

Borders Voluntary Community Care Forum

# Annual Report 2010-2011



*Having a say and taking  
action in community care*



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I am delighted to present the first BVCCF annual report since I took up the position of Convenor in 2010.

The past year has been one of change, challenge and achievement for the organisation and its Executive, Management Committee and staff.

We saw the departure of Co-ordinator Annette Scobie, who retired after more than 18 years with BVCCF, having been involved since its earliest days. During that time, she was instrumental in developing BVCCF as well as various other local third sector organisations, while working tirelessly to ensure that users of community care services had a voice.

We also started preparing for the retiral of Joan Lawson, who has a long history with BVCCF - more recently as a member of the Borders Learning Network team. Joan has been involved with the organisation since 1998, in a range of roles, and will also be missed.

We welcomed our new Co-ordinator, Jenny Miller, who brought with her valuable experience of working at both policy and practice levels in the third sector. Jenny joined us from YouthBorders, where her partnership work with statutory services developed relationships that have proved invaluable in her new role. Jenny has taken on her responsibilities with enthusiasm and energy and her appointment has given us an opportunity to review the Forum and look at new ways of engaging with service users, carers, our third sector partners and statutory agencies.

Next to come into post was Assistant Co-ordinator Kathleen Travers. This new position was funded by Social Work Services and the remit includes supporting work on learning difficulties and physical disabilities, and Kathleen has been working closely with People First and Borders Disability Forum. Kathleen's background in communications, and her experience in the third and public sectors, will be put to good use developing BVCCF's communications services as we move into the next phase of our organisational development.

Our past Convenor and current Vice-Convenor, Margaret Simpson, was honoured with an MBE in the New Year's honours list - a wonderful achievement. She was given her award for services to social enterprise and to the community. Margaret has been involved with BVCCF for many years and we were all delighted that she gained this recognition for her hard work.

We have faced a number of challenges over the last year, as have our colleagues and partners. Cuts have been made across the sector and changes in how services operate have affected the service users, carers and providers we represent. My hope is that in the coming year the BVCCF staff, Executive and Management Committee will continue to support each other and work closely together to ensure we are in a robust position to meet the challenges, as well as opportunities, that lie ahead. I would like to thank them all for their sterling work over the last year. My thanks also to our funders, Scottish Borders Council and NHS Borders, for their continued support of BVCCF.

And I want to remind our members that this is YOUR forum – we would not exist without you, so keep up the good work!

**Fiona Fleming**  
Convenor



If there is one thing that can be said about 2010-2011, it is that it was universally a challenging year for everyone. In some senses, it could be taken as a tough break to begin a new job, taking over from someone like Annette, who had built the Forum up from scratch, and was hugely well respected by all who had worked with her.

However, in a period of such uncertainty and change in social care and health services, I have viewed it as a positive opportunity to be able to reshape and modernise the Forum in order to move it forward and survive the tough challenges ahead.

I came into post in May 2010, and was fortunate to work alongside Annette for a good stretch as part of the handover process. It wasn't until December that Annette was officially 'off the hook' and I took over the reins, so I have been on a steep learning curve since then.

'Change' has been the key theme throughout services and this has also been the case within the BVCCF team. As well as the significant staff changes Fiona mentions, a huge amount of work has gone on behind the scenes, upgrading office equipment and software, and putting new systems in place to allow the new team to work more efficiently

This report highlights some of our changes, challenges and achievements over the last year.

It is important now to try to plan for the next three years, an era in which we are all likely to see continued financial cuts and rationalisations to services, including BVCCF. Good planning and better partnership working as the third sector, not competition, is crucial to surviving the road ahead.

Finally, I have to give my thanks to a brilliant team who have shown enterprise and enthusiasm in taking on all the challenges thrown at them. That includes a great Management Committee and Executive who have done all they can to support the Forum. I must pay particular thanks to Pippa Dickson as Treasurer. The BVCCF office is genuinely a friendly and supportive place to work and that is due to the individuals who make that happen.

