

**CARERS SITTER SERVICE
ANNUAL REPORT
APRIL 2024 to MARCH 2025**

Outcomes and difference made:

To beneficiaries:

The cared for and their carers can access a service free of charge:

Carers Sitter Service has been providing a free sitting service to carers in The Deepings, Stamford, Bourne and surrounding villages for over 30 years. This grant has allowed this free and most valued service to continue.

Carers will gain respite from caring duties and have time to themselves:

Carers continue to tell us that being able to rely on a known volunteer to sit with their loved one for a few hours at a time not only gives them time to attend hospital appointments etc. but it “gives them a bit of their life back” – time to spend catching up with friends and family, continuing with hobbies or just taking a little bit of time out from their ever present duties as a 24 hour a day carer, just for themselves.

“I believe that full time carers really benefit from knowing that at least for a few hours they can leave their lifelong partner with someone they trust as a friend.”

“I would just like to say what a great help CSS is making to our situation. Our lovely sitter J is so good with M and he really enjoys her company. She usually spends a couple of hours a week with us and that time enables me to go to the shop or potter in the garden, knowing he is in safe hands. It gives me a bit of precious personal time and makes such a difference. We are lucky to have this extra help and support. It is greatly appreciated.”

“When my wife was diagnosed with dementia in 2017 we were introduced to CSS by our district nurse. We have had the same volunteer sitter visit us once a week since then, only being interrupted by the restrictions of the Covid pandemic. The regular attendance of our sitter has become something that we can rely on and look forward to; it allows me some free time for shopping or a walk by the river, while my wife responds to the stimulation of some sympathetic female company. Our sitter also keeps us informed of the charity’s activities and we also receive a regular newsletter so we always feel included. We have even won the monthly raffle, twice!”

The cared for will have the opportunity to develop friendship outside their family:

Needing to be cared for at home and not being able to get out and meet up with friends and family can be very lonely and boring at times. We hear from both carers and cared for how having a sitter enables new friendships to develop – quote from N volunteer sitter:

“Looking after a person with a long-term illness, especially any variant of dementia, is incredibly onerous for their regular carer. Therefore any easing of this responsibility that I can offer, even if it is only for a few hours a week, hopefully helps the carers in giving them a break so they can lead, even to a small extent, their own life as an individual. My presence in the home gives the “sittee” a new relationship to experience, with different conversational topics than those held with their own partner, and hopefully breaks to some extent any monotony of life. Sitting gives me an insight into the lives of people less fortunate than myself, and ensures I take nothing for granted in my own life. In my view, all three parties benefit hugely.”

Both the cared for and the carers will sustain mental wellbeing from the service:

Carers and the cared for tell us having a volunteer sitter is not only a lifeline for the carer who can attend appointments etc with peace of mind but these new relationships help to raise their spirits – quote from I and J – husband and wife beneficiaries of our service:

“Thank you for all the hard work you do to make our lives easier. You and your team make such a difference to my husband and I. Without S sitting with my husband, I would find it difficult to attend appointments. Then there is the other bonus, I have an enjoyable time chatting and laughing with a caring, friendly person. Thank you again, we would be lost without you.”

Carers and the cared for are aware of other relevant services appropriate to their needs:

We work closely with other local charities and professional service so are able to supply relevant information to our beneficiaries by telephone, email, on our website and when we do our initial home visit. We regularly make referrals to other relevant charities and organisations.

For the organisation:

Staff will retain employment:

We have been able to retain both members of staff – coordinator and administrator. Both members of staff have suffered from a number of health issues this past year but with the help of volunteers they have been able to keep up with new referrals and organising home visits.

Volunteers will form new friendships with the cared for and with other volunteers. Staff and volunteers will feel part of the community and have a sense of purpose. Volunteers will be skilled through training:

“CSS has introduced me to an amazing group of volunteers that are CSS!”

“Although every carer partnership is different and has its own dynamics, I sense that I am now more skilled and confident in these relationships and can be more effective as a volunteer.”

“I became a volunteer after hearing a very enlightening talk a few years before I retired and I thought I will volunteer for that charity when I retire, which I did three years ago. The benefits as I see it work both ways. Not only do I feel I am putting something back into the community by sitting with the partners of loved ones, whilst they have a very well earned break to do something for themselves, but I have met some lovely people who have become good friends, so very beneficial to me too as I missed my work colleagues after retiring.”

“I very much enjoy being a volunteer for CSS. It is a very rewarding thing to do. Just giving a few hours of my time means so much to the carer of the loved one you are sitting for. Over the years I have met some wonderful and interesting folk and still keep in contact with many of the families. I would wholeheartedly recommend volunteering for such a worthy cause.”

On June 6th 2024 Kate Marshall, Dementia Specialist with Dementia Support South Lincs and one of Carers Sitter Service trustees, did a training session on different types of dementia and the behaviour sometimes associated with them; ways of communicating with people with dementia; “activities” to do with people with dementia – at the end of the day we invited the volunteers to try out some of the activities and share what they do on their “sits”; activity kits are now available for volunteers to use as they wish.

