



# LEAP

Annual Report 2024



Enhancing the lives of older people in our community

# Executive Director's report

## A year of challenge and change



When LEAP started operating in 1992, our first funding of nearly £27,000 came from the local authority – Strathclyde Council at the time - and the Scottish Office.

This year, the local authority - now South Lanarkshire Council - threatened to half our core funding back to around £27,000. I admit this was as worrying a moment as I have had since joining LEAP. Halving our core funding would not only have threatened jobs and services, it also had a direct impact on what we could seek in matched funding elsewhere.

Thankfully the Council had a change of heart. They overturned the proposal, subject to a future review of voluntary sector funding. This review is something we welcome as it will allow us to demonstrate the value and worth of our services to older people in South Lanarkshire.

Elsewhere, gathering funds remained difficult. Some trusts that previously supported LEAP changed their application criteria and no longer supported services for older people. Other funders decided to fund other worthy causes.

However, Georgie Madden, our business development manager, has had another great

year of finding money. I know I mention Georgie every year, but I do so because her efforts allow us to continue to provide our services.

Additionally, Georgie has found money for us to develop new services for people living with dementia and their carers. After an initial pilot in Cambuslang, we will be able to support these people in Cambuslang/Rutherglen and East Kilbride over the next couple of years.

This development has come in response to the increasingly complex needs of potential clients being referred to LEAP, especially through social work offices. The positive note to that is that, once again, LEAP is being seen as the organisation that can be trusted to deliver vital and complex services to some of the most needy people in our community.





To be able to do that, you need professional staff willing to take on more complex work and I am proud that we have so many of those people working for us. We are privileged to have them.

Elsewhere in the organisation, things carry on as they have done for a long time – befriending and handyperson services and classes and activities being delivered to the best quality possible.

Our learning and leisure programme now includes personal activities such as yoga and massage for people at home, unable to leave their house to join our classes.

And we continue to attract new partners such as Lingo Flamingo offering French classes with a SCQF-recognised certificate for people completing the course.

I could go on about several other new initiatives but will focus on the coming year if I can.

On 1 April 2024 we took over the leases to the Toll Pitch Pavilion in Cambuslang and Spittal Community Centre in Rutherglen with a view to applying for them as asset transfers from South Lanarkshire Council. By September we hope to be offering activities from both these former South Lanarkshire Council buildings and giving



groups and local people the chance to hire the halls for their own activities.

Again, this proves LEAP's standing among other organisations in the area.

This comes down to the efforts of everyone in LEAP – staff, volunteers and the Trustees. I say it every year in a variety of ways but I have no hesitation in saying it again. It is their professionalism, commitment and enthusiasm that allow us to do what we do.

Long may that continue.

Executive Director

# Report from the Chair



Well it's been another good year for LEAP!

Thanks to our amazing team of staff and volunteers that we are privileged to have, we have continued to develop and contribute to communities all over South Lanarkshire.

I will never be able to emphasise enough that everything LEAP has achieved in the last year (and the 30+ previous years!) is absolutely down to the volunteers and I have the greatest pleasure in thanking them for all they do. We are incredibly grateful for their support and I know I speak for the many folk they help on a daily basis.

We never have enough volunteers and are always looking for people who can help us. Please do think if you have any time you can offer – an hour or two a week can make a positive impact on someone's life and you'll find a warm welcome and a cuppa anytime you want to chat about it!

This year we have secured two new venues that we can use for our classes and groups. We have leased the Spittal Hall in Rutherglen and the Toll Pitch in Cambuslang, and we are working to be ready in September!

The Handyperson service is still going strong and makes a really valuable contribution to support older folk in South Lanarkshire. From changing light bulbs and curtains to helping with bigger jobs – don't be shy phoning to get a job done. A big thanks to Kevin and his team for not only helping with the tasks but for helping to keep us out of A&E!!

We also now have a dementia group running twice a month in the sheltered housing in

Cambuslang. If you want to find out more about joining the group or volunteering just call our office for more information. Helen Jilks has become our Dementia Service Officer and I would like to wish her good luck in her new role.







