



**Queens  
Cross  
Housing  
Association**



# **Social Regeneration Impact Report: 2024/25**

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## **Foreword**

I am pleased to present our **Social Regeneration Impact Report for 2024/25**.

The Queens Cross Social Regeneration Team is engaged in a diverse array of initiatives across our communities, contributing significantly to the wellbeing focus of our organisation. This report outlines the various activities and opportunities related to health and wellbeing, digital inclusion, community engagement, and youth work. The team also supports projects within the QC Group, including events, community consultations, and localised initiatives.

Our work is shaped by the context in which we operate. Our neighbourhoods encompass some of the most deprived communities in Scotland, as identified by the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation. The ongoing cost of living crisis exacerbates challenges, with many individuals and families struggling to afford necessities. Our research, *Getting to Know You*, indicates that this financial strain often limits opportunities for social engagement and participation in activities, particularly for children. By organising accessible, high-quality activities locally, we aim to foster community cohesion, enhance wellbeing, and combat social isolation, ultimately creating vibrant communities where individuals desire to live and work.

The challenges faced by our communities are not isolated. National studies and government data reveal a rising trend in poverty across the UK. The Joseph Rowntree Foundation's report "UK Poverty 2025" indicates that 12 million individuals are living in poverty, with approximately 6 million experiencing what is classified as "deep poverty," living on low incomes, significantly below the poverty line.

Queens Cross has committed to addressing poverty through our business plan, establishing a strategic objective for 2020-25 focused on creating and supporting greater life opportunities for all. This includes empowering the Social Regeneration Team to advance this mission. The team recognises the combined power of the Queens Cross Group for their continued support in 2024/25, as well as to our funders: Glasgow City Council, including the Glasgow Communities Fund Fund, National Lottery Awards for All, Digital Pioneers SCVO, and GCVS, for their invaluable contributions to our projects. This targeted support enables us to implement a diverse programme effectively. We also appreciate the contributions of our contractors, working across the Queens Cross group who provide community benefits, including cash donations and in-kind services that enhance our efforts. The breadth and quality of our services are made possible through this collaboration.

In a challenging economic landscape, securing funding for community activities remains a struggle. Nonetheless, we strive to meet the needs and interests of residents by offering a robust programme of community activities, opportunities and improved facilities.

We hope you find our 2024/25 Social Regeneration Impact Report both informative and engaging.

**Jamie Ballantine**  
**Social Regeneration Manager**

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# OUR VISION, VALUES & STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

**Excellent housing in vibrant communities**

## **Our Values**

### **Respect**

We see the positive in everyone, especially our tenants. We treat everyone fairly, regardless of age, race, gender, or background. We ask for opinions even if we know we might not like what we hear. And we address people's concerns in any way we realistically can.

### **Integrity**

What we say in public is the same as what we say behind the scenes. If we say we will do something, we mean it. Our tenants can count on us to solve their problems and make sound decisions.

### **Aspiration**

We want the best for all our current and future tenants. We are not afraid to strive for things that will not be easy – or try things that have not been done before. We seek out opportunities and welcome change. If it does not turn out as planned, we learn and improve and then we try again.

## **Our Strategic Aims**

- A) Building and sustaining popular neighbourhoods
- B) Creating and supporting greater life opportunities for all
- C) Developing greener spaces and community wellbeing
- D) Being a dynamic and listening community partner
- E) Treating people equally and with respect

## 1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 Our vision at Queens Cross Housing Association is to ‘*create excellent housing in vibrant communities.*’ Our work in Social Regeneration is key to achieving this vision. This report sets out progress made against the delivery of our Social Regeneration Framework, with reference to projects and activity delivered across our three key themes:
- Theme 1 - Community Integration and Social Cohesion
  - Theme 2 - Community Health and Wellbeing
  - Theme 3 - Community Learning & Opportunities
- 1.2 Our themes are linked directly to the Queens Cross Group’s Business Plan priorities which we are working towards achieving at present. Our strategic objectives are as follows:
- Building and sustaining popular neighbourhoods
  - Creating and supporting greater life opportunities for all
  - Developing greener spaces and community wellbeing
  - Being a dynamic and listening community partner
  - Treating people equally and with respect
- 1.3 This report sets out the work that has been carried out in relation to each theme and the contribution this work has made against QCHA’s Business Plan priorities. The work is delivered and coordinated by the Social Regeneration Team which consists of 5 full time staff members’ and a small pool of sessional staff to help deliver our commitments. **This report highlights work carried out between 1<sup>st</sup> April 2024 and 31<sup>st</sup> March 2025.**
- 1.4 Challenging context continues: Operating during the Cost-of-Living Crisis.**
- 1.5 Rising prices continue to impact households throughout the country, with dramatic increases in the price of energy, food, and fuel, which combines to place households under considerable strain. The public health implications of this have been well documented and publicised, and the Association is aware of the negative impacts on mental and physical health resulting from people being unable to afford the essentials in life.
- 1.6 The work of the Social Regeneration Team therefore continues to be important, creating opportunities and quality experiences for people to come together, socialise, interact, share food, and support each other. These opportunities can help people to connect, stimulating interests and learning new skills, all taking place within our community spaces and accessible on a limited budget. There is a choice of quality activities and opportunities available, all of which were developed in

response to people's needs. Activities and opportunities organised by the team are free to access, and all have the potential to make a positive influence on wellbeing.

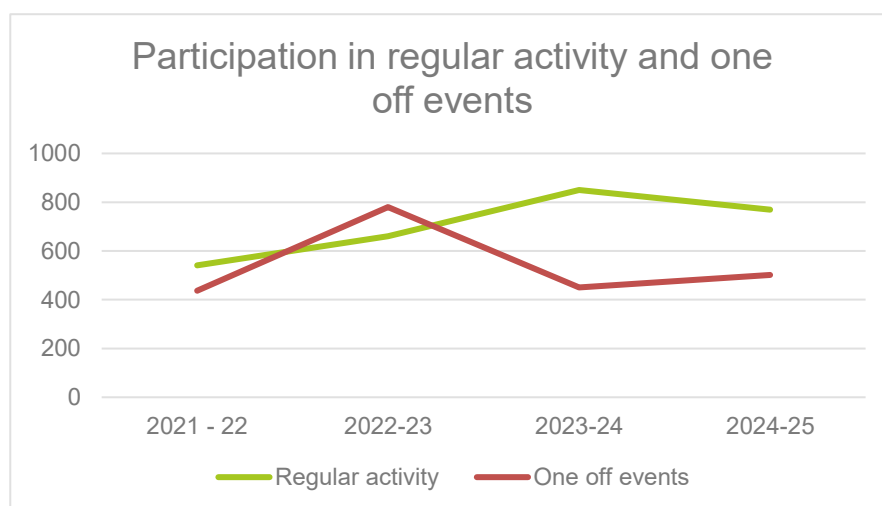
## 2.0 Social regeneration activities and their impact

- 2.1 The Social Regeneration Team is involved in a wide variety of work throughout our communities and across all age groups. All activities and opportunities are available free of charge and are chosen for the potential benefits they can offer people. Much of our programme has been developed in response to both evidence of specific needs and in response to the interests and requests from people who live in our communities.
- 2.2 We recognise that community activities when considered in isolation may only seem to offer small gains. However, when observed cumulatively and as part of a consistent programme delivered over time, the service provided by the team remains popular and is directly relevant to the practical promotion of wellbeing, community cohesion and building sustainable networks. This work also contributes directly to our strategic vision of having “vibrant communities.”
- 2.3 This report describes impact using a combination of qualitative and quantitative information, including participant numbers, case studies and practical examples. Where applicable we will also use the Social Value Bank tool to highlight the “social value” calculated by the application of that model.

### 2.4 A summary of key statistics provides context to the narrative which follows in this report:

#### 2.5 Participants:

Approximately 769 people took part in regular activities organised by the team in 2024/25. This figure includes around 150 people participating in community meals run in partnership with The Courtyard Pantry Enterprise. This is a decrease



on regular participation levels from 2023/24 and reflects changes to our team, including the loss of a team member (Older Persons Activity Coordinator) due to changes to our funding and service during this period. Nevertheless, the team worked hard to deliver a busy programme of activity whilst also supporting a range of popular one-off community engagement activities and events.

- 2.6 **Participation** with one off community events and opportunities organised by the team also continues to demonstrate positive activity that results in engagement. Our numbers here show over 500 people attending one off sessions which include an

open day, community consultation sessions, Christmas events and an Easter High Tea event that the team organised for the Queens Cross Community Foundation. This is a slight increase on participation levels with last year's "one off events".

**2.7 Attendance** at the Association's annual Gala Day is consistently between 1500 and 2000 people, this event is a cross departmental collaboration, and the social regeneration team along with other key teams assist with planning and delivery of this annual event in August each year. August 2024 was a busy year, with numbers approximately 2,000 on the day.

**2.8** Reflecting on a busy year, the combination of regular community-based activities and "one off" events and engagement opportunities, demonstrates the contribution the Social Regeneration team make towards QCHA's vision to providing excellent housing in *vibrant* communities.

## 2.9 Funding

The team secured approximately £150,000 of external funding during 2024/25 to help deliver a diverse programme of community action. The main sources of funding are shown in the table opposite.

### Grant Funding 2024/25

GCC Communities Fund	66,866.58
GCC Easter Holiday Programme	6,829.00
GCC Area Partnership	4,500.00
National Lottery Awards for All	9,948.00
Glasgow Guarantee	5,376.00
QC summer holiday programme QC Workspace	12,000.00
QC summer holiday programme QC Foundation	1500.00
QC summer holiday programme Wright Kerr	3,000.00
QC summer holiday programme Urban Union	3,000.00
CEMVO	875.00
Community Food Grant	522.00
GCC Area Partnership for gala day	5,000.00
Digital Pioneers	25,298.00
Allied Vehicles	3,500.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>148,214.58</b>

**2.10** At the beginning of the financial year the team faced considerable challenges related to funding our Children's

Holiday Programme for summer 2024 and Spring 2025. Changes to the criteria and with funding being ring fenced for priority wards, meant we had to look elsewhere for funding. We are very grateful to Queens Cross Workspace, Urban Union and Allied Vehicles who stepped in and funded our holiday programme.

