**North Highland Cancer Information & Support Centre**

**AGM Monday 12th September 2016**

**Chairman’s Report 2015/2016**

**Retiring Office Bearers 7th September 2015:**

Chairman - Jen Ironside

Vice Chairman - Jean Dunnet

Treasurer. - Isobel Miller

Secretary - Louise Shakespeare

Committee Members - Audrey Smith, Barbara Cormack, Hilary Gunn, Liz Smith

**Elected Office Bearers 7th September 2015:**

Chairman - Jen Ironside

Vice chairman - Jean Dunnet

Treasurer - Isobel Miller

Secretary - Barbara Cormack

Committee members - Audrey Smith, Liz Smith, Hilary Gunn, Louise Shakespeare, Andi Roy

**Opening times of the centre** – Mondays 10am -3pm – Drop – in Session

 Thursdays – 10am – 4.30pm – Complementary Therapy

 Fridays – 10.30am -1.30pm – Drop – in Session

**Questionnaire** - We asked our members to fill out a questionnaire this year to find out what people thought of the service we provide and how we could improve on what is already in place. This was one of the recommendations from the Macmillan QEM and always a worthwhile exercise. Once all the questionnaires were returned Andi Roy collated all the information and then the management committee implemented the changes. We are very grateful to everyone that made suggestions, this helps keep the centre moving forward and I hope you are all happy with how we addressed all your concerns. Of course it is not possible to alter the service we provide to please everyone but I can assure you that the management committee give careful consideration to all suggestions and implement change where appropriate.

Thanks to Andi Roy for collating this information and for all the other important work she does in keeping the cancer information and members contact details up dated and helping the treasurer with the financial spreadsheets.

**PVG** - It is a legal requirement that to be a volunteer at the centre each person must be a member of the Protecting Vulnerable Groups Disclosure scheme. Thanks to Jean Dunnet who organised the latest round of disclosures along with Catherine Patterson from CVG.

**Fund Raising** - the past year has been a financially lucrative one for the centre with a variety of organisations and individuals raising large sums of money for us. This in turn gives the centre some publicity as most cheque presentation photos are published in the local newspapers. Thanks to Barbara Cormack for sending out thank you letters to everyone we receive money from.

We have done a little fund raising of our own throughout the county this year. The annual coffee morning held in the Pentland Hotel in Thurso and collections at Tesco Thurso in November 2015 and Tesco Wick September 2016, the Prize Bingo in Wick - this was our first fund raising event in Wick and is certainly something we would be happy to do again in the future. We had a stall at the Halkirk Games where we had a raffle and a lucky dip for the children. As always none of these events happen without a lot of organisation before hand and a group of volunteers to run the events plus people to donate baking, raffle/tombola prizes, so I thank everyone who gave up their time to help. Thanks to our treasurer Isobel Miller, as events always mean extra work organizing floats and counting/banking money afterwards.

With the funds sitting where they are, we do not have any immediate plans for any additional big fund raiser at the moment.

**Housekeeping** - Over the summer both the toilets have been painted which has helped brighten them up. Our thanks goes to Colin Smith our resident painter for his immaculate work once again.

For the time being all other areas of the centre are still in fairly good condition but as always the committee will keep an eye on the interior fabric and are aware that it must be kept in good condition.

It is our plan to install a slimline dish washer in the kitchen to keep the cups stain free. We are waiting for an electrician to put in an extra socket before we can progress with this project.

Keeping the centre pristine is still a priority and we continue to use a rota throughout the year so that the centre gets a good clean every month. We are always looking for new members to volunteer for this task. Thank you to everyone that takes their turn on the rota as well as our regular volunteers that tidy up at the close of each day.

**ComplementaryTherapies** - thanks to Laura Durrand, Gillian Macmanus, Monica Whitehead and Donna Murray our therapists for delivering such a valuable service to our members, credit to all four ladies for their hard work and professionalism. We are glad that we can still offer therapies free of charge to everyone. If you have an appointment and are unable to attend, please call the centre and leave a message on the answer machine -01847 890996- to cancel so that your appointment can be given to someone else.

On Thursday 8th September Monica ran a “Meditation through Relaxation” class, which was well attended. This may be repeated in the future depending on the feedback from those involved.

