



#SURROUND2OUND

ONE VOICE AMONG MANY

HOT CHOCOLATE TRUST  
ANNUAL REPORT

2013/14

We've all experienced those times  
when everyone seems to talk at once.

Who do you listen to?

How do you choose?

What do they say?

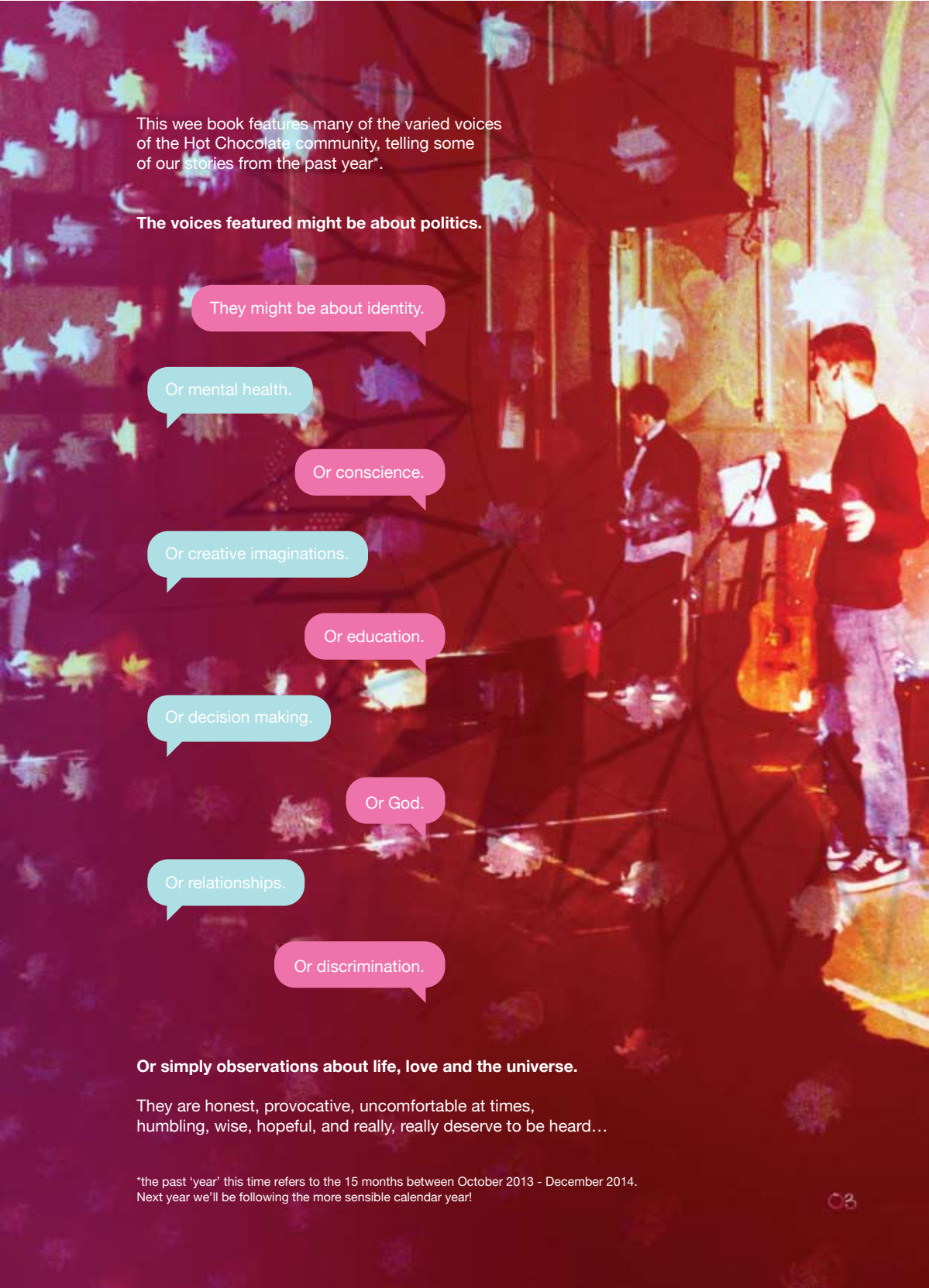
What if you disagree?

What difference could your voice make?

How can you be heard over the noise?

2014 was a pretty big year for Scotland, with a lot of people talking at once.

So we spent a lot of the year thinking about 'voices',  
and what it means to be one voice among many.



This wee book features many of the varied voices of the Hot Chocolate community, telling some of our stories from the past year\*.

**The voices featured might be about politics.**

They might be about identity.

Or mental health.

Or conscience.

Or creative imaginations.

Or education.

Or decision making.

Or God.

Or relationships.

Or discrimination.

**Or simply observations about life, love and the universe.**

They are honest, provocative, uncomfortable at times, humbling, wise, hopeful, and really, really deserve to be heard...

\*the past 'year' this time refers to the 15 months between October 2013 - December 2014. Next year we'll be following the more sensible calendar year!

# WHO WE ARE

AND WHAT'S IMPORTANT TO US

Hot Chocolate Trust is a dynamic youth work organisation based in the Steeple Church, Dundee. Since 2001, Hot Chocolate has worked with thousands of young people aged 12-21 who hang out in the city centre, building relationships and supporting them towards adulthood and positive futures.

## The way we work is pretty simple.

There are a few key things we think are really important, and so we always try to do youth work in a way that reflects them. These include...

1) Viewing young people as whole people: supporting their holistic development which realises physical, mental, emotional, social and spiritual potential

2) Growing a community with young people which is open, accepting and safe

3) Building relationships based on respect and trust, relationships which are voluntary and two-way

4) Ensuring that plans and activities are owned by young people, adapt with the culture, and bring about positive change for all involved

5) Embracing a culture of reflective learning where we learn from other people and organisations. We strive to learn from our own experiences (even our mistakes)

6) Knowing what we're good at (and not so good at): working with other people and organisations that can provide specialist opportunities for young people that we couldn't make happen on our own. You'll hear some of these fantastic partners' voices in the following pages too.

Hot Chocolate is open to all young people without prejudice or distinction of religion, race, culture, disability, gender, sexuality or politics.

The only restriction is age, we work with secondary school age up to 21 years old (although we do sometimes continue to work with folks on an individual basis after that).





## JAY'S STORY

I was scared of rejection, in case I lost a lot of people.  
There were constantly voices in my head saying 'don't do it' and 'don't tell people'.  
And it got to the stage that I really wasn't happy.

People used to get bullied so much because of their sexuality  
and that was one of the main reasons why I never came out.

But I had to tell someone.  
The first person I went to was my mum.

After I did it I felt like the world had been lifted right off my shoulders.

And it felt amazing because I was able to be me.  
I felt brilliant.

If anything, I've made more friends around Hot Chocolate because everyone is different.  
There's lots of people here who are the same sexuality as me and everyone's supportive.

Everybody's got secrets and I know lots of people that are still hiding a lot of things.  
But I want them to come out and be themselves instead of fearing.  
Because then they'll have the world lifted off their shoulders as well.  
And they'll feel free.