**2.11** Each successful funding bid results in a new project that must be delivered to meet the funder's expectations, each component represents a new and often significant workload. This year alone, the Social Regeneration Team has managed a mix of both capital and revenue projects, each demanding detailed planning, reporting, and coordination to ensure compliance, delivery of outcomes, and overall funder satisfaction.



## 2.12 Community Benefits

**2.13** Community benefits both in cash and “in kind” have become key to the delivery of quality community activities and events. We are grateful to our professional contractors who support our work. The association received £43,870 of community benefit during 2024/25 £28,000 of which directly supported community projects during the year. £30,500 was in the form of cash payments and £13,370 was the value of work provided “in kind”. Highlights include the following:

- **Wright Kerr** our major repairs contractor provided considerable support through Community Benefits during 2024/25. Community Benefits included financial donations of £6,000 towards the running of our gala day and £3,000 towards our Childrens’ Holiday Programme. Wright Kerr also carried out a makeover of some public benches at the Queens Cross Clock Tower, re-covering them with weatherproof composite surfaces. Wright Kerr also generously support our seasonal activities donating items such as Easter eggs and selection boxes for events held around Christmas time.

- **Mackenzie Construction** who carried out our transformational environmental improvement works for our Making Places project in Woodside provided a large container to be used as a tool shed provided by our community growers at the new allotment site.



**Mackenzie Construction also** supported our gala day by providing fencing and pedestrian barriers as well as arranging the **Glasgow Warriors** to coach rugby at this popular community event. *Picture: 2024 Gala Day!*

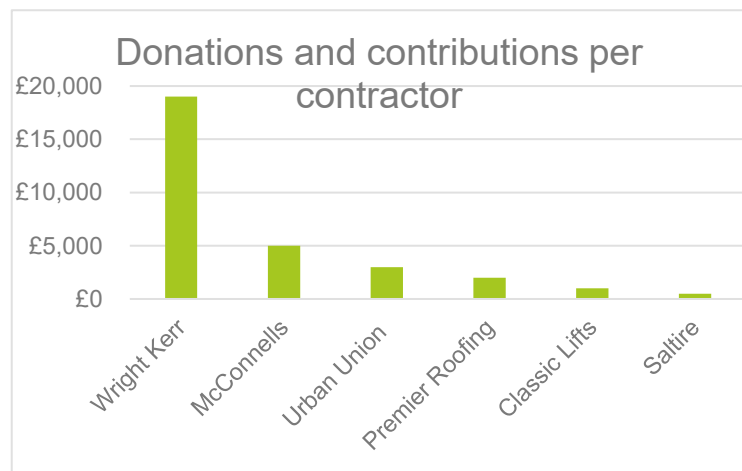
- Hamiltonhill house builder **Urban Union** provided a number of community benefits including a donation of £3,000 to our Childrens Holiday Programme, a new planter in The Courtyard Garden at Wester Common Drive, new planters at Queens Cross Clock Tower, litter picks throughout our areas as well as hosting a successful information event called “Energy Buzz Connect” at The Courtyard. Urban Union also donated prizes to our gala day, supported the QC Community Foundation High Tea and made a substantial donation of £10,000 towards the running of the Queens Cross Pride of



Queens Cross Awards, an event which celebrates success of community members, local organisations and staff going above and beyond in their service. **NB:** Urban Union are delivering a housebuilding programme in our community and are also working to their own programme of community benefits that includes job creation, apprenticeship, school visits and much more. **This report highlights how Urban Union have helped with our community regeneration activity.**

- Cash contributions were also received from **Premier Roofing** to support our community growing spaces. Their £2000 donation helped pay for improvements at the association’s community gardens at Dundasvale and Woodside. The money was helped renew various planters that had rotted. **Classic Lifts** also made a donation of £1000 to the Queens Cross Community Foundation. **Saltire** also donated £500 towards our gala day held in August 2024. **McConnells** also contributed £5000 towards our Pride of Queens Cross event in October.

- Helpful community benefit support was also received from **McConnells** who are carrying investment works in Wester Common Drive area. McConnells not only provided us with quality raffle prizes such as a large

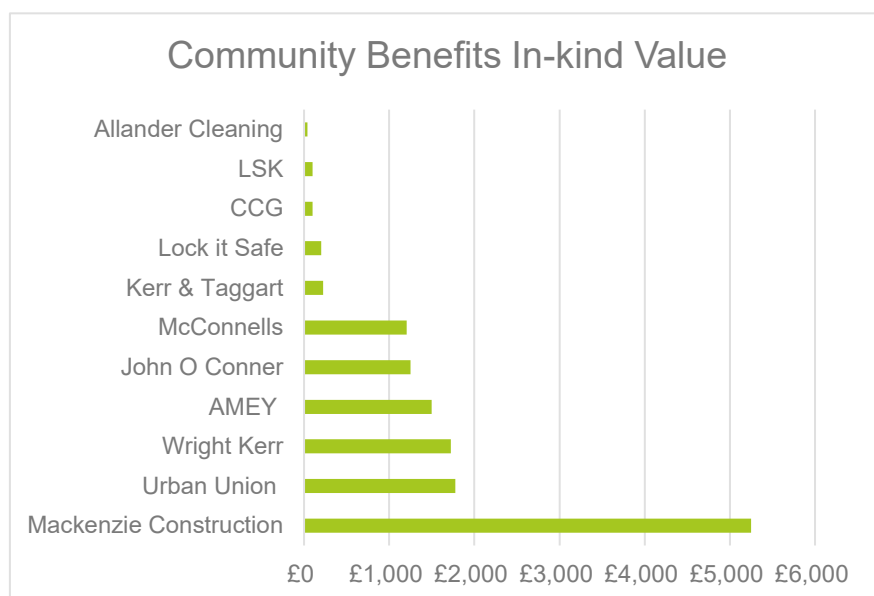


screen TV at our Christmas fair and gift voucher raffle prizes at our gala day, they also provided two members of staff to help out at both events. Capable staff who can help work at our events is very much welcome and is a welcome “in-kind” community benefit. Gala day prize donations were also received from **Allander Cleaning, CCG and LSK**. Joinery contractor **Kerr and Taggart** also support our events during the year, helping provide both easter eggs and selection boxes at our seasonal events throughout the year.

- Landscape maintenance contractor **John O’Conner** have also supported one of our community projects by providing additional labour hours to help with a bulb planting programme paid for by Glasgow City Council’s Green and Open Spaces Fund. **John O’Conner** also support physical community improvement activities with “in kind” labour and machinery provision including de-mossing and cleaning slabs in some of our neighbourhoods.

- Queens Cross Workspace tenant **Envision Electrics** also make a regular donation to the Queens Cross Community Foundation, this is welcomed and featured in detail in the Queens Cross Community Foundation Impact report. Also **AMEY** have also carried out much needed environmental maintenance work in Woodside, trimming back bushes that were encroaching on pathways. NB, AMEY are not contracted by QCHA however they have a compound adjacent to some of our housing in Woodside.

2.14 Contractors who provide “community benefits” through our professional contracts are very much valued members of the Queens Cross community. The Association is committed to maximising the value of these benefits, recognising their positive impact on local tenants and residents.



By working in close partnership with our contractors, we aim to generate even greater social value and tangible outcomes for our communities from all future contracts.

### 3.0 Theme 1: Community Integration and Social Cohesion

3.1 Community integration and social cohesion underpins much of our Social Regeneration activity. Our communities are diverse and we acknowledge that many living in our communities can face challenges to integration due to factors such as language barriers, limited social networks and ethnic and cultural differences.

3.2 We have continued to make progress against this theme in 2024/25 by making opportunities available to minority communities and celebrating diversity through our work. Examples include:

- 32 local people engaged in our weekly ESOL classes for residents whose first language is not English (4 classes per week);
- 22 local residents also accessed in-person vocational classes which ran in collaboration with Glasgow Kelvin College including participants for whom English was not their first language.
- Ongoing support to minority communities to access our services and engage in our activities, assisted by employing bi-lingual project staff.
- Participation in our programme of community activities also reflects the ethnic diversity of our communities. For example, our youth groups, growing

spaces and crafter groups are all examples where people socialise together and learn about cultural diversity in activities facilitated by the association.

### **3.3 Community Opportunities Project**

- 3.4 Funding from Glasgow City Council's Communities Fund for our "Community Opportunities Project" directly supports the employment of a full time, bi-lingual project coordinator as well as many of the activities listed above. One of the key strengths of the project is that we were able to deliver a high quality, community based, inclusive and accessible ESOL programme for members of the community whose first language is not English. The fund also directly supports community activities in our facilities.
- 3.5 Our Communities Opportunities Project focuses on activity in the Woodside and Wester Common areas. The project allowed us to deliver the following activities and engagement opportunities throughout the year:
- Online and In-person ESOL classes to support local people to improve their English language skills.
  - Eid parties at Wester Common and Windsor Hall were incorporated into our 2024 Summer Programme encouraging children and their families to join the celebrations.
  - Christmas parties, Ramadhan Iftar and Chinese New Year parties held at Windsor Community Hall to celebrate diversity and include local residents to learn about diverse cultures and join in the celebrations.
  - A range of local information sessions including specialist providers covering topics such as health and wellbeing, employability, energy advice, and financial Inclusion. These sessions have provided access to quality information from credible sources and helped participants make informed choices.
  - Continued support to the Ageing Well men's group which consists of men from minority ethnic communities. Our bilingual staff member has continued to raise awareness and provided access to information to promote health and wellbeing and help raise awareness of local services. This group continues to meet in Woodside on Tuesday afternoons. The participants have told our staff that they have developed new friendships and now do not feel as socially isolated. The group goes for regular walks and the men feel this has improved both their physical and mental health.
  - The Chat and Chai women's group established in 2023 has been going strong. Our members continue to meet weekly in our Windsor Hall. Along with having information sessions on assorted topics, they have participated in culturally sensitive yoga classes and exercise classes.

