

# NEWSLETTER



## WELCOME BACK

**NEWSLETTER: SEPTEMBER 2025**

### CHAIRMAN STATEMENT:

It is with great pleasure that I welcome you to this new edition of the GCRA Newsletter - our first since 2020. A lot has changed since our last publication, both in the wider world and within our own organisation. Over the past few years, we have navigated challenges, embraced opportunities and have ultimately emerged stronger than ever.

One of the most significant developments has been our evolution in identity. With our new name-Grampian Heart and Health, we now more clearly reflect who we are today and the community we serve. This change is more than just a new name; it represents a renewed sense of purpose and direction for the future.

Alongside this, we are delighted to have expanded our offering with new classes and activities, giving members more ways than ever to participate, learn and connect. We've also secured additional venues, ensuring our programmes are more accessible and better suited to the needs of our growing community.

Another milestone has been the successful securing of substantial funding. This support has given us the confidence and resources to build on our achievements, strengthen our foundation and plan for an ambitious future. It stands as recognition of the value GCRA brings and the trust placed in us to deliver for our community.

This newsletter marks not only a return but also a fresh beginning. Through it, we will share stories, celebrate progress and keep you connected with the exciting developments taking place across GCRA.

On behalf of the board, I extend my heartfelt thanks to our members for your ongoing support. The journey since 2020 has shown us what we can achieve together and I look forward with optimism to what lies ahead.

Warm Regards

**Albert Lyon**

**Grampian Heart and Health Chairman**

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## GRAMPIAN HEART AND HEALTH STAFF UPDATES:

At the end of August 2025, Caroline Ness, Service Coordinator, as she retired. Caroline has been an incredible part of our team, supporting our community and helping us grow. We wish her all the best in this exciting new chapter.

We are delighted to welcome Lindsay Milligan, who will be taking over the role as Service Coordinator. We are excited to have her on board and look forward to her ideas and support that she will bring to Grampian Heart and Health.

In other news, Megan Couch has moved from her role as Marketing Coordinator to Funding and Marketing Coordinator. This expanded role will see Megan continue promoting our activities while also securing the funding required to deliver and develop our classes.



Pictured: Left - Right, Back row - Lindsay Milligan, Kay Robb, Anna Bichard, Peter Smith, Albert Lyon, Lynn Cowling, Lee Morrison, Jane Eaton. Front Row, Kate Miller Caroline Ness and Sharon Thomson.

## FUNDING UPDATES:

The past few months have been incredibly exciting for us, as we've successfully secured funding from multiple sources, including an amazing £19,400 from The National Lottery Community Fund and £4,629.85 from the Aberdeen Student Show, raised through the brilliant production of "Seagully Blonde". We are truly grateful to everyone involved in the Aberdeen Student Show for your kindness and generosity your support makes a real difference!

This funding not only validates the work we're doing but also gives us the resources to continue growing, reaching more people, and making an even greater impact in our community. With these contributions, we can plan new initiatives, expand our programs, and ensure that the work we're passionate about continues to thrive.

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## HOW YOU CAN HELP:

GCRA LTD trading as Grampian Heart and Health is a register charity and receives no government funding and is heavily reliant on the generosity of its members, the public, local businesses, trusts and foundations in order to continue delivering high quality exercise classes.

### **Fundraise for Grampian Heart and Health:**

We have been incredibly lucky to have had such strong support from our members and the wider community who have organised their own fundraising events to raise funds for us over the years.

For anyone who would like to support us with their own or class-led fund-raising event, please contact Megan Couch (Funding and Marketing Coordinator) - [megan.couch@gcra.org.uk](mailto:megan.couch@gcra.org.uk) for further support.

### **Become a Grampian Heart & Health Ambassador:**

We're looking for enthusiastic members of our community to help spread the word about Grampian Heart and Health.

Would you be interested in promoting what we do?  
Would you be willing to share your story and inspire others?

As an Ambassador, you'll play an important role in encouraging more people to look after their health and wellbeing and show how small changes can make a big difference

If this sounds like you, we'd love to hear from you! Contact Megan Couch (Funding and Marketing Coordinator) - [megan.couch@gcra.org.uk](mailto:megan.couch@gcra.org.uk) for further support.

***Together, we can make a positive impact across Grampian***



# NEWSLETTER

## Join our Board:

Are **YOU** passionate about the work we do at Grampian Heart and Health and are **YOU** ready to make a positive impact? We're looking for individuals to join our board!

As a board member, you'll attend quarterly meetings and our AGM, with the option to get more involved by joining the Management Sub-Group. It's a fantastic opportunity to contribute your expertise and help us continue to make a meaningful difference.

Interested? Get in touch at [info@gcra.org.uk](mailto:info@gcra.org.uk)

## HOW YOU CAN SUPPORT US:

### EasyFundraising:

Easyfundraising partners with over 8,000 brands who will donate part of what you spend to a cause of your choice. It won't cost you any extra. The cost is covered by the brand.

All you need to do is:

1. Go to <https://www.easyfundraising.org.uk/causes/gcra/> and join for free.
2. Every time you shop online, go to easyfundraising first to find the site you want and start shopping.
3. After you've checked out, the retailer will make a donation to GCRA Ltd at no extra cost to you whatsoever! There are no catches or hidden charges and GCRA Ltd will be really grateful for your donations. Thank you for your support.

### Don't Send me a Card:

If you're looking for a simple and meaningful way to support our work, consider using Don't Send me a Card. Instead of traditional cards for birthdays, anniversaries, Christmas or special occasions, this platform allows you to send ecards online to friends and family whilst supporting us at the same time.

It's a win-win: your loved ones celebrate their special moments in a modern, thoughtful way, and we receive much needed support to continue our projects and make an impact. Every contribution, big or small, helps us grow and reach more people in our community.

