



annual review

2020/21



welcome and introduction



**Chair of the Board,
Lesley Cruickshank**

2020/21 – the year of COVID 19, restrictions, lockdowns, working from home...

How could a community service like we are continue to operate and support our users when all of this was going on and we could not welcome people into our building? Well, as usual, our innovative staff team found not one, but many ways to carry on our important work.

Not that this was easy. The past year affected all of us – both physically and mentally – our staff team included. They did not have the usual amazing team of volunteers to rely on as they too were isolating so new recruits were needed. They too stepped up to the plate. I do think our staff and volunteers are amazing.

As a Board, we continued to meet – virtually. Isn't technology wonderful? Our role was to support our staff, ensure they did not try to do too much – which they did, approve plans as lockdowns lifted and then were imposed again.

With vaccinations and relaxation of restrictions, there is light at the end of the tunnel. We have learned much over this past year. We can support users by going for a walk or a bike ride as well as welcoming them into the Hub. I am proud of all we have achieved in such a difficult time.

Finally, this will be my last report as Chair. I have been a member of the Ripple Board for over 20 years and have decided to step down. It has been a privilege to be part of such a wonderful organisation. After all this time, I continue to be amazed at how much we achieve within the limited funds we have and our small staff team.

Thank you to all of them and our dedicated volunteers. It has been my pleasure!



Director, Rachel Green

March 2020 saw the Ripple like many other organisations reeling from the crisis of the global pandemic with a year of lockdowns and restrictions. We had to adapt quickly and flexibly ensuring that we could support individuals in our local community who were most affected.

We maintained personal contact through the Hub continuously throughout the pandemic organising ourselves as a point of community contact. We provided some of the most basic needs for people including food and prescription service and often were the only place where people could get hold of someone on a daily basis.

Our wellbeing team moved to supporting people both online and

face to face in person where restrictions allowed. We cycled with people, went for walks with them and kept checking in on them as people's mental health suffered.

Our youth team moved to online providing young people in our area with a point of contact and a way to stay active and connected including accredited learning. This support extended itself to their families who were given food parcels and other necessary items.

Our older people's services kept in touch with individuals through phone calls and postcards. We set challenges and activities for people to join in with from their own homes and helped them navigate the much reduced services that they normally relied on.

As the majority of our volunteers were shielding we recruited new volunteers who were either furloughed from their usual jobs or were keen to help in their community. We delivered food parcels, boxes, meals and recipe ideas through our community food worker and our café.

We were able to receive laptops, tablets and phones from other

our impact

organisations to distribute to those who needed them alongside free internet so they would not face additional expenses in an already very difficult situation.

I know we provided much needed supplies, information, advice, support and comfort to many people in our area and we couldn't have done this without a supportive Board, amazing staff team and dedicated volunteers.

Whilst the beginning of the year saw us moving into another lockdown we continued to support people to take up their offers of the vaccine. Writing this now the effects of the pandemic are still ever present and the consequences for the people in this area are visible at physical, mental and economic levels.

We will continue to focus on present needs whilst keeping a mindful eye on the past year with a view to ensuring that we remain a sustainable, accountable and effective organisation for years to come. We are #nevermoreneeded

Board

Lesley Cruickshank, Ewan Aitken, Bill Johnston, Norman Gilfillan, Grant Bulloch, Danny Holland, Jacqueline Milne, Angus Hardie

Staff

Dawn Baxter, Gemma Elder, Catriona Robertson, Ayesha Mir, Danielle Ward, Gordon Thomson, Wendy Dumbrell and all youth work staff

In Remembrance

If I had a flower
For every time I thought
of you, I could walk
in my garden forever
Tennyson

Mrs Maud Smith
Mrs Shelia Ware
Mrs Nan Christie
Mrs Nan Melville
Mr Ken Marshall
Mr Archie Swanson
Mr John Clark
Mr George (Jerry) Gillies
Mr George McKenzie

What extra activities/support we provided:

12 volunteers recruited to support vulnerable people during lockdown
Phone support set up to connect volunteers and members of the local community
Phone top up for young people
Food parcels/boxes
Fresh produce boxes
Facebook drop in's
Accredited learning (Hi5 Awards)
Colouring in packs for young people
Arts & crafts packs for young people
10 laptops for young people
15 phones/mobiles for young people and families
Utensils/crockery packs for families
Gardening and seed packs for families
Xmas hampers for families
Selection boxes for young people
School uniform support for families
Digital drama club
Drama club prop packs
Bike maintenance session
Lunch Club (Digital Cooking Session) in partnership with Edinburgh Community Food
Easter Lunch Club drop in and activity packs pick up
Offers of 1-2-1 support
720 meals delivered to vulnerable shielding individuals/families over 6 months
480 meals over 6 months – Ripple deliveries to lunch club members and volunteers
480 people accessed wholefood & veg – pantry, throughout lockdown
240 food boxes of fresh veg/fruit delivered
420 meals over Christmas/New-year – Leith Gives/ UNICEF
14 volunteers – REHIS qualified
4 people attended 6-week closed online 'Food & Mood' group
7 families learnt cooking healthy food in a 6-week online training
30 families – afternoon tea and picnic boxes

working with children and young people



Danielle, Youth Services Manager, reflects on lockdown in 2020, a time of severe restriction for youth work services, when the Ripple successfully changed tack. Ordinarily, the project runs its activities from the Hub. Drop-ins are aimed at harder to reach young people, – boys group and a girls group have more planned activities and offer a supportive environment while the drama club is the under 12's age group.

As COVID struck the Ripple youth work team were keen to reach out and support young people, and began a new approach of initiating contact with young people in local streets and parks. A new approach was required quickly and staff had to perform their roles differently and promote the project in new ways. Renewed community visibility and impact being out in the community and wearing uniforms purchased through Generation CashBack support, had a valuable impact on the Ripple's profile, its support of young people, community relationships and future work.

Overall, the project has succeeded in remaining open for business, getting out into the local community, trialling new approaches and safely restarting indoor work which was further supported by Youth

Scotland advice and training, when the opportunity arose.

James (*Pseudonyms have been used) James had been actively involved in the Ripple groups for years. During lockdown the Youth Work Team were able to provide James with phone vouchers to support him to keep in touch with friends. Once the groups restarted, James became actively involved again.

Zafar and Salama (*Pseudonyms have been used) During lockdown, the project supported Zafar's and Salama's family with food boxes, and the siblings kept in touch with the project with regular online contact as well as sending in pictures of creative work and activities from home. These were collated and both young people achieved a Youth Scotland Hi5 Award. "We do cooking

and then we do some games, sports, like volleyball, basketball, football and hockey." [Zafar] "I like the girl's group, it has crafts, drawing, talking with other people." [Salama] "It was something good in my life." [Salama describes her 'Hi5 Award'] "It helped me get my mood up... Because I want to make people happy, I want to make people know that I'm really good at stuff and show other people." [Zafar] Connecting in groups and connecting during lockdown I've met new people from other schools." [Salama] "It helped me meet new people and make new friends too." [Zafar] "It [phone top up from project] helped me keep in touch with all my friends. When I got it, I phoned every single one of my friends, because I've not seen them in a long time. And then, they were happy that I kept in touch."



Working with adults and community collaborative projects



Friday 13th March turned out to be the most inauspicious of dates in our collective memories. Over 40 Ripple friends and volunteers enjoyed a musical afternoon – together! By the following Monday we all started to make plans for an unprecedented lockdown.

By Monday 23rd March all Ripple clubs and activities were cancelled. And, what makes the Ripple the Ripple – our PEOPLE were told to STAY HOME, isolate, shield and change all their familiar daily routines. A big ask for people who rely on us for food, exercise, advice, support and companionship.

In true community spirit, we received over 30 offers of help via our website on the first

day from local people who wanted to get involved in supporting the most vulnerable in our community. Within a week we had interviewed and recruited 15 new volunteers who were not in any risk categories and, along with our staff team of 4, set about organising shopping, cooking and collecting medication for an initial 15 people who we knew need help.

We phoned, texted and sent personalised postcards for our older people's club members, Wellbeing Group and volunteers.

Food Distribution – In conjunction with Fareshare, food bags were prepared and delivered by staff and volunteers, initially to 12 people rising to over 30.

