



DUNFERMLINE ADVOCACY

Impact Report 2021-22

Chairperson's Report

In 1992 Dunfermline Advocacy was founded to support vulnerable people leaving hospital care to move into the local communities of West Fife. For many this was an unknown and frightening thought. Dunfermline Advocacy was there to ensure that individual needs were considered, fears allayed and relevant support provided, to ensure that they were accepted, appreciated and included in the community.



30 years on this work continues, consistently providing support, understanding and friendship to those who need it most.

For a small charity this is an amazing achievement, brought about by hard work, and determination to help many people live their lives as independently as possible.

Writing this report made me think about what defines achievement and concluded that there are as many definitions as there are people.



In our 30 years, many hundreds of people have experienced their own personal achievements as well as motivating others to achieve theirs, each in their own way. This includes:

Dunfermline Advocacy staff who motivate, guide and support our advocates, partners and each other to keep developing, reaching forward and doing more;

Our advocates who provide patience and encouragement to partners to allow them to shape and live their own lives;

And our partners, who through trust and connection to their advocates, have choices, experience new things, are not excluded and can enjoy sustainable friendships.

As an advocate I have seen first-hand how a tiny change for a partner can be a huge achievement, not just for the partner but for the advocate too - that first eye contact, that small shy smile, initiating a conversation, asking to visit somewhere new - things that to some may seem insignificant but to advocacy partners can be life-changing. These achievements build confidence and can provide the motivation for partners to want to do more and move through life.

Dunfermline Advocacy has been making this happen for thirty years.

Sadly, this is my last AGM. I am standing down as Chair and from the Board but leave Dunfermline Advocacy in the safe hands of a committed and experienced Board.

However, I have been an advocate for 11 years and support two partners. I will continue to do this and be part of the great work that Dunfermline Advocacy does.

I have been a Board member for nine years and Chair for five years and it has been a privilege to have been part of the DA team, helping support the great work that it does for a huge number of people.

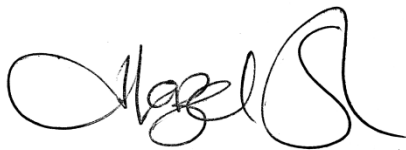
I give my thanks to Rachel and the staff team who continue to achieve and go above and beyond.

Thanks also go to the Board for its hard work and support to both myself and to the charity.

To our funders, I give my thanks and appreciation for their continued support and trust.

And most importantly, heartfelt thanks to our advocates - a collective of kindness, commitment and willingness to help others.

Thanks to everyone and here's to the next 30 years.



Hazel Smith, DA Chair



**The Queen's Award
for Voluntary Service**

The MBE for volunteer groups

2 Halbeath Road

Dunfermline

Fife, KY12 7QX

DunfermlineAdvocacy.org

OSCR

Scottish Charity Regulator

www.oscr.org.uk

Registered Charity

SC021638

Activity in 2021

During 2021 we supported 192 vulnerable people in West Fife, up 34% from the number supported in 2020.

We supported a total of 85 Citizen Advocacy partnerships- 72 long term partnerships, and 13 short term partners supported through our pool of 12 short term Advocates. In addition we worked with 63 people to determine their advocacy and other support needs and signposted or referred them to more appropriate services for their needs, and a further 44 people whom we planned to match with a volunteer but had not yet made a match.

2021 and Remote Support

The DA office was closed for most of 2020, and indeed continued to be closed for much of 2021, with most work taking place remotely, and in person as required. By October 2021 we were starting to make use of the office space, but on a very limited basis.

Last year we described 2020 as our year of Remote Support. This saw us expand our skills and experience, making best use of Zoom and Teams to make both individual support video calls and also to run online support groups and training sessions for Advocates along with online events including our AGM and Festive Blether. Although we expected this to change in 2021, Covid had other ideas and our plans to move back to in-person working were delayed.

However our experiences during 2021 allowed us to begin to consolidate new ways of working practices across the organisation, for our partners, volunteers, staff and the Board of Trustees.

2022 and Hybrid Working

Our ability to increase our work by 34% was made possible by the fact that our Development Team were working remotely from March 2020. Indeed, working from home and supporting advocates, partners, partnerships, new and prospective volunteers using remote methods allowed the team to make best use of their time.

During 2022 we began to adapt our working to be a more hybrid model, with the office now open and people meeting in-person, but with the team still making effective use of home working and remote methods of support.

