



ANNUAL REPORT 2021/22

Boomerang Community Centre SCIO

Creating a better everyday life for the people in our community



SC047467



Boomerang Community Centre SCIO SC047467

Boomerang Community Centre

10 Kemback Street Dundee

DD4 6ET

Telephone 01382 455656

<https://www.facebook.com/Boomerang-142955002467693>

ANNUAL REPORT 2021-22

The Boomerang Community Centre

VISION STATEMENT

Our vision at the Boomerang Community Centre is to create a better everyday life for the people in our community.

- To provide a safe, caring, friendly, listening environment by working in partnership
- To bring people together to connect, signpost and improve social interaction
- To provide delicious, nutritious meals made with seasonal food
- To inspire people to grow and develop resilience
- To improve mental and physical wellbeing by providing opportunities to remain fit and healthy
- To help people enjoy life by providing affordable solutions
- To strive to strengthen the community and reduce the harmful effects of poverty
- To ensure all staff, volunteers and members feel respected and are treated with dignity.



Boomerang Community Centre SCIO SC047467

The Boomerang Community Centre in Dundee aims to create a safe and welcoming environment where people from across the community can be supported to flourish. Our aim is to support those in the Maryfield community and primarily disadvantaged or vulnerable groups and individuals of all ages to reconnect, socialise, form positive relationships, learn and develop to become an active citizen. Our focus is about improving the lives of people by delivering community services based on the needs of the local residents in a warm and welcoming way. We aim to tackle deprivation by providing affordable, relevant, person led services to the local community. The service is based in the Maryfield/Stobswell area of the city which houses various data zones that are among the most deprived in Scotland.

Message from the Chair

Welcome to the 2021-2022 Annual Report.

I write as the new Chairperson of the Boomerang Community Centre. It was a great privilege and personal honour to be elected in December 2021 and I wish to take this opportunity to thank my fellow trustees for their continued support and for their hard work and dedication. Many thanks to Ronnie Neave for leading the previous Board of Trustees over many years. I would like to say a sincere thank you to every single one of our staff, members, volunteers, CLD professionals, supporters and donors who have given of their time and expertise to support the ongoing work of the charity.

Following the sudden death in June 2021 of Neil Ellis, the manager and founder of the centre, we were all truly devastated. In 1988, with a £25 grant from Dundee City Council, Neil decided he would start up a Lunch Club at the Trinity Church. From this little acorn the “Boomerang” was born. At the start of the pandemic his only thoughts were about helping the most vulnerable and elderly living in the local community. He set about delivering over 7000 meals to people at home. This was a lifeline to many. The Stobie Larder was also developed during the pandemic and continues to bring relief to many in the area. Neil’s legacy will live on through the work of the charity he founded.

Despite facing the most extraordinary challenges and the full impact of Covid-19, the Boomerang Community Centre has emerged in 2022 in good shape and ready to face the demands of a post Covid world. The last year has been successful on so many more fronts than we could ever have envisioned, we diversified, listened to our members, and began to emerge in a stronger position. Our vision at the



Boomerang Community Centre SCIO SC047467

Boomerang Community Centre is to create a better everyday life for the people in our community and the last year has been a year of transition and outstanding achievement as we reintroduced daily activities while endeavouring to improve the quality and availability of services, this against a backdrop of the anxieties and fears faced by people who had been living in isolation.

I would encourage you to read the full details in our manager's report which serves to highlight the areas of ongoing work, new projects, and ways of providing services illustrated in the photos. We have also been looking at how the delivery of our services has changed over the course of the pandemic and what lessons we can learn for the future. The focus of all this review process has been to both improve the services we offer and to better tailor what we offer to differing individual needs. As we move forward, we will be looking at opportunities to expand and improve our current range of activities in a sustainable manner.

Projecting forward to 2022-2023 we are aware of the ever changing, uncertain economic climate and the hardship faced by many who use our services and our hope is that the Boomerang Community Centre can continue to provide a safe, caring, friendly environment to bring people together to connect and to reduce the harmful effects of poverty.

As of April 2022, we are delighted that we are joined by a new Centre Manager, Gill Bain, who brings with her a wealth of experience in the third sector. The board of trustees are excited to see where the next year takes us as an organisation.