**Jenny Miller**  
*Co-ordinator*

## Neighbourhood Links

Evidence of the effectiveness of the Neighbourhood Links service was presented to the Community Health and Care Partnership following an in-depth evaluation. As a result, it was agreed to continue the project beyond the pilot period of May 2010. It forms an important part of the future development of Preventative Services by supporting people who need help to remain active in their communities and to maintain their independence, health and well being. The second Neighbourhood Links Service Co-ordinator for the west side of the Borders was appointed during the year. Neighbourhood Links, which began as a pilot in 2008, is a partnership project between BVCCF and the British Red Cross. It aims to promote and develop the capacity of voluntary and community organisations to provide support to people in their own communities who have lower levels of social need.

## Home care services

BVCCF conducted a survey of people who receive a home care service through Scottish Borders Council, including services provided by independent home care providers as well as Social Work's in-house service. Social Work Services asked BVCCF to carry out the independent survey as a result of concerns about the consistency and quality of in-house and independently provided home care, following the appointment of two new companies to provide services after local providers failed to win the contracts. More than 900 questionnaires were sent out and more than 50 per cent were completed, and telephone interviews were also conducted. Most respondents stated that the quality of their service had either stayed the same or improved to some extent. Overall, results were positive with some areas for improvement, and BVCCF made a number of recommendations. There are plans to carry out a further survey this year.

## Carers Voice

A new group for carers, set up by the Princess Royal Trust Carers Centre and BVCCF, was established. Members were invited to give their views on the Short Breaks Strategy being developed by Social Work Services. Carers fed back on how they felt about assessments, access to short breaks, and the types of break options. Their views were fed into the Short Breaks Strategy Working Group.



## Meeting MSPs

Members of the BVCCF Executive met local MSPs Jeremy Purvis and John Lamont to discuss issues of concern, particularly funding and contracts and procurement processes, which affect the stability of the third sector. Matters raised with the politicians included community transport budget cuts; day support services for people with mental health problems during cold weather; Social Work's new charging policy, access to concessionary travel, and banking services for people with disabilities. At a further meeting, the focus was telehealthcare, following concerns from the membership about funding for those services.



The Mental Health and Wellbeing Forum (MHWBF) brings together service users and carers and local voluntary organisations with an interest in mental health.

Over the past year, Development Worker Meg Roper has supported service user and carers to participate in a range of planning groups. Members have been supported to take part in the Mental Health and Wellbeing Partnership Board, the Organisational Development Group, Mental Health Improvement Group, the Recovery Network, Short Breaks Reference Group, the Psychological Services Steering Group, and the Rehab Services Planning Group. Members have helped to plan and run a series of special events, and some took part in the Section 26 audits being undertaken by Infusion.

Throughout the year, guests from statutory services and the third sector visited to talk about developments and any changes to their services. They included Pauline Burns from NHS Borders, who came along to explain how the Toyota LEAN process was being used by NHS Borders to help it to make services more effective and efficient. This process had been used to look at the crisis service, out of hours services and the mental health rehabilitation service.

Other guests from NHS Borders included Dr Ross Cameron and Dr Cliff Sharpe, who kept the group up to date with NHS policies. Isabel Swan consulted the Forum about the Quality Strategy and explained how three Quality Councils have been set up to look at person centred, safe and clinically effective care. Brian Patterson and Philip Grieve talked about changes to acute services, at Huntlyburn in particular.

Third sector visitors included Karen Palmer of Borders Independent Advocacy Service (BIAS), Brian Appleby and Caroline Thomson of Borderline Helpline, Wendy Bates from Health in Mind and Mark Holroyd of Addaction, who all kept the Forum up to date with developments in their services.

Throughout the year, the Forum continued to run its Consultation Café events, which provided a relaxed opportunity for service providers to consult on initiatives. They took place in different venues around the Borders, and were always supported by Bryan Davies, Planning Officer from Scottish Borders Council.

The Consultation Café events looked at three issues over the year - local mental health targets, benefits, and the introduction of the charging policy - and asked for feedback on the new integrated Community Mental Health South team. Guests were Choose Life Co-ordinator Hayliss Mackay; Brian Patterson, Head of Acute Services; Joy McLelland, Head of South Team; Alistair Stavert, Welfare Benefits Advisor, and Elaine Torrance, Head of Social Care and Health.

