

SOLIHULL CARERS CENTRE

England & Wales · Charity number 1092613

Details

Other names	CARERS TRUST SOLIHULL, CARERS TRUST - SOLIHULL, PRINCESS ROYAL TRUST SOLIHULL CARERS CENTRE
Status	Registered
Legal form	Charitable company
Company number	04378042
Registered	2002-06-25
Register	View on the Charity Commission register

Contact

Address Solihull Fire Station Annexe
620 Streetsbrook Road
Solihull
West Midlands
B91 1QY

Phone 01217881143

Email centre@solihullcarers.org

Website www.solihullcarers.org

Activities

Objects: TO SUPPORT ADULT AND YOUNG CARERS WHO ARE, OR WERE, CARRYING OUT A CARING ROLE FOR PERSONS WHO ARE DISABLED, ELDERLY OR ILL, BY THE PROVISION OF PRACTICAL HELP, ADVICE, ASSISTANCE, SERVICE, ADVOCACY AND SUPPORT. ALSO TO ADVANCE EDUCATION CONCERNING CARING AMONGST CARERS, PROFESSIONALS AND THE PUBLIC.

Activities: We are an independent charity which has been providing local support to carers for over 18 years. We offer emotional support, carer's assessments, practical information and advice, social activities and events, a strong voice for carers, support groups, and drop-in and home visit support through our outreach services to carers aged 5 to 105, living anywhere in the borough of Solihull.

Classification

- **How:** Makes Grants To Individuals, Provides Human Resources, Provides Services, Provides Advocacy/advice/information, Acts As An Umbrella Or Resource Body
- **What:** The Advancement Of Health Or Saving Of Lives, Disability, The Prevention Or Relief Of Poverty
- **Who:** Children/young People, Elderly/old People, People With Disabilities, Other Defined Groups

Geography

- Birmingham City
- Solihull

Finances

Period end	Income	Expenditure	Assets	Employees
2025-03-31	£890,187	£944,221	£342,661	30
2024-03-31	£785,880	£799,205	£396,695	27
2023-03-31	£747,326	£711,960	£410,020	26
2022-03-31	£733,459	£663,280	£374,654	24
2021-03-31	£719,337	£622,812	£304,475	19

Trustees

Name	Role	Appointed
David Edward Heaselgrave	Chair	2026-03-13
CAROL SHIEL		
David John Brown		2025-03-03
Janice Elizabeth Price		2020-12-20
Loretta Paula James-Head		2024-01-22
Susan JEYNES		
Timothy David Whitfield		2026-03-02

SOLIHULL CARERS CENTRE

England & Wales - Charity number 1092613

Accounts

**Here2
Help**



Solihull
METROPOLITAN
BOROUGH COUNCIL



ANNUAL REPORT AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

April 2024 to March 2025

**CARERS
TRUST**

Solihull

Supporting unpaid carers of all ages in Solihull for over 20 years

Solihull Carers Centre is a company limited by guarantee and a Registered Charity operating as Carers Trust Solihull. Registered Company in England No. 04378042. Registered Charity No. 1092613.

COMPANY INFORMATION

The Directors and Trustees are pleased to present their report together with the financial statements of the charity for the year ended 31 March 2025.

The Organisation

Solihull Carers Centre (SCC) is a company limited by guarantee and a Registered Charity operating as Carers Trust Solihull (CTS). The Directors of the charitable company ('the charity') are its Trustees for the purpose of charity law and within this report are collectively referred to as the Trustees.

Company Information

Registered Company in England No. 04378042
Registered Charity No. 1092613

Directors and Trustees 2024-2025

David Heaselgrave	Chair
Loretta James-Head	Deputy Chair
Graham Thompson	Treasurer
Kelly Beckett	
Rachael Beer	(resigned 3 March 2025)
David Brown	(appointed 3 March 2025)
Christine Grace	
Sue Jeynes	
Janice Price	
Carol Shiel	
Selina Westwood	(resigned 22 July 2024)

Registered Office & Operational Address

The Carers Centre
Solihull Fire Station Annexe
620 Streetsbrook Road
Solihull
B91 1QY

Independent Examiner

Hannah Justice FCA FCCA
BSN Associates Limited
Chartered Accountants
3B Swallowfield Courtyard
Wolverhampton Road
Oldbury
West Midlands
B69 2JG



CONTENTS

- 2.** Company information
- 5.** Our work at a glance
- 6.** Introduction from our Chair
- 7.** Another record year: our CEO
- 8.** Our work
- 16.** Thank you to our funders and supporters
- 17.** Thank you to all our volunteers
- 18.** Directors' and Trustees' Annual Report and Financial Statements

TRIP TO THE NATIONAL MEMORIAL ARBORETUM.



OUR WORK AT A GLANCE 2024-25



From the 2021 Census, we can estimate there are **19,940 unpaid carers of all ages in Solihull**



5,077 CARERS REGISTERED WITH CARERS TRUST SOLIHULL (CTS) AT END OF 31 MARCH 2025

CARERS REGISTERED WITH CTS:
2,757 CARERS AGED 26+
1,029 PARENT CARERS
780 YOUNG CARERS (YC)
511 YOUNG ADULT CARERS (YAC)

56 DAYS OUT, WORKSHOPS, RELAXATION DAYS & TRAINING:



24 FOR YOUNG & YOUNG ADULT CARERS
32 FOR ADULT CARERS

252 PARENT CARER ASSESSMENTS & REVIEWS INCLUDING:

101 assessments*
101 nine-week reviews*
50 annual reviews*

60 YOUNG CARERS CLUBS

14 ADULT CARER MEET UPS



674 ADULT CARER ASSESSMENTS, REVIEWS & PLANS:

134 contingency plans
273 assessments and reviews
267 support plans

372 ADULT CARERS RECEIVED SUPPORT SESSIONS

118 YOUNG CARERS AND YOUNG ADULT CARERS ENGAGED IN ONE-TO-ONE SESSIONS

193 YC & YAC ASSESSMENTS:

154 young carer assessments
39 YAC assessments



1,962 VOLUNTEER HOURS

29 VOLUNTEERS:

Includes 9 new volunteers

106,400 FACEBOOK REACH

9,400 FACEBOOK PAGE VIEWS

53 BLOG POSTS



NOTE:

Young carers are 5-16 years old; young adult carers are 17-25 years old; and adult carers are 26 years and over.
*For parents of children with special educational needs and disabilities.

INTRODUCTION FROM OUR CHAIR

Following on from previous years' achievements, once again Carers Trust Solihull has had an excellent year, increasing both the number of carers we support and the range of services we offer to unpaid carers in our community.

Our staff teams have been stable, with no significant variation in numbers, and they have continued to improve and ultimately attract more carers. At the year end, we had 5,077 carers registered with us, an increase on the previous year of approximately 3%, accounting for approximately 25% of recognised carers within the borough. For a small but highly focused charity this is a truly exceptional result, and one that everyone is extremely proud of and remains our focus as we move into the new year.

Reasons for the increases are varied, from better communication, identifying and providing targeted, relevant support to carers, plus constantly reviewing and, where needed, improving our networking with all of Solihull care services. Key to all of this are our staff and volunteers, and I would like to recognise the dedication and focus they have demonstrated, consistently going above and beyond in bringing an unparalleled service to unpaid carers in Solihull.

Special thanks in all of this goes to Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council, our primary funder, who work with us in setting our targets and support structure so that we can identify carers within our community, allowing us to succeed in our primary mission of improving the lives of carers.

Everyone is or knows an unpaid carer. Our goal is to continue to provide hope and support for those most in need.

I would also like to thank our other friends and sponsors who both organised and helped us with several carer-specific events, which aided in fundraising and increased our visibility in the community. This year total fundraising, in addition to our SMBC contract, totalled £142,019. This gave us the ability to enhance the core services we supply as part of our SMBC contract and trial some new initiatives, such as our sitting service, which has been greatly appreciated by our carers.

The coming year, as always, brings new challenges to both our charity and our carers. The cost-of-living crisis and pressure on public funding will mean our services will become even more important to carers of all ages, and our dedicated teams will continue to offer a professional, supportive and friendly service.

In conclusion, on behalf of the Trustees, we are proud to support this fabulous charity and give thanks to our staff, volunteers, friends, funders and our carers for making us the organisation we are today.



David Heaselgrave
Chair of Trustees

ANOTHER RECORD YEAR

OUR CEO

2024-25 was a year of consultation and consolidation, as the solid performance in the previous year carried over into excellent results across the services. We increased the number of registered carers across all groups.

Our website traffic, communication, and social media traffic all increased, with more carers enjoying our podcasts and films. I am particularly grateful for the work on the website, which is even easier to navigate.

The outreach to businesses and partnerships blossomed, and the events and activities work provided more support and activity across the board.

The adult team, in particular, cleared a backlog generated during the lockdowns and secured record numbers in assessments, reviews, and support work despite increasing demand.

Overall, whilst the cost of living crisis was not as prominent in the news, we were able to help a range of carers through hardship grants and other vouchers.

We are keen to see how we could improve services and increase levels of satisfaction. There were joint consultation sessions in Solihull and Chelmsley Wood, with all carers, and separate male-carers meet-ups.

Young carers were consulted, and all our service users were surveyed, with positive satisfaction feedback and ideas for further improvement. This all fed into SMBC's own consultation and Carers Forum, as they prepared to retender our contract.

Most of the services that CTS provide are commissioned by the council. We undertake work that they would otherwise deliver themselves.

Multiagency work took place with Primary Health Partnerships, which oversee many of Solihull's GPs, to encourage carers to register at their surgeries and to improve awareness amongst patients and health workers about the support available to carers.

During the year, we organised or attended 57 workshops, activities, and awareness-raising events in 15 different wards and transferred much of our work with young carers to the new Family Hub venues.

The retender of the All-age Carer Service took place between June and July of 2025. We were successful and are delighted to have secured the Charity's long-term future, but the contract price has reduced significantly, reflecting the budget pressures on councils across the country.

To square the circle of limited funding and increasing demand, we have begun a major restructuring and brought forward our partnership with an AI-based service, Bridgit. This will enable us to ramp up our digital engagement offer to more carers and maintain priority face-to-face work with sadly fewer staff hours.

But my final thanks go to the Trustees, team managers, staff and volunteers that make CTS what it is. A thank you to Solihull Council, which commissions and therefore funds the bulk of our services, and a big thank you to other funders, sponsors and supporters who allow us to go the extra mile.



Brandon Scott-Omenka
CEO Carers Trust Solihull

OUR WORK

CARERS WEEK



5K Carers Charity Walk 2024.

Carers Week 2024 was a vibrant celebration of Solihull’s unpaid carers, bringing the national theme “Putting Carers on the Map” to life. The week highlighted the strength of Solihull’s caring community and what Carers Trust Solihull stands for – empowering, supporting and celebrating carers.

It began with two coachloads of carers, families and those they care for enjoying a joyful day at Weston-super-Mare, followed by a 5K Charity Walk at Packington Estate with Carers Trust Heart of England. The event blended fresh air, friendship and purpose with generous support from UB Healthcare.

Across the borough, staff and volunteers hosted information stands at Solihull Hospital and community venues, encouraging carers to register for support. Adult and parent carers enjoyed a mix of wellbeing events – from afternoon tea and relaxation sessions to a cinema trip and health checks delivered by Gateway Family Services, the Stroke Association and Marie Curie.

Young carers had their own lively celebration, featuring circus skills, exotic animals, food and laughter – a well-earned break from caring.

During the week, we raised awareness by connecting with carers across the community. Our team distributed information packs to over



Young carers with exotic animals.



Carers having pampering.



Carers enjoying Weston.



Carers enjoying Weston.



Delivering info bags in M&S.



Delivering goodie bags in schools.

20 businesses, organisations, and schools across the borough – including Asda, Marks & Spencer, Morrisons, Solihull Action Through Advocacy, Solihull Community Advice Hub, and Grace Academy.

We also took to the community with information stands, offering advice and support to the public. Highlights included a joint stand with University Hospitals Birmingham at Solihull Hospital and a drop-in session at Monkspath Community Hub with Solihull Healthcare Partnership.

The week concluded with our second Carer Friendly Awards Charity Ball, recognising schools, employers, professionals and individuals who go the extra mile to support unpaid carers.



Our 2024 Carer Friendly Award winners with Brandon Scott-Omenka, our CEO (fourth from left).

Watch a roundup of the week and read further details by visiting our website.



OUR WORK CARERS RIGHTS DAY



Carers Rights Day panel.



CTS staff chatting with audience.



Solihull Parent Carer Voice with CTS.

This year's Carers Rights Day celebrated the vital role of unpaid carers and helped ensure they're informed about their rights and the support available. We marked the day early, on Wednesday 20 November, under the national theme "Recognising Your Rights."

Held at the Renewal Centre in Solihull, the event brought together local services and organisations for a vibrant information marketplace offering advice to carers and professionals. A highlight was our expert panel, featuring Citizens Advice Solihull, Age UK Solihull, UB Healthcare, Act on Energy and Solihull Council. They answered live and pre-submitted questions, raising awareness and improving access to support across the borough.

Discussions focused on employment rights and new legislation – the Carer's Leave Act 2024, providing up to one week of unpaid leave a year, and the Flexible Working Act, allowing carers to request flexible working from day one.

“ Keep doing what you're doing supporting carers.

“ Useful session, nice to meet everyone.

In the north of the borough, Carers also connected over a networking lunch, describing it as “a safe space where I can be myself” and “a really useful session.”

Meanwhile, young carers enjoyed a celebration, creating flash cards about their rights. Our team distributed awareness packs and hosted local exhibition stands to promote support for young and young adult carers.

It was a warm, positive day that left carers feeling informed, valued and connected – exactly what Carers Rights Day is all about.

Watch videos from the day and read more about it by visiting our website.

“ The assessment gave me an insight into aspects that I have overlooked or needed work. It has been beneficial to read everything back and understand how the support plan will help me progress in my life alongside my role as a parent carer.



HIGHLIGHTS PARENT CARERS

We delivered 151 parent carer assessments and annual reviews, plus 101 nine-week reviews. These showed that:

- **100% of parent carers felt their support plan gave enough information to make changes**
- **99% were happy with their assessment**
- **95% found it helpful and**
- **80% would recommend an assessment to others**

Parent carers also reported the greatest improvements in how they felt and in having time for themselves, followed by managing at home, health, caring, finance, and work. All parent carers who returned their 9-week reviews received a £25 restaurant choice voucher for themselves and a friend, and 21 parent carers received external grant funding totalling £5,138.

MAYA* A PARENT CARER

Maya is a parent carer of her 6-year-old son, who has autism. She recently moved to Solihull after spending 12 months in homeless accommodation. Over recent months, her mental health has declined, and she has been experiencing panic attacks, making it difficult for her to leave the house. Although she has attempted to access local support services for herself and her son, her mental health challenges have made this difficult.

We referred Maya to a local advocacy service to support her with accessing disability benefits and other relevant services. I also included local SEND* clubs in her support plan, which she hopes her son will be able to attend, giving both of them some respite. In addition, I supported Maya to apply for a national Carers Trust grant for decorating supplies to help her make her new house feel like a home.

“ Thank you so much for your completion of my assessment, which is a thoughtful and accurate account of our conversation. I really appreciate you taking the time to help me. Thank you for being so easy to talk to and understanding. A PARENT CARER.

*Not real name.



Adult carers workshop.

OUR WORK WITH ADULT CARERS

“ I just wanted to pass on my thanks for organising today’s session for carers, I am so pleased I came. I very much enjoyed meeting other carers and hearing their stories and I learnt a lot from them. Caring for someone with dementia can be so very isolating and bringing us all together was an excellent idea. It made me feel less alone.

This year brought strong, positive growth across every area of our service.

Ensuring carers received structured, timely support, we delivered:

- **273 carer assessments and reviews**
- **267 support plans, and**
- **134 contingency plans**

Our partnerships and new innovations opened the door to essential benefits, including short breaks, free bus passes, winter warm initiatives, hardship funding, and more.

Across the year, 372 carers received direct support from us. Of these, 280 took part in a rich programme of 13 workshops, 12 activities, and 7 wellbeing sessions – helping them build resilience, skills, and community connections. Carers remain at the heart of everything we do, and insights from our annual survey will continue to shape how we evolve our offer to meet their needs effectively.

In addition, we strengthened links within the local community, broadened access to vital resources, and enhanced emotional wellbeing support through tailored sessions and increased outreach – ensuring carers feel seen, supported, and valued throughout their journey.

MICHAEL* AN ADULT CARER

Michael cares for his 18-year-old son, who has severe autism spectrum disorder (ASD). After recently moving from Hong Kong, he did not know what support was available locally and felt isolated. He also struggled to exercise or take time for himself, as he could not leave his son unattended.

Following a carer’s assessment, Michael received guidance on ASD-specific services, including day centres that could offer respite. He was supported to access Direct Payments, which allowed him to buy a treadmill so he could improve his physical health at home. He also received a tablet to help him stay connected with family and access important information.

As a result, Michael reports better health, reduced isolation, and improved ability to stay informed and connected in his new community.

SARA* AN ADULT CARER

During an extremely difficult period in her life, Sara experienced homelessness and a sudden move to another part of Solihull. Feeling unsettled and under pressure, she needed both practical help and emotional reassurance.

Through continued contact, she received support delivered with empathy and without judgement. She was listened to, connected to relevant services, and offered financial assistance where needed. Key support included a referral to Age UK’s Winter Warmth Scheme for blankets, and a hardship grant application through CTS to help her purchase food and essential items. She was also given tailored information to help her adjust to her new circumstances following the move.

By maintaining regular communication, we helped reduce her stress and ensured she did not feel isolated while navigating this challenging time.

*Not real name.

HIGHLIGHTS YOUNG ADULT CARERS

This year, young adult carers received dedicated one-to-one support, including assessments and tailored guidance from a specialist worker. They had exclusive out-of-hours access to activities and could drop in to see us across all local colleges.

Carers accessed grant funding and free bus passes to support personal goals, and were regularly represented at the local carers partnership board while also contributing to university research. We completed 39 assessments, with 98% carried out within 35 days of referral. Of the 38 young adult carers we supported, 82% reported positive outcomes from their assessment and support work, and 100% said they learned something that would help them in their caring role.

“ I managed all my assignments on time thanks to my laptop. I always say it, but I mean it, you guys are heroes and the work you do is incredible. From the bottom of my heart, thank you again for helping me along with the next chapter of my life!

A YOUNG ADULT CARER.

LILY* YOUNG ADULT CARER

Lily, aged 24, contacted us explaining she was facing significant financial hardship and her mental health was deteriorating. During our conversation, she shared feelings of isolation as a single parent without family or social support and confirmed she felt safe, with no intention of harming herself. She had recently relied on a foodbank to feed herself and her two children. We arranged a £100 Asda e-voucher immediately and offered ongoing emotional support. Lily also engaged with wider team projects, which helped improve her situation. She later emailed to express her thanks, saying “my days are looking brighter, with a little joy.”

EVIE* YOUNG ADULT CARER

Evie, aged 17, cares for her dad, who has mental health needs. She completed her first year at university but was diagnosed with an eating disorder and felt anxious about returning, as she was worried university life would trigger her symptoms. She asked for support to explore how caring was affecting her wellbeing. Through discussion, it became clear that caring responsibilities had contributed to her eating disorder, and together we explored strategies to help manage this. Although her GP had referred her for counselling, she faced a two-year wait, so national Carers Trust funded specialist counselling. Evie is now making progress and has successfully returned to university.

“ This service has been an integral part of our family for over two years. You have made a significant difference to our lives and no doubt to the lives of other young adult carers. Without all the lovely staff we’ve met, this special charity would not be what it is.

A YOUNG ADULT CARER.

*Not real name.



For Young Carers Action Day, young carers created artwork showing what 'success' looks like for them.

OUR WORK WITH YOUNG CARERS

This year, we introduced group mentoring in schools, funding to support young carers returning to education, and free bus passes.

We worked with eight schools to deliver Young Carers Action Day events, supported families and young carer clubs through family hubs, and partnered with 19 education settings to achieve or maintain the Young Carers in Schools Awards. We completed 154 assessments, with 99% delivered within 35 days of referral. From evaluations, 161 young carers reported positive outcomes from their assessment and support. A total of 178 young carers enjoyed our activities and achieved at least one learning outcome. Additionally, 125 young carers benefitted from mentoring, highlighting the value of peer support and trusted friendships.

“ Although E is a confident girl, she was struggling to speak up for herself ... and ended up being bullied. Since her mentoring sessions she has done a complete 180. On one occasion when someone tried to be unkind, she immediately told them they weren't being nice and [that] she would like them to go away ... She then went straight to a teacher to tell them exactly what was happening and that she would be letting me know. The sessions are brilliant and really beneficial to our kids.