In closing I am pleased to be able to report that the Boomerang Community Centre remains in a strong position with a sound financial base and well placed to continue its valuable work in a still mainly uncertain future. The 2021-2022 financial year has been very challenging, with a focus on securing funding to retain our staff, continue with existing services and provide new activities for our members. This has been achieved through working in partnership with funders both on a local and national level and we received grants from Dundee City Council, The National Lottery, Children in Need, STV, The Regeneration Fund and the NHS Community Innovation Fund to name a few.

Once again, many thanks to all who make this brilliant charity a great success.

Anne Robb



Boomerang Community Centre SCIO SC047467

Acting Manager's Report

The Covid 19 pandemic brought with it a degree of uncertainty for the organisation. However, Neil and his staff rose to the challenge and diversified the way Boomerang worked. This meant we were still able to assist and deliver essential services to the most vulnerable people living in our community.

In June 2021, we had the sudden loss of our Centre Manager Neil Ellis which was a shock to everyone who knew Neil and especially for our staff, volunteers, and service users. It was a very sad time for all.

Predictably the team and the culture within Boomerang meant that within a few weeks of Neil's passing the team here at Boomerang still responded to the needs that were arising within our community and continued the groups that were running in Neil's memory.

Many people do not realise the extent of our services with many groups and activities focused to assist the elderly to continue to live independently in their own homes, to assisting vulnerable families struggling with poverty to disability and mental health groups. Boomerang caters for everyone within our community treating everyone with mutual respect.

I would like to thank everyone for their fantastic support over the past 12 months of being given the privilege of leading the close-knit team and to the staff and volunteers for their excellent work in this very difficult year. I am confident that Boomerang will continue to flourish, expand, and attain new heights over the over the next year under new management.

Alison Carr



Boomerang Community Centre SCIO SC047467

The Community Larder



The Stobie Community Larder opened in April 2020, during the pandemic, to provide a range of provisions and is now a permanent feature at Boomerang. Depending on availability we can provide a variety of tinned and frozen foods, bread, fresh fruit and vegetables, cleaning products and a range of personal hygiene products.

Initially the Larder was set up to assist those in need living in the Stobswell area but has since open to those living outside this area. 1122 people accessed the larder. The Larder is run by our faithful volunteers and is opened on a Monday, Wednesday, and a Friday from 10am to 12 noon. This is a membership scheme; individuals pay a small fee for 10 items.

Due to the cost-of-living crisis, it is anticipated that those people accessing this valuable service will increase.

In December 2021, we received a substantial donation from TESCO to assist families in crisis at Christmas time and over 60 bags were given out to the most vulnerable individuals and families helping to reduce some stress and anxiety at a very difficult time of year.

This essential service has continued to provide food at a time of great need, and we would like to thank the local shops, farmers, and supermarkets for their donations. By linking up with FareShare and the local shops and supermarkets we also aim to reduce food wastage.



Boomerang Community Centre SCIO SC047467

“Thank you so much to everyone at Boomerang for their continued hard work at the Larder. This has been a godsend to me and my family. My husband lost his job during the Covid-19 pandemic and things have been very difficult and the Larder has been such a lifeline to us.”

The Neil Ellis Community Garden



One of Neil’s final, successful funding bids was for a Community Garden at Boomerang. Funding was provided through the Regeneration Forum. As Neil was a keen gardener, he wanted to bring a Community Garden to Boomerang where people could come along and sit and relax. Neil wanted an area where fruit and vegetables could be grown that could then be used in the kitchen to provide healthy meals for the local community, with surplus supporting the larder too.

R & M Landscaping were awarded the contract and work commenced in the summer of 2021. Work included the removal the existing turf, building 6 timber sleeper planters, lining the planters, building a 4ft fence around part of the building including 2 pathways with gates and new topsoil was added to areas around the car park. Children from the toddler’s group and local nursery designed a bee garden and planted flowers and vegetables. The decision was taken to buy a bench and name the garden in Neil’s memory.



Boomerang Community Centre SCIO SC047467

Families

The Parent and Toddler Group is one of our most popular groups at Boomerang. This group re-opened in May 2021 with several restrictions due to the Covid legislation and guidance. We started a booking system for 10 participants per day and this worked well in ensuring the safety of the staff, parents, and children in our care. 443 places were accessed during this reporting period.

