**NORTH HIGHLAND CANCER INFORMATION AND SUPPORT CENTRE, SCIO (SC048935)**

**Your local drop-in centre for those affected by cancer**

  

# CHAIRMAN'S REPORT 2021/22

The Centre has continued to operate as normal although the numbers on Mondays seem to have fallen. This we feel is due to the fact that covid is still very prevalent and people with cancer are understandably wary of mixing with others. The Thursday therapy sessions are continuing to be very popular as is our beauty therapy mornings.

Thank you to all the volunteers who gave of their time throughout the year. Without you the Centre could not operate.

Financially the Centre is operating very well thanks largely to our generous local community.

**Retiring Committee**

Isobel Marshall – Chairman

Jean Dunnet – Vice Chairman

Frankie Murdoch – Treasurer

Margaret Mackay – Secretary

Barbara Cormack, Malcolm Clark, Linda Sutherland and Joan Mackay – committee members

**Cancer Support Group for Men**

The ‘Men’s group’ have continued their monthly meetings throughout the year and the numbers have remained steady with an average of 5-7 men per meeting. They had a couple of new members join the group whilst a few have left. They have had two guest speakers, one from a Macmillan nurse and the other from Iain Gregory who talked about the Caithness Roads Recovery Project. Iain was also able to answer some questions on more general topics.

The move to holding meetings in the afternoon has clearly been of benefit to the group as the number of attendees has remained quite consistent.

Malcolm would like to thank the men who have supported him in keeping the group going. Additionally, the group are indebted to the chair and committee of the NHCISC for allowing them to use the centre. Without this, the group would not exist.

**Project for NHCISC Administrative Post to be funded by Macmillan Cancer Support**

Last year Malcolm approached CLAN Cancer Support (Aberdeen based) to see if there was a possibility of them providing day-to-day management of the centre to relieve the pressure on the committee. This proposition was initially positive but Clan Cancer Support then realised that they had a big recovery project to undertake as a consequence of Covid and would therefore have to focus on their existing businesses at this time.

Malcom then approached Macmillan Cancer Support with whom he had been working with for a time to establish if they could fund an Administrative Post for about two years. This resulted in a visit by one of their Lead Engagement Team visiting the centre to establish the viability of such a proposal. The visit proved very positive and this was followed by a survey of the NHCISC members to establish what they felt about the NHCISC; what was good and what areas could be improved upon. Thank you to everyone who took the time to complete the questionnaire.

The results of this were received well by the Macmillan team and they now have enough information to create a business case for the funding. They have identified three possible sources of funding and are quietly optimistic about a successful outcome. However, this is not guaranteed and therefore an element of caution must be maintained until a decision is finalised.

**Bereavement Awareness Training by Highland Hospice**

On 20th April 2022 Ann Craig from the Highland Hospice in Inverness came to the NHCISC to deliver Bereavement Awareness Training. About 12 volunteers attended the training and it was very well received. Those who attended agreed that more awareness training like this would be well received by the committee, volunteers and members. All members of the NHCISC are encouraged to raise awareness of training events that will benefit those who use the centre. The meeting ended with a nice buffet lunch and discussion of the event.

**Volunteers meeting**

We held an informal meeting of volunteers on 31 January 2022 to air any problems, improvements etc the volunteers would like to see at the Centre. This was very well received and numerous suggestions were made which we hope we have implemented.

**North of Scotland Cancer Alliance**

On 26 September Amy Anderson from Aberdeen visited the Centre. She is a project co-ordinator for the North Cancer Alliance, a collaboration of 6 NHS Health Boards in the North.

Her project is scoping out the capacity in the community to help patients with a diagnosis of cancer to best prepare for their treatment/surgery.  She intimated that the NCA also has other projects where they are looking for input from charitable organisations who have a lot of expertise in providing services to people.

She was most impressed with our premises and website and the services we are providing at the moment and would do her best to promote the Centre through her contacts.

She spent over an hour with us. A few of our committee and volunteers attended and were able to present our views to her.

**TV Monitor**

We have purchased a 40” TV monitor for the main room which will be very useful for training purposes as was demonstrated when we had the bereavement training session on 20th April.

**New seating**

The Centre has purchased six new chairs and two sofas from Caithness Furnishers in Thurso. The firm donated one of the sofas which was very kind of them. We received an anonymous donation of £1,500 towards the furniture for which we are also very grateful. This left a total outlay of only £2,275 to come from Centre Funds. We have also purchased some new curtains for the room which Precision Blinds are giving us at cost price.

**Calendar**

Barbara Cormack is producing the calendar again this year. We will let you know when it is available for sale.

Barbara is also looking into obtaining a defibrillator for the Centre.

**Christmas lunch**

Once again we held our 2021 Christmas lunch in the Pentland Hotel. It has been suggested that this year we should perhaps go to another venue. Castletown has been receiving good reports so it was suggested we could try that.

We look forward to another successful year.

ISOBEL MARSHALL

Chair, NHCISC