



HOSPICE COMMUNITY OUTREACH INITIATIVE DOVE CAFÉ

A welcoming, safe place, to be heard.

BACKGROUND

Through conversations with visitors and attendees, and by reviewing the availability of drop-in peer support groups, Kilbryde Hospice identified a gap within the South Lanarkshire community: the need for a safe, welcoming space where individuals feel genuinely heard and supported. This need primarily affects people living with a life-limiting illness or frailty, those caring for someone in that situation, and individuals coping with bereavement.



To address this need, the Dove Café was established.



Its approach promotes resilience, kindness, and compassion, while reducing social isolation and strengthening supportive networks within the community..



To create a hospice without walls, bringing our services into the heart of the community.
To build compassionate communities and encourage open conversations about death, dying, and bereavement.

AIM

01

THE AUTHORS, TOGETHER WITH EXPERIENCED HOSPICE VOLUNTEERS, COLLABORATED WITH COMMUNITY PARTNERS TO INTRODUCE THE DOVE CAFÉ CONCEPT, FOCUSING ON SOME OF THE MOST DEPRIVED AREAS IDENTIFIED IN THE SCOTTISH INDEX OF MULTIPLE DEPRIVATION (2020).

02

TO SUPPORT THE INITIATIVE, WE OFFERED LIGHT-TOUCH EDUCATIONAL SESSIONS ON LOSS AND BEREAVEMENT FOR THOSE INTERESTED IN LEARNING MORE. THIS EVOLVED INTO THE FIRST, MONTHLY DOVE CAFÉ, OPENING IN RUTHERGLEN, SOUTH LANARKSHIRE.

03

THIS WAS DELIVERED IN PARTNERSHIP WITH LOCAL COMMUNITY GROUPS, PROVIDING A SAFE AND WELCOMING SPACE FOR CONVERSATIONS ABOUT LIFE AND DEATH. ATTENDANCE WAS BALANCED BETWEEN MEN AND WOMEN, AND SEVERAL PARTICIPANTS LATER ENROLLED IN THE END-OF-LIFE AID SKILLS FOR EVERYONE (EASE) COURSE. *(END OF LIFE AID SKILLS FOR EVERYONE (EASE) | GOOD LIFE, GOOD DEATH, GOOD GRIEF)*

INTERVENTIONS



Despite efforts to promote these cafés through websites, social media, and community venues, similar initiatives in other areas have struggled to attract visitors. To overcome this challenge, we are exploring innovative ways to engage the community and increase awareness of the Dove Cafés.

CHALLENGES

RESULTS

Despite initial challenges, the Dove Café groups thrived—creating meaningful friendships and strengthening community ties. Through open, heartfelt conversations, participants found comfort and reassurance in knowing they were not alone in their grief.

Key Benefits for Participants

Opportunity to talk about the death of a family member

Compassion and understanding for their loss

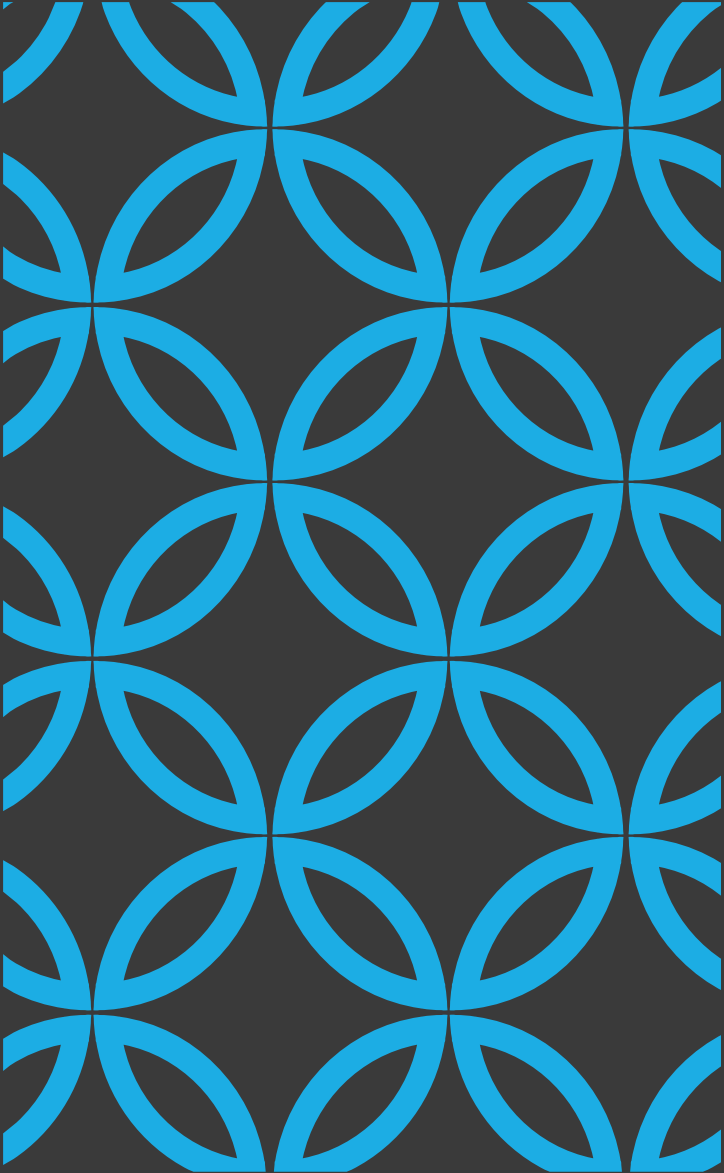
Enjoyable company and a welcoming atmosphere

Sharing experiences helps ease the pain of loss

Attentive listening and genuine support

Time to tell their story and receive helpful advice

Friendly environment encouraging open conversations about death



CONCLUSION

**Dove Cafés are hosted in community settings across South Lanarkshire, offering a welcoming space for those affected by loss, bereavement, life-limiting illness, or frailty. To support this initiative, Kilbryde Hospice has developed a light-touch training pack, empowering communities to create and run their own Dove Cafés.

We invite everyone to join us in fostering understanding and support. This initiative reflects a public health approach to death literacy (Kellehear, 2020), laying the foundation for personal and community growth. By promoting resilience, kindness, and compassion, Dove Cafés help reduce isolation and strengthen supportive networks within the community.**

We are grateful
for the generosity
of our community,
who have donated
time, space and
resources to
support our Dove
Cafés