Radio Tay's Cash for Kids provided funding and we purchased a Fortress for our outdoor area which the children had such fun playing on and it was great for interacting with other children.

In October 2021, we held a Halloween Toddlers Party and for some children this was the first party they had ever attended due to the pandemic. This was a great success thanks to Linda Anderson making it such a happy, safe event for all the families who attended.

"I was so relieved when I heard that the Boomerang Toddler group was re-opening. My child has been deprived of normal social interactions as she was born at the very start of the pandemic. I am so pleased now that she can meet up with other children to socialise and learn new skills and for myself to share parenting techniques, skills, and knowledge."

STV's weatherman Sean Batty and his crew came along to Boomerang in the autumn of 2021 to see first-hand the work that we do for children and their families. They filmed our outdoor area and interviewed a kinship carer who attends Boomerang with her two grandchildren. STV also put on a little birthday party for a child who was celebrating his birthday as he had not had a party due to covid restrictions. This was televised on the STV Children's Fundraising Appeal and was great publicity for Boomerang.

Boomerang was awarded the STV children's appeal Winter Funding to support low-income households during the winter period to help buy essentials such as food and warm clothing.

We purchased ASDA Vouchers which were distributed to 38 single parent families, 17 families living with a disabled adult or child, 34 to families on a low income, 2 to families who had children under the age of 1, 5 vouchers to larger families, 2 vouchers to Minority Ethnic families and 2 vouchers to where families had a mother or father under the age of 25.



Boomerang Community Centre SCIO SC047467

“I had just suffered a mini-stroke and was suffering the aftereffects of this. As a single parent I was also really struggling financially, and food was running low at the time I received the voucher. It was such a godsend.... thank you to everyone at Boomerang.”

Every child deserves a little magic and the children and their families from the Toddlers enjoyed a trip to Circus-Starr in the Marryat Hall in Dundee and again a great time was had by all. We received 50 free tickets for this event from the organisation who tour the whole of the UK and have supported Boomerang for many years.

“This is the first ever show both myself and my husband have attended with our 2-year-old daughter due to the Covid-19 pandemic. To see the look on her face was absolutely amazing. Thank you for this opportunity.”

12 children also attended Balnuith Alpacas up in Tealing in the summer of 2021. This rare breed farm offers a unique opportunity to meet Alpacas, Miniature Mediterranean Donkeys etc and had a wonderful day up at the Farm.

Children’s Cooking Classes



Another award from STV Children’s Appeal enabled us to put on a six-week cooking class for six children. Sylvia Anderson led the Group. In teaching the children to cook, they became aware of hazards in the kitchen, understood the value of planning a menu and were taught a bit about nutrition and healthy eating. The young people were also encouraged to learn about measuring ingredients thus improving their math skills. The final evening, they invited others to sample their food and they served this to family and friends.



Boomerang Community Centre SCIO SC047467

“I loved baking cakes and being able to take them home to my mum to try...she loved them.”

“I don’t have a lot of confidence at School due to me being different and these cooking classes have given me a lot more confidence.”

“My mum does not have a lot of money and struggles to buy food at times. I am now able to show her how to cook without it costing a lot of money and don’t need to ask for a takeaway and making her feel bad because she could not afford it...I can now make things myself.”

“My dad brings me up on his own and is really concerned about the cost of gas and electric going up and having to buy food.... I can now make him lovely meals on a low budget.”

Social Isolation Café

The Social Isolation Café was opened in May 2021 and runs from 10am to 11.30 a.m. Monday to Friday. This café was designated a “Chatter & Natter” table where our customers could sit if they wanted to chat to others. Thanks to funding from the Impact Fund, those attending were given tea/coffee and a bacon roll for free.

“I love coming along to this Café every morning. It gives me a chance to get out my sheltered house as our common room has not yet re-opened for socialising in and I miss the company. By coming along to this every morning gives me something to get up for.”

Befriending

The befriending service re-started in July 2021. We have 8 volunteer befrienders signed up and they visit their “befriender” on a weekly basis and sit and have a cup of tea and a chat at home.

The purpose of this service was to reduce isolation and improve quality of life for those who may have family living away or are living alone. Befriending can provide individuals with a new direction in life, re-establish engagement with social activities and improve self-esteem. Many people were socially isolated over the pandemic, and it was fantastic to see this service starting up again.