The Fareshare Pantry continued to operate on a fortnightly basis, attended by 25 regulars and continued to support several new people each week. It quickly became apparent that the lockdown was not going to end anytime soon and to avoid having people leave their homes for shopping the Ripple moved to a full delivery service, beginning with matching the new volunteer team with shielding people as they were referred to us.

We delivered food to people who were shielding due to:
COPD
cancer
stroke
blindness
age related frailties
poor mental health
dementia.

We delivered food to people with other vulnerabilities: recently homeless discharged from hospital looked after children fear of falling if standing too long limited cooking facilities.



working with wellbeing

The very early part of lockdown was spent contacting all of the people we have worked with through our wellbeing project asking how they were and what they needed both now and in the coming weeks. People were anxious, isolated, worried about their safety, their income and their ability to feed themselves. We began supporting people in various ways.

Delivering food, collecting prescriptions and talking on their doorsteps. We arranged regular phone calls and made up and sent wellbeing packs in the post. We provided practical solutions to everyday problems, and gave our time to reassuring people over the phone in some of their most anxious moments.

At times we had to move away from our 'normal' way of working and do what was right at the time. We made the call as an organisation that face to face

support was essential for some people.

Throughout this time we conducted regular safely distanced meetings with people experiencing suicidal thoughts and with history of suicide attempts. A year later they have told us that if that support hadn't been available, they aren't sure they would still be here.

The building tentatively opened in late summer and some very isolated people were delighted to be able to come back in and meet up to eat and talk. After the optimism of opening over the summer, it seemed by October that we were going to be back where we started and talk of more lockdown was testing everyone's ability to be positive and hopeful, and to make any kind of plans. Bigger group plans were cancelled and put back on hold, and I continued to meet with certain people who were

needing contact, support and encouragement.

With no easing of restrictions in sight, I started making plans for a Zoom group. I also spent time making up packs for participants to send out, with everything they would need to complete the group from home. This included sourcing a device for one woman who had two kids being home schooled and were all sharing the same device.

We worked in partnership with the Poverty Alliance for local people to contribute to Scottish policy by providing recommendations on how to reduce multiple deprivation. Three participants agreed to engage in the discussions.

This year was focused on employment, digital access, community support and mental health. Participants all expressed pride for the area in which they lived

but all discussed concerns of safety and lack of community support available, often explaining that the Ripple is the only form of support they can recognise and associate with. There was also collective concern on the current economic impacts of the pandemic and acknowledgement towards reduced employment availability. One participant expressed that her household has experienced a large reduction in income since the start of the pandemic and has been causing serious strain. The participant went on to emphasise how welcomed efforts like the community pantry hosted on a fortnightly basis at the Ripple are in a difficult time such as this. The impact of the pandemic, isolation from loved ones and reduced financial security were all reported factors when discussing people's mental health.

working with food



With lockdown announced the Ripple stepped up its response to food poverty and insecurity in the Restalrig/Lochend/Craigentinny area, by collaborating with the Cyrenians. We delivered home-made cooked meals to vulnerable people who were shielding until the lockdown rules relaxed and most people were able to go back to shops.

In the meanwhile, we also started cooking in the Ripple kitchen and delivered food boxes to our Lunch Club members. We welcomed our Lunch Club members back in the building when the lockdown rules relaxed in July, it lasted only a short while before shutting down the building again. We continued cooking and delivering homemade food boxes until Christmas.

We also collaborated with Fareshare to stock cupboard food items that were easily accessible for local people in addition to

running the community pantry.

We worked closely with Edinburgh Community Food delivering fresh wholefood boxes. A 6-week delivery programme consisted of fresh produce – fruit and veg, DIY meal kits and mental health resources for 40 families. We also distributed utensils, crockery, storage tubs, measuring spoons alongside food boxes to encourage healthy cooking from scratch. Bird seed and gardening tips were also distributed to encourage gardening and outdoor activity, the focus being mental health in these unprecedented times.

In collaboration with UNICEF, Leith Gives, and Edinburgh Community Food, we were able to deliver fresh food boxes to families including our youth club families.