**Jay, 20**

# NORMAL WEEK

## OPEN SESSIONS:

TUESDAY 7-9pm

WEDNESDAY 7-9pm

SATURDAY 2-5pm

**INDIVIDUAL SUPPORT:**  
Normally 5-10 per week,  
arranged by appointment

**GROUPS & PROJECTS**  
Normally 1-3 per week,  
arranged at times suitable  
for young people

**OFFICE HOURS:**  
MON / THU / FRI 10am-5pm  
TUE / WED 10am-10pm  
SAT 12noon-6pm

**OPEN SESSIONS:** informal and unstructured drop-ins where young people come to build relationships, have a safe place to 'be', develop new skills, and explore new ways of thinking.

We come together as a family and we have a laugh. We speak about our lives and we express our ideas about what we want. We play pool, football, make art. There's a music room where you can learn how to play - and then you perform stuff. We use the kitchen to make cakes and pancakes and cheese toasties sometimes. I like that there's different things, and that we get to choose what we want to do.

I love coming down. It's where I meet new people and make friends. Before I used to be here I was really hyper and I'd get in a lot of trouble, in the house or out on the streets. At first the team were really strict with me which was good because I needed that. They're great and they've helped me a lot.

I've achieved a lot through this place - I feel like I've settled down a lot and can get on much better with people. When I started coming here I was a bit nervous because I was new and quite a lot younger. But I felt like I belonged. I felt like this is a good place that I want to be part of. **Jordan, 13**

**INDIVIDUAL SUPPORT (1-1s):** when a team member and a young person meet 1 to 1 to explore issues/interests/ambitions that matter.

1-1s help so much to relieve the stress of what you're dealing with. It's really helpful to have a different point of view - someone a bit older, who's not just a friend, to help you make decisions. I've been helped with every possible issue over the years - being homeless, finding jobs, getting to college, working through problems with friends and girlfriends. If you need help for anything, that's what 1-1s are for - the team makes it feel like we'll always figure a way around stuff together. **Liam, 21**

**GROUPS & PROJECTS:** are an important part of Hot Chocolate's life, responding to the needs and interests of the community particularly around art, music, sport, cooking, employment and health. Stand out moments this year have included: being on BBC Radio Scotland talking about Art & Culture; app testing for the V&A; catering for the Christmas Light Night festival; parent & babies groups; lots of research; songwriting, recording and performance groups; cleaning days; football, basketball and badminton tournaments; Youth Team gatherings; and a smoking cessation group... To name but a few.


Group work brings us and team closer. I think it definitely brings a lot of team building and communication skills to both young people and team. I enjoy group/project work - it's something for us all to work together on. **Lydia, 17**

**YOUTH TEAM:** a supported and accredited volunteering programme where young people take on extra responsibility and develop skills and confidence.

Hot Chocolate's had a huge impact on my life. I was on Youth Team 2014 and I did 100 hours of volunteering. In the future I would like to become a youth worker and so it was great to gain an insight into what the job really entails. I learnt that being a youth worker isn't as easy as it looks and it's not all fun - you have to do boring tasks as well. I also learnt that the hardest thing is actually giving the young people advice - I learnt this through carrying out mock 1-1s where they made up fake problems and I tried to help them. Being on youth team has given me more confidence and made me believe that pursuing a career in youth work is the right track for me as I've had a lot of positive feedback from the team. **Sam, 18**



home



I love coming to the Steeple because it's one of my favourite places ever, and I've met pretty much all my favourite people here. It's always been such a welcoming place to anyone.

**Catt, 17**

Steeple is like my second family. Home is where the grass is!

**Lydia, 17**

I was an outcast. Nobody liked me at school, and I struggled to fit in here at first but over time I've made some really good friends, that will stand by me and who have been like big brothers to me.

I've changed a lot since back then. I'm much more confident and outgoing.

**Dazz, 20**

This place has really changed me. It creates a place to push you out of your comfort zone, and helps you grow from being a young person to becoming a role model.


It's helped me realise that I can do this for the rest of my life. There'll always be guys younger than me who I might be able to give a bit of support.

**Liam, 21**

**Everyone can be themselves without being judged.**

**Kayleigh, 20**





This place is where my life started.  
My real life. Where I got to know  
who I really am and who I wanted to be.  
And who I realised I could become...

You never really leave Hot Chocolate.  
It becomes part of you.

**Jemma, 25**

You guys are interested in stuff  
just because we're interested in it.  
That's how much you care about us.

I've never known anyone to go out their way,  
for no apparent reason, just to make me happy.

**Ross, 21**

If I didn't have Hot Chocolate  
the last couple of years of my life  
would be completely different.  
I wouldn't have met anyone I am close  
with today.

I wouldn't have the job I have now  
and I wouldn't have my flat.  
My life would be completely different.

**Alex, 20**

I was off my head on drugs  
when I heard my brother's voice  
on the phone, calling me to the hospital.

I held my dad's hand as he died.  
And I told him I was going to make him proud.  
And I really think I am.

**Anon**

# OTHER REGULAR STUFF

**HOSPITALITY:** We love having visitors, and we host people a lot. They might be partners, funders, groups of students, church leaders, or other youth workers, or... The list is endless.

When I was on Youth Team I did a lot of different challenges, like hosting visitors from other agencies. I make a real effort with visitors and with new young people, coz I remember what it was like to be new. **Dazz, 20**

From my many visits to Hot Chocolate I have always found the team to be very enthusiastic, committed and empowering for the young people of Dundee. They are a great example of how faith based organisations can have a very positive role to play for working with LGBT+ young people, not only by ensuring that their voices are heard but also creating a safe and welcoming space for them to explore their own identities. I look forward to many more projects with Hot Chocolate in the near future. **Barry Jordan, LGBT Youth Scotland**

