

Women's Fund for Scotland

End of Year Update: December 2021



Overview

This report aims to provide an update on the grants that the Women's Fund for Scotland made in 2020/2021. These grants were made under the Women's Fund for Scotland Covid-19 Emergency Fund.

The Women's Fund for Scotland (WFS) aims to promote systemic change in Scotland to empower women and to help overcome the multiple disadvantages and discriminatory practices that females experience throughout their lives. Their vision is of a Scotland in which women participate equally at all levels of society, free from any barriers to full and equal engagement in political, institutional, economic, and cultural life, including freedom from the fear of sex-based violence.

A number of projects from 2020/2021 remain live, and activities are currently being implemented across Scotland. This reflective report will examine the progress that projects have made thus far and will capture some of the success stories* from the programme. It is hoped that this report will demonstrate how funding is enabling community groups to support women's development, self-sufficiency, and social and economic equality

*Please note, some names have been altered in order to ensure anonymity.



Feedback

"Thank you for your support throughout the process, your flexibility and trust to know that we can adapt services to meet new and ongoing circumstances to make the best use of public funds, and the rapid access to the cash to deliver these." – **Shaper Caper Limited**

"We would like to thank The Women's Fund for Scotland for the funding that enabled us to do this unique project which will help vulnerable women for many years to come." – **Pain Concern**

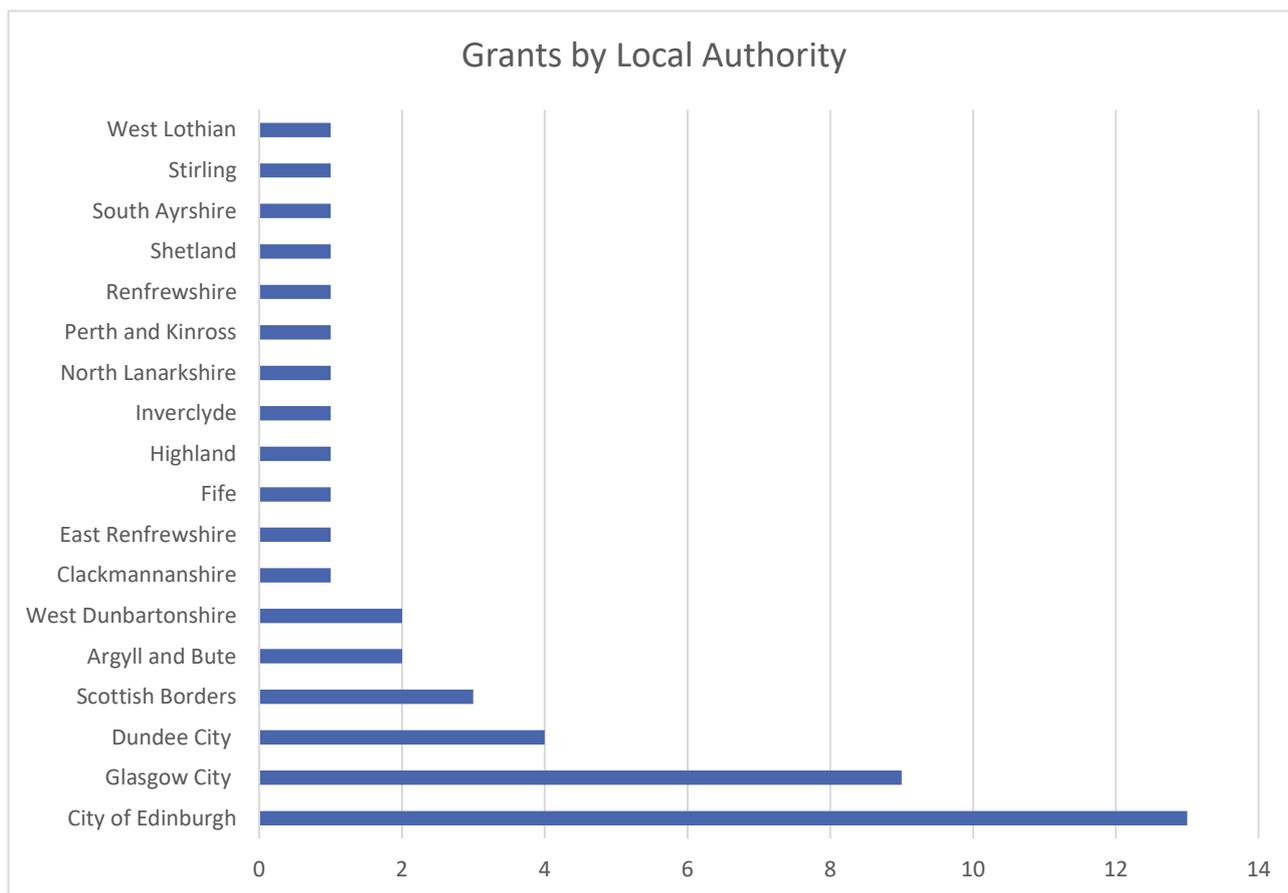
"Thank you! The grant was paid into our bank account very quickly which let us access it immediately. This enabled us to support families in crisis as a matter of emergency". – **Glasgow East Women's Aid**

