



**SIGHTHILL COMMUNITY
EDUCATION CENTRE**
Scottish Charity No. SC004763

2025-26 Annual Report

COMMUNITY SERVICES



Partnership Agreement with CHAI

In early 2025, we requested CHAI to provide an advice service here, due to the huge need for this in our community. Since June 2025, CHAI advisors have been delivering an advice outreach at Gate 55 one afternoon a week (covering welfare rights, benefits, debt, and housing) by appointment. CHAI's advice service has proven extremely popular here, helping residents in need to maximise their incomes. CHAI are now also going to be expanding their provision with an additional drop-in service. It will provide a more accessible and informal route for people seeking advice, particularly for individuals and families who may find it difficult to keep appointments, or need help at short notice. It will also enable CHAI to engage with people at an earlier stage, which can often help to prevent issues from escalating. It will hopefully also support those who might otherwise not seek help at all. We have signed a Partnership Agreement to formalise our working relationship with CHAI.



Sunflower Pantry Wester Hailes

We're excited to be welcoming The Health Agency's Tasting Change Pantry – known as The Sunflower Pantry Wester Hailes – to Gate 55, soon. We plan to house the Pantry in Room 1 – a space that will be exclusively for their own use – and will also provide storage space so they can build stock.

This service will offer very low-cost food to its members, helping residents to manage the cost of living that is causing a crisis for so many people.

We're offering a free space here for this purpose, as this service is one that's badly needed in our area. We're also looking forward to working together with The Health Agency to ensure the success of the Sunflower Pantry in this location.

Other Services

We also continued to support the provision of services here by third-sector organisations such as Triage, Narcotics Anonymous, Women's Aid, Milan, and SCORE Scotland - as well as CEC Social Work, Discover, and the NHS.

PROGRAMMES

Youth Work

We supported the Easter and Summer youth work programmes and the Saturday clubs – these are run by CEC and the WHY Project - with £3,812.49 for their expenses.

Youth work is a huge part of why Gate 55 is so important in our community. It's one of our core functions: communities must have spaces like this where these clubs can run safely and affordably. The children who attend these clubs have the use of the centre's public-facing kitchen – where they prepare and enjoy food - and a sports hall, as well as their own Youth Zone, with pool tables and comfy sofas.

The Family Fun Day – which is organised by the WHY Project – in July is always a great way for families to come and enjoy a fun-packed, free day out, with lots of treats and activities for the children. This year, there was a bouncy castle and free hot dogs and ice-cream. It also provides an informal and relaxed space for parents to meet with representatives of organisations that can offer advice and support. Our new Gate 55 Community Food Growers group provided bags of fresh salad and beans to take home.

The rural skills project - engaging school non-attenders in learning rural skills in our grounds - is now in its second year, and has seen more young people building additional raised beds from sleepers and practising crop production activity. This year they also built some wooden fencing and carried out some landscaping activity, making beds for flowering plants for pollinators to support the crop production. The work the young people do here helps them to gain an SVQ in Rural Skills, with most then returning to education. It has been rated 'Excellent' by the SQA. This project works in tandem with the community food growing group: over summer, the community food growing group takes care of crops planted by the young people, as well as sowing new crops, as this is currently a term-time programme only. We support this project with tools and safety equipment.

We arranged for a group of young people from Gate 55 to be able to attend the Green Careers Fair at Glasgow University (a fair which is usually only open to university students) so they could learn about careers in regenerative agriculture, green construction, ecodesign and architecture, and biotechnology. The careers fair was being run by SEDA Land.

Adult Activity Programmes

Employability

We piloted an employability programme together with COSS for which we also received 6 laptops from Places4People; the laptops are available for all other groups as well.

We also hosted the Spring Fun Day run by Parental Employability Support here in March.

Physical Activity

We continued our other programmes of activity such as carpet bowls for older people, and continued to host Adult Education classes in tae kwon do, as well as the regular Bounce and zumba sessions.

We are working towards getting new lines painted on the sports hall floor for basketball, badminton, etc in the next financial year.