Boomerang Community Centre SCIO SC047467

Lunch Club



The Lunch Club was Neil's initial vision and was sorely missed when we had to close this service during the pandemic. During the past year, when permitted, we provided an "Afternoon Tea." This was the start of encouraging people to socialise in a safe outdoor space.

We were delighted to reopen the Lunch Club on the 14th of February 2022, and we celebrated with a Valentine's theme.

The Lunch Club is somewhere to have social contact and meet with friends or make new ones and attracts older people and those with neuro-disabilities. There is a great atmosphere at the lunch club which is due to Lynne and the volunteers making it an enjoyable social activity. It is also an opportunity to take part in other activities at the Centre. 443 lunches have been provided at the Lunch Club since opening in February 2022.

"I broke down at Boomerang when it was announced in March 2020, that the Boomerang was having to close as the Boomerang is so precious to me. I knew that I was going to miss seeing all my friends and doing the activities that we participated in after the lunch club. When I received the phone call from Sammi in January 2022 saying that the lunch club was re-opening on the 14th of February 2022, I was so so happy in knowing that I would see all my friends again and also looked forward again to a such lovely lunch but the most important thing for me was company again after being isolated for so long".



Boomerang Community Centre SCIO SC047467

School Holiday Clubs

We provided holiday clubs for 12 children during the school holidays where local children have a free meal and take part in activities such as craft and outdoor play sessions. The club is free of charge and is run by a Youth Worker and volunteers. Many of the volunteers comprise children from the local Secondary School who view childcare as a career choice.

The food element of the support offered to the Holiday Club is provided through the Dundee Bairns Fun and Food initiative. Dundee Bairns also gave monies to purchase equipment and provide entertainment. The feedback from those attending was incredibly positive. This type of social interaction in tandem with activities is shown to enhance both the physical and mental wellbeing of children.

“Thank you so much for giving my children the opportunity to attend the holiday activities. As a family, we are struggling financially, and this meant that the children had such a fun time over the school holidays as I would not have been able to afford activities and buy food during this period. Thank you to all the volunteers and staff for giving my children such a fun time.”

Youth Work



Once again, because of the pandemic the young people’s service at Boomerang No1 Café was restricted at times to 5 young people per session. They opened their



Boomerang Community Centre SCIO SC047467

doors in May 2021 and worked in accordance with guidance from the Scottish Government. During this time 71 new young people attended the club with around 59 of those returning on a frequent basis. In the same timeframe we also had 22 young people return, 17 returning on a frequent basis.

Everything we aim to do at the No1 Cafe is based around building relations, helping the young people develop their social skills, introducing them to be part of a group. This was all heightened on their return following the pandemic. It was very apparent that there was a great need to rebuild confidence post covid.

We have three specific outcomes that we want to achieve with the activities we deliver for our young people: -

- Better personal and social relationships
- Increased community involvement
- Increased healthy lifestyle choices

Over the months from returning May 21 to March 22 we have been aiming to help the young people overcome and deal with any insecurities they had and build up their confidence through providing fun activities and slowly reintroducing them to being comfortable interacting in small and larger groups again. Taking an interest in the young people's thoughts and interests played a major part in how we progressed with the Sports Club, Art club and in Drop ins. Through a range of activities, we helped to ease the young people back into a steady routine while allowing them to forget about the worries of the outside world and concentrate on adding some fun back into their lives in the process.

Most of the groups run from 5.30 to 7pm weeknights and all-day Saturday. These include groups for Art, Media, Girls, Films and Drop-in sessions.

As the sessions went on, we identified that there were still some apprehensions. By introducing card games such as Uno, Uno flip, Monopoly Deal to drop-in sessions it has helped create a common interest of playing games together. The Young People tend to react better to being introduced to games if staff are involved and joining in with these activities as it has allowed the young people and staff to bond and encourages more engagement. Other successful activities include media, art, playing pool, rounders, and football. As they improve these skills, they have become more inclusive encouraging others to join in.