The Forum also held some special consultation events looking at transport issues and the charging policy.

Meg was involved in working closely with Bryan Davies and New Horizons Borders as it moved to become a fully independent and user led organisation and recruited a new manager, Lisa Archibald. Meg continues to provide support to New Horizons as it has grown over the last year.

Another new development has been the setting up of a Representatives Panel. This group is made up of members of the Forum and service users and carers who are keen to be involved more closely in planning and consultation and come together to gain skills and mutual support. This group is chaired by a service user and co-supported by Lisa Archibald.

The Forum was very saddened by the sudden and unexpected death of Robin Jack, who had been a very committed member. His last piece of work for the Forum was as part of the rehab redesign options appraisal. He, along with another member, had worked very hard on this and their input was recognised as being of great benefit. We still miss Robin and his intelligent and considered contributions to the Forum.

## Advocacy Plan

BVCCF facilitated and chaired a working group of the Borders Advice and Advocacy Forum (BAAF) to create a local Independent Advocacy Plan for the Borders. The plan has allowed work to begin on an action plan formalising systems, improving recognition and awareness of advocacy, and identifying gaps in provision. The plan will be consulted on and ratified by partners in 2011-2012.

## Borders Disability Forum / Physical Disabilities



BVCCF has been supporting the Borders Disability Forum as a member of its Management Committee and in helping to identify opportunities for capacity building. The BDF runs three groups – the Deaf and Hard of Hearing Network, Borders Visual Impairment Network, and the accessible transport scheme Gala Wheels. A range of equipment to make life easier for people with a hearing or visual impairment has been acquired by the BDF and is available on a “try before you buy” loan basis to help people make decisions about purchases. BVCCF will work with the Disability Forum in the coming year to look at how best to ensure that it represents the view of people with disabilities across the Scottish Borders. BVCCF supported the design and launch of ‘Living Well with a Disability’ – a strategy to support adults with a physical disability in the Borders. It will continue to monitor the implementation of the strategy and its effectiveness through the Physical Disabilities Strategy Group.

## Dementia

BVCCF members commented on and influenced the Dementia Strategy and subsequent Implementation Plan for services in the Borders. We have continued as a member of the Dementia Planning and Implementation Group, which oversees these documents. We have also supported a carer representative to be part of this group.

## Charging review

Social Work Services undertook a review of charges across all of the services it provides and commissions. BVCCF’s User and Carer Working Group, the Mental Health and Wellbeing Forum and the Consultation Cafe were all consulted. The Forum and its members gave feedback on concerns about the potential for costs to spiral and discourage the use of day services and associated transport. There was still significant confusion when service users received letters informing them of changes and BVCCF continued to support users on this issue.



## End of life at home

Confusion and the need for clarity about what happens when a loved one passes away at home, especially out of hours, have been raised throughout the year. This is happening more often as more people are cared for outside of hospitals and residential homes. The Forum, through the User and Carer Working Group, has been gathering information about this issue and working in conjunction with NHS Borders, the Procurator Fiscal and Lothian and Borders Police to try to explain procedures and answer questions. The need for specialist information for carers has been identified.

## People First Borders

We have continued to support People First Borders, which also had a busy and challenging year. Members in Hawick, Galashiels and Duns tackled a range of issues. They worked on a learning disability awareness pack in primary schools pack to combat bullying and talked to school pupils in their area. They were also involved in the People First Scotland annual conference and held their own conference in Hawick.

**People First BORDERS**



The Social Work Services review of charges affected all People First Borders members and a collective response was sent to the Council. One of the local members was invited to be on the People First Scotland Citizens' Grand Jury in Edinburgh, when questions were addressed to the Minister for Public Health and representatives from the Scottish Government, the Care Commission, the Mental Welfare Commission and the Association of Chief Police Officers. Many of the group members continue to participate in the Citizens' Panel, the representation/consultation forum for people using Scottish Borders Council Learning Disability Service and their parents/ carers. The progress of the day opportunities review for adults with learning disabilities resulted in five new members attending the Hawick group. In the coming year it is planned to establish a new group in Kelso. And there was a great achievement for Support Worker Donna Allen, who returned to work after taking time out to complete a Master's Degree in Autism.

