

# Pilmeny Development Project

## Annual Report

### 2024/25



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Scottish Charity Number SC002549  
A company limited by guarantee with number SC188129

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## Introduction

Pilmeny Development Project (PDP) is a locally run and managed voluntary organisation, working in Leith since 1979. We work primarily with vulnerable older people, young people, families and provide a community development support role with local residents of all ages.

## Overall aims

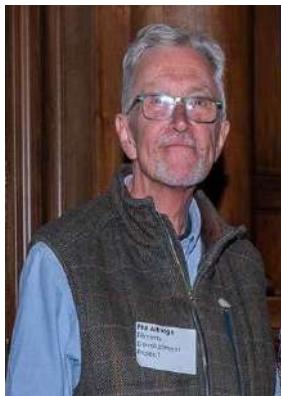
The overall aims of Pilmeny Development Project are:

**To support local residents and groups and to encourage appropriate self-help initiatives towards the identification and resolution of their problems.**

- (a) **Children and Young People** – overall aim is: - To improve the range and provision of services with children and young people which enables them to meet their social, educational and recreational needs and to develop their capabilities.
- (b) **Older People** – overall aim is: - To improve the range and provision of services with the older people which maintains and improves the quality of their lives and enables them to remain independent and active for as long as possible.
- (c) **Adults** – the overall aim is: - To improve the range and provision of services which enables them to meet their social, educational and recreational needs and improves the quality of their lives.

*“PDP is a greatly undervalued service  
which steps up to other services failure”*

## Chairperson's Report



### **It is my great pleasure to present the Pilmeny Development Project (PDP) Annual Report for 2024–2025.**

Just last October, we came together to celebrate PDP's 45th Anniversary – a moment of pride and joy. None of us could have imagined that, within months, we would be facing the most challenging crisis in our history. The decision by the Edinburgh Integrated Joint Board (EIJB) to cut all funding for 64 organisations – including our older people's services – struck at the heart of our community.

Yet, despite the scale of the challenge, PDP has refused to stand still. Thanks to the vital support of the City of Edinburgh Council (CEC) through the Third Sector Resilience Fund, we can continue our older people's work until March 2026. This lifeline gives us precious time – but it does not remove the urgent need to secure our future.

Our 46th Annual Report showcases the difference PDP makes every day: reducing isolation, building connections, and standing alongside the most vulnerable in Leith and North East Edinburgh. However, we are operating in a perfect storm – rising demand, increasing costs, and shrinking resources. We need our community more than ever to help us protect and sustain these services for older people, young people, and the wider neighbourhood.

To everyone who has spoken out, campaigned, donated, volunteered, or simply shared kind words of support – thank you. You have shown that PDP's work matters, and that together we are stronger.

I hope you enjoy reading about the dedication, creativity, and resilience of our team and community over the past year. I ask you to continue standing with us, so that, in the face of uncertainty, we can keep delivering the services, support, and vitality that makes Leith such a special place to live.

**Phil Attridge**

*“PDP has been my lifeline”*

# PDP Management Committee 2024-2025



**Chairperson:** Phil Attridge

**Vice Chair:** Sophie Marshall

**Secretary:** Joan MacLellan

**Treasurer:** Bruce Heil

**Ex officio:** Councillor Jack Caldwell, Councillor James Dalgleish, Councillor Amy McNeese-Mechan, Councillor *Susan Rae*

## PDP Staff:

Anne Munro Manager/Community Development Worker – Older People

Nicola Hutchison Youth Development Worker - Children & Young People

Gita Filipova Administrator (part time)

Mary O'Connell Leith Timebank & Older People's Services project worker

Margaretann Farquharson Older People's Services project worker (part time)

PDP Youth Work Sessional Staff- Alexander Fortune Duff, Charlene Fraser, Beth Gill, Andrew Johnstone, Bailey McKail, Jack Simpson, Chelsea Stewart & PDP Sessional staff – Ian Boardman, Raj Singh, Aleksandra Szczygielska,

## PDP Services/Support:

Nada Hudson Bookkeeping Services provider

Jai Adami HR Advisor

## Thanks

Thanks to **elected members**: Tracy Gilbert MP, Ben McPherson MSP, Fysol Choudhury MSP, Cllr Amy Mcneese-Mechan, Cllr Jack Caldwell and Cllr James Dalgleish - who provided invaluable help and support throughout 2024/25.

**Special thanks to ALL our brilliant volunteers** – We really could not do it without you...well done everyone!

Last, but certainly not least, thanks to all **our local residents, old and young** with whom we have worked over the last twelve months – without your time, effort and support (on a purely voluntary basis) the work of this Project would not be possible!

# Summary PDP Statistics & Infographic 2024/25



For every £1 of CEC/EIJB grant, we levered in **£1.09** additional matched funding in 2024/25



More than 4,088 local residents including 1,277 socially isolated older people, 2,589 young people, children, families, carers, 150 local groups, organisations, 110 volunteers and 222 Leith Timebank members were directly involved in PDP activities during 2024/25, receiving much needed help and support



**PDP exceeded or met** the targets and outcomes set by Edinburgh Council and had 95-100% user satisfaction level in 2024/25



**Pilmeny Development Project**  
A company limited by guarantee with number SC168129.  
Scottish Charity Number SC002549



**PILMENY DEVELOPMENT PROJECT**  
**APRIL 2024 TO MARCH 2025**

## OLDER PEOPLE / CARERS

**908 Telephone/ Welfare Check Calls**

**230 Befriending Meetings** with PDP Staff & Volunteers



**263 in-person/ virtual social groups** with over **3,540 Older People** in attendance

**1,030 Activity Packs,**  
Plus **865 PDP Newsletters**



## CHILDREN & FAMILIES

**240 youth clubs** with **3,500** in attendance

Over **3,100** contact with parents and schools



## YOUTH VOLUNTEERS

**233 volunteer hours** by young people

## INTERGENERATIONAL PROJECTS

Activities involving people of different age groups. e.g.  
New Spin, Leith Walk Primary



## LEITH TIMEBANK - A Skill-Swapping Project

Members exchange their skills with other members, such as gardening, accompanying people to medical appointments, language lesson, etc. **Plus** a monthly programme of activities.