At Art club we have continued to tap into their interests, we take their lead on what they are interested in and encourage the young people to try all varieties of art and support individuals to overcome any insecurities they may first have at



Boomerang Community Centre SCIO SC047467

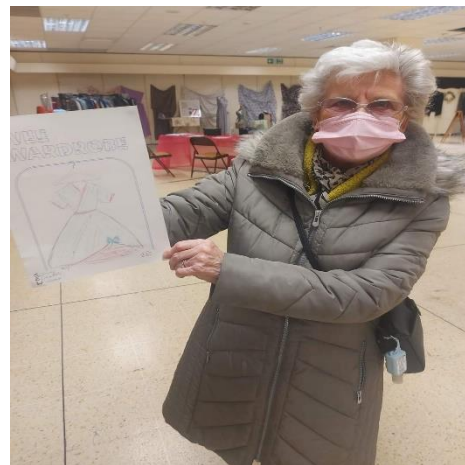
trying new activities. This in turn has led to being more creative and confident in expressing themselves with a good example being that most are now happy to add their design to the benches, tabletop, and walls in No1, making the club feel more like their own.

The young people have also shown that they are growing in confidence by suggesting games to play themselves and with a little help to clarify the rules of the games they are showing they are more than capable of sharing their ideas with the group and helping to set up the game. The increased community involvement has certainly played a part with the change in dynamics of the young people attracted to the club and wanting to be part of No1.

We now have a growing mixture of different nationalities, backgrounds and religions attending the club. No1 has played an important aspect in bringing all these young people from diverse backgrounds together, helping to introduce young people to others in the community which has been especially good for families who recently arrived from places such as Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, Latvia, and Poland.

They view No1 as an ideal place for their children to integrate into the community, make friendships and build their confidence around other young people.

Knit & Natter/Crafting and Reminiscence



Our Knit & Natter, Crafting and Reminiscence Groups commenced in the summer of 2021. These groups provide a creative, relaxing, and enjoyable experience for participants. The Knit & Natter and Craft Groups are looking forward to getting



Boomerang Community Centre SCIO SC047467

back to the local fayres and open days selling the fruits of their labours. Proceeds go to local charities including Boomerang.

The Reminiscence Group enjoyed several speakers and outings which the participants thoroughly enjoy.

Fitness

Chair Yoga is a very popular class at Boomerang. This re-started in the summer of 2021. At the start around 8 to 10 people attended but due to its popularity has increased to around 15 people attending. This type of class can improve flexibility, co-ordination, and strength, while boosting your mood, and reducing stress and joint strain. Some people come along with their Carers who also participate in the class.

Walk, Talk and Lunch Group



The Walk, Talk and Lunch Group started at Boomerang on the 5th of November 2021. Around 30 people attend the Group weekly on a Friday at 11am and after a walk and chat in the beautiful Baxter Park they come back to the Centre for a bowl of soup, a roll, and refreshments. The walkers pay £1 for this service.

Walking groups can improve the health of people with chronic health conditions such as arthritis, dementia, depression, and Parkinson's disease. They also help



Boomerang Community Centre SCIO SC047467

promote physical activity among older adults and have added benefits including increased motivation and the opportunity for socialising.

Alison completed her Walking Leading Course through the Community Health team to help support the group. Some of the people attending have additional support needs and come along with their Carers.

Veterans

The Veterans were welcomed back in June 2021. This is where a group of people from the forces can meet monthly and enjoy a breakfast together in Boomerang. This allows those with diagnosed mental illness and physical injuries somewhere safe to re-enter society and talk about issues in private or with others in a similar position. Approximately 20 veterans attend this group on a monthly basis.

A Trooping of Colour (Queen's Birthday parade) took place on the 12th of June 2021, in which the Forces Champion from Lancashire attended and was in awe at the quality of service provided by the staff at the Boomerang. As a result of the extremely warm welcome afforded by the staff and volunteers at Boomerang the Veterans launched their own raffle and all proceeds are given to the Centre.

Tabula Rasa

A new Group started in July 2021 called "Tabula Rasa" meaning "New Beginnings." Neil had sought funding through the National Lottery Community fund (£6400). The emphasis of the Group was to deliver a peer led programme of activities for women who have experienced abuse.

The activities were designed to complement the work of Women's Aid and enabled women to move on to the next stage in their recovery journey. This included budgeting and basic DIY as well as meditation and mindfulness.

