



Inverclyde Cares: Activity Report 2020-2023

Background

Inverclyde HSCP Strategic Plan 2019-2024 outlined 6 Big Actions and how they contribute to improved outcomes for the people of Inverclyde. Big Action 6 of the plan focused on building on the strengths of our people and our community, and it is recognised that the skills, resources, and relationships of people within our communities are key to the successful delivery of these improved outcomes. In response, a new public health approach called Inverclyde Cares was developed and ran between June 2020 and June 2023. Hosted by CVS Inverclyde, this initiative brought together communities, statutory services and Third Sector partners with the aim to promote inclusive communities that support residents to live active and fulfilling lives while also celebrating the positive stories about Inverclyde that often go unnoticed.

Recognising the importance of social connections, Inverclyde Cares valued the role families, communities and the public sector have in supporting one another. These inter-dependencies play a vital role in developing a community whose members really care for one another. Inverclyde Cares became the foundation on which the local health and care system supported a better, more collaborative response to those who are lonely, vulnerable or excluded. Community initiatives support people at all stages of life providing a real opportunity for early help, support and recovery.

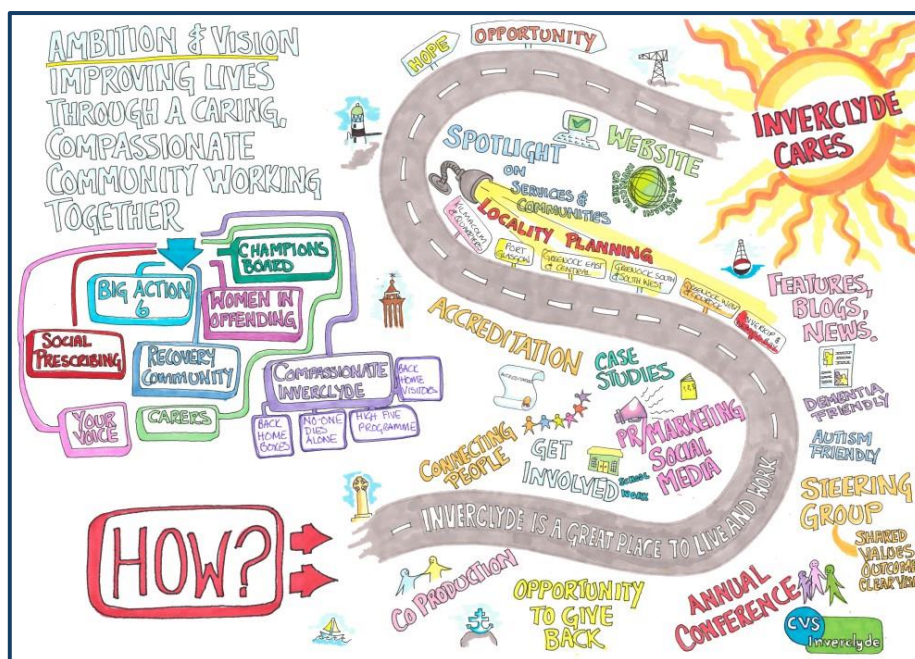


Fig 1: Concept drawing of Inverclyde Cares by CVS Inverclyde

It is widely understood that Inverclyde’s persistent health and social challenges cannot be fully addressed without nourishing and enabling the wider community’s compassion, drive to care for one another and determination. There is also growing recognition that those who have experience of the challenges often hold the solutions. These community assets are both precious and abundant in Inverclyde, and they deserve to be recognised and empowered. Inverclyde Cares has been key to strengthening the bridges between all those who have a role to play in making Inverclyde the best possible place to live and work.

Values and principles

The desire to belong, to be appreciated, respected and cared for is core to everyone’s wellbeing. These values underpin Inverclyde Cares and feed into its 4 principles:

<p>Engaging Communities</p>	<p>Connecting People</p>	<p>Build Neighbourly and Kind Communities</p>	<p>Becoming Stronger Together</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensuring that the views of the community are heard and understood, and that everyone is given a realistic chance of being engaged and involved. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensuring that, collectively, we are creating opportunities for individuals, communities, schools, businesses and groups to get involved and “give something back”. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Giving people the knowledge, tools and power to fully participate in their local community and have a leading role in its improvement. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Finding ways to increase coordination, collaboration and joint knowledge production.

