



**AUTUMN  
VOICES**

*Growing old creatively*

**Autumn Voices Annual Report, July 2021 to June 2022**

1. Autumn Voices
2. Online
3. Competitions
4. Projects
5. Funding
6. Structure
7. Steering Group and Staff Team
8. Statement of Receipts and Payments

## 1. Autumn Voices

Autumn Voices (AV) is a Scotland-based organisation that seeks to celebrate creativity in later life.

Through its website and other online platforms Autumn Voices seeks to disseminate information and content on writing, creating, ageing and living. We offer information, articles, blogs and short interviews, as well as a newsletter and regular competitions with prizes. We have a showcase for members' work. The website is updated regularly, and Autumn Voices has an active social media presence. AV offers free basic membership, with members (currently numbering 350) given access to all facilities and services on the website.

With local partners and freelance facilitators we run face-to-face activities for older people across Scotland, in settings including arts and community centres, day centres, care homes and dementia resource centres. Activities include workshops, demonstrations, presentations, readings and performances.

<https://autumnvoices.co.uk/>

## 2. Online

The AV website featured monthly interest themes, in line with our target audience of older people and focus of creativity in later life. Themes included international celebration days, health issues affecting older people more acutely, creative pastimes and interests, organisations whose work intersects with that of AV, and our own projects and activities.

AV published content on healthy eating, hillwalking, the natural world, pets, gardening, women's history, war and remembrance, Black History Month, languages, hearing loss, chronic illness and disability, creative writing, dance, photography, knitting and woodcarving. We commissioned content from the Scottish Seabird Centre, the Devil's Porridge Museum and The Bakehouse Community Arts.

AV approached bloggers and book reviewers, as well as subjects for short interview segments, including writers Colin Will, Lindsay Oliver, Anne Dunford, Diana Hendry and Chrys Salt, as well as community activists, volunteers and creative practitioners. We featured well-known figures like writer and naturalist Polly Pullar, mountaineer and writer Cameron McNeish, and actor, singer and musician Toyah Willcox.

The website averages monthly totals of around 1,000 visitors and 3,000 pages read.

AV generated social media content each day for Facebook, Instagram and Twitter, offering original magazine-style content from our website and beyond, pointing to articles and opportunities of interest to our demographic. Popular posts included blogs from burlesque queen Foxy La Mer and academic Abdourahm Said Bakar on Black History Month, and flash competition winner Wendy Webb who was pictured alongside popular author Elly Griffiths.

We shared, responded to and commented upon social media posts from partner organisations and stakeholders including Age Scotland, Lapidus Scotland, Food Train Scotland, and various

funding organisations such as the Paul Hamlyn Foundation and the National Museums of Scotland.

Our monthly email newsletter was sent out via MailChimp to a list of subscribers which rose from 207 to 332 over the year. Topics highlighted included calls for submissions to competitions and challenges and announcement of winners, news about the appointment of steering group members and trustees, announcements and reports on in-person events and workshops of interest to members, and calls to action for our crowdfunder and external competitions and festivals.

Over the year social media analytics and trends showed a 31% increase in Facebook followers and a 35% increase in Twitter followers. AV opened a new presence on Instagram. Online engagement increased not just in numbers of followers, members and subscribers, but also in terms of geographical reach, as our audience furth of Scotland (rest of UK and overseas) has grown.

### 3. Competitions

The 2021 Autumn Poetry Competition was publicised to interested organisations such as King Lear Prizes, the Scottish Association of Writers, U3A Scotland, Luminate, Lapidus, Highland Lit, Moniack Mhor and various writers' groups in Scotland and around the UK. The 131 entries were judged by poet and performer Chrys Salt, and the winner was Ann Craig from Arbroath. We were able to offer cash and book prizes. The award was serviced by a live event, recorded for the website.

The mini-competition themed to coincide with COP26 attracted 16 entries, and was won by Dean Gessie from Ontario, Canada.

### 4. Projects

Watering Grass Roots (WGR) aimed to find out how AV can better connect with its members and their local communities. Four creative workshops were delivered in Dumfries & Galloway in September 2021 and 2022. Participants took part both in person and online. The September workshops highlighted the poetry competition. For another strand of WGR, AV members were asked to submit projects which involve the elderly members of local organisations in creative activities. Four projects were selected for development, with two (see A&B and P&K below) later receiving funding.

Third Age Plus Pioneers (3A+) focussed on those aged over 90, which ran from autumn 2021 to summer 2022. AV recruited a Project Manager and five project workers (PWs), artists with experience of working with older people, each of whom recruited partner organisations and participants for the activity sessions. Author Jane Archer worked in Perthshire; singer-songwriter Chiara Berardelli worked in Fort William, Greater Glasgow and London; cabaret artist Miss Annabel Sings worked in Edinburgh; poet Stuart Paterson worked in Glasgow, Ayrshire and East Lothian; and photographer Nicola Stead worked in Glasgow. The PWs worked in a range

of arts, community, health and care settings, and with a wide range of organisations and individuals. All PWs undertook face-to-face work, while a page on the AV website showcases outcomes from the project including video and audio recordings, poems, prose and blog posts.

AV received funding for three locally-based projects, with most of the project activities scheduled for the second half of 2022.

In Argyll & Bute (A&B) we partnered with the Alzheimer's Scotland Helensburgh Dementia Resource Centre, and programmed three blocks each of five sessions. The first block, in June, was facilitated by Chiara Berardelli, and focused on music and singing.