Between Apr24-Mar25, **1,109 exchanges (2,028 hours)** took place., with **122 Social Activities** with **1,625** in attendance. Currently Leith Timebank has **226 members**. Leith Timebank is managed and supported by PDP.



## VOLUNTEERS

Over **100** fantastic local volunteers

Over **2275** Volunteer Hours (Adults & Youth)



## PDP Key Achievements – 2024-2025

**4,088+ local residents** supported, including:

- **1,277 socially isolated older people**
- **2,589 young people, children, families, and carers**
- **150 local groups/organisations**
- **110 volunteers**
- **222 Leith Timebank members**

- For every **£1 EIJB grant** an additional **£1.09** was secured in matched funding.
- Extensive partnership work with local and national agencies

### Young People (2,589 engaged)

- **352 opportunities** for young people with ASN; **874** for BAME young people.
- Delivered **youth clubs, school holiday activities, and intergenerational projects** for ages 5–17.
- Developed targeted **after-school provision** for ASN pupils at Leith Primary.
- Ran **girls' mental health and wellbeing groups** with YMCA Edinburgh (under 12s & 12+).
- Supported **10 young people** to gain Saltire & High 5 Awards as volunteers.
- Maintained and repaired the **PDP Youth Centre** as a safe space.
- Strengthened **parent, school, and professional partnerships** for holistic support

### Older People (1,277+ supported)

- **908 befriending calls & 230 home visits** to isolated older residents.
- Delivered **1,030 newsletters & 865 activity packs** to 360 older people.
- Emergency shopping/food/prescription support for **70+ housebound residents**.
- Regular support groups for **26 older women** and **16 older men** with long-term health issues.
- Developed community social groups for **50+ older people**.
- **Leith Timebank**: 222 members, 1,109 exchanges, 2,028 volunteer hours.
- Ran “**Reconnecting Programme**” for 100+ post-lockdown.
- Hosted **3 large events/tea dances** (300+ attendees).
- Supported **Older Peoples Forums** and specialist BAME older people services.
- Delivered **multicultural cooking group** & two major **intergenerational projects**

### Adults, Volunteers & Community Development Work

- Provided **information, advice, and practical help** to local residents.
- **110+ volunteers** & 222 Timebank members contributed **4,303 volunteer hours**.
- Maintained **‘Investing in Volunteers’ Award** standards.
- Continued as a **‘Keep Safe’ point** and **3rd Party Reporting Centre** with Police Scotland.
- Worked in partnership with **30+ agencies** including Calton Welfare Services Project, Citadel Youth Centre, Feniks, Harbour Homes, Heart of Newhaven, Hibernian Community Foundation, Leith Growers, Living Memory Association, MECOPP, Milan (SWO), Sikh Sanjog, YMCA Edinburgh and many more!

# FINANCE REPORT

## 2024 - 2025

### TREASURER'S REPORT

The financial position of Pilmeny Development Project remained strong with turnover of £251,062 in the year. We achieved this through the continued support of our funders and the prudent management of our finances.

The Accounts continue to be illustrated in a different format due to the introduction of FRS (Financial Reporting Standard) 102, which has led to the recognition of the Pension Past Service Deficit, currently faced by Pilmeny and other affected voluntary organisations.

This pension deficit continues to improve in 2024-2025 and there is an ongoing review by the Board exploring options to reduce further this deficit

It is recognised as good practice that charities retain at least three months full running costs in their bank account (net of Creditors, Pension Liability and Restricted Funds) and fortunately, unlike some other groups, we are above this target due to surpluses carried forward from previous years.

The unrestricted reserves are £119,271. We are also retaining £41,582 (Creditors), of which £32,129 is Deferred Income (funds received in financial year and released to grant income in 2025).

The Restricted funds balance is £41,620, with most of these funds expected to be utilised in 2025/26.

It is important to note that the outlook for future funding remains uncertain and we are still awaiting confirmation of several key funding sources for the next financial year.

***BRUCE HEIL / TREASURER***

**PDP ANNUAL AUDITED ACCOUNTS FOR 2023/2024 CAN BE VIEWED ON PDP WEBSITE  
[www.pilmenydevelopmentproject.co.uk](http://www.pilmenydevelopmentproject.co.uk) OR A COPY IS AVAILABLE ON REQUEST**

## FUNDING & FUNDRAISING

The work of the Project would have been impossible without the financial support, donations and 'help in kind' from many Funders and Trusts in 2024/25 to whom we are very grateful. They include:



- Capital Charitable Trust
- City of Edinburgh Council (CEC) C&F Connecting Communities/Holiday Action fund
- CEC Leith Sports Hub
- Demystifying Death Week Small Grants Fund
- Edinburgh Community Mental Health & Wellbeing Fund (Young People)
- Edinburgh Community Mental Health & Wellbeing Fund (Adults)
- Edinburgh Health and Social Care Partnership (NHS Lothian)/Edinburgh Integrated Joint Board
- Edinburgh Winter Festival
- ETLF
- Hibs Community Foundation
- Hilda & Johnny Gibb Charitable Trust
- LAYC
- Leith Benevolent Association
- Leith Community Fund
- Leith Gives
- Ponton House Trust
- Radio Forth Cash for Kids & Mission Christmas
- Royal Company of Merchants
- Scottish Government - Social Isolation & Loneliness Fund
- Help in Kind
- Edinburgh Community Food
- Police Scotland
- **Individual Fundraising and donations by local individuals**

**From us all at Pilmeny Development Project**



## WORK WITH CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

**The overall strategic aim is to improve the range and provision of services for and with children and young people which promotes their well-being and enables them to develop their capabilities.**



*Nicola Hutchison*

*Youth Development Worker*

### OVERVIEW

2024-25 we have been utilising the youth centre space 44 Buchanan Street. It gave us opportunities to promote the youth groups and engage with more young people. We continued to strengthen our relationships with professionals such as YMCA Edinburgh, Citadel Youth Centre, Sikh Sanjog, The Junction and Community Police. We noticed the on-going need to support families due to the Cost of Living Crisis as it showed a huge negative impact on families in the community needing extra support. PDP Youth Development Worker supported families and provided young people with more 1:1 support. This included support to families via 1:1 meet-ups, phone calls, attending child planning meetings, referring young people to other services such as counselling or mentoring and supporting them anyway possible.

