

Who are Raploch Community Partnership?

Raploch Community Partnership are an award winning charity based in Stirling. The organisation deliver a range of intergenerational services in priority areas that aspire to tackle social isolation and loneliness, increase individual skill levels and support people in to employment. They also offer a wide range of leisure and learning opportunities, delivered locally in an informal, relaxing environment. They work in the 5% most deprived areas in Scotland, to help address inequalities.



How was the grant used?

- The organisation’s Connect Project seeks to facilitate an increase in social connectedness of individuals experiencing disadvantage and secure a reduction in the effects of social isolation. The grant was used to purchase 350 re-usable face mask making kits and 18 sewing kits. Volunteers used these to make masks and distributed them to people, who are most in need within the community.

What had to change due to Covid-19?

- Raploch Community Partnership have been working closely with local partners to respond to community needs in light of the Covid-19 pandemic. They reopened their Hub space in August with face-to-face sessions restarting from October 2020. These were held on different days of the week, to maximise reach, accessibility/availability of the sessions for those who wanted to attend. Those who were unable to attend for various reasons including shielding were offered support remotely.



What difference has the grant made?

- Through the social hubs and mask making activity, individuals gained a chance to socialise with each other and learn new skills, which had both powerful and transformative experiences for volunteers and service users.
- There was great uptake of this activity and it provided a positive opportunity for people to come together, gain friendship, encouragement and learn and share skills in a time of uncertainty.
- The Hub space could accommodate participants in a safe Scottish Government COVID-19 guidance compliant manner and everyone was able to enjoy producing masks regardless of their sewing skills level!
- Project activity was not deterred by a second semi-lockdown. During this time; Raploch Community Partnership were able to adapt accordingly and in-line with the Scottish Governments guidelines for the delivery of CLD activities within communities. A number of mask making packs were distributed via their volunteer team and once an appointment based system was put into place, they were able to have people back in the Hub to continue and complete the activity.

'I really enjoyed the mask making group as it helped my social anxiety. I met a lovely group of people I hope to keep meeting up with, the group itself was very informative about making masks. I haven't sewed in years so was good to learn a new skill and fun to do. I'm now making them at home as well so I found it really good fun as well as informative. Thank you.'

'It's a really good idea to make the masks and give them away. Some people can't afford even £1. To some people that's a lot of money – look at the homeless. We should be giving them out. Some masks cost £5! We should be giving them to people who can't afford it. We could give them out through the Salvation Army, or the Hub, or the schools.'