PARENT OF MENTEE.

SARAH* IS A YOUNG CARER

Sarah, age 17, cares for her grandmother, who has complex health needs. She saw one of our posters at school and wanted support but did not feel comfortable approaching the school directly. We met her at a local café, away from both her caring responsibilities and school, in a setting where she could relax. Following her assessment, she received a carers card that gives free access to local swimming, which she looks forward to as valuable “me time”. She also received a grant for school items and agreed that we could inform the school about her caring role. As a result, the school provided her with a quiet room and dedicated space to complete homework.

“ I don't feel like I can talk about my caring roles and how it affects me to my family, so it's been really nice having this opportunity in support work. I don't usually get to relax like this, it was also fun to just be me. Thank you for caring about me.

A YOUNG CARER.

ISLA* IS A YOUNG CARER

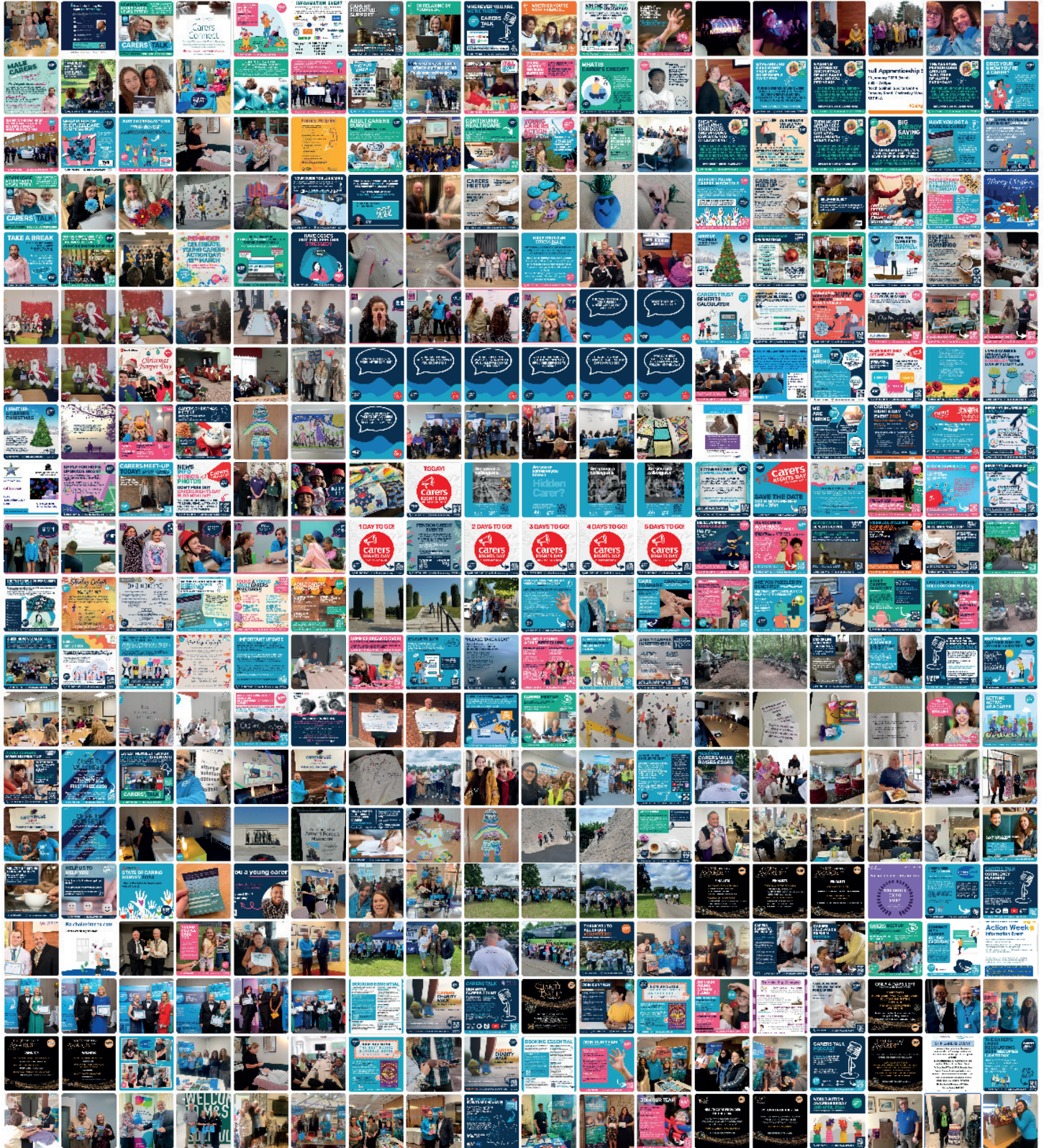
Isla, aged 14, mentors Jack*, an eight-year-old young carer with ADHD who wanted to improve his school experience. Isla also has ADHD and adapted sessions with short breaks, games, activities, and worksheets to help Jack stay focused. Relating to Jack gave Isla confidence and a sense of achievement, which she carried into her own life. She recognised her disability as a strength and successfully supported Jack to reach his goals, showing the value of peer understanding and shared lived experience.

*Not real name.

OUR WORK A YEAR IN FACEBOOK POSTS



Search for 'Carers Trust Solihull' on Facebook.





OUR WORK BUSINESS & COMMUNICATIONS

This year marked strong and sustained progress in how we engage, inform, and support carers across Solihull, while continuing to provide essential business systems and IT support across CTS. Despite capacity pressures at key points in the year, we broadened our digital offer, significantly strengthened engagement across all platforms, and delivered high-quality communications, media, and design support for the organisation, carers, and our wider audiences.

A key achievement was the launch and growth of our Carers Essentials online hub. From Quarter 2, we produced detailed guides on Carer's Allowance, Carer's Cards, Carer's Credit, Blue Badges, financial support, and scams. These resources achieved 699 views, with the most-viewed guide reaching 170+ views, demonstrating strong demand for accessible advice.

Our e-bulletins continued to outperform sector benchmarks. Subscribers grew from 2,632 to 3,037 adult carers, with 265 young carers added. Open rates exceeded charity averages by up to 15.5%, with consistently strong click-through performance. We also issued our first young carers e-bulletin to begin shaping age-appropriate digital engagement.

Website and digital engagement rose significantly: users increased from 4,075 to 4,729 by Quarter 3, page views peaked at 10,354, and new users grew 19.5% year-on-year. Online registrations accelerated sharply after finding solutions to

Our adult carers survey (250+ responses) in Quarter 4, showed 81% of carers found the website easy or very easy to navigate...

external factors barring access, rising 18.7% in Quarter 4 alone.

Our adult carers survey (250+ responses) in Quarter 4, showed 81% of carers found the website easy or very easy to navigate, 17% neutral, and only 2% find it difficult. Our website engagement achieved sustained growth in 2024-25, as we improved on harnessing SEO (search engine optimisation) and targeted Google Ads. At the time of writing, we are now averaging 20,000 page views, demonstrating growing effectiveness in reaching carers online.

In spite of the significantly improved website performance in the year, we planned website changes for a different usability experience.

Social media engagement continued to deepen. Facebook reach peaked at 34,900 during major campaigns such as Carers Rights Day. Campaign-led video and story content supported higher-quality interactions even when reach fluctuated.

We also supported the organisation through newsletters and events programmes, major awareness campaigns, digital media, and design delivery across teams. Alongside this, we progressed and strengthened our capability in emerging AI-enabled carer support, including active involvement in the Bridgit working group. This year reflects meaningful growth, innovation, and resilience. With strengthened capacity, enhanced digital infrastructure, and expanding resources, we are well-positioned to build on this momentum and continue improving how carers access support and information.



Jaguar Land Rover donated a superb hybrid vehicle to our charity, enabling young carers to be transported in comfort and style for activities and support. They also left a surprise in the boot: a £10,000 cheque to further strengthen our work with young carers.

THANK YOU TO OUR FUNDERS AND SUPPORTERS

The support of groups, businesses, and individuals who choose to donate to and champion the work of Carers Trust Solihull – whether through small donations or large grants – enables us to significantly expand our offer to carers in Solihull.

We would especially like to thank Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council. Without their contractual funding, we would not be able to deliver the majority of our services.

WE ALSO GRATEFULLY ACKNOWLEDGE SIGNIFICANT SUPPORT FROM:

- Jaguar Land Rover
- UB Healthcare
- The National Lottery Community Fund
- National Carers Trust Time for Me Funding
- Eveson Trust

- John Lewis
- Persimmon Homes
- Sydney Mitchell Solicitors
- Rotary St Alphege
- The Mayor's Office
- Balsall Common Lions
- Blossomfield Care Home

Thank you also to everyone who contributed to or joined our Charity Ball and Carer Friendly Awards, Carers Week Walk, CTS Quiz Night, Christmas Tree Campaign, and Carers Rights Day.



A special thank you to Sydney Mitchell Solicitors for selecting us as one of their two charities of the year and making us beneficiaries of their charity ball fundraiser, and to UB Healthcare for their continued support with continuing healthcare information for carers.

Staff and volunteers preparing packs for our 2024 Charity Ball and Carer Friendly Awards.



VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT

SAM HALE

Sam is one of our brilliant Admin Support Volunteers and a big part of what makes Carers Trust Solihull feel like home. Whether he's putting together carers packs, helping around the office, or keeping our plants happy, Sam puts his all into everything he does.

His smile and laugh are contagious, with his humour and kindness, he's a reminder that people really are good and that community matters.



He may call himself a volunteer, but to us, he's family. CTS wouldn't be the same without him.

“ I have only been volunteering since January... I am really amazed how appreciative the two families I have worked with have been.

By giving three hours of my time a week, I allow one carer the opportunity to meet with friends for lunch at her church, maintaining her friendship group, and the other carer the opportunity to go on a motorcycle ride with friends out into the countryside to have a drink, a bite to eat, and a catch-up - "a normal conversation," he would call it.

... I have a real sense of achievement, to know that by giving so little means so much to the families the service supports.

JAYNE LOOSE, SITTING SERVICE.

THANK YOU

TO ALL OUR VOLUNTEERS

This has been a positive year for Carers Trust Solihull volunteers. The team supported trips for young and adult carers and helped reach over 5,000 carers across Solihull.

Volunteer engagement remained steady, with new recruits joining the Young Carers Befriending Team, Sitting Service, Telephone Befriending, and admin roles. A former volunteer also returned on an ad-hoc basis. Most projects are now fully staffed and performing well. Our 29 volunteers continue to show exceptional dedication, professionalism, and compassion, playing a vital role in delivering essential support to carers throughout the borough.

“ I'm Solihull born and bred, and after over 40 years in banking, I really missed the purpose and friendship that work gave me. Volunteering with Carers Trust Solihull filled that gap perfectly. Having seen my mum care for my dad through dementia, I know how vital support for carers is. My role now lets me use my organisational skills to free up staff for the families who need them most. It's incredibly rewarding to know I'm helping make a difference. The team here are amazing - caring, dedicated people who make you proud to be part of it.

KAY PHIPPS, YOUNG CARERS ADMIN VOLUNTEER.

DIRECTORS AND TRUSTEES ANNUAL REPORT 2024-25

CONTENTS

- 19. Objectives and activities
- 20. Achievements and performance
- 22. Structure, governance and management
- 23. Financial review
- 25. Statement of Directors' responsibilities
- 26. Independent Examiner's report
- 27. Statement of financial activities for the year ended 31 March 2025
- 28. Statement of financial position as at 31 March 2025
- 29. Statement of cash flows for the year ended 31 March 2025
- 30. Notes to the financial statements

After a strong performance in 2023-24, Carers Trust Solihull (CTS) Trustees saw the teams regularly exceed their principal KPIs in 2024-25, registering more active carers than ever and coordinating joint carer consultation events with Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council (SMBC), on the balance and satisfaction with the service offer.

Our CEO, team managers, staff, and volunteers particularly focused on the cost of living, partnership with business and an enhanced social media and web offer to complement the face-to-face, digital, and telephone communication. The board noted the improvements in partnerships with businesses.

Reviewing the year, we are particularly grateful to the staff who built on the previous year's performance to record new record numbers of registered active carers, assessments and activity.

We are particularly grateful to the Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council for their commissioned contract and to Heart of England Inclusive Communities, The Lottery, Everson Trust, and our partners UB Healthcare and Sydney Mitchell and other local donors, big and small, whose support has allowed us to support more carers in need.

During the year, Trustees reviewed their strategic role and received regular reports on performance, risk, planned developments and fundraising to maintain high-quality strategic governance and quality assurance.

OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES

OUR OBJECTIVES REMAIN:

“To support adult and young carers who are, or were, carrying out a caring role for persons who are disabled, elderly or ill, by the provision of practical help, advice, assistance, service, advocacy and support. Also, to advance education concerning caring amongst carers, professionals and the public.”

Our services are restricted to unpaid carers of family members or friends and neighbours who have physical or mental illness, physical or learning disability, long-term or terminal illness or addiction. Carers Trust Solihull (CTS) seeks to support carers regardless of disability, race, gender, age, sexuality, belief or social background.

We encourage all people with an unpaid caring role to register with us and receive information, advice and services or to take an active part in our organisation. We provide:

- Face-to-face support – telephone, social media and web-based support – someone to talk to who understands.
- Events and activities – a break from caring and a chance to have fun.
- Information and advice – an opportunity to learn about services and the help available.
- Adults and young carers clubs and drop-in sessions – meeting other carers.
- Training and workshops – gain knowledge and skills as the carer continues to care.
- Carers assessments – an opportunity for a carer to discuss their role and get help and support.
- Carers Card – confirmation that a person is a carer with access to some discounts.
- Exploring the future – supporting carers into education, employment and training.
- Advocacy for carers – opportunities to suggest improvement in CTS and other services.

CTS seeks to address the considerable and on-going needs of carers by the provision of accessible and age-appropriate user-led services. We aim to identify carers as early as possible and support them to prevent their circumstances needlessly deteriorating.

CTS provides support for carers across Solihull. We recognise that there is a large number of unidentified and “hidden” carers, including those who may not realise that they are in an unpaid caring role. To enable these carers to continue their caring role effectively and safely they may need access to information, advice and support.

Public Benefit Statement: The Trustees consider they have complied with the duty in Section 17 of the Charities Act 2011 to have due regard to public benefit guidance published by the Charity Commission.

ACHIEVEMENTS AND PERFORMANCE STRATEGY

In 2024-25, Carers Trust Solihull reviewed its Strategic Governance and introduced a new and Strategic Assurance score card, revised its Business Portfolio Plan and refreshed its Strategic Objectives and targets:

CUSTOMER CARE

WE WILL ENSURE THE PROVISION OF CONSISTENTLY HIGH QUALITY SERVICES TO CARERS:

- Complete carers surveys/exit questionnaires.
- Promote carer awareness in the Chamber of Commerce.
- Work with schools to reduce carer education inequalities.
- Increase CTS training, events and activities on varied media.
- Implement CTS social media strategy.

LEARNING AND GROWTH

WE WILL WORK WITH HEALTH, SOCIAL CARE AND OUR STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS TO RAISE CARER AWARENESS:

- Staff and Trustees’ joint events
- Ensure CTS Safeguarding retraining.
- Continue the Volunteer Long Service Award.
- Refresh volunteer strategy and build up numbers.
- Develop pharmacy publicity and relaunch our work in GP surgeries.

INTERNAL BUSINESS

WE WILL IMPROVE, DEVELOP AND REDESIGN OUR SERVICE’S EFFICIENCY AND EFFECTIVENESS:

- A minimum of 150 young carers and 25 young adult carers assessments; a minimum of 150 parent carers assessments and reviews.
- Implement new equalities monitoring.
- Coordinate health and safety inspection and office monitoring.
- Increase volunteer recruitment for priority projects.
- Continue quarterly policy and procedure refresh.
- Complete a series of minor/major applications.
- Hold a second Charity Ball and Carer Friendly Awards event.

PROGRESS IN 2024-25

The Trustees, staff and volunteers reconfirmed CTS' key partnership goals when working with others to promote carer recognition:

- Raising community awareness of unpaid caring and the available support services.
- Highlighting the health, well-being, and cost-of-living challenges for unpaid carers.
- Increasing the recognition of unpaid carers in the health and social care economy.
- Leading on unpaid carer issues within the care and support sector.
- Maintaining and extending trusted CTS services for carers.
- Encouraging other organisations to ensure their services are carer friendly.
- Promoting carers' opinions in decision-making at national and local levels.
- Ensuring carers' representations translate into specific and measurable outcomes.
- Campaigning to improve the legal, economic and support for carers.
- Strengthening relationships within the Carers Trust regional and national network.

Trustees confirm that overall, CTS has made considerable progress on meeting our priorities for 2024-25, including our development goals:

- The CEO and Trustees introduced a new assurance scorecard for: financial audit; health and safety liability insurance; annual and SMBC reporting; assurance of DBS monitoring.
- Supporting carers facing the cost-of-living crisis by means of hardship payments, the Sitting Service and Time for Me vouchers to enable carers to take a break and collaborative activities at Carers Rights Day.
- Work with SMBC Adult Social Care on consultation activity with adult carers, male carers and young carers to explore their challenges and satisfaction with support.
- Deploy Inclusive Communities funding to develop the health outreach and social media content, and campaigning.
- A coordinated effort to clear assessment backlogs resulted in a record score in adult carers assessments and reviews.
- Excellent work with schools that saw more Solihull schools achieving carer awareness awards.
- Development of our website resulted in high levels of carer satisfaction in using the new tools and features.
- Work to highlight hidden carers in the workforce.
- Joint work with Social Care, ICB and primary care groups to develop pharmacy publicity and GP surgeries carer registrations and referrals.

We will also raise CTS and unpaid carers' profiles by:

- Deepening partnerships with local businesses and the Chamber of Commerce events.
- Support from our many sponsors and supporters.

STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

The Directors of the charitable company (“the charity”) are its Trustees for the purposes of charity law and within this report are collectively referred to as the Trustees. The Trustees are listed on page 2.

The Articles of Association require that at least 50% of Trustees must be current or former carers. During 2024-25, the Trustee board had a stable membership of 9 Trustees.

The Trustees meet at least six times each year and receive a data-rich, “balanced scorecard” of assurance and performance as well as supplementary reports covering progress against the overall business strategy, key performance indicators, fundraising progress, financial reports, risk register audits and an overarching Chief Executive Officer summary.

The Board implemented a new scorecard format, including portfolio business planning, strategic audit assurance, and streamlined reporting to the Board, with an emphasis on digital sharing in Trustee folders.

The Chair of Trustees follows the agreed policies and procedures for the recruitment of Trustees, and these are applied to every new appointment, with routine checks through the Disclosure and Barring Service..

The Board established a Tender Preparation Plan with a Trustee sub-group, action plan and risk assessment and attendant major actions and resource allocations.

After an independent annual assessment of CTS’s Quality Management System, CTS retained its ISO 9001:2015 certification with another highest score and no improvement retentions.

STAFFING

At the time of writing, we have a full-time chief executive officer, 6 other full-time posts, 23 part-time staff and 12 sessional staff. No employee received emoluments in excess of £60,000 during the year or previous year.

At the time of writing, there are 9 Trustees. The Trustees give freely of their time and expertise and do not receive any emoluments or other benefits. In 2024-25, Trustees met four times for a short Executive Meeting, four times for a full Executive Meeting and convened an Annual General Meeting. A joint workshop with staff, one Trustee Board Strategic Away Day, and various supplementary sub-meetings, including a tender reacquisition sub-group, also took place.

Several volunteers support the charity. At the close of 2024-25, the number of volunteers was 29 volunteers and 5 young mentors. The number of volunteer hours in 2024-25 was approximately 1,962. These valued volunteers enable us to support more carers.

NETWORKING

During the year, we actively participated in the National Carers Trust network.

We remained members of the National Council for Voluntary Organisations (NCVO) and the Association of Chief Executives of Voluntary Organisations (ACEVO) who connect, represent and support UK charities with consultancy, training, advice, and support on governance issues.

We are active in the Solihull voluntary and community networks participating in meetings with SMBC and a full range of our voluntary sector colleagues. This enhanced joint working remains a positive feature of the CTS year. We are active members of various local partnerships, including the Carers Partnership Board, Adult Safeguarding and Children Safeguarding Boards.

We have deepened our relationship with Solihull Chamber of Commerce and several local businesses, including Sydney Mitchell and UB Healthcare.

FINANCIAL REVIEW

The financial year ended with a 13% increase in overall income to more than £890,000, significantly higher than in any previous year. Our ambitious budget was set to spend a further amount of the surplus built up in earlier years and we ended the year with total expenditure increased by almost 18% which included an increased level of staffing with both staff costs and direct spend on carer support being 17% higher year on year. As a result, we recorded a £54,000 reduction in our total reserves.