We continued to attract young people from minority ethnic communities and those with additional support needs. In addition, we have had an intake of young volunteers across LOSP, Juniors, Girls Group and New Spin. This allowed young people opportunities to gain skills to further them into employment and allowed them to engage and be supported by young people in their community. We have also supported the young people to gain credited Saltire awards, which can be valuable for job applications, CVs, and university/college applications.

Over 2,589 young people were registered and engaged in multiple activities/sessions. This included specific opportunities for 352 young people with Additional Support Needs (ASN) and 874 minority ethnic community members throughout 2024/25.

Activities and opportunities for local children and young people included:

- PDP youth clubs, intergenerational activities and school holiday provisions for local children and young people (aged 5 -17 years) in Leith Walk and Leith area.
- Development of Leith Early intervention Project/ Pilmeny (LOSP) diversionary project for 'hard to reach' young people at risk of offending.
- 1-1 support and developed a targeted after school provision for young people with ASN attending Leith Primary School
- Girl's mental health and wellbeing initiative. PDP in partnership with YMCA Edinburgh, run two gender specific groups (under 12 and 12+ years) which have continued to grow from strength to strength.
- Continuing to support partnership project Sikh Sanjog by running 2 youth groups that enabled access to more youth work provisions for youth people from minority ethnic communities.
- Support to enable 10 young people to achieve Saltire and High 5 Awards and become young volunteers in 2024/25.
- Development of PDP Youth Centre, maintaining/ repair the youth centre to keep it a safe place for young people, older adults and families.
- Development of stronger relationships with parents, schools, and professionals (including social workers, Schools and NHS), enabling PDP to provide joined up, holistic approaches, which better met the needs of our children and young people in this area.

### To develop and maintain quality provision for children aged 5-8 years (P1-P4)

PDP provided weekly youth club sessions based at PDP Youth centre. The **Junior Youth Club** ran on Tuesday evenings from 4.45pm – 6pm. We ran three terms of 10 sessions in 2024/25. The club advertised on PDP website, PDP socials (i.e. X and Facebook), via local primary schools and posters in the local community. The past year has been a very positive, with a total of 320 young people attending throughout the year.

**April – June 2024** - This term involved topics such as understanding emotions and positive mental health. We also did STEM science sessions and had scientists from Edinburgh University to deliver a session.

**September – December 2024** - lots of fun activities such as Halloween party, bonfire night and made Christmas cards for PDP older people along with a trip to Winter Wonderland.

**January to March 2025** - Sessions included celebrating Burns night, Chinese New Year and smoothies.

### To develop and manage quality provision for children aged 8 – 12 years (P4 – P7)

PDP provided weekly **Intermediate Youth Club** sessions held at PDP youth centre. The club ran on Wednesday evenings 4.30 – 6pm. Young people had the opportunity to socialise and do activities in a safe and comfortable environment. Over the past year, over 483 young people attended Inters club.

**April – June 2024** - Activities included Group Games, LGBTQ Pride, Euros themed session and Leith Community Growers delivered a planting session in our outdoor area.

**September – Dec 24** - Young people took part in a Halloween party, fireworks night sparklers, enjoyed a Christmas Dinner together and anti-bullying week activities.

**January to March 2024** - Fun activities (suggested by young people) included, Indoor beach day, staff v kids games day and an end of term trip to Laser Tag.



### To offer a School Holiday Programme for young people 12 – 15 yrs and children 7-11 years

The **Easter Holiday Provision** held over 1 week in April 2024, provided over 86 opportunities for local children and young people. We delivered Easter themed sessions with fun structured activities such as an Easter Egg Hunt, Easter Relay races, egg decorating, bunny cup art and Easter bag decorating. The young people enjoyed playing football, basketball and rugby, which kept the young people entertained and physically active. We even offered a sports trip to Leith Academy to learn new skills we done Basketball, football dodgeball and had a Boxing session with an experienced coach. Our group trip was to Gravity Trampoline Centre, this trip offered young people new opportunities with their friends that some may have not gotten to do before. We also ran a targeted session for our girl's health & well-being group with a trip to try a new sport Ariel. PDP young people had a great time and asked to go back again. With the cost of living increasing, we have noticed more and more young people coming to our groups hungry. We supplied families with 'Take & Make' bags on lead up to the Easter holidays. We also provided snack every day and lunch for young people who did not have anything. This took some pressure of the parents to buy them lots of food knowing they would eat at club.

**PDP Summer Programme 2024** ran for 6 weeks during the school holidays across July – August 2024. Our playscheme sessions took place 2 days a week Tuesday/Wednesdays 10-2pm. We also organised group trips to Ninja Warrior, Fox Lake and SKY Academy studios, held a water fight and visited the Botanic Gardens. We provided a breakfasts and healthy snacks throughout the whole playscheme. Edinburgh Community Food kindly helped by donating 15 family food boxes to support families on low-incomes and needed extra support with food over the holiday period. Specialist Trips were organised for targeted groups such as 12+ group (LOSP) and our girls (8-12) health and well-being group. In addition, Hi5 Youth Awards sessions were also organised as 1:1 sessions for 6 local young people. As well as summer provision we ran two 'Youth Café's (modelling our usual youth club for ages 5-18yrs), 12<sup>th</sup> August - 11th September. The aim of the youth cafés was to provide young people a safe space where they could come to for food, to play with friends, feel included, do fun activities and receive support from PDP youth workers.

### **To work collaboratively with other agencies to build local capacity for meeting the needs of children & young people as per the Community Planning priorities for Leith**

PDP is strongly committed to partnership and multi-agency working as a means to improve local services and opportunities for young people. Over the past year, we have worked hard to ensure that we are up to date on current and local issues. We were successful in grant funding for Leith Community Mental Health Consortium, with whom we are working collaboratively (The Junction, YMCA, The Ripple, Citadel Youth Centre and Multi-Cultural Family Base). We have strengthened our ongoing partnership with Sikh Sanjog, ensuring good quality youth work provided for young people from minority ethnic background. We worked to strengthen links with other organisations such as, Young Carers, Police Scotland, Community sports Hubs, Edinburgh Community Foods and Leith Primary School to name a few, in order to share skills and resources as well as continuing to attend local community meetings and networking meetings such as Leith Youth Services Network.

