

# Healthy n Happy Community Development Trust Review

20 December 2016

## 1. Context

Healthy n Happy was first established in 2002 as a Healthy Living Centre to deliver community led health improvement at a local level. They have grown and diversified significantly since then, becoming a Community Development Trust in 2012 to reflect their broader role in improving the health and wellbeing of local people and communities. Healthy n Happy aim to make Cambuslang and Rutherglen the healthiest and happiest places to live in Scotland. Their activities are currently structured around five main areas of work: *Transforming Lives*; *Transforming Communities*; *Bike Town*; *CamGlen Radio* and *Social Enterprise*.

Cambuslang and Rutherglen is a diverse urban area in South Lanarkshire with a population of around 57,000 people. Since the mid-20th Century, the area has been severely and progressively impacted by loss of industry and manufacturing. Long term unemployment, poverty, alcohol and drugs misuse and poor physical environment have become key issues for local communities, along with a range of life limiting and chronic health conditions. According to the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD) 2016, almost a third of the community in which Healthy n Happy work are within the 15% most deprived datazones in Scotland.

Healthy n Happy is a company limited by guarantee with charitable status and have a wholly owned trading subsidiary company limited by shares. Healthy n Happy is governed by a board of ten Directors drawn from the local community with responsibility for strategic direction and performance. The senior management team is responsible for ensuring successful delivery of strategic and operational outcomes and objectives. Activities are delivered by a mixture of full-time, part-time and sessional staff along with a significant number of local volunteers.

## 2. How has the Trust impacted on the lives of people it works with?

Participants are increasing their confidence, self-esteem, motivation and resilience. Healthy n Happy activities are helping people develop networks of support and are reducing the risk of social isolation. For example, the *Changes* course and masterclass is helping participants with mental health issues become stronger and happier and to regain more control of their lives. Participants are better able to leave their homes, take part in activities independently and get involved with other Trust programmes. They are learning effective coping strategies, improving their personal relationships and building confidence through sharing their story at events and on the radio.

Local residents are becoming more active. Participants in *Bike Town* are progressing from riding a bike at a low level to weekly cycle rides that is increasing their confidence to ride on roads and their enjoyment of physical activity and spending time outdoors. Over time, they are cycling for increasingly longer distances of up to 20 miles. A few cyclists are extending their cycling ambitions by participating in national events.

Participants are benefitting from a greater sense of connection to their community and to each other. For example, *Parents Cafés*, are improving community cohesion by bringing together people from different backgrounds and nationalities. Parents welcome the opportunity to meet regularly and share their feelings and stories in a relaxed and open minded forum. In *Bike Town*, participants are increasing their knowledge of paths and road networks and forming new relationships with other cyclists from different backgrounds and areas of the town.

Volunteers with a range of interests and needs are developing their skills and confidence through *CamGlen* community radio. They are increasing in confidence, feeling less isolated, developing new relationships and progressing to formal learning. The peer support group is enabling people to share their skills, knowledge and experience. They are mentoring and encouraging others in a supportive environment. People who thought that they could not

achieve their dream of becoming a radio presenter are progressing to independently researching, planning and presenting their own show. Participants and volunteers are gaining new practical skills such as radio production and presenting, bike maintenance and woodcraft. Children from local schools are developing creative writing and communication skills through *CamGlen* radio school. *Handy Folk* volunteers are learning how to use hand and power tools, support each other, and apply these practical skills to jobs at home. Their participation is also reducing social isolation and giving them more confidence to look for work. The *Handy Folk* are contributing to the environment by using some salvaged and recycled materials. They are enhancing community spaces and learning environments by designing and crafting decorative objects for nursery, school gardens and local parks.

Participants and volunteers are not always clear about their goals or in their understanding of how well they are progressing. They would benefit from a more consistent approach to this. This would help to ensure appropriate levels of pace and challenge relevant to individual needs and further support Healthy n Happy's asset based approach. There are currently some missed opportunities to connect and reinforce positive health messages between activities. Although there are effective examples in terms of positive mental health and increasing physical activity these are often looked at separately. Joining up health messages would further strengthen Healthy n Happy's positive impact on people's lives.