"We are so grateful for your support. Women really were directly impacted by your support during a doubly difficult time in their lives." – **No Feart**

"Thank you. The time for decision making, award and payments was very fast and effective and there was no delay in services being delivered. Thank you to everyone who helped us to make this work possible." - **Minority Communities Addiction Support Service (MCASS) SCIO**

"We are grateful to the Women's Fund for Scotland. We are hoping this is just the beginning of the journey for this group of women to empower others to be more active in their community." - **Centre 81 Steering Group**

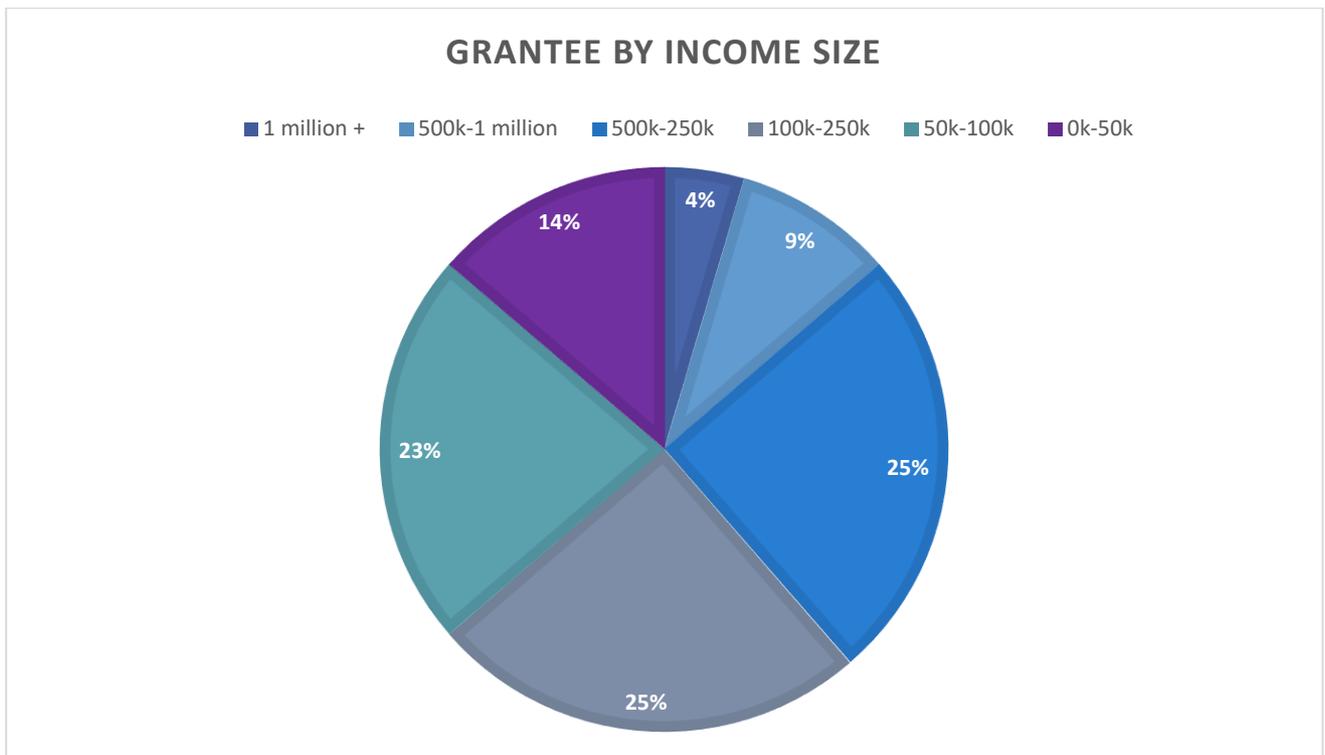
Geographic Distribution



Analysis

18 out of a possible 32 local authorities have received funding from the Women's Fund for Scotland. The majority of grant monies have been distributed across the central belt, with a focus on high population areas like Glasgow City, City of Edinburgh and Dundee. This distribution is in line with other funders across the Third Sector. There are currently more than 24,000 charities in Scotland, ranging from small local charities to large international organisations and the majority of these are situated in the central region. It is positive to see that a number of local authorities with high levels of deprivation are present. These include North Lanarkshire, Inverclyde and West Dunbartonshire.