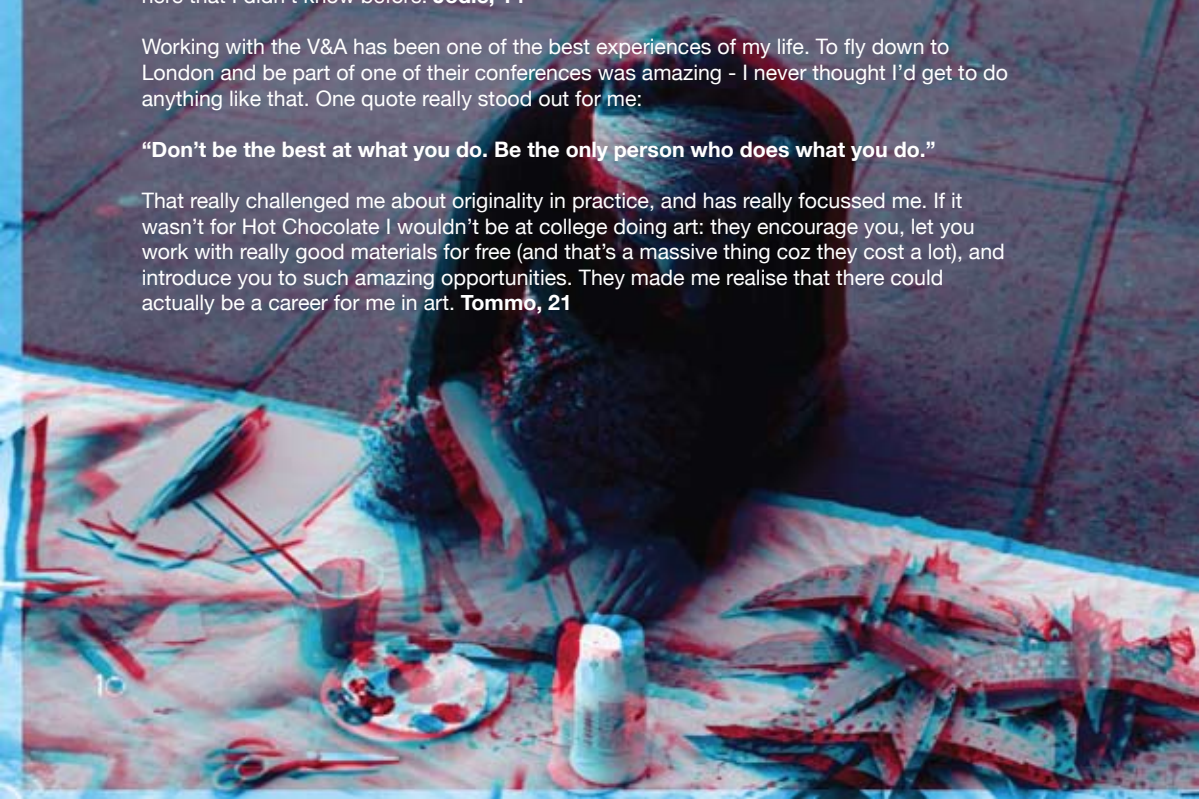
**ART:** Hot Chocolate seems to attract artists, both young people and team alike. This year has been an exciting one for art. We've done a bunch of interesting projects, managed two creative residencies and have worked closely with the V&A Dundee.

I like the art room. I find it difficult meeting new people, so I like the fact that it's a bit of a quieter space. I've been making a canvas, and Jo was showing me tonight how to do print making. I've not done that before. Team are really friendly - I like them a lot. And I find it a bit easier now that I'm getting to know new people - and I've even met my second cousin here that I didn't know before! **Jodie, 14**

Working with the V&A has been one of the best experiences of my life. To fly down to London and be part of one of their conferences was amazing - I never thought I'd get to do anything like that. One quote really stood out for me:

**"Don't be the best at what you do. Be the only person who does what you do."**

That really challenged me about originality in practice, and has really focussed me. If it wasn't for Hot Chocolate I wouldn't be at college doing art: they encourage you, let you work with really good materials for free (and that's a massive thing coz they cost a lot), and introduce you to such amazing opportunities. They made me realise that there could actually be a career for me in art. **Tommo, 21**



## LUKE'S STORY

My mum's had a problem with alcohol for as long as I can remember. I found her in her bed once and thought she was dead. I might not have lost a loved one physically, but I've certainly lost her mentally. The drink has caused psychosis - she sometimes thinks that people are after her and want to kill her. It's a really scary thing to watch. I don't even know who she is anymore. I've learnt just to take every day as it comes. You have to when you think that someone you love might be dead the next day.

Recently, I've had to make the decision to draw a line and cut her off. She'll try to phone, but she'll be drunk. And I just can't handle it anymore. I feel like I have to be strong for my sister, so I keep smiling. I can't stand to see her hurt. But it's hard coz I live with my gran now and she lives with our older brother, so I don't get to see her much.

I feel really angry all the time. All the time. It's like it's always there, just below the surface. And you never know when I'll erupt. Sometimes I shout, sometimes I get violent, sometimes I walk away. It depends how I'm feeling that day. My highs are really high and my lows are really low. The doctor thinks it's probably bipolar, since it runs in the family.

Mine is a horrible situation. But it's not the worst situation to be in and I don't want sympathy from people. I have a new level of compassion for other people that are struggling. Coz I've been through hell myself. Until someone else has been in your shoes, they have no clue how it feels.

It's important not to bottle things up. It's better to get things out.

I feel safe talking about my stuff at Hot Chocolate. I feel like I've got trust in people here. I know that they'll really listen to you, and they'll give you advice and help you see what you can actually do about it. People are there for you. They're not just trying to get information from me, they're trying to help me figure out what's best. If I lose the plot, they'd help me stay calm. The team don't treat me like they're the adult and I'm the child. They see me like an equal. That's why I like speaking here, why I feel safe here.

This place has been a really good experience for my life actually. I used to walk past it and think that I'd never be part of it, that I'd never be accepted, because everyone seemed so tight, so close. But it's given me hope that there are people like this in the world - so there must be more people like that out there. Kind hearted people who genuinely do care.

**It's changed my perspective on life.**

Hot Chocolate supports young people to set short and long term goals towards learning and employment opportunities. This happens specifically through a jobs/training folder, partnering with a range of organisations around development opportunities, support with CV writing and development, interview preparation, and arranging volunteering/work experience.

Hot Chocolate means a lot to me. At the time I was failing my exams with little hope and a lot of issues going on, the team made me realise where I wanted to be in life. Now, I'm training to be a nurse, I do befriending, have a full time job and will also be at university next year! Hot Chocolate gives young people in Dundee hope and a place to belong no matter what style, skin tone, back story or opinion. They just bring a home away from home.

**Elise, 18**

If anyone needs help, speak to someone at Hot Chocolate about it - I did and it's the best thing I have ever done. I was working alongside Jules to build better family relationships and apply for college. I wouldn't be where I am today without the support of Jules - she's so supportive and friendly. Hot Chocolate has just helped me so much.

**Gemma, 21**

I enjoy school, but I find it really stressful. I get good grades and my attendance is brilliant, but I have a problem with some of the teachers who say that I seem 'set to fail'. I feel so much pressure about it - sometimes its so bad that I want to spew, or it feels like my body shuts down and all I can do is sleep. Hot Chocolate is the place where I can escape, where I don't feel the stress. They help me to keep going.

**Rhori, 15**

When I first came down here I was 14 and it felt like I didn't have a care in the world. I was only in school about one day a week - I had a really bad attitude, had been banned from all my departments and I hated everybody there. My life was about drink, parties and drugs. I stopped all that when I was 18, when I started my career in hairdressing. I knew that's what I really wanted to do - and I knew that I couldn't make it if I was still high from the night before. I got an apprenticeship and went to college for two years - which was quite hard after so long out of school. But I was really focussed. Hot Chocolate's really helped me over the years with my mental health, college, finding work, relationship stuff. It's where you can let it all out. It's a place of security and relief: you know that once you're in here you're safe.