### **3.6 Chat and Chai Women's Group**

- 3.7 The Chat and Chai women's group was established during the first year of the community opportunity project and continues to be a popular group. The group continues to meet weekly in our Windsor Hall facility. Along with having information sessions on assorted topics including health related talks and energy themed advice, they have also participated in culturally sensitive yoga classes and exercise classes. We have 18 regular attendees, and 25 separate people have engaged with the group.
- 3.8 During 2024/25 Chat and Chai has enjoyed numerous opportunities to participate in external activities, strengthening community ties and enriching member experiences. The group recently visited heritage sites, such as Hill House, in collaboration with WSREC, and took part in an engagement session on reflecting on the COVID-19 experience of BAME community members, organised with the Scottish Government and CEMVO. Our walking groups are also going from strength to strength; indeed, one of our Chat and Chai members has now completed Walking Leadership training, thanks to the support of Boots and Beards. These activities not only foster community connections but also empower participants to pursue new opportunities and lead healthier, more engaged lives.

### **3.9 Men's Group "Ageing Well"**

- 3.10 The "Ageing Well" Men's group has allowed us to reach out to hard-to-reach groups who experience barriers preventing them to access services. Providing a bilingual and culturally sensitive safe space has allowed us to raise awareness of services and opportunities which in turn can help with integration with wider society. Participants in this group have found out about opportunities available to them from organisation such as NHS and Home Energy Scotland. One participant was matched with an opportunity that led to them discovering they were eligible to have a new heating system installed in their home. Approximately 18 men attend each week.
- 3.11 Through connections established by our Community Opportunities Project, we coordinated a community consultation exercise on behalf of the National Care Service. Residents from a range of diverse communities were invited to share their views on current care services, providing valuable insight into lived experiences and barriers to access. Participants were offered a voucher incentive in recognition of their time and contributions. The feedback gathered will help inform and influence national policy development in the care sector.

### **3.12 Local Employment Opportunities**

- 3.13 Our Glasgow Communities Fund support also enabled us to pay for sessional workers who have helped us engage with minority communities and maximise the involvement of local people in our community activities. We also partnered with CEMVO to recruit a bilingual member of staff. CEMVO support voluntary

organisations working with ethnic minorities and this opportunity allowed the worker to gain valuable employment experience as they supported people to engage with the work of the social regeneration team which included supporting our Crafternoon sessions and the “Chat and Chai” Women’s group.

- 3.14 As a result of this placement, we were successful in securing funding from the Glasgow Guarantee Programme which contributed towards the wage costs of the sessional worker during 2024/25. This allowed the worker to continue working with us and adding invaluable support to the team, as well as gaining more skills and confidence in community-based work.

**3.15 Opportunities and activities open to all, regardless of tenure.**

Our grant-funded sessions are free and essential for many who would otherwise face barriers to access. Our ESOL classes, for example, help people improve their English skills and remain in high demand across the city, where free places are often oversubscribed. We’re proud to provide this vital support to our local community.

- 3.16 ESOL IMPACT:** As ESOL learners develop their skills and confidence, partnership links with training providers can provide progression routes to encourage lifelong learning. Even simple day to day interactions can be improved by learning key words and phrases. The sessions can also help people to expand their social networks which can be empowering and also contributes to a sense of community or belonging.

**3.17 CULTURALLY SENSITIVE ACTIVITIES IMPACT:**

- 3.18 Creating culturally sensitive groups like the “Chat and Chai” Women’s Group and the “Ageing Well” Men’s Group has helped us engage harder-to-reach communities facing barriers to services. Offering bilingual, safe, and inclusive spaces, has also helped to raise awareness of local opportunities, supported integration, and empowered participants—leading to positive outcomes such as employment, further study, and greater involvement in community life.

## **CASE STUDY EXAMPLE**

- 3.19 The following case study highlights the critical role of community-based groups, such as “Chat and Chai” in creating safe, trusted spaces where vulnerable individuals can seek help. It illustrates how culturally sensitive support services, combined with strong partnership working, can lead to life-changing outcomes for those facing complex and distressing situations. The story that follows outlines how our staff responded to a disclosure of domestic abuse, the steps taken to ensure the individual’s safety, and the positive outcome that resulted from coordinated intervention.

## Case Study:

Fatima (not her real name) is a Pakistani woman and local resident; she occasionally attended the "Chat and Chai" women's group run on Tuesday mornings. At one session, she approached us in a distressed state, revealing that she had been a victim of domestic abuse for several years.

Fatima said her husband was violent and expressed fears for her safety. Fatima disclosed that her husband controlled her movements, monitored her interactions, and she was financially dependent on him, as she had never worked. She did not want to stay with him any longer and was very scared.

After, listening to Fatima and discussing her current situation to best understand her circumstances, our Project Coordinator told Fatima about a domestic abuse charity, Hemat Gryffe, a local charity which supports women from BAME background. Fatima was also worried about her husband finding out, and learning about Hemat Gryffe, culturally sensitive and specialist charity, we helped her to get an urgent appointment. Fatima was then advised to do the following:

- Perform a factory reset on her mobile phone to ensure it wasn't being tracked or monitored.
- Agree on a code phrase to maintain safety, ensuring that if her husband was present during any subsequent calls, that the conversation would remain discreet.
- Pack essential items in a "go bag" such as medications, important documents (e.g., passport), and clothing, hidden in preparation to leave.

Our Project Coordinator remained in touch during the entire process, providing emotional support and ensuring her safety until she arrived at Hemat Gryffe and was handed over to a caseworker.

## Outcome.

The combination of an effective introduction to specialist support from Hemat Gryffe, and Fatima's determination, meant that Fatima was able to leave her abusive home and find temporary accommodation. She was also successful in applying for Universal Credit and was also able to receive continued support from the domestic abuse charity. She is now safe and under the care of a specialized caseworker, with steps in place to provide ongoing protection and financial stability.

- 3.18** This case study highlights how social groups like "Chat and Chai," while primarily designed to reduce isolation and build community, can have powerful unintended outcomes. In this instance, the group became a vital lifeline for someone experiencing domestic abuse, offering a safe, trusted space where help could be sought. It demonstrates the deeper value of such initiatives, showing how community-based projects can play a critical role in safeguarding and supporting individuals in crisis.

## 4.0 Theme 2: Community Health and Wellbeing

- 4.1 Our Community Health and Wellbeing theme includes a programme of activities that create opportunities for people to live healthy lives. The whole team are involved in delivering activity within this theme, including being involved in coordinating physical improvements that can contribute towards positive outcomes around health and wellbeing e.g. improving community gardens, installing cycle stores and public art projects.
- 4.2 We know that incidences of ill health, loneliness and social isolation are worse in our communities than in many other parts of Glasgow and indeed the rest of Scotland. Evidence of this is provided in the NHS Wellbeing Survey for the Greater Glasgow and Clyde area, the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation and QCHA's own triennial in depth social research, which we call "Getting to Know You." Within this context we aim to provide opportunities and choices that may help, even in a small way to tackle loneliness and social isolation.
- 4.3 Activities organised within this theme are designed to reflect the needs and interests of the local community. Our activities promote positive choices around health and wellbeing for residents. This theme has also typically included a specific focus on Older Persons activities, which is delivered to complement the work of our Wellbeing for 60+ service. During the period 2024/25 the funding for our Older Persons Activity Coordinator ended along with a package of funding for our Wellbeing 60 service. Nevertheless, some legacy community activity continues which is still supported by the Social Regeneration Team.

## 4.4 Physical improvements that contribute towards community wellbeing

- 4.5 **Cycle storage at high rise development:** *Picture, new cycle store opens in summer 2024!*

- 4.6 Funding of over £55,000 was secured from Cycling Scotland to commission a bespoke cycle storage facility that needs to be both robust and secure. This facility was installed in response to demand from local residents for secure cycle storage. A location, in the heart of the estate at Wester Common Drive emerged as the best option. The store is



overlooked by hundreds of flats, an important principle of Secured by Design without being too close to properties to cause disruption. The location was also well lit already. The cycle store features a living roof which was also a condition of



granting planning permission. The living roof is an interesting feature and it makes the structure more appealing to look at from the flats. The solar panels were installed by Envision Electrics, a local company operating out of QC Workspace premises.

*Picture: living roof on new cycle store, improving biodiversity and view from above.*

- 4.7 The project required the involvement of landscape architects, a surveyor, GCC planning department as well as specialist suppliers Lock it Safe who carried out the groundworks, foundations and installed the steel structure on site. The store features a living roof and solar powered lighting. The store is equipped with a two tier rack system allowing storage for



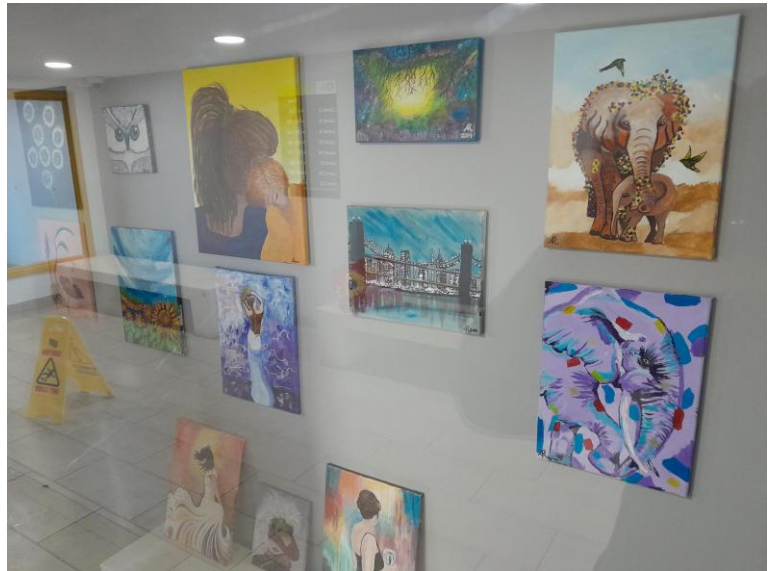
up to 44 bicycles. The project was instigated by colleagues in Housing Services who wanted an option for residents with bicycles to store them somewhere safe and to help tackle the risk of people leaving bikes in communal areas.