### **To promote the social, health and wellbeing of children and young people through collaborative work in the Leith area**

**Leith Open Spaces Project (LOSP)** - LOSP aims to work with young people aged 12-17yrs, deemed to be 'at risk of anti-social behaviour'. LOSP runs as an informal weekly youth drop-in provision. Throughout 2024/25, we provided 30 sessions with attendances of 361 young people.

**April – June 2024** - We organised an active/health session from Nuffield health and focused on Drugs & Alcohol issues, with input from Crew.

**September – December 2024** - We worked in partnership with Police Scotland Community Police officers to deliver a diversionary bonfire night activities and a trip. We also developed our baking and cooking skills making croissants, pasta and much more!

**January to March 2025** - Sessions included a visit from Youth Scotland to deliver a 'feel good' session where they made stress balls and bath bombs. Other activities included cooking pasta, pizza as well as lots of sports including football, basketball and volleyball.

### **Other Areas of Youth Development Work in 2024/25**

#### **Leith Primary School Additional Support Needs After School Provision**

PDP support Leith Primary school since the head teacher noticed a gap in provision with a need for a group targeting young people not engaging or struggling to engage in mainstream youth services. The group ran on a Monday Afternoon from 2.30-3.30pm within Leith Primary. This was in school time, allowing children some respite from class and opportunity to build up social development skills in a group setting. We targeted and worked with 147 young people across 27 sessions in P3-P4 with 96 that had additional support needs, behavioural support or language barriers.

## PDP Girls Health and Wellbeing Group

PDP Girl's Health and Wellbeing Group has been running since 2020. The group was set up via direct consultation carried out by PDP and YMCA Edinburgh, which identified a need for single gender youth provision within the Leith Ward. We also developed a second girls group in partnership with YMCA Edinburgh for older girls (12+). In total, both girls groups supported attendance of 442 local girls and support 4 of them to take part in YMCA mentoring programme.

**Girl's Health and Wellbeing Group (8-12 years)** held on Thursdays 3.45-5.15pm, provided 30 weekly sessions and school holiday activities.

**April to June 2024** - Activities included movement for mental health, Pride month, friendship bracelets.

**September to December 2024** – Sessions included anti-bullying through art, Law students delivered online safety, baking and movie day.

**Jan - March 2025** – Activities included Cooking sessions (Chinese noodles), Learning the new skill of crocheting with Edinburgh Remakery, group games and art.

**Girl's Health and Wellbeing Group for older girls (12+)** ran on Mondays 4.30- 6pm, provided 30 weekly sessions and school holiday activities.

**April – June 24** - Girls helped organise Leith Gala Day stall, took part in LGBT Pride activities and visited The Junction for a session relationships and sexual health.

**September to December 2024** - Activities around Mental health following Tik Tok trend 'candy trauma dump', session with Port of Leith boxing club and baking/cooking.

**Jan – March 25** - Sessions included mental health mindful walk, visit to Edinburgh Remakery -tote bag design, Junction for healthy relationships session along with lots of baking and cooking.

## PDP & Sikh Sanjog Youth Provision

PDP is working in partnership with Sikh Sanjog to help to maintain a youth provision within Sikh Sanjog due to loss of their funding and youth worker role. PDP youth work coordinator plans and manages the sessions for Sikh young people. Two groups were established - a mixed multicultural youth group (age 5-12yrs) held at PDP youth centre and a BAME girls group (12+ yrs) at PDP Resource Centre, with attendances of 320 young people throughout the year.

### Mixed youth group (5-12yrs)

**April – June 24** – Activities included Cultural celebrations (e.g. Vaisakhi), group games and a talent show.

**Sep – Dec 24** – Sessions included celebration of Diwali, making posters for anti-bullying week, many group games, musical chairs and parachute games that were much enjoyed.

**Jan – March 25** – Activities included Lohri celebrations, art, group games and a trip to Wonderworld.

### Sikh Girls Group (12+)

**April – June 24** - Sessions focused on relationship building/ kindness, waterfight and a trip for Booba (Bubble tea).

**Sep – Dec 24** - The group celebrated Diwali, made stress balls for mental health week and had an end of term trip to Starbucks.

**Jan – March 25** – Sessions had Lots of focus on baking /cooking and they made delicious treats. A Trip to Starbucks at the end of term was also popular.

## PDP 1:1 and Family Support

Community mental health funding for our development worker to expand their role to offer families and young people 1:1 support. This allowed young people to receive 1:1 support (in person, over phone or social media platforms) to talk about issues - many talked about poor mental health. The young people were sign-posted to relevant services in the area that can support them such as The Junction counselling service or YMCA Mentoring with 6 young people being mentored last year. Support to parents was also a focus, with identified families requiring support. This involved visits to GP, attending child-planning meetings, food bank deliveries and applying for individual welfare grants.

## Intergenerational Work

PDP is strongly committed to intergenerational work and we strive to provide opportunities for local older people and young people to work together. Over the past year, PDP Youth Team has continued to work to develop intergenerational activities including 'New Spin', which aims to increase positive intergenerational relationships and address stereotypes. New Spin is a partnership project between PDP and Citadel Youth Centre, which runs weekly during term time and includes a wide range of activities. **More information on this work detailed in the Older People's section of this Report.**

**PDP Youth Work Sessional Staff and Volunteer Team** PDP youth team has worked unbelievably hard during 2024/25 by being fully cooperative and supportive to the on-going changes to youth work delivery. The staff team worked together to organise and deliver an exciting and varied youth programme both during term time and holidays to all the young people involved. The dedication of the youth team, both sessional staff and volunteers, has ensured that the needs of all young people during the year have been met, despite the cost of living, funding and resource limitations. Although we have seen some changes in staff and volunteers, it has of course been sad to see them go; we wish them all the best in their future endeavors we are always keen to recruit more volunteers and will continue in our recruitment drive for the coming year!

Young people feedback:

*"It's the funnest" – juniors group (age 6)*

*"I come to club because I'm lonely at my house and it helps me make friends" – Inters group (age 10)*

*"Girls group made me feel AMAZING!!" - girl (age 11)*

*"I come to club as we get to do what we want, it's our group and we have a say" – LOSP (age 16)*

We would like to thank all our children and young people for their hard work and continued dedication to the success of the youth provision here at PDP and within the local community of Leith. We wish all those who have left over the last year the best of luck for the future .... We could not have done it without you!