I would also like to welcome Donna McPherson who is our Friendship Groups Co-ordinator.

A big thanks as always to Stuart McGregor our Executive Director. We are grateful for the brilliant job he does in leading and supporting our amazing staff. I must also mention Georgie Madden for her skills and efforts in sourcing funding that we have badly needed to keep LEAP thriving.

Unfortunately this year we've been forced to increase our class charges slightly and I know that was a difficult but necessary decision to make sure that we can still be here to provide services to older people in our communities.

To my fellow directors, please accept my sincere thanks for everything you do to support the project and keep it focused on providing what our users need

To our volunteers, from throughout South Lanarkshire (and beyond!), you make all of this possible by constantly going above and beyond

to help the groups and individuals who benefit from our services. I would like to extend my sincere thanks on behalf of my fellow directors.

The local press coverage we receive is something that helps us "get the word out" and is of huge value. Thanks to the community reporters in Strathaven, Blantyre, Hamilton, East Kilbride and Rutherglen who show genuine support for not only LEAP but our communities.

Our co-ordinators, office staff and tutors must also be recognised – you are always there to support our volunteers and visitors! Your enthusiasm and kindness in how you deliver our services and adapt to challenges with grace is inspiring.

The coming year will again bring challenges. Financial constraints will continue to be felt across all community organisations. I must particularly thank South Lanarkshire Council for their backing throughout the year and of course our MP's, MSP's and local Councillors for their ongoing support – it really is appreciated.

I would like to sign off now by wishing you all good health and God bless. Thank you for all your support.

Chair

# Treasurer's report



For one family, 1992 was an Annis Horribilis but for LEAP, it was the start of a great adventure that continues to this day.

The journey has sometimes been difficult, and this past year proved to be so, as South Lanarkshire Council proposed a 50 per cent cut to our core funding. Such a cut would have proven disastrous for LEAP, with cuts to staff and a further restriction in finding funds from other sources.

We are indebted then to everyone who jumped to our defence and challenged local councillors or took part in the Council's consultation to register their disagreement with the proposal.

I would like to think that the strength of feeling within LEAP's membership made a difference as Councillors, MSPs and MPs got to hear about our predicament. The good news was that the Council changed its plans and we kept our core funding, albeit for one year pending review.

This allows Georgie Madden, our business development manager scope to develop funding bids around a stable core funding for the coming year.

I have lost count of the actual amount of money Georgie has brought into LEAP, but I know it is in the millions. Without her efforts we would not be able to do what we do.

That effort - along with the commitment of all of our staff – will be vital to our continued success, especially as the coming year will see changes, and challenges, including the







development of our new dementia services and the Toll Pitch and Spittal halls, which we have taken on from South Lanarkshire Council.

I am sure though, that everyone will rise to the challenge and I will be reporting on success this time next year.

My direct thanks as treasurer, as ever, go to Georgie, Stuart and Edward, our accountant. Georgie for finding the money, Stuart for managing it well and Edward for compiling the accounts.

My wider thanks go to everyone involved with LEAP – staff and volunteers. They all go the extra mile to make sure our clients and volunteers are well looked after at all times, and that the organisation continues to provide vital services to those most in need.

Casting my eye forward for a moment, I can see the funding environment remaining difficult and potentially volatile for some time to come.

Some trusts are changing criteria, and we wait to hear what the results of South Lanarkshire Council's funding review will bring.

It may not be the smoothest of rides.

Treasurer



This is my fourth report on behalf of the Befriending Service. As each year progresses, it begins to sound rather repetitive in saying how much our project makes a difference in people's lives – clients and volunteers alike – but that is what we do, nothing changes – and we know we are good at it!

The success of the service, striving to reduce loneliness and isolation amongst our clients, rests with the continual commitment and dedication from our valued volunteer base. We thank each and every one of them for their astounding contribution throughout the year.