Visit: <https://www.dontsendmeacard.com/ecards/charities/gcra-grampian-cardiac-rehabilitation-association>

1. Click the link above.
2. Pick your card from the selection.
3. Enter your desired message.
4. Choose the amount you wish to donate to receive the card.



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## WHY THE REBRAND?

In 2025, GCRA took an important step forward in our mission to support heart health and wellbeing across our community. We are proud to announce that we have rebranded as Grampian Heart and Health. This change is more than a new name; it represents our ongoing commitment to inclusivity, community engagement and the values that have guided us from the very beginning, back in 2003.

Over the years, GCRA has grown and evolved, serving a diverse population with a wide range of needs. As we reflected on our identity and purpose, we recognised the importance of having a name and brand that truly reflect the communities we serve. We wanted a name that communicates our focus on heart health while being welcoming and accessible to everyone.

The rebranding process involved more than just a change in name and visuals. We engaged closely with members of our community to understand their experiences, needs and perspectives. Their insights shaped every aspect of our rebrand, from our new name to our refreshed visual identity. This collaborative approach ensures that the changes we make are meaningful and genuinely reflect the voices of the people we exist to support.

Grampian Heart and Health embodies our vision for the future: a health organisation that places inclusivity and community at its heart. This rebrand is part of a wider initiative to embed inclusivity into every aspect of our operations.

We want to take this time to acknowledge that this journey is one we have taken together with our members. Members, instructors and our board have all played a vital role in shaping Grampian Heart and Health. It is because of their dedication, feedback and support that we are able to move forward with confidence and clarity.

While our name and look have changed, our mission remains the same. We are committed to:

Providing trusted support for heart health

Delivering classes that promote wellbeing for all members of the community

Ensuring that every individual feels valued, supported and empowered to take care of their health.

We are extremely grateful to everyone who has supported us over the years. Together, we have built GCRA into what it is today and together we will continue to grow and strengthen our community as Grampian Heart and Health.



Left - Old logo



Right - New Logo

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## INSTRUCTOR SPOTLIGHT

Hi, I'm Lee Morrison.

I am a husband and Dad to my wife and five children.

I have over 15 years of experience as a Fitness Instructor and Personal Trainer.

I enjoy public speaking, working out at the gym and running distances ranging from 3 to 50KM.

Since 2017, I have specialised in instructing chair-based and standing, exercise sessions for older adults.

I currently lead classes each week at the Ellon Kirk Centre, Peterhead Rescue Hall, and the MACBI Centre in Mintlaw, where I love welcoming everyone with a warm smile, plenty of encouragement and a regular smattering of pretty awful Dad jokes (according to member feedback)!

My sessions are specifically designed for people who require a gentler approach to staying active, helping them build functional strength, cardiovascular fitness and improved balance, whilst enjoying the benefits of regular movement in a relaxed and social atmosphere.

What would be my advice for someone contemplating joining a class?

Go for it! Grampian Heart and Health classes are an ideal opportunity to begin your journey to becoming a healthier, stronger, more active YOU.

## OTHER INFORMATION:

Our AGM will be held on Thursday the 20<sup>th</sup> of November 2025 at the Hopeville Social Club at 2pm, 34 Harlaw Road, Inverurie, AB51 4SR.

All AGM invites will be sent over at the end of October 2025, these will be sent out via email, please remember to check your spam/junk folder as some Grampian Heart and Health email may end up in there, depending on your provider.

### QUIZ NIGHT

Kay's RGU class have been busy organising a quiz night. This will take place on Sunday 2<sup>nd</sup> November 2025 at 5pm at the Ashvale, Great Western Road, Aberdeen.

For those wishing to attend this great night, please contact Kay at [kaylrobb@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:kaylrobb@yahoo.co.uk) or the Office at [info@gcra.org.uk](mailto:info@gcra.org.uk)



Tickets are £17 which includes a delicious Ashvale Supper - your choice of Haddock, Scampi, or Chicken Fillets.

Registered Charity No: SC033331  
GCRA Ltd Trading as Grampian Heart and Health



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## PRESENCE ON SOCIAL MEDIA:

Over the last year, we have been working hard to improve our social media presence. We are delighted to say that this has made a real difference

We've built a stronger community presence on Facebook and we have also joined LinkedIn, helping us to connect with partners, professionals and supporters across Aberdeen and Aberdeenshire.

We want to give a big thank you to all of our members who have been interacting with our posts. Your support helps us reach more people as well as spreading awareness about Grampian Heart and Health.

If you have Facebook, but haven't followed us yet, now is a great time. By following, you will receive updates, information regarding events and ways to support us in gaining funding to continue to deliver and develop our classes

Facebook - <https://www.facebook.com/grampianhearthealth/>

## EMAIL SOFTWARE:

In May 2025, we decided to take an important step forward and introduce an email platform, Dot Digital, to allow for more effective and reliable communication with all of you.

From now on, all newsletters, updates and important announcements will come from this platform, helping us keep in touch with you more efficiently and reliably.

It's really important that you don't unsubscribe, as doing so will mean you will no longer receive crucial updates about class changes, cancellations, instructor holidays and other important information. Staying subscribed ensures you're always in the loop and won't miss anything important.

If you haven't received any emails from us yet, don't worry! Please get in touch with Megan Couch ( Funding and Marketing Coordinator) at [megan.couch@gcra.org.uk](mailto:megan.couch@gcra.org.uk), who will investigate the issue and make sure you're added to our mailing list so you won't miss any future updates.

# THANK YOU

If you have something that you wish to share with us via the newsletter, please get in contact with Megan at [Megan.couch@gcra.org.uk](mailto:Megan.couch@gcra.org.uk) before the 8<sup>th</sup> of December to ensure that it is featured in the December Newsletter