Gate 55 Community Food Growers

This year saw the growth of our community food growing group, supported by a grant (Grow Your Own Fund) from CEC which pays for a part-time project worker (3 hours per week) and for materials and expenses. We are acting as the parent organisation for this new community group. The group has been working in the allotment and has grown cauliflowers, beans, onions, carrots, potatoes, courgettes, kale, and winter salad leaves, as well as harvesting raspberries, apples and plums from the existing fruit bushes and trees. The group selected 20 new fruit trees (apple, plum, pear and cherry) which were provided as part of the Calders Canopy Community Project, and families with Discover helped to plant these. They've been using one of the courtyard areas as a propagating space and also put up mini-polytunnels in the allotment in winter.

The group uses organic, no-dig methods. The fruit and vegetables have been made available for free from a shelving unit inside reception. The group held cookery sessions and small community meals, sharing recipes for chard pakora, apple crumble, and stir-fried cabbage. Recipe booklets are available from the shelving unit. The group now has around eleven regular members at its weekly sessions.

Creativity & Celebration

We supported the dance school set up by young members of the WHY Project with the purchase of a new large flatscreen TV that can be mounted on the existing mobile unit.

We were delighted to be asked to host celebrations for Eid and Chaand Raat – open to all members of our community: we offered free space for these get-togethers, and we provided volunteer support as well. At the Chaand Raat celebration, there was henna hand-painting; while for Eid, people enjoyed food and dancing.

We also regularly provide free space to a group that provides people with Shona heritage with an opportunity to celebrate their food and culture.

Sighthill Library, which is housed in our building with us, continued to offer its activities and we promoted these in our online and printed materials. The Library is important not only for its lending facilities for books and the wonderful Children's Library but also for the regular activities such as Lego Club, and a range of seasonal activities it provided this year.

We continued to host Adult Education classes in Guitar, and Art Therapy.

MAINTENANCE

We had our sports hall windows and courtyard door areas pressure-washed (with thanks to Mossend Exterior Cleaning who gave us a special price).

We were fortunate to be able to get support from Places4People who are generously providing free services for us: Advance came and did a great job lifting slabs that had been disturbed by roots and relaying these where appropriate (other areas have been re-covered with gravel). Advance also created a new cover for a drain. Jock Brickworks came and repaired the spalled brick steps in the west garden, as well as repairing ageing brickwork in the raised beds around the car park, and beside the paths. This has made a huge difference to the building.

New raised beds and a section of fencing were created by the young people on the Rural Skills project.

The Gate 55 Community Food Growers weeded the west courtyard and planted ericaceous fruit bushes under the Scots Pine tree; they also weeded the east courtyard.

SUSTAINABILITY

Waste & Emissions Reduction

The Gate 55 Community Food Growers have been using compost made on site from kitchen scraps. They've also been growing lots of fruit and veg from seed here, which reduces food miles. The group makes use of cardboard waste to help prepare its beds and path areas. The compost comes mainly from Caledonian Horticulture, which processes local garden waste. The group's produce is given away in brown paper bags and biodegradable caddy bags. Where possible, they've repaired existing items rather than buying new, such as the repaired and repainted cold frame.

Tesco continues to provide us with unsold clothing that might otherwise go to landfill. We make this available for free on the tables inside reception: it is very popular, and includes school uniform items as well as some adult clothing, and footwear. This really helps local people to stretch budgets further.

Repair Cafe

We asked the Repair Cafe to come and run a session here in January. The Repair Cafe has a wonderful team of volunteers who come and show people how to mend broken items. Many local residents took the opportunity to come and repair their broken items.

Water Collection

We use a water butt in the courtyard garden to water all plants in the propagating area.

Biodiversity

We have some meadow areas to support more insect life, and have planted pollinator-friendly plants such as borage and calendula as well as a broader range of early-flowering plants.

ACCOUNTS

[Please note these accounts are in the process of being audited: this section will be updated accordingly.]

Balance at 01.04.25:	£29,278
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Income

Income from Room Hire (Unrestricted):	£17,450
Income from GYO Grant Funding (Restricted):	£ 4,946
Total Income:	£22,396

Expenditure

Running Costs & Purchases:	£5,237.46
Programme Expenses:	£3,812.49
GYO Grant Fund Expenses (Restricted):	£2,938.64
Total Expenditure:	£11,988.59

Cash Balance at 31.03.26:	£39,685.51
of which:	
Restricted (GYO Fund):	£2,007.36
Unrestricted:	£37,678.15

“Everything we do is
for the community. We
just want a place where
everyone can come.”

Patricia Lee - Chair

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