This increased level of spending has continued but must be significantly curtailed following the reduction in income from SMBC when the new contract begins on 1 December 2025.

YEAR END FINANCIAL POSITION

We finished the year with total reserves of £342,661 down from £396,695 at the start of the year. An element of the reserves is restricted, deriving from income received to be spent on specific projects with the balance unrestricted, available to be spent as necessary to support the work of the charity.

Restricted Funds

Restricted income of £122,194 received during the year included the gift of a vehicle valued at £30,000 generously provided by Jaguar Landrover to be used for the transport of young carers. With expenditure of restricted funds amounting to £91,071 this left the balance of restricted funds carried over at the year end of £59,502 (2024:£28,379).

Details of restricted fund balances are shown in Note 11.

Unrestricted Funds

During the year unrestricted funds decreased by just over £85,000 to £283,159 which equates to approximately 4 months of ongoing unrestricted expenditure. The policy of the Trustees is to maintain sufficient unrestricted funds to provide financial stability and ensure that the work of the charity is not affected by unexpected events, delayed receipts, or a short-term lack of incoming funds. Also, to ensure that in the event of a significant and permanent reduction in income, sufficient funds are available to meet all liabilities and provide an acceptable winding down of operations.

The Trustees have reviewed both the reserves policy and the level of reserves as of 31 March 2025 and are satisfied that the reserves are adequate.

INVESTMENT POWERS

The Charity has the power to make any investment which the Directors see fit. Our funds are only invested in deposit facilities protected under the Financial Services Compensation Scheme and within the limits of the Scheme. We aim to maximise interest income using both fixed and variable-rate deposits.

RISK MANAGEMENT

The Board regularly considers risks to the organisation and agrees on measures to mitigate those identified. The Trustees periodically review their Risk Management and Opportunity Register, which enables the service to plan for and reduce threats to the service we provide to the public. During 2024-25, the Trustee Board and CEO established subgroups to:

- Coordinate the retender application.
- Maintain the Assurance quarterly Scorecard.

These tasks were discussed at Trustees Board meetings and the Trustee Away Day session in March 2025, when the Board received confirmation of the likelihood of a tender process for its All-Age Carer Contract in 2025. Reserves have routinely been held to mitigate this risk. The Trust was informed that it had secured the Tender on September 29th, 2025, and the Trust embarked on a major restructuring to comply with the new contract specification and the reduced contract value in time for the new service to go live on December 1st 2025.

FUNDING

Our funding primarily relies on the SMBC Community Well-Being All-Age Carers Contract and the service-level agreement with Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council. The current agreement is in place until 31st November 2030, with a potential extension until 31st November 2034. During the year, significant funding was also received from The National Lottery Community Fund, Jaguar Land Rover, the national Carers Trust Time for Me Funding, the Eveson Trust, and other local funders. We are also very grateful to those, including staff, trustees and volunteers, who have raised money for the charity, organised special events, sponsored walks, and participated in corporate activities.

STATEMENT OF DIRECTORS' RESPONSIBILITIES

The Trustees (who are the Directors of Solihull Carers Centre/Carers Trust Solihull for the purpose of company law) are responsible for preparing the Trustees Annual Report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and regulations.

Company law requires the Trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year. Under that law the Trustees have elected to prepare the financial statements in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice (United Kingdom Accounting Standards and applicable law). Under company law the Trustees must not approve the financial statements unless they are satisfied that they give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charitable company and the income and expenditure of the charitable company for that period.

In preparing these financial statements, the Trustees are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- observe the methods and principles in the Charities SORP;
- make judgments and accounting estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- state whether applicable UK Accounting Standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements;
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charitable company will continue in operation.

The Trustees are responsible for keeping adequate accounting records that are sufficient to show and explain the charitable company's transactions and disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charitable company and enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 2006. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charitable company and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

Small company provisions

This report has been prepared in accordance with the provisions applicable to companies entitled to the small companies' regime.

On behalf of the Board

David Heaselgrave
Chair of Trustees

18 November 2025

INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT TO THE TRUSTEES OF SOLIHULL CARERS CENTRE

I report to the trustees on my examination of the financial statements of Solihull Carers Centre ('the charity') for the year ended 31 March 2025.

Responsibilities and basis of report

As the trustees of the company (and also its directors for the purposes of company law) you are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006 ('the 2006 Act').

Having satisfied myself that the accounts of the company are not required to be audited under Part 16 of the 2006 Act and are eligible for independent examination, I report in respect of my examination of the charity's accounts as carried out under section 145 of the Charities Act 2011 ('the 2011 Act'). In carrying out my examination I have followed the Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5) (b) of the 2011 Act.

Independent examiner's statement

Since the charity's gross income exceeded £250,000 your examiner must be a member of a body listed in section 145 of the 2011 Act. I confirm that I am qualified to undertake the examination because I am a member of the Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales (ICAEW), which is one of the listed bodies.

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

1. accounting records were not kept in respect of the charity as required by section 386 of the 2006 Act; or
2. the financial statements do not accord with those records; or
3. the financial statements do not comply with the accounting requirements of section 396 of the 2006 Act other than any requirement that the accounts give a 'true and fair' view which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination; or
4. the financial statements have not been prepared in accordance with the methods and principles of the Statement of Recommended Practice for accounting and reporting by charities applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102).

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.

Hannah Justice FCA FCCA
Independent Examiner
On behalf of BSN Associates Limited

3B Swallowfield Courtyard
Wolverhampton Road
Oldbury
West Midlands
B69 2JG

18 November 2025

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES

YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

(incorporating the Income and Expenditure Account)

	Notes	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total 2025 £	Total 2024 £
Income from:					
Grants, activities and donations		19,825	52,945	72,770	8,309
Investments: Bank interest		15,799	-	15,799	12,295
Charitable activities: Contract and grants	2	732,369	69,249	801,618	765,276
Total income		767,993	122,194	890,187	785,880
Expenditure on:					
Charitable activities	3	853,150	91,071	944,221	799,205
Total expenditure		853,150	91,071	944,221	799,205
Net income/(expenditure)					
for the year		(85,157)	31,123	(54,034)	(13,325)
Net movement in funds		(85,157)	31,123	(54,034)	(13,325)
Reconciliation of funds:					
Total funds brought forward		368,316	28,379	396,695	410,020
Total funds carried forward		283,159	59,502	342,661	396,695

The Statement of Financial Activities includes all gains and losses in the year. All incoming resources and resources expended derive from continuing activities.

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION

31 MARCH 2025

	Notes	2025 £	2024 £
Fixed assets	6	40,008	11,600
Current assets			
Debtors and prepayments	8	17,268	6,538
Investments	7	309,578	361,930
Bank current account		13,985	48,860
		340,831	417,328
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	9	38,178	32,233
Net current assets		302,653	385,095
Net assets	10	342,661	396,695
Unrestricted funds		283,159	368,316
Restricted income funds	11	59,502	28,379
Total funds		342,661	396,695

For the year ending 31 March 2025 the charity was entitled to exemption from audit under section 477 of the Companies Act 2006 relating to small companies.

Trustees' responsibilities:

- The shareholders have not required the charity to obtain an audit of its financial statements for the year in question in accordance with section 476;
- The Trustees acknowledge their responsibilities for complying with the requirements of the Act with respect to accounting records and the preparation of financial statements.

These financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the provisions applicable to companies subject to the small companies' regime.

The financial statements were approved by the Directors on 18 November 2025 and were signed on their behalf by:

David Heaselgrave
Chair of Trustees

STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS

YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

	2025	2024
	£	£
Net cash provided by (used in) operating activities	(87,227)	(61,722)
Cash flows from investing activities	-	(11,508)
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the reporting period	410,790	484,020
Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the reporting period	323,563	410,790

RECONCILIATION OF NET INCOME TO NET CASH FLOW FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES

	2025	2024
	£	£
Net income/(expenditure) for the reporting period	(54,034)	(13,325)
Adjustments for:		
Depreciation of fixed assets	1,592	1,883
Donated fixed assets received	(30,000)	-
(Increase)/decrease in debtors	(10,730)	(6,015)
(Decrease)/increase in creditors	5,945	(44,265)
Net cash provided by (used in) operating activities	(87,227)	(61,722)

ANALYSIS OF CASH AND CASH EQUIVALENTS

	2025	2024
	£	£
Cash in hand	13,985	48,860
Notice deposits (less than 3 months)	309,578	361,930
Total cash and cash equivalents	323,563	410,790

NOTES FORMING PART OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

1. Accounting policies

Status

The Charity is a company registered in England and Wales that is limited by guarantee and does not have a share capital. The liability of members is limited to £1. The registered office is shown on page 2. The charity constitutes a public entity as defined by FRS 102.

Statement of compliance, basis of preparation and assessment of going concern

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the Statement of Recommended Practice: Accounting and Reporting by Charities preparing their financial statements in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (SORP FRS 102) issued on 16 July 2014, the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the United Kingdom and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) and the Companies Act 2006. The financial statements are prepared under the historical cost convention with items recognised at cost or transaction value.

In common with many charities the organisation is heavily dependent on grant and contract income. Founded over 20 years ago we are a service-led organisation considered as the lead agency supporting carers in the area. The accounts have been prepared on the going concern basis in expectation that there will not be a significant decrease in support from funding bodies.

Income recognition

Income is recognised once the Charity has entitlement to the income, it is probable that the income will be received and the amount of income receivable can be measured accurately.

Voluntary income is recognised as above except where the income is subject to conditions that require a level of performance before the charity is entitled to the funds, when the income is deferred and not recognised until either those conditions are met, or the fulfilment of those conditions is wholly within the control of the Charity and it is probable those conditions will be fulfilled in the reporting period.

Grants and contracts specifically for the provision of services to be provided as part of the charitable activities or services to beneficiaries are accounted for on the basis of amounts receivable for the year.

Interest arising on cash balances is included when receivable and the amount can be measured reliably by the Charity. This is normally upon notification of the interest paid or payable by the bank.

Expenditure recognition

Liabilities are recognised as expenditure as soon as there is a legal or constructive obligation committing the Charity to that expenditure, it is probable that settlement is required and the amount of the obligation can be measured reliably. All expenditure is accounted for on the accruals basis, inclusive of any value added tax which cannot be recovered.

Tangible fixed assets

Tangible fixed assets are stated at cost or in the case of gifted assets, at valuation. Depreciation is provided at rates calculated to write off the cost or valuation of each asset over its expected useful life, being three years for computers and other office equipment and five years for motor vehicles. Leasehold improvements are depreciated over the period of the lease. Assets are capitalised where the purchase price or valuation exceeds £2,500.

Taxation

The Charity is exempt from taxation on its charitable activities.

NOTES FORMING PART OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

Fund accounting

In order to differentiate the availability of funds they are categorised according to the following definitions:

Unrestricted funds are donations and other incoming resources receivable or generated for the objects of the charity without further specified purpose and are available as general funds.

Restricted funds are to be used for specific purposes as laid down by the donor. Expenditure, which meets these criteria, is charged to the fund together with a fair allocation of management and support costs.

Pension costs

The Charity operates a defined contribution pension scheme available to all of its employees. The pension charge represents the amount payable by the Charity to the scheme during the year.

Operating leases

Lease payments are recognised as an expense over the lease term on a straight-line basis. The aggregate benefit of lease incentives is recognised as a reduction to expense on a straight-line basis over the lease term.

Functional currency

The financial statements are prepared in sterling which is the functional currency of the entity.

2. Income from charitable activities

	2025	2024
	£	£
Contracts and grants		
Local Authority contract – Solihull MBC	732,369	711,037
Other grants	-	4,000
	732,369	715,037
Grants – restricted funds		
Solihull MBC – Adult carers	3,999	-
Carers Trust – Young carers	750	750
Carers Trust – Adult carers	-	1,052
Children in Need – Young carers	-	12,252
Heart of England Community Foundation	31,000	-
The Eveson Trust – Adult carers	3,500	-
The Triangle Trust – Young carers	30,000	30,000
Other grants – Young carers	-	5,400
Other grants – Adult carers	-	785
	69,249	50,239

Income from grants, activities and donations includes the gift of a motor car valued at £30,000 received from Jaguar Landrover for the use of the Young Carers Team.

NOTES FORMING PART OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

3. Expenditure on charitable activities

Direct and support

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total 2025 £	Total 2024 £
Carer support and activities	65,301	22,400	87,701	75,095
Staff costs	667,213	68,671	735,884	625,112
Recruitment	2,691	-	2,691	5,113
Premises	23,038	-	23,038	19,272
Communications and office costs	51,665	-	51,665	38,169
Motor and travel expenses	9,568	-	9,568	7,093
Training and consultancy	5,755	-	5,755	5,677
Publicity/information	5,741	-	5,741	3,425
Insurance	4,067	-	4,067	3,860
Professional fees and subscriptions	4,501	-	4,501	5,839
Fundraising	4,719	-	4,719	-
Other	2,853	-	2,853	4,298
	847,112	91,071	938,183	792,953

Governance costs

			2025 £	2024 £
Independent examination	2,220	-	2,220	2,016
Professional fees	3,723	-	3,723	3,656
Other	95	-	95	580
	6,038	-	6,038	6,252

Total expenditure on charitable activities

	853,150	91,071	944,221	799,205
2024	743,495	55,710	-	799,205

NOTES FORMING PART OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

4. Staff costs

The total staff costs for the year amounted to £735,884 (2024:£625,112). The costs for 2025 include employer national insurance contributions amounting to £47,010 (2024:£38,152) and pension costs of £27,027 (2024:£22,938).

The charity during the year had on average 10 full time employees (2024:9) and 20 part time employees (2024:18) plus 9 sessional staff (2024:7).

No employee received emoluments in excess of £60,000 during the year or the previous year.

In addition, at the year-end there were 9 directors (2024: 10). The directors all give freely of their time and expertise and did not receive any emoluments or other benefits.

5. Operating lease commitments

The charity has commitments under an operating lease for land and buildings expiring in 2033 amounting to £120,000 (2024: £135,000).

	2025	2024
	£	£
Amounts falling due within 1 year	15,000	15,000
Amounts falling due within 2 to 5 years	60,000	60,000
Amounts falling due after 5 years	45,000	60,000

6. Fixed assets

	Motor Cars	Computer Equipment	Leasehold Improvements	Total
	£	£	£	£
COST				
At beginning of year	7,900	13,200	11,508	32,608
Additions	30,000	-	-	30,000
Disposals	-	11,200	-	11,200
At end of year	37,900	2,000	11,508	51,408
ACCUMULATED DEPRECIATION				
Opening balance	7,508	13,200	300	21,008
Disposals	-	11,200	-	11,200
Charge for the year	392	-	1,200	1,592
Closing balance	7,900	2,000	1,500	11,400
NET BOOK VALUE	30,000	-	10,008	40,008

There were no capital commitments at the year-end (2024: none).

NOTES FORMING PART OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

7. Investments

At cost and valuation

	2025	2024
	£	£
Short term deposits held at UK banks	309,578	361,930

8. Debtors

	2025	2024
	£	£
Debtors	15,045	5,650
Prepayments	2,223	888
	17,268	6,538

9. Creditors: amounts falling due within one year

	2025	2024
	£	£
Creditors and accruals	20,149	15,519
Deferred income	7,002	7,002
Tax & pension contributions	11,027	9,712
	38,178	32,233

10. Analysis of net assets by funds

	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Total funds
	£	£	£
Tangible assets	10,008	30,000	40,008
Current assets	311,329	29,502	340,831
Current liabilities	38,178	-	38,178
Net assets	283,159	59,502	342,661

NOTES FORMING PART OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

11. Restricted income funds

The restricted income funds comprise the following unexpired balances of donations and grants to be applied for the following purposes:

	Opening balances	Incoming resources	Outgoing resources	Closing balances
	£	£	£	£
Young carers peer mentoring project	5,761	30,000	35,761	-
Other young carers projects	22,618	53,695	20,311	56,002
Adult projects	-	3,500	-	3,500
Other funds	-	34,999	34,999	-
	28,379	122,194	91,071	59,502

12. Trustees expenses

No expense payments were made to Trustees during the year (prior year £60). The charity provided indemnity cover for Trustees costing £95 (2024: £677).

13. Related party transactions

No Trustee or other person connected with the charity had any personal interest in any contract or transaction entered into by the charity during the year. The Trustees are not aware of any related party transactions requiring disclosure.

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**CARERS
TRUST**

Solihull

WATCH OUR FILMS

Our films feature unpaid carers in Solihull sharing their experiences. These are a great educational resource for anyone wishing to gain understanding of what it means to be a carer and the support available.

Watch the films on our website or visit our @solihullcarers YouTube channel and select **Awareness Videos**.

Supporting unpaid carers of all ages in Solihull

Carers Trust Solihull
Solihull Carers Centre
Solihull Fire Station Annexe
620 Streetsbrook Road
Solihull B91 1QY

T 0121 788 1143
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Solihull Carers Centre is a company limited by guarantee and a Registered Charity operating as Carers Trust Solihull. Registered Company in England No. 04378042. Registered Charity No. 1092613.

Registered Office:
Carers Trust Solihull
Solihull Fire Station Annexe
620 Streetsbrook Road
Solihull B91 1QY

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SOLIHULL CARERS CENTRE

England & Wales - Charity number 1092613

Accounts



ANNUAL REPORT AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

April 2023 to March 2024



**Supporting unpaid carers of all
ages in Solihull for over 20 years**

Solihull Carers Centre is a company limited by guarantee and a Registered Charity operating as Carers Trust Solihull. Registered Company in England No. 04378042. Registered Charity No. 1092613.

DIRECTORS AND TRUSTEES ANNUAL REPORT 2023-24

CONTENTS

19. Objectives and activities
20. Achievements and performance
22. Structure, governance and management
23. Financial review
25. Statement of Directors' responsibilities
26. Independent Examiner's report
27. Statement of financial activities for the year ended 31 March 2024
28. Statement of financial position as at 31 March 2024
29. Statement of cash flows for the year ended 31 March 2024
30. Notes to the financial statements

During 2023-24 Carers Trust Solihull (CTS) Trustees oversaw the work of the staff and volunteers. CTS worked hard to overcome staff vacancies and absence to fulfil its contract with Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council (SMBC) to support Solihull's unpaid carers.

Our CEO, team managers, staff, and volunteers consolidated our well-established services and new innovative support services that were disrupted by the COVID stay-at-home and lockdown periods. The service could finally pull away from the post-COVID period with a new balance between face-to-face, digital, and telephone communication.

Reviewing the year, we are particularly grateful to the staff that coped and soldiered on when it was difficult to recruit to vacant positions and were welcoming and supportive when new additions to the team could be made. It is to their credit that the service reached a record number of registered active carers.

We are particularly grateful to the Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council, Triangle Trust 1949, Heart of England Inclusive Communities, and the innumerable local donors, big and small, who have allowed us to support more carers' needs.

During the year, Trustees reviewed their strategic role and received regular reports on performance, risk, planned developments and fundraising to maintain high-quality strategic governance and quality assurance.

OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES

OUR OBJECTIVES REMAIN:

"To support adult and young carers who are, or were, carrying out a caring role for persons who are disabled, elderly or ill, by the provision of practical help, advice, assistance, service, advocacy and support. Also, to advance education concerning caring amongst carers, professionals and the public."

Our services are restricted to unpaid carers of family members or friends and neighbours who have physical or mental illness, physical or learning disability, long term or terminal illness or addiction. Carers Trust Solihull (CTS) seeks to support carers regardless of disability, race, gender, age, sexuality, belief or social background.

We encourage all people with an unpaid caring role to register with us and receive information, advice, and services or to take an active part in our organisation. We provide:

- Face-to-face support – telephone, social media and web-based support – someone to talk to who understands.
- Events and activities – a break from caring and a chance to have fun.
- Information and advice – an opportunity to learn about services and the help available.
- Adults and young carers clubs and drop-in sessions – meeting other carers.
- Training and workshops – gain knowledge and skills as the carer continues to care.
- Carers assessments – an opportunity for a carer to discuss their role and get help and support.
- Carers card – confirmation that a person is a carer with access to some discounts.
- Exploring the future – supporting carers into education, employment and training.
- Advocate for carers – opportunities to suggest improvement in CTS and other services.

CTS seeks to address the considerable and on-going needs of carers by the provision of accessible and age-appropriate user-led services. We aim to identify carers as early as possible and support them to prevent their circumstances needlessly deteriorating.

CTS provides support for carers across Solihull. We recognise that there is a large number of unidentified and “hidden” carers, including those who may not realise that they are in an unpaid caring role. To enable these carers to continue their caring role effectively and safely they may need access to information, advice and support.

Public Benefit Statement: The Trustees consider they have complied with the duty in Section 17 of the Charities Act 2011 to have due regard to public benefit guidance published by the Charity Commission.