These principles are already embedded within the fabric of Inverclyde, and Inverclyde Cares acknowledged the amazing work already happening in our communities. The work of Compassionate Inverclyde is an excellent example. Compassionate Inverclyde was the arm of Ardgowan Hospice that developed programmes to harness the compassion within our local communities, resulting in a tangible positive impact on people in Inverclyde. By helping people in the community feel empowered to act compassionately, they created a self-sustaining social movement of ordinary people helping ordinary people that is as popular as it is inspiring. Inverclyde Cares endeavoured to build upon the work of Compassionate Inverclyde. Compassionate Inverclyde became its own independent charity in the summer of 2023.

The foundation of Inverclyde Cares

Inverclyde Cares Programme Board was established in July 2020 and brought together representatives from across the community, third and private sector, demonstrating the need for a whole systems approach. The Board was Chaired by HSCP Corporate Director and Vice Chaired by CVS Inverclyde’s Chief Executive Officer.

In October 2020, CVS Inverclyde appointed a Programme Board Coordinator on a 6-month contract, with short-term funding secured to kickstart activity. This initial activity looked at the relationships between existing structures and particular groups within our community who had the potential to be marginalised. Building on both national and local work, Inverclyde Cares proposed developing seven ‘friendlies’ to build workstreams, which created opportunities through engaging localities and supporting groups to connect people.

These included:

Age Friendly Inverclyde	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •This workstream aimed to support children and young people and older adults in our communities, including inter-generational activities.
Autism Friendly Inverclyde	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Work in this area was already in progress by the HSCP and relevant partners. It was anticipated that this workstream would help link that strategic work to activity in communities.
Breastfeeding Friendly Inverclyde	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •As part of a Scottish Government initiative, NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde were taking this work forward to improve local breastfeeding rates.
Carer Friendly Inverclyde	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Unpaid carers play a crucial role in Inverclyde’s health and care system. This workstream aimed to support and promote this contribution.
Dementia Friendly Inverclyde	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Building on a local project in partnership with Healthcare Improvement Scotland, this work aimed to raise awareness of dementia and how collaboration can improve support.
Disability Friendly Inverclyde	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Recognising that not all disabilities are visible, this work was to raise awareness that small changes to an environment can have a huge impact on people with disabilities.
Recovery Friendly Inverclyde	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •We want Inverclyde to be a place that believes recovery is possible. Looking at recovery in its widest form, this workstream included Alcohol & Drugs, Community Justice & Mental Health.

CVS Inverclyde secured a limited budget to make enhancements around the Inverclyde Life website that would incorporate information about the friendlies. It was proposed that the relevant programme board complete a template defining each of the friendlies, i.e.: what does an alcohol and drug recovery friendly Inverclyde look like. It was intended that these definitions would align with strategies and partnership plans across the local authority to support cross-sectoral collaboration and help evidence change. Figure 2 illustrates the relationship between the friendlies, the Inverclyde Cares Programme Board, Inverclyde Life and other existing groups. The additional work on Inverclyde Life was paused when the Inverclyde Cares Programme Coordinator contract finished in April 2021.