Here are some of the comments:

“I found the session very helpful, both in understanding dementia and meeting up with fellow volunteers. Thank you Kate for an excellent job.”

“I enjoyed the training and in fact gave a copy of the information sheets to a friend who was visiting me to help her deal with her dad. It was interesting to hear the trainer tell us about the different people she has contact with who have dementia and how their partner/carer deals with situations that arise. It was good to meet up with other volunteers as well.”

“Many thanks to Kate for a very enjoyable and informative Dementia Training session. It is always good to hear of the other sitters experiences and to learn of the various ways in which dementia affects those with it and how best to deal with certain situations.”

“I found it interesting and I’m sure it will be useful going forward to work with individuals suffering with various types of dementia. I found the section on communication really helpful and thought it was particularly interesting to hear from someone who had so much first hand experience working with people with dementia in a personal and professional capacity. I would love to have more training sessions like this on a range of conditions/illnesses that are common among the people we care for.”

“Gave an understanding of various types of dementia, explaining their presentational differences. Good advice on how to communicate with dementia sufferers, especially at first meeting.”

For the community:

The service fills a gap in services:

There is no other free sitting service, as far as we know, in the whole of Lincolnshire, and possibly in the whole country. The carers who started Carers Sitter Service, over thirty years ago, were always adamant that the service should remain free and we are proud to have been able to continue their legacy. Sitting/companion services are available through local agencies but hourly fees range between £20 and over £30. This is unachievable for most carers. They tell us they would feel guilty, even if they had the funds, to “squander” their hard earned money paying for a sitter so they were able to have some time to themselves, to recharge their batteries. Maybe they would be able to justify it for a hospital appointment but most would need two to three hours at a time.

The service will reduce the burden on social services:

We receive regular referrals from social services and social prescribers. Quote from social prescriber:

“As a social prescriber working in the South Lincs and Rural PCN I meet carers on a regular basis. For both me and those I refer, the service is invaluable. To know that there are people willing and available to support those most in need, for me is without doubt, invaluable. The service allows those carers to recharge, whilst giving peace of mind that their loved ones are safe. I cannot thank CSS enough for the role they provide within our community.”

More people will be aware of the service through events:

The administrator or coordinator tries to attend all events to which CSS is invited. Trustees will often attend if staff is unavailable. CSS will often share an information stand with another local charity so both charities are represented. CSS takes every opportunity to give talks to local groups about the service and to fly the flag for our charity. This sometimes leads to donations, referrals and sometimes even new volunteers. We have attended Stamford Day Centre “memory days”, Len Pick Trust presentation evening, spoken at Stamford Cancer Day and given a presentation to The Deeping Oddfellows. We feel we are well known in our community. We have leaflets in all local public places like GP surgeries, libraries, community centres, supermarkets etc. Later this month we have been invited to have an information stand at a local supermarket. These sessions are always a great opportunity to raise the charity’s

profile and to hand out information but especially to talk to passersby, meet new people and catch up with old friends/supporters of the charity. Last summer one of our volunteers gave a talk in a local pub about the charity and the benefits of becoming one of our volunteers. She and a group of friends went on to do a 10 mile walk with volunteers from other local charities. This was another opportunity to raise awareness of the free service we offer to the local community.

On 17th May we will have an information stand at an all day Wellness Event at The Deepings GP Practice.

Number of beneficiaries:

As you will see from the chart below all our figures have increased.

Lottery update figures March 2025

April 2023 – March 2024		April 2024 – March 2025	
Number of hours sat	810.5	Number of hours sat	952
Number of sits done	352	Number of sits done	427
Bourne	130	Bourne	144
Stamford	42	Stamford	36
Deeping	89	Deeping	152
Villages	91	Villages	95
Number of referrals	62	Number of referrals	70
Number of volunteers	14	Number of volunteers	19

How the difference made was measured:

Our administrator has done a wonderful job collating and recording necessary figures relating to number of hours sat, number of sits, location of sits, referrals and number of volunteers.

We wrote to several carers and volunteers and their feedback has been used above to illustrate some of our objectives.

Due to illness we have lost a lot of staff hours over the last several months which has meant we have not, as yet, sent out a questionnaire. This will go out to beneficiaries and professional in the upcoming reporting year.