2024 → 2025



Youth Groups

## WORK WITH OLDER PEOPLE

The overall strategic aim is to improve the range and provision of services with older people which maintains and improves the quality of their lives and enable them to remain independent and active for as long as possible in the community



Anne Munro, Manager

Pilmeny Development Project aims to reduce isolation and promote participation and inclusion for older people in need of social support. We provided a range of older people's services and activities (including intergenerational work) throughout the last 12 months.

## PILMENY DEVELOPMENT PROJECT OLDER PEOPLE'S SERVICES PROJECT (OPSP)

The **vision** for PDP Older Peoples Services Project is to provide preventative services that enhance health & wellbeing, while reducing the impact of social isolation and loneliness among older people, through proactive community engagement.

Margaretann Farquharson and Mary O Connell (job-share)  
17.5 hours each per week (to end April 2025) with  
management support provided by Pilmeny Development  
Project (PDP)



### Funding Crisis

In 2024/25, there was a 10% cut in funding from the Edinburgh Integration Joint Board (EIJB) to PDP. Additionally, in November 2024, EIJB decided to disinvest 100% in its grants programme, affecting 65 Third Sector organisations, including PDP. In Jan25, in response to the disinvestment decision, PDP launched a campaign to **#SavePDP** at a packed public meeting. We had gained media coverage (STV News, The Edinburgh Reporter), held local outreach events, and gathered community support through petitions and letters, highlighting the vital role of our services. As of Mar25, EIJB funding was extended until June 2025, but the long-term future remains uncertain.

### PDP 45<sup>th</sup> Anniversary

PDP marked a significant milestone in 2024 by celebrating its 45th Anniversary with a well-attended and vibrant community event. It was a great opportunity to reflect on the organisation's long-standing commitment to the local area, celebrate our achievements, and bring together service users, partners, and supporters in recognition of the impact PDP has made over the decades.

### OPSP Activities 2024/25

Between Apr24-Mar25, PDP provided a hybrid service to over **1,600 local older people**. The service provided reflects the changing needs/ wants of older people, Cost of Living Crisis, pandemic recovery/ coming out of lockdowns, etc. During the reporting period, PDP offered a range of service provision for local older people including:

1. Group and social activities
2. Befriending support (Telephone & In reach)
3. Practical help and food provision
4. Regular newsletters
5. Activity packs
6. Information and advice

## OPSP Activities cont'd

### 1. Group and Social Activities

PDP delivered a diverse range of in-person and virtual group activities aimed at reducing social isolation and promoting wellbeing among older adults. These included PDP Older Women's Positive Health Group, PDP Older Men's Health & Wellbeing Group, NEECAG ( 2 Forums for Older Adults), Christmas parties, Older People's Week celebrations, Tea Dances, other older people's events, intergenerational projects, in-person coffee groups, and PDP Re-Connect programmes.

During the reporting period, PDP facilitated **262 group sessions**—both in-person and virtual—with a total attendance of **3,546 participants**.

Following the COVID-19 pandemic, additional efforts were required to ensure older people's safety and comfort in returning to group activities. While time-intensive, these steps were essential. Measures included completing risk assessments, providing reassurance and support through phone calls, arranging transport for those hesitant to use public transport or experiencing reduced mobility, and pairing participants with volunteers to accompany them to events.

A key highlight of 2024–25 was the successful development of Older People's Events and Tea Dances in partnership with Hibernian Community Foundation, Leith Community Sports Hub, Places for Leisure, and Ageing Well (Edinburgh Leisure). Three themed events were held—Summer Gathering, Older People's Week, and a Burns Lunch—each attended by over **80 older adults**. These events featured shared meals, taster sessions (e.g. table tennis, chair-based exercise), dancing, and information stalls. They significantly contributed to reducing social isolation, encouraging active lifestyles, and strengthening community partnerships to support older adults. We look forward to expanding these initiatives further in 2025–26

### 2. Befriending Support

To address loneliness and social isolation among older adults, PDP delivered a befriending service offering both telephone support and in-home visits (in reach service).

Between April 2024 and March 2025:

- **908 social and welfare phone calls** were made by PDP staff and trained volunteers, providing regular contact, conversation, and emotional support.
- **167 in-person home visits** were carried out, all in accordance with PDP's Health & Safety protocols and individual risk assessments.
- **63 in reach assessments/meetings** were conducted by Community Workers to support housebound or socially isolated individuals. These sessions helped connect older people with relevant local services, social activities or PDP volunteers, based on their specific needs.

This tailored approach has helped many older adults feel more connected, supported, and engaged with their community.

### 3. Practical Help and Food Provision

Volunteers from PDP and Leith Timebank (LTB) were recruited to support older people with essential daily tasks—particularly those who were housebound and had no one else to assist them. During the reporting period, PDP volunteers and LTB members provided **practical help on 53 occasions**.

Support included tasks such as transport to medical appointments, gardening, collecting prescriptions from the pharmacy, and grocery shopping. In addition, PDP referred older people to a local foodbank. For those unable to collect food parcels themselves—due to limited mobility or lack of transport—PDP volunteers and LTB members stepped in to collect and deliver the parcels directly to their homes. We also distributed “Take & Make” meal packs from Edinburgh Community Food to older people on low incomes, helping to ensure access to nutritious meals while promoting independence and healthy eating.

## OPSP Activities cont'd

### 4. Newsletter

PDP produced, printed, and distributed **four issues** of the *PDP Newsletter* during the reporting period, with over **865 copies** sent by post to over **300 older people**.

Many older people supported by PDP do not have smartphones or access to the internet, making it more difficult for them to stay informed or feel connected. The newsletter helps bridge that gap, providing a valuable source of information and engagement.

Each issue featured articles on health and safety, home-based activity ideas, crosswords, handy tips, jokes, and more. To add a personal and uplifting touch, pupils from Leith Walk Primary School created Christmas, Easter and summer cards, which were included with the newsletters

### 5. Activity Packs and Gifts

PDP volunteers supported the research, creation, and delivery of 1,030 activity packs and gifts to over 300 local older people throughout the year. These included thoughtful items such as Valentine's self-care packs, Christmas gifts, Easter eggs, and the Older Men's Group football sweep, among many others. In partnership with Leith Community Growers, PDP also delivered plants to housebound older adults, along with specially designed nature activity packs. These packs included quizzes, growing instructions, and interesting nature facts—enabling recipients to engage with and enjoy nature from the comfort of their own homes.