Volunteer Recruitment & Advocate Training

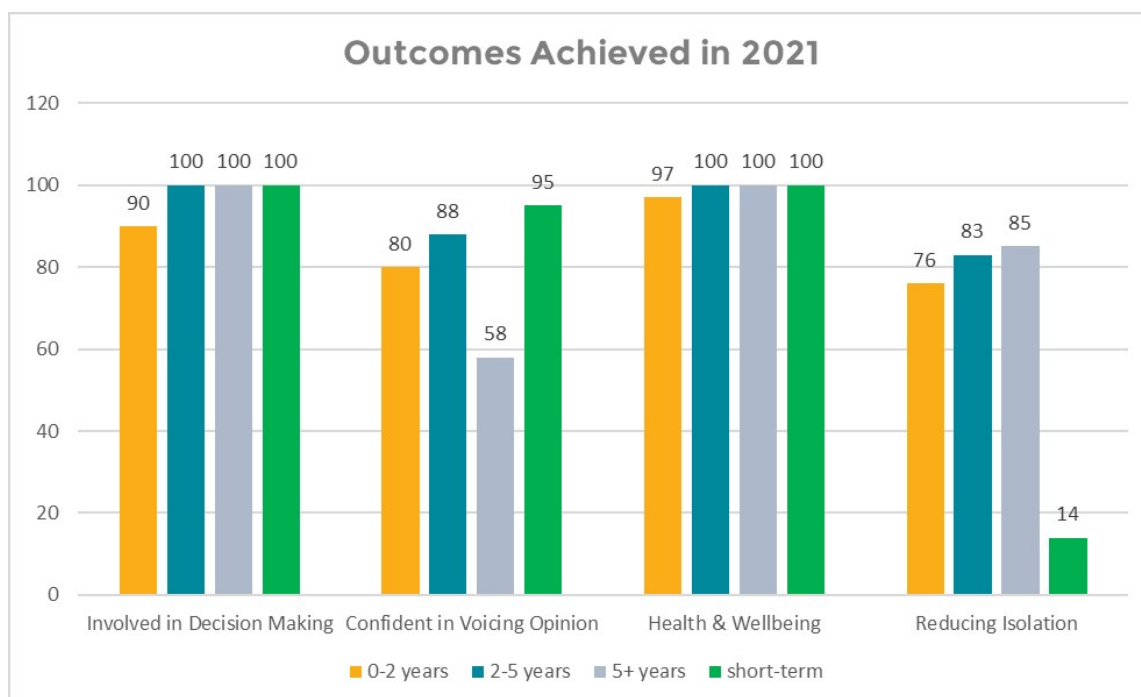
We are delighted to be able to report an increase of 35% in the number of people coming forward to volunteer with us in 2021.

During 2021 we continued to run the Advocate Preparation Course online, and did so 6 times during the year. We also ran 11 online training sessions on 5 different topics, including Digital Advocacy, Self-Care for Advocates, Advocacy and Criminal Justice, Citizen Advocacy and Human Rights, and Adults with Incapacity Information Session.

We are now participating in in-person volunteer recruitment events along with training taking place in-person, hybrid or online, guided by the needs and wishes of our volunteers.

Impact in 2021

Last year we looked at our outcomes and the difference Citizen Advocacy makes for people the longer they are matched, and we looked at this again in 2021. We also looked at the impact for our short-term partnerships matched during the year. We gathered information from people accessing Citizen Advocacy, their advocates, people making referrals, family members and from our Development Workers.



Second Year of Pandemic

We are pleased to be able to report that despite partnerships not being able to meet in person during additional periods of lockdown, that the number of people experiencing a positive impact overall has increased compared to pre-Covid years.

The direct advocacy support from Development Workers for people not yet matched with a volunteer continued to have a positive impact for people involved for less than 2 years.

In 2021 the numbers of people achieving sustained or improved health and wellbeing was the same as the previous year across all groups.

We did observe a slight reduction in numbers of people achieving a reduction of experiencing loneliness and isolation, but overall the numbers were still higher than reported in 2019. We believe that the continuing restrictions and periods of lockdown were even more challenging for people who we know were looking forward to the return of in person support, and support with anxieties about getting back out into the community again.

We continued to see a lower number of people reporting increased confidence in those matched for over 5 years, and here there are a larger number of partnerships where we provide non-instructed advocacy and we know that these partnerships have found not being able to meet in person a huge struggle during the pandemic. We expect this to change when we report results for 2022 with all partnerships able, and back to meeting in person.

Celebrating 30 Years of Citizen Advocacy in West Fife

We were delighted to bring together more than 70 people to mark our 30th Anniversary in September 2022.

We had some nice food, cake and lots of chats and laughs. People really appreciated being able to get together and share some of their stories about the support they have had from Dunfermline Advocacy over the last few years in particular. The event was attended by a range of partnerships- some matched over the course of the pandemic, but also many who have been involved with us for more than 20 years.



"It was a very special celebration, 30 years of providing kindness, support and friendship to our local community by our wonderful advocates and staff team is a fantastic achievement. It was extra special to me as this will be my last event as Chair and what a lovely way to say thank you and goodbye (although I will be back for the parties!!)." (Hazel Smith, Chairperson)

I am proud, definitely, of all the work we've done. We've got 100-plus volunteers and the work that they do week-in and week-out is amazing. It's incredible because we are a small organisation but to continue to thrive for 30 years, I think it's quite an achievement.