**Kenny, 21**

# WEEKENDS AWAY

This year we did an ambitious four residential weekends: a wee group flew to London to work with the V&A; the Youth Team learnt new skills around planning, leading and enterprise; some artists and musicians got, well, musical and arty; and a big group headed to Ardeonaig to throw themselves off high ropes courses, build (and sink) rafts, and explore the theme of being an Outsider. Here's what was said about them:

I understand better that there are a lot of really nice people who care about me.

I've come to reflect on my attitudes towards people.

I realise now how sh\*t it feels to be an outsider for some people.

I've become closer with a lot of people - ones I didn't expect to..

I realised even more how important Hot Chocolate is for me.

It's changed me as a person and I socialise more.

Fantastic weekend - best I've had in a long time even without alcohol!

The creative weekends are great because they showcase what we can achieve. We invite friends & family to have an insight and see what we express - this lets them see what life is like for us and helps them understand us. They are often surprised by what they see and hear, and by the community of Hot Chocolate.

London was actually the most amazing experience of my life, so many amazing things and so much stuff to do. It kinda sucks that its over but will deffo go back sometime and would just like to thank the V&A for making all this happen.

I feel so privileged to have been chosen for this amazing opportunity!!

I can see the comparison between my attitude on my last visit here and who I am now - it feels good like.

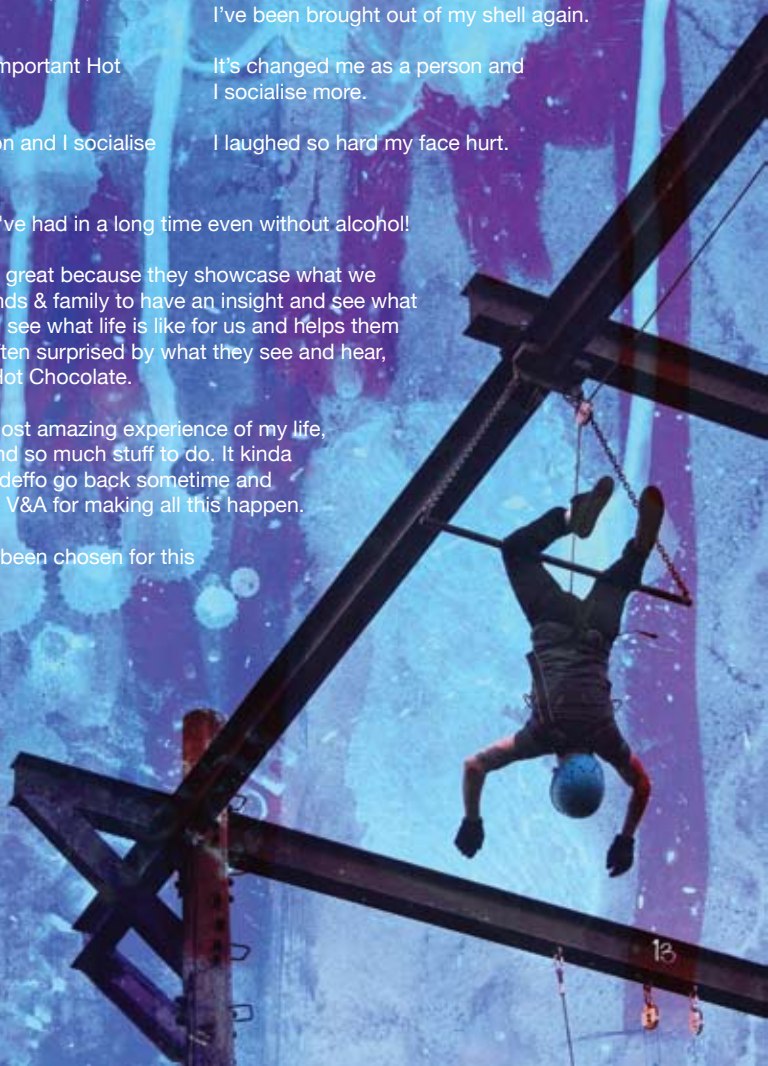
This has helped me escape pressures in Dundee.

I realise just how much my life has changed.

I've been brought out of my shell again.

It's changed me as a person and I socialise more.

I laughed so hard my face hurt.



**EXODUS:** is our three-week summer programme, where the young people take a theme (Surround Sound: One Voice Among Many) and break it down into different questions to explore through art, discussion, songwriting, video making, trips, and cooking meals together.

#### HOW WE USED OUR VOICE(S)

I was new here in Exodus. I found it hard to speak to people and I wasn't sure if they liked me or not. One of the older young people went around everyone in Hot Chocolate and asked them what they thought about me, and to write me a note. Then he gave them to me and when I read them I gave him a massive hug. It made me feel like I really belonged! I still have them in my jewellery box and I look at them any time I'm feeling a bit down.

**Tammie, 14**

**POLITICS!** A couple of political people [Jenny Marra MSP & Gord Matheson] came in to chat with us about the Scottish referendum, but I still didn't feel I got all the answers I wanted.

So I went on the trip to the Scottish Parliament a few days later - I wanted to see what they actually do. I found out a bunch of stuff - like the first ever Scottish Parliament was in the 1200s. They asked us to think about which powers ran under Scotland or Westminster. That made me think that we should have more powers - it really challenged me about what actually needs to change.

**Bronn, 17**

I feel like in a big debate like the referendum politicians don't always listen to what young people have to say, which is not what happened at this debate. We had very little information and the conversation came as a huge help to understand some of the issues.

**Simon, 20**

I AM HUMAN.

I AM SLEEPY.

I AM RADICAL.

I AM NOT HOMER SIMPSON.

I AM A BIT CRAZY.

I AM A WRECKING BALL.

I AM FANTASTIC.

I AM CURIOUS.

I AM THE ODD ONE OUT.

I AM THE RESULT OF A FAILED CONTRACEPTION.

I AM WEIRD.

I AM A DIFFERENT BREED.

I AM A CARRIER OF STORIES.

I AM PARTLY DEFINED BY IMAGES AND SOUNDS AROUND ME.

I AM A CHAMELEON.

I AM CONFUSED.

I AM A LEGEND.

I AM NOT A MAN OF WORDS.

I AM A MAN OF MANY WORDS.

**TRIPS!** I went to Edinburgh Skatepark and skated for the first time. It was really good because it was the first time I'd ever taken part - I'd just been too scared before. But Ana did one of the ramps and then challenged me to do it - she kinda blackmailed me in a nice way! I overcame my fear and I want to do it again actually. I was quite new at Hot Chocolate, but through Exodus I've really got to know Ana (and Jo too in the Art Room), and they've been meeting with me and helping me with a whole bunch of stuff. It's been really good. **Zoe, 17**

**MUSIC!** I got really involved in the music stuff - when I played it felt like I was in another world. I had a lot of stuff going on at the time, and Exodus just felt like a way to escape.  
Lee, 21

**FILM-MAKING!** I came up with an idea to make a film about my experience of growing up, being brave, coming out - finally becoming who I actually am. I wanted to make a film to help other people overcome their fears. A lot of my pals were crying when they watched it. It made me feel good about myself because people had actually listened.  
Jay, 20

**COOKING!** I did some cooking at Exodus for a Friday night meal. I hadn't really done that before, except at school. I liked it though - I'd like to do some more of that.  
Robbie, 13

**ART!** We made around 400 origami birds and then hung them from the ceiling of the chilling room as an installation piece. Every bird represented a different voice, opinion, belief, hope, or prayer. Some people were struggling to make the origami birds, but I knew an easier way, so I taught loads of people. I enjoyed it - and it was mental to see them all hanging up. It was good seeing all the ones I'd taught people how to make.  
Rhori, 16

I AM A WEAPON.