ACHIEVEMENTS AND PERFORMANCE STRATEGY

In 2023-24 Carers Trust Solihull reviewed its Strategic Business Plan and amended its Strategic Objectives and continues to deliver on its targets:

CUSTOMER CARE

WE WILL ENSURE THE PROVISION OF CONSISTENTLY HIGH QUALITY SERVICES TO CARERS

- CTS will empower Solihull’s diverse carers to advance their well-being and influence local and national strategy, policies and services.
- CTS will work with education and employers to assist carers in achieving their academic, training or employment goals.
- CTS will grow its Carers Academy training options to support carers in achieving their goals.
- CTS will continue to develop Carers Interactive, a comprehensive web-based service offer.

LEARNING AND GROWTH

WE WILL WORK WITH HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE AND ENABLE OUR STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS TO RAISE CARER AWARENESS

- CTS will develop its staff and volunteers’ skills and expertise to best support our services to carers.
- CTS will work with Solihull Safeguarding Boards and carers to raise awareness and safeguard children and adults.
- CTS will ensure staff and volunteer oversight, supervision, training and professional development.
- CTS will work with GPs and hospitals to jointly support carers in their dealings with health and care services.

INTERNAL BUSINESS

WE WILL IMPROVE, DEVELOP AND REDESIGN OUR SERVICE’S EFFICIENCY & EFFECTIVENESS

- CTS will ensure core contractual annual key performance indicators are met and exceeded.
- CTS will ensure data security, health and safety, and general procedures to minimise risks in all our functions.
- CTS will grow staff and volunteer capacity, increasing and improving our range of services.
- CTS will increase fundraising and publicity to expand services that promote carer recognition.

PROGRESS IN 2023-24

The Trustees, staff and volunteers reconfirmed CTS’ key partnership goals when working with others to promote carer recognition:

- Raising community awareness of unpaid caring and the available support services.
- Highlighting the health, well-being, and cost-of-living challenges for unpaid carers.
- Increasing the recognition of unpaid carers in the health and social care economy.
- Leading on unpaid carer issues within the care and support sector.
- Maintaining and extending trusted CTS services for carers.
- Encouraging other organisations to ensure their services are carer friendly.
- Promoting carers’ opinions in decision-making at national and local levels.
- Ensuring carers’ representations translate into specific and measurable outcomes.
- Campaigning to improve the legal and economic support for carers.
- Strengthening relationships within the Carers Trust regional and national network.

Trustees confirm that overall, CTS has made considerable progress on meeting our priorities for 2023-24, including our **development goals**:

- Collaborate in ensuring winter and cost of living support to carers facing exceptional hardship.
- Developing pre-bereavement counselling for carers (including young carers with terminally ill parents).
- Deploying the Triangle1949 funded Young Carer/Young Adult Carer Mentor and Befriending.
- Producing further carer online training films and modules.
- Joint work with schools to reduce carers’ education inequalities.
- Developing our website offer with further content creation to inform carers.
- Launching the Cranfield Trust web and whole-service Marketing Plan.

Due to staff and volunteers recruitment challenges, the following projects were extended into 2024-25:

- Relaunching the “Time to Talk” adult carers bereavement project.
- Growing the volunteer carer Sitting Service.
- Increasing engagement with pharmacies and relaunching GP surgery carer outreach and contact.

We will also raise CTS and unpaid carers’ profiles by:

- Developing Carers Week, Carers Rights Day, and Young Carers Action Day.
- Building partnerships with local businesses and Chamber of Commerce events.
- Advocating for carers in vital safeguarding processes.
- Holding a second Charity Ball and Carer Friendly Awards event in June 2024.

Lastly, we will not lose sight of our staff and volunteers. We will:

- Ensure staff well-being, development, and retention.
- Relaunch our Volunteer Long Service Award and Monthly Recognition.
- Establish a new Business Partnership and Fundraising post.

We continue to source funds to adapt support services and meet the needs of carers. We will also reduce any post-COVID legacy service waiting lists.

STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

The Directors of the charitable company ("the charity") are its Trustees for the purposes of charity law and within this report are collectively referred to as the Trustees. The Trustees are listed on page 2.

The Articles of Association require that at least 50% of Trustees must be current or former carers. During 2023-24, the Trustee board saw the recruitment of several new trustees to the board, fully integrating them into its work, including participation in joint events with the staff teams as appropriate.

The Trustees meet at least six times each year and receive a data-rich, "balanced scorecard" of performance as well as supplementary reports covering progress against the overall business strategy, key performance indicators and action plans, detailed fundraising progress, financial reports, risk register audits and an overarching Chief Executive Officer summary.

Various aspects of the organisation of the board were examined, and it was agreed to revise and streamline the paperwork reporting to the board in 2024-25.

The Trustees have implemented its policies and procedures for the recruitment of trustees, and these are followed for every new appointment with routine checks through the Disclosure and Barring Service.

Trustees completed a review of its project management and Board reporting with an external consultant in March 2024 and will use the consultant to further improve its effectiveness on an agreed work programme.

After an independent annual assessment of CTS's Quality Management System, CTS retained its ISO 9001 certification with a full pass.

STAFFING

At the time of writing, we have a full-time Chief Executive Officer, 8 other full-time posts, 22 part-time staff and 13 sessional staff, (total non-sessional hours being the equivalent of 2,225 hours per month) – overall 13.8 full-time equivalents. No employee received emoluments in excess of £60,000 during the year or previous year.

At the time of writing, there are 9 Trustees with three new Trustees and four Trustees having stepped down since the last annual report (Anthony Illingsworth, Melanie Stewart, Debbie Taylor and Selina Westwood). The Trustees give freely of their time and expertise and do not receive any emoluments or other benefits. In 2023-24 Trustees met four times for a short Executive Meeting, four times for a full Executive Meeting and convened an Annual General Meeting. A joint workshop with staff, One Trustee Board strategic away day, and various supplementary sub-meetings have occurred.

Several volunteers support the charity. At the close of 2023-24, the number of volunteers was 24 adult volunteers and 17 young mentors. The number of volunteer hours in 2023-24 was approximately 1,394. These valued volunteers enable us to support more carers.

NETWORKING

During the year, we actively participated in the National Carers Trust network.

We remained members of the National Council for Voluntary Organisations (NCVO) and the Association of Chief Executives of Voluntary Organisations (ACEVO) who connect, represent and support UK charities with consultancy, training, advice, and support on governance issues.

We are active in the Solihull Voluntary and Community networks participating in meetings with SMBC and a full range of our voluntary sector colleagues. This enhanced joint working remains a positive feature of the CTS year. We are active members of various local partnerships, including the Carers Partnership Board, Adult Safeguarding and Children Safeguarding Boards.

We have deepened our relationship with Solihull Chamber of Commerce and several local businesses.

FINANCIAL REVIEW

The financial year ended with a 5% increase in overall income to over £785,000, our highest ever. The easing recruitment environment allowed us to bring our staff numbers up to the budgeted level towards the end of the year. Staff costs, our most significant element of expenditure, increased by 14% as a result. After several years of surplus, we ended the year with expenditure exceeding income by a little over £13,000.

Looking ahead, with the increase in staff numbers now and budgeted increase in direct expenditure on carer support, we expect to make further inroads into our funds, built up by surpluses in previous years.

YEAR END FINANCIAL POSITION

We finished the year with total reserves of £396,695 down from £410,020 at the start of the year. An element of the reserves is restricted, deriving from income received to be spent on specific projects with the balance unrestricted, available to be spent as necessary to support the work of the charity.

Restricted Funds

Expenditure of restricted funds slightly exceeded restricted income received in the year.

At the year-end restricted income funds amounted to £28,379 (2023:£31,390). Details of restricted fund balances are shown in Note 11.

Unrestricted Funds

During the year unrestricted funds decreased by just over £10,000 to £368,316 which equates to approximately 5 months of ongoing expenditure. The policy of the Trustees is to maintain sufficient unrestricted funds to provide financial stability and ensure that the work of the charity is not affected by unexpected events, delayed receipts, or a short-term lack of incoming funds. Also, to ensure that in the event of a significant and permanent reduction in income, sufficient funds are available to meet all liabilities and provide an acceptable winding down of operations.

The Trustees have reviewed both the reserves policy and the level of reserves as of 31 March 2024 and are satisfied that the reserves are adequate.

INVESTMENT POWERS

The Charity has the power to make any investment which the Directors see fit. Our funds are only invested in deposit facilities protected under the Financial Services Compensation Scheme and within the limits of the Scheme. We aim to maximise interest income using both fixed and variable-rate deposits.

RISK MANAGEMENT

The Board regularly considers risks to the organisation and agrees on measures to mitigate those identified. The Trustees periodically review their Risk Management and Opportunity Register, which enables the service to plan for and reduce threats to the service we provide to the public.

During 2023-24, the Trustee Board and CEO established subgroups to:

- Streamline all risks and reports to the Trusts Board.
- Prepare a Tender Preparation Subgroup.
- Implement a Portfolio planning model for the 2022-24 CTS Business Plan.
- Introduce an assurance quarterly Scorecard.

These tasks were discussed at the Trustee Away Day session in March 2024 when the Board received confirmation of the likelihood of a tender process for its All-Age Carer Contract in 2025. Reserves have routinely been held to mitigate this risk.

FUNDING

Our funding mainly relies on the SMBC Community Well Being All Age Carers Contract and service level agreement with Solihull MBC. The current agreement expires in September 2025 and will be subject to a planned competitive re-tender in Spring 2025 on contractual terms that have yet to be agreed. During the year, funding was received from Solihull MBC, Carers Trust national, The Triangle Trust 1949 Fund and other local funders. We are also very grateful to those, including staff, trustees and volunteers, who have raised money for the charity, organised special events, sponsored walks and corporate activities.

STATEMENT OF DIRECTORS' RESPONSIBILITIES

The Trustees (who are the Directors of Solihull Carers Centre/Carers Trust Solihull for the purpose of company law) are responsible for preparing the Trustees Annual Report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and regulations.

Company law requires the Trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year. Under that law the Trustees have elected to prepare the financial statements in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice (United Kingdom Accounting Standards and applicable law). Under company law the Trustees must not approve the financial statements unless they are satisfied that they give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charitable company and the income and expenditure of the charitable company for that period.

In preparing these financial statements, the Trustees are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- observe the methods and principles in the Charities SORP;
- make judgments and accounting estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- state whether applicable UK Accounting Standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements;
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charitable company will continue in operation.

The Trustees are responsible for keeping adequate accounting records that are sufficient to show and explain the charitable company's transactions and disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charitable company and enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 2006. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charitable company and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

Small company provisions

This report has been prepared in accordance with the provisions applicable to companies entitled to the small companies' regime.

On behalf of the Board

David Heaselgrave
Chair of Trustees

11 November 2024

INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT TO THE TRUSTEES OF SOLIHULL CARERS CENTRE

I report to the trustees on my examination of the financial statements of Solihull Carers Centre ('the charity') for the year ended 31 March 2024.

Responsibilities and basis of report

As the trustees of the company (and also its directors for the purposes of company law) you are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006 ('the 2006 Act').

Having satisfied myself that the accounts of the company are not required to be audited under Part 16 of the 2006 Act and are eligible for independent examination, I report in respect of my examination of the charity's accounts as carried out under section 145 of the Charities Act 2011 ('the 2011 Act'). In carrying out my examination I have followed the Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5) (b) of the 2011 Act.

Independent examiner's statement

Since the charity's gross income exceeded £250,000 your examiner must be a member of a body listed in section 145 of the 2011 Act. I confirm that I am qualified to undertake the examination because I am a member of the Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales (ICAEW), which is one of the listed bodies.

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

1. accounting records were not kept in respect of the charity as required by section 386 of the 2006 Act; or
2. the financial statements do not accord with those records; or
3. the financial statements do not comply with the accounting requirements of section 396 of the 2006 Act other than any requirement that the accounts give a 'true and fair' view which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination; or
4. the financial statements have not been prepared in accordance with the methods and principles of the Statement of Recommended Practice for accounting and reporting by charities applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102).

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.

Hannah Justice FCA FCCA
Independent Examiner
On behalf of BSN Associates Limited

3B Swallowfield Courtyard
Wolverhampton Road
Oldbury
West Midlands
B69 2JG

11 November 2024

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

(incorporating the Income and Expenditure Account)

	Notes	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total 2024 £	Total 2023 £
Income from:					
Grants, activities and donations		5,849	2,460	8,309	12,615
Investments: Bank interest		12,295	-	12,295	5,244
Charitable activities: Contract and grants	2	715,037	50,239	765,276	729,467
Total income		733,181	52,699	785,880	747,326
Expenditure on:					
Charitable activities	3	743,495	55,710	799,205	711,960
Total expenditure		743,495	55,710	799,205	711,960
Net income/(expenditure) for the year					
		(10,314)	(3,011)	(13,325)	35,366
Net movement in funds					
		(10,314)	(3,011)	(13,325)	35,366
Reconciliation of funds:					
Total funds brought forward		378,630	31,390	410,020	374,654
Total funds carried forward		368,316	28,379	396,695	410,020

The Statement of Financial Activities includes all gains and losses in the year. All incoming resources and resources expended derive from continuing activities.

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION 31 MARCH 2024

	Notes	2024 £	2023 £
Fixed assets	6	11,600	1,975
Current assets			
Debtors and prepayments	8	6,538	523
Investments	7	361,930	419,635
Bank current account		48,860	64,385
		417,328	484,543
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	9	32,233	76,498
Net current assets		385,095	408,045
Net assets	10	396,695	410,020
Unrestricted funds	11	368,316	378,630
Restricted income funds	12	28,379	31,390
Total funds		396,695	410,020

For the year ending 31 March 2024 the charity was entitled to exemption from audit under section 477 of the Companies Act 2006 relating to small companies.

Trustees' responsibilities:

- The shareholders have not required the charity to obtain an audit of its financial statements for the year in question in accordance with section 476;
- The Trustees acknowledge their responsibilities for complying with the requirements of the Act with respect to accounting records and the preparation of financial statements.

These financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the provisions applicable to companies subject to the small companies' regime.

The financial statements were approved by the Directors on 11 November 2024 and were signed on their behalf by:

David Heaselgrave
Chair of Trustees

STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

	2024 £	2023 £
Net cash provided by operating activities	(61,722)	50,067
Cash flows from investing activities	(11,508)	-
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the reporting period	484,020	433,953
Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the reporting period	410,790	484,020

RECONCILIATION OF NET INCOME TO NET CASH FLOW FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES

	2024 £	2023 £
Net income for the reporting period	(13,325)	35,366
Adjustments for:		
Depreciation of fixed assets	1,883	4,880
(Increase)/decrease in debtors	(6,015)	1,669
(Decrease)/increase in creditors	(44,265)	8,152
Net cash provided by operating activities	(61,722)	50,067

ANALYSIS OF CASH AND CASH EQUIVALENTS

	2024 £	2023 £
Cash in hand	48,860	64,385
Notice deposits (less than 3 months)	361,930	419,635
Total cash and cash equivalents	410,790	484,020

NOTES FORMING PART OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

1. Accounting policies

Status

The Charity is a company registered in England and Wales that is limited by guarantee and does not have a share capital. The liability of members is limited to £1. The registered office is shown on page 2. The charity constitutes a public entity as defined by FRS 102.

Statement of compliance, basis of preparation and assessment of going concern

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the Statement of Recommended Practice: Accounting and Reporting by Charities preparing their financial statements in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (SORP FRS 102) issued on 16 July 2014, the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the United Kingdom and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) and the Companies Act 2006. The financial statements are prepared under the historical cost convention with items recognised at cost or transaction value.

In common with many charities the organisation is heavily dependent on grant and contract income. Founded over 20 years ago we are a service-led organisation considered as the lead agency supporting carers in the area. The accounts have been prepared on the going concern basis in expectation that there will not be a significant decrease in support from funding bodies.

Income recognition

Income is recognised once the Charity has entitlement to the income, it is probable that the income will be received and the amount of income receivable can be measured accurately.

Voluntary income is recognised as above except where the income is subject to conditions that require a level of performance before the charity is entitled to the funds, when the income is deferred and not recognised until either those conditions are met, or the fulfilment of those conditions is wholly within the control of the Charity and it is probable those conditions will be fulfilled in the reporting period.

Grants and contracts specifically for the provision of services to be provided as part of the charitable activities or services to beneficiaries are accounted for on the basis of amounts receivable for the year.

Interest arising on cash balances is included when receivable and the amount can be measured reliably by the Charity. This is normally upon notification of the interest paid or payable by the bank.

Expenditure recognition

Liabilities are recognised as expenditure as soon as there is a legal or constructive obligation committing the Charity to that expenditure, it is probable that settlement is required and the amount of the obligation can be measured reliably. All expenditure is accounted for on the accruals basis, inclusive of any value added tax which cannot be recovered.

Tangible fixed assets

Depreciation is provided at rates calculated to write off the cost of each asset over its expected useful life, being three years for computers and other equipment and five years for motor vehicles. Leasehold improvements are depreciated over the period of the lease. Assets are capitalised where the purchase price exceeds £2,500.

Taxation

The Charity is exempt from taxation on its charitable activities.

NOTES FORMING PART OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

Fund accounting

In order to differentiate the availability of funds they are categorised according to the following definitions:

Unrestricted funds are donations and other incoming resources receivable or generated for the objects of the charity without further specified purpose and are available as general funds.

Restricted funds are to be used for specific purposes as laid down by the donor. Expenditure, which meets these criteria, is charged to the fund together with a fair allocation of management and support costs.

Pension costs

The Charity operates a defined contribution pension scheme available to all of its employees. The pension charge represents the amount payable by the Charity to the scheme during the year.

Operating leases

Lease payments are recognised as an expense over the lease term on a straight-line basis. The aggregate benefit of lease incentives is recognised as a reduction to expense on a straight-line basis over the lease term.

Functional currency

The financial statements are prepared in sterling which is the functional currency of the entity.

2. Income from charitable activities

	2024	2023
	£	£
Contracts and grants		
Local Authority contract - Solihull MBC*	711,037	670,790
Other grants	4,000	6,750
	715,037	677,540
Grants - restricted funds		
Solihull MBC - Adult carers	-	5,000
Carers Trust - Young carers	750	1,650
Carers Trust - Adult carers	1,052	10,250
Children in Need - Young carers	12,252	28,236
The Triangle Trust - Young carers	30,000	-
Other grants - Young carers	5,400	6,791
Other grants - Adult carers	785	-
	50,239	51,927

*Contract with Solihull MBC for the purchase of 'Community Wellbeing Services Carers of All Ages'.

NOTES FORMING PART OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

3. Expenditure on charitable activities

Direct and support

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total 2024 £	Total 2023 £
Carer support and activities	52,274	22,821	75,095	73,562
Staff costs	594,463	30,649	625,112	547,373
Recruitment	5,113	-	5,113	11,010
Premises	19,272	-	19,272	(5,649)
Communications and office costs	38,169	-	38,169	42,514
Motor and travel expenses	5,021	2,072	7,093	6,680
Training and consultancy	5,677	-	5,677	7,231
Publicity/information	3,425	-	3,425	11,088
Insurance	3,860	-	3,860	3,246
Professional fees and subscriptions	5,839	-	5,839	4,962
Other	4,130	168	4,298	3,920
	737,243	55,710	792,953	705,937

Governance costs

			2024 £	2023 £
Independent examination	2,016	-	2,016	1,920
Professional fees	3,656	-	3,656	3,563
Other	580	-	580	540
	6,252	-	6,252	6,023

Total expenditure on charitable activities

	743,495	55,710	799,205	711,960
2023	596,943	115,017	-	711,960

NOTES FORMING PART OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

4. Staff costs

The total staff costs for the year amounted to £625,112 (2023:£547,373). The costs for 2024 include employer national insurance contributions amounting to £38,152 (2023:£35,078) and pension costs of £22,938 (2023:£20,751).

The charity during the year had on average 9 full time employees (2023:9) and 18 part time employees (2023:17).

No employee received emoluments in excess of £60,000 during the year or the previous year.

In addition, at the year-end there were 10 directors (2023:9). The directors all give freely of their time and expertise and did not receive any emoluments or other benefits.

5. Operating lease commitments

The charity has commitments under an operating lease for land and buildings expiring in 2033 amounting to £135,000 (2023:£150,000).

	2024 £	2023 £
Amounts falling due within 1 year	15,000	15,000
Amounts falling due within 2 to 5 years	60,000	60,000
Due after more than 5 years	60,000	75,000

6. Fixed assets

	Motor Cars £	Computer Equipment £	Leasehold Improvements £	Total £
COST				
At beginning of year	7,900	13,200	-	21,100
Additions	-	-	11,508	11,508
At end of year	7,900	13,200	11,508	32,608
ACCUMULATED DEPRECIATION				
Opening balance	5,925	13,200	-	19,125
Charge for the year	1,583	-	300	1,883
Closing balance	7,508	13,200	300	21,008
NET BOOK VALUE	392	-	11,208	11,600

There were no capital commitments at the year-end (2023:none).