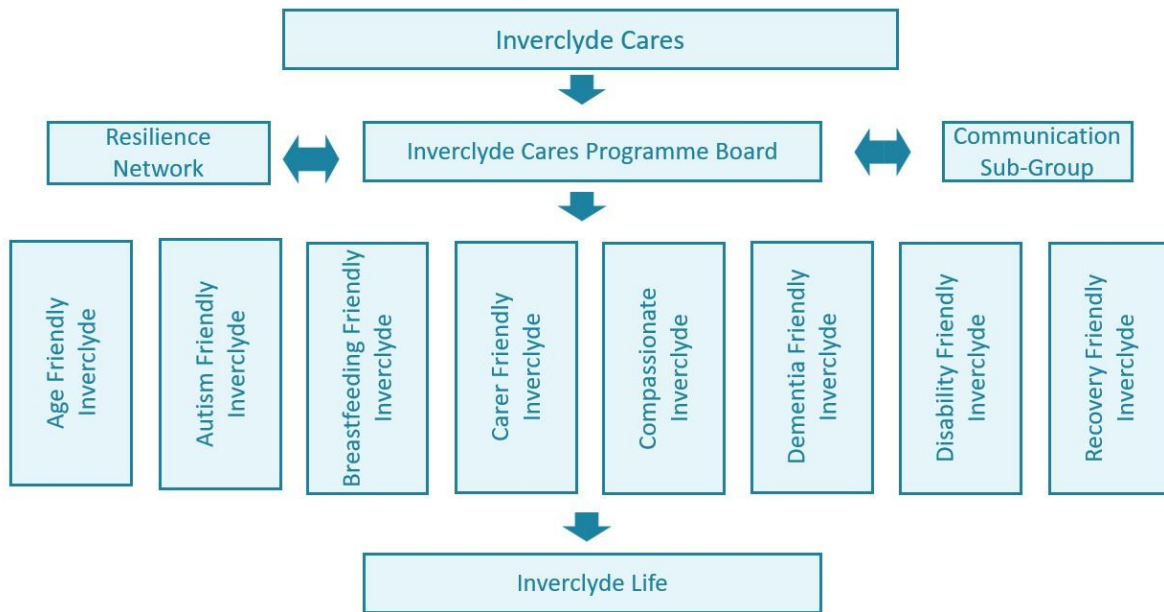


Fig 2: Inverclyde Cares relationships diagram

A whole system approach

In partnership with Inverclyde HSCP and Ardgowan Hospice, the programme lead for Compassionate Inverclyde was seconded to CVS Inverclyde in May 2021 to become the programme lead for Inverclyde Cares. A development session was held with both the Inverclyde Cares programme board and the Compassionate Inverclyde programme board to explore and agree a collective narrative for Inverclyde Cares. This session created an open space to creatively think and discover together what we have, what we want and what we need to holistically shape a sustainable future direction for Inverclyde Cares. The stakeholders were asked in advance of joining to consider the following questions:

- How can we make an inclusive Inverclyde that cares?
- What are the top three priorities, where do we start?

From this session, it was suggested that loss was the golden thread due to the impact the Covid-19 pandemic had both globally and locally. The programme board recognised that loss must come hand in hand with hope, which created the four workstreams for Inverclyde Cares.



Bereavement

The No One Grieves Alone Programme creates bereavement support across Inverclyde. This work builds on Scotland's Child and Adult Bereavement Charter, which contains 13 statements which describe what the best bereavement care and support should look like. The Inverclyde Cares Programme Lead used these statements to help local organisations to review their policies to develop their own organisational bereavement charter. Successful organisations were able to submit their progress to the national bereavement group to receive a Bereavement Charter Mark. As of September 2023, the No One Greives Alone Programme reported:



The success of the No One Greives Alone programme has received national interest, and it was the winning poster presentation at NHS Education for Scotland (NES) Annual Bereavement Conference in November 2022.

Kindness

There is a shared vision in Inverclyde to ensure that it is a caring, compassionate community that works together to promote kindness. Kindness is at the heart of wellbeing and improves overall health. Acts of kindness and compassion are carried out every day by people in our communities, which often go unrecognised. The Kindness Award was launched in July 2022 to acknowledge that kind deeds, words and attitudes are appreciated and deserve to be celebrated. The nomination process was intentionally developed to be simple, consisting of the description of the kind act and the difference it made to the individual. By the end of September 2023, 193 individual Kindness Awards were distributed across Inverclyde. Organisations are also able to earn Kindness Awards. The bronze level award is presented when an organisation completes their Bereavement Charter. As of September 2023, twelve

organisations in Inverclyde had earned a bronze award and one organisation had gone on to earn a silver Kindness Award by building on the bereavement charter work to review their wider policies through the lens of kindness and compassion. The Inverclyde Cares Kindness Awards Event was held on 13th November 2022, which is World Kindness Day. The event took place in a local cinema and was a true celebration of the kindness in Inverclyde.