I AM WILD AND FREE.

I AM COMPASSIONATE.

I AM NOT RIGHT.

I AM MUSICAL.

I AM DESPICABLE.

I AM ADVENTUROUS.

I AM PHILOSOPHICAL.

I AM A MUG.

I AM TIRED.

I AM HAPPY.

**SPOKEN WORD!** A poet called Oli joined us for a couple of days and inspired us to use our voices in poetic form...

# EXODUS

# NEW THINGS

ASKING,  
LISTENING,  
DOING ...

As we mentioned earlier, Hot Chocolate works hard to be aware of culture, trends, needs and opportunities. This year, we've carried out a lot of research with the young people and team, and have developed some really exciting new areas of work in response to the voices we heard...

**MUSIC:** The young people said they wanted to do more music projects, so we got some funding and appointed Nicole (a former HC young person who did her first ever gig in the Steeple and went on to do a degree in music!) as Hot Chocolate's first ever music worker.

Music for me is really emotional. It's a hobby. It's expressive. If I didn't have music, I don't think I'd even be here - it's helped me through a lot of really bad times. Nicole has brought so much to the music here. To have someone here all the time with really good skills and approaches is brilliant. Before, the music room was mainly for jamming and band practice, but now there's a lot more focus.

**Airon, 16**

I was involved with the creative weekend away and a few gigs. There I wrote my first song and got it recorded...which was awesome. Having Nicole as a music worker is fab cos without her I'd probably have no input with music at all.

All the music stuff I got involved with really helped my confidence and I met a whole bunch of amazing people.

**Hannah, 19**

I got involved in the Advent showcase. Me and Nicole wrote a song about expectations. She wrote the lyrics, I wrote the music and we performed it together. Having a music worker has made a huge difference to Hot Chocolate - the music room's a lot busier and there's always something going on, which has helped me do what I really love to do.

**Andi, 20**

The whole of 2014, I was going through the most emotional stuff of my life. It was about my dad. He's never been there for me. And after seven years of silence he got in touch and then disappeared again. That hurt me so much it was unbelievable. I suffer from anxiety and depression, and I tried everything I could at that point to try to harm myself. After two weeks of that, I went to the doctors and I got help. I went on the music weekend not long after. I had a big heart to heart with Jo & Andy, and I actually wrote a song about my dad. I got really good feedback, really good. People loved it. I think music is the most powerful thing, because it's about emotion and connection. When I performed the song, people were singing along, and I saw that some of the other young people who have gone through similar stuff were really relating to it. That felt really good. Music saved my life. And if I ever make it as a musician, I'll only have this place to thank.

**Ross, 21**



### **PARENTS:**

This year we also wanted to make sure that the young people who have kids could feel more connected to Hot Chocolate, especially during Exodus. So we made some plans with the parents and with the St Andrews Family Project, and made it happen!

I took part in a few parent and children sessions during Exodus. I really enjoyed getting out of the house as my little girl was only a few weeks old. It was good to do activities with other mums and their kids. My favourite part of it all was seeing my daughter smile for the first time. I hope Hot Chocolate can organise something like this again. **Sarah, 20**

### **HITTING THE STREETS:**

Hot Chocolate started back in 2001 by taking cups of hot chocolate out to the grass, to meet the young people where they were at - both metaphorically and geographically! This past year we noticed that the dynamics of young people in the city centre had changed quite a bit, so we left the comfort of our building and headed out to the streets, to once again meet new young people where they were at. (This is called 'detached' youth work.)

Hot Chocolate has really pushed itself in the past year to get out of its comfort zone and meet new young people. It really started with one of the themes we were exploring of 'The Outsider' and we've built on it since. We thought a lot about that verse from the Bible that says "I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was in prison and you visited me, I was hungry and you fed me". That's exactly what we do here.

**Jo, Youth Worker (Arts)**

We first came down here a few weeks ago coz a friend came who met some of the youth workers on the street. When we walked through the door we thought, what have we done? It seemed so loud. But everyone was really nice & welcoming. I went straight into the kitchen and made cookies which was really appealing to me coz I love cooking. And we love hanging out in the music room and listening to what's going on up there.

**Bethany, 16 & Chantelle, 16**

I love Hot Chocolate. It's different. Why? It's the DNA. The team do the rare thing of \*going to\* the young people. Of being with them where they are. Of listening. And of then inviting the young people to shape what happens next. What inspires this difference? I think it's that they follow the example of Jesus who met people where they were and lived in the midst of community, sharing His life and bringing hope.

**Helen Brough, Forge Scotland**



# NEW THINGS

ASKING,  
LISTENING,  
DOING ...

## **NHS RESEARCH INTO 'LEGAL HIGHS':**

**Hot Chocolate has been involved with a piece of work NHS Tayside has been undertaking, looking at the impact of new psychoactive substances in the area and considering how to improve support for those affected by them.**

I met some of the young people and they shared with me their honest experiences, observations and wisdom. Their voices are powerful but not often heard - what they were telling me was so rich, full of impact and insightful. Their voices will be heard in a soon-to-be-published report\* where they will be able to see directly the value of their contributions to influence health policy. I believe Hot Chocolate has an important role to play regarding the health and wellbeing of young people in Dundee - they create a safe space where young people who don't readily engage with services receive support, where their voices are heard, and where their life chances are improved.

**Dr Emma Fletcher, Specialty Registrar in Public Health, NHS Tayside**

\*UPDATE: this report has now been published, and was recently debated in Parliament, where Hot Chocolate got a specific shout out for being such an excellent contributor! Whoop!

For once, young people actually spoke and have been heard. Normally we're asked questions, but it feels like no-one's really listening. But what I've said has actually gone somewhere and will actually make a difference this time. I feel pleased that we've been taken seriously, and that Hot Chocolate as an organisation has been bigged up in parliament.

**Liam, 21**

## **SOUL CHOCOLATE:**

**Hot Chocolate is a Christian organisation, offering opportunities to explore spirituality and the Christian faith for anyone who is interested.**

Soul Chocolate is a new group that meets around once a month to share our thoughts about spirituality. You don't have to be a Christian, and I think that's really cool - it's refreshing to hear other people's views. Every time we've met it's been really different: doing a labyrinth on St Andrews beach; having meals in the Steeple; spending time in an art exhibition. I'd have never thought about putting art and spirituality together, but it's really made me think differently.