In Dumfries & Galloway (D&G) we established or evolved partnerships with Alzheimer's Scotland, Eskdalemuir Expressive Arts, A' the Airts Community Arts Centre (Sanquhar) and Annan Day Centre, and programmed book-making, photography, writing and visual arts sessions.

In Perth & Kinross (P&K) we partnered with writer Jane Archer, who programmed writing workshops at Birnam Arts from June through to September. A new publication will feature work from these workshops, along with work by several established locally-based writers.

The A&B and P&K projects were both developed from WGR proposals. AV first linked with some partners in D&G as part of WGR and 3A+.

## 5. Funding

Research was undertaken on a large number of trusts and foundations as potential sources of funding. In about 60% of cases not being a SCIO meant AV was ineligible to apply. More detailed research and eligibility checks were undertaken on 20 funds, including some funding from the Scottish Government and the National Lottery. 15 applications were submitted, of which 8 were successful in this period raising in total £53,087.06.

The largest single grant was from Paul Hamlyn Foundation's Ideas and Pioneers fund for Third Age Plus Pioneers. Grants were raised from three local Communities Mental Health & Wellbeing Funds, with money received before 30 June but most related activities taking place between July 2022 and March 2023.

We undertook a Crowdfunder to support core costs. Originally planned for November 2021 it ran in January and February 2022, and raised £3,576 plus match-funding of £3,391 from the National Emergencies Trust (NET). We received an additional £1000 in March from NET; that, plus a couple of late donations, gave a total of £8,115.85.

## 6. Structure

As a constituted but unincorporated group Autumn Voices is limited in what funding we could secure. Research into the most appropriate legal form for Autumn Voices was undertaken, and a comparison of the benefits and disadvantages of a SCIO (Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation) or a CIC (Community Interest Company) led to a decision to apply to become a SCIO.

Trustees are needed for a SCIO, and an open call for volunteers for a steering group for Autumn Voices was put out on our website and Creative Scotland Opportunities. 12 volunteers were recruited, including Robin Lloyd Jones as chair. The Steering Group held its first meeting in July 2021 with further quarterly meetings to develop the SCIO application and support the AV staff team.

## 7. Steering Group and Staff Team

### Steering Group Members

- Robert Bennett
- Simon Berry
- Larry Butler
- Miller H Caldwell
- Helen Cormack
- Mark Daws
- Christine Hamilton
- Robin Lloyd-Jones
- Kriss Nichol
- Liz Niven
- Sheila Wakefield

### Staff Team

- Ken Cockburn, Projects Coordinator
- Susan Garnsworthy, Fundraising and Development Coordinator
- Craig Hamnett, Website Developer & Technical Support
- Gillian Hamnett, Content Editor & Consultant
- Robin Lloyd-Jones, Founder (Robin stepped back from day-to-day involvement with AV in February 2022)
- Clare O'Brien, Marketing and Competitions Administrator

*October 2022*

<b>AUTUMN VOICES</b>		
<b>An unincorporated cultural association</b>		
<b>pending application for Scottish charitable status.</b>		
<b>STATEMENT OF RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS</b>		
<b>YEAR TO 30 JUNE 2022</b>		
	<b>2022</b>	2021
<b>RECEIPTS</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
<b>Project Grants</b>		
Third Age Plus Pioneers - Paul Hamlyn Foundation	14,430.00	
Argyll & Bute Communities Mental Health & Wellbeing Fund	6,412.06	
Dumfries & Galloway Communities Mental Health & Wellbeing Fund	11,770.00	
Dumfries & Galloway Unlimited - watering grass roots	250.00	1,000
Museums & Galleries Scotland	4,725.00	
Perth & Kinross Communities Mental Health & Wellbeing Fund	5,000.00	
Hope Scott Trust - Pathhead	1,000.00	
<b>Other Grants and Income</b>		
Crowdfunding	8,115.85	
William Syson Trust	4,500.00	
Unwin Charitable Trust	5,000.00	
Competition fees and book sales	962.52	747
Donations	580.00	3,000
Creative Scotland	-	4,250
Robertson Trust - grant	-	2,000
	<b>62,745.43</b>	<b>10,997</b>
<b>PAYMENTS</b>		
Staffing : social media	11,223.41	3,485
Fundraising	7,531.53	
Web-site development and management	5,832.21	9,560
Project management	4,782.05	
Projects people costs	10,631.61	
Competition adjudication and prizes	857.57	275
Software and facebook costs	354.58	325
Sundry administrative costs	344.74	142
Publicity and photography	171.60	150
Accountancy	100.00	
Bank and paypal charges	58.33	35
	<b>41,887.63</b>	<b>13,973</b>
<b>Surplus / (deficit ) for year</b>	<b>20,857.80</b>	<b>(2,976)</b>
<b>Funds brought forward at 1 July</b>	<b>5,733.92</b>	<b>8,710</b>
<b>Funds carried forward at 30 June</b>	<b>26,591.72</b>	<b>5,734</b>
<b>Represented by bank balances</b>		
Bank of Scotland	26,581.17	5,537
PayPay account	10.55	197
<b>Carried forward at 30 June 2022</b>	<b>26,591.72</b>	<b>5,734</b>
<b>Independent Examiner's Report</b>		
I have prepared the above statement of Receipts and Payments from extensive financial information and explanations supplied to me, and confirm the two bank balances to be correctly stated as at 30 June 2022.		
<b>Eric A. Wishart</b>		
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Eric Wishart, accountant retired		
[ DM Vaughan & Co 1975-1988; PwC 1988-2011]		
Edinburgh, 28th September 2022		