

**Dr Stefan Geider, GP, Chairperson and medical director of CWT.**

Good morning and a very warm welcome to this grand opening of North Point building at Compass. A special welcome to our next-door neighbour Ashley, one of our first supporters who has always keeping a close eye on our site, and to our youngest supporter Ruri who had the first ever birthday party in the North Point Hall.

For those who don't know me, I am Dr Stefan Geider, GP of Camphill medical practice NHS as well as chairperson and medical director of the Camphill Wellbeing Trust, the medical charity which hosts the Compass project. Camphill Wellbeing Trust works in an integrative way with Camphill Medical Practice NHS serving patients from Peterculter, Cults, Milltimber and Bieldside. As an extension of our innovative approach, approximately three years ago Camphill and Torry medical practices together formed the River Dee Medical group, a community interest company, the first of its kind in Scotland.

My particular interest and role in the past 35 years as a GP has been on the children and adults with learning disabilities and additional support needs of the various Camphill communities in Aberdeen City and Shire.

Today we celebrate volunteering and volunteering has played an important role in my life – changing it significantly, changing it when I first joined Camphill School as a young volunteer over 40 years ago. I met an ethos within the Camphill organisation which at that time for over 40 years explored the integration of health, education and care embedded in a natural, therapeutic environment surrounded by meaningful social relationships. I was deeply touched to experience how these pillars fostered resilience and nurtured wellbeing while supporting sustainable living. This experience led me to return to Camphill 10 years later as a doctor.

It was interesting to note some similarities between Camphill's birth and that of Compass. Camphill was founded during the second world war in the middle of very dark times. Despite this, Camphill with its integrative approach began to thrive and is now a worldwide movement with centres in over 100 countries.

Similarly, Compass was started during another dark and challenging time worldwide – the Covid pandemic. It is our vision that Compass can be a place where the successful approaches of Camphill can be translated and made available for the local and regional population.

The pillars of Camphill - growing organic food, encouraging healthy nutrition, connecting with nature and living sustainably, lifelong learning with individualised education and care plus a holistic and approach to health are relevant not only for those with additional support needs but for the rest of us in the general population for sustaining health and building resilience.

We are all aware that the impact of Covid, our ever faster moving times, the political financial and cultural climate, wars in the daily news all are having a significant impact on people's wellbeing. As a GP it's often easy to prescribe an antidepressant when you meet people with high levels of anxiety, low mood, stress and burn out. I am very grateful that here I have some different options available. By signposting my patients to Compass's unique Skill for Health social prescribing service they can tackle their symptoms with for example two hours therapeutic gardening.

We are all aware of the current state of the NHS and the pressure on GP practices. It is my hope that at Compass we can make an impact on reducing the demand on local practices by creating other opportunities for addressing certain areas of ill health and by helping build a healthier more resilient local community.

I'd now like to introduce you to Emma King, Primary Care Lead of Aberdeen Health and Social Care Partnership who has offered to say a few words today. I first met Emma approximately eight years ago when she came to visit and inspect Camphill medical practice NHS.

Emma quickly picked up that Camphill medical practice and its collaboration with Camphill Wellbeing Trust was different and unique.

Coming from an occupational therapist background Emma connected with the hands-on practical approach and since then has respected and supported us. This was extremely important 4 years ago when we embarked on an adventure to form the first community interest company GP practice in Scotland. Emma's support was vital in bringing about this innovative model in primary care. Thank you, Emma..

**Emma King – Primary Care Lead, Aberdeen City Health & Social Care Partnership**

Good morning everyone.

Thank you, Stefan, and thank you to the entire Compass and Camphill community for inviting me to be here with you today.

On behalf of the City Health and Social Care Partnership, I want to extend our heartfelt congratulations to you all. What you have nurtured and built here is truly inspiring—a progressive, inclusive community model that not only uplifts individuals but also brings people together through meaningful and healthy activities.

Your commitment to fostering connection, well-being, and opportunity is something we deeply value and admire. It's clear that this is not just a place—but a living, growing community with purpose at its heart.

We are proud to be working alongside you, and we look forward to continuing our collaboration—supporting you as you sustain and expand the vital services that make such a positive difference in people's lives.

Thank you again for the warm welcome, and congratulations on everything you've achieved.

## **Aileen Primrose, CEO of Camphill Wellbeing Trust at Compass Site, Aberdeen**

**Saturday 6<sup>th</sup> September 2025**

Good morning, everyone.

It is my absolute pleasure to welcome you here today to celebrate the official opening of North Point - this impressive, sustainably refurbished building on our Compass site.

This moment marks an important step in our journey *navigating healthy, sustainable living* — a journey to bring the ethos & practices of Camphill to the wider public through hands on experiences

It is a journey that would not have been possible without the dedication, generosity, and vision of so many people here today, and of others not able to be with us.

When Camphill Wellbeing Trust first took on this site in December 2020, it was a place of neglect —

- overgrown,
- vandalised
- and unused,

But despite this it had a unique atmosphere -one which invited you in and enfolded you in its sense of calm and well-being.

It was partly this which compelled us to ensure that this special place should not be lost as a health-giving resource for the people of Aberdeen .

Now today, standing here, we see not what was, but what is possible when people come together with purpose. This building is more than just bricks and mortar- imbued with the care and vision of those have worked to bring it to this stage –it provides a nurturing space where people of all ages and backgrounds can come together to exercise, play, connect and grow stronger in body.mind and spirit.

None of this would have been possible without our incredible volunteers, who have given their time, skills, and passion to help bring this vision to life.

You are the beating heart of Compass and make our work all worthwhile.

To our funders and donors, large and small—

- your faith in us,
- your commitment to investing in sustainable development,
- your belief in what we can achieve here

has made all the difference.

On behalf of everyone who will use this space for years to come: thank you.

I am delighted to say that today is not the end of the story — but a chapter in an unfolding one. Our next phase will focus on the sustainable refurbishment of two further buildings: the former science block and kindergarten. These will create a community hub with:

- a zero-waste training kitchen using organic, seasonal produce from our garden to supply a welcoming café,
- a play area for families,
- a dedicated therapeutic space
- an upcycle and recycle shop.

Together, these will provide vital resources, learning opportunities, and inspiration for the wide range of people who already use Compass, and for those we've yet to welcome through our doors.

So today, we celebrate what has been achieved, but also look forward with hope, determination and excitement to what lies ahead.

Together, we are proving that from dereliction can come vitality, and that by navigating healthy, sustainable living, we can leave a legacy for future generations.

Thank you, once again, to everyone who has contributed to making this vision a reality. This is your building, your community, and your future.

And now, Stefan and I will hold this gorgeous nature ribbon woven by Petra, one of our gardeners, to be cut by Ian, our volunteer who has contributed the most hours to our Compass project