## Preventative services

BVCCF continued to chair the Preventative Services Group, which is taking forward the recommendations following the Transforming Older People's Services review and facilitated a working group to explore how to improve the promotion of volunteering.

## Self Directed Support

A Board to oversee the implementation of the pilot Self Directed Support project, facilitated by Social Work Services, included representation from BVCCF. We will be working with the Borders Direct Payments Agency during 2011 to establish a Citizens Reference Group for SDS.

## Borders Joint Carers Strategy

We have worked in partnership with Scottish Borders Council, NHS Borders and Borders Carers Centre on updating the Borders Joint Carers Strategy, which will broadly follow the structure and desired outcomes of the new national strategy for carers in Scotland. The implementation and success of the strategy will be facilitated through the Carers Planning Group, which has continued through 2010-2011.

## Short Breaks Strategy

BVCCF is a partner in drafting the strategy through the Short Breaks Strategy Project Board and has assisted in aiding user involvement in the process. We will continue to support the consultation process for the strategy with the public in 2011 and to monitor its progress through the Carers Planning Group.

## Community Health Care Partnership and Sub-Groups, Change Fund

BVCCF continued to represent the third sector, and where possible support users and carers to be involved across the CHCP structure. We supported two new user carer representatives to attend the Primary & Community Care Partnership (PCCP), and continued to support service users to attend the Mental Health & Wellbeing Partnership Board. We were also asked by Scottish Borders Council/NHS Borders to represent the third sector in the formation of a Change Plan and distribution of Change Funds to support the 'reshaping of care' for older people's services – moving away from hospital/care home delivery of care. This work began early in 2011 and will continue into next year and beyond, depending on Scottish Government funding.



## Anticipatory care

We began some work early in 2011 to look at third sector involvement in anticipatory care planning for older people, which had been piloted by primary care health staff in the Stow area. We worked alongside Red Cross - Neighbourhood Links to ensure that the third sector and preventative services are included in anticipatory care planning by health and social care staff. Additional funding from the Change Fund was sought to build the capacity of Neighbourhood Links to support this.

The Borders Learning Network has gone from strength to strength during the second year of its pilot period, with Mary Daykin, Meg Roper and Joan Lawson organising local training programmes, developing a network, and conducting an in-depth audit of care providers.



A collaboration between BVCCF, Scottish Borders Council and NHS Borders, the BLN has developed as a resource for everyone

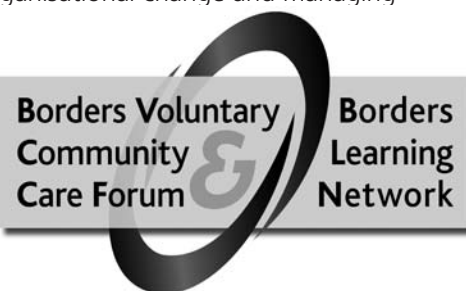
working in community care in the statutory, third and independent sectors, aiming to ensure that appropriate training and learning is available to staff, volunteers, service users and carers.

The in-depth study of care sector providers, which was completed at the end of 2010, helped to build up a clearer picture of the people employed in the care sector. The audit provided a clear picture of their qualifications, further training needs and how they could share resources to help others working in the same field.

One of the main findings was that the third and independent care sector in the Scottish Borders has a well qualified workforce. The services that took part in the audit were all sizes and some were branches of regional, national or international organisations. They were independent private providers, not for profit organisations, charities and social enterprises. They employ more than 2000 paid staff, helped by more than 300 volunteers, providing care at home, residential care, respite care, tenancy support and day services. Another encouraging outcome was the ability to match organisations who expressed a need for specific training with others who could provide it.