- 4.8 This project is an example of an **Association wide** effort. Whilst the Social Regeneration Team identified the funding and dealt with the procurement and coordination of the construction. The project came about as a result of colleagues from housing services identifying the need from local tenants and after the installation was complete, access to the cycle store is facilitated by our Business Support team who register the users and collect the annual fee.
- 4.9 Providing a secure cycle store in a high-rise housing development offers clear health and wellbeing benefits by encouraging active travel, reducing reliance on cars, and supporting residents to incorporate regular physical activity into their daily routines. Cycling is an affordable method of transport, and it also promotes mental wellbeing through increased access to outdoor exercise and a more sustainable lifestyle. The addition of a living roof enhances these benefits by improving local air quality, supporting biodiversity, and contributing to a greener, more pleasant environment—making the shared outdoor space more inviting and beneficial for all residents.

#### 4.10 Local artists utilising display spaces in Cedar Multi Storey Flats

*Picture caption: one of the art displays at Cedar Flats*

- 4.11 Improvement works at the Cedar Street Flats saw new display spaces created as part of a programme of major investment in insulation, heating and in the appearance of the blocks. Since the works were completed 2 years ago, the team have supported the effective use of these display spaces which regularly feature new artworks in the ground level spaces at Cedar multistorey flats such as wool crafts, pyrography art and green woodworking pieces.



Contributing artists who live locally have gladly embraced this opportunity to showcase their work. The display areas have also been used to exhibit artwork made by children who are involved in our holiday programmes and youth activity. We refresh the art displays during the year.

- 4.12 The art works have been a welcome addition to the glass display spaces at the entrance to the refurbished tower blocks on Cedar Street. Many residents have complimented the work, with people saying the creations have brightened their day and brought a smile to their faces as they pass them by leaving or entering the building. These community display spaces are an ideal way for people to showcase their otherwise hidden talents and often their first opportunity to have them on public display.

#### 4.13 Making Places, Landscape Improvements Project.

- 4.14 The Social Regeneration Team continued to support community engagement in the Association's Making Places project, working with the Investment team to ensure that people were aware of the plans as they develop, and have plenty opportunities to have their say. Community events and drop-in sessions were held to keep these ambitious landscape improvement plans alive in people's minds throughout the duration of the project. The team organised an open day event in partnership with the Investment Team to mark the completion of the project in October 2024.

*Picture: a resident being introduced to one of the new herb gardens on Cedar Street.*

- 4.15 Making Places is about improving the landscaping and environment around people's homes, including more growing spaces, improving the pathways and connections from front doors to new and planned green infrastructure that enables active travel.



The new layout also includes “edible landscapes” and residents now have access to fresh herbs growing just outside their doors!

- 4.16 Over 200 people attended the association's open day to mark the completion of the Making Places environmental improvement project. Children tried out the new play areas and enjoyed some play on pedals with fun bikes and trikes supplied by Freewheel North. A smoothie bike also provide some light nutrition and exercise too! Residents also received a guided tour of the herb gardens, learning about what types of herbs are growing and how these can be used. Seasonal soup was also on offer, produced by the Courtyard Pantry to showcase the type of soup that can be made with locally grown produce. This work has been years in the planning by the investment team before even getting onsite, the improvements have made a tremendous impact on the appearance and functionality of this neighbourhood.

## **5.0 Health and Wellbeing Activities & Opportunities**

- 5.1 During 2024/25 the Social Regeneration Team's programme continued to provide an impressive range of activities that promote health and wellbeing. Activities tend to take place in warm and welcoming spaces and serve to provide the additional purpose of, helping people to socialise, meet new friends, learn new skills, whilst taking part in sessions that directly support wellbeing such as Yoga, Walking, Singing and Mindfulness.



- 5.2 Over 120 people engaged regularly in our wellbeing related activities during this reporting period. We provide these thanks to funding from Glasgow City Council, The National Lottery, community led action and partnership working with other organisations, being ready for opportunities as they arise.

*Picture: walking group on a sunny winters day*



- 5.3 A summary of our health and wellbeing activities and how they are supported is set out below:

- Growing sessions with horticultural support at our 4 community gardens – National Lottery Funded
- Walking group – Glasgow Communities Fund
- Mindfulness sessions – National Lottery Funded
- Yoga sessions – National Lottery/IYA Funded
- Singing group – National Lottery Funded
- Crafternoon sessions – community led with support from a sessional worker.
- Led cycle rides funded and provided by Bike for Good
- Supporting local community members to visit the science centre: Glasgow Science Centre funded
- Social support groups “brunch and blether” aimed at older people.

- 5.4 The team also facilitate other activities that support health and wellbeing such as a fortnightly hoarding support group, an informal mens group and an informal social support group.

- 5.5 Our sessions are welcoming, high quality and promoted within the community. All our activities are listed on the “What's On” area of our website which is promoted in the Focus magazine and frequently shared through our social media pages on Facebook and Instagram. These are effective communication channels for anyone looking to find out what opportunities are available.

## What's On



Take a look at the latest events and weekly groups/activities happening in our local area! These are mostly all provided as FREE to our local community thanks to funding.

## 5.6 Growing Spaces

- 5.7 Our growing spaces offer 26 personal plots and a variety of communal growing areas including a polytunnel. Our gardens are registered with the Keep Scotland Beautiful “It’s Your Neighbourhood” award scheme and we engaged with their independent assessment framework for the 8<sup>th</sup> year running. In 2024/25 our community garden projects were judged to be “*Outstanding*”; this is the highest level that can be achieved. Being part of this scheme gives the growers a benchmark through formal assessment by the Royal Horticultural Society, which helps to shape improvements that can be made including providing details on helpful resources. The certification gained each year gives the group a sense of achievement.
- 5.8 During the year new allotment plots were developed in Woodside as part of our Making Places Landscape Improvement project. This has created 14 larger allotment style plots for allocation. The team created a new allotment and growing spaces allocation policy and have commenced allocating plots at time of writing this report.
- 5.9 Our community gardens allow people to grow their own fruit, vegetables, and flowers. Each season growers like to experiment with new plants, this year they managed to grow corn for the first time. Flower bouquets and lavender posies are also made in the gardens and given away as free items in the Pantry shop. These little posies are popular and much appreciated by Pantry customers.
- 5.10 A garden area at one of our older persons housing developments was brought back into use by the team in 2023. This neglected and overgrown space was made usable again with cuttings from Woodside Garden and support from our gardening tutor. This space is popular with people living at the property, providing much welcome access to outdoor space, light exercise and supporting learning around gardening.
- 5.11 SOCIAL IMPACT:** Connecting with nature is widely understood to benefit people’s wellbeing and the Association is keen to support access to growing spaces in our communities. It often leads to people taking part in other groups and feeling more connected to the community.
- 5.12 Growers who are involved are proud of their achievements, and there is a wider community benefit from the produce that is harvested from the gardens. Some of our growers who have said that being outdoors, combined with social interaction and physical activity has been beneficial for their mental health. All our gardens are in areas of urban density, providing high rise residents with access to quiet and safe green spaces close to their homes.
- 5.13 Regular growers at Dundasvale Community Garden tell us that they get a huge amount of joy in growing colourful flowers, fruit, and vegetables there. They especially focus on bee friendly varieties. Some of the growers here have formed supportive friendships with other growers, which has resulted in them attending other group activities and feeling less isolated.

- 5.14 During the year we replaced many raised beds at growing sites which had become rotten. This deterioration is a normal part of what happens in community gardens. Thanks to a combination of grant funding and funding support from Glasgow City Council we were able to replace planters at both Woodside and Dundasvale during 2024/25.



*Pictured new planters ready for growing at Dundasvale (above) and Woodside (below).*

- 5.15 In total 38 people are registered with our growing spaces and on average 14 people attend our drop-in sessions each week.

**5.16 Health and Wellbeing Coordinator observation:**

- 5.17 *“Our weekly growing sessions have fostered strong group cohesion and a real sense of community among participants across our garden sites. A genuine team spirit is evident, with growers consistently supporting one another, collaborating closely, and sharing a positive, welcoming attitude. The sessions are filled with warmth and camaraderie, participants often bake for each other, engage in lively conversations, and enjoy plenty of laughter. This uplifting atmosphere has not only strengthened bonds among existing members but has also attracted new participants, drawn by the inclusive and joyful spirit of the group.”*



**5.18 Community action on Litter**

- 5.19 Scotland has a problem with litter and Keep Scotland Beautiful has declared a litter emergency. Glasgow is blighted with litter, and the problem is no different in our neighbourhoods. Queens Cross is committed to improving the management of our neighbourhoods and with initiatives such as Nurture our Neighbourhoods the association strives to tackle this problem. Furthermore, as investment in our estates improves the appearance of neighbourhoods with projects such as Making Places, a practical drive to encourage more people to take part in litter picking activities emerged in response to local demand and supports our commitment to wellbeing.





- 5.20 A group of regular litter pickers have now collected over 400 bin bags of litter by a small group of residents who remain committed to tackling litter in their neighbourhood. Local community members have remained determined to tackle litter in their neighbourhood this year. This small group of active citizens got started with some light touch support from our Health and Wellbeing Coordinator to access litter picking equipment and connect with likeminded locals. Initially tackling some real hot spots before moving onto a regular cycle of litter picking activity in and around the streets in their local neighbourhood.



- 5.21 SOCIAL IMPACT:** Community-led litter picking has a positive impact on both the local environment and the people who take part. By taking ownership of their surroundings, participants not only help create cleaner, more pleasant public spaces but also inspire others to adopt more responsible behaviours. Those who volunteer their time and energy report a strong sense of wellbeing, purpose, and pride in making a visible difference. As active citizens, the group meets weekly on their own terms, demonstrating the power and value of grassroots action in strengthening community spirit and promoting environmental stewardship.

## 5.22 Kids Outdoors Sessions

- 5.23 “Kids Outdoors” is an outdoor youth session that takes place in our community garden and supports learning about growing and the environment. Previously supported by a social enterprise organisation called Froglife the sessions are now led by our own sessional youth workers.

- 5.24 The sessions, open to children aged 5–12, were extremely popular throughout the growing season from April to October, attracting 12 to 25 young participants each week from diverse backgrounds.