Feedback from clients and family members alike reflects very positively on how our volunteers have made that huge difference, not only to reducing loneliness and isolation, but to encourage and increase people's social networks within their local communities.

And to highlight those immense benefits, one of our befriending stories - via Age Scotland - reached national recognition, with a client/volunteer match being part of a promotional video campaign promoting the National Care Service.

**Iain English**  
volunteer development  
officer



Whilst on the subject of recognition, our service has now achieved its fourth 'Excellence' category in the Quality in Befriending Award issued by the UK wide Befriending Networks.

One of our key celebrations this year was celebrating the 100th birthday of one of our befriending clients – Thomas Small. And being a stamp collector, to mark the occasion, LEAP presented him with a framed set of King George V stamps issued at the time of his birth.

One other key moment was presenting our Volunteer of the Year Award to Christine Brown for her noteworthy contribution to LEAP over the years.

We are successfully running eight befriending groups throughout our service area, in which activities range from games, memory box discussions, cards and crafts, musical entertainment and bingo as well as the usual seasonal dinners and lunches on offer. One feature was the Dog's Trust 'Four-legged' session which was a "stroke" of success!

This year, our 161 befriending volunteers gave more than 14,500 hours of their time to befriend 189 clients.



Supporting the groups now is Donna McPherson who joined in Aug 2023 as our Befriending Group Co-ordinator. LEAP wishes to extend its sincere thanks to our previous co-ordinator, Mandy Martin.

Every Christmas and Easter we distribute to those most in need a number of generously packed hampers kindly donated by a local contributor to whom we are grateful.

Volunteers are comprehensively trained and thereafter we offer a range of developmental training opportunities such as Dementia Awareness, Epilepsy awareness, Hazard awareness, Mental Health First Aid, Emergency First Aid at Work.

We also bring volunteers together over the odd coffee morning to offer peer / shared learning opportunities but essentially forming that bond within our volunteer base. Many friendships are formed here, which is a benefit to those volunteers who come into our service to address their own needs whether it be for a purpose, identity or wellbeing.

*"It lifts my spirits, the volunteer brings a connecting experience listening to all her stories! Feels like she is one of the family"*

*"Group befriending is just brilliant, it has improved my mental health and wellbeing".*

*"I really enjoy being a volunteer, it is the very best thing that has happened to me"*

*"It is most enlightening to have the volunteer in my life, giving me confidence and something to look forward to every week"*

Moreover, with those qualities in hand, we look to ensure our service is delivered to a very high standard, and that we go the extra mile to ensure that our volunteers are fully equipped to get the very best journey possible with us.

But we still need more volunteers to cope with the increasing demand for our invaluable service. If you know of anyone, then please point them in our direction!

It just leaves me again, on behalf of LEAP and everyone in the befriending service, to thank each and every one of those volunteers for their invaluable contribution throughout the year.















Helen Jilks  
Dementia Services  
Development officer



This year, LEAP was delighted to be awarded funding from the Community Mental Health and Wellbeing Fund to launch a much need dementia group in the Cambuslang area. The 'Wednesday Lunch Club' was launched in March 2024 with the 20 places going quicker than tickets for Taylor Swift!

After consultation across our stakeholders, we decided to pilot a new style of group. The group begins with lunch then the carer separates into their own space for an information or wellbeing session and the dementia group stay in the main area for activities supported by dementia-trained volunteers and staff. This gives the carers a chance to breath and offer each other peer support in the knowledge their loved ones are safe and supported in a caring environment.

We evaluated the group after six weeks with 100 per cent of the carers saying they had benefitted from the group.

Moving forwards, we were thrilled to receive funding from the Integrated Care Fund to provide dementia services across East Kilbride.

From summer 2024, we are going to start a drop-in coffee morning, a music group and a lunch club for people living with dementia and their carers.



And we are also looking at funding for larger premises to provide our lunch group to a wider audience across Cambuslang and Rutherglen and hopefully increase the number of cafes and music groups across the South Lanarkshire area.

