

**STEPPING STONES**

**IMPACT**

**REPORT**

**2024-2025**

# Table of Contents

Chair Persons Remarks Financial Snapshot	3
Chief Officer Report	4
Impacts in Numbers!	5
What the members say....	6
Future Plans	7
Acknowledgements and Thank You	8



Funded by the following agencies with thanks.

West Dunbartonshire  
Health & Social Care Partnership



# Chairpersons Comments

I hope this year's Impact Report gives you a picture of the work Stepping Stones carries out in the West Dunbartonshire area. In May, we said goodbye to John White, Operations Director. His farewell celebration gave us the opportunity to reflect on the 15 years he has taken the organisation forward from its original inception, to the premises and services offered, always at the Centre, a member led organisation.

Bronwyn O'Riordan, the new Chief Officer, was appointed in May. She has literally hit the ground running. Looking forward, our Resilient Communities Strategy, which ends in 2026 gives us the opportunity to look at the next phase of developing our services in WD. This includes looking at peer support, volunteering and working with younger people. Our Lived Experience panel will be involved in this.

John Mooney and Betty Edmonds both stepped down from the Board and I would like to give them thanks for their service over the years to Stepping Stones. I would also like to extend my gratitude to the Board of Directors for their support over the past year and look forward to working with them in some exciting new proposals.

Stepping Stones is fortunate to have a highly motivated caring staff team, from a friendly smile at reception to the professionalism of its workers, full time, part time and voluntary.

Thank you one and all for everything you do to make Stepping Stones a great organisation.

**Alison Punton - Chair**

## Financial Snapshot

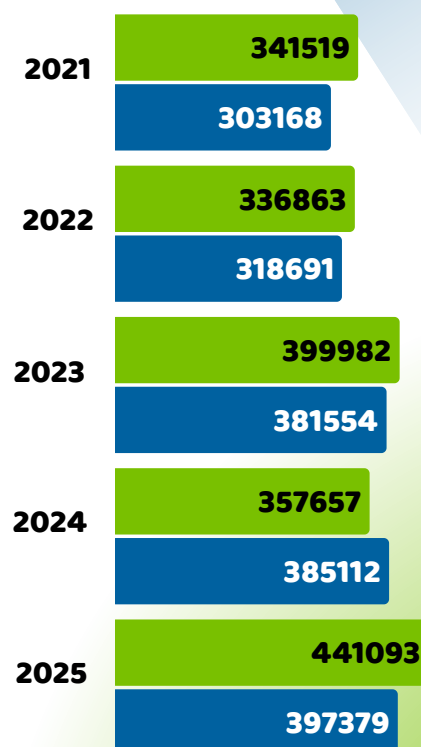
This year has seen a positive result from the previous year's negative expenditure from the work carried out in the new office. One of the main reasons for this increase is the additional funding kindly received from our partners and other sources, and our office repairs have reduced significantly also. Like everyone else our utilities expenditure has been a bit higher due to the significant increase in costs for heating etc. But we are monitoring this carefully in the year ahead.

Many thanks to everyone for their donations and our main income sources which can be found on our annual accounts.

Overall Stepping Stones is in a healthy position financially and the Board plan to ensure we keep a close eye on expenditure in 2025/2026.

**Noel Hynes - Treasurer**

● Income  
● Expenditure



# Chief Officer Report

## Allow me to introduce myself.....

Hello Everyone,



My name is 'Bronwyn', I am the Chief Officer at Stepping Stones, I joined in May 2025.

Having spent over 20 years in the Third Sector, working for charities from grassroots to national, I was delighted to become part of this wonderful organisation, whose values align so well with my own.

I'd like to congratulate and thank 'John White', our former Operations Director, who retired after 16 years of service. This Impact Report clearly demonstrates the tremendous work and achievements he and the team delivered over the past year.