These small but meaningful gestures helped boost wellbeing, provide moments of joy, and foster a continued sense of connection with the outside world.

### 6. Information Provision

PDP Older People's Services provided **115 pieces of tailored information** and made **103 referrals** on behalf of local older people, helping them access relevant services and opportunities to improve their quality of life.

Support covered a wide range of areas, including:

- **Health** – e.g. RSV vaccines, Physio at Home, Nuffield Health Joint Pain Management Programme, shingles information
- **Housing** – e.g. Edindex, Y-People, Harbour Homes
- **Safety** – e.g. Key safes, Care and Repair services
- **Financial** – e.g. Money Advice Shop, Pension Credit, Citizens Advice, fuel vouchers
- **Digital Inclusion** – e.g. ACE IT digital support
- **Sensory Loss** – e.g. Sight Scotland, Deaf Action
- **Carer Support** – e.g. Care for Carers, VOCAL
- **Food Access** – e.g. Meals on Wheels, Empty Kitchen Full Heart, community meals at the Heart of Newhaven

This service played a vital role in ensuring older people were informed, connected and supported across all areas of daily life.



## OPSP Activities cont'd

### Monitoring and Evaluation

Information gathered to evidence project outcomes included:

- a. No of Older People/ Referrals
- b. No of telephone calls, food deliveries/ practical support/ activity packs/ newsletters/ befriending meetings/ virtual groups/ digital lessons
- c. Feedback from other agencies, staff, other professionals, families, carers and wider community networks
- d. Case studies, quotes and stories
- e. Questionnaires

### Referrals

During the reporting period, PDP received over **32** new referrals.

Source of Referrals Apr23-Mar24			
GP Link Worker/ NHS e.g. OPRA	6	Self-Referral	2
Family/ Friend	6	Community Mental Health	2
Vol Organisation e.g. CHSS	5	Alzheimer Scotland	2
Community Mental Health	3	Housing Association	1
Social Work	2	Alzheimer Scotland	1
OT	2		

Status of referrals as of March25		
Engages in PDP Activities/ Services	Continued Support: 11	
Completed	8	Completed: 11
Referral Inappropriate - signposted to other service	3	
Offered Service but declined	6	No service: 10
Referral – No response	4	

### OPSP Service Users

- **Gender** – 48% Men, 52% Women
- **Carers** – 41 service users are carers
- **85%** of service users **live alone**
- 9 Service Users have disclosed they are part of the **LGBTQI+** Community
- **BAME**: 62 Service Users (Eastern European, Sth Asian, African)

Age Range	
90+	5%
80-89	27%
70-74	41%
60-69	22%
50-59	5%

### Feedback from Review Questionnaire

Statement	% of respondents
I feel less isolated since using the project	100%
I feel more connected to my community (seeing more people, getting out more)	100%
I am more able to participate in community activities	98%
I feel I have gained new friendships/contacts I can call on	100%
I have gained new skills	93%
I have gained in confidence/self esteem	93%
I feel of value and/or am valued	87%
I feel more involved in my community since using the project	98%

I feel that my opinion matters	87%
I feel more positive about my local community	89%
I have a better understanding of the people and groups within my community	86%
I am more aware of the importance of physical activity since using the project	93%
I am more physically active than I used to be (eg gardening, walking, exercising)	78%
I am more aware of the importance of eating healthily since using this project	94%
I feel more able to cook healthy meals	91%
I feel more able to plan my meals/ food shopping since using the project	81%
I am more aware of things that affect my emotional health/wellbeing since using the project	80%
I feel more able to cope with the "ups and downs" of everyday life	83%
My mental/ emotional health is better	80%
I feel more confident that I will be able to seek support and help when I need it	100%
I feel more in control of my life and able to sustain healthy relationships	95%
I have more awareness of how to access help with welfare benefits since using the project	100%
I feel more confident that I will seek help with welfare benefits when I need it	91%

### OPSP Volunteers

As of Mar25 PDP **had over 90 active Older People Service Volunteers.**

During the reporting period, volunteers provided **1,864.5 hours** of help.

PDP provided:

- **6 volunteer group training sessions** (4 x volunteer inductions, Sikh Cultural Awareness and Intergenerational Training)
- Each volunteer also completed role specific training
- PDP provided regular formal and informal 1:1 volunteer **support & supervision** sessions
- PDP provided a range of **social opportunities** for volunteers e.g. Volunteer Week Celebration, Festival Tickets, etc.



## OPSP Activities cont'd

### Quotes

*"I want you to know how much we appreciate all you and the PDP team does for Dad and his friends. He loves his club and looks forward to his time with you all every week. You're all so kind, caring and understanding helping him through this difficult time"*

*"Thank you so much to you and your colleagues who organised the Burns Lunch – it was lots of fun, and I came home feeling better than I have for a while!"*

*"I was new to Leith and very lonely. The club has made such a difference to me and I look forward to a Monday very much"*

*"Without the PDP older men's' group and support I would go crazy – I would lose my independence would be in a care home or in hospital. It really helps and cheers me up to be in the company of other folk in the same position, who understand how depressing and difficult it can be"*

The past few years have presented significant challenges, but PDP Older People's Services Project (OPSP) has responded with resilience and adaptability, drawing on strong foundations and trusted relationships to deliver a flexible, hybrid model of support. Through a wide range of tailored services, including social activities, befriending, practical assistance, and accessible information, we have helped reduce isolation, enhance wellbeing, and empower older people to remain active, connected, and independent within their communities.

Both the COVID-19 pandemic and the ongoing Cost of Living Crisis have further highlighted the critical need for our services, particularly among those who are isolated, living alone, or on low incomes. However, the future of this vital work is uncertain. Persistent financial instability, especially due to disinvestment by the Edinburgh Integration Joint Board, now places the sustainability of the project beyond June 2025 at serious risk.

Despite these challenges, PDP remains firmly committed to advocating for older people and responding to their evolving needs through strong partnerships, volunteer involvement, and community-based resilience.

As we mark **45 years** of community service, we take pride in the impact achieved, but also recognise the urgent need for sustained investment to secure the long-term future of essential support for older people in our area.