Rachel, CEO from recent Dunfermline Press article

"Many congratulations on your first 30 years! All we can really achieve in this world is to make it a better place and DA have certainly done that... Here's to creating more of a legacy in the next 30 years." (Andrew Croxford, Accountant)

"I enjoyed coming along but I was nervous at first as I was on my own. Thanks for sitting next to me and then I had a nice lad next to me and everyone else. With all your help I was able to relax. It meant a lot." (Partner)

"It was a great evening, thanks for including us in a very special day." (Partnership)

"Really good night, thanks for the invite." (Partner)

"It was a great evening, thanks for including us in a very special day." (Partnership)

"It was really good, nice to see everyone there. It was a fantastic day out." (Partner)

"It was good, my partner enjoyed it as well. It was great to actually meet in person after 2 years!" (Advocate)

"My partner loves a party and was so pleased to have been invited for our birthday. She said she loved meeting the staff and hoped we would have more parties." (Advocate)

"It was fun!" (Partnership)



Treasurer's Report

Our total income for the year was almost at the same level as the previous year at £204, 498 (2020-21 £205, 749).

Our costs increased by around £6000 to £187, 418 on the prior year due to a rise in staff costs (£181, 762).



As an organisation, we are not immune to the current economic situation and, like others, we are facing the reality of increasing energy prices and the financial impact of the well-documented cost of living crisis. Funding also remains an ongoing challenge for Dunfermline Advocacy, just as it does across the voluntary sector, both in terms of the raising of income to meet the ever growing demand for our services or to meet the growing costs of running the organisation and the associated office space.

During the coming year, we will continue to make the most efficient and effective use of our funding and other resources to deliver our much needed service whilst meeting our financial commitments and ensuring that our staff are sufficiently remunerated to sustain them during this difficult economic period.

The Board of Trustees alongside our CEO Rachel, are committed to directing our energy and efforts to overcome these challenges. Celebrating our 30 year anniversary as a thriving organisation has been a wonderful achievement and we will work tirelessly to ensure this legacy continues.

Please see our full accounts for more information on our funding and how we used it- I would like to thank our Independent Examiners, Thomson Cooper, for producing the accounts and examining the charity's accounting records.

I take this opportunity to say a particularly big thank you to our main funders, Fife Health & Social Care Partnership, Fife Council, NHS Fife.

I also want to thank our other grant funders the National Lottery Community Fund, The Henry Smith Charity and The Robertson Trust, FVA (Mental Wellbeing & Communities Fund), Kickstart for all their support in the year 2021-22, and particularly their ongoing support, trust, and understanding of the difficulties we have experienced in delivering normal service during the pandemic.

Thanks must also go to the other businesses and local people who continue to support us, the Coop Local Community Fund, Iceland Dunfermline Branch, Your Conveyancer (Dunfermline), Asda Halbeath and Hospital Hill, Tesco Fife Station and those individuals who have made donations or supported others fundraising on our behalf including those who have completed the Kiltwalk and those who have selected Dunfermline Advocacy as an Amazon Smile charity.

Anne Adrain, Treasurer

Chief Executive Report

2021 began not unlike 2020 with a period of lockdown, and uncertainty of what the pandemic would bring during the year. However the spring also brought the start of the vaccination program and what began to feel like some hope of a way forward.

That said, 2021 also brought the largest number of people referred to us, with a 60% increase of people in need of support. I am proud to report that with some changes to our working practices, we are reporting a 34% increase in the number of people we supported during the year.



"I jumped at the chance to put my passion out for other people, to be able to help someone. The satisfaction that I'm really helping someone, to see progress. I'm proud of being an Advocate.... Dunfermline Advocacy? It's brilliant!"

Long-Term Citizen Advocate

My thanks go to all those who have volunteered with Dunfermline Advocacy over the last 30 years, and especially over the past two years- supporting people through a very challenging time. Indeed, I've chosen two quotes to include in my report this year from Citizen Advocates perfectly summing up just how fabulous they are.

"I get a lot of satisfaction out of working with {them}, just seeing {them} slowly but surely get back a bit of their confidence and just to start believing again, that the world can be a better place than the one they are currently sitting in at the time that you meet them."

Short-Term Citizen Advocate

Final Thanks

I take this opportunity to express my thanks to Hazel for her time as Chairperson. Hazel is a truly exceptional, kind and inspiring person who has brought her skills and values to the role over the past 5 years.

With 2022 almost over, a new Chairperson about to be in place, our sights are now firmly fixed on our work for 2023 and beyond. Our plans are in many ways simple- to support as many people as we can and to seek funding that will allow us to do so, especially with the cost of living crisis expected to worsen over this winter and beyond.

As we mark our 30th Anniversary I believe we have not only survived but thrived as an organisation. The past two years have challenged DA like the whole sector, but we are in an incredibly strong position to meet these challenges head-on over the coming year.



Rachel Annand, Chief Executive