NOTES FORMING PART OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

7. Investments

At cost and valuation

	2024	2023
	£	£
Short term deposits held at UK banks	361,930	419,635

8. Debtors

	2024	2023
	£	£
Debtors	5,650	-
Prepayments	888	523
Included within Debtors is an amount of £5,000 (2023:£Nil) that is due for payment in more than 12 months.		
	6,538	523

9. Creditors: amounts falling due within one year

	2024	2023
	£	£
Creditors and accruals	15,519	30,878
Deferred income	7,002	34,254
Tax & pension contributions	9,712	11,366
	32,233	76,498

10. Analysis of net assets by funds

	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Total funds
	£	£	£
Tangible assets	11,600	-	11,600
Current assets	388,949	28,379	417,328
Current liabilities	32,233	-	32,233
Net assets	368,316	28,379	396,695

NOTES FORMING PART OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

11. Unrestricted income funds

The unrestricted funds which total £368,316 (2023:£378,630) are available as general funds to be used for the objects of the charity without further specified purpose.

12. Restricted income funds

The restricted income funds comprise the following unexpired balances of donations and grants to be applied for the following purposes:

	Opening balances	Incoming resources	Outgoing resources	Closing balances
	£	£	£	£
Young carers peer mentoring project	-	42,252	36,491	5,761
Other young carers projects	25,424	6,150	8,956	22,618
Adult projects	5,966	-	5,966	-
Other funds	-	4,297	4,297	-
	31,390	52,699	55,710	28,379

13. Trustees expenses

Trustees received expense payments totalling £60 during the year (prior year £nil). The charity provided indemnity cover for Trustees costing £677 (2023:£694).

14. Related party transactions

No Trustee or other person connected with the charity had any personal interest in any contract or transaction entered into by the charity during the year. The Trustees are not aware of any related party transactions requiring disclosure.

FOLLOW US ON SOCIAL MEDIA FOR UP TO DATE INFORMATION



@solihullcarers



CARERS TRUST
Solihull

WATCH OUR FILMS

Our films feature unpaid carers in Solihull sharing their experiences. These are a great educational resource for anyone wishing to gain understanding of what it means to be a carer and the support available.



To watch the films use the **QR code** on the left or visit our YouTube channel and select **Awareness Videos** here:

<https://www.youtube.com/@solihullcarers/playlists>

Supporting unpaid carers of all ages in Solihull

Carers Trust Solihull
Solihull Carers Centre
Solihull Fire Station Annexe
620 Streetsbrook Road
Solihull B91 1QY

T 0121 788 1143
E centre@solihullcarers.org
www.solihullcarers.org

SUPPORTED BY:



Solihull Carers Centre is a company limited by guarantee and a Registered Charity operating as Carers Trust Solihull. Registered Company in England No. 04378042. Registered Charity No. 1092613.

Registered Office:
The Carers Centre
Solihull Fire Station Annexe
620 Streetsbrook Road
Solihull B91 1QY

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SOLIHULL CARERS CENTRE

England & Wales - Charity number 1092613

Accounts



ANNUAL REPORT AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

April 2022 to March 2023



Supporting unpaid carers in Solihull for over 20 years

Solihull Carers Centre is a company limited by guarantee and a Registered Charity operating as Carers Trust Solihull. Registered Company in England No. 04378042. Registered Charity No. 1092613.

COMPANY INFORMATION

The Directors and Trustees are pleased to present their report together with the financial statements of the charity for the year ended 31 March 2023.

The Organisation

Solihull Carers Centre (SCC) is a company limited by guarantee and a Registered Charity operating as Carers Trust Solihull (CTS). The Directors of the charitable company ('the charity') are its Trustees for the purpose of charity law and within this report are collectively referred to as the Trustees.

Company Information

Registered Company in England No. 04378042
Registered Charity No. 1092613

Directors and Trustees 2022-2023

David Heaselgrave	Chair
Debbie E Taylor	Deputy Chair
Graham Thompson	Treasurer
David Brown	(resigned 28 November 2022)
Christine Grace	
Sue Jeynes	
Elaine McPherson	(resigned 16 February 2023)
Janice Price	
Carol Shiel	
Melanie Stewart	
Selina Westwood	

Directors and Trustees Changes Since Year End

Selina Westwood	(from 24 April 2023) Deputy Chair
Debbie E Taylor	(resigned 24 April 2023)
Anthony Illingsworth	(appointed 24 April 2023)

Registered Office & Operational Address

The Carers Centre
Solihull Fire Station Annexe
620 Streetsbrook Road
Solihull
B91 1QY

Independent Examiner

Hannah Justice ACA FCCA
BSN Associates Limited
Chartered Accountants
3B Swallowfield Courtyard
Wolverhampton Road
Oldbury
West Midlands
B69 2JG



Rebecca wall
receives Young Carer
of the Year David
Henry Award 2022
sponsored by Rotary
Club of Solihull
St Alphege at our
Charity Ball and Carer
Friendly Awards.



CONTENTS

- 2. Company information
- 5. Our work at a glance
- 6. Introduction from our Chair
- 7. Working for carers: our CEO
- 8. Our work
- 16. Thank you to our donors and funders
- 17. Thank you to our volunteers
- 18. Directors' and Trustees' Annual Report and Financial Statements



OUR WORK AT A GLANCE 2022-23



From the 2021 Census, we can estimate there are **19,940 unpaid carers of all ages in Solihull**



4,455 CARERS REGISTERED WITH CARERS TRUST SOLIHULL (CTS) AT END OF 31 MARCH 2023

CARERS REGISTERED WITH CTS:

3,350 CARERS AGED 26+ INCLUDING
818 PARENT CARERS
748 YOUNG CARERS (YC)
357 YOUNG ADULT CARERS (YAC)

58 EVENTS & ACTIVITIES:



37 YC EVENTS & ACTIVITIES

21 ADULT EVENTS & ACTIVITIES

137 PARENT CARER REVIEWS & ASSESSMENTS:

69 *SEND carers assessments
68 carers reviews



56 YOUNG CARERS CLUBS



32 ADULT CARER MEET UPS

188 ADULT CARER ASSESSMENTS, REVIEWS & PLANS:

39 contingency plans
75 assessments and reviews
74 support plans

204 ADULT CARERS RECEIVED SUPPORT SESSIONS

117 YOUNG CARERS AND YOUNG ADULT CARERS ENGAGED IN ONE-TO-ONE SESSIONS

164 YC & YAC ASSESSMENTS:

125 young carer assessments
39 YAC assessments



1,398 VOLUNTEER HOURS

42 adult volunteers
5 peer mentors (YC)
9 new volunteers

128,579 FACEBOOK REACH

2,138 FACEBOOK PAGE VIEWS

40 BLOG POSTS



NOTE:

Young carers are 5-16 years old; young adult carers are 17-25 years old; and adult carers are 26 years and over.
*Special educational needs and disability.

INTRODUCTION FROM OUR CHAIR

This year we have experienced a unique and testing environment. A combination of Covid and the various lockdowns, hybrid working, inflation and the cost of living crisis have brought new challenges for our carers, staff, volunteers and sponsors. I am proud to say that we not only weathered the storm but continued to grow and develop our services to carers of all ages.

On behalf of the Board, I want to thank Brandon Scott-Omenka our CEO, the management team, our staff and volunteers for providing a seamless and high-quality support service. The level of enthusiasm, focus and professionalism in performing and developing programmes to improve the quality of life for our carers has kept CTS in the fore of services provided to a largely undervalued and unrecognised section of our society.

Funding is always a challenge to a charity and we are extremely grateful to all of our primary funders, corporate sponsors and volunteers who have supported us through a range of events and partnerships. One such event involved a young man from BDO who made us his charity of choice completing an arduous climb to base camp on Everest, ultimately raising £2,000.

The Trustees, all of whom are volunteers, annually review our strategy ensuring that our services are fit for purpose being both relevant and appropriate in providing a comprehensive range of services to unpaid carers. This year we have updated our business plan enhancing both our existing services and piloting new ones including expanding our digital communication with carers and the local community.

Special thanks go to Debbie Taylor, Elaine McPherson and David Brown who after many years of loyal service have stepped down from the Board. We are always looking to recruit new Trustees and I welcome anyone interested to apply for what is a rewarding and often stimulating role.

The level of enthusiasm, focus and professionalism in performing and developing tasks to improve the quality of life for our carers has kept CTS in the fore of services provided to a largely undervalued and unrecognised section of our society.

One of our key aims is to reach out to as many carers as possible. As outlined in Brandon's report the numbers of carers registered with us has been increasing year on year. This year has seen an increase of over 7% which is proof we are becoming visible to a wider audience. It is likely that all of us either have been or are a carer, or knows someone who is and by raising our profile we have been able to reach out and support more people than ever.

It has been a real pleasure to lead the Trustee Board and watch as our charity has grown and adapted to the new challenges faced. All of us, staff and Trustees remain focused on our remit and are confident that we will continue to provide excellent support and services to unpaid carers in Solihull.

David Heaselgrave



David Heaselgrave
Chair of Trustees

WORKING FOR CARERS OUR CEO

2022-23 was a demanding year for Carers Trust Solihull. We began on a high, having secured an extension of our Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council (SMBC) Carers of All-Ages support contract to September 2024, leaving us in a secure position coming out of the Covid lockdown.

We started the previous three-year contract in April 2019 with 3,039 active registered carers. During 2022-23 the numbers rose from 4,148 to 4,455 as we finally put the last Covid lockdown arrangements behind us (not that we knew this then).

Carers Rights Day focused on joint work with national Carers Trust, SMBC and third-sector partners to support carers during the winter. General inflation and utility bills rose dramatically, hitting most carers, particularly those that had given up employment to care for a loved one.

In the year, we extended our pre-bereavement offer to young carers with terminally ill parents. Despite difficulties in recruiting volunteers, we continued our carers Sitting Service pilot, extended our training and carers films online, and provided training to long Covid NHS clinicians.

Funding from BBC Children in Need to support our Peer Mentoring and Befriending project came to an end, but a new grant from The Triangle Trust 1949 Fund was secured in its place, guaranteeing a further two years for the project. We are pleased to continue our award-winning work with young carers of all ages and for Cranfield Trust's assistance in developing a marketing plan to reach out to more carers as part of the support package.

In our work with our partners, CTS contributed to the final SMBC Solihull Carers Strategy, which the SMBC scrutiny panel reviewed before becoming SMBC policy.

The main challenge of 2022-23 was capacity and the impact of difficulties in recruitment and

retention on our staff and volunteers, which meant the key initiatives often had to progress against a headwind of unfilled key vacancies. The biggest reward was finally seeing the Adult Carers Team fully staffed and go on to achieve record performance figures supporting carers.

Being able to support carers during this challenging year has been its own reward. Let us hope there will be another twenty years of growth and service to Solihull's carers.

Whereas 2022 was CTS's twentieth birthday, since the day in 2002 when the organisation registered as a Charity, the highlight of Carers Week, and my highlight of the year, was the first CTS Charity Ball and Carer Friendly Award, which topped off a great Carers Week. As the evening came to an end, I was stopped by a young adult carer in her early twenties and told that "CTS had saved her life." It left me with a feeling of humility and a renewed passion for the impact of our staff and volunteers.

Being able to support carers during this challenging year has been its own reward. Let us hope there will be another twenty years of growth and service to Solihull's carers. There are many that could be singled out for praise, including those that have provided excellent service over many years before moving on to new pastures, but the list would be too long and would have to include everyone who has worked so hard in 2022-23. A big thank you again to our staff, trustees, volunteers, stakeholders, and donors, one and all.

Brandon Scott-Omenka
CEO Carers Trust Solihull



Young carers helping to raise awareness.

OUR WORK CARERS WEEK

We organised a spectacular array of events and activities to 'Make Caring Visible, Valued and Supported' during Carers Week in 2022.

Adult carers enjoyed a meet up at Lily's Tea Parlour, a meal at the Olton Tavern Pub Inn and we partnered with Solihull Library for afternoon tea to celebrate the Queen's Jubilee, where carers could explore the photo archives of Solihull from 1950. Young carers were delighted by a magic show – lots of fun was had learning to spin plates! Carers and their families enjoyed a much-deserved break at the seaside on our annual beach trip to Weston-super-Mare.

Some of our awareness raising activity included the wide distribution of information and resource packs to several local organisations and businesses to help people recognise and support carers at work and in the community.

We held our first Charity Ball and Carer Friendly Awards ceremony at the Village Hotel in Solihull; a fantastic night celebrating carers was hosted by the BBC's Phil Upton. Our Carer Friendly Awards not only recognised carers but also those in the community who go the extra mile to support unpaid carers in Solihull.



Melanie Stewart, CTS Trustee with Debbie Allen, winner of the Adult Carer award and our CEO, Brandon Scott-Omenka.



Phil Upton hosting our Charity Ball and Awards.



Magic Show for young carers.



Carers with Michelle, Events Coordinator at Lily's Tea Parlour.



Award winning carers celebrate at our Charity Ball.



Carers celebrating the week with a meal.



Staff at Aldi receive a pack to help support carers at work.



Audience and stall holders exchanging information.

OUR WORK CARERS RIGHTS DAY



Carers Rights Day panel.



Audience of carers and others.



Activities for young carers led by YC's staff.

Our Cost of Living Information Event for Carers Rights Day in 2022 was hosted at Solihull Council's Civic Suite. We responded to the growing concern around energy prices and the cost of living crisis and had a special focus on 'keeping warm this winter'.

Representatives from several local organisations made themselves available throughout the event, to offer carers the advice and information that they need. A panel of professionals including, Angie Pretty (Solihull MBC), Hannah Nurrish (GPS

“ Fantastic event!
HEALTH WATCH

80% of respondents found the event very useful and 75% said they had received new information and support.

Healthcare), Kerry Turner (CAB), Teresa Baxter (Community Advice Hub) and Melinda Tomkins (Act On Energy), who spoke on the current projects running to support residents of Solihull through the cost of living crisis and answered questions. This was recorded and distributed on our social media channels and website for those who could not attend. Young Carers also attended the event and got creative by designing t-shirts and hats expressing their rights as young carers.

“ I thought I knew a lot but there are so many new services.
A CARER

“ I am so pleased I came.
A CARER



Until I had the assessment I wasn't aware of the amount of things available for myself to access. A PARENT CARER

HIGHLIGHTS PARENT CARERS

With a dedicated worker allocated two hours per week to raise awareness the demand significantly increased for Parent Carer Assessments. We saw an increase in referrals soar to 266% by the end of the year.

THIS RESULTED IN 44 COMPLETED POST-ASSESSMENT 9-WEEK REVIEWS

The results from the reviews showed that:

- **98% were happy with the assessment process.**
- **90% found it helpful.**
- **87% would recommend it to others.**
- **98% reported that the support plan gave them information to make changes.**

Following the reviews, parent carers received a restaurant voucher giving them the opportunity to take time for themselves.



TOM* A PARENT CARER



Tom cares for his two sons with additional needs and his wife with mental health needs. He reported giving up his career due to caring for his family. He wanted another focus to maintain his skills for when he could work again and needed to manage the family finances more efficiently, but his laptop had broken. We sourced a reconditioned laptop for Tom through our Connecting Carers Project which he uses to access online courses to maintain his professional training and utilises software applications to handle money matters. The assessment helped to meet his needs around finances and work and education.

“ I have been so lost and very lonely for many years, I just wish I'd found Carers Trust a long time ago. My problems are far from over and I still have a long way to go but my assessment has really helped me work on a few areas at a time and I have started my healing journey. I'm starting to gain more confidence in my caring role and I'm confident that by receiving support from Carers Trust other areas of my life will change too. A PARENT CARER

*Not real name.



Carers Trust Solihull has been:

“ An absolute life saver.

DIANE*

*Not real name.

OUR WORK WITH ADULT CARERS

Alongside completing Carer Assessments and Reviews on behalf of SMBC, our team supports carers in all aspects of their caring roles. We work closely with carers to help them to manage their role and plan for the future which can give them peace of mind, reduce stress and anxiety which is a crucial aid to their health and well-being.

We continue to work in partnership with organisations across the borough and nationally. During Dementia Week, we teamed up with Dementia Carers Count to deliver three workshops and one group session for our carers who were at different stages of their caring role. We also secured extra funds to give carers much needed short breaks, hardship grants plus bereavement and befriending support.

- Of carers that received an assessment or review, 52% also received a contingency plan.
- 65% of newly registered carers requested information on how to put a plan in place.
- There was a 27% increase in carers receiving emotional and intense support from our team.
- Events and activities for carers saw an increase of 123% in attendance levels.
- Training opportunities for carers had an increase of 33% in attendance levels.

DIANE* AN ADULT CARER

Diane was struggling to physically manage her caring role and her own health conditions were impacting on her emotional well-being. Neither Diane nor her husband, who she cares for, were receiving any formal support. By registering as a carer with us, Diane first made use of our Telephone Befriending Service gaining emotional support from an experienced befriender. Diane's Carer's Assessment was then escalated due to staff concerns around her well-being.

The assessment took place in the home where our support practitioner was able to see that the house was cold and that both Diane and her husband have limited mobility. We immediately applied for a hardship grant to purchase a heated throw; Diane was pleased with the difference this made, allowing them to sit together in warmth whilst watching TV.

Diane was reluctant to use the heating due to a fear of accruing debt from the rising cost of energy. We encouraged her to take a meter reading and contact her utilities provider; the account was in credit and this allayed her fears.

From the assessment we identified that the couple were eligible for further support due to their limited mobility. We applied for assisted bin collections and registered Diane for the OutsideClinic service to access eye and hearing tests at home.

With the statutory care needs assessment for Diane's husband, we included details of disability funding available for a bathroom refit. Occupational Therapy performed their own assessment leading to a visit from the Falls Team.

The couple now have a cleaner who visits weekly which helps with the difficult physical tasks. Diane's husband is also receiving support from professional carers following a hip operation.

Our service has made a significant difference to Diane's caring role, health and well-being and the couple look forward to attending our activities.



HIGHLIGHTS YOUNG ADULT CARERS

We made an extra difference to young adult carers in education by taking advantage of surplus funds generated by Covid restrictions. On completion of our peer mentoring and befriending project, we used the surplus funds to equip young adult carers with laptops so that they could access essential online education resources to keep up with their college studies.

We continue to strengthen our partnership working with colleges in Solihull equipping them to identify, support and refer young adult carers in the borough. We delivered Young Carers and Young Adult Carers Awareness Training to frontline staff at Solihull College and the entire staff team at Solihull Sixth Form College. Young adult carers recognise that support exists and know who to approach to seek the help they need to manage their studies alongside leading their own lives and caring.



*Not real name.

“ ...thank you all for your kindness and generosity in gifting me my laptop, it's been a godsend and, thanks to you I've managed to pass all my current assignments. The work you all do as a team is impeccable and it changes so many lives, especially in the current cost of living crisis you're still making a massive impact on those you work with! You really are unsung heroes and I thank you from the bottom of my heart, not just for the support this year but every year I've been with the service! **A YOUNG ADULT CARER**

JAY* YOUNG ADULT CARER

With four years experience of volunteering on our peer mentoring and befriending project (PMBF), Jay represented CTS and Shirley Lions Club as the nominated Young Ambassador in the Lions Club International competition this year. Jay entered the district final after several months of preparing his application and presentation with the support of the PMBF project coordinator and the Shirley Lions Club. In a close contest, he was runner-up and praised for being a remarkable young individual and a credit to society. At this time, he also turned 18; becoming a young adult meant he was no longer eligible to benefit from the PMBF project, however, to continue his commitment to a project that has supported and developed him, he chose to volunteer as an adult befriender. He had previously engaged with our one-to-one befriending service and gained part-time employment as he began his A-level studies. As a befriender, Jay is giving young carers the chance to benefit from one-to-one and group mentoring plus monthly young carers clubs. Jay's role as a facilitator of these sessions alongside our staff team, is vital.



OUR WORK WITH YOUNG CARERS

Supported by the7stars foundation, we launched a much-needed bereavement project this year. We now offer pre- and post-bereavement support for young carers and young adult carers who have or, who expect to experience the death of the person they care for.

A two year funding grant from the Triangle Trust 1949 Fund has secured the continuation of our Peer Mentoring project. To be refreshed in 2023 it will focus on supporting young carers to overcome barriers to education.

Young Carers in Schools training has been delivered to two multi-academy trusts, reaching several educational settings with one presentation. This maximises our efforts to raise awareness of the needs of young carers in schools while encouraging collaborative working across trusts.