The children love being outdoors, engaging with nature, and learning hands-on gardening skills at Woodside Garden. One of our regular growers plays a key role by enthusiastically sharing their knowledge, helping the children deepen their understanding of growing and develop confidence in garden tasks. Learning about nature while living in the city helps foster a stronger connection to the environment,



promotes mental wellbeing, and encourages sustainable habits—bringing the benefits of the natural world into everyday urban life.

## 5.25 Walking Groups

- 5.26 Our walking groups have continued to thrive, remaining a popular way for local residents to stay active, socialise, and explore their surroundings. Participants have enjoyed discovering and frequenting walking trails around the Hamiltonhill Claypits Nature Reserve, the canal path to the Stockingfield Junction bridge, and nearby parks. The group has also taken occasional trips further afield, including visits to coastal destinations like Largs. The walks are supported by trained *Paths for All* walk leader volunteers, who help ensure a safe, welcoming, and enjoyable experience for all.



**5.27** The walking group continues to offer meaningful support and connection, with 12 people currently registered and an average of 7 attending regularly each week. More than just exercise, the walks provide a safe and welcoming space for participants to talk openly about life's challenges, with both peers and *Paths for All* walk leaders offering a listening ear and informal support. The group typically meets at the local Toshies Café, where they enjoy a drink and snack together before setting off, fostering a strong sense of community and wellbeing from the very start.

- 5.28 “Walk and Shop” sessions also take place throughout the year in partnership with Tesco Maryhill’s “Community Champion.” who, when possible would organise a selection of donated food people can take home after their walk. This frequency of this activity became irregular during 2024/25 as it is dependent on availability of food and staffing from Tesco. Nevertheless, it remains a welcome addition to the walk when it is possible.

- 5.29 SOCIAL IMPACT:** This weekly walking group provides older people with a vital opportunity to stay active, connect with others, and enjoy the outdoors, supporting both physical and mental wellbeing. For participants affected by the cost-of-living crisis, the group has also served as a gateway to additional support. Several members have been referred to the Queens Cross Wellbeing Team and Financial Inclusion Team (FIT) for tailored assistance, and also signposted to initiatives like Community Meals, delivered in partnership with The Courtyard Pantry. As a result,

the group not only promotes healthier lifestyles but also helps tackle social isolation and financial hardship in a compassionate, community-led way.

### 5.30 Mindfulness Sessions

5.31 Mindfulness sessions continued to be delivered during the year. Participants can attend in person in one of our community facilities or join the class online. The hybrid option continues to suit some participants. Thanks to funding support from the Digital Pioneers fund and from the National Lottery we have been able to provide free access to these tutor led sessions each week. 19 people are registered with the sessions with an average of 7 people attending each week.

5.32 **SOCIAL IMPACT:** The mindfulness sessions offer participants a safe, supportive space where empathy, understanding, and shared experience are at the heart of every interaction. The dedicated time for guided mindfulness practice is deeply valued, helping individuals manage anxiety, build resilience, and develop healthier coping strategies for life's challenges. Many participants face ongoing mental health struggles that can be isolating, yet the group provides a consistent sense of connection and belonging. By fostering open conversations and mutual support, the sessions not only improve emotional wellbeing but also play a vital role in combating loneliness and social isolation, issues that remain all too common in our communities.

***When asked what people liked most about attending mindfulness classes, participants said:***

*"It gives me time to slow down, reflect, and be around people who understand."*

*"I feel better and more positive after the session—I really look forward to each week."*

*"It's helped me manage my anxiety and feel more connected to the community."*

*"You're not just learning mindfulness—you're building friendships too."*

*"Having a safe, calm space like this makes a big difference to my week."*

*"Meeting new people".*

### 5.33 Free access yoga sessions in the community

5.34 Yoga sessions continued during the year and these sessions are held at our community space located on the ground floor of 65 Cedar Street (a residential tower block). The class is flexible for beginners and includes chair-based yoga practice. 17 people registered, with 9 people regularly attended these sessions. Mats and cushions are supplied for people to use.

5.35 These sessions have been funded through a combination of National Lottery funding and the *Iyengar Yoga Association*. When our lottery funding ended in December 2023 and demand for the class remained high, we sought ways to continue to fund this activity. Thanks to partnership working with our Yoga teacher Margaret Blythe and her membership with the ***Iyengar Yoga Association***, we managed to access funding to deliver weekly sessions throughout 2024/25

**5.36 SOCIAL IMPACT:** All attendees report wellbeing benefits both physically and mentally by taking part, often saying that they felt stretched and relaxed after the session". Yoga is good for core strength and flexibility and regular practice can also benefit people's mental health.

5.37 Free in person yoga tuition is difficult to find, and many people in our community may be unable to afford to pay for private classes. These quality sessions are much welcomed by the regular participants who attend.

### **5.38 Singing Group "Wee Singalong"**

5.39 The "Wee Singalong" Group receives funding from the National Lottery and is led by a skilled music tutor who provides excellent instruction. The singing sessions are particularly popular among individuals aged 60 and above, taking place at the Dundasvale Tenants Hall. Participants have the opportunity to learn to sing along to live music, with the tutor beginning each session with a warm-up. Engaging in singing not only enhances physical well-being



but also boosts mental health. Additionally, the group fosters a welcoming environment where residents can enjoy tea and engage in conversation. According to the tutor, the group has developed a rich and diverse repertoire of songs over the years.

5.40 The singing group is well attended each week with an average of 10 people taking part. We will face another funding challenge in 2025 to keep this group going.

*Photos: the group gathered at the resident's hall at Dundasvale with Sarah Hayes their tutor.*



### **5.41 SOCIAL IMPACT:**

Participants are taught breathing techniques that positively influence their overall wellbeing, while the class also serves as a venue for social interaction. Engaging in singing aids memory recall, as participants must remember song lyrics. Research from the University of Oxford indicates that group singing fosters social bonds and contributes to health and happiness, as music stimulates the brain, and singing enhances breathing, posture, and muscle tension. Many participants have reported increased energy levels and reduced breathlessness following regular practice.



**5.42 Weekly Craft Group: “Crafternoon Group”**

5.43 “Crafternoons” is a welcoming, weekly craft group that gathers in our community room at 65 Cedar Street. It was created in response to local interest, as residents reached out to the team seeking a space to collaborate on craft projects. The group is diverse and inclusive, with many participants expressing that they felt quite isolated before joining.

5.44 The group has expanded significantly and is now supported by a sessional worker from our Community Opportunities Project. Members organize a monthly gathering where they cook or bake together, sharing and enjoying cultural foods and dishes. This vibrant and enjoyable group frequently participates in other activities together, including visits to the Glasgow Science Centre, with complimentary transport provided by the centre.



5.45 The group now operates a stall at our annual Gala Day event and the QCCF Christmas Fayre, providing a focal point for their activities. They frequently assist with alteration requests from local residents and accept donations of items they can recycle or upcycle into crafts, thereby reducing waste. Currently, 30 individuals are registered, with 12 attending regularly each week. Members maintain communication through their own WhatsApp group between sessions and have also created a Facebook group.

**5.46 SOCIAL IMPACT:** The group has helped people to make friendships, build confidence/skills, find employment, share cultural celebrations, and provides weekly welcome social interaction. Crafters share ideas to create a stock of various craft gifts. Other social meetings between them have taken place, so they have built on these friendships outside of the group we started. The group includes people from diverse cultures, and this has led to them all understanding more about one another and the world around. This is practical manifestation of promoting social cohesion. Many people attending are living with health issues. This group all support one another with positive kindness and shared experiences or helpful tips when needed and welcomed.

**5.47 Sewing Group:** 4 regular participants registered with this weekly activity. The sessions are supported by a sessional worker who is also skilled in sewing, knitting and crafts. This activity provides a focus for people to get together and socialise whilst keeping their hands busy and chatting. The group often mend old clothes or refurbish fabrics into new items.

**5.48 SOCIAL IMPACT** The group performs an important social purpose and the sewers have also progressed on to bigger projects, including making and mending curtains for themselves and family members. The group also continue to make decorative

items often donating them to community events to help fundraise. Tenants enjoy this activity and say it gives them a sense of purpose and regular contact with others.

**5.49 Brunch and Blether: a weekly social gathering for older people.**

Brunch & blether was established to help tackle loneliness and isolation. Based in Windsor Hall, this activity attracts older people living in the community, including residents from nearby Cromwell Street, one of our supported housing developments for older people. The group usually enjoy some snacks from the local baker shop and play games and chat in the hall. The session is supported by our sessional workers.

**5.50 SOCIAL IMPACT:** The group serves as an informal social support network for this group of older people where they can share and talk about challenges they face in later life. 18 people are registered and around 14 people take part each week.

**5.51 Men's Group at The Courtyard for 40+ (The Stag Group)**

This group brings men together to play recreational games such as pool, darts and chess as well as discuss their lives, health, and hobbies. Participants enjoy the sense of camaraderie and brotherhood.

**5.52** The group offers a supportive environment where men can talk openly, relax, and enjoy the company of other men, allowing them to feel less alone. Initially this was only for men over 60 years, but due to requests from participants to be more inclusive it was opened to a lower age bracket. 6 participants regularly attend each week, and the sessions are supported by a sessional worker.

**5.53 Clutter Chat:** This is a support group for people affected by hoarding issues. This group meets fortnightly in our premises at 472 Maryhill Road. Clutter Chat is an independent charity, and the sessions are run by volunteers. Queens Cross provides free access to the space and assists with promotion of the service. The sessions are well attended and people advise they find this practical support useful in order to tackle and keep tackling their own issues with hoarding and clutter. Attendance levels are around 7 to 10 people attending each week.