Income Size



Analysis

The above graph indicates that over 37% of grants were awarded to organisations and community groups with an income of £100k or less. This is a promising trend and demonstrates that your fund is able to channel monies to smaller, grass-root grantees that may not have the confidence, capacity or financial reserves to apply for large scale grant programmes. 50% of grant monies went to organisations with an annual income of 100-500k. Only 4% of grants went to organisations with an income of 1 million or more which is positive to see and suggests that the fund is not being monopolised by charities who already have a healthy income stream.

Project Update

Centre81 Steering Group

West Dunbartonshire

£3,000.00



Centre81 Steering Group was established in May 2018 with the aim of providing community services for residents of East Clydebank. Based in Whitecreek, the group operates from the local community centre, owned by the local housing association. Service provision is varied and includes exercise classes, kids craft clubs and an adult art group.

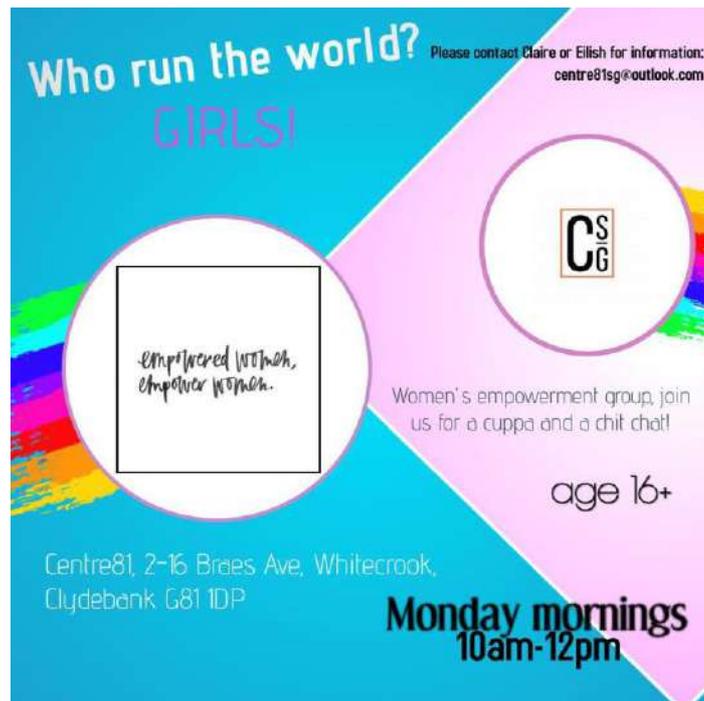


Centre81 Community Facility, Whitecreek

In 2020, Centre81 Steering Group was awarded a grant of £3,000.00 by the Women's Fund for Scotland. Grant monies went towards an empowerment project that targeted women and single mothers in the community. According to statistics, Whitecreek has almost twice the average rate of lone parent families (51% opposed to Scottish average of 27%), with the majority of these single parents being women.

The 'Who Run the World?' commenced in April 2021. Lockdown restrictions were slowly eased at this time, and this enabled the organisation to implement project activities at the community centre. The opportunity to take part in face-to-face sessions was appreciated by project participants, many of whom were single mothers with a small support network. Activities focused on health and well-being, self-care & self-worth, self-confidence and self-esteem. Throughout the 3 programmes, the charity was able to engage with 10 females who had never accessed the community centre. This was a huge benefit to the group because they are now aware of a local amenity that they can use on a more regular basis.

The main success of the project was that it enabled women who were socially isolated and struggling mentally because of COVID-19 to come together and discuss the barriers they were facing. It also created opportunities for new friendships and support networks. This had a positive impact on the groups mental health because they enjoyed getting to meet alike individuals who understood the struggles around single parenthood.



Promotional posters for the project went out on social media

Centre81 Steering Group feel that this project has proven to be a great success. The group of women are continuing to meet every Monday and they have recently created an extended plan of activities that they would like to do. This includes health and well-being, cookery classes, training opportunities and even Italian speaking classes! As a first-time applicant to the Women's Fund for Scotland, the charity also feel that they have been able to increase their own capacity and learn more about the benefits of women led projects.

Testimonial

"Alice attended our third block of the programme. She was extremely nervous and anxious about starting the group. She shared with the group that this was the first time she had left the house because of her underlying health conditions. She felt extremely isolated and lonely. Since attending the group she has grown in confidence, made new friends and became more involved with her community. She attends the chatty café every Monday morning and registered for a planting course. Her confidence has grown so much that she now attends the heart of Scotstoun community centre to play football with another women's group. Alice stated that if it wasn't for Who Run the World? Girls! she would still be sitting at home."