Healthy n Happy is highly effective at direct engagement with the local community. A creative approach, such as the *pop-up living room* and other events, is increasing their reach within disadvantaged communities, promoting community cohesion and increasing community safety. A strong relationship between staff and local people has resulted in a high level of returns in recent consultations. Information sharing, skills development and networking activities are helping some well-established groups feel less isolated. They are better able to contribute their views, access funding and highlight local issues such as road safety. Support to *Springhall Resource Group* is resulting in increased confidence and a sense of optimism to affect positive change.

The Trust is helping to develop and support the formation of constituted local groups. For example, local people in Burnhill are becoming more actively involved in improving their local area through the *Burnhill Action Group*. They are helping to foster a more positive identity and residents are noticing an increase in community spirit. As a result, new activities and organisations are serving the area leading to positive outcomes such as employment. Funding for a family hub, secured through participatory budgeting, is supporting the development of new whole family activities and events closer to home. As a result, parents' relationships with their children are improving and connections between families are being strengthened.

Healthy n Happy is making extensive use of a variety of social media to communicate with stakeholders. However, there is scope to review how the individual branding of activities might be more clearly connected and communicated.

### **3. How has the Trust impacted on the local economy?**

The Trust is continuing to secure significant funding for local communities, both directly for their own projects and support to local community organisations to access funding. For example, with support *Burnhill Action Group* has secured more than £53,000 in the last two years. Healthy n Happy have secured over £1.2 million for the Whitlawburn and Springhall communities including £1 million for the five year *Our Place* project 2014-2019.

Healthy n Happy is effective at improving infrastructure for community activities such as the recently leased *Bike Town* facility. The acquisition and development of *Number 18* over recent years is providing a customised base for *CamGlen* and modern accommodation for community

activities in the centre of Rutherglen. Although at an earlier stage of development, the Trust's enterprise activities, such as *Bike Town* and *Number 18*, have the potential to generate regular income to help sustain the organisations activities. Healthy n Happy is providing employment for local people with 21.5 full time equivalent posts and around 30 sessional staff. Half of the staff live locally.

Governance by the Board is strong and the Directors are clear about their role and responsibilities. New appointments to the Board are used well to augment and where appropriate widen skills and knowledge. The Trust's leaders are highly effective at recognising potential opportunities to improve and extend the work of the Trust. Board members and senior staff are outward looking and innovative. They consider a wide range of information including local research and intelligence to develop creative ways to drive improvement. They are proactive in responding to changes in local and national policy. However, there is scope to extend opportunities for local people to contribute to decision making within the Trust and more widely in community planning.

Trust leaders are ambitious for both Healthy n Happy and their community and are resilient. The Trust formed an extensive plan to develop green energy using wind turbines and responded quickly to exploring alternatives when their proposal was rejected. They quickly rebuilt productive working relationships with community organisations that opposed their plans. Since expanding the Trust's remit, senior leaders are increasingly looking for opportunities to improve the regeneration and infrastructure of Rutherglen and Cambuslang. Such as work with partners to attract the development of a National Cycle Centre to the area.

The Trust is at the early stage of ensuring that they have a coherent approach to evaluation and tracking across all its projects. The development of the *Healthy n Happy Improvement and Evaluation Framework* is helping to provide a clear approach to impact measurement. The Board's Research and Development Sub Group is effective at ensuring the Trust continues to be a learning organisation. The recent restructuring of the organisation has provided greater clarity to strategic planning and outcomes. However, further work is needed to fully embed this clearly and consistently across operational plans and activities.

There is strong culture of respect and a nurturing ethos across the organisation within and between staff teams, volunteers and participants. Staff and volunteers are motivated and committed to make a positive difference to people's lives and to the community. They feel valued within a caring and compassionate organisation. The Trust is responsive to the individual needs of staff, for example, through a common sense approach to absence management.

Staff have a variety of skills and experience and this is considered when developing projects and delivering training. Staff are being well supported to reflect on their practice through regular meetings with their line manager, team gatherings, annual review and away days. Learning and development needs are discussed regularly and opportunities are signposted. However, there is a need to strengthen the opportunities for staff to undertake planned learning aligned with the needs and priorities of the organisation. A majority of the staff have progressed from either participant or volunteer to sessional staff and to part-time or full-time employee. The Trust is now developing more formal approaches to coaching and mentoring for staff. This has the potential to further strengthen the learning culture within the organisation and progression opportunities for all staff. Staff would benefit from a more consistent and structured staff induction and the Trust are currently reviewing this.

