



A warm welcome across Perth and Kinross

Warm Welcome fund evaluation

www.pkc.gov.uk/warmspaces

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Background

In 2023, Perth and Kinross Council granted a budget of £250,000 for the Warm Welcome Fund Initiative. This was a re-brand of the previous years' Cost of Living Fund. The aim of the funding was to support community groups and organisations in their delivery of the provision of warm spaces and warm home packs over the winter months. This would help alleviate the cost of living whilst also contributing to a reduction in social isolation.

The £250,000 funding was broken down and allocated to each ward area based on population size. This was to ensure fairness and to maximise the potential for the use of the funding. A series of workshops were facilitated by the Community Learning and Development team in each ward area to encourage community groups and organisations to work more collaboratively with each other, avoiding duplication of their offer and recognising what their communities' needs were. Funding was then allocated through collective agreement with each other based on what they could offer and what local needs were.

Applicants to the fund have welcomed this refreshed approach to allocating funding as shown from a sample of quotes from them:

“The fund was accessible, and I enjoyed the process of meeting other like-minded people to decide how the funds available should be used”

“Warm Welcome Fund was easy to apply for and the process ensured monies were distributed fairly and appropriately to services applying”

“The fund was very easy to apply for this year, really straight-forward and the meetups to discuss the fund were extremely valuable both in understanding the requirements and in meeting other groups”

“The process was simple and refreshingly straightforward. It was transparent and democratic involving communities directly and without unnecessary bureaucracy”

The amount of funding awarded across Perth and Kinross was £247,670.86

94 different community groups and organisations delivered warm welcome spaces and distributed warm home packs

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Evaluation Data

At the end of March 2024, recipients of the fund were asked to complete an evaluation to demonstrate the impact that their projects had on their communities and in tackling inequalities.