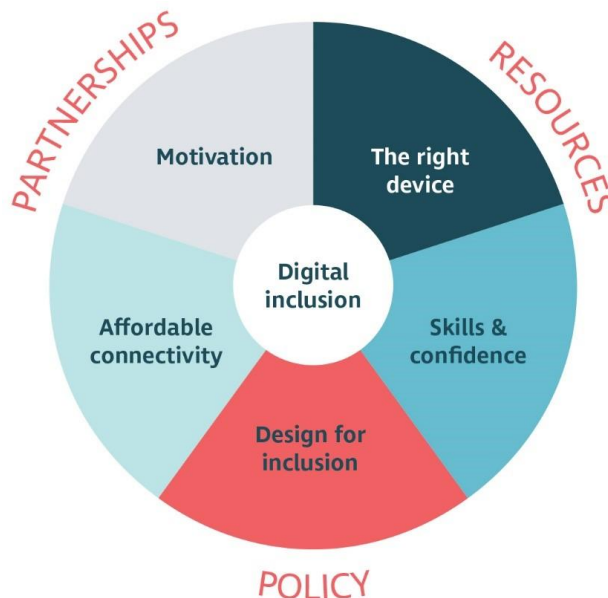
## **6.0 Theme 3: Community Learning and Opportunities: including Digital Inclusion**

**6.1 Community Learning and Opportunities** is a theme which includes community-based learning, digital inclusion, youth work and opportunities such as job clubs. During the year we delivered digital inclusion services, supported by the SCVO Digital Pioneers fund. We supported people to access services online, get online, and delivered a coding club once weekly for young people up to the age of 16 in Woodside Library.

**6.2** We know that our communities are impacted by poverty and limited opportunities, furthermore many of our residents are unemployed or in low paid and insecure employment. Nationally the Scottish Government aims to make digital inclusion popular for every citizen in Scotland. Locally, we know from our own social research, "Getting to Know You" that digital exclusion continues to prevent people

from accessing services and support that could improve their lives. This provides a focus for us to continue to support people to get online and have access to digital support in the community. Highlights of this project are set out below:

- 6.3 A successful bid to the SCVO Digital Pioneers Progress Fund supported a further 6 months of activity from September 2024 to March 2025. This funding allowed us to expand our offer of Digital Inclusion and connectivity in Queens Cross communities including a very popular partnership with a surgery within Woodside Health Centre. The funding boosted our sessional budget, allowing more sessions across more days. This continuation funding allowed us to deliver more structured learning around digital inclusion, for those looking to improve their computer skills. These sessions took place across our 4 areas (dundasvale, woodside, Queens Cross and Wester Common) with our Digital Café sessions taking place in our IT suite at The Courtyard and were delivered in partnership with Wonconnect, a social enterprise specialising in developing IT skills. These “Digital Cafe” sessions were delivered in 2 x 12-week blocks that included lunch for learners. The funding also provided a budget 25 devices including laptops, tablets and mobile phones for people in our communities.



- 6.4 **Digital Skills:** Demand for digital support at our drop-in sessions continued, and we delivered our digital skills sessions which help people get online, build confidence using devices and the internet as well as staying safe online. Our sessions are also aimed at people struggling financially, for example people looking for work or who need support applying for Universal Credit. Support at our drop-in sessions can range from helping people update their CV's, understand and navigate online application portals, to offering advice on how to search for cheaper deals for goods and services. The team delivered 550 digital themed sessions (490 sessions and 60 devices) in total during the year with regular weekly digital sessions available in most of our community facilities and coding clubs for children. All sessions are designed with the learner front and centre, building up their skills and confidence while showing them that digital is for everyone.
- 6.5 **Social Impact:** Supporting people to get connected to the internet can help to bring a range of positive social impact for individuals and their households. Having access to technology that connects people socially with friends and family can make it easier to maintain communication which can be positive for users. Asking for help or just sharing a joke or an experience can mean people feel less isolated. Also, gaining access to online entertainment platforms such as YouTube and Netflix can provide a much-needed distraction from challenging circumstances. In our digital age, it is easy to forget that for people on low incomes, getting online has not

been a priority. Increasingly the transactions we make and services we seek are found online. This means it is now more important than ever before to be able to communicate digitally. The following **case study** spotlights the impact of digital inclusion.

## **Case Study: Digital Drop-In Sessions**

### **Background**

*David*, a man with a neurological condition affecting memory and speech, and his mother and carer, *Susan*, were referred to QCHA's Digital Inclusion service by medical professionals at Woodside Health Centre. The referral was based on their recognised need for greater digital confidence to support communication and daily life.

Both David and Susan expressed a strong desire to improve their understanding and use of digital tools, particularly smartphones, text messaging, and email. Due to David's condition, which makes information retention and communication challenging, personalised and patient support was essential.

### **Tailored, Person-Centred Support**

Working in partnership with Woodside Health Centre, QCHA arranged private, one-to-one sessions with David and Susan in a safe and quiet setting. This personalised approach allowed our worker to assess individual digital support needs without distractions, build trust and rapport in a relaxed environment and focus on practical, achievable goals tailored to their needs.

These sessions were key in laying the foundation for long-term digital learning and social engagement. David and Susan began attending group-based digital drop-ins at other accessible community venues. Over time, both have demonstrated improved digital confidence, and they are now more comfortable using smartphone apps and digital communication tools. Active participation in group sessions and engaging with QCHA staff and other attendees has also increased their regular social interaction. In turn this has led to them making stronger community connections: David, in particular, has taken up additional activities outside the digital sessions that support his broader social confidence and interests.

### **Observed Outcomes**

Both David and Susan can now better navigate digital technology in daily life. The sessions have supported their social inclusion, particularly important given David's health condition. They also continue to attend sessions regularly, not only for the learning opportunities but also for the social benefits.

This case demonstrates the transformative impact of community-based Digital Inclusion support. Through the collaborative efforts of QCHA, SCVO, and Woodside Health Centre, David and Susan have moved from digital apprehension to confident, connected community members, proving the power of tailored support in breaking down barriers to inclusion.

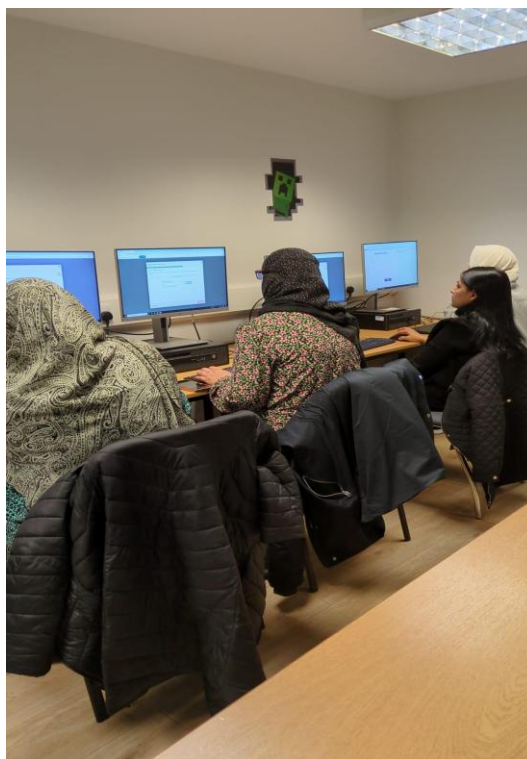


## 6.6 Digital Café sessions at The Courtyard, Wester Common Drive

*Picture: leaners in our computer suite at The Courtyard*

- 6.7 Digital Café at The Courtyard was delivered in partnership with “Won Connect”, a local social enterprise. The Digital Café format brought people together once per week to engage in semi structured learning whilst also meeting people they have not met before. 2 x 12 week courses were delivered, covering topics like “5 ways technology can help you stay fit and healthy” to “understanding the basics of AI” as well as giving new learners the basics of using devices, setting up emails and filling in online forms.

Participants received a lunch as part of these sessions as well as some social time to catch up and reflect on everything from the course curriculum, to sharing youtube videos, music and more!



## 6.8 Digital Skills with Glasgow’s Golden Generation

- 6.9 These sessions were delivered in partnership with Glasgow’s Golden Generation. Weekly sessions of digital support were delivered within the common room area of Hopehill Road, a housing development for older people. These sessions suit people who live in the development and for other older people that live nearby.
- 6.10 **SOCIAL IMPACT:** this work helps older people make the most of the opportunities available by being online with programmes that increase skills and confidence. We have recognised that older people without digital skills risk losing access to key services. Use of the various communication platforms is also increasingly important for keeping people connected with friends, families, and service providers. Learning and practicing sending and receiving emails, using search engines, and understanding the importance of source credibility are covered in the sessions. People can also find out about shopping safely online. Being able to offer tenants access to digital learning opportunities in the community, free of charge, undoubtedly makes it easier for people to access these opportunities.
- 6.11 **Coding Club:** Our Coding Club sessions for young people (aged 10-16) continued during 2024/25. These sessions were developed by our Digital Inclusion Coordinator and supported by some of our sessional youth and community workers (from Glasgow Caledonian University) with skills and knowledge in this area.

Young people can interact with coding via gaming and other software, they are encouraged to explore a wide range of topics and develop skills when attending the Coding Club at Woodside Library.

- 6.12 Social Impact:** Coding is a growth area and young people will often have a natural interest in developing this skill. We want to be able to provide opportunities for local young people to explore this space, and the coding classes provide a gentle insight into the application of coding. App making and creating simple computer games allows people experiment and learn more about the power and potential of the devices they use every day.
- 6.13 Digital Support for Social Regeneration** Digital Inclusion has become an underpinning theme for our work in social regeneration activities. Having a dedicated worker is beneficial in supporting community members to become more digitally competent, as well as supporting colleagues to enhance their digital skills. Our Digital Inclusion Coordinator continued to assist people to get connected to online classes such as ESOL classes and hybrid mindfulness sessions. This help also involves capacity building and encouraging the concept of “Digital Champions”, offering support to staff to become more confident to help people do things online.
- 6.14 Inclusive Digital Solutions:** Our digital inclusion focus has also seen the team support changes such as creating and managing a paperless system for all Queens Cross Community Foundation grant applications including The John Gray Bursary, Small Grants applications and the Community Chest. The Digital Inclusion Coordinator provides vital support with this ongoing work. This makes it easier for customers to apply and streamlines the process for staff assessing against set criteria.

## **7.0 Working with Young People and Families**

- 7.1** ‘Working with young people and families,’ is included in our theme of community learning and opportunities. 2024/25 was another busy year for the team with the added challenge of finding funding for our children’s summer holiday programme.