I am sure that everyone is aware of the increasing demand for mental health support services, and how vital this work is. Some of you may know that many services across the country have been (or are being) cut, and waiting lists are generally increasing. I suspect you might be shocked to learn what that impact of demand and cuts looks like for Stepping Stones - it means that our referrals have increased this year by over 28%!!!

Again, a testament to the team, who have continued to meet the needs of nearly 1000 people across West Dunbartonshire.

There have been a few additions to the staffing; some change as expected, and a wonderful team effort given throughout. I'd like to acknowledge that 'Coliosa Boyle' was internally promoted to Services Manager this year. I have confidence that she and the team will maintain our consistently high scores with the Care Inspectorate.

## Taking our next steps.....

The team and I will continue to work in co-production with our members to develop our services, and ensure that we are delivering support where and how it is needed.

Following the launch of our 'Stepping Up for Neurodiversity' project, we recruited 3 new Support Workers and held an Event for community engagement.

Group activities were developed as part of our 'Resilient Communities' strategy.

I commend this Impact Report to the AGM. I appreciate the ongoing relationship and collaborative opportunities offered by West Dunbartonshire Health and Social Care Partnership, and our funders.

I am grateful for the support shown by the board of directors and their continued commitment towards achieving our organisational objectives.

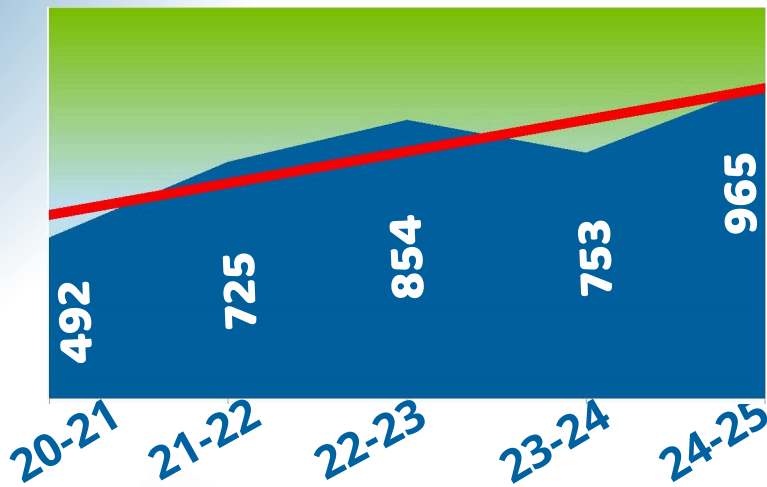
I look forwards to meeting our members and partners, and working with you all.