Writing for Wellbeing

A new "Writing for Wellbeing class" was also set up in August 2021, where around 4 ladies attended. Evidence shows that this type of class reduces stress, improves immune function, keeps memory sharp, boosts mood and strengthens emotional



Boomerang Community Centre SCIO SC047467

functions. This group finished in January 2022, due to the facilitator no longer being able to commit to these classes.

Links with local Schools

In April 2021, Morgan Academy students came to Boomerang and did some intergenerational work with our isolation café. This type of work can help to develop empathy, care, and kindness, as well as improving their understanding of disability. This ran for around six weeks with 8 children attending on a weekly basis.

Christmas

Christmas is always a joyful time here at Boomerang. On the 14th of December children were invited into Boomerang to post their letter to Santa. Once again, we opened Santa's grotto, and this was a very emotional time for some families. Shortcake the Elf greeted approximately 100 people and introduced the children to Santa.

Many thanks to all our supporters for donating either monies, presents or donations of food over this period and special thanks again to the Stobswell Forum and to Pat and Gordon Fotheringham for their huge donation of selection boxes for our children at the Toddlers and our No 1 Cafe.

A Christmas Fayre was held on the 11th of December on a smaller scale however it was a very successful event again with children being able to visit Santa in his Grotto. We had around 8 stall holders with our Knit & Natter and Craft groups also attending on the day.

Also, thanks to funding from ASDA (Bringing Back Communities) we were able to provide a wonderful Christmas Buffet for over 30 of our service users which was prepared by Grant at the Old Mill Café. Santa also visited the party giving out boxes of chocolates.

Boomerang Bingo

Boomerang online Prize Bingo started up during the Covid-19 pandemic and has gone from strength to strength with around 15 people playing on a weekly basis.



Boomerang Community Centre SCIO SC047467

All proceeds go to the Centre. A big thanks to all the support from people donating prizes for the Bingo and to Helen Moran for storing the prizes. The bingo has helped so many people over recent difficult times and continues to help with mental wellbeing and social isolation.

One of the most positive things that has come out of this is that one of our volunteers has gained so much more confidence and has made new friends by playing and calling the bingo.

We received 15 new iPad through Connecting Scotland, and this enabled our service users and volunteers to play online bingo and reconnect with family and friends at a time when we could not connect in person.

Annual Golf Tournament

The Annual Golf tournament took place in August 2021 on the Ashludie Course in Monifieth with over 120 golfers attending the event. Many local businesses came on board to sponsor holes, donate prizes etc.

Proceeds from the day were split between Boomerang and CHAS Children's Hospice. Over £3,000 for each charity was raised and the decision was taken to purchase a Defibrillator to be placed outside the centre to benefit the whole community. This will be installed soon, which will be an excellent addition to the local community.

Partnerships

We were also delighted to be involved in the Dundee Kindness Project. This celebrated some of the people, organisations and businesses who had gone out their way to help others in Dundee particularly during the pandemic. We were interviewed and we had a personal booth in the City Square in November 2021.

In March 2022, Boomerang were involved in East Craigie Football Club Community lunches and 10 people from Boomerang went to East Craigie for 5 consecutive weeks on a Friday for lunch and entertainment.

We have successfully worked in conjunction with many partners and know how critical it is for organisations to work together to strengthen our services to benefit the local community. We would like to take this opportunity to thank all our partners, sponsors and supporters who help us turn our dreams into reality.



Boomerang Community Centre SCIO SC047467

Several other organisations make use of our excellent building. These include Andys Mens Club, Junior Showtime, Mens Shed, SANDS, Yoga Stuff, IMPS Dundee Model Club, and First Stop Safety Training.

Volunteering

Volunteering is at the heart of Boomerang, and we were lucky to have 29 volunteers helping in the various groups and activities over the last year. Boomerang would not be able to run without all the help and support we receive, and we would like to thank all the staff and volunteers who have contributed towards the successful running of the Centre.

Supporters of our Work



Treasurers Report

In summary the examination of the financial statements for the year ended March 2022, show that the total incoming resources for the work of Boomerang during the financial year totalled **£151,543** of which **£136,937** was in restricted funds for specific projects. Income was down **£45,202** from last year due to the Covid-19 pandemic. The overall expenditure is down **£8884** for the year. There was a reduction overall for the year of **£22,963**.



Boomerang Community Centre SCIO SC047467