67 out of 94 • responses to the evaluation



4,511

Unique individuals engaged



1,837

Warm Home Packs distributed



350

Warm Welcome Volunteers

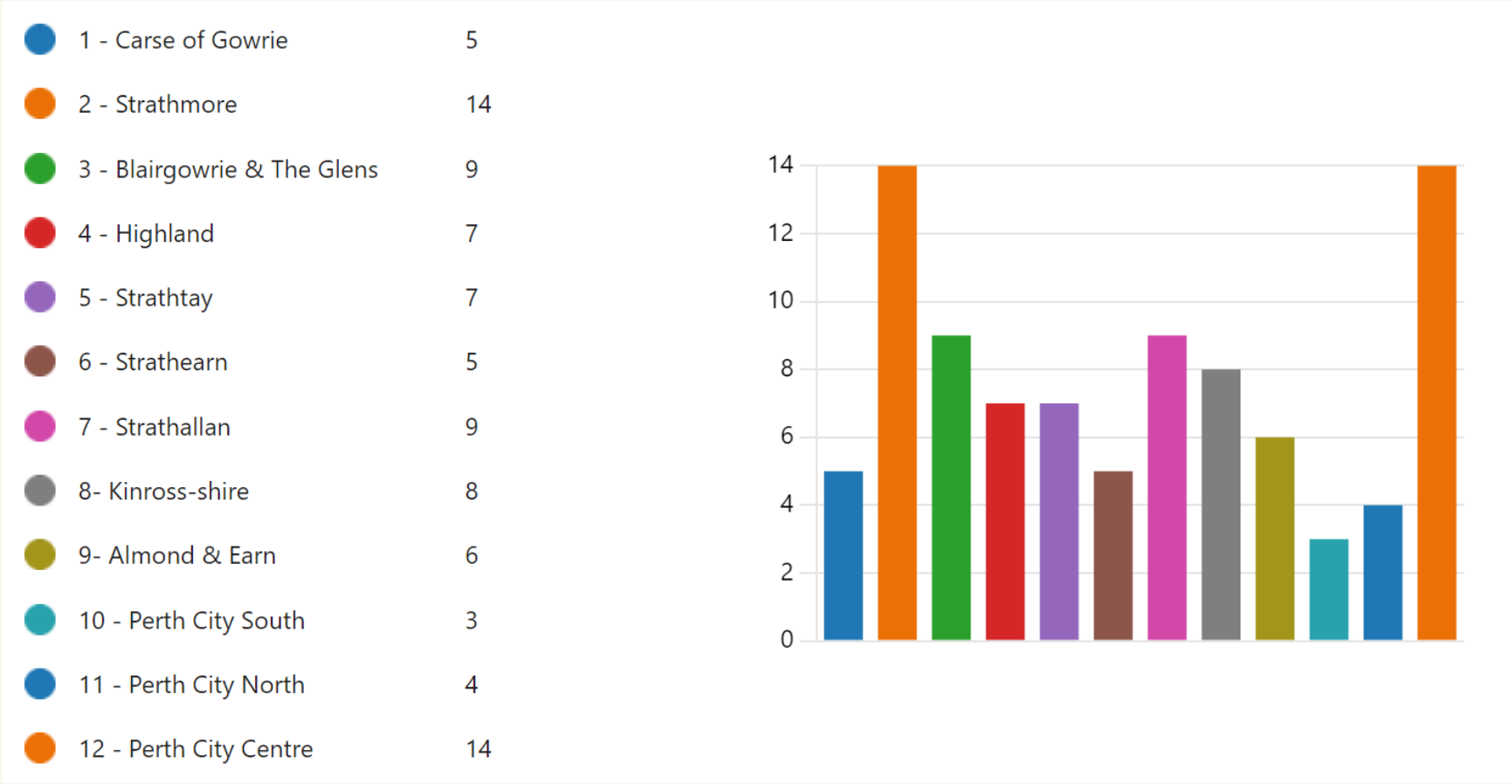


33,743

Overall attendances at Warm Spaces

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The geographical spread of the evaluations is below:



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Addressing Inequalities

Evaluations demonstrated that the following themes were addressed in terms of addressing inequalities in communities:

- **Food Poverty**
- **Fuel Poverty**
- **Social Isolation**
- **Promotion of social inclusion**
- **Rural isolation**
- **Mental health and wellbeing**
- **Physical health and wellbeing**

Main Benefits for Communities

Some of the main benefits for communities were identified as following:

- **Warm packs allowed people to stay warm in their own homes**
- **Provided company and friendship**
- **Increased inter-generational socialisation**
- **Access to free activities which were engaging**
- **Universal access helped reduced stigma**
- **Being able to transport rurally and disabled individuals to warm spaces**
- **Access to free hot meals**
- **People learnt new skills**
- **People could access wider support at a warm space e.g. Welfare Rights**
- **People engaged in new activities and joined new clubs and groups**



Case Studies

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Case Study 1

One attendee of the project was a male alcoholic with complex medical needs. His attendance has allowed our group the opportunity to offer compassionate support both at the times he attends and has enabled a few to go to his house and offer additional support in the home. The Anti-poverty Support Group were then able to identify that he had no heating or electricity, no working cooker and other personal needs and addressed this.

Case Study 2

One family with a disabled child told us:

"I'm not sure you guys know the difference you make to people's lives, and if I can ever pay it forward I will. I have a family steak pie and sausages thanks to the butchers and with the electric blankets for the kids and the bag of coal I could put my heating on tonight with a thankful smile on my face."

Case Study 3

2 or 3 of our regular ladies in their eighties were delighted when we were able to purchase an indoor curling game with Warm Welcome fund money. They had enjoyed curling at Perth in previous years and had a wonderful time playing the game and reliving past experiences. They were also able to pass on their skills and knowledge of the game to others. This increased their involvement and gave them a sense of purpose.

Case Study 4

One person commented that they had been isolated within the confines of his home for 6 months due to mental issues. As he came across our hub, he took heart and came in. He mentioned how the warm welcome had attracted him to come in and come back almost every week. Over time he gained more and more confidence and started to attend various other social and sports events. He has now fully overcome his isolation and considers us as his friends. He sees the meetings at the hub as the highlight of his week.

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Case Study 5

My elderly mother, who has lived in the area all her life, suffers from dementia, which has resulted in her becoming social isolated. She enjoys attending the Community Café each week where she sees people she knows and sometimes still recognises. I also value the friendship and company of the volunteers and those who come to the Café. It is a safe place to bring my mum, which is near at hand and helps to reduce my stress levels when dealing with mum's sometimes difficult mood swings.

Case Study 6

We had a single parent and her daughter who although would not admit it, were struggling to cope with the cost-of-living crisis and their utilities bill. We heard via a neighbour that this was the case and we put together a pack for both the parent and the daughter and personally delivered it to their door. They were really grateful for the packs which they later said had been of great benefit. The young daughter particularly liked the cosy socks and blanket.

Case Study 7

Socially isolated gentleman due to health reasons engaged with the hub. He was unable to walk the short distance from his house to the Hub as he was on oxygen 24/7. Some of the locals would pick him up and bring him down with his portable oxygen bottles and he would enjoy a cuppa and a chat. He was struggling with the cost of living, and he came to one of our sessions with Welfare Rights who fast tracked his benefits application. Someone in the village was giving away a mobility scooter and advertised it on our notice board. We picked it up and delivered it to him. He said:

“his Harley gave him back his freedom to roam”

and popped into the hub most days. Sadly, he suddenly passed away which shocked many but from what he said, the Hub and the people he met there made his condition and life much more bearable.

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Celebration of Volunteers Event

In March 2024, the Provost held a civic reception to honour the contributions of the 350 volunteers involved in delivering warm spaces in their communities.

Volunteer representatives were also presented with certificates for their group and each individual volunteer as a token of appreciation for their efforts throughout the winter months.

During the event Perth and Kinross Third Sector Interface (TSI) also launched a new online Volunteering Platform which aims to encourage volunteering in local communities. The 'Be the Change' platform is a self-service directory of opportunities for community groups and organisations to promote their volunteering roles and for residents to sign up and take part in volunteering activity in their local community.