My spirituality's grown through Soul Chocolate. It's made me think about God and Jesus in a different way. Somehow they seem more relatable to me. It feels like it's started at just the right time - like lots of people are asking some of these questions at the moment. It feels like something's emerging, and it's exciting to be a part of.

**Laura, Volunteer**

### OLD 'UNs:

Another big development this year has been working with some of Hot Chocolate's former young people (who have moved on due to age or circumstance). We spent a lot of time meeting with them and listening to their experiences of being young in Dundee, and what their lives are like now. We made a series of short films, featuring their voices and stories. These are incredibly powerful - and we hope to be able to share them with key decision/policy makers in order to improve some of the opportunities and services for young people. Here's one of those stories:


I was a mosher. From a really young age I dressed in black and listened to heavy metal music. People often assume that moshers are just attention seeking, but we were that way because we felt angry, upset, dark. So of course we were going to drink, smoke, and do what people told us not to do. I had gone through so much stuff in my life even by that point, that I hadn't told anyone about. My mum had chucked me out and basically given up on me. I had no authority figure to tell me to stop. I was just dossing about at friends houses and going to parties. So for me being a mosher was an outlet so that people would maybe recognise that I wasn't feeling great. I wore black because I felt black. I didn't listen to happy songs because I didn't feel happy.

My drug of choice was always ecstasy - it helped me feel happy and love life. It started as recreational, but quickly it went far too far. Me being normal became recreational. I was taking all kinds of stuff - who knew what was even in them? It was just reckless abandon. I thought it was my freedom.

There was stuff that was so painful, I still don't know if I'll ever come to terms with it. But through taking drugs back then, it meant that I could constantly forget. One time when I was on a lot of painkillers I was clipping my nails and caught my finger. I was bleeding but couldn't feel it. I was proper numb - and that's the way I wanted to feel. I finally stopped that destructive behaviour after a really scary experience of a huge drug bender that landed me in hospital. I saw videos of me that my friends had made, and I just didn't recognise myself. I started distancing myself from that peer group, and I started confronting my depression. The drugs had been hiding it from me, but they'd also made it worse. It's been a really hard few years since then, but I feel that I'm coming out of it now. I've had a lot of help from my doctor and my partner too.

You guys at Hot Chocolate never judged us for drinking or taking drugs. You understood that we don't need someone to tell us off. We needed help through it - not to be told that what we're doing is wrong and we shouldn't be doing it, but to help us explore why we were doing it, what our other options might be, and what our dreams for life are. We could come to you about anything. I remember going through a really sh\*t time when I was homeless. I hadn't slept for three or four days, and one of the team took me up to the Lily Walker Centre to help me get housing. I felt so bad that I kept falling asleep, but the team made sure what needed to happen, happened. Another time I had no money and hadn't eaten for days, and you gave me some food. That was five years ago and I still remember that, your kindness to me. It's amazing how little things can proper make an impact on people. You had open arms. It didn't matter what our problem was, or when it was, you guys were there.

**We hung out in town because we weren't wanted and we weren't loved.  
But you guys made us feel wanted and loved.**



A friend brought me here coz he told me there was a drum kit. I started coming & we formed a band. I've been involved in youth projects before, but never anything quite like this. This place feels more geared for older youth who are living in the real world and dealing with real issues. Team are awesome, they treat you like an adult - you're given the respect you deserve.

**Nathanael, 20**

**Hot Chocolate  
makes me feel like  
hot chocolate.**

**Robbie, 13**

This place could be under a cardboard box, and we'd still be a family.

It shows that everyone can come under the 'roof of the Lord' and still be accepted, whether you believe in God or not.

It doesn't feel like a church, it feels like a home.

**Jenna, 15**

I've been watching the young folk on the grass for years from my taxi. It's hardly ever them that cause any bother - I see other people coming and trying to start things with them. I see the ones who have been around for years starting to look after the younger ones. I see people coming out after your doors shut to pick up the litter, taking care of the place.

**Taxi driver, from the rank outside  
the Steeple, October 2014**

The voices tell me to harm myself,  
to not believe people.  
And the shadow follows me around.  
The psychiatrist tries to help.  
But it doesn't seem to work.

**Anon**

My favourite thing about Hot Chocolate is that  
you're never left out - everyone speaks to you  
and you always feel welcome.

**Claudia, 17**

I started coming down here a year ago and  
I thought 'what the f\*\*\* am I doing here?'  
But I started to get to know people and  
make pals. It's affy good.

If this place wasn't here I'd probably just stay  
in my bed coz I'm dead lazy.  
But Eilaine's helped me find  
a job & stick with it.

**Kelsea B, 16**

**It's not the taste,  
it's the consistency.**

**Rhori, 16**

# TEAM VOICES

Hot Chocolate has a brilliant team, full of creative and skilled people, who are deeply committed to the young people. It may sound cheesy, but we really do share life together: in the good times and the bad.

Hot Chocolate has been my saving grace in the last 18 months. It's so full of amazing people, who really put things in perspective even in the tough times. I've been learning more about what grace means: there's always a reason for why people do what they do.

**Ding, Volunteer**

February 2014 was a really hard time for us because Sarah, one of our old friends and team members, died. She had left Dundee a few years ago, but a lot of us had some really great memories of her: cooking up a storm in the kitchen or looking after everyone on the Glenshee weekend away or discussing theology. We miss her a lot. It was a real honour for her family to invite us to the memorial service, and ask for donations in her name to be gifted to Hot Chocolate. The young people saw how affected we were by it all, and they really rallied around us - I remember Mykailo even bringing us some homemade soup. That's what we mean by sharing life, I guess.

**Charis, Assistant Director**

I'm a nurse, so I keep a wee eye on the young people's health and chat to them sometimes about things like smoking or drinking or diabetes. I just love the community and the obvious care that is felt by everyone. I've been on a massive learning curve - both in terms of the young people, but also in terms of myself.

**Rachel M, Parish Nurse**

Hot Chocolate has helped me understand who I really am.

**Blair, Volunteer**

I really like the atmosphere of Hot Chocolate, and I think it's really important. It's relaxed and open and safe. It's a Christian organisation, but you don't have to be Christian to be welcomed and respected - I've not experienced that before. I can really be myself here.

**Elika, Volunteer**

I credit Hot Chocolate for making me more confident and outgoing than when I was younger. I was cripplingly shy. But having adults who valued what I was saying, were non-judgemental, and who gave me a lot of responsibility and trust really helped me. So I wanted to volunteer, to give something back. I've learnt a lot.

I'm now applying for a Postgrad in teaching, and I think this experience will really help me.

**Rachel P, Volunteer & Former HC Young Person**

This year (15 months!) Hot Chocolate has worked with over 300 young people & alumni (around 120 per month). Approximately...

200  
in the building

50  
on the streets

60  
22+ year olds

There have been...

186  
open sessions

10  
detached sessions

Not counting additional holiday sessions. Average of 25 young people per session.

424  
1-1s

68 different young people

85  
groups

80 different young people

120

grown in self-worth

118

grown in self-knowledge

133

improved their social skills

We have worked with 106 young people & alumni 'in depth' through...