**Bronwyn O'Riordan - Chief Officer**



# Impacts in Numbers!

## Referrals 2020-25

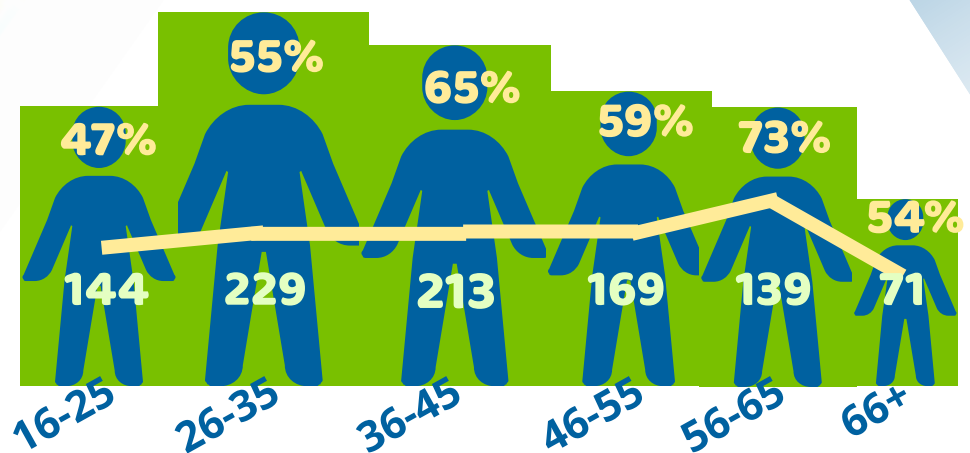


## Main Referral Reasons



**Neurodiversity Service**  
Assessments attended **35**  
Received Services **38**  
Service ended **7**

## No. referred and % engaged



Service	Appts Offered	Number of Members
Person Centred Counselling	1845	278
Enhanced Guided Self Help	733	121
Individual Support	1229	178
DAR	657	575
Reassessments	33	31
Groups sessions	319	244

# What the members say....

**This section offers a selection of comments made by the members about the one to one and group supports received in the past year.**

## ONE TO ONE COUNSELLING & ENHANCED GUIDED SELF HELP

*"A safe space to be able to openly discuss trauma and emotional issues, as well as being able to find the next steps in my ongoing improvement to my mental health."*

*"I can get out the house. My anxiety is more manageable. I have tools that I can use to manage it."*

*"I feel that I can now identify my feelings and not feel guilty about things I cannot change. I now understand that I am not responsible for everyone in my life and that I have the right to express my feelings. I now feel hopeful about moving on with my life and that I can cope with making decisions."*

## ONE TO ONE INDIVIDUAL SUPPORT AND GUIDED SELF HELP

*"Helped me manage my finances, supported me through bereavement, helped me deal with stressors a bit better and supported me to manage work/life balance and declutter my mind and my house which has been very beneficial."*

*"I have been able to identify when my negative thoughts and anxiety are creeping in and deal with them accordingly. "is that a thought or a fact" is now almost a daily mantra."*

*"The first benefit was the understanding of my problems and facing them, second benefit is I have started to accept who I am and have gained confidence in myself. I now face problems and instead of ignoring them I deal with it."*

## GROUP SUPPORT INCLUDING SOCIAL AND PEER SUPPORT TRAINING

### **Relaxation Groups**

*"It's the best hour of the week. The methods I have learned have served me very well indeed."*

### **Social Group**

*"Gives me purpose and meaning in my life. Sharing personal stories Learning from each other Stepping stones gives a structure to my day. Learning new skills"*

### **Peer2Peer Course**

*"It gave me confidence and how to show my assertiveness without sounding as if I'm being bossy."*

### **Reiki Taster Sessions**

*"I would rate the overall experience really good. It was the most relaxed I felt in a long time. Afterwards I felt fine, don't feel as emotional as I was when I came in."*

# Future Plans

**The Board of Directors and staff are working with our members to develop Stepping Stones Services. Here are some updates on our plans, we hope that you'll find these useful. Any questions or feedback please contact us to discuss further.**

## **YOU ASKED & WE LISTENED**

Members, peers and trainees have continually given feedback and asked how they get involved and perhaps give back to Stepping Stones and their community. After careful consideration we have decided to create new supporter pathways, introduce a new volunteering model, invest in community outreach, fundraising, and create more opportunities for people to be part of Stepping Stones.

## **INCLUSIVITY**

We continue our efforts to be an inclusive and equal opportunities organisation; we remain a Disability Confident Employer, a Real Living Wage Employer, we are now Neurodivergent aware, we are a Trauma Informed service provider, and we invest in continual professional development of our workforce.

Going forwards we shall develop plans to further reach and engage young people. We shall work with our members to identify the needs of activities and groups. Our Services shall be held in accessible locations, with (where possible) reduced barriers to entry.

We will be launching a more accessible website in late 2025. Features shall include an online self referral form, and a general enquiry form to support out of hours options to contact us.

## **MANAGING DEMAND**

We will continue to work towards our long term goal of driving down waiting times for people who have common mental health challenges. We will continue to use our experience and knowledge to seek solutions to enable better outcomes for those who refer to Stepping Stones.