Exciting times ahead!

*"The Wednesday Club is wonderful. It gives us somewhere to go and meet other people with the same problems."*

*"A brilliant group - thank you!"*





Once again our handypersons team was waiting to come to people's aid with small jobs they could no longer safely do themselves, or larger jobs they wanted done professionally and at a fair price.

Our team can turn their hands to many everyday jobs, from changing curtains to turning mattresses and bigger jobs such as fitting keysafes – anything that keeps people feel safer in their homes for longer.

During the year, our team of around 30 regular volunteers carried out around 600 jobs either on their own or with support if needed. We also helped customers with bigger jobs where they would usually contact a tradesperson but might be uncomfortable with doing that for fear of being targeted by rogue tradespeople.

We helped more than 100 people in this position by fitting keysafes and new smoke alarms, fitting wireless intruder alarms, power washing drives and patios and cleaning gutters.

This sort of work brings in valuable income that allows LEAP to continue its free handyperson work. In the past year that amounted to more than £6,500.

Kevin Key  
Handyperson Service  
co-ordinator



This is less than last year but understandable given the bulk of that year's work had been fitting new standard smoke alarms.

This past year has seen more varied work covering keysafes, power washing, building flatpack furniture and installing wireless intruder alarms. We are now looking to add to this list of works by including jobs such as fitting telephone call blockers.

We also continue to support South Lanarkshire social work and NHS departments to get people back to their homes as soon as possible after hospital treatment.

And our volunteers will no doubt come to our aid by supporting work to bring our new halls at Toll Pitch and Spittal back up to working order.





Lysanne Erlings  
Learning Co-ordinator

The Learning & Leisure programme has gone through some exciting times this year, as we had organisations reach out to us to offer our participants fantastic opportunities.

This resulted in us being able to offer an average of 26 sessions per week between April 2023 and March 2024. On average 274 people attended our activities on a weekly basis, which is 23 more than last year.

In total we had 1241 individuals participate in our programme, which is an increase of 101 people from last year.

One of the organisations we worked with was Lingo Flamingo, a charity offering language classes to older people to help delay the development of dementia.

They offered us an eight-week French course, with the opportunity to obtain an SCQF certificate. Eight of our participants decided to work towards their qualification. Of course, we

had a wee ceremony with French delicacies to celebrate their achievement.

Clyde Cycle Park in Cambuslang offered us five Cycling Skills classes at their park. Our group showed up every week, even if it rained. They were so keen that the cycle park offered them the opportunity to come every week, which they



gratefully accepted.

LEAP successfully applied for funding with Cycling UK, which meant the participants were



able to get free bikes of their own so that they can now cycle whenever they want, helping them with their fitness, their mental health and how it helped boost their confidence. Our Billy was even interviewed by BBC Scotland!

Blantyre Life, a newly-built care facility that aims to enable older people to live independently as long as possible, offered us space for activities. We have been running a yoga class and a Tai Chi class, with both classes now running at capacity. People at the classes meet in the café of the centre before and after the class, which has allowed new friendships to blossom. We even had one participant say that having the class in Blantyre has been life-changing for them, as previously they never left the house.

It is for people like them that myself and the befriending service have been working together to assist, for the last few years. Together we delivered Learning & Leisure at Home, mindfulness activities such as yoga, massage and art for people unable to leave home.

The results were great, with multiple people telling us they felt less stressed and more relaxed. Someone who had gotten a massage told us it gave her so much energy that she was able to walk without her walker after the session! We had family members informing us the change they had seen in their parents. One person, who hadn't left the house in a long time, decided to go for a walk after her massage because it had given her a boost in energy, which she hadn't expected.



Unfortunately, financial year 2023-2024 was the last year we had funding to offer certain activities to our participants, help us cover costs for tutors and hall hires, and to offer our Learning & Leisure at Home activities. Partnerships such as these help to offer exciting opportunities for our clients, while keeping our costs down for the charity.