### **7.2 Highlights of the year include:**

- a. We recruited and trained 4 new sessional youth and community workers who supported the work of the Summer Programme. These staff brought a range of skills and experience to our team. Two of the session staff recruited have also been successful in securing roles within the Wellbeing for young people team.
- b. During our summer activities we took 45 Kids to the Science Centre thanks to an offer from their community engagement team. The groups were invited to take part in workshops, visit the exhibits and experience the planetarium. The science centre provided transport, food and free tickets for all the children and they had a truly wonderful experience.
- c. During the 2024 summer programme we arranged a work experience placement for a local young person. Having attended the youth service when they were a child the

young person approached our staff expressing an interest in gaining experience of working with children. During the programme they helped with serving breakfast and lunch, welcoming children into the group, organising activities and supporting the children on trips outside of the club.

- d. Work experience placement has led to 1 local young person joining our staff team as a sessional worker and they are now working during our term time youth sessions and on holiday projects. *Picture: structured outdoor play*

- e. Participation levels have continued to grow from strength to strength with a regular schedule of activities that respond to the needs of the young people within the community. 230 young people were registered for our activities during 2024/25.



**Social Impact:** Regular activities such as Parents & Toddler groups and after-school clubs have helped children and young people to socialise together, in a safe and structured environment. Activities often feature healthy food or snacks, and all indoor activities also served the purpose of providing warm spaces during the colder months when many people could not afford to use their heating at home. Involvement in extracurricular activities is also thought to improve educational attainment. Free access to quality play and learning opportunities out with school is also part of our approach to challenging poverty.

### 7.3 Spring Children's Holiday Programme 2024

- 7.4 Spring 2024 programme offered a wide range of activities and healthy meal provision to the 64 young people registered to attend. The Spring Holiday Programme was delivered across two sites, Windsor Hall and The Courtyard, activities were supported by our team of sessional youth and community workers. Approximately 35 children attended each day at Windsor Hall and 22 was the average daily attendance at The Courtyard.
- 7.5 Our Spring Holiday Programmes are free to local families and our costs were significantly supported by Glasgow City Council's Children's Holiday Programme. The young people (aged 5 to 15) received breakfast, lunch and snacks provided by The Courtyard Pantry and took part in a structured day (0930-1500) of both indoor and outdoor activities. Our holiday programmes are always oversubscribed such is the demand for these sessions.



7.6 Staff observed that during the programme children developed their creative skills by doing different activities including clay modelling, bracelet making and card making. Children working together, became more confident speaking to their peers and feeling comfortable as working as a team. Older children also helped the younger ones with their projects.

7.7 **SOCIAL IMPACT:** Funding from GCC's Children's Holiday Fund helps us to offer a wide range of activities and provide good quality, healthy food that may not be readily available otherwise. It is clear from the feedback from children, parents and staff that the programme has had such a positive impact on the families we work with. Being able to access free and inclusive spaces for their children enables parents to feel involved in their community and eases some of the day-to-day pressures of family life, especially during the school holidays.

## 7.8 Summer Programme 2024

7.9 Our 2024 Summer Holiday Programme ran for 6-weeks over 3 days. Our offer in 2024 was reduced from 4 days a week to 3 due to unexpected funding issues. Despite the reduction in days the programme was packed full of fun and interactive activities for young people (aged 5 to 15). We continued to work in partnership with Glasgow Sculpture Studios who supported the young people to produce their own card game. We worked with an independent outdoor education provider that offers community based outdoor education and conservation learning. Young people learned about orienteering, den building, fire safety and nature conservation- all very important outdoor life skills. We also took up an offer from the Science centre that saw 45 children taking part in workshops and visits to the Science Centre.

7.10 In previous years our Holiday Programmes were funded by the GCC holiday programme funding. In 2024 the council changed their priority areas and for the first time in 8 years we found ourselves with no additional funding to run our summer activities. The activities are traditionally offered for free to local families and provide access to healthy meals and engaging activities throughout the summer. Thanks to a fast response from colleagues across the QC group we secured funding to run the programme from QC workspace, Urban union, Wright Kerr and QCC Foundation. The young people received breakfast, lunch and snacks provided by The Courtyard Pantry and took part in a structured day (0930-1500) of both indoor and outdoor activities. 149 young people were registered for the summer holiday programme and many continued to attend out weekly activities when school resumed.



- 7.11 **Social Impact:** Our Summer Holiday Programme allowed us to offer much needed support to the local community. Many of the parents and guardians of the young people attending our sessions are in employment and therefore the sessions also serve as a safe and supportive place for their children to go during the summer holidays. Access to free children's activities in our area is particularly important as we know that many people struggle with rising living costs.

The neighbourhoods we operate in are listed by the SIMD as amongst some of the most deprived communities in Scotland and we believe that access to quality opportunities is crucial to help young people expand their knowledge and experience. Our programme brought young people into a secure environment where they could also enjoy nourishing food throughout the 6-week programme. Some of the young people participating confided that getting fed was a highlight, and something they very much welcomed. Children attending the summer programme can also find the transition back to school easier than after the holidays, than those who have not engaged in any supported activities over the summer.

## 7.12 Parent and Toddlers

- 7.13 Our Parent and toddler sessions continue to provide safe spaces for families with young children to come and experience positive play and development. Our sessions provide a space for children and their caregivers to build social connections, share experiences and seek advice from peers. The group also helps alleviate some pressure on low income families by providing access to arts and crafts as well as food during the activity, which means parents spend less money on these things.

- 7.14 **Social Impact:** Working with young people and their families, providing activities and opportunities is a positive contribution for a community-based housing association to make. We know that many of our families are on low incomes, therefore the process of accessing funding and providing free of charge activities does provide a positive, no cost experience for families on low incomes. At a strategic level we are committed to tackle poverty and its effects, and this work is part of that approach. We know that children who participate in extracurricular activities are more likely to achieve greater educational attainment. Therefore, we believe, that by creating quality opportunities for people to engage, have new experiences and learning, coupled with socialising with others out with their network, that this can help build skills and social capital.

- 7.15 **Social Impact of our Youth Work:** Long term outcomes are positive. For example, we have seen young people progress to take up sessional roles in our team, having previously participated in Queens Cross Youth Groups. We also believe that providing activities for young people and families demonstrates to our customers that we, as an organisation, care about our customers and providing them with the best possible experiences. Our youth work is also inclusive, and the participants are ethnically diverse. Indeed over 50% of the participants of our summer programme were from black and minority communities. We believe that bringing children and families together in diverse neighbourhoods, to share in quality experiences, helps a little way towards building community cohesion at community level.

## 8.0 Working with Queens Cross Community Foundation

- 8.1 The Social Regeneration Team work closely with the Queens Cross Community Foundation, a charitable foundation that is part of the Queens Cross Group. This involves working with and supporting the trustees to assess and administer their grants schemes, progressing their business plan objectives and supporting the Foundation to plan and deliver community events.



- 8.2 During the year the Social Regeneration Team supported various fundraising activities for the foundation, working closely with the trustees. These included an Easter High Tea, Christmas fair and fundraising activities at the Queens Cross Gala Day.
- 8.3 We report separately on the work of Queens Cross Community Foundation and also compile an impact report for the Foundation. That report can be found online at [www.qcfoundation.org](http://www.qcfoundation.org) The report is in the “about us” section, at the bottom of the page - <https://www.qcfoundation.org/about-us>

- 8.4 The team also supported Queens Cross Community Foundation trustees to organise their third Christmas Fair which was held on 5th December 2024. The event was a tremendous success, with around 140 people passing through the doors at. The purpose of the event was to spread some Christmas Cheer and raise some money for the QC Community Foundation.



The fair featured crafters market stalls, Children's games, bauble decoration and of course meeting Santa Claus. The Christmas Fair was extremely popular with local families. Free and fun activities plus hot chocolate and mince pies was a welcome winter treat. Support from the association's contractors, trustees and staff helped supply selection boxes and raffle prizes for this free entry fundraising event. *Picture: The Wellbeing Team at The Courtyard Christmas Fair.*

- 8.5 Smaller Christmas themed events were also held at Dundasvale Residents Hall & Windsor Hall in December 2024 following on the popularity of the event held in 2023.

These events are much welcomed by community members and provide a fun opportunity to mix with neighbours during the short dark days of winter. We know social isolation is a real issue in our communities therefore, free, local events are simple and practical ways to encourage people to socialise, particularly for older people. As well as creating a festive atmosphere in the community, the events are also opportunities for people to find out about other opportunities and to meet staff and improve customer relations. *Picture: Dundasvale Neighbourhood Team with residents.*



## 9.0 Equalities Monitoring

- 9.1 Equalities monitoring is important to ensure that the uptake of our services and opportunities reflects the demographics of our diverse local communities. The Social Regeneration Team record equalities information of participants wherever possible. The returns we receive highlight evidence of a diverse range of people with regards to protected characteristics.
- 9.2 Ethnicity: Our communities are ethnically diverse, and this is reflected in the participants of our activities. For example, over 50% of the children registered with our youth activities are from Black and minority ethnic backgrounds. This is over 100 people. Furthermore, we have 45 people registered with ESOL, all of whom are from ethnic minority communities. However, in practice we are yet to develop an effective process that captures the equalities data from all the people that engage with the activities that we run.
- 9.3 Our most recently formed men's group, designed to engage with men from BAME communities is ethnically diverse. There are 25 participants, 21 are Pakistani 2 Indian, 1 Somali and 1 white Scottish. Similarly, our women's group has 20 participants, 12 are Pakistani, 3 are Chinese, 2 are Indian, 2 from Saudi Arabia, 1 from Iraq and 1 from Kuwait. The languages spoken by participants at these groups include Chinese, Arabic, Somali, Urdu and Punjabi.
- 9.4 Working with so many different ethnicities and nationalities, we often face a language barrier during the course of our work. This makes capturing monitoring equalities information challenging. Returns are unfortunately historically low and circumstances in which we can request this information are not always simple. As a small team involved in delivering a diverse programme, finding time to carry out research and analysis will always be challenging.

## 10.0 Social Value Calculator

- 10.1 Social impact illustrated by participation levels, positive feedback and case studies provides us with a useful and tangible insight into community or "wider role"



activities delivered by the Social Regeneration Team at QCHA. Examples and case studies have been highlighted in this report to help demonstrate the level of participation and value that people themselves place on the activities and opportunities. We have been using the Social Value Calculator and the Social Value Bank toolkit to report on the social value of our Social Regeneration activities since the reporting period 2020/21.