“ My son doesn’t have the opportunity to attend social events, I am really grateful for Solihull Young Carers.

PARENT OF A YOUNG CARER

BENJI* IS A YOUNG CARER

Benji is struggling at school and the school has concerns about his attendance. His mum felt the school did not understand Benji’s intense caring role. So we wrote to the school explaining Benji’s caring responsibilities and their impact, and spoke to the SENCO** to outline appropriate support e.g. providing homework when Benji is unable to attend school, and nominating a designated person within the school for him to approach when he is struggling. The school and the family are now working together to maintain support for Benji. Mum felt that the letter was helpful and hopes that Benji will be able to attend school more often because his caring role is now recognised and supported.

“ I am looking forward to meeting other young carers. A YOUNG CARER

DECISION MAKING GROUPS

Decision Making Groups happen each quarter to bring together YCYACs*** to share thoughts, feelings and opinions about their service – what works well/what doesn’t, generating ideas for the activities, evaluating marketing tools and materials, providing input to shape future services from their perspective as children and young adults who have caring responsibilities. Registered YCYACs are invited to join sessions through the text reminder service with groups facilitated online over Zoom. This engages carers in their homes and routinely attracts between 5-8 YCYACs per session. As a ‘thank you’ to recognise their valuable contributions each person receives a gift voucher.

*Not real name. **Special Educational Needs Coordinator.

***Young carers and young adult carers.

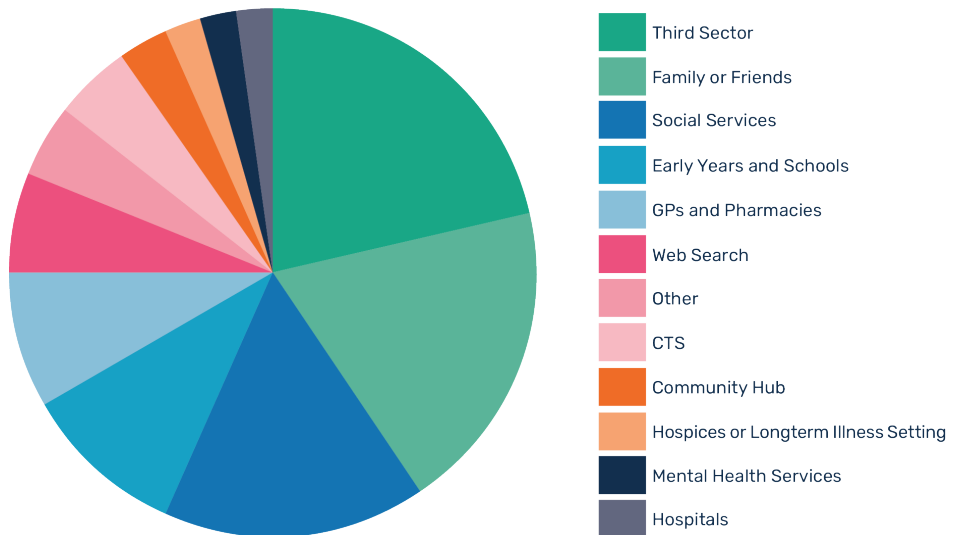
OUR WORK REACHING CARERS



To reach carers, we need referrals. To ensure referrals, we need publicity and recognition in the network of health and social care, charity and the business community.

Many who approach the Trust for information, advice or support find out about us via word of mouth. Some are anonymous, reluctant to reveal their circumstances, feeling their way, and reaching out for the very first time. Others have known of us for years, in some cases through their whole carer journey, not infrequently involving more than one cared-for person.

HOW CARERS FIND OUT ABOUT OUR SERVICE



JANUARY-MARCH 2023: SAMPLE SIZE OF 131

The support and information exchange networks, particularly with the charitable sector and Solihull Council, have proven crucial in recent years. We can refer to them when we discover a carer who needs alternative assistance from one of our Community Wellbeing Service (CWS) partners, and vice versa. Checking in with colleagues, discussing the support that we can collectively offer and sharing solutions and an occasional therapeutic moan is what good partnership work is about. Our friends in the CWS and across the voluntary sector, the very big and the very small, are valued by the Trust. Not long ago, those that set up CTS met in a community centre to decide what more could be done (see the CEO summary on page 5) to help unpaid carers in Solihull. From small acorns, all charities are born.

It is noticeable that the grassroots charities of the borough were hardest hit by the Covid lockdowns. Whilst the small and nimble organisations were often to the fore during stay-at-home and winter measures, these measures particularly restricted local fundraising, and it is important that we all try to support the fledgling as well as the established.

It is also noticeable that we are currently struggling with recruitment of volunteers and to fill our staff vacancies. Many of us are discussing this, all of us hope it is transitory, most fear it is here to stay. At least for the immediate future. If you want to support the work for Carers Trust Solihull do not hesitate to contact us by using any method listed on the back page.





OUR WORK BUSINESS AND COMMUNICATIONS



Hazel Carter (above), award-winning author of *Life's Good*, joined Michelle Stoddard, our multi-talented Events and Carers Academy Coordinator to record a podcast talking about her experience of caring for her husband, Alan.

QR CODE FOR
PODCAST:



Since 2019, we have undertaken all design work, digital and print communications in-house. We design and distribute printed newsletters and events programmes three times per year for young carers and twice per year for adult carers. In the past year, we have distributed 13,000+ direct communications to carers and designed and produced more than 18,000 items including leaflets, booklets, stands, branded promotional items and all the publicity and branded items for our Charity Ball and Carer Friendly Awards.

The Business and Communications Team is the hub at the centre of the service, ensuring that our 4,000 plus registered carers are kept up to date and that we continually improve our methods for communicating with carers unknown to our service, who may be unaware of the support available to them. Alongside this, we ensure that our 29 regular staff members are equipped with IT hardware and software to meet the demands of our service and modern hybrid working while undertaking and supporting essential business functions.

The team is always striving to offer rich media content, via our website and across key social media



platforms. Our media work is produced and created in-house and occasionally in partnership with local media companies.

We are using our media expertise to improve the training we deliver to carers; an interactive Contingency Planning tool has been developed and created in the last year to be piloted in winter 2023. We were also delighted to launch our first podcast for carers in June 2023; an entire series is planned that will cover topics including Wills and Power of Attorney. Rich media alternatives are designed to give carers who cannot attend our Carers Academy training in person a chance to catch up and learn in their own time.

Since its launch, the website averaged 154,000 impressions* in a 12 month period.

A creative partnership with Kijo web design resulted in the production and launch of our new website in July 2022. We worked closely with Kijo on mapping different user journeys and provided all the copy and images that are used on the website. A year on, we are conducting a review of the website to improve on the experience for our range of users.

*The number of times any URL from your site appeared in search results viewed by a user, not including paid Google Ads search impressions.



Our first Charity Ball and Carer Friendly Awards.

THANK YOU TO OUR DONORS AND FUNDERS

We are always humbled by those groups, businesses and individuals that decide to donate and support the work of Carers Trust Solihull as donors or with large grants for us to significantly expand our offer in Solihull.

We would particularly like to thank Triangle Trust 1949 Fund for their support of our young carers peer mentoring and befriending project and Cranfield Trust, who, as part of the same package, are assisting us with our marketing and therefore getting the message out about the Carers' contribution and the support we can offer them in the borough.

We noted in 2022-23 significant support from:

- **Barston Association**
- **Inner Wheel**
- **Waitrose**
- **Rotary Club of Solihull Saint Alphege**
- **Shirley Round Table**
- **The Triangle Trust 1949 Fund**
- **The7Stars Foundation**
- **Wesleyan Foundation, Heart of England**

We would also like to thank the following for their sponsorship of our very first Charity Ball and Carer Friendly Awards in 2022:

- **3Di Midlands**
- **Barchester - Fountains Care Home**
- **Copier Maintenance**
- **Lucent Financial Planning**
- **Marks & Spencer**
- **National Grid**
- **Phoenix Group Solihull**
- **Plastic Investments**

We are always grateful for the contractual relationship with Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council (SMBC) – this partnership is at the core of our work in the borough.

We also appreciate national Carers Trust's carers grants and Time For Me funding for overnight respite, hobbies, outings, and micro-breaks for carers of all ages.

Lastly, we note that considerable resources are channelled through the SMBC, national Carers Trust, and other funding streams from various government departments.



Melanie Stewart, Trustee, Terry Blyth, CTS Volunteer of the Year, Brandon Scott-Omenka, CEO, CTS.

As the Young Carers Team admin volunteer, Terry Blyth won CTS Volunteer of the Year 2022 Award, celebrating a phenomenal 10 years of service with the Trust.

“ As I had retired, once Covid lockdown had ended I was looking for somewhere to volunteer. The Carers Trust gave me the ideal opportunity as a volunteer for the Sitting Service. It is a great pleasure to meet people and make new friends. I love being able to give carers a short break to enable them to do something for themselves. This I feel is a positive experience for me and I hope, for the carers as well.

MEG, SITTING SERVICE VOLUNTEER



THANK YOU TO ALL OUR VOLUNTEERS



2022-23 was a difficult year for our volunteer recruitment, with at least half the year without a volunteer coordinator, despite several attempts to recruit to the post. We needed to increase our volunteer numbers to support key projects including our Sitting Service, Time To Talk (adult bereavement support) and our peer mentoring and befriending programmes.

In spite of all this, our volunteer numbers remained stable, with the new recruits broadly matching those that departed. We ended the year with 47 volunteers including nine new volunteers and five new Sitting Service volunteers.

Recruitment difficulties may have been impacted by the demand for volunteers to support the Commonwealth Games, changes in the recruitment market, post-Covid revaluation of personal well-being needs or the onset of cost of living inflation leading to many people requiring paid work. And the rise in non-Covid illnesses that started in the summer of 2022 may have taken many people out of the volunteer and labour market.

KAY IS A WINNER!

“ Last year we celebrated and thanked Kay for her five years of voluntary service at CTS – since then she has clocked up another year! Recognising the six years of voluntary service Kay has given to the Parent Carers project at CTS, she received the Room to Reward volunteer award which included a hotel break. Kay is a highly valued member of our team and a real credit to her local community and carers in Solihull.



DIRECTORS AND TRUSTEES ANNUAL REPORT 2022-23

CONTENTS

- 19. Objectives and activities**
- 20. Achievements and performance**
- 22. Structure, governance and management**
- 23. Financial review**
- 25. Statement of Directors' responsibilities**
- 26. Independent Examiner's report**
- 27. Statement of financial activities for the year ended 31 March 2023**
- 28. Statement of financial position as at 31 March 2023**
- 29. Statement of cash flows for the year ended 31 March 2023**
- 30. Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2023**

During 2022-23 Trustees oversaw staff and volunteers as they transitioned back to normal services post the Covid-19 outbreak and subsequent major stay-at-home orders and lockdowns. The Carers Trust Solihull (CTS) worked with Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council (SMBC), other agencies and borough-wide charities to deliver support to Solihull's unpaid carers.

We are grateful to our CEO, team managers, staff and volunteers who integrated phone, web based, and digital ways of working, developed during the stay-at-home orders and lockdown periods into the pre-Covid face-to-face ways of working, whilst piloting new services.

Reviewing the year, we are particularly grateful to staff that have acted-up into managerial roles during a period of staff leave and difficulty in recruiting staff and volunteers whilst also extending the service to a record number of registered active carers.

We are particularly grateful to the national Carers Trust, Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council, The Triangle Trust 1949 Fund, and the Cranfield Trust and the innumerable local donors, big and small, that have allowed us to support more carers' needs.

During the year, Trustees reviewed their strategic role and received regular reports on performance, risk, finances, planned developments and fundraising to maintain high-quality strategic governance and quality assurance.

OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES

OUR OBJECTIVES REMAIN:

“To support adult and young carers who are, or were, carrying out a caring role for persons who are disabled, elderly or ill, by the provision of practical help, advice, assistance, service, advocacy and support. Also, to advance education concerning caring amongst carers, professionals and the public.”

Our services are restricted to unpaid carers of family members or friends and neighbours who have physical or mental illness, physical or learning disability, long term or terminal illness or addiction. Carers Trust Solihull (CTS) seeks to support carers regardless of disability, race, gender, age, sexuality, beliefs or social background.

We encourage all people with an unpaid caring role to register with us and receive information, advice, and services or to take an active part in our organisation. We provide:

- Face-to-face support – someone to talk to who understands.
- Events and activities – a break from caring and a chance to have fun.
- Information and advice – an opportunity to find out about services and the help available.
- Adults and young carers clubs and drop-in sessions – meeting other carers.
- Training and workshops – gain knowledge and skills as you continue to care.
- Carers assessments – an opportunity for a carer to discuss their role and get help and support.
- Carers card – confirmation that a person is a carer with access to some discounts.
- Exploring the future – supporting carers into education, employment and training.
- Advocate for carers – opportunities to suggest improvement in CTS and other services.

CTS seeks to address the considerable and ongoing needs of carers by the provision of accessible and age-appropriate user-led services. We aim to identify carers as early as possible and support them to prevent their circumstances needlessly deteriorating. We reach out to more carers every year.

CTS provides support for carers across Solihull. We recognise that there is a large number of unidentified and “hidden” carers, including those who may not realise that they are in an unpaid caring role. To enable these carers to continue their caring role effectively and safely they may need access to information, advice and support.

Public Benefit Statement: The Trustees consider they have complied with the duty in Section 17 of the Charities Act 2011 to have due regard to public benefit guidance published by the Charity Commission.

ACHIEVEMENTS AND PERFORMANCE STRATEGY

In 2022-23 Carers Trust Solihull reviewed its Strategic Business Plan and amended its Strategic Objectives and continues to deliver on its targets:

CUSTOMER CARE

WE WILL ENSURE THE PROVISION OF CONSISTENTLY HIGH QUALITY SERVICES TO CARERS

- CTS will empower Solihull’s diverse carers to advance their well-being and influence local and national strategy, policies and services.
- CTS will work with education and employers to assist carers in achieving their academic, training or employment goals.
- CTS will grow its Carers Academy training options to support carers in achieving their goals.
- CTS will continue to develop Carer Interactive, a comprehensive web-based service offer.

LEARNING AND GROWTH

WE WILL WORK WITH HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE AND ENABLE OUR STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS TO RAISE CARER AWARENESS

- CTS will develop its staff and volunteers’ skills and expertise to best support our services to carers.
- CTS will work with Solihull Safeguarding Boards and carers to raise awareness and safeguard children and adults.
- CTS will ensure staff and volunteer oversight, supervision, training and professional development.
- CTS will work with GP’s and hospitals to jointly support carers in their dealings with health and care services.

INTERNAL BUSINESS

WE WILL IMPROVE, DEVELOP AND REDESIGN OUR SERVICE’S EFFICIENCY & EFFECTIVENESS

- CTS will grow its national and local collaborations with other agencies to improve our reach and effectiveness.
- CTS will ensure data security, health and safety, and general procedures to minimise risks in all our functions.
- CTS will grow staff and volunteer capacity and thereby increase and improve our range of services.
- CTS will increase fundraising and publicity to expand services that promote carer recognition.

PROGRESS IN 2022-23

The Trustees, Staff and Volunteers reviewed and refreshed key CTS Partnership goals when working with others to promote Carer Recognition:

- Raising community awareness of unpaid caring and the available support services.
- Highlighting the health, well-being, and cost of living challenges for unpaid carers.
- Increasing the recognition of unpaid carers in the health and social care economy.
- Leading on unpaid carer issues within the care and support sector.
- Maintaining and extending trusted CTS services for carers.
- Encouraging other organisations to ensure their services are carer friendly.
- Promoting carers' opinions in decision-making at national and local levels.
- Ensuring carers' representations translate into specific and measurable outcomes.
- Campaigning to improve the legal and economic support for carers.
- Strengthening relationships within the Carers Trust regional and national network.

Trustees confirm that overall, CTS has made considerable progress on meeting our priorities for 2022-23. In addition, our **development goals** progressed:

- Collaborate in ensuring winter and cost of living support for carers facing exceptional hardship.
- Developing pre-bereavement counselling for carers (including young carers with a terminally ill parent).
- Securing The Triangle Trust 1949 Fund support for Young Carers and Young Adult Carers peer mentoring and befriending project.
- Producing a range of carer online training films and modules.
- Developing a new long Covid carer referral pathway.
- Growing joint work with schools to reduce carers' education inequalities.
- Launching our new website.
- Started work on a CTS whole-service marketing plan with Cranfield Trust.

Due to staff and volunteers' recruitment challenges, the following will be extended into 2023-24:

- Developing the "Time to Talk" adult carer bereavement project.
- Developing carer well-being, i.e. health, self-care, nutrition, and self-protection.
- Piloting the Volunteer Carer Sitting Service.
- Relaunching GP surgeries outreach and contact.

We will also raise CTS and unpaid carers' profiles by:

- Developing Carers Week, Carers Rights Day, and Young Carers Action Day.
- Promoting employer carer pledges via Chamber of Commerce events.
- Advocating for carers in vital safeguarding processes.
- Planning a follow-up Charity Ball and Carer Friendly Awards event in 2024.

Lastly, we will not lose sight of our core business. We will:

- Ensure staff well-being, development, and retention.
- Embed our Volunteer Long Service Award and Monthly Recognition.
- Confirm a vital new long-term office lease.
- Scope the Carers Trust's Quality Assurance and Impact.
- Establish a new fundraising team.

We continue to source funds to adapt support services and meet the needs of carers.

STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

Solihull Carers Centre operating as Carers Trust Solihull, (CTS), is a company limited by guarantee and a registered Charity governed by its Memorandum and Articles of Association. The Directors of the charitable company (“the charity”) are its Trustees for the purposes of charity law and within this report are collectively referred to as the Trustees. The Trustees are listed on page 2.

The Board of Trustees has actively sought to recruit new Trustees with appropriate skills and knowledge. The Articles of Association require that at least 50% of Trustees must be current or past carers. During 2022-23 the Trustee board was stable with the recent recruits to the board fully integrating into its work and participating in joint events with the staff team as appropriate. Various aspects of the Trustee role have been reviewed including:

- Responsibilities of Trustees.
- Trustee / Staff liaison and communication.
- Governance, strategy, management and policymaking.
- Future horizon plans, risk assessments and strategic objectives.

The Trustees have agreed policies and procedures for the recruitment of trustees, and these are followed for every new appointment which includes taking up references. Checks by the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) are no longer required for trustees of charities. However, we have decided that all CTS’s Trustees are DBS checked. Trustees have job descriptions and operate within an agreed Code of Conduct. The Trustees completed a review of its Board performance with an external consultant in June 2023 and will implement changes to improve its effectiveness on an agreed work programme.

The Trustees meet at least six times each year and receive a data-rich, “balanced scorecard” of performance as well as supplementary reports covering progress against the overall business strategy, key performance indicators and action plans, detailed fundraising progress, financial reports, risk register audits and an overarching Chief Executive Officer summary.

After an independent annual assessment of CTS’s Quality Management System, CTS retained its ISO 9001 certification with a consecutive highest score.

STAFFING

At the time of writing, we have a full-time Chief Executive Officer, 10 other full-time posts, 18 part-time staff and 7 sessional staff. No employee received emoluments in excess of £60,000 during the year or previous year.

At the time of writing, there are 10 Trustees. With three Trustees stepping down after long and respected service. (D. Taylor, D. Brown, and E. McPherson) The Trustees give freely of their time and expertise and do not receive any emoluments or other benefits. In 2022-23 Trustees met four times for a short Executive Meeting, four times for a full Executive Meeting and convened an Annual General Meeting. A joint workshop with staff, two Trustee Board strategic away days, and various supplementary sub-meetings have taken place.

Many volunteers support the charity. At the close of 2022-23, the number of volunteers stood at 42 adult volunteers and five young peer mentors. The number of volunteer hours in 2022-23 was 1,398. These valued volunteers enable us to support more carers

NETWORKING

During the year, we strengthened our links to the national Carers Trust, with the Time For Me grant being secured to fund micro respite for our carers.

We remain members of the National Council for Voluntary Organisations (NCVO) and the Association of Chief Executives of Voluntary Organisations (ACEVO) that connect, represent and support UK charities with consultancy, training, advice, and support on governance issues, toolkits, a support line and more.

We are active in the voluntary and community networks; during the Covid lockdown and post-Covid arrangements, participating in regular weekly and fortnightly Zoom meetings with SMBC and a full range of our voluntary sector colleagues. This enhanced joint working remains a positive feature of the year. We are active members of various local partnerships, including the Carers Partnership Board, Adult Safeguarding and Children Safeguarding Boards.

We have been key members of weekly or fortnightly video conferencing, conference calls and other liaisons on vaccination rollout, carers GP registration, and long Covid concerns with SMBC, Public Health and the principal third sector organisations.