Kate Marshall – Trustee

April 29th 2025

Carers Sitter Service			
Financial Statement 1 April 2024 to 31 March 2025			
Receipts and Payments			
		2024/25	2023/24
Income			
	SK Lottery	£173.00	£254.00
	Grants	£34,950.98	£7,850.00
	Fund Raising	£81.00	£338.00
	Donations	£7,419.56	£12,934.63
	100 Club	£1,320.00	£2,530.00
	Gift Aid	£200.00	£895.32
	Other	£0.00	£22.90
	CCLA	£20.79	£18.25
Total		£44,165.33	£24,843.10
Expenditure			
	Salaries	£23,686.04	£20,721.60
	Co-ordinators Expenses	£0.00	£115.34
	Staff Mileage	£229.95	£39.15
	Sitters Mileage	£1,378.12	£1,065.20
	Printing / Postage / Stationary	£547.99	£543.82
	Office Equipment	£1,624.16	£0.00
	Telephone / Broadband	£550.77	£670.40
	Subs / Adverts / Licences	£0.00	£0.00
	Rent	£1,699.25	£1,500.00
	Publicity	£161.19	£148.98
	Fund Raising Expenses		£0.00
	Bank Charges	£0.00	£0.00
	Accounts		£0.00
	DBS	£83.35	£20.00
	Insurance	£239.28	£209.77
	Miscellaneous	£232.37	£117.95
	100 Club	£200.00	£320.00
Total		£30,632.47	£25,472.21
Excess	Income	£13,532.86	
	Expenditure		-£629.11
Balance Sheet 31 MARCH 2025			
Brought Forward			
	CCLA	£535.30	£517.05
	Metro Bank / HSBC	£3,908.52	£4,576.05

	Petty Cash	£20.58	£0.41
Total		£4,464.40	£5,093.51
Surplus			
Deficit	Profit / Loss	£13,532.86	-£629.11
	Interest CCLA		
Total		£17,997.26	£4,464.40
Carried Forward	CCLA	£556.09	£535.30
	Metro Bank	£17,373.45	£3,908.52
	Petty Cash	£67.72	£20.58
Total		£17,997.26	£4,464.40



Carers Sitter service

Supporting our local carers

Annual Report
31 March 2025

Legal Status

The organisation is a registered as a CIO

Registered Charity 1040408

Address / Contacts

Wake House

41, North Street

Bourne

Lincolnshire

PE10 9AE

Tel: 01778 420255

Email: : carersitterservice@gmail.com

Website: www.carerssitterservice.org.uk

Trustees

Janice Hill - Chair

Marjorie Boxall-Hunt

Trudie Anders

Kate Marshall

Hilary Smith

Officials

Paula Harding - Coordinator

Sara Banks - Administrator

Celia Howes – Treasurer

Graham Thompson – Auditor

Objects

To provide, within the area of Bourne, Stamford, the Deepings and their surrounding villages, a service to relieve the stress felt by full-time carers.

This will be achieved by the provision of a sitting service provided by volunteers in the carers' homes.

Review of the Year

There is no other free sitting service, as far as we know, in the whole of Lincolnshire, and possibly in the whole country. The carers who started Carers Sitter Service, over thirty years ago, were always adamant that the service should remain free and we are proud to have been able to continue their legacy. Sitting/companion services are available through local agencies but hourly fees range between £20 and over £30. This is unachievable for most carers. They tell us they would feel guilty, even if they had the funds, to “squander” their hard-earned money paying for a sitter so they were able to have some time to themselves, to recharge their batteries. Maybe they would be able to justify it for a hospital appointment but most would need two to three hours at a time. The service will reduce the burden on social services:

Figures for year ended 31 Marchj2025	
Details	Numbers
Number of Hours Sat	952
Number of sits Done	427
Bourne	144
Stamford	36
Deepings	152
Villages	95
Number of Referrals	70
Number of Volunteers	19

In all our activities the Trustees have had regard to the guidance issued by the Charity Commission on public benefit

Accounts

Carers Sitter Service					
Accounts for 1 April 2024 to 31 March 2025					
Receipts and Payments					
			2024/25		2023/24
Income					
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	Grants		£34,950.98		£7,850.00
	Fund Raising		£81.00		£338.00
	Donations		£7,419.56		£12,934.63
	100 Club		£1,320.00		£2,530.00
	Gift Aid		£200.00		£895.32
	Other		£0.00		£22.90
	CCLA		£33.74		£18.25
Total			£44,178.28		£24,843.10
Expenditure					
	Salaries		£23,686.04		£20,721.60
	Co-ordinators Expenses		£0.00		£115.34
	Staff Mileage		£229.95		£39.15
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	Petty Cash		£67.72		£20.58
Total			£18,010.21		£4,464.40
			£0.00		
Signed	C H owes				G T hompson
Name	Celia Howes				Graham Thompson
Date	28-May-25				

Independent examiner's report to the trustees of Carer Sitters Service

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the) Carer Sitters Service for the year ended 31st March 2025.

Responsibilities and basis of report

As the charity trustees of the Trust you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 ('the Act').

I report in respect of my examination of the Trust's accounts carried out under section 145 of the 2011 Act and in carrying out my examination I have followed all the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the Act.

Independent examiner's statement

I have completed my examination.

I confirm that no material matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination giving me cause to believe that in any material respect:

1. accounting records were not kept in respect of the Trust as required by section 130 of the Act; or 2. the accounts do not accord with those records.

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in this report in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Signed:

G Thompson

Graham Thompson

28th May 2025