doubling our contribution. Some of us are pictured with Trefor Davies, Chair of the Melrose branch, who drew the raffle and took our money! Thanks to everyone who supported us.

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Evaluation



Dunwhinny Lodge Care Home in Peebles was a residential care home provided by Social Work Services for older people in the Borders.

In early 2013, Dunwhinny Lodge closed and residents moved to the new Dovecot Court extra care housing development, owned by Eildon Housing Association, which was specifically designed with the needs of older people in mind.

Scottish Borders Council social work asked us to undertake an independent evaluation to gather the views of Dovecot clients and their families about:

- how the process was managed prior to the move
- the move itself
- how residents were supported to settle in
- how they felt about the new service.

Consultation

Following the decision of the UK Government to close the Independent Living Fund in 2015 and give Scotland a share of the money, the Scottish Government launched a consultation to find out how people with disabilities thought the money should be spent.

We organised a series of events in the Borders, with partners Encompass, TLC Borders and the Disabled Persons Housing Service, to find out what local people – whether they receive ILF or not – thought the Scottish Government should do about the fund and how disabled people can best be supported.

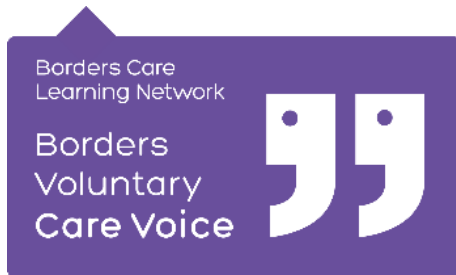
The response, submitted to the Scottish Government on 1st November, reflected the views of around 40 users and carers. The Scottish Government provided funding for the consultation.

Support



Members of People First Borders voted to end official ties with People First Scotland and to review the group's constitution. A new name, **Live a Life**, was agreed by the members and work began, with support from Borders Voluntary Care Voice and the Scottish Borders Enterprise Chamber, to submit an application for the organisation to become a Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation (SCIO). As the Joint Learning Disability Team decided to cease funding for People First Borders, efforts began to try to secure funding from other sources.

Borders Care Learning Network



Borders Care Learning Network (BCLN) continued to run an extensive **Training for Care** programme over the year, for people working or volunteering in the health and social care sector unpaid carers.

A total of 74 courses ran from April 2013-March 2014. The varied range of subjects included: Alcohol Awareness, Presentation Skills, Continuous Professional Development (CPD) for Staff, Looking at

our Working Practice, Bereavement Awareness and Palliative Care.

Enhanced Training for Care was open to managers in the health and social care sector, including those new to management and those who wanted to update their skills. This programme aimed to enhance leadership skills and knowledge and build existing underpinning knowledge. The topics were: Managing Change, Personal Effectiveness, Supervision Skills, and Assessment, Appraisal and Feedback.

"Very enjoyable course, excellent trainer who made the subject informative and fun. Thanks."

"The lecturer was excellent. He made the course fun, extremely interesting and this information will stick in my head so much more, top class!"

"Really superb instruction. Covered a lot of situations. Good communication with humour and edgy stories to make memorable."

"Very good course, delivered in an easy style and at a pace that fitted in with everybody on the session and made me believe that I can counter the stress."

"BCLN is a marvellous innovation and a great opportunity for those involved in the care sector."

87% of training attendees believe that the training will have an effect on their working practice.

86% of training attendees believe that the training will have an effect on their personal and/or working life.

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A one-day course on Understanding Mental Health Improvement in October aimed to:

- increase understanding of mental health improvement
- explore concepts of how it can be promoted
- consider individual roles and responsibilities
- develop skills in evaluating and planning.

A series of events aimed at raising awareness about maintaining mental wellbeing into older age was held across the Borders in 2012. During 2013, BCLN continued to provide awareness sessions for groups around the Borders.

The objectives were to:

- understand the promoting factors for good mental wellbeing
- consider how organisations can affect wellbeing
- develop an action plan to promote mental wellbeing for service users.

BCLN ran a series of Wellness Recovery Action Planning (WRAP) training courses in November. It was aimed at service users, carers and mental health professionals – at a personal and professional level.