FINANCIAL REVIEW

The financial year ended with a small increase in overall income reflecting a significant reduction in grant income which was more than offset by increased funding from our service level agreement with SMBC. Much of the restricted funding received in the previous year was spent and expenditure on carer support and activities which had more than doubled in the previous year was further increased significantly. The difficult recruitment situation continued to thwart attempts to bring staff numbers up to the budgeted level though towards the end of the year recruitment efforts began to show better results. Staff costs, our most significant element of expenditure, increased by 9% as a result. With staff costs running below budget and an increase in total income, we ended the year with an unexpected surplus of a little over £35,000.

Looking ahead, with the increase in staff numbers now, we expect to make significant inroads into the surplus brought forward.

YEAR END FINANCIAL POSITION

We finished the year with total reserves of £410,020 up from £374,654 at the start of the year. An element of the reserves is restricted, deriving from income received to be spent on specific projects with the balance unrestricted, available to be spent as necessary to support the work of the charity.

Restricted Funds

The proportion of restricted income was significantly lower than in the previous year resulting in a sizeable reduction in the level of restricted funds.

Restricted income funds amounted to £31,390 (2022: £90,486). Details of restricted fund balances are shown in Note 11.

Unrestricted Funds

During the year unrestricted funds increased from £284,168 to £378,630 which equates to approximately 6 months of ongoing expenditure. The policy of the Trustees is to maintain sufficient unrestricted funds to provide financial stability and ensure that the work of the charity is not affected by unexpected events, delayed receipts or a short-term lack of incoming funds. Also, to ensure that in the event of a significant and permanent reduction in income, sufficient funds are available to meet all liabilities and provide an acceptable winding down of operations.

The Trustees have reviewed both the reserves policy and the level of reserves as of 31 March 2023 and are satisfied that the reserves are adequate.

INVESTMENT POWERS

The Charity has the power to make any investment which the Directors see fit. Our funds are only invested in deposit facilities protected under the Financial Services Compensation Scheme and within the limits of the Scheme. We aim to maximise interest income using both fixed and variable-rate deposits.

RISK MANAGEMENT

The Board regularly considers risks to the organisation and agrees on measures to mitigate the identified risks. The Trustees periodically review their Risk Management and Opportunity Register, which enables the service to plan for and reduce threats to the service we provide to the public.

During 2022-23 the Trustee Board and CEO also established subgroups to:

- Complete a CTS Business Plan 2022-24.
- Refresh the Fundraising Strategy and Goals.
- Review the development of new income streams.

These tasks were discussed on a Trustee Away day session in March 2023 when the Board received confirmation of the likelihood of a tender process for its All Age Carer Contract in 2024 or 2025.

Reserves had routinely been held to mitigate this risk.

FUNDING

Our funding mainly relies on the secured service level agreement with Solihull MBC. The current agreement expires in September 2024 with a potential 1.5-year extension available thereafter. During the year, there were grants from Solihull MBC, Carers Trust national, The Triangle Trust 1949 Fund and other local funders. We are also very grateful to those, including staff, who have raised money for the charity, organised special events, sponsored walks and corporate activities.

STATEMENT OF DIRECTORS' RESPONSIBILITIES

The Trustees (who are the Directors of Solihull Carers Centre/Carers Trust Solihull for the purpose of company law) are responsible for preparing the Trustees Annual Report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and regulations.

Company law requires the Trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year. Under that law the Trustees have elected to prepare the financial statements in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice (United Kingdom Accounting Standards and applicable law). Under company law the Trustees must not approve the financial statements unless they are satisfied that they give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charitable company and the income and expenditure of the charitable company for that period.

In preparing these financial statements, the Trustees are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- observe the methods and principles in the Charities SORP;
- make judgments and accounting estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- state whether applicable UK Accounting Standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements;
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charitable company will continue in operation.

The Trustees are responsible for keeping adequate accounting records that are sufficient to show and explain the charitable company's transactions and disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charitable company and enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 2006. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charitable company and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

Small company provisions

This report has been prepared in accordance with the provisions applicable to companies entitled to the small companies' regime.

On behalf of the Board

David Heaselgrave
Chair of Trustees

2 October 2023

INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT TO THE TRUSTEES OF SOLIHULL CARERS CENTRE

I report to the trustees on my examination of the financial statements of Solihull Carers Centre ('the charity') for the year ended 31 March 2023.

Responsibilities and basis of report

As the trustees of the company (and also its directors for the purposes of company law) you are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006 ('the 2006 Act').

Having satisfied myself that the accounts of the company are not required to be audited under Part 16 of the 2006 Act and are eligible for independent examination, I report in respect of my examination of the charity's accounts as carried out under section 145 of the Charities Act 2011 ('the 2011 Act'). In carrying out my examination I have followed the Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5) (b) of the 2011 Act.

Independent examiner's statement

Since the charity's gross income exceeded £250,000 your examiner must be a member of a body listed in section 145 of the 2011 Act. I confirm that I am qualified to undertake the examination because I am a member of the Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales (ICAEW), which is one of the listed bodies.

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

1. accounting records were not kept in respect of the charity as required by section 386 of the 2006 Act; or
2. the financial statements do not accord with those records; or
3. the financial statements do not comply with the accounting requirements of section 396 of the 2006 Act other than any requirement that the accounts give a 'true and fair' view which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination; or
4. the financial statements have not been prepared in accordance with the methods and principles of the Statement of Recommended Practice for accounting and reporting by charities applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102).

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.

Hannah Justice ACA FCCA
Independent Examiner

On behalf of BSN Associates Limited

3B Swallowfield Courtyard
Wolverhampton Road
Oldbury
West Midlands
B69 2JG

Date: 2 October 2023

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES

YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

(incorporating the Income and Expenditure Account)

	Notes	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total 2023 £	Total 2022 £
Income from:					
Grants, activities and donations		8,621	3,994	12,615	1,898
Investments: Bank interest		5,244	-	5,244	1,427
Charitable activities: Grants	2	677,540	51,927	729,467	730,134
Total income		691,405	55,921	747,326	733,459
Expenditure on:					
Charitable activities	3	596,943	115,017	711,960	663,280
Total expenditure		596,943	115,017	711,960	663,280
Net income/(expenditure)					
for the year		94,462	(59,096)	35,366	70,179
Net movement in funds		94,462	(59,096)	35,366	70,179
Reconciliation of funds:					
Total funds brought forward		284,168	90,486	374,654	304,475
Total funds carried forward		378,630	31,390	410,020	£374,654

The Statement of Financial Activities includes all gains and losses in the year. All incoming resources and resources expended derive from continuing activities.

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION

31 MARCH 2023

	Notes	2023 £	2022 £
Fixed assets	6	1,975	6,855
Current assets			
Debtors and prepayments	8	523	2,192
Investments	7	419,635	344,391
Bank current account		64,385	88,875
Cash balances		-	687
		484,543	436,145
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	9	76,498	68,346
		408,045	367,799
Net current assets		408,045	367,799
Net assets	10	410,020	374,654
Unrestricted funds		378,630	284,168
Restricted income funds	11	31,390	90,486
Total funds		410,020	374,654

For the year ending 31 March 2023 the charity was entitled to exemption from audit under section 477 of the Companies Act 2006 relating to small companies.

Trustees' responsibilities:

- The shareholders have not required the charity to obtain an audit of its financial statements for the year in question in accordance with section 476;
- The Trustees acknowledge their responsibilities for complying with the requirements of the Act with respect to accounting records and the preparation of financial statements.

These financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the provisions applicable to companies subject to the small companies' regime.

The financial statements were approved by the Directors on 2 October 2023 and were signed on their behalf by:

David Heaselgrave
Chair of Trustees

STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

	2023	2022
	£	£
Net cash provided by operating activities	50,067	69,311
Cash flows from investing activities	-	-
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the reporting period	433,953	364,642
Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the reporting period	484,020	433,953

RECONCILIATION OF NET INCOME TO NET CASH FLOW FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES

	2023	2022
	£	£
Net income for the reporting period	35,366	70,179
Adjustments for:		
Depreciation of fixed assets	4,880	5,980
(Increase)/decrease in debtors	1,669	(1,435)
(Decrease)/increase in creditors	8,152	(5,413)
Net cash provided by operating activities	50,067	69,311

ANALYSIS OF CASH AND CASH EQUIVALENTS

	2023	2022
	£	£
Cash in hand	64,385	89,562
Notice deposits (less than 3 months)	419,635	344,391
Total cash and cash equivalents	484,020	433,953

NOTES FORMING PART OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

1. Accounting policies

Status

The Charity is a company registered in England and Wales that is limited by guarantee and does not have a share capital. The liability of members is limited to £1. The registered office is shown on page 2. The charity constitutes a public entity as defined by FRS 102.

Statement of compliance, basis of preparation and assessment of going concern

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the Statement of Recommended Practice: Accounting and Reporting by Charities preparing their financial statements in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (SORP FRS 102) issued on 16 July 2014, the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the United Kingdom and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) and the Companies Act 2006. The financial statements are prepared under the historical cost convention with items recognised at cost or transaction value.

In common with many charities the organisation is heavily dependent on grant income. Founded over 20 years ago we are a service-led organisation considered as the lead agency supporting carers in the area. The accounts have been prepared on the going concern basis in expectation that there will not be a significant decrease in support from funding bodies.

Income recognition

Income is recognised once the Charity has entitlement to the income, it is probable that the income will be received and the amount of income receivable can be measured accurately.

Voluntary income is recognised as above except where the income is subject to conditions that require a level of performance before the charity is entitled to the funds, when the income is deferred and not recognised until either those conditions are met, or the fulfilment of those conditions is wholly within the control of the Charity and it is probable those conditions will be fulfilled in the reporting period.

Grants specifically for the provision of services to be provided as part of the charitable activities or services to beneficiaries are accounted for on the basis of amounts receivable for the year.

Interest arising on cash balances is included when receivable and the amount can be measured reliably by the Charity. This is normally upon notification of the interest paid or payable by the bank.

Expenditure recognition

Liabilities are recognised as expenditure as soon as there is a legal or constructive obligation committing the Charity to that expenditure, it is probable that settlement is required and the amount of the obligation can be measured reliably. All expenditure is accounted for on the accruals basis, inclusive of any value added tax which cannot be recovered.

Tangible fixed assets

Depreciation is provided at rates calculated to write off the cost of each asset over its expected useful life, being three years for computers and other equipment and five years for motor vehicles. Items of equipment are capitalised where the purchase price exceeds £2,500.

Taxation

The Charity is exempt from taxation on its charitable activities.

Fund accounting

In order to differentiate the availability of funds they are categorised according to the following definitions:

Unrestricted funds are donations and other incoming resources receivable or generated for the objects of the charity without further specified purpose and are available as general funds.

Restricted funds are to be used for specific purposes as laid down by the donor. Expenditure, which meets these criteria, is charged to the fund together with a fair allocation of management and support costs.

Pension costs

The Charity operates a defined contribution pension scheme for many of its employees. The pension charge represents the amount payable by the Charity to the scheme during the year.

Operating leases

Lease payments are recognised as an expense over the lease term on a straight-line basis. The aggregate benefit of lease incentives is recognised as a reduction to expense on a straight-line basis over the lease term.

Functional currency

The financial statements are prepared in sterling which is the functional currency of the entity.

2. Income from charitable activities

	2023	2022
	£	£
Unrestricted funds - grants		
Solihull MBC	670,790	511,252
Other grants	6,750	-
	677,540	511,252
Restricted funds - grants		
Solihull MBC – Adult carers	5,000	40,000
Carers Trust – Young carers	1,650	1,680
Carers Trust – Adult carers	10,250	-
Children in Need – Young carers	28,236	23,673
Other grants – Young carers	6,791	49,198
Other grants – Adult carers	-	12,927
Covid relief grants	-	91,404
	51,927	218,882

Incoming resources include amounts receivable after the year end in respect of expenditure incurred by the year end.

NOTES FORMING PART OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

3. Expenditure on charitable activities

Direct and support

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total 2023 £	Total 2022 £
Carer support and activities	30,434	43,128	73,562	58,093
Staff costs	480,239	67,134	547,373	503,179
Recruitment	10,428	582	11,010	5,945
Premises*	(5,649)	-	(5,649)	15,255
Communications and office costs	41,986	528	42,514	38,463
Motor and travel expenses	6,680	-	6,680	7,256
Training and consultancy	7,231	-	7,231	7,664
Publicity/information	8,195	2,893	11,088	14,696
Insurance	3,246	-	3,246	1,876
Professional fees and subscriptions	4,962	-	4,962	2,420
Other	3,168	752	3,920	2,133
	590,920	115,017	705,937	656,980

Governance costs

			2023 £	2022 £
Independent examination	1,920	-	1,920	1,800
Professional fees	3,563	-	3,563	3,550
Other	540	-	540	950
	6,023	-	6,023	6,300

Total expenditure on charitable activities

	596,943	115,017	711,960	663,280
2022	488,098	175,182	-	663,280

* Premises costs include a credit of £20,600 relating to prior years.

4. Staff costs

The total staff costs for the year amounted to £547,373 (2022:£503,179). The costs for 2023 figures to include employer national insurance contributions amounting to £35,078 (2022:£32,249) and pension costs of £20,751 (2022:£20,060).

The charity during the year had on average 9 full time employees (2022: 9) and 17 part time employees (2022: 15).

No employee received emoluments in excess of £60,000 during the year or the previous year.

In addition, at the year-end there were 9 directors (2022: 11). The directors all give freely of their time and expertise and did not receive any emoluments or other benefits.

5. Operating lease commitments

The charity has commitments under an operating lease for land and buildings expiring in 2033 amounting to £150,000 (2022: £14,000).

	2023	2022
	£	£
Amounts falling due within 1 year	15,000	14,000
Amounts falling due within 2 to 5 years	60,000	-

6. Fixed assets

	Motor Cars	Computer Equipment	Total
	£	£	£
COST			
At beginning of year	17,650	13,200	30,850
Disposals	9,750	-	9,750
At end of year	7,900	13,200	21,100
ACCUMULATED DEPRECIATION			
Opening balance	14,095	9,900	23,995
Disposals	9,750	-	9,750
Charge for the year	1,580	3,300	4,880
Closing balance	5,925	13,200	19,125
NET BOOK VALUE	1,975	-	1,975

There were no capital commitments at the year-end (2022: none).

NOTES FORMING PART OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

7. Investments

At cost and valuation

	2023	2022
	£	£
Short term deposits held at UK banks	419,635	344,391

8. Debtors

	2023	2022
	£	£
Debtors	-	1,499
Prepayments	523	693
	523	2,192

9. Creditors: amounts falling due within one year

	2023	2022
	£	£
Creditors and accruals	30,878	53,134
Deferred income	34,254	7,301
Tax & pension contributions	11,366	7,911
	76,498	68,346

10. Analysis of net assets by funds

	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Total funds
	£	£	£
Net assets	378,630	31,390	410,020

11. Restricted income funds

The restricted income funds comprise the following unexpired balances of donations and grants to be applied for the following purposes:

	Opening balances	Incoming resources	Outgoing resources	Closing balances
	£	£	£	£
Children in Need project	-	28,236	28,236	-
Young carers projects	38,251	12,435	25,262	25,424
Adult projects	21,527	15,250	30,811	5,966
Covid relief funds	20,504	-	20,504	-
Other funds	10,204	-	10,204	-
	90,486	55,921	115,017	31,390

12. Trustees expenses

Trustees received no expense payments during the year or the prior year. The charity provided indemnity cover for Trustees costing £677 (2022: £694).

13. Related party transactions

No Trustee or other person connected with the charity had any personal interest in any contract or transaction entered into by the charity during the year. The Trustees are not aware of any related party transactions requiring disclosure.

FOLLOW US ON SOCIAL MEDIA FOR UP TO DATE INFORMATION



@solihullcarers



WATCH OUR FILMS

Our films feature unpaid carers in Solihull sharing their experiences. These are a great educational resource for anyone wishing to gain understanding of what it means to be a carer and the support available.



To watch the films use the QR code on the left or visit our YouTube channel and select Awareness Videos here:

<https://www.youtube.com/@solihullcarers/playlists>

Supporting unpaid carers in Solihull for over 20 years

Carers Trust Solihull

Solihull Carers Centre
Solihull Fire Station Annexe
620 Streetsbrook Road
Solihull B91 1QY

T 0121 788 1143

E centre@solihullcarers.org
www.solihullcarers.org

SUPPORTED BY:



Solihull Carers Centre (SCC) is a company limited by guarantee and a Registered Charity operating as Carers Trust Solihull (CTS). Registered Company in England No. 04378042. Registered Charity No. 1092613.

Registered Office:
The Carers Centre
Solihull Fire Station Annexe
620 Streetsbrook Road
Solihull B91 1QY

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SOLIHULL CARERS CENTRE

England & Wales - Charity number 1092613

Accounts

DIRECTORS AND TRUSTEES ANNUAL REPORT 2021-22

CONTENTS

- 19. Objectives and activities
- 20. Achievements and performance
- 22. Structure, governance and management
- 23. Financial review
- 25. Statement of Directors' responsibilities
- 26. Independent Examiner's report
- 27. Statement of financial activities for the year ended 31 March 2022
- 28. Statement of financial position as at 31 March 2022
- 29. Statement of cash flows for the year ended 31 March 2022
- 30. Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2022



During 2021-22 Trustees saw a massive effort by the staff to support carers in the wake of the Covid-19 outbreak and subsequent major disruption to their support services. The service worked in partnership with Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council (SMBC) and other agencies and borough-wide charities at the heart of delivering support to Solihull's unpaid carers.

We are grateful to our CEO, team managers, staff and volunteers who helped to deliver this support and worked diligently to provide services over the phone or via the internet in uniquely different ways. Reviewing the year, we have marvelled at the implemented changes and the new services started and piloted.

We note the support of the key funding agencies and bodies recognised in this report. We are particularly grateful to Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council, National Carers Trust, and the innumerable local donors, big and small, that have allowed us to grow to meet heightened carers' needs.

During the year, the Trustees reviewed their strategic role and received regular reports on performance, finances, risk, planned developments and fundraising. Ensuring the retention of high-quality strategic governance of the charity has been critical in these unprecedented times.

OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES

OUR OBJECTIVES REMAIN:

“To support adult and young carers who are, or were, carrying out a caring role for persons who are disabled, elderly or ill, by the provision of practical help, advice, assistance, service, advocacy and support. Also, to advance education concerning caring amongst carers, professionals and the public.”

Our services are restricted to unpaid carers of family members or friends and neighbours who have physical or mental illness, physical or learning disability, long term or terminal illness or addiction. Carers Trust Solihull (CTS) seeks to support carers regardless of disability, race, gender, age, sexuality, beliefs or social background.

We encourage all people with an unpaid caring role to register with us and receive information, advice and other services or to take an active part in our organisation. The range of services we provide includes:

- Face-to-face support – someone to talk to who understands.
- Events and Activities – a break from caring and a chance to have some fun.
- Information and Advice – an opportunity to find out about services and the help available.
- Adults and young carers clubs and drop-in sessions – meeting other carers.
- Training and Workshops – gain knowledge and skills as you continue to care.
- Carers Assessments – talk about your life as a carer and get help to access support.
- Carers Card – recognising you as an Adult Carer or Young Carer with access to some discounts.
- Exploring the future – supporting you to access education, employment and training opportunities.
- Speaking up for adult carers and young carers – tell us what we can do differently and shape future services for carers in Solihull.

CTS provides support for carers across Solihull. At the time of the 2011 Census, approximately 24,100 Solihull residents identified themselves as being a carer, including 400 under the age of 16 years.

Today it is estimated this figure has risen to more than 27,500 carers living within the Borough. "The lives of young carers in England" (2017) D of E suggests the number of young carers could be as high as 4,000.

We recognise that there is a large number of unidentified and "hidden" carers, including those who may not realise that they are in a caring role. To enable these carers to continue their caring role effectively and safely, they may need access to information, advice and support.

CTS seeks to address the considerable and ongoing needs of carers by the provision of accessible and age-appropriate user-led services. We aim to identify carers as early as possible and support them to prevent their circumstances from needlessly deteriorating. We reach out to more carers every year.

Public Benefit Statement: The Trustees consider they have complied with the duty in Section 17 of the Charities Act 2011 to have due regard to public benefit guidance published by the Charity Commission.

ACHIEVEMENTS AND PERFORMANCE STRATEGY

In 2021-22 Carers Trust Solihull reviewed and amended its previous Strategic Objectives and continued to deliver on its targets and development goals as set out in the Strategic Business Plan:

CUSTOMER CARE

WE WILL ENSURE THE PROVISION OF CONSISTENTLY HIGH QUALITY SERVICES TO CARERS

- CTS will empower Solihull's diverse carers to advance their well-being and influence local and national strategy, policies and services.
- CTS will work with education and employers to assist carers in achieving their academic, training or employment goals.
- CTS will grow its Carers Academy training options to support carers in achieving their goals
- CTS will continue to develop Carer Interactive, a comprehensive web-based service offer.