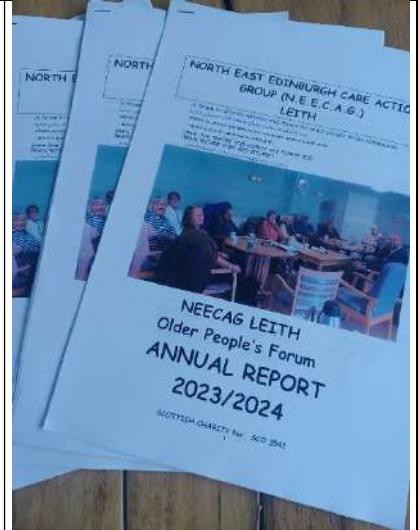
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## PDP Older People's Services Photos 2024-2025



Older Men's Group & Sihk Sanjog Canal Trip

PDP Women's Group at No 15



PDP Activity Pack & Newsletter

Arts & Crafts in Edin Remakery

Leith NEECAG Annual Report



Olympic Session at Manderston Court

Birthday Celebrations

## NEECAG - North East Edinburgh Care Action Group Report: 2024-2025

*"I look forward to our monthly meetings at NEECAG – I think it's important that we get our voices heard, and I always leave with some useful information. And now that I have been coming for years, I get to meet my friends – it's a great afternoon"*

### About NEECAG

Formed in 1995, the North East Edinburgh Care Action Group (NEECAG) provides a vital platform for older people in Leith and Portobello to discuss health and community care issues, have their voices heard, and influence local services. It remains the only service in the area specifically representing the unmet needs of older people and their carers.

### Membership & Meetings

As of March 2025, NEECAG has over 250 members. Two local groups (Leith and Portobello) meet monthly, with minutes sent to all members. Meetings promote social connection and consultation.

### PDP Support & Volunteer Contribution

PDP provided management and coordination support throughout 2024/25, particularly around funding and partnership working. Special thanks go to Mary O'Connell and Margaretann Farquharson, along with the dedicated team of volunteers. The group warmly welcomed Margaretann back after her absence earlier in the year.

PORTOBELLO NEECAG			LEITH NEECAG		
Date	Topic	No. s	Date	Topic	No.s
25 <sup>th</sup> Apr24	Edinburgh Community Food	10	3 <sup>rd</sup> Apr24	Edinburgh Library Consultation	11
25 <sup>th</sup> May24	NO MEETING	0	1st May24	Nuffield Health	21
27 <sup>th</sup> Jun24	Nuffield Health	13	5 <sup>th</sup> June24	Edinburgh Carer Support Team	18
25 <sup>th</sup> Jul24	Stay Hydrated	9	3 <sup>rd</sup> July24	Old Royal High School Survey	18
27 <sup>th</sup> Aug24	Summer Social Hibs Social Club *	65+	7 <sup>th</sup> Aug24	Community Safety by Police Scotland	23
Sept2024	NO MEETING	0	27 <sup>th</sup> Aug24	Summer Social at Hibs Social Club *	65+
3 <sup>rd</sup> Oct24	Older People Week Celebration *	130	4 <sup>th</sup> Sept24	Leith Community Growers	17
31 <sup>st</sup> Oct24	Portobello NEECAG AGM	12	2 <sup>nd</sup> Oct24	Older People Week Celebration *	130+
28 <sup>th</sup> Nov24	Living Memory Association	12	6 <sup>th</sup> Nov24	Leith NEECAG AGM	17
4 <sup>th</sup> Dec24	Christmas Party at Gordon Court *	23	4 <sup>th</sup> Dec24	Christmas Party at Gordon Court *	23
23 <sup>rd</sup> Jan25	Burns Supper Celebration at Hibs *	100	23 <sup>rd</sup> Jan25	Burns Supper Celebration at Hibs *	100+
27 <sup>th</sup> Feb25	ACE IT (digital skills for 50+)	11	5 <sup>th</sup> Feb25	ACE IT (digital skills for 50+)	23
27 <sup>th</sup> Mar25	Evaluation and Planning	15	5 <sup>th</sup> Mar25	Evaluation and Planning	10

\* Social Events x 4 NEECAG Meetings x 20

*"Thank you so much for sending the spring newsletter – Always look forward to it – so many lovely interesting bits and pieces. I got a nice Easter card from a wee girl from Leith Walk Primary School – So kind. And I must try and do the exercises"*

*"Very pleased to be a member, always welcome, very helpful, venue excellent"*

## NEECAG cont'd

### Key Achievements & Outcomes 2024/25

#### 1. Health & Wellbeing

- Monthly guest speakers promoted physical and mental health (e.g. Nuffield Health, Edinburgh Community Food).
- Events included activity tasters like Table Tennis and Seated Exercise.
- Newsletters/Activity Packs supported healthy lifestyles and mental wellbeing, including topics like hydration, dementia, journaling, and mindfulness.

#### 2. A Voice for Older People

- Members helped shape meeting content and contributed to consultations (e.g. Edinburgh Library Review, Royal High School Survey).
- Took part in campaigns on digital inequality, winter fuel payments, and the need for a Minister for Older People.
- Shared political contact info and SOPA details in newsletters.

#### 3. Reducing Social Isolation

- Four major social events held: T-Dance, Christmas Party, Burn's Event, and Older People's Week Celebration.
- Extra meeting time allowed for socialising.
- Befriending support (phone/in-person) continued alongside hybrid activity models.

#### 4. Promoting Safety

- Police Scotland offered in-person safety advice.
- "PDP Patrol" in newsletters raised scam awareness.
- Topics included online fraud, SP Energy guidance, and Trading Standards updates.

#### 5. Cost of Living & Income Support

- Tailored advice shared on Pension Credit, free meals, funeral support, and discounted transport.
- Events were free and accessible.
- Information included pain management programs, carers' support, and digital skills sessions.

#### 6. Capacity Building & Peer Support

- NEECAG enables older people to shape local services and support networks.
- Volunteers (including school students) contributed to newsletters.
- Intergenerational links strengthened via festive cards and joint projects.
- Information shared on dementia, healthy eating, and community services.

NEECAG continues to foster inclusion, independence, and empowerment for older people in North East Edinburgh, ensuring their voices remain central to community planning and support.