People First Borders received funding of £10,000 from the Office for Disability Issues *Strengthening disabled people's user led organisations* (DPULO) programme to establish an easy read project, **Tell Me**. A team of volunteers, including people with a learning disability, rolled out a programme of training through BCLN.

Three BCLN Network Meetings took place, offering participants a chance to:

- make new connections with other organisations that specialise in care
- share resources
- find out more about training opportunities.

Speakers included: Sylvia Crick of ARC Scotland, on Self-directed Support; Elaine Auld of NHS Borders, who talked about falls prevention; Elaine Kwiatek of NHS Borders, who helped with the BCLN training audit; John Yellowlees of the Scottish Social Services Council; and Nigel Sargent of Volunteer Centre Borders. Those attending also took the chance to give updates on developments within their own organisations and share any concerns.

A Day for Volunteers, at Selkirk Rugby Club in June, featured speakers and workshops for volunteers in health and social care organisations, and was attended by 60 people. An Activity Organisers Day in October at Selkirk Rugby Club was aimed at staff and volunteers who arrange activities in health and social care settings. As well as networking opportunities and an exercise session, there were workshops on: dyslexia awareness, music and people with dementia, boccia, and an introduction to cognitive stimulation therapy.

User and Carer Working Groups

The service user and carer groups discussed a variety of subjects during the year, including a number of common issues such as welfare reform, social work charging and Self-directed Support.



Topics discussed during the year by the User Carer Working Group included Reshaping Care. Programme Manager Michael Curran gave an update on the work and presented information on some successful and unsuccessful projects. Other subjects covered by guest speakers during the year were:

- Warwick Shaw of NHS Borders talked about the redesign of Borders General Hospital and the redesign of BGH and car parking facilities.
- Linda Stewart, Head of Physiotherapy, NHS Borders gave a presentation on waiting times for physiotherapy.
- Senior Health Information Manager at NHS Borders, George Ironside, spoke about 'Did Not Attend' appointments and the patient reminder service.
- A presentation on prescription and pharmacy was provided by Alison Wilson, Director of Pharmacy at NHS Borders.
- Convenor of the Scottish Grief and Bereavement Hub, John Birrell, met the group to discuss its review of a leaflet designed to give information when someone dies.

Carers Planning Group

The Carers Planning Group held a Carers Voice event in June as part of National Carers Week 2013. NHS Borders and Scottish Borders Council Social Work Services provided information about their finances and listened to views on how their services could be improved for carers. Thirty eight people attended, including 28 carers.

The group was given an update on the impact of the "bedroom tax" by Jane Keir, Welfare Benefits Officer at Scottish Borders Council. Members also heard how the Young Carers Strategy was progressing, along with information about Change Fund support for carers, short breaks for carers, supporting carers in Borders General Hospital, and updates from Borders Carers Centre – including its carers' assessments pilot and plans by the Scottish Government to create a Carers' Charter.

Members also began working on issues for carers in employment, hoping to create resources to inform carers of their rights. The group governs its own fund to support awareness-raising and information for carers, funded by the Carers Information Strategy via NHS Borders. It continues to monitor the progress of the Borders Carers Strategy, which will be reviewed and re-drafted for 2015. The Carers Planning Group is facilitated in partnership with Scottish Borders Council, NHS Borders, Action for Children and Borders Carers Centre.

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The Mental Health and Wellbeing Forum met five times during the year. Guests included Linda Jackson from the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT) Equality Forum; and Alistair Stavert from the Scottish Borders Council Welfare Benefits team. Philip Grieve also went along to tell the Forum about the refurbishment of Huntlyburn, and members were invited to visit to see what had been done on the ward.

Two members continued to attend the Mental Health and Wellbeing Board, which was reviewing its governance structure. A paper from the Forum went to the Mental Health and Wellbeing Partnership Board, voicing concerns about the function of Board meetings. The Forum felt that the meetings were being dominated by a small number of staff giving updates and were not as participative or effective as they should be. The paper also suggested reviewing the governance procedures for the mental health structure. Key members held a meeting to discuss this, and it was recommended that the Mental Health and Wellbeing Forum should officially become part of the governance structure. These changes have now been implemented.

Two consultation events were facilitated during the year. One with Haylis Smith, Planning & Development Manager - Mental Health and Addictions, considered the draft Mental Health Strategy for the Borders. At another event, individuals had an opportunity to talk about their concerns regarding accessing services with Dr Jonathan Kirk and Brian Patterson from NHS Borders and Bryan Davies, Group Manager, Mental Health and Addictions.