27 different young people

04  
weekends away

16  
on youth team

Hot Chocolate is all about making a difference.

In the past year, we have supported young people to increase and improve in the following ways:

increased understanding that they can positively impact their lives and communities

acted to positively impact their lives and communities

increased ability to plan ahead and stick to goals

119

110

98

grown in their awareness and understanding of their spirituality

Hot Chocolate has also supported many young people to move on to 'positive destinations'...

19

started education

43

started employment

18

started training

43

started volunteering

58

supported to sustain their 'positive destination' despite significant barriers (e.g. financial, housing, family)

27

From time to time (i.e. these are very conservative numbers) we take a wee note of the numbers of conversations we have around different issues in a session. In the past 15 months we had...

829 chats about alcohol

613 chats about smoking

593 chats about drugs

684 chats about education

760 chats about employment

325 chats about mental health

610 chats about family

501 chats about confidence

390 chats about bullying

292 chats about sex

258 chats about lgbt

# BOARD VOICES

I am privileged to report on a successful year of Board activity. We have been joined by Amy and Stephen who have rapidly settled into their respective roles and responsibilities. Our Leadership Team is now in place with Amy and Rich as Vice Chairs leading our key scrutiny support groups. These groups actively manage designated governance and strategic development functions, providing the full Board with recommendations for decisions on a planned quarterly basis. We are now refining how we report the core youth work practice to the Board, and we will pilot this in 2015.

We have implemented the recommendations from our previous Board Review, and I am very pleased that the Board has developed a new self evaluation process, to ensure the ongoing development of its members and collective function. This has been piloted by the Leadership Team, helping focus our work planning at a governance level. And we will complete this self evaluation pilot at a group level in 2015, before using the information generated to enhance our contribution to the organisation.

We continue to value and appreciate the time and expertise freely offered by our Board, and I am particularly grateful to our Executive Director Dave Close and all our staff who continue to support the work of the Board. We continue to value the ongoing support from our friends at the Steeple Church, and from the new minister the Rev. Robert Calvert and the Kirk Session. We also hugely appreciate the external support both financially, and in kind, from our sponsors and volunteers, without which we could not do the crucial work that we do.

The reports of young lives being radically changed continues to reinforce the work of our Board in our Lord's service. Each of us have been humbled by the enormous passion and empathy of our front line staff and volunteers/helpers who never lose their belief in the capacity of young people to grow into maturity in realising their potential to change and improve their future in the face of adversity.

We have no doubt that 2015 will continue to provide us with challenges and rewards which we will endeavour to meet with confidence.

In His service,  
**Tony Boffey (on behalf of the Hot Chocolate Board)**

Mr Tony Boffey	Chairperson
Mr Richard McCallum	Treasurer and Vice-Chairperson
Mrs Rebecca Brawley	
Mrs Alison Cartwright	retired June 2014
Mr Stephen Elwell-Sutton	from March 2014
Mrs Deborah Farley	
Ms Lynda Forte	
Mr Joe Lafferty	from March 2014
Mrs Amy McDonald	retired March 2014
Mr John McIntosh	retired March 2014
Miss Heather McKenzie	retired December 2013

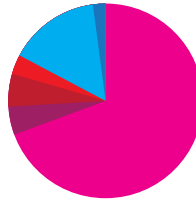


At Hot Chocolate, we couldn't do what we do without the generous grants and donations from our funders and donors. Most of our money is spent on salaries, as in order to build and deepen relationships with young people, we need to spend time with them.

As with most charities, we need to do a lot of fundraising so we can continue to respond to the young people's needs.

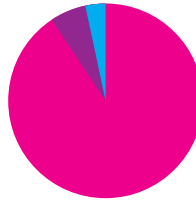
**At Hot Chocolate, we have been grateful to receive funding, donations, or donations in kind during our 15 month financial period (1st October 2013 – 31st December 2014) from the following funders, fundraisers and donors:**

Alliance Trust  
 AM Pilkington Charitable Trust  
 Avian Communications Ltd  
 Awards for All  
 Bank of Scotland Foundation  
 BBC Children in Need  
 Big Lottery Fund: Young Start  
 Cash4Communities  
 CashBack for Communities  
 CCS Datacare  
 Church of Scotland  
 Creative Scotland: Youth Music Initiative  
 David Johnstone and the RBS bakers  
 Deutsche Bank  
 Dundee City Council  
 29th Dundee Ogilvie Brownies  
 Faith in Scotland Community Action Fund  
 Hedley Foundation  
 Inchrye Trust  
 Inspiring Scotland  
 Lifetree (Scotland) Ltd  
 Lloyds TSB Foundation for Scotland  
 Mathew Trust  
 Miss EC Hendry Charitable Trust  
 O2  
 People and Communities Fund  
 Richard Young  
 RJ Larg Family Trust  
 Robertson Trust  
 Saints and Sinners Club of Scotland  
 Scott McCallum  
 Scottish Council for Voluntary Organisations  
 Souter Charitable Trust  
 St Katharine's Fund  
 St Mary's Thompson Charitable Fund  
 Tay Charitable Trust  
 The Astor Foundation  
 The Christina Mary Hendrie Trust  
 The family and friends of Sarah Fletcher  
 The Moffat Charitable Trust  
 The Steeple Church: Dundee  
 (Church of Scotland)  
 The Tillyloss Trust  
 The Tudor Trust  
 Victoria and Albert Museum  
 and all our individual donors



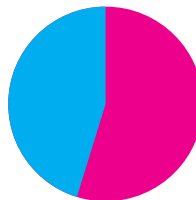
**Analysis of Income 2013-14**

£408,749	Total Income
£284,534	Restricted Grants
£18,400	Unrestricted Grants
£23,589	Gift Aid Donations and Tax
£9,495	Other Donations
£66,156	Donated Services
£6,575	Other Income



**Analysis of Expenses 2013-14**

£354,482	Total Expenses
£325,662	Charitable Activities
£17,815	Costs of Generating Funds
£11,005	Governance Costs



**Funds at 31 December 2014**

£116,486	Total Funds
£60,087	Unrestricted Funds
£56,399	Restricted Funds

\*The eagle-eyed amongst you might have noticed that our income and expenditure is a bit higher than in previous years. This is partly due to the figures covering a 15 month period, partly due to building our reserves in line with our long term financial planning, and partly due to specific discrete projects we've taken on during this time frame.



## ASKING, LISTENING, DOING, **LEARNING & SHARING ...**

**Hot Chocolate loves learning.** It happens every day, through listening to the young people, reflecting on what we're doing, grappling with theory, and working with others who challenge and sharpen our practice. We also love to share what we're learning. So whether it's through taking on interns or students on placement, sharing some of the short films we've made, teaching in the university, collaborating with other organisations, or presenting at conferences - we are committed to help grow the values and practice of radical community development throughout Scotland (and beyond).