We anticipate another increase in referrals next year, and to help support this we plan to upskill more staff in the ability to carry out assessments, deliver psychoeducation classes and groups.

## **STEPPING UP FOR NEURODIVERSITY**

Year 2 of this project will begin in late 2025; we will continue to work with service members and local agencies, and form a focus group to develop new services for neurodivergent people who experience common mental health problems.

## **SERVICE MEMBER INVOLVEMENT**

Members will be invited to contribute to service plans through lived experience panels, peer work, conversation cafes and through service evaluations.

By introducing a new communications and marketing strategy we will increase our engagement with members.



# Acknowledgements and Thank You

**Stepping Stones is a registered charity SC019270.**

We are genuinely appreciative for the funding we receive from West Dunbartonshire Health and Social Care Partnership which allows us to continue to provide valuable services to the local community. We are also grateful for the funding we receive from The Lottery 'Improving Lives Fund', and various small grant programmes, including the West Dunbartonshire Community Mental Health and Wellbeing Fund. Thank you to all the people fundraising on our behalf; a cash donation, a gift or monies raised via events such as the Kiltwalk were gratefully received.

**Our thanks go to the Board Members, Staff, Volunteers and Facilitators as listed below who have helped us deliver our services throughout the year.**

## **Board of Directors**

John Mooney - Chair (resigned 28/2/24)  
Alison Punton - Chair  
Janette Tran - Board Member  
Noel Hynes - Treasurer (from 28/2/25)

Betty Edmonds - Board Member  
Louise Nisbet - Treasurer  
Iain Anderson - Board Member  
Maureen Duffy - Board Member

## **Staff**

John White - Operations Director  
Elaine McWilliams - Group Worker P/T  
Jackie Sroka - Assessment Team Leader P/T  
Cathie McGrory - Admin Team Leader  
Chloe Gorton - Reception Admin Worker P/T  
Sarah Dillon, Peer Group Worker P/T  
James Reilly - Peer Group Worker P/T  
Jim Todd - Peer Group Worker P/T

Danai Batziou - Counselling Supervisor  
Coliosa Boyle - Support Team Leader  
Ashley Dougan - Peer Support Worker  
Pauline Sweeney - Support Worker P/T  
Ali Brown - Person Centred Counsellor P/T  
Maggie Friel - Reception & Admin Worker P/T  
Sian McLaughlin - Support Worker  
Anna Lilley - Support Worker  
Rachael Cramb - Support Worker

## **Volunteers**

Chriss McKeown - Relaxation  
Morag Hutchison - PCT  
Tatiana Heise - PCT  
Wendy Kirkup - PCT

## **Peer Volunteers**

Louise Nisbet  
John Kerr  
Pauline Murray  
Lorraine Dodd  
Lorraine McKenzie

## **Facilitators**

Chris Godwin - T'ai Chi

**Enhanced Guided Self Help and Person Centred Counselling Trainees who have contributed to the services in the past year**

Abegail Foye - EGS  
Caitlin Devenney - EGS  
Cheyenne Luckemeier - PCT  
Ellie Scott - PCT  
Ene Dapa - PCT  
Hannah Bottle - PCT  
Hannah Jackson - EGS  
Hannah Mains - EGS

Jill Malcolm - PCT  
Kasia Taczowska - EGS  
Laura Connelly - PCT  
Lauren Chase - EGS  
Matthew Costello - PCT  
Monika Blonka - PCT  
Natalya Fineron - PCT

Nicola Granger - PCT  
Ross Caldwell - PCT  
Ruth Lamb - PCT  
Sumbul Shafiq - PCT  
Thomas Sadler - PCT  
Zenab Ali - PCT

Ground Floor, Social Economy Centre,  
63 Kilbowie Road, Clydebank, G81 1BL



0141 941 2929  
admin@stepstones.org.uk  
www.stepstones.org.uk