**Patio** - many thanks to Ish & Danny MacDonald for keeping the patio area looking beautiful all year round, we appreciate how much time and money they spend keeping it looking good.

This spring the Arbour got a couple of coats of paint which will help protect it from the elements and hopefully extend its life.

**New Services** - earlier this year local hairdresser Cara Duff started using the centre as a base for a Wig Fitting and Styling Service. This has been a service that has been unavailable in the county in the past so it is great to see that Cara can now provide this and we are delighted that she is able to use the centre.

 Cancer Support Group for Men - Malcolm Clark held the inaugural meeting in May in the centre and got sufficient interest to establish a monthly meeting. Anyone wishing more details about the group should contact Malcolm at malcolm.nhcisc@btinternet.com

We wish Malcolm all the best with this group and hope it continues to go from strength to strength.

**Scottish Conference of Cancer Support Groups** - This was a hugely successful annual event which a number of volunteers/ members attended in the south each September but unfortunately it was postponed in September 2015 and in the spring of 2016 and again in September 2016. I do not expect another date to be set and sadly this appears to be the end of an extremely valuable event and the highlight of my calendar and that of several others. What we learnt at these conferences was used to shape and develop our own centre. At this moment I have not heard of any alternative event that might take its place.

**Other services that use the centre** - Highland Hospice continue to use the centre every second Wednesday for their Outreach Service and every other week for their Bereavement Counselling Service.

Connecting Carers hold their meetings in the centre one Tuesday afternoon each month.

Highland Headway have occasional meetings usually on Tuesday evenings.

Community Health Choir - this group of enthusiastic singers meet every Friday afternoon from 2.15-3.15pm under the instruction of Susie Dingle, new members always welcome and being able to sing is optional. Thanks to Sandy Moore and Betty Cunningham for organising these sessions.

**Social events** – our Christmas lunch took place in the Weigh Inn on Friday 4th December 2015 and 50 members enjoyed the festive fare. Thanks to Audrey Smith for organising the lunch.

New Year Party in the centre on Saturday 23rd January 2016 which attracted a good crowd, as always the buffet was provide by everyone who attended and once again the table was groaning with delicious food for all to enjoy. Entertainment for the evening was provided by Catherine Mackenzie & David Rosie.

The 2016 summer outing was on Tuesday 12th July and this year 50 members and friends enjoyed lunch at the Portland Arms in Lybster followed by a visit to the gardens at Dunbeath Castle which included afternoon tea. This year we had an additional accessible mini bus, this was one of the suggestions from the questionnaire and the management committee agreed that it was important to include everyone at these outings.

Our thanks goes to Audrey Smith for organising the lunch and Jean Dunnet for organising the transport and the visit to Dunbeath Gardens and the afternoon teas.

**Thank you** - I would like to thank all the members for supporting the centre by coming along to the weekly sessions. Donating, baking and turning out for fund raising events, your loyalty and generosity are greatly appreciated.

I extend a huge thank you to every volunteer that faithfully supports the centre and dedicates many hours each year to keeping the centre open, meeting and greeting whoever comes through the door. It is not always an easy job and can at times be challenging, so please spare a thought for our wonderful volunteers and always show them respect and gratitude.

I would also like to the thank the hard working management committee that hold the mantle of responsibility for all decisions that are made for the good of the centre and our members. As chairman I could not do my job without your continued help and support.

Thanks also to Dean Smith for looking after our website and updating it and John Munro for hosting the website.

There are many people that play a part in the successful running of the centre many of them work quietly behind the scenes but each one instrumental in keeping the centre running smoothly. Although we are a small independent charity run by an enthusiastic group of volunteers we are also accountable to OSCR who are the charity regulators in Scotland and have a set criteria for us to follow and of course we have regular inspections by Macmillan to ensure we keep up the high standards of excellence.

**Forth coming events** - Tesco Thurso information Stand & Collection - date to be arranged.

 Annual Coffee Morning – date to be arranged.

 Christmas Lunch – date and venue to be arranged.

**Proposals for 2016/2017** - Volunteer Training- date to be confirmed

 Midas training for two members - to be arranged by Caithness Voluntary Group, date to be confirmed.

 Gentle Exercise classes - It is hoped to be able to offer a class on Monday afternoons in the centre, date to be confirmed.

Jennifer Ironside

Chairman

Signature…………………………………..

Date………………………………………...