It is for this reason that I am looking forward to everything that the Spittal Community Centre and Toll Pitch Pavilion can offer the Learning & Leisure programme.

These spaces will allow us to put on new activities and reach more people in more places.

## Income and expenditure for the year ending 31 March 2024

Income (£)	2024	2023
Donations	10,379	17,266
Grants	306,529	417,306
Other income	53,000	140,779
<b>Total income</b>	<b>369,908</b>	<b>575,351</b>
Expenditure (£)		
Staff costs	266,882	379,817
Class running costs	18,136	19,088
Materials	5,436	3,762
Travelling expenses	4,240	6,634
Training	2,709	3,477
Heat and light	3,323	13,712
Rent, rates and water rates	19,417	52,700
Cleaning	1,474	3,245
Telephone and broadband	2,601	3,170
Postage	3	2,014
Photocopying and printing	521	479
Stationery	411	348
Advertising and promotion	280	2,533
Motor expenses	4,145	7,345
Repairs and renewals	610	7,416
Security costs	1,444	3,051



Computer supplies and equipment	8,156	5,686
Office and other equipment	-	9,276
Office and garden refurbishment	-	8,362
Professional fees	1,200	460
Accounting fees	3,850	5,750
Payroll fees	888	842
AGM Expenses	2,337	2,487
General expenses	165	768
Insurance	3,706	4,448
Bank charges	161	186
Subs, publications and membership fees	2,862	2,353
Volunteer expenses	4,898	4,243
Recruitment costs	-	59
IT support and management	722	882
Fundraising expenses	32	-
Home & Garden Service costs	2,175	6,252
SCVO IT project costs	7,820	-
Catering	157	686
Card costs	384	504
Audit fees	-	3,336
<b>Total expenditure</b>	<b>371,145</b>	<b>565,371</b>
<b>Net income/(expenses) for the year</b>	<b>(1,237)</b>	<b>24,382</b>

# Balance sheet at 31 March 2024

Current assets (£)	2024	2023
Debtors and prepayments	5,448	6,704
Cash in bank and on hand	310,012	345,355
<b>Total current assets</b>	<b>315,460</b>	<b>352,059</b>
<b>Creditors - amounts falling due within one</b>	<b>92,245</b>	<b>130,607</b>
<b>Net current assets</b>	<b>220,215</b>	<b>221,452</b>
<b>Total net assets</b>	<b>220,215</b>	<b>221,452</b>
<b>Funds</b>	<b>220,215</b>	<b>221,452</b>

The financial statements were approved by the Board on 24 June 2024 and signed on its behalf by Gilbert Feron, Chair.





## The LEAP family

Willie Cairns, communications officer

Matthew Craig, data administrator

Iain English, volunteer development officer

Lysanne Erlings, learning and leisure co-ordinator

Claire Glennon, human resources manager

Kat Hannon, volunteer development officer

Margaret Hogg, administrator

Heather Jackson, volunteer development officer

Helen Jilks, volunteer development officer

Kevin Key, handyperson volunteer co-ordinator

Georgie Madden, business development manager

Mandy Martin, friendship groups co-ordinator  
(left 28 April 2023)

Calum McGregor, IT support officer and tutor

Stuart McGregor, executive director

Donna McPherson, friendship groups co-ordinator  
(joined 28 August 2023)

Moirra Pettigrew, finance administrator



## Our funders 2023-24

We are extremely grateful to the following trusts and organisations who have supported us financially in the past year.

**National Lottery Community Fund**

**National Lottery Awards For All**

**Robertson Trust (until Jan 2024)**

**Garfield Weston (until Jan 2024)**

**Age Scotland – Keeping Doors open**

**Allied Vehicles Charitable Trust**

**South Lanarkshire Council**

**Seniors Together**

**SCVO – Digital Fund**

**VASLan Community Mental Health Fund**

**Centrica**

**Cycling UK**

**John Lewis**

**Wood Foundation**

**SSE Renewables**

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**Enhancing the lives of  
older people in our  
community**

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