

Kythe Grants Plus

A Gannochy Trust #CharityStory



As we look to build on the legacy of our founder A.K Bell - one of the great philanthropists of his time – The Gannochy Trust continues to invest in a wide range of local projects that not only address poverty and disadvantage, but also seek to improve health, wellbeing and opportunity, especially for young people.

Through an innovative programme called Grants Plus, The Gannochy Trust is also helping local charities build capability, encourage innovation and strong governance through a range of additional supportive services, from leadership training to management consultancy. Our latest #Charity Story shines a light on one such Grants Plus programme delivered by the Cranfield Trust for Perth based charity KYTHE, who provide support and mentorship for young people across the region.

Barry Dougall, Senior Youth Work Manager at KYTHE said: “We are a Perth and Kinross based charity whose work is deeply rooted in Christian values. We use a range of activities to support young people through their teenage years, giving them the space to discover who they are as people so they can reach their full potential. The Grants Plus programme delivered through the Cranfield Trust has supported KYTHE through a period of significant organisational change, as we look to expand our services and reach more vulnerable young people.”

KYTHE’s first step on the road to organisational change was to appoint Rob Packham as their senior strategic advisor. Rob has considerable experience in organisational leadership and change management through senior roles in the NHS and Local Government. He said: “I was approached by one of KYTHE’s trustees and hearing their story, I knew this was a special organisation.

After meeting with Barry and the trustees, we realised the charity was ideally set up to meet the needs of Kinross-shire’s young people. There was so much in common with elements of Scottish policy, aspirations I recognised from my previous job. But it was clear that KYTHE’s pace of growth was rapidly outgrowing the capacity of its people. To tackle this, it needed to become self-sustaining with a robust fund-raising strategy. We approached the Cranfield Trust to help us find the right expertise to make this happen.”

Gillian Bell, Project Manager at Cranfield Trust said: “KYTHE were initially looking for a consultant with fund raising experience. Through our nationwide network of skilled volunteers, we were well placed to find the right person. One of the few positives of the Covid pandemic, is many of our volunteers now work remotely, which means we can find people with the right skills and experience from any part of the UK.”

Cranfield Trust quickly found a match for KYTHE, putting forward a talented Dutch volunteer called Charlotte Cremers. At the time, Charlotte was working as International Alumni Relations Manager at The University of Sheffield. She was also a trustee for the Derbyshire Wildlife Trust – helping with fund raising and marketing communications. Prior to that, Charlotte had built up a breath of experience in research communications and management consultancy with global firms such as Electrolux. Her experience in the commercial sector, along with her deep understanding of fund raising and the challenges facing the third sector, made her the perfect fit for KYTHE.

Charlotte said: “During lock down, I had some spare time to look for new opportunities and put my skills to use. I felt there were many smaller charities offering life changing services but needed help to grow. I found the Cranfield Trust after a Google search and saw they were doing some interesting work with smaller charities. I made an approach and it wasn’t long before Gillian got in touch about KYTHE. This was exactly the kind of project I was looking for.”

Rob continued: “Once Gillian matched us with Charlotte, the whole process went up a gear. She has been a game changer for KYTHE and we are immensely grateful for her work over the past 12 months, and to Cranfield Trust for facilitating the introduction.

Charlotte was initially brought in to help develop a more sustainable fundraising strategy, but she has brought so much more. Through our conversations we quickly recognised that without the correct foundation, the new strategy could be at risk. Through her enthusiasm for the work, Charlotte has become a major contributor to the KYTHE team, a relationship we hope will continue long into the future.”

Through Rob’s leadership, KYTHE completed an organisational review that led to a process of restructuring and a plan for strategic change. Despite joining in the middle of a period of transformation, Charlotte helped the charity realise the importance of being able to describe simply “why” it existed.

Rob said: “We knew what we did and how we did it, but it was surprisingly difficult to identify *why* we were there and *how* we were different. Eventually we agreed on the strap line ‘Transforming Young Lives.’ This allowed us to consider what was required to bring the 5-year strategy to life, setting new, ambitious goals for the future.”

After a few months, KYTHE had a new strategic plan in place (KYTHE 2025), including a one-year plan that set out activities for the first year. Thanks to Charlotte and Cranfield Trust, KYTHE were also able to develop a new fundraising strategy to complement its ambitions, as well as governance measures to allow the charity to manage a bigger workload and look more professional to the outside.

Furthermore, by analysing the behavioural patterns of donors, Charlotte worked with KYTHE to develop clear and impactful messaging and carefully crafted content delivered through a dynamic new website. This would help the charity access more substantial funding from a more diverse range of sources, which was essential to support KYTHE’s intentions for growth.

Charlotte continued: “Our website is the shop window of the charity and it is through this that we can tell our story to larger funders. Our stories needed to connect with people, tell of young lives turned around, confidence built and real change based on personalised support that helps young people help themselves. These kinds of stories resonate practically and emotionally and they grab people’s attention.”

Attracting the right calibre of people to KYTHE was also critical. Charlotte said: “So far, much of KYTHE’s work is undertaken by volunteer members of the management committee. They have worked tirelessly in their spare time to keep the doors open. This is admirable, but unsustainable as the organisation grows. KYTHE needed people with specialist skills who can dedicate their time and talents to the task.”

This process has culminated in the recent recruitment of Eileen Rock, a dynamic new head of fund-raising who will further develop and implement the fundraising strategy and support a period of rapid growth. KYTHE are also exploring the opportunity to recruit an Operations Manager to look after the finances and day-to-day management of the charity.

The final phase of Charlotte’s work was to help KYTHE develop practical ways to achieve its long-term goals, as set out in KYTHE 2025. The new strategy challenges the charity to reach more young people across the region, and from this the concept of Mobile KYTHE was born.

Barry continued: “We have some great facilities, but they are already overstretched. We also know that many people can’t travel to our hub, so we had to find a way to get to them. We came up with the idea of “Mobile KYTHE” where we use a van to take our equipment and facilities to all the localities that are out of reach. This is the most cost effective and efficient way we can expand.”

The charity is also preparing to raise funds for a new community hub that will provide facilities and support for a wider range of young people, not just those with acute needs.

Charlotte said: “The community hub is an ambitious project which demonstrates our intent for the future. We want to create an inspiring place for young people, and a sustainable asset that can generate income for the charity. It’s a win, win. We’re currently looking for £1,000,000 of funding over the next four years. This is the next big step for the charity.”

Barry concludes: “Our partnership with Cranfield Trust through The Gannochy Trust Grants Plus programme has been nothing short of brilliant for us and the young people. You can see it in their faces. In partnership with The Gannochy Trust, Perth and Kinross Council and Cranfield Trust, Rob and Charlotte have helped KYTHE find a new perspective, feel stronger, more ambitious, and hopeful for the future.”

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