LEARNING AND GROWTH

WE WILL WORK WITH HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE AND ENABLE OUR STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS TO RAISE CARER AWARENESS

- CTS will develop its staff and volunteers' skills and expertise to best support our services to carers.
- CTS will work with Solihull Safeguarding Boards and carers to raise awareness and safeguard children and adults.
- CTS will ensure staff and volunteer oversight, supervision, training and professional development.
- CTS will work with GPs and hospitals to jointly support carers in their dealings with health and care services.

INTERNAL BUSINESS

WE WILL IMPROVE, DEVELOP AND REDESIGN OUR SERVICE'S EFFICIENCY & EFFECTIVENESS

- CTS will grow its national and local collaborations with other agencies to improve our reach and effectiveness.
- CTS will ensure data security, health and safety, and general procedures to minimise risks in all our functions.
- CTS will grow Staff and volunteer capacity and thereby increase and improve our range of services.
- CTS will increase fundraising and publicity to expand services that promote carer recognition.

PROGRESS IN 2021-22

Trustees confirm that overall, CTS has made considerable progress on meeting our priorities for 2021-22, including:

- Website redesign.
- Chambers of Commerce relationship building.
- Revising CTS promotional material.
- Greater institutional ownership and embedded action.
- Revisiting events and activities.
- Carers Academy's suite of on-line training and awareness raising.
- Meeting or exceeding KPI and contract expectations.
- Staff pay and grading implementation.
- Scoping long covid carer support.
- Press releases, social medias and Facebook reach.
- Time to Talk, IT digital support, reception service & the Sitting Service.
- Fundraising strategy and successful small and major applications.
- The first Carers Trust Solihull Charity Ball and Carers Awards.

During 2021-22 we:

- Consulted with all our carers on their satisfaction with our services and what, if any, areas we might improve.
- We supported SMBC in the revision of its Solihull carers strategies and focus groups with carers set up to get "grassroots" views.
- We started the evaluation of the 2021 National Carers Survey, a vital tool in assessing carer satisfaction across the country.

As we reviewed 2021-22 we recognised the following areas for further development. These included:

- Produce carer online training modules.
- Launch Website, facilitate content, and revise regularly.
- Implement Volunteer Long Service and Monthly Awards.
- Scope the introduction of the National Carers Trust's Impact Award.
- Pilot a Long Covid Carer referral pathway and Volunteer Sitting Service.
- Establish a Volunteer Fundraising team.
- Plan a second Charity Ball and Carers Award event.

Our support for the staff and volunteers has meant improving access to appropriate equipment, resources and facilities, particularly during the Covid-19 outbreak. We continue to source funds to adapt support services and meet the needs of carers.

STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

Solihull Carers Centre operating as Carers Trust Solihull, (CTS), is a company limited by guarantee and a registered Charity governed by its Memorandum and Articles of Association. The Directors of the charitable company (“the charity”) are its Trustees for the purposes of charity law and within this report are collectively referred to as the Trustees. The Trustees are listed on page 2.

The Board of Trustees has actively sought to recruit new Trustees with appropriate skills and knowledge. The Articles of Association require that at least 50% of Trustees must be current carers. During 2021-22 the Trustee board was stable with the recent recruits to the board fully integrating into its work and participating in joint events with the staff team as appropriate. Various aspects of the Trustee role have been reviewed including:

- Responsibilities of Trustees.
- Trustee / Staff liaison and communication.
- Governance, strategy, management and policymaking.
- Future horizon plans, risk assessments and strategic objectives.

The Trustees have agreed policies and procedures for the recruitment of trustees, and these are followed for every new appointment, which includes taking up references. Checks by the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) are no longer required for trustees of charities. However, we have decided that all CTS’s Trustees are DBS-checked. Trustees have job descriptions and operate within an agreed Code of Conduct.

The Trustees meet at least six times each year and receive a data-rich, “balanced scorecard” of performance as well as supplementary reports covering progress against the overall business strategy, key performance indicators and action plans, detailed fundraising progress, financial reports, risk register audits and an overarching Chief Executive Officer summary.

After an independent annual assessment of CTS’s Quality Management System, we retained our ISO 9001 certification with a consecutive highest score.

STAFFING

At the time of writing, we have a full-time Chief Executive Officer, 8 other full-time staff, 22 part-time staff and 9 sessional staff. No employee received emoluments in excess of £60,000 during the year or previous year.

At the time of writing, there are 11 Trustees. The Trustees give freely of their time and expertise and do not receive any emoluments or other benefits. In 2021-22 Trustees met four times for a short Executive Meeting, four times for a full Executive Meeting and convened an Annual General Meeting. A joint workshop with staff, and a full Trustee Board strategic away day, and various supplementary sub meetings have taken place.

The charity is supported by a number of volunteers. At the close of 2021-22, the number of volunteers stood at 40 adult volunteers and 11 young peer mentors. Currently, these numbers are at 39 adult volunteers and 9 young peer mentors. The number of volunteer hours in 2021-22 was 1,773. these valued volunteers enable us to support more carers.

NETWORKING

During the year, we strengthened our links to the National Carers Trust and received ongoing Covid related grants to support carers locally.

We remain members of the National Council for Voluntary Organisations (NCVO) and the Association of Chief Executives of Voluntary Organisations (ACEVO) who connect, represent and support UK charities with consultancy, training, advice, and support on governance issues, toolkits, a support line and more.

We were active in The Voluntary and Community networks during the Covid lockdown and post Covid arrangements, participating in regular in weekly and fortnightly Zoom meetings with SMBC and a full range of our voluntary sector colleagues. This enhanced joint working remains a positive feature of the year. We are active members of various local partnerships, including the Carers Partnership Board, Adult Safeguarding and Children Safeguarding Boards.

We have been key members of weekly or fortnightly video conferencing, conference calls and other liaisons on vaccination access, Carers GP registration, and long Covid concerns with SMBC, Public Health and the principal Third Sector organisations

FINANCIAL REVIEW

Expenditure in the year was increased by more than £40,000 in the aftermath of the Covid-19 pandemic, with spending on activities and events for carers more than doubled on the previous year and significantly higher than in earlier years. Staff costs are by far the most significant element of our expenditure and whilst increasing by more than £18,000 a difficult recruitment situation meant that our staffing level was significantly below what we had budgeted for. At the same time, applications for grants continued to be very successful, with overall income in the year increased by over £14,000 more than in the previous record year as funders sought to improve support during lockdowns and other difficulties imposed by the Covid-19 virus. This combination of an unanticipated sizeable increase in income and staff costs below expectation has left the year with an unanticipated surplus of income over expenditure of £70,179.

With income expected to decrease in 2022-23 and an intended increase in staff numbers, we expect to make significant inroads into the surplus brought forward from previous year.

YEAR END FINANCIAL POSITION

We finished the year with total reserves of £374,654 up from £304,475 at the start of the year. An element of the reserves is restricted, deriving from income received to be spent on specific projects with the balance unrestricted, available to be spent as necessary to support the work of the charity.

The proportion of restricted income increased over the previous year and contributed to the near doubling of the restricted funds balance at the year end.

Restricted Funds

Restricted income funds amounted to £90,486 (2021: £46,786). Details of restricted fund balances are shown in Note 11.

Unrestricted Funds

During the year unrestricted funds increased from £257,689 to £284,168 which equates to approximately 5 months of ongoing expenditure. The policy of the Trustees is to maintain sufficient unrestricted funds to provide financial stability and ensure that the work of the charity is not affected by unexpected events, delayed receipts or a short-term lack of incoming funds. Also, to ensure that in the event of a significant and permanent reduction in income, sufficient funds are available to meet all liabilities and provide an acceptable winding down of operations.

The Trustees have reviewed both the reserves policy and the level of reserves as of 31 March 2022 and are satisfied that they are adequate.

INVESTMENT POWERS

The Charity has the power to make any investment which the Directors see fit. Our funds are only invested in deposit facilities protected under the Financial Services Compensation Scheme and within the limits of the Scheme. We aim to maximise interest income using both fixed and variable-rate deposits.

RISK MANAGEMENT

The Board regularly considers risks to the organisation and agrees on measures to mitigate the identified risks. The Trustees periodically review their Risk Management and Opportunity Register, which enables the service to plan for and reduce threats to the service we provide to the public.

During 2021-22 the Trustee Board and CEO also established subgroups to:

- Refresh the Risk Management and Opportunity Register.
- Complete a CTS Business Plan 2022-24.
- Refresh the Fundraising Strategy and Goals.

These tasks were discussed on a Trustee Away day session in March 2022 when the Board received confirmation of the successful extension of CTS' contract well into 2024.

Reserves had routinely been held to mitigate this risk.

FUNDING

Our funding mainly relies on the secured service level agreement with SMBC. The current agreement expires in September 2024 with a potential 2-year extension available thereafter, subject to a review of costs and outcomes. During the year, there were several grants from Solihull MBC, National Carers Trust, Triangle Trust 1949, Children in Need and other local funders. We are also very grateful to those, including staff, who have raised money for the charity, organised special events, sponsored walks and corporate activities.

STATEMENT OF DIRECTORS' RESPONSIBILITIES

The Trustees (who are the Directors of Solihull Carers Centre/Carers Trust Solihull for the purpose of company law) are responsible for preparing the Trustees Annual Report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and regulations.

Company law requires the Trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year. Under that law the Trustees have elected to prepare the financial statements in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice (United Kingdom Accounting Standards and applicable law). Under company law the Trustees must not approve the financial statements unless they are satisfied that they give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charitable company and the income and expenditure of the charitable company for that period.

In preparing these financial statements, the Trustees are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- observe the methods and principles in the Charities SORP;
- make judgments and accounting estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- state whether applicable UK Accounting Standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements;
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charitable company will continue in operation.

The Trustees are responsible for keeping adequate accounting records that are sufficient to show and explain the charitable company's transactions and disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charitable company and enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 2006. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charitable company and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

Small company provisions

This report has been prepared in accordance with the provisions applicable to companies entitled to the small companies' regime.

On behalf of the Board

David Heaselgrave
Chair of Trustees

3 November 2022

INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT TO THE TRUSTEES OF SOLIHULL CARERS CENTRE

I report to the trustees on my examination of the financial statements of Solihull Carers Centre ('the charity') for the year ended 31 March 2022.

Responsibilities and basis of report

As the trustees of the company (and also its directors for the purposes of company law) you are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006 ('the 2006 Act').

Having satisfied myself that the accounts of the company are not required to be audited under Part 16 of the 2006 Act and are eligible for independent examination, I report in respect of my examination of the charity's accounts as carried out under section 145 of the Charities Act 2011 ('the 2011 Act'). In carrying out my examination I have followed the Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5) (b) of the 2011 Act.

Independent examiner's statement

Since the charity's gross income exceeded £250,000 your examiner must be a member of a body listed in section 145 of the 2011 Act. I confirm that I am qualified to undertake the examination because I am a member of the Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales (ICAEW), which is one of the listed bodies.

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

1. accounting records were not kept in respect of the charity as required by section 386 of the 2006 Act; or
2. the financial statements do not accord with those records; or
3. the financial statements do not comply with the accounting requirements of section 396 of the 2006 Act other than any requirement that the accounts give a 'true and fair' view which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination; or
4. the financial statements have not been prepared in accordance with the methods and principles of the Statement of Recommended Practice for accounting and reporting by charities applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102).

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.

Hannah Justice ACA FCCA
Independent Examiner

On behalf of BSN Associates Limited

3B Swallowfield Courtyard
Wolverhampton Road
Oldbury
West Midlands
B69 2JG

3 November 2022

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES

YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2022

(incorporating the Income and Expenditure Account)

	Notes	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total 2022 £	Total 2021 £
Income from:					
Grants and donations		1,898	-	1,898	7,101
Investments: Bank interest		1,427	-	1,427	1,413
Charitable activities: Grants	2	511,252	218,882	730,134	710,823
Total income		514,577	218,882	733,459	719,337
Expenditure on:					
Charitable activities	3	488,098	175,182	663,280	622,812
Total expenditure		488,098	175,182	663,280	622,812
Net income/(expenditure)					
for the year		26,479	43,700	70,179	96,525
Net movement in funds		26,479	43,700	70,179	96,525
Reconciliation of funds:					
Total funds brought forward		257,689	46,786	304,475	207,950
Total funds carried forward		284,168	90,486	374,654	£304,475

The Statement of Financial Activities includes all gains and losses in the year. All incoming resources and resources expended derive from continuing activities.

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION

31 MARCH 2022

	Notes	2022 £	2021 £
Fixed assets	6	6,855	12,835
Current assets			
Debtors and prepayments	8	2,192	757
Investments	7	344,391	233,437
Bank current account		88,875	131,058
Cash balances		687	147
		436,145	365,399
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	9	68,346	73,759
Net current assets		367,799	291,640
Net assets	10	374,654	304,475
Unrestricted funds		284,168	257,689
Restricted income funds	11	90,486	46,786
Total funds		374,654	304,475

For the year ending 31 March 2022 the charity was entitled to exemption from audit under section 477 of the Companies Act 2006 relating to small companies.

Trustees' responsibilities:

- The shareholders have not required the charity to obtain an audit of its financial statements for the year in question in accordance with section 476;
- The Trustees acknowledge their responsibilities for complying with the requirements of the Act with respect to accounting records and the preparation of financial statements.

These financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the provisions applicable to companies subject to the small companies' regime.

The financial statements were approved by the Directors on 3 November 2022 and were signed on their behalf by:

David Heaselgrave
Chair of Trustees

STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2022

	2022	2021
	£	£
Net cash provided by operating activities	69,311	125,397
Cash flows from investing activities	-	-
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the reporting period	364,642	239,245
Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the reporting period	433,953	364,642

RECONCILIATION OF NET INCOME TO NET CASH FLOW FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES

	2022	2021
	£	£
Net income for the reporting period	70,179	96,525
Adjustments for:		
Depreciation of fixed assets	5,980	5,980
(Increase)/decrease in debtors	(1,435)	(42)
(Decrease)/increase in creditors	(5,413)	22,934
Net cash provided by operating activities	69,311	125,397

ANALYSIS OF CASH AND CASH EQUIVALENTS

	2022	2021
	£	£
Cash in hand	89,562	131,205
Notice deposits (less than 3 months)	344,391	233,437
Total cash and cash equivalents	433,953	364,642

NOTES FORMING PART OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2022

1. Accounting policies

Status

The Charity is a company registered in England and Wales that is limited by guarantee and does not have a share capital. The liability of members is limited to £1. The registered office is shown on page 2. The charity constitutes a public entity as defined by FRS 102.

Statement of compliance, basis of preparation and assessment of going concern

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the Statement of Recommended Practice: Accounting and Reporting by Charities preparing their financial statements in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (SORP FRS 102) issued on 16 July 2014, the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the United Kingdom and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) and the Companies Act 2006. The financial statements are prepared under the historical cost convention with items recognised at cost or transaction value.

In common with many charities the organisation is heavily dependent on grant income. Founded over 20 years ago we are a service-led organisation considered as the lead agency supporting carers in the area. The accounts have been prepared on the going concern basis in expectation that there will not be a significant decrease in support from funding bodies.

Income recognition

Income is recognised once the Charity has entitlement to the income, it is probable that the income will be received and the amount of income receivable can be measured accurately.

Voluntary income is recognised as above except where the income is subject to conditions that require a level of performance before the charity is entitled to the funds, when the income is deferred and not recognised until either those conditions are met, or the fulfilment of those conditions is wholly within the control of the Charity and it is probable those conditions will be fulfilled in the reporting period.

Grants specifically for the provision of services to be provided as part of the charitable activities or services to beneficiaries are accounted for on the basis of amounts receivable for the year.

Interest arising on cash balances is included when receivable and the amount can be measured reliably by the Charity. This is normally upon notification of the interest paid or payable by the bank.

Expenditure recognition

Liabilities are recognised as expenditure as soon as there is a legal or constructive obligation committing the Charity to that expenditure, it is probable that settlement is required and the amount of the obligation can be measured reliably. All expenditure is accounted for on the accruals basis, inclusive of any value added tax which cannot be recovered.

Tangible fixed assets

Depreciation is provided at rates calculated to write off the cost of each asset over its expected useful life, being three years for computers and other equipment and five years for motor vehicles. Items of equipment are capitalised where the purchase price exceeds £2,500.

Taxation

The Charity is exempt from taxation on its charitable activities.

Fund accounting

In order to differentiate the availability of funds they are categorised according to the following definitions:

Unrestricted funds are donations and other incoming resources receivable or generated for the objects of the charity without further specified purpose and are available as general funds.

Restricted funds are to be used for specific purposes as laid down by the donor. Expenditure, which meets these criteria, is charged to the fund together with a fair allocation of management and support costs.

Pension costs

The Charity operates a defined contribution pension scheme for many of its employees. The pension charge represents the amount payable by the Charity to the scheme during the year.

Operating leases

Lease payments are recognised as an expense over the lease term on a straight-line basis. The aggregate benefit of lease incentives is recognised as a reduction to expense on a straight-line basis over the lease term.

Functional currency

The financial statements are prepared in sterling which is the functional currency of the entity.

2. Income from charitable activities

	2022	2021
	£	£
Unrestricted funds - grants		
Solihull MBC	511,252	511,252
Restricted funds - grants		
Solihull MBC		
Solihull MBC – Adult carers	40,000	40,000
Carers Trust – Young carers	1,680	6,748
Children in Need – Young carers	23,673	39,572
Other grants – Young carers	49,198	8,600
Other grants – Adult carers	12,927	-
Covid relief grants	91,404	104,651
	218,882	199,571

Incoming resources include amounts receivable after the year end in respect of expenditure incurred by the year end.

NOTES FORMING PART OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2022

3. Expenditure on charitable activities

Direct and support

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total 2022 £	Total 2021 £
Carer support and activities	27,629	30,464	58,093	26,611
Staff costs	385,554	117,625	503,179	484,609
Recruitment	5,451	494	5,945	1,566
Premises	15,255	-	15,255	16,135
Communications and office costs	27,496	10,967	38,463	66,960
Motor and travel expenses	7,256	-	7,256	6,587
Training and consultancy	3,992	3,672	7,664	334
Publicity/information	2,736	11,960	14,696	3,442
Insurance	1,876	-	1,876	2,356
Professional fees and subscriptions	2,420	-	2,420	6,549
Other	2,133	-	2,133	2,166
	481,798	175,182	656,980	617,315

Governance costs

			2022 £	2021 £
Independent examination	1,800	-	1,800	1,800
Professional fees	3,550	-	3,550	3,277
Other	950	-	950	420
	6,300	-	6,300	5,497

Total expenditure on charitable activities

	488,098	175,182	663,280	622,812
2021	442,570	180,242	-	622,812

4. Staff costs

The total staff costs for the year amounted to £503,179 (2021:£484,609). The costs for 2022 include employer national insurance contributions amounting to £32,249 (2021:£28,333) and pension costs of £20,060 (2021:£20,289).

The charity during the year had on average 9 full time employees (2021:9) and 15 part time employees (2021: 17) corresponding to an estimated 18 full time equivalents (2021: 19).

No employee received emoluments in excess of £60,000 during the year or the previous year.

In addition, at the year-end there were 11 directors (2021: 12). The directors all give freely of their time and expertise and did not receive any emoluments or other benefits.

5. Operating lease commitments

The charity has commitments under an operating lease for land and buildings expiring in 2023 amounting to £14,000 (2021: £28,000).

	2022	2021
	£	£
Amounts falling due within 1 year	14,000	14,000
Amounts falling due within 2 to 5 years	-	14,000

6. Fixed assets

	Motor Cars	Computer Equipment	Total
	£	£	£
COST			
At beginning and end of year	17,650	13,200	30,850
ACCUMULATED DEPRECIATION			
Opening balance	12,515	5,500	18,015
Charge for the year	1,580	4,400	5,980
Closing balance	14,095	9,900	23,995
NET BOOK VALUE	3,555	3,300	6,855

There were no capital commitments at the year-end (2021: none).

NOTES FORMING PART OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2021

7. Investments

At cost and valuation

	2022	2021
	£	£
Short term deposits held at UK banks	344,391	233,437

8. Debtors

	2022	2021
	£	£
Debtors	1,499	-
Prepayments	693	757
	2,192	757

9. Creditors: amounts falling due within one year

	2022	2021
	£	£
Creditors and accruals	53,134	52,930
Deferred income	7,301	10,679
Tax & pension contributions	7,911	10,150
	68,346	