The Forum continued to facilitate a carers group with the Rehab Service and meetings were well attended. In partnership with Borders Carers Centre, another successful weekend for mental health carers was held at Peebles Hydro.

The “big event” of 2013 was the Peer Support Day held at Borders College in June. Organised by members of the Forum, the event looked at peer support and the value of it. Eighty people attended, and the main speaker was Ron Coleman, who has been active in the field of mental health since 1991, when he used his experiences to develop his ideas for recovery-centred treatment of others. Since then he has went on to write books and papers on the subject and was influential in the development of the Hearing Voices Network in the UK.

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The Parent Carer Working Group, which is facilitated in partnership with Borders Carers Centre, is open to any parents in the Scottish Borders who are carers of children and young people with additional needs. The group aims to give parent carers a voice in the planning and design of services for children with additional needs. It is a small, but committed group, which is represented on the Carers Planning Group.

During the year, the group identified a number of key priority areas, including respite, transition, welfare reforms and Self-directed Support.

Members also discussed their experiences of respite during the summer holidays. It was felt that, generally, respite is not planned or flexible for parents. There is also a lack of information on respite, including what is available and how much respite people are entitled to. The group will be looking at this in more detail in the future.

Guest speakers at meetings included representatives from Scottish Borders Council, Encompass, Borders Care Learning Network and NHS Borders.

Members responded to a consultation on NHS Borders Children & Young People's Health Strategy. They were also asked by NHS Borders to comment on a review of the NHS Borders Transitions from Children to Adult Health Services policy and the Children and Young People's Palliative Care pathway.

Borders Advocacy, Advice and Support Forum

During the year, BAASF again covered a wide range of issues and heard about the work of local organisations, including Galashiels Works, Victim Support Borders and the Patient Advice and Support Service (PASS). The new Co-ordinator of the Adult Protection Unit, David Powell, attended to give members an update on the work of the unit and its priorities. Welfare reforms continued to be a standing item on the agenda. Membership of the Forum increased over the year and it continued to meet quarterly, with regular e-mail updates between meetings.

A sub-group, the Information Sharing Group, was established, initially to bring together various pieces of mapping work that had been undertaken and to try to avoid duplication of work. The group continues to meet and now has representatives from the statutory sector.

BAASF submitted a response to the consultation on a revised Independent Advocacy - Guide for Commissioners. The revised document aimed to capture the many developments since the publication of the original Guide to Commissioners in 2001 by the then Scottish Executive Health Department and the subsequent revision and publication by the Scottish Independent Advocacy Alliance (SIAA) in 2010. Importantly, it sought to clarify Commissioners' statutory responsibilities under the Mental Health (Care & Treatment) (Scotland) Act 2003.

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Membership

Membership of Borders Voluntary Care Voice is open to any third sector organisation with links to health and social care, and to interested individuals. Membership is free and gives access to the latest information, news and events relevant to the sector. We have 26 individual members and 23 organisational members

Organisational Members

Action on Hearing Loss
Border Caring Services
Borders Adult Learning and Achievement Group and
Borders Interactive Gathering Sub Group
Borders Asperger & Autism Group Support (BAAGS)
Borders Carers Centre
Borders Citizens Advice Consortium
Borders Independent Advocacy Service (BIAS)
Borders Voluntary Older People's Service
British Red Cross
Brothers of Charity Services (Scotland)
Disabled Persons Housing Service
Eildon Housing
Elder Voice
Encompass
Health in Mind
Interest Link Borders
New Horizons Borders
Outside the Box Development Support
Penumbra
People First Borders
Physiotherapy Trust
Seton Care
The Hive

Borders Voluntary Care Voice Board 2013-2014

George Anderson
Pippa Dickson (Treasurer)
Alison Henderson
Graeme Nisbet (from 11.9.2013)
Stuart Robertson
Margaret Simpson (Chair)



Borders Voluntary Care Voice

Roxburgh House Court

Roxburgh Street

Galashiels TD1 1NY

01896 757290

admin@borderscarevoice.org.uk

www.borderscarevoice.org.uk

www.facebook.com/borderscarevoice

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