Hot Chocolate is full of competent, skilled, effective and flexible folks with a fantastic handle on innovation that is generated from the ground up. They ask all the right questions and are continually trying out new ideas. Because they work so closely with young people in a person-centred, relationship based way, they generate invaluable insights that you just don't get elsewhere. The energy from Hot Chocolate is infectious. Their ideas spark little fires in others who are then encouraged to be creative and bold too.

**Lisa Pattoni, Institute of Research and Innovation in Social Services**

I'm an Additional Support Needs Assistant for an off-site education service. I love my job - it can be stressful sometimes, but it's good. Hot Chocolate really helped prepare me for it. I'd volunteered here for a couple of years before, so in my interview I spent my whole time talking about Hot Chocolate. I've had so many opportunities here and gained so much experience. It's been great.

**Colin, Volunteer**

Hot Chocolate is having a big impact on my practice. It's a real skill to have a conversation and engage meaningfully with someone you don't know. I think what we do here, and how we do it, is really important.

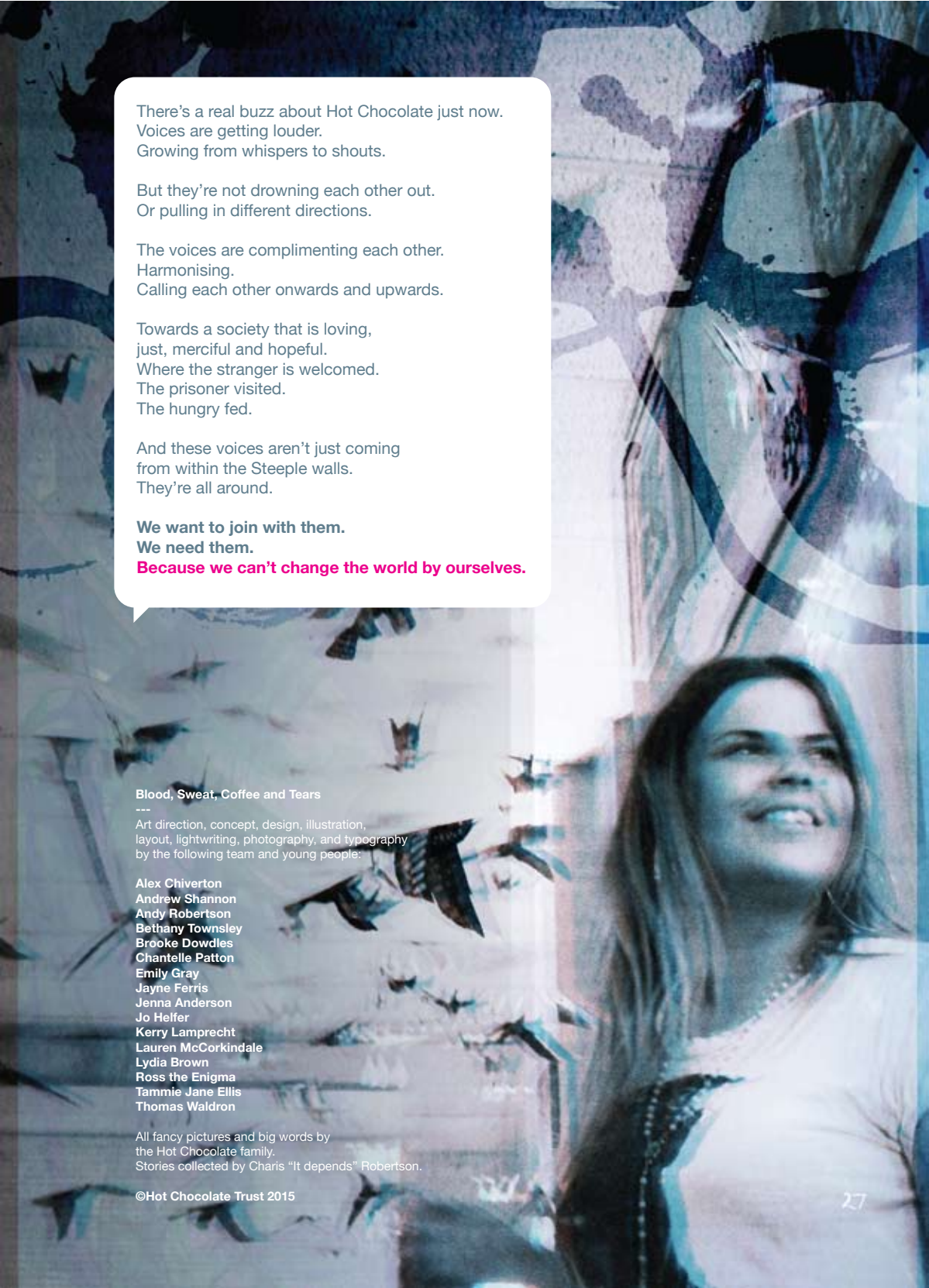
**Peter, Student**

My first experience here had a profound impact on me. I just knew I wanted to be more involved. Since then I've done lots of things here, but the Creative Weekend was one of the most rewarding things I've ever done in my life. I've actually just quit my job because I want to focus more on community work. I'm going to do an internship here and build up experience so I can do a Masters in Community Learning and Development.

**Ross, Volunteer**

What we teach in the classroom about community work is what you are really doing in practice. You make it come alive, and keep my mind awake and alert to what it's really about. When the students come back from placement to the classroom, they bring back an awareness around power dynamics, working with and not for, respect, political change - they come back with radical practice. Some are visibly rattled by what they've learnt, but I think that's a good thing.

**Jean McEwen-Short, Lecturer in Community Learning and Development, Dundee University**



There's a real buzz about Hot Chocolate just now.  
Voices are getting louder.  
Growing from whispers to shouts.

But they're not drowning each other out.  
Or pulling in different directions.

The voices are complimenting each other.  
Harmonising.  
Calling each other onwards and upwards.

Towards a society that is loving,  
just, merciful and hopeful.  
Where the stranger is welcomed.  
The prisoner visited.  
The hungry fed.

And these voices aren't just coming  
from within the Steeple walls.  
They're all around.

**We want to join with them.**  
**We need them.**  
**Because we can't change the world by ourselves.**

#### Blood, Sweat, Coffee and Tears

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Art direction, concept, design, illustration,  
layout, lightwriting, photography, and typography  
by the following team and young people:

Alex Chiverton  
Andrew Shannon  
Andy Robertson  
Bethany Townsley  
Brooke Dowdles  
Chantelle Patton  
Emily Gray  
Jayne Ferris  
Jenna Anderson  
Jo Helfer  
Kerry Lamprecht  
Lauren McCorkindale  
Lydia Brown  
Ross the Enigma  
Tammie Jane Ellis  
Thomas Waldron

All fancy pictures and big words by  
the Hot Chocolate family.  
Stories collected by Charis "It depends" Robertson.

avian

are proud to sponsor  
Hot Chocolate Trust

Hot Chocolate Trust  
The Steeple, Nethergate, Dundee  
DD1 4DG

01382 223 880  
admin@hotchocolate.org.uk  
www.hotchocolate.org.uk

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ONE VOICE AMONG MANY