



HOT
CHOCOLATE
TRUST

METAMOR



PHOSIS

Annual
Report
2016

Metamorphosis

noun me-ta-mor-fo-sis \me-ta-mor-fo-sis\

1: Something sciencey.

2: Something morphing into something else.

3: It's the thing with the butterfly! Caterpillar, cocoon, butterfly!!!

4: It's about transforming, changing, becoming something else.

5: A complete change.

6: The process by which the young form of some animals develops into the adult form.

Pretty much the whole point of adolescence is to navigate change: from a child to an adult, from dependence to independence to own identity and values and way in this world.

These life changes may be inevitable, but they're definitely not easy, as many of the stories and experiences of young people in the following pages will demonstrate.

It's also been a year of change for Hot Chocolate. Our space has changed. Our team has changed. Our world has changed. So the theme of METAMORPHOSIS has been timely.

This wee book tells the story of our journey through 2016. Young people, team and partners will share their experiences and insights about how we have changed, both as individuals and as a community. Prepare yourself to be challenged, humbled, broken and inspired.

**Welcome to Metamorphosis:
turn and face the strange.**



The first four definitions are from HC young people, the last two from the Cambridge dictionary. The young people were pretty spot on, as usual...



I think a lot of people come here in the week to escape a lot of what's going on at home or at school or in their head. The few short hours you have when it's open is probably the best escape you get all week. I try to explain this place to people and they're like 'is it a youth group or a hub or...?' and I'm like naaaaaah - it's different mate. It's no a drop in. It's no a youth group. It's just the steeple, eh. You guys don't give yourselves enough credit, you really don't. When you came to visit me in prison, I was half expecting you to like scowl at me and shake your head, but I went into that wee visit room and you were like HEY! and you threw your hand up for a high five.

Kieran, 20

Since 2001, HC has worked with thousands of young people who hang out in the city centre, building relationships and supporting them to navigate the changes towards adulthood and positive futures. We are creative, imaginative and very passionate about our incredible community.

HC is open to all young people without prejudice or distinction of religion, race, culture, disability, gender, sexuality or politics. The only restrictions are of age – from 1st year of high school up to 21 years of age (although we do sometimes continue to work with folks on an individual basis after that).

How we work is simple. (Not always easy, but always simple). We open our doors, welcome anyone who comes in, build trust, believe in each and every person, stick together through the ups and downs of life, learn from each other, and create new possibilities together. It really is quite special.

You don't understand what the Steeple is until you've walked through that door. It's like a whole different world. You walk in and it's like all the bad stuff just washes off, and you're free from pressure and judgement for the time you're here. You're just free to be who you are.

MK, 15

Hot Chocolate Trust* is a youth work organisation based in the Steeple Church, Dundee.



Abbreviated to HC throughout this book

When have you experienced change?

When my Dad left, that changed everything.

In first year I was 4ft9. Now I'm 5ft2.

I'm away to leave school and start college.

Coming out of school and into Hot Chocolate. I feel relief. I can finally be myself.

Cutting contact with my mum. I went from a toxic environment to a happy one.

Depends what it is.

Immediate change is very scary. Gradual is okay.

How do you cope with change?

Sometimes it's okay. Sometimes it's awful.

I didn't sleep for 3 days.

Everything changes. You just need to adapt.

I tried to become invisible.

I feel like a lovely butterfly! Because of how I used to feel emotionally and mentally.

I'm in the shell, but breaking out. I'm not happy to fly yet but I'm working it out.

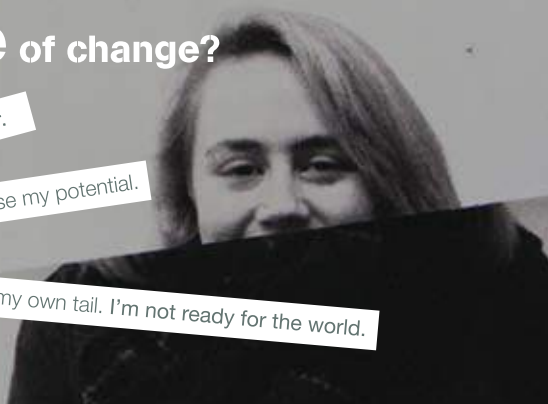
What's your state of change?

Now I'm happy - it gets better.

I'm going into the cocoon, getting everything in order.

I feel like I'm just about to burst out and release my potential.

I'm a caterpillar who just ate my own tail. I'm not ready for the world.



I've had a really bad upbringing. My meant to be real dad left when my mum was pregnant with me. He used to hit her to try to make her lose the baby (me). I've been 15 years without a dad. He never cared about me, he's never once got in touch with me. When I was growing up I'd see people with mums and dads and their good lives and I just felt shit. I felt left out coz I didn't have that. Then my stepdad started hitting my mum too. And I felt bad coz I couldn't do anything about it. I used to try and stop him, but then he'd try to go for me. I went to school and sat in class, but I'd never know what was happening back home. I used to just sit and think: I don't need this in my life. I just want to grow up and have a good life, and I can't do that when they're always fighting. As I got older I realised that that house wasn't the right place for me, that I couldn't deal with it.

I got chucked out in the end anyway, and I went to live with my gran. I love her to bits. I've got so much respect for her. If it wasn't for her I'd be on the streets or in a home somewhere.

I started coming to HC when I was 12, when things were really bad at home. I didn't have anyone to speak to, and I didn't want to tell the team anything at first. I was angry and scared and hurting so much. But I know now I can tell the team anything, and I know that they'd do everything they can to help me and make sure I'm safe. I feel safe here - this is a safe place for me. It's like a family to me, and that's a hard word for me to use, given what I've been through.

There's been times where I've felt so bad about my life, so low, that I just wanted to end it. But I know that there's people that care about me so much that they'd be gutted if I did, like my gran and the team and my friends here. They've helped me to keep going and to see the positives in my life. And even speaking about this now, letting it out, telling the truth, saying what I need to say... it feels good. It's so much better than bottling it up and saying I'm ok when I'm really not ok.

I've been living with my gran for the last two years now, and life's been really good. I'm happy and I'm focussed on school work. I refuse to let my life be shit - I want to get something out of life. I've started to get my life back on track, I've changed totally into the person I always wanted to be.

Graeme, 16

(Name and identifying details changed to protect identity)

Experiencing Change

Our rhythms of life.

In the midst of all these changes, HC provides a stable, consistent, predictable base through...

Open Sessions

(150 each year) : 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.

It doesn't matter what's happening in open sessions - I want to get involved in it. There might be jamming in the music room, art projects, cake baking with loads of different recipes (the best was when we made peanut butter fudge slop that was actually meant to be brownies). There'll be basketball or football too. It's all very very homely. It's alive. It's welcoming. It makes me feel like me. I don't get that anywhere else. Dione, 16

Individual Support


(350-400 each year): when a team member and a young person meet 1 to 1 to explore issues/interests/ambitions that matter.

When I first came to HC I was terrified. I'd been bullied badly at school so I was really withdrawn. I'd sit in the corner of the Chilling Room not speaking to anybody. I'd been dragged in by a friend and I stayed because it was dry and warm. But over time I started to open up. I started doing 1-1s with Lauren. It was a safe space to talk, and I wasn't judged. I gained a lot of confidence in that time. My time here feels like a firework: it started small and exploded into something beautiful. Verena, 17

Groups & Projects

(50-100 each year): are an important part of HC's life, responding to the needs and interests of the community.

I'm always doing projects with different people. Like I made a film for the music residential to give them inspiration around the theme. You can totally come in with ideas here and the team will be like: 'yeah, you can totally do that, what do you need?'. You have freedom in terms of what you're doing. Even if the team don't have the right equipment or something, they'll work with you to change it up and solve the problem. MK, 15

A black and white photograph of three young people wearing hoodies. The person on the left is looking towards the camera, the person in the middle is smiling and resting their chin on their hand, and the person on the right is looking off to the side.

I overcame my fear.

The best bit was having a time to actually relax and not have to think about things you would have to when you're in Dundee. When you're there, and in the situations, and so close to it all, it's hard. You just need some time to get out of it.

It's been really comforting to be surrounded by nature and wildlife. When I first came on Friday I was really anxious but know I've got to know people I feel much better. It's nice to forget about my problems for a few days.

Residentials

(3 or 4 each year): when groups of young people and team head off to a house in the country or outdoor centre and spend a weekend making music/creating art/developing skills/exploring themes/having adventures/escaping the city.

It's meant I could just leave Dundee for a bit. Dundee's negative, always. But here's homely and it feels good.

Being part of HC's Youth Team was an extraordinary experience. During an open session, I would be assigned a challenge for me to complete. Being part of Youth Team was a real eye-opener as to what exactly goes on backstage. It was great to sit down and enjoy a meal prepared for both the Youth Team and HC's staff just before open session commenced - I felt like I bonded with the staff and got to know them as people rather than "just workers". I recommend Youth Team to anyone that would be willing to have a go. Sean B, 18

This place has really helped me overcome my anxiety. It's helped me grow up - especially being on Youth Team. Kamil, 16

Youth Team

a supported and accredited volunteering programme where young people (10-15 each year) take on extra responsibility and develop skills and confidence.

Anything and everything can happen in life, and HC considers it vital to be able to support young people as whole people, with whatever changes they might face: emotionally, physically, socially and spiritually.

Navigating Change

I got in a lot of trouble with the police last year and I ended up in court. It was a really stressful time, dramatically bad. I got 180 hours of community service, but I probably would have got a prison sentence if it wasn't for HC.

You came with me to my social work appointments, wrote me a bloody good reference, came with me to court. You gave me a lot of emotional support too. You don't find that in a lot of places.

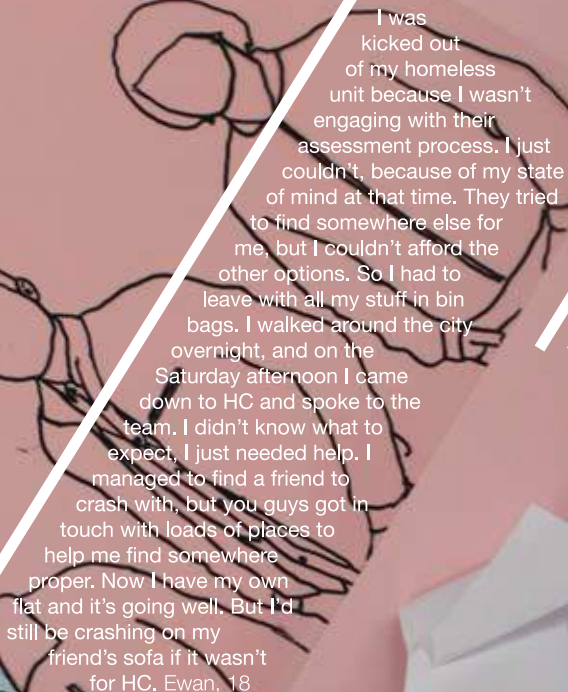
The whole thing knocked me straight, that's for sure, but there were probably better ways to do that. Anon, 18

HC and LGBT Youth Scotland have been working with LGBTI young people to look at the subject of spirituality and faith. This came from the young people themselves not having a space to talk about being a person of faith and LGBT. HC ran sessions with the Allsorts group and collated responses from a questionnaire. This piece of work is a very unfamiliar territory but has provided some really fascinating results so far. I hope that we can continue to build on this exciting research in 2017.

Barry Jordan, Youth & Community Development Officer (Tayside),
LGBT Youth Scotland


This place is in a church building but it doesn't feel like a church. Whenever I describe it to people, I say that it's run by Christians but it's totally open. Nothing gets forced down your throat. You can get spiritual guidance here if you want and I actually think it's important for young people to have a space for that. I used to be a Christian but then some really hard stuff happened and I couldn't figure out why a God who is all-loving could let such bad things happen. So now I'm an agnostic. Emily, 18

My parents are planning to move abroad soon. They'll help me find a place to stay but they won't be able to pay for me, so I'll need to figure out how to live on my own. I hope HC will be able to help me with that. I'm sure they will though - they've helped me a lot so far with CVs and college and stuff. Ryan, 17



I was kicked out of my homeless unit because I wasn't engaging with their assessment process. I just couldn't, because of my state of mind at that time. They tried to find somewhere else for me, but I couldn't afford the other options. So I had to leave with all my stuff in bin bags. I walked around the city overnight, and on the Saturday afternoon I came down to HC and spoke to the team. I didn't know what to expect, I just needed help. I managed to find a friend to crash with, but you guys got in touch with loads of places to help me find somewhere proper. Now I have my own flat and it's going well. But I'd still be crashing on my friend's sofa if it wasn't for HC. Ewan, 18

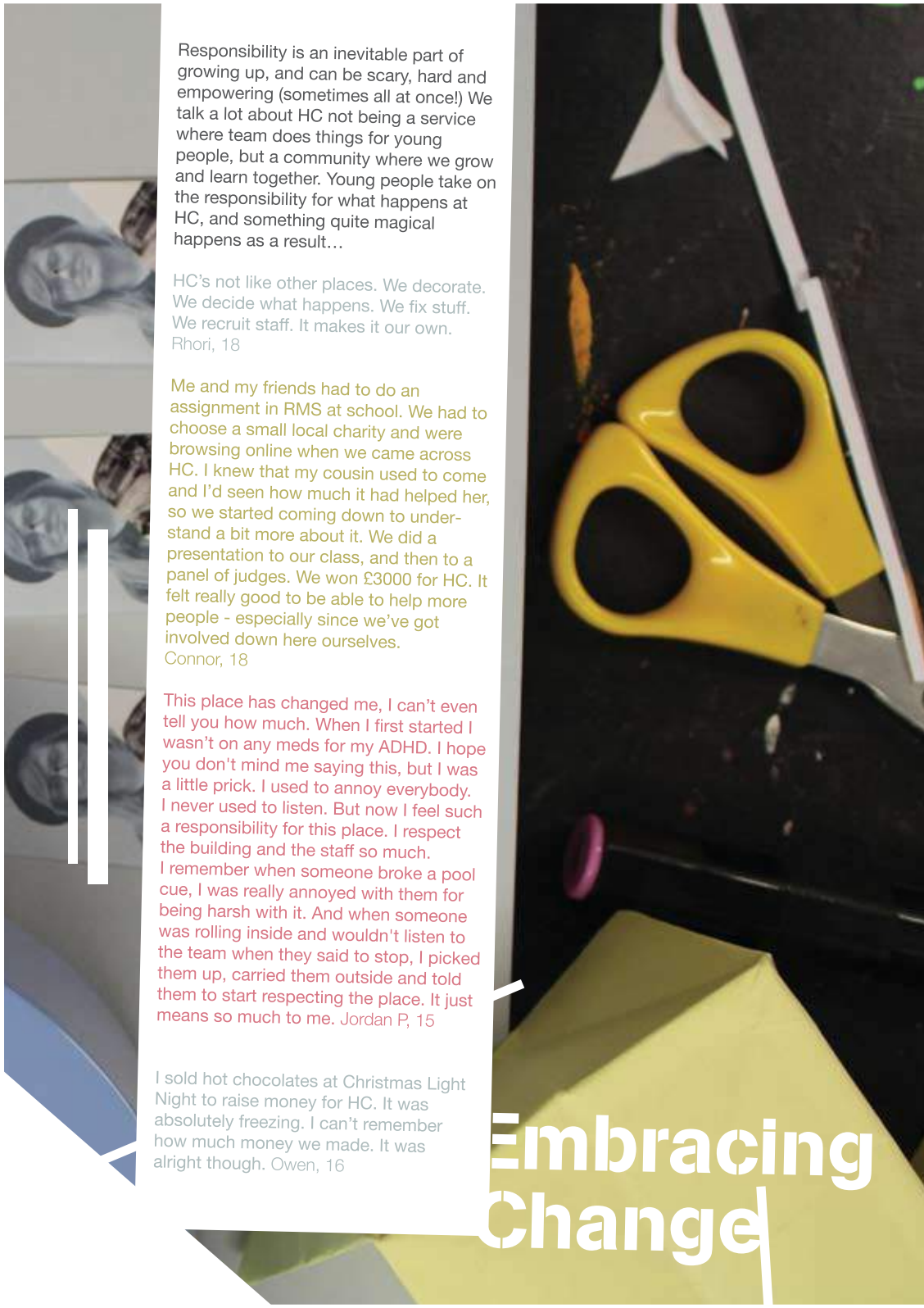
HC has helped me get through so much: family stuff, mental health, school. It's been important to have someone to talk to, the freedom to share if I want. It's productive.
BethanyAnne, 18



I'm a young mum and often get treated like a child, or like an idiot. I've grown up so quickly - too quickly maybe. Responsibility is hard. Being a parent is so hard. Sometimes I just want to feel like a kid again. The team are the main reason I come here - I get a lot of support. I know them and they know me, and I feel respected here.
Danielle B, 17

When I came here, for the first time I didn't feel weird or judged. When people found out that I was bisexual, half the young people said 'me too'.

I've never felt unwelcome or unwanted here - people are always happy to see me.
Alex, 17



Responsibility is an inevitable part of growing up, and can be scary, hard and empowering (sometimes all at once!) We talk a lot about HC not being a service where team does things for young people, but a community where we grow and learn together. Young people take on the responsibility for what happens at HC, and something quite magical happens as a result...

HC's not like other places. We decorate. We decide what happens. We fix stuff. We recruit staff. It makes it our own.
Rhori, 18

Me and my friends had to do an assignment in RMS at school. We had to choose a small local charity and were browsing online when we came across HC. I knew that my cousin used to come and I'd seen how much it had helped her, so we started coming down to understand a bit more about it. We did a presentation to our class, and then to a panel of judges. We won £3000 for HC. It felt really good to be able to help more people - especially since we've got involved down here ourselves.
Connor, 18


This place has changed me, I can't even tell you how much. When I first started I wasn't on any meds for my ADHD. I hope you don't mind me saying this, but I was a little prick. I used to annoy everybody. I never used to listen. But now I feel such a responsibility for this place. I respect the building and the staff so much. I remember when someone broke a pool cue, I was really annoyed with them for being harsh with it. And when someone was rolling inside and wouldn't listen to the team when they said to stop, I picked them up, carried them outside and told them to start respecting the place. It just means so much to me. Jordan P, 15

I sold hot chocolates at Christmas Light Night to raise money for HC. It was absolutely freezing. I can't remember how much money we made. It was alright though. Owen, 16

Embracing Change




Showing visitors round can be a bit nerve-wracking, but I guess they just want to get a taste of what happens here. Our first Youth Team challenge was to give visitors a tour. So we showed them around the different spaces, telling stories about what happens there. They seemed really interested, and asked loads of questions. We didn't realise til afterwards that they were funders - we probably shouldn't be trusted with that on a regular basis! Haha.
Matthew & Nathan, 15



I gave the speech at the open night. I was terrified. I've spoken in front of people once or twice before, but never to a crowd that big. I write the whole thing out before, but then I ended up just winging it at the time. I got really positive feedback after - there were lots of questions from the visitors, and the HC people all said they were really proud of me. I felt really happy to be asked - it felt like my own wee bit of responsibility for the night.
Cait, 18

The last year's been a great year for me. I feel like myself as a person, HC, the building - we've all developed in this time. I started here as a young person over 8 years ago, and I'm now on team as a volunteer. I always knew that I'd want to give something back to HC one day, but I didn't expect to be doing open sessions. I really enjoy it though. Aled, Volunteer (and former HC young person)



Themes are good coz they mean you get to focus on a topic... especially for art projects. Metamorphosis meant there was a lot of talking and bonding between the team and young people around the issues of change. Our big art project was a series of panels that got displayed down at the waterfront. I helped paint the map panel and also came up with the idea for the big portrait panel. I'm so happy and proud of it. Kai, 17

A woman came in to teach us some self defence. She put us into pairs and taught us a few different moves for how to disarm opponents and protect ourselves in case we get attacked. It was the first time I'd ever done anything like that, and it was really useful and informative. I hope I never need to use what I learnt, but you never know. Aiden, 18


We went to Butterfly World in Edinburgh: I felt like I was transported to the rainforest, it was really hot, humid and there were an abundance of butterflies! There was lots of chrysalis hanging in rows and I got some brilliant photos. Emily, 18

I think Exodus was one of the best summers I've had in a long time. it gave me a chance to spend time with friends I hadn't seen in a while but it also gave me time to make new ones too. Making a massive roast dinner was such a rewarding experience: it was fun but it was also great to see how much joy it brought everyone who joined us to eat it. Shannon, 18

I set up the go-karting trip. I had to research it, get prices, do the sign ups. Sometimes it was a bit of a pain in the arse coz I'm not very good at being organised, but it was good. People thought it was fun. Kamil, 16

Exodus Summer Programme

One of the main ways we explored the theme of METAMORPHOSIS this year was through Exodus, our three week summer programme, full of creative projects, discussions, trips and community building - all planned and organised with the young people.



First we had to go around the building following clues and finding letters to spell out METAMORPHOSIS. But then they took it up a notch. We wrote down a personal story about when and where we've had a time of change in the city. These stories and places of memories were turned into clues and basically we then did a big treasure hunt around the city centre to go and find all these places and memories. It was really clever and pretty great. MK, 15

We went to see an empty council flat, to get an insight into the change from living with your parents to living on your own. I was thinking about moving out at that point, and actually hearing from someone who's job is to re-home people was really helpful. I learnt more about how to get a flat and keep it, the cost of furnishings and upkeep, and where you can go for support. It was a really worthwhile trip. Cait, 18

We rearranged our spaces and created a Cocoon Room* for the three weeks. The layout and lighting create a safe space for people to truly relax, and have focused/constructive conversation or even take a nap. Having no raised seating meant that everyone was physically on the same level which affected the way people interacted. It was a very mindful space - almost meditative at points. Cameron, Volunteer (and former HC young person)



And, as you'll see over the page, this 'temporary' Cocoon Room has had a large and lasting impact on the community...

Cocoon Room

Space matters a lot, because there's so many people here with so many different needs. The cocoon room was sooo good, especially for anxiety escape heaven. It was like music, dimmed lights, blankets, cushions. It felt very enclosed and secure - a great place to chat and chill. I was gutted when the space went back to normal - we loved it so much. So we did a petition to recreate that little place of peace at the front door. And we did, but we're now designing a proper space. Jack R, 20

Space

Following the immense popularity of the Cocoon Room throughout Exodus, came a bit of a space & building revolution! We launched various project where we (with some from help from our friends at the Steeple and Boots the Chemist - yes you did read that right!) redesigned and refurbished several of our spaces...

New Office

HC's work has grown a lot in the past couple of years and we really needed extra space for 1-1s and team. So we converted a storage area. It's beautiful. And even more so, since a lot of the work was done by former young people who now work in the trades, and who were really keen to 'give something back' to HC by way of their time and skills. That ongoing sense of ownership and generosity of the community is one of the reasons this place is so special.

Charis, Assistant Director (Development)

Music Room Corridor

I worked on a project with Andy to decorate the hallway to the music room so it didn't look so dark and ominous. We took lots of photos of the space and did the application. We went to the event where we were given the cheque too. It was a bit awkward, but it was really cool. For the project 8 young people each had a panel to design and were given an artist to work with. My artist was really nice, and helped me sketch out my design: a big rose made of books. The space looks amazing now. It's brighter, more welcoming, so many different styles.
BethanyAnne, 18


I was blown away by HC. The young people were so involved in both the vision and ideas from the start, and their enthusiasm was motivating. They were a delight to work with, and on the night of the new music room launch they were all buzzing with excitement in what they had achieved in the ten weeks. We felt so honoured to be invited to the opening which they had organised themselves. It was a great night with live music and wonderful company... the welcome they gave us was overwhelming. I hope we can all work together at some time in the future.
Audrey, Storecare Field Manager Scotland,
Boots UK & RoI

Music Room

When the music room was getting refurbished I took a huge part in it, helping to design the room and creating a blueprint. Ryan B, 17

Kitchen

I volunteered at Exodus and spent two weeks cooking meals for the team. Food is a really important part of HC - it helps you connect as a team and with the young people. So getting a new kitchen fitted has been great. It's so much nicer to cook in, and you look after it and respect it more when it looks nice. The young people use it a lot too, for making pancakes and hot-dogs or whatever. That's important too, in terms of lifeskills, because not everyone knows how to cook and that can have a big impact on health and finances.
Aled, Volunteer (and former HC young person)

The background is a collage of various images. At the top left, there's a photo of three young women smiling. Below it, a larger photo shows a young man in a white shirt and a young woman in a pink shirt. To the right, there's a close-up of a purple Hot Chocolate logo. At the bottom, there's a photo of a person's legs in patterned shorts. White speech bubble-like boxes with black borders contain quotes from various people, some of which are tilted at an angle.

Anyone is welcome here. You can be yourself. Cameron, 15

The best thing about HC is having friends. Conal, 14

I got involved with HC because I wanted to work with young people and it was good experience for me. I've had quite a bit of training from Andy and that's helped me tremendously to understand what to do in different situations - and it's helped me get a job working with young people at the Attic!
Kathleen, Volunteer

Hot Chocolate's genuinely a safe haven.
Whenever I need someone to talk to there's always a member of team more than happy to help.
Regan, 17

It's strangely unique and a whole lot of fun. Jordan A, 18

Looking back on last summer, I was so worried. It was my first offence for breaking and entering, and I knew I didn't really belong in jail. You guys helped me a lot. You wrote character references, shining more light on my positive attributes. And you came to court with me which was really comforting. I'm not misunderstood here. I feel safe to speak here. I'm much calmer now, and I know I'm capable of achieving things in life. Anon, 19

I always enjoy and am inspired by what you do... day in, day out.
Jim Sweeney, CEO, YouthLink Scotland

If HC shut tomorrow, I'd be the first to start protesting outside. Ryan B, 17

**"Truly I tell you, unless you change
and become like little children,
you will never enter
the kingdom of heaven."**

**Maybe we don't just need to grow up,
maybe we need to grow down.**

Maybe we need to take more risks.

Maybe we need to be more naive.

**Maybe we need to get more mud
on our clothes, ink on our hands,
and blood on our knees.**

Maybe we need to get lost in dreaming.

Maybe we need to unlearn our learning.

**Maybe we need to sleep in a little,
and to stay up till we can't bear it.**

Maybe we need to hate more vegetables.

Maybe we need to get hopelessly distracted.

Maybe we need to huff more and sulk more,
to scream into pillows, and to punch more
walls.

Maybe we need to run till we buckle.

Maybe we need to get drunk on laughter.

Maybe spin under lights and collapse in heaps, exhausted, exhilarated.

Maybe we need to colour the mess.

Maybe we need to turn it up.

Maybe we need to fall out, and make up,
and fall out all over again.

Maybe we need to be individual,
maybe all in exactly the same way.

Maybe we need to bury our affections in dirty looks and the pulling of hair.

Maybe we need to go home and stuff our faces.

**Maybe we need to make stupid mistakes.
Maybe it is big and it is clever.**

**Maybe we need to be careless,
and to care less.**

Maybe we need to forget what it was that was so important.

Maybe we need to cry when it hurts.

Maybe we need to believe, just a little.

Maybe we need to steal marshmallows.

Maybe we need to enjoy being who we are, where we are, for a moment.

**Maybe we need to lose our shoes,
and lose our shit every now and again.**

Maybe we need to grow down.

And as we grow down, maybe, just maybe, our roots will find a richer soil, and taste water and warmth, and we might find from below the energy we need, to craft branches, to make leaves and to shed fruit.

And together we shall realise
just how much it is

that we've all grown up.



@HotChocoTrust... are winning at youth work. Another world in the heart of Dundee! YMCA Scotland (on Twitter)

This place is blooming class! It's got a very special place in my heart. When my group at the Rep finishes at 7.45, I run straight over here just so I can catch the last few minutes. Mhairi, 17

I had the privilege of doing a 3-month internship with HC. It focused on studying the effects of trauma and developing resources to educate and develop team members' practice. Not only did this give me new tools and understanding, but it once again renewed the sense of respect and awe I have for these young people! They are truly AMAZING human beings and they teach me so much! Ding, Volunteer

If you need help you can get it. Heather F, 18

HC is an escape for me from everything. It's the place I can be myself. Anon.

I've grown up a lot in the past few years. I used to put on a persona to protect myself because I was scared of being hurt. But my attitude was really bad, and my temper was out of control. You guys helped me see that expressing my anger the way I was, would get me nowhere. Through HC, I learnt to have respect for people, and their different opinions and perspectives. I learnt how to react, and how not to react. I learnt how to control my anger. I'm a different person now. Jenna, 17

The Steeple's great coz it doesn't burn the gays, which is quite surprising for a church. Matthew, 15 & Jessica, 17

I think what makes HC special is that they embrace new vision, evolving constantly with the young people, rather than expecting the community to fit with them. Marion, CLD Student, Dundee University

It's been a year of new things for the music project: new equipment, new space, new singing group, new recording software and training. All this, combined with a bunch of songwriting, recording and performing throughout Exodus and a music residential, has meant **it's been a very musical year...**

Music means everything to me. It's my happy place where you have your own little world to escape to. It's also a way to show off who you are. It's really boosted my confidence - especially Nicole. When I speak to her about stuff, she remembers. That matters - it makes me feel valued and important. Mhari, 17

I've gained a lot of confidence because of the people around me showing support and giving me feedback. Gaining knowledge around recording skills really helped me when I had to create a project for college. Jack M, 17

The fact that everyone's so friendly and jokey makes the singing group a lot of fun to be a part of. Cael, 15

Nicole's been giving me guitar lessons. She's given me exercises to do and new techniques. It's definitely improved my skills. It's good that this place has a music room. The only other place I can do music is school, and it feels so different there. Cameron, 15

I'd never written a song before. It was a good experience and it didn't click on to me what you can do with writing a couple of words. Jordan P, 15

HC has given me amazing opportunities to meet and work with other musicians. I wouldn't have gained the experience or confidence I have in a group without the help from Nicole. Danielle, 17

I think being a part of music helps you get your emotions out if you're upset - but it's also a great distraction if you have stuff going on that you're stressing about. Dione, 16

Music

As always, we've done a lot of work with young people around employment, education and training.

There's been some great connections with the college, as well as some unique volunteering and work experience opportunities...

We had the opportunity to host a visit from Jamie Hepburn MSP, Minister for Employability and Training, who then wrote us a wee letter:

"I have to commend the Trust for its contribution in the local community and the unique approach which is helping to engage some of the most troubled young people."

And Ricky Ross (fae Deacon Blue) held a fundraiser gig for HC (cheers Ricky!) and a bunch of young people organised and hosted the night...

At the gig I mainly did cloak room work which was fun. I got to meet loads of new people and gain customer service skills. I also learned how to work well with others and be in a team. I enjoyed it very much.
Toni, 21

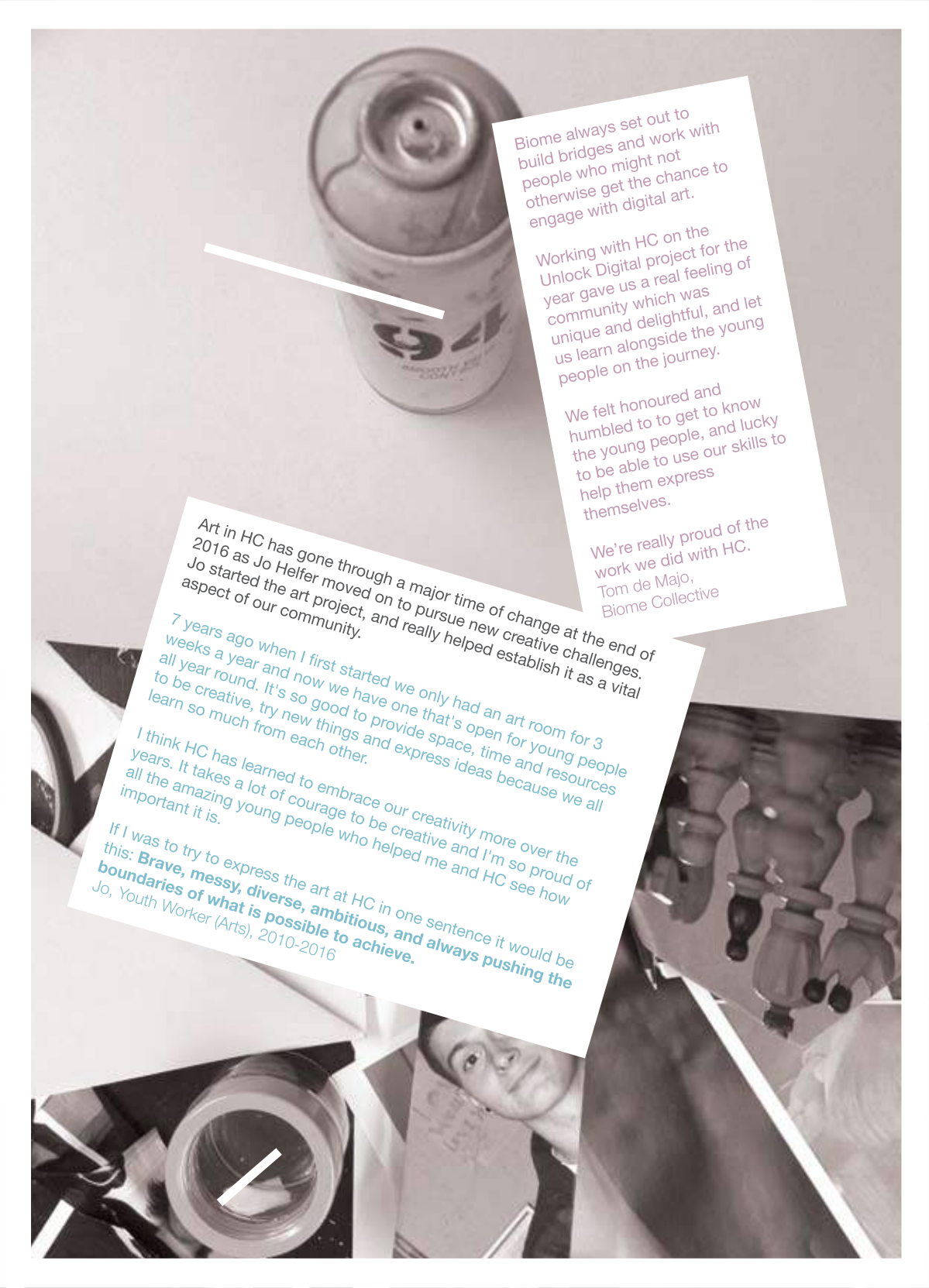
HC is such a positive and friendly place. I come in regularly to give informal advice and spread the word about new opportunities. My job is to help the young people find the right courses for them, to help remove the barriers to them accessing college, and to provide support and solutions when they face challenges. The partnership works because we all really want the young people to succeed and have healthy, happy, positive futures.

Celeste Robinson, Student Services Officer - School & Guidance, Dundee & Angus College

Education & Employment & Training & Volunteering

You give people something new to look to. Like if we've had a bad day and we come in crying, you'd be like 'come on, let's go get a hot chocolate', and let's draw something. You give us a different perspective. Like when I went to college I didn't have the grades for it. When I went to uni I didn't have the grades for it. But when they saw my Saltire award, my Duke of Edinburgh award - that's the reason why I got there. You give us responsibilities, opportunities. Ellie, 19

Just to know let you know that if it wasn't for volunteering with HC, I wouldn't have got the job I just got as an assistant youth worker. It's only 3 hours a week but it's a foot in the door for what I want to do and that's amazing. So thank you!
Shannon, 22 (via Facebook)



Biome always set out to build bridges and work with people who might not otherwise get the chance to engage with digital art.

Working with HC on the Unlock Digital project for the year gave us a real feeling of community which was unique and delightful, and let us learn alongside the young people on the journey.

We felt honoured and humbled to to get to know the young people, and lucky to be able to use our skills to help them express themselves.

We're really proud of the work we did with HC.
Tom de Majo,
Biome Collective

Art in HC has gone through a major time of change at the end of 2016 as Jo Helfer moved on to pursue new creative challenges. Jo started the art project, and really helped establish it as a vital aspect of our community.

7 years ago when I first started we only had an art room for 3 weeks a year and now we have one that's open for young people all year round. It's so good to provide space, time and resources to be creative, try new things and express ideas because we all learn so much from each other.

I think HC has learned to embrace our creativity more over the years. It takes a lot of courage to be creative and I'm so proud of all the amazing young people who helped me and HC see how important it is.

If I was to try to express the art at HC in one sentence it would be this: **Brave, messy, diverse, ambitious, and always pushing the boundaries of what is possible to achieve.**
Jo, Youth Worker (Arts), 2010-2016

I'd never have been studying art at college, or planning to go to DJCAD if it wasn't for the art at HC. The art room has pretty much everything you could ever want or need, and Jo and the team spot people's potential and really encourage it. They won't let you get stuck in the same routines.

HC paid for me to join the DCA print studio so I could use their equipment. I didn't actually know it was there, or that any person could access it. But it means that I can create much better prints for my clothing designs. Lots of people are now approaching me to make them mandala bags, or t-shirts for their bands.

That's given me a lot more confidence. Chantelle, 18

Arts

We sometimes describe our arts work as 'doodle and stretch'... The doodle refers to the informal, the experimental, the accidental creative expressions. And the stretch refers to deliberate new challenges, techniques and skills developments. Both are really important as the following quotes will show, but this year has seen more of a focus on 'stretch' as we embarked on a big digital arts project (Unlock Digital) in partnership with Creative Scotland and Biome Collective.

We come here coz we want something different. We don't want to just play video games, we can do that at home - we want to pay attention to each other rather than a screen. But playing stuff like joust, that was cool. I think you need something totally weird and wacky that will catch your attention - like the fruit DJing.

The whole of Unlock Digital was just brilliant. Especially the games jam residential. We properly worked as a team - I did the art, Lauren edited photos, Mal turned them into GIFs, Conal did sound effects, Cait did the storyboard, Albert did the coding.

We created an amazing interactive digital game. Kai, 17

I made a piece called 'Gender Bent'. It was on photoshop, which I'd used before but this really helped improve my skills.

The piece was was a person, made up of half male body parts, half female body parts, from lots of different people.

It was to promote awareness and discussion about what is gender. Emily, 18

Unlock Digital allowed us to expand and show who we really are. Verena, 17

No Change: Getting Stuck.

I look back on my childhood and I don't have any happy memories.

I got badly bullied all through primary school, and when I went to high school, that's when my dad started drinking really heavily. I felt trapped at home. I was fighting physically with my dad, and mentally with my mum. I was in a really bad place and couldn't cope. I was taking drugs and drinking, playing up a lot, missing school. I regret it now, but I was young and I didn't know what else to do. I had to block it all out somehow because I didn't feel I could speak to anyone about what was happening. The only escape I had was coming into town to see my friends and come to the Steeple. That's where I felt like I could escape and relax a bit, and feel free for a while.

My dad died when I was 16. I remember the day like it was yesterday. It still haunts me: the feeling that I could have done more, that I just watched him slowly drink himself to death. That kills me. I've still not dealt with it, and that was over five years now. I feel guilty and angry and jealous of other people who have still got their dads. I know in my head that it's not my fault, but it's hard to believe that with my heart. But what could I have done really? I was so young, and he was so set in his ways with the drinking.

I struggle with depression and anxiety. Having to drag yourself out of bed every single day when you think there's no point - that's a really hard thing to do. You're battling a war inside your head. Most people don't get that. Every day I get flashbacks. Every day. I need to be able to move on, but I can't do that when there's images constantly in my head of everything bad that's happened in my life. I'd give anything to get rid of these images. But I feel like I'm stuck in it. I feel like the way I am is the way I'm always going to be until the day that I die. I don't want it to be like that. I want to move on from my dad's death. I have to learn how to live with it. I hope in the future I find some kind of healing, but at the moment I can't see it.

Mike, 21 (name changed to protect confidentiality)

Tragically, stories like Mike's are not uncommon amongst the community of Hot Chocolate's young people. Past traumas can have devastating and enduring consequences. But that is NOT inevitable.

We've been learning a lot more about trauma in the past year: what it is, how it affects people, how healing and recovery can absolutely be possible. In fact, we've even referred a few young people to some brilliant trauma specialists... HC referred me for counselling when I was having a hard time. My counsellor's lovely. She's helped me a lot, to see that I'm not alone and to give me a space where I can talk about things. I'd definitely recommend it to other people. Kathleen, 16 (name also changed)

Mike started engaging with therapy too:
It's tough and it's scary to face up to this stuff. But I realised I need to do something or else I'll end up in an even worse place.

We've also been working with a number of trauma specialists to help the HC team develop our knowledge, skills and expertise in this area. Developing partnerships around this will be a big part of our focus for the next three years.

The community feel of belonging created by the team and young people at HC provides a platform where healing can begin. From this place of safety and relational support, young people can begin to process the traumatic experiences which are the cause of so much stress in their lives. Barnardo's Scotland is committed to help the HC workforce to deliver a higher quality of trauma informed practice. This will reduce the effects of harmful stress being experienced by young people while increasing their potential for realising their best hopes.

Steve Sweeney, Children's Service Manager,
Barnardo's Scotland Rollercoaster Service

And Unstuck.

I am pleased to report on the continuing positive contribution of the board this year in aiding and overseeing the work of the Trust. The Directors have actively embraced their responsibilities with enthusiasm and expertise. This has allowed us to build upon strong governance foundations within policy, procedures and operational guidance across a number of areas. It has been a year of consolidation and this will continue into 2017 as we review all our governance documents with an aim to achieve consistency in layout, content and effect. We have established a governance monitoring process that will allow us to track and monitor our legal and corporate responsibilities that will aid continuous improvement.

We say goodbye to Joe and Rebecca after a long period of service and welcome a number of new Directors who have picked up individual areas of practical support to the board and staff. We are particularly appreciative of the ongoing support from the Rev. Robert Calvert, the Kirk Session and friends at The Steeple. Together with the help from a wide circle of external sponsors and donors, they contribute generously in time and resources to realise our work within a wider climate of difficult financial pressures. In particular this has allowed us to redesign, improve and upgrade several of our building spaces, including the music, chilling and art rooms, kitchen, and toilets - as well as construct a new additional office space. Young people have been at the heart of this design and redecoration work, and it is our intention to build upon these upgrades across the base in the next 2 years.

We continue to value greatly all the personnel who enable our delivery of high quality youth work with the young people. Looking forward to 2017, in line with our overall vision, we will further expand our staffing and budget whilst continuing to monitor the financial challenges. We have seen an increase in new young people, particularly younger members, and this has led us to review our approaches to better cater for their needs. We are enormously encouraged to witness the effect of our work with young people and especially as they realise their personal ambitions and development. We look forward to sharing our vision with them.

In his service, Tony Boffey
(on behalf of the Hot Chocolate board)

Board Report



At Hot Chocolate Trust, 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 HC, we have been grateful to receive funding, donations or donations in kind during 2016 from the following funders, fundraisers and donors:

Alexander Moncur Trust / Alliance Trust Staff Foundation / Avian Communications Ltd / Balgay Children's Society / Bank of Scotland Foundation / BBC Children in Need / Boots the Chemist Social Club / Boots UK Ltd / CashBack for Communities / CashBack for Creativity / Church of Scotland (Northwood Grant) / Community Innovation Fund / Creative Scotland: Time to Shine / Creative Scotland: Youth Music Initiative / Dundee Round Table / Ecclesiastical Insurance / ERASMUS / Faith in Scotland Community Action Fund / G&M Proctor Ltd / Inchrye Trust / Inspiring Scotland / Mike Soutar / Miss AM Pilkington Charitable Trust / Novum Trust / People and Communities Fund / Richard Young / Ricky Ross / Saints and Sinners Club of Scotland / Sheila Tennant Awards / St Katharine's Fund / STV Appeal / Tag Games / Tay Charitable Trust / The Aberbrothock Skea Trust / The Baird Trust / The Gannochy Trust / The Henry Smith Charity / The Joseph Rank Trust / The Leng Charitable Trust / The MAKE Trust / The Mathew Trust / The Robertson Trust / The Steeple Church: Dundee (Church of Scotland) / The Tillyliss Trust / The Tudor Trust / WM Sword Charitable Trust / Youth and Philanthropy Initiative Scotland and all our individual donors and fundraisers

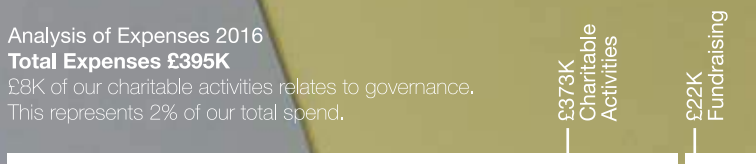
Finances

Analysis of Income 2016 Total Income £419K



Analysis of Expenses 2016 Total Expenses £395K

£8K of our charitable activities relates to governance.
This represents 2% of our total spend.



Funds at 31 December 2016 Total Funds £154K



These rounded figures are from our draft accounts and may be subject to change.
Our full accounts will be available on our website in due course.

Activity

In 2016 HC worked with around
300 young people.

There have been:
150 open sessions
354 1-1s

(with 77 different young people)
67 groups
(with 69 different young people)

4 weekends away
(with 33 different young people)

16 young people have been on
Youth Team

5 groups outside of HC
(with about 50 different young people)

Hot Chocolate doesn't
exist to 'keep young
people off the streets'
but to make a real
difference in the real lives
of real young people.

And whilst the stories
and quotes throughout
this annual report show
that, we know that
some statistics can
also be useful to get
a sense of the
bigger picture...

Being Changed

Impact

Throughout our various activities,
we ask young people to reflect on
their lives, journeys, experiences,
learning - and how they're
changing. These reflections, along
with the team's observations, are
recorded, letting us understand in
more detail about the difference
we make.

So, in the past year, we have
supported young people to develop
in the following ways:

165 have grown in self-worth
164 have grown in self-knowledge
147 have improved their social skills
140 have increased in understanding
that they can positively impact their
lives and communities
127 have acted to positively impact
their lives and communities
114 have improved their ability to
plan ahead and stick to goals
14 have increased in their awareness
and understanding of their spirituality

Positive Destinations

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

27 in education
30 in employment
16 in training
68 in volunteering
(19 gained accreditation)
17 have gained work experience
47 were supported to remain in their
'positive destination' despite
significant barriers (eg financial,
housing, family)
101 were supported towards
employment, education or training
(eg writing CVs, interview prep,
references)
53 accessed external support to
overcome barriers

Conference

Your presentation at the 'Creating a Fairer Scotland' Holyrood Conference had the biggest impact on me that day, and this has stayed with me. I was blown away by the depth of relationships established with the young people. The insight that they shared about the hardships they experienced, and the barriers they faced in life, was moving. I find HC heartening and inspiring. I have been considering how as a Headteacher I can make a difference in young people's lives and future aspirations. I feel I can learn an awful lot from the approach taken by HC.

Kate Whitley, Headteacher

Criminal Justice Consultation

I was captivated listening to the young people's experiences with community justice issues, and taken aback by how articulately they spoke. I also felt sadness about what some of them have had to go through at such a young age. I was also struck by the genuine care expressed by the workers and I am glad Hot Chocolate exists for them.

Karen Moir, Strategic Planning Officer, Tayside Community Justice Authority

With 16 years of experience, Hot Chocolate is committed to effect change in the wider world too. There are ever increasing opportunities to present at conferences, deliver training sessions, develop partnerships, collaborate on local and national consultations, publish blogs and articles, and host a variety of visitors who want to learn from HC's approach and impact. Each time, our priority is to amplify the voices of HC's young people: they, after all, are the experts of their own experiences and are best placed to influence meaningful change.

Training

Re: HC training day on 'Reclaiming Monitoring and Evaluation':

Lots of people are talking about this stuff but you're actually doing it!

Stuart Henderson, Research Analyst, Strategy and Innovation, Scottish Prisons Service.

Partnership

We came together with HC to try and reach young people who may be experiencing difficulties either in their own relationships or at home with their parents and who might not otherwise be able to access support directly from us. HC feels like a lifeline - a safe place for young people to be themselves, express themselves, spend time with friends, as well as accessing support when needed from the dedicated youth workers. Lucie Kapasi, Children & Young People's Service Team Leader, Women's Aid Dundee

Amplify



Milligan, 28

Years at HC: 2002 - 2009

Life back then: Easy and exciting, with meeting all the people I met along the way. Even though it was balanced out with rough times with me getting involved in street crime. But I came out a better person thanks to all the team at HC!!

Favourite memory: Getting the Bob Geldof award at Exodus for the most charity gigs.

Life now: I'm married with a 14 month son. I work as a chef and I continue to write music (life long passion).

Kyle (Gex), 26

Years at HC: 2004 - 2008

Life back then: There were no worries. just chilling on the grass or playing basketball. good times.

Favourite memory: Getting the Bob Geldof award at Exodus for the most charity gigs.

Life now: Currently all grown up, married, 2 children, full time job. Too old to come to the steeple - no HC for me!

One of our favourite things in HC is keeping in touch with former young people to see **how life unfolds** for them as they get old(er). Their reflections on their own metamorphoses have proven to be some of the most important insights that we as a team and community can learn from.

Nik, 25

Years at HC: 2003-7

Favourite memory: Building a human pyramid on the grass with Glen on the bottom.

Life now: Recently released from HMP Perth. Currently unemployed. Enjoying freedom and life in general. Lots of books and craft.

Hopes for the future: Maybe move out of Dundee. University maybe if I can decide what I wanna do.

Skye, 18

Years at HC: 2011-14

Life back then: It made me grow up faster, coz I was going about with older people doing things I shouldn't have been doing. It made me realise I wanted to stop mucking about and do something.

Life now: Working part time and a full time student at college. Passed my driving test last year.

Hopes for the future: Finish college, possible go to uni, then open my own business one day and oh yeah a bmw jeep.

Broon, 19

Years at HC: 2009 - 2015

Life back then: Difficult, but only because I made it difficult! Thinking back, life wasn't even that bad!

Life now: Work, volunteering at HC, college.

Hopes for the future: Not gonna lie, still not a clue! I love my job so I'm not thinking of going any time soon ;P

Dale (Wee Dale), 26

Years at HC: 2001-2007

Life back then: The stability I didn't have at home I found at the Steeple. Alison and her team provided a fundamental support network, and my friends provided me with fritter rolls, fags and bus money.

Life now: I am the owner of a decorating company based here in Dundee handling commercial and domestic projects in the surrounding areas (D.L Decoration #plug)



Linsey, 26

Years at HC: 2003-8

Life back then: Fun but difficult. Lots of anger and alcohol. I hated school so I never went.

Favourite memory: Alison took me and a few friends horse riding because we were missing Exodus trips due to being on a training course. It was at this point I realised that the HC team actually really loved us!

Life now: Currently working for and volunteering at HC! (End of last year when Alison was visiting and we realised I had keys to HC and she didn't - was surreal and amazing at the same time). Married with my second child on the way. Life is good!

Hopes for the future: To pursue a career in youth work.

Josh, 24

Years at HC: 2005 - 2009

Life back then: I wasn't doing very good at school, bunking off, getting terrible grades, almost got kicked out.

Life now: Doing my masters at DJCAD looking into public art, where hopefully one day I will make something of myself. I know I probably wouldn't be where I am now if it wasn't for HC. I still work with the team on various projects and they are always there to lend a helping hand.

Kim, 26

Years at HC: 2006-10

Life back then: Quite difficult with family and finding my place within the world.

Life now: Finishing my honours degree in counselling while bringing up my 8 year old son. Hula hooping and fire dancing when I can and making new connections with like-minded people. Also learning more and more about myself and gradually developing who I am as a person.

Michelle, 21

Years at HC: 2005-2008

Life back then: Pretty rubbish! I was in foster care and due to the fact I was displaying really bad risky behaviours I had to be secured at age 15. It felt like everything had just fell apart.

Life now: Mum to my 4-year-old son. I have completed an HNC in Social Care at Dundee College and now work full time with young people in care. I have a flat that I have made into a lovely home. Currently undertaking driving lessons. I love my life! I really didn't think I would have accomplished so much by 21. Especially with a lot that has gone on in my life. I can truly say that I am proud of myself!



Hot Chocolate is now 16 years old: legally independent, but still growing & with much to learn.

From our days of infancy out on the grass with simple cups of hot chocolate, we've come a long way. It's encouraging to hear the words of one of our longest funders:

Inspiring Scotland's 14:19 Fund has been supporting HC and the young people they are committed to since 2009.

We have huge admiration for the way HC has grown in profile, in ambition, and in ability to meet the complex needs of the young people of Dundee.

HC as an organisation has grown its networks and its capabilities, and diversified its sources of funding. Not only is HC supporting their local young people but is sharing its expertise and learning with others who can also benefit from it. **HC has truly "grown up".**

Lorna Mackay, Performance Advisor
14:19 Fund, Inspiring Scotland

We've definitely had another growth spurt in the past couple of years, that's for sure, and we know we need to keep maturing and developing as an organisation and as a community. We're updating our systems and rethinking our team structures so we can embrace the grown up responsibilities we'll need to navigate the changes and challenges ahead. And we're clear that we need to strengthen our youth work knowledge and skills around trauma-informed practice...

...but some things will never change for Hot Chocolate.
We will always keep the young people's ambitions and needs at the very heart of what we do.

And our values - the things we consider to be absolutely essential to what we do and how we work - **will never change.**
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 safe, welcoming and affirming to all.
- 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 positive change for all involved.
- 5) Embracing a culture of reflective learning where we 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 who can provide specialist opportunities for young people that we couldn't make happen on our own.

The level of consistency is amazing, like the cake mix I made for my exam!
They are always here when young people need them and they always will be.

That's why I love being a part of Hot Chocolate.

Tammie, 16

Design Team:

Bethany-Anne Townsley / Chantelle Patton / Hannah Cook / Kai Christie / Matthew Cassidy / MK Giannico / Nathan Beattie / Anna Reid / Andy Robertson

All fancy pictures and big words by the Hot Chocolate family. Stories curated by Charis Robertson.

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