Social events and award ceremonies are recognising and celebrating formal and informal volunteers. Induction training is helping them prepare for their role, develop a basic understanding of mental health and how to deal with different scenarios. Volunteer leaders

have a clear sense of making a difference and they feel valued. Training courses, such as group facilitation and welfare awareness, are helping volunteers to identify areas for personal development and take on new roles. However, a consistent approach to staff and volunteer support, supervision and development is not yet fully embedded across the organisation. It would also be helpful if the definition and role of volunteers was more clearly communicated to a wider audience.

#### **4. How has the Trust improved outcomes through partnership working?**

Relationships with partners are strong and based on mutual trust and respect. Healthy n Happy works effectively with a wide range of community groups, public services, other third sector organisations and local businesses. The Trust is proactive in signposting participants and local people to opportunities and have successfully maintained relationships with some key funders over several years. Partners value the innovative and creative approach the Trust take.

National organisations including the Scottish Community Development Centre (SCDC) and the Big Lottery view the Trust as a key source of information and advice in regard to Rutherglen and Cambuslang. A range of health and other partners confidently refer clients to the Trust because of their reputation and success at making a difference to people's lives. The Trust is recognised by partners for its successful community engagement. As a result, partners have asked the Trust to carry out consultations on their behalf, such as the recent smoking consultation on behalf of NHS Lanarkshire.

The Trust is outward looking and contributing to a range of regional and national developments and networks. The Trust has been a key community organisation in taking forward the U Lab approach to managing change within Scotland with the Executive Director of the Trust on the National Steering Group. Staff across the organisation are contributing to effective partnership working through representing Healthy n Happy on local and national steering groups. The Executive Director also chairs the national network Scottish Communities for Health and Wellbeing.

Healthy n Happy is improving outcomes through effective partnership working. Working with education services they provide professional development input on mental health to secondary school staff. As a result, school staff are more confident speaking to young people about mental health issues. Further examples of working with schools include enhancing places with the woodcraft creations of *Handy Folk* and providing learning opportunities for schools through *CamGlen*.

As Healthy n Happy continues to grow and diversify, there is a need to consider more formal partnership agreements beyond those with funding partners. This will help to ensure that relationships built on trust remain strong, clear and accountable. There is also scope to increase partnership working with schools. This includes closer connections to the school curriculum and further promotion of the Trusts' activities.

#### **The review of Healthy n Happy Community Development Trust found the following key strengths.**

- Trust leadership is strong, innovative, outward looking and ambitious for the community.
- A strong culture of respect in which volunteers and staff are committed and caring is helping to improve people's lives.
- Participants are more confident, have improved wellbeing and are gaining life skills. They have a greater connection to place and to each other.
- Strong partnerships based on trust and Healthy n Happy's track record of success.

- Well embedded community anchor organisation, highly valued by local people and a driving force for positive change through effective and creative engagement with the local community.
- Improved local economy and infrastructure through attracting significant funding into the community, developing new infrastructure and creating employment opportunities.

**We discussed with partners how they might continue to improve their work. This is what we agreed with them.**

- Ensure that strategic priorities and plans are fully embedded in operational delivery.
- Clearer and more consistent communication with internal and external stakeholders in terms of marketing, people's roles, and use of terminology.

## **5. What happens at the end of the review?**

We are satisfied with the overall quality of provision. We are confident that Healthy n Happy Community Development Trust and partners can build on and take forward the key strengths and recommendations in this report. We will make no further evaluative visits in connection with this review.

**Simon Ross  
HM Inspector  
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**Development Trusts Association  
Scotland**

1B Washington Lane  
Edinburgh  
EH11 2HA

**T** +44 (0) 131 220 2456

**E** [info@dtascot.org.uk](mailto:info@dtascot.org.uk)

[www.dtascot.org.uk](http://www.dtascot.org.uk)

**Education Scotland**

Denholm House  
Almondvale Business Park  
Almondvale Way  
Livingston EH54 6GA

**T** +44 (0)131 244 4330

**E** [enquiries@educationscotland.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@educationscotland.gov.uk)

[www.educationscotland.gov.uk](http://www.educationscotland.gov.uk)