## Leith & Portobello NEECAG Photos 2024-2025



Leith Growers planting herbs with members

Community Safety Talk with Police Scotland



ACE IT Talk – Digital Skills for 50+



Portobello & Leith NEECAG Xmas Party



## PDP Intergenerational Work

Development of PDP intergenerational work in 2023/24 included:

- 'New Spin' Intergenerational Project (in partnership with Citadel Youth Project) which involved over 30 local older and younger people in 30 weekly sessions and 3 Summer outings
- Provision of intergenerational projects in partnership with Leith Walk Primary, Leith Timebank and Heart of Newhaven involving over 40 socially isolated older people, volunteers and 50 children and young people.

**More detailed reports of our Older Peoples Work and Intergenerational Activities undertaken during 2024-25 available via this link: <http://www.pilmenydevelopmentproject.co.uk/reports>**



*"We get to mix with the older people to show them that all kids are not the same" (YP)*

*"I like to get to know the young people" (OP)*

*"Gets me out the house, when I get out – not so bored, gives me something to do" (YP & OP)*



LEITH TIME BANK  
PART OF THE EDINBURGH [timebanknetwork](#)



**Mary O'Connell**  
Project Worker

**Leith Timebank (LTB)** is a community-led initiative connecting local residents to exchange time and skills through volunteering, primarily supporting older people, unpaid carers, and adults with multiple health conditions. Members earn time credits for their support, which they can exchange for services from others. Mary O'Connell, working part-time, leads coordination.

#### Funding & Staffing

LTB is funded mainly by the Edinburgh Integration Joint Board (EIJB) Grant (via Pilmeny Development Project) and the GameChanger Transfer Programme. EIJB funding faces withdrawal, threatening LTB's sustainability, prompting a community-led #SavePDP campaign. GameChanger (GC) funding is secured until late 2025, with efforts ongoing to find alternative funding.

#### GameChanger Transfer Programme

Started in 2019, it integrates GC volunteers into LTB's timebanking, expanding volunteering opportunities and fostering collaboration between the two groups.

#### Activities & Impact (April 2024–March 2025)

- Delivered 1,109 member exchanges totalling 2,028 hours, with exchanges becoming longer and more holistic.
- Supported social activities, medical appointments, befriending, food delivery, practical tasks, and event support.
- Ran 122 social activities with 1,625 attendees, including multicultural workshops, sports, intergenerational programs, and community celebrations.
- Established a Community Pot to support those unable to reciprocate due to health or caring duties.

#### Outcomes

- Reduced isolation and loneliness among members.
- Improved mental health, wellbeing, self-esteem, and confidence.
- Expanded volunteering with training and digital skills support.
- Helped members maximize income by providing free services, food support, advice, and access to resources.
- Strengthened community capacity through partnerships with local organizations like Hibernian Community Foundation and Nuffield Health.

#### Governance & Networks

LTB is supported by an Advisory Group including local leaders and is part of wider networks like Timebanking Scotland and Timebanking UK, holding the Timebanking UK Quality Mark™.



#### Looking Ahead (2025–2026)

Plans include growing membership, adapting activities to community needs, increasing exchanges, supporting partner involvement, and raising LTB's profile among health and community services. Despite funding uncertainties and ongoing social challenges, Leith Timebank remains a vital, innovative community resource that fosters mutual support, social connection, and wellbeing for vulnerable groups while building stronger local partnership

## Leith Timebank Photos 2024-2025



Canal Trip



Monday Matchday at Hibs



Nutrition Talk with Nuffield Health



PDP Self-Care & Valentine Activity Packs



Screen Printing at Newhaven Friendship Group



#SavePDP Campaign on STV News

## WORK WITH ADULTS

The overall strategic aim is to improve the range and provision of services for and with adults which enables them to meet their social, health, educational and recreational needs and improves the quality of their lives



### Volunteers

PDP is fortunate to have an amazing team of dedicated volunteers – without them; our work simply would not be possible. In 2024–2025, over **110 volunteers** and **222 Leith Timebank members** contributed an incredible **4,303 hours** of their time to support PDP’s work. We ran group training sessions for volunteers, provided individual induction training, and offered ongoing role-specific support throughout the year. **We are deeply grateful to each and every one of you for your commitment and energy.**

### Investing in Volunteers Award

PDP has proudly held the *Investing in Volunteers* Quality Mark since 2013, successfully renewing it again in 2023. This achievement secures the standard for a further three years and is a public testament to our continued commitment to supporting and valuing volunteers.

**Police Scotland ‘Keep Safe’ initiative** PDP works with Police Scotland to maintain PDP as a ‘Keep Safe’ point for vulnerable people. This is in addition to our status as a 3<sup>rd</sup> Party Reporting Centre for hate crimes.

**Student Placements** PDP provided a number of student placement opportunities along with professional support and supervision throughout 2024-25. Thanks to **Louise Gardiner**: (Edinburgh University Comm Ed Student MALiC 1<sup>st</sup> year) (Jan –May 2024), **Camille Morissette**: Edinburgh University Social Work MSW (Feb –June 2024), **Callum Forrest**: (Edinburgh University Comm Ed Student MALiC) (Jan –May 2025). Special thanks also to **John Kerr** for his assistance with our professional support work.



### Partnership work

We worked in Partnership throughout 2024- 2025 with many agencies including: Ageing Well (Edinburgh Leisure) , Calton Welfare Services Project, CEC Sports Hub (Leith), Citadel Youth Centre, Edinburgh Community Food, Edinburgh Remakery, EVOC, Fenwicks, Harbour Homes (POLHA), Heart of Newhaven, Hibernian Community Foundation, LAYC, Leith Growers, Leith Trust, Living Memory Association, Lochend Neighbourhood Centre, MECOPP, Milan (SWO), Police Scotland, Sikh Sanjog, YMCA Edinburgh, local schools and many more ...**thank you all!**

Finally, our heartfelt thanks go to all the residents of the Leith Walk and Leith Wards and to everyone across NE Edinburgh, who have worked with Pilmeny Development Project over the past year. Your voluntary time, energy, and commitment have been invaluable – without your dedication, the work of the Project simply would not be possible.



If you require any help or further information on the work of the Pilmeny Development Project, please do not hesitate to contact us.



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