Project Update



Shaper Caper Limited

Dundee

£5,000.00

Shaper Caper was formed in April 2016 and is an independent dance theatre company based in Dundee. As well as being a production and international touring company, they also provide a range of creative learning projects throughout Dundee, Angus and Perth and Kinross. Their mission is dance for all and from their inception they have been committed to working at the grassroots community level, providing opportunities to explore movement and creativity to anyone regardless of age, ability or socioeconomic status. Projects they deliver include Well Good, which is run in partnership with NHS Tayside and is a workshop exploring issues around health and smoking cessation which is delivered to primary 6 and 7 classes and reached 7,000 pupils annually.

Shaper Caper was awarded a grant of £5,000.00 in September 2020. Grant monies went towards 'The Body League', a practical and entrepreneurial skills development programme. The project aimed to deliver the 'Body League' to Shaper Caper's Young Advisory Council. 15 young women aged 16 to 30 were targeted including two young women with disabilities. Shaper Caper hoped that funding would improve confidence in young women and support their access to a future employment by increasing their knowledge, leadership and practical experience.

Project activities commenced in November 2020 and for its first few months, activities were delivered via zoom. This digital format helped to ensure that participants stayed safe and also offered women the chance to socialise and keep in touch during the height of the Covid-19 pandemic. Shaper Caper delivered monthly sessions on skills that the participants themselves identified as necessary for their professional development. The baseline survey indicated that participants were keen to learn about dance technique at professional level, how to be a freelancer (obligations and legal responsibilities), how to fundraise, setting up and running a small company, project management, governance, finances, digital communications, etc.

In addition, all participants accessed 1:1 mentoring sessions to discuss their personal needs and wishes with regard to the programme and their careers. There were opportunities for peer learning, specific training outsourced and delivered by specialists (access, ethics, unconscious bias), and applied tasks that showed their learning throughout the programme such as the making of short videos (including filming, and sound and video editing) and digital communications for collaborative practice using Miro and mural giving presentations to the team.

The programme doubled the number of young people, Shaper Caper usually engage with, moving from 10-12 to 20 participants geographically spread across Scotland. The regular

communications kept the dialogue interactive, which ensured that the participants could affect the content of the programme at any given time to meet their needs.

Testimonial

In January 2021, Iliana Parousi joined Shaper Caper for a week-long placement needed to pass the final year of her BA Hons Dance and Drama course. Her inter-personal skills and professional attitude were noticed by staff, and she was asked to join 'The Body League' programme of activities. Iliana committedly and wholeheartedly attended becoming a key member to lead and inspire her peers. Since participating in the programme, Iliana successfully secured a place on the 2022 Time to Shine leadership programme which offers Iliana a paid post as a Community Dance Artist, an opportunity that has undoubtedly crystallised out of her engagement throughout this project. This is an invaluable circumstance for a recent graduate to bridge the gap between academy and practice whilst gaining professional on-the-job experiences for her future practice.



Iliana Parousi

Project Update

Pregnancy and Parents Centre

City of Edinburgh

£4,357.00



Pregnancy and Parents Care (PPC) have been supporting pregnant women and their families in Edinburgh for over 35 years. The charity takes a holistic approach and aims to fill the gap in care and support that cannot be offered by statutory services. Their community of pregnant women, partners, parents and carers includes equality and marginalised groups as well people living in poverty or areas of high deprivation. A sliding scale fee policy and the ability to offer classes free of charge on a case-by-case basis ensures inclusion for all. It is estimated that the organisation works with 100 families a week.

PPC was awarded a grant of £4,357.00 by the Women's Fund for Scotland in June 2020. Grant monies went towards providing an online Motherspace group for 20 women between October to December 2020. Activities targeted women with babies under the age of 6 months and it was hoped that the project would assist first time mothers who experienced childbirth during the Covid-19 pandemic.

Activities commenced in 2020 at a time when lockdown restrictions were easing. PPC recognised the need for mothers to return to in person meetings and as a result, the 'Mother Space' project became the 'Mother Walk' project. 24 new mums and babies attended the project and all project participants were new service users for the organisation. Activities centered around mindfulness sessions, coffee mornings and walking groups and funding ensured that participation would be entirely cost free.

"Being with other mums and realising things that were happening to me weren't unique - sharing challenges and ideas and having a support system. It was one time a week I always left the house with my girls, otherwise I would sometimes not see other people or leave the house - it helped keep me sane at such a difficult time"

Local Mother

PPC state that MotherWalk was hugely successful and WFS funding enabled the charity to think outside the box when it came to project activities. Thanks to the success of the project, PPC have successfully sourced further funding to support Motherwalk well into Summer 2022. What started as a facilitated group to avoid isolation for new mums has evolved into a core group continuing outdoor activities alongside the newer mums who join and our new mums are always welcomed into the "fold" where lots of original "MotherWalkers" take blankets, sit in the fresh air feeding their babies, laughing but mostly building strong networks with fellow new mums.