The identification of gaps in learning opportunities resulted in a local training programme being created, aimed at developing the capacity of care workers and organisations. Courses were developed and rolled out around the Borders at a locality level and included topics such as mental health awareness, coping with organisational change and managing risk.

A series of five locality network meetings took place in Dolphinton, Whitsome, Hawick, Kelso and Galashiels, which provided an opportunity to share good practice and experiences, and to consider the future development of the network.



## Members of the Executive

Karen Palmer	Borders Independent Advocacy Service
Alison Henderson*	Border Caring Services
Caroline Thomson (until 23/6/10)	Borderline
Fiona Morrison*	Borders Carers Centre
Nicky Kershaw	Borders Direct Payments Agency
John Hunter	Borders Disability Forum
Margaret Simpson* - Vice Convenor	Borders Disabled Persons Housing Service
Roy Gray (until 23/6/10)	Borders Visual Impairment Network
Lindsay Wilson	British Red Cross
Jean Grieve	Individual Member
Fiona Fleming* - Convenor	Individual Member
Pat Evans	Individual Member
Pippa Dickson* - Treasurer	Individual Member
Helen Pennington	Penumbra Youth Project
Donna Allen	People First Borders
George Anderson (from 23/6/10)	Individual Member
Lisa Archibald (from 23/6/10)	New Horizons

### Ex Officio Member

Liz Walthew Borders Third Sector Interface

### Co-opted Members

Sam McGregor (until 26/6/10) Scottish Health Council  
Shelagh Martin (until 26/6/10) Scottish Health Council

*\*Management Committee Members*

## Staff

Co-ordinator Jenny Miller (from May 2010)  
Annette Scobie (retired September 2010)  
Assistant Co-ordinator Kathleen Travers (from January 2011)  
Senior Administrator Helen Rogerson  
Borders Learning Network (self-employed) Meg Roper, Mary Daykin,  
Joan Lawson

## **LIST OF MEMBERS**

ACE Centre	Health in Mind
Addaction Scotland	Interest Link
Alzheimer Scotland Action on Dementia	Kelso Community Council
Association for Real Change	Kinship Care Support Officer
ARC Progress Scotland	Let's Talk
Ark Housing Association	Momentum
Arthritis Care	Mountview – Duns
Barony Housing Association Ltd	MS Society
Berwickshire Association for Voluntary Service	Neighbourhood Links
Borders Independent Advocacy Service	New Horizons
Big River Project	Outside the Box
Border Women's Aid	Peebles Citizens Advice Bureau
Borderline	Penumbra Supported Living Service
Borders Additional Needs Group	Penumbra Youth Project
Borders Aspergers and Autism Group Support	People First Borders
Borders Caring Services	Princess Royal Trust Borders Carers Centre
Borders Community Transport Network	Queen's House (Kelso) Ltd
Borders Direct Payments Agency	Quest Support Group
Borders Disability Forum	Re:discover Borders
Borders Equality Forum	Richmond Fellowship Scotland
Borders Housing Network	Royal National Institute for the Deaf
Borders ME Group	Roxburgh Citizens Advice Bureau
Borders Talking Newspaper	Scotia Chiropractic
Borders Visual Impairment Network	Scottish Association for Mental Health
British Red Cross, Borders	Scottish Borders Forum of Community Councils
Brothers of Charity	Scottish Borders Elder Voice
Central Borders Citizens Advice Bureau	Scottish Health Council Borders
Chest, Heart and Stroke Services	Scottish Business in the Community
Community Integrated Care	Sense Scotland
Counselling Unlimited	Streets Ahead Borders
Crossreach	The Eyemouth and District Disabled Association
CRUSE Bereavement Care	TLC Borders
Deaf & Hard of Hearing Network	The Bridge
Disabled Person's Housing Association (Borders)	The Bridge Central Borders
Eildon Housing Association	The Bridge in Roxburgh
Gala Day Services	The Bridge in Tweeddale
Garvald West Linton	The Vision Thing
Hanover Housing Association	Volunteer Centre Borders
Hawick and District Eventide Homes Ltd	Women's Royal Voluntary Service
Hawick Congregational Community Church	Youth Borders

*Individual members not listed*