- 10.2 The Scottish Federation of Housing Associations recommends the model by HACT, which is a charity that supports housing organisations to measure the 'Social Value' housing associations can make in monetary terms, by being involved in wider role and community activities. HACT have created a Social Value Bank that lists some of the activities a Housing Association may be involved in beyond housing development and housing management.
- 10.3 HACT provides a cash value to help quantify social impact, to demonstrate the impact in real terms positive engagement can have on communities. HACT says that their social value calculator is: "a way of measuring the positive benefits your work has on both individuals and communities" . We have applied this model to our work. It is important to note that not all activities we are engaged in at Queens Cross are listed in the social value bank, so we have only counted those that are consistent with the Social Value Bank criteria.
- 10.4 The "social values" are determined by HACT, however having applied these values to our monitoring work in recent years, it has been helpful to track how the "social value" of our work has increased using their measure. We offer this information as supplementary to our numbers around participation and our examples of social impact. Our activities and their prescribed social value by HACT are included on the next page.

## Social Value of activities using the HACT Toolkit\*.

\*Values assigned by HACT

Activity (Regular unless stated otherwise)	No of Participants	Social Value per Toolkit £	Social Impact Value Per Activity £
Yoga	10	2,256	38,352
Coding club young people	25	1,515	37,875
Walking Groups	12	5,281	63,372
Digital Skills Sessions (12-week class with lunch)	9	1,515	13,635
Digital Drop Ins	51	1,515	77,265
Digital Support from Glasgow Golden Generation at Hopehill (60+)	6	1,515	9,090
Gardening Sessions (with horticultural support)	14	1,411	19,754
Regular Gardeners with QC growing spaces	30	1,411	42,330
ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages)	32	1,567	50,144
Crafternoons Group	27	1,515	40,905
Mindfulness Classes	15	1,515	22,725
Men's Group Woodside BAME	19	1,850	35,150
Men's Group at Courtyard	6	1,850	11,100
Brunch & Blether	15	1,850	27,750
Womens Group BAME	20	1,515	30,300
Clutter Chat Hoarding Group	10	1,850	18,500
Sewing Group (Older people)	5	1,515	4,545
Litter Picking Group	5	1,515	7,575
Parent and Toddler	89	1,515	134,835
Singing group	11	1,515	16,665
Providing a digital device & internet connection	25	2,413	60,325
Youth groups	159	1,850	294,150
Total Social Value Per Toolkit			<b>1,056,342</b>

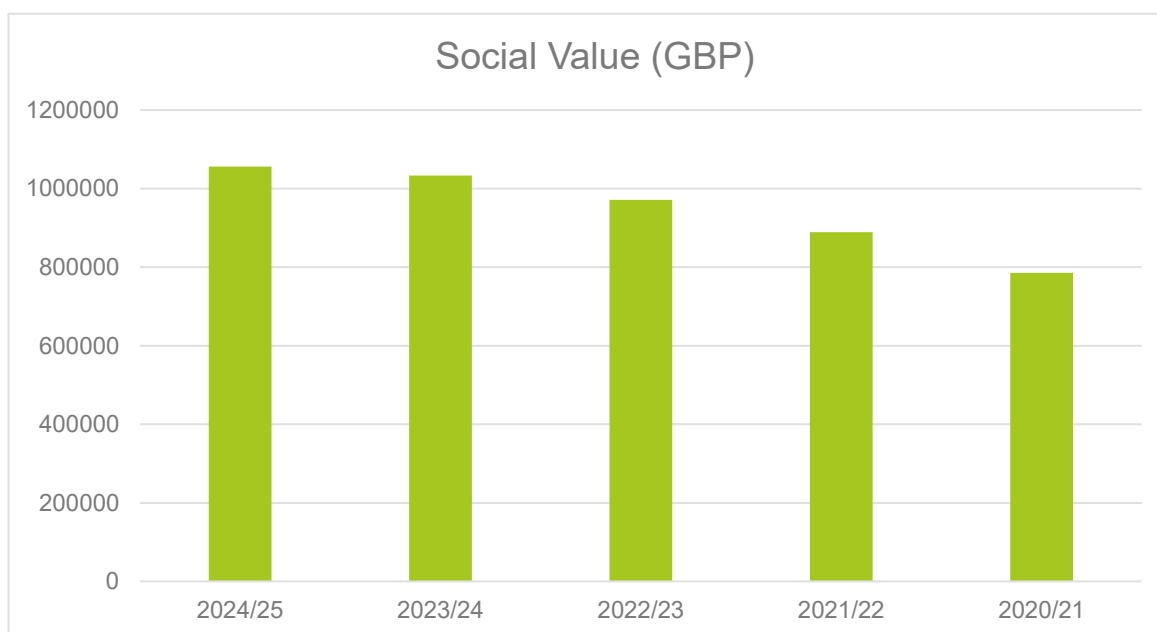
## 10.5 Values explained: Extract from HACT Toolkit

The toolkit says the following values can be applied to the number of participants providing the activity is regular e.g. for more than two months. We have therefore only applied these values to regular activity organised by the Association's Social Regeneration Team.

HACT Descriptor	HACT Value
Yoga	£2256
Member of a social group	£1850
Keep fit or light exercise	£1670
Access to internet	£2413
Hobbies	£1515
Gardening	£1411
General Training	£1567

## 10.6 Trends and analysis

- 10.7 Using the Social Value Bank Toolkit, we can see the change in in social value for our HACT qualifying activities since we began using the tool in 2020/21. Based on the Social Value Bank calculator, Social Regeneration Activity has contributed £1,056,342 of social value compared with £1,033,366 in 2023/24, and £971,242 in 2022/23, £888,938 in 2021/22 and £785,778 in 2020/21. This tool does not provide a value for all our activity, but nevertheless it serves as an additional measure that allows us to track progress.



- 10.8 Caution should be used when reporting these figures as the values are created by a third party using a complex methodology. These figures may be useful for benchmarking against other RSLs involved in Wider Role Activity, providing we remember that not all activity has a HACT value. There will also be activities carried

out by other teams in the association that will be listed in the Social Value Bank. In future it would be useful to look at Social Impact figures of the whole association, as these will highlight significant impact.

## 11. Funding & Partnership Working

11.1 External funding and partnership working allows us to deliver our range of community activities at Queens Cross. During the year we received funding from Glasgow City Council, National Lottery, Cycling Scotland, SCVO, Allied Vehicles in addition to funding support from the Queens Cross Group. The combined the value of this funding was £ 148,214.58, less than the previous year in 2023/24 (£213,944) and reflective of a more challenging funding climate.

11.2 Local partnerships with the City Council and community-based organisations are critical for the delivery of our programmes. During the year we worked in close partnership with Glasgow City Council, Bike for Good, The Courtyard Pantry Enterprise, Community Central Halls, Freewheel North, Glasgow's Golden Generation, Glasgow Sculpture Studios, The Glasgow Canal Cooperative, The Froglife Trust, Won Connect, Queens Cross Community Foundation, Young Possil Futures, Developing the Young Workforce, The Lennox Partnership, and Keep Scotland Beautiful, NHS Health Improvement Team and Jobs and Business Glasgow.

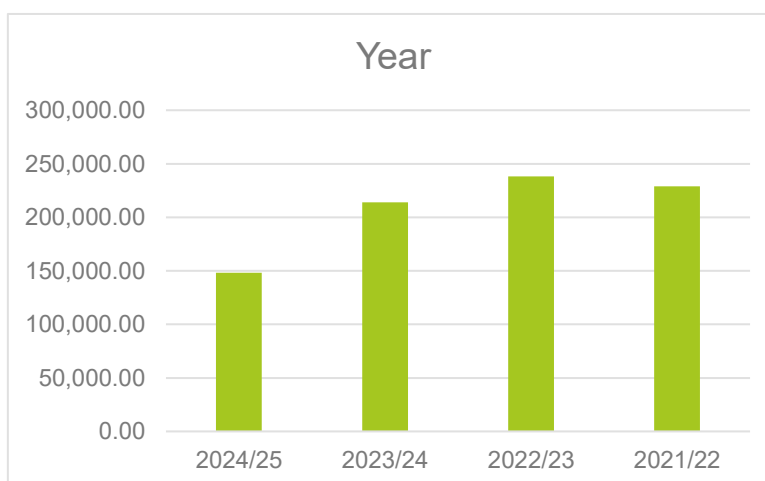
*Picture: Donna MacLean NHS Health Improvement Team*



11.3 Reflecting on previous years we can see the trend of securing external funding has become more challenging. A review of external funding over the past four financial years reveals a gradual downward trend, highlighting the increasing challenge in securing external support. The figures are shown in the table opposite.

After reaching a high in 2022/23, funding levels have declined year-on-

year, with 2024/25 showing a marked drop from the 2022/23 peak. This trend may reflect growing competition for limited funds, changes in funding priorities, or broader economic constraints. It underlines the need to diversify funding sources, strengthen partnerships, and adapt funding strategies, such as maximising community benefits moving forward.





## 12.0 Conclusion

- 12.1 This report provides an overview and insight into the social impact of work carried out by the Social Regeneration Team in 2024/25. The report covers our work around Health & Wellbeing, Digital Inclusion and Youth Work whilst also including examples from specific projects, such as our “Community Opportunities Project.” We have sought to highlight numbers of people participating and examples of the range of activities people have engaged with case study examples the diverse impact this work can have.
- 12.2 The outlook for 2025/26 will bring fresh challenges especially with the cost-of-living crisis continuing to impact people. Additionally, our own operational budgets are being tightened due to increasing costs, which will continue to present challenges in the next few years ahead.
- 12.3 Access to free or low-cost opportunities will be more important than ever and our approach of linking dignified food provision with activities will need to continue as part of our engaging programme for local people.
- 12.4 Continuing to access funding and to be able to provide the programme of services the Social Regeneration Team currently have running will as ever be a challenge and goal. However, we as a team remain optimistic that we will continue to find ways to put practical solutions into action.

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