We have been busy training and learning about food hygiene, health, healthy living for older people and allergy training. All the training

took place online via zoom platform. 16 of our volunteers took part in the training with 14 achieving REHIS qualifications. We renovated our café area by installing a new café counter with a chiller and under counter fridge.

We started 2021 with more learning and information sharing. 'Food & Mood' workshops went online, we had 6 weeks of learning about macro and micronutrients in food, role of insecticides/pesticides, additives/excipients in food and how it may affect mental health conditions. Recipes were discussed and shared, we got amazing response with participants reporting changes in energy, mood, general wellbeing with new knowledge and encouragement.

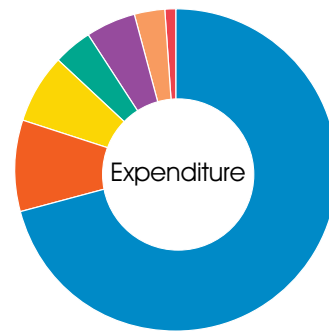
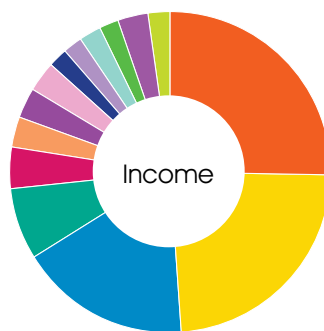
Another 6-week lunch club cooking with kids' sessions were organised with our youth club families in collaboration

with ECF. Parents and young children learned making healthy food from scratch, they were provided with weekly ingredients to cook along over Zoom. Children loved learning and contributing to cooking healthy food and thoroughly enjoyed it. We may in future conduct such workshops again!

With the news of lockdown rules relaxation, we celebrated and shared our joy with Afternoon Tea and Picnic boxes for 30 families who struggled with mental health and isolation. Boxes consisted of homemade sandwiches, quiches, scones and fillings, fresh tomatoes and grapes.

Last but not least we maintained communication about health, healthy food, healthy buying and shopping, healthy weight – tips and resources, mindful eating and healthy shopping list by posting newsletters to all of our service users.

Income and Expenditure for the year ending 31st March 2021



Partners

North East Community Planning Team
Local Gp's
Edinburgh College
Local Councillors
Brave Strong and Beautiful
MSP's
Lothian Health Board
LAYC
EVOC
SCVO
Cyrenians
Fareshare
Edinburgh Community Food
Edinburgh Community Health Forum
Police Scotland
Scottish Fire and Rescue
Landmark Trust
Street League
Leith Gives
Youth Scotland
POLHA

Total income

£404,716

City of Edinburgh: Children & Families	£101,208
Edinburgh Integrated Joint Board	92,045
Scottish Government	68,906
Lottery	28,699
Robertson Trust	17,000
Hunter Foundation	13,638
CORRA	12,438
POLHA	12,055
Awards for All	10,000
Development Trust Association Scotland	10,000
Breathe Easy	9,950
Other grants	9,626
Donations	10,833
Room hire and activity subscription	7,576
Café income	742

Total expenditure

£311,023

Staff including recruitment and training	220,877
Programme costs	27,230
Rent, rates, light and heating	20,620
Telephone, post, printing and stationery	11,799
Insurance, subscriptions, professional fees	16,731
Premises expenses	9,445
Governance	3,480
Other	841



The work of the Ripple is dependent on the generosity and commitment of many individuals, businesses and funding bodies. Our thanks and appreciation go to the kind individuals who have made donations and the funders who gave us vital financial support during 2019/20. **Our Funders and Donors:** City of Edinburgh Council, Edinburgh Integrated Joint Board, The Big Lottery, Awards for All, The Robertson Trust, Youth Scotland, Cash Back for Communities, The Landmark Trust, POLHA, Corra, Hunter Foundation, CAF, Scottish Government, DTAS

The Ripple
198 Restalrig Road South
Edinburgh EH7 6DZ
0131 554 0422
admin@theripple.org.uk
www.rippleproject.co.uk
Twitter @RippleRestalrig

The Ripple Project, Company
Limited by Guarantee.
Registered in Scotland
No 214364
Scottish Charity No SC 024973