Remembering Together

With funding from the Scottish Government, Greenspace Scotland lead work with communities across Scotland to co-create Remembering Together. Remembering Together is a project to co-create memorials which will honour the people we have lost, mark what has been lost and changed in our lives and preserve the best of what we have learned and created together during the Covid-19 pandemic. Locally, this work was contracted to CVS Inverclyde, coordinated by the Inverclyde Cares Programme Lead and supported by a cross-sector steering group. The local arts charity RIG Arts lead the initial consultation with communities to gather stories and experiences during the pandemic, with artists holding workshops for the cross-sectoral health and care workforce and communities. The themes from this consultation were:



The Remembering Together Phase 2 project will take the recommendations from the initial consultation to develop the concepts with community representatives from Inverclyde. One of the most prominent themes was that a Covid memorial should be a place to visit. The idea of gardens as places of growth and renewal as well as offering greenspace to reflect on the past recurred and the concept of a trail or interactive artworks was also popular.

Depending on the pre-existing green locations identified and preference of the community, a brief will be created, and artists will be commissioned to develop and install community spaces/artworks to represent each area as Inverclyde’s Co-Created Covid Community Memorial. This will be in the form of a series of labyrinths in five parks across Inverclyde. Labyrinths are not age-, belief-, or religion-specific and can be enjoyed by all residents. This work is anticipated to be complete by summer 2024, with a launch event scheduled for June 2024.

Challenge Stigma

Stigma is a known issue in Inverclyde, both among professionals and within the community. Stemming from work by the Resilience Network, Challenge Stigma brought together communities and professionals from all sectors to sit around the table as equals to discuss how to address stigma in Inverclyde. Literature acknowledges these commonalities and argues that intersectionality can make already vulnerable individuals exponentially more susceptible to the combined effects of multiple types of stigma. This is a reality for many people in Inverclyde.



Challenge Stigma highlights the importance of positive communication and the power in the words we use. Thinking about language matters because judgemental words perpetuate stigma, even unintentionally. This has prompted the development of the Language of Kindness, which prompts people to consider both what they want to say and how it will be received by others.

In response to requests from both third sector and public sector partners, the Resilience Network has begun to develop a series of training modules built on the values and priorities of the people of Inverclyde. Two modules have been completed focusing on the stigma experienced by ethnic minorities and New Scots and people with problematic substance use and their loved ones. These modules were co-created with people with lived and living experience, services providers and strategic partners. To avoid duplication, the training pulls together reliable information from both public and third sector sources along with personal stories from local people with the aim to increase both understanding about stigma and to help people to challenge it.

In May 2023, the Inverclyde Cares Programme Lead and Partnership Facilitator with CVS Inverclyde gave a presentation about the four workstreams at the 23rd International Conference on Integrated Care in Antwerp, Belgium.

Next steps and recommendations

In the Spring 2023 the Programme Board began to discuss the future of Inverclyde Cares. Compassionate Inverclyde received support from Ardgowan Hospice, CVS Inverclyde and Inverclyde HSCP to become an independent charity. Much of the four workstreams transitioned to the new organisation, with Challenge Stigma remaining with the Resilience Network hosted by CVS Inverclyde. This change brought a new discussion about where Inverclyde Cares fits within the wider governance structure in Inverclyde. It is recommended that this work becomes a subgroup of the HSCP's Inequalities Group due to the close alignment of their shared priorities. As a subgroup, the aims and objectives of Inverclyde Cares would report into the Inverclyde Alliance Board via the Inequalities Group. The terms of reference for Inverclyde

Cares was updated in December 2023 to reflect this change whilst retaining the core values and ethos that underpinned the inception of Inverclyde Cares. It is anticipated that next steps will include an opportunity for partners to come together to understand the Inequalities Group Action Plan and priorities. This will facilitate the development of a new Inverclyde Cares Steering Group. This group will map existing work in the community against the Inequalities Group's priorities, identify gaps and establish a relevant workplan. As part of Inverclyde's wider health and care system, Inverclyde Cares is well placed to influence positive change in our communities.