



# THE ACUMEN

MENTAL HEALTH STIGMA &  
DISCRIMINATION PROJECT



## ABOUT US...

**ACUMEN is a network of people with lived experience of mental health, carers and healthcare professionals. We operate across Renfrewshire, East Renfrewshire, Inverclyde and Argyll & Bute**

ACUMEN's purpose is collective advocacy on behalf of its members to promote the wider involvement of experts by experience and carers in shaping mental health services and the promotion of recovery and wellbeing. From March 2019 to March 2020, ACUMEN and See Me Scotland worked with groups throughout the West of Scotland to highlight the issue of stigma and discrimination towards mental health. Here are some of the things we did!

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*The Inverclyde Mental  
Health Reference Group*

The Inverclyde Mental Health Reference Group is a group dedicated to challenging stigma and discrimination towards mental health in Inverclyde with the help of a See Me Champion, they participated in several awareness raising activities in the area.

In March 2019 the Mental Health Reference Group organised a one-mile community walk event called "Dash the Splash" along the esplanade in Greenock. It was a windy and wet day, but had an excellent turn out with 50 people turning up to take part!



*A wet and windy day at the Dash the Splash in Greenock!*

In January and February 2020 ACUMEN and the Inverclyde Mental Health Reference Group held the “Winter Wellness” events in Inverclyde showcasing activities for self-management and workshops such on topics such as Wellness Recovery Action Plans, Mindfulness and Mental Health Awareness. These events had a great turn out and involved organisations such as the Salvation Army, Your Voice, Belville Community Gardens, Mind Mosaic, Police Scotland, Health Improvement Greater Glasgow and Clyde, Moving On, the Inverclyde Bothy and Greenock Morton.



*The Inverclyde Shed at the Winter Wellness event in Inverclyde*



*The Juice Bike at the Greenock Winter Wellness event*



*The Inverclyde Bothy at the Winter Wellness event in Inverclyde*



*Walk a mile with the Kintyre Link Club in Campbeltown*

In April 2019, the Kintyre Link Club in Campbeltown organised a Walk a Mile event in their local area and had a turnout of 120 people! This event was supported by the local HSCP, Argyll and Bute Woman's Aid, as well as local police and volunteers. The weather was bright and sunny, and lots of people turned up to learn more about local mental health initiatives in the surrounding areas.



On Saturday 24th August 2019, the Safe and Sound peer support group put on the 'Tee Off and Chat' day targeted at men on the island who wanted to talk about their mental health. People who attended came away with more information about locally based activities that they can get involved in. This was a combined effort with the local Golf Club, See Me Scotland, HSCP and Support in Mind.

## OBAN

**"I would like this to be on every week."**

The Oban Mental Health Forum is an active group of people with lived experience, third sector and statutory partners who have come together to challenge mental health stigma. The group is keen to create links across the community, bringing the police, community mental health teams, as well as the Health and Social Care Partnership together.

In November 2019 the group helped to organise the "Stand Up to the Winter Blues" event in Oban which was organised with Hope Kitchen. People who came along enjoyed stand-up comedy and singing from local groups. Participating groups included Hope Kitchen, Martins Monday Club, Martin Women's Club, Mental Welfare Commission, Corran Halls, Salvations Army, local walking groups and The Bothy.

## CAMPBELTOWN



*Anti-stigma walk in Lochgilphead*

Mid Argyll Health & Wellbeing Network was successful in receiving a grant, via ACUMEN and SEE ME, to run an anti-stigma walk in Lochgilphead on Saturday 25 January 2020. Overall, around 50 people of all ages attended various stages of the walk, which started at Blarbuie Woods with a Tai Chi session, a half-way rest and photo session for the Argyllshire Advertiser at the Forestry Commission office, and finished at the Community Centre with lunch, information and a relaxed opportunity to socialise.

In addition, local press coverage of the event has been very positive, helping to challenge stigma and promote awareness of mental health as an issue that affects us all.

## COWAL

The Cowal Mental Health Forum was set up with the help of See Me Scotland, to bring together people with lived experience of mental health, volunteers and healthcare professionals to take action and share knowledge and experience related to mental health issues in the Dunoon area. This group meets online on a regular basis, steered by a member of the ACUMEN team.

## DUNOON



## THE STIGMA ROADSHOW

*A conversation about stigma and  
discrimination with Voluntary Action  
East Renfrewshire*

Between January and March 2020, ACUMEN worked to deliver a series of workshops about stigma and discrimination using materials from See Me Scotland, particularly the Communities Can Pack. This pack is a series of activities based around openly discussing stigma and discrimination and challenging our ideas on what this means. ACUMEN went to community groups throughout the West of Scotland including:

- **Voluntary Action East Renfrewshire (VAER), Barrhead**
- **Voluntary Action East Renfrewshire (VAER), Newton Mearns**
- **The Wynd Womans Group, Paisley**
- **Jeans Bothy Mental Health & Wellbeing Hub, Helensburgh**
- **Kintyre Link Club, Campbeltown**
- **Belville Community Gardens, Inverclyde**
- **Salvation Army, Greenock**

The aim of these workshops was to discuss stigma and discrimination, to give the chance to open up about personal experiences of the topic, as well as learn new and interesting information.

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ACUMEN will be continuing to engage with people through these groups and events in the future, even during the uncertain times that we are going through currently. Much of our activity has moved online and we are continuing to support groups in the community, raise awareness of mental health issues in the community, advocate for people with lived experience of mental health and tackle stigma and discrimination towards mental health. If you are interested in getting in contact with ACUMEN about anything that is contained within this booklet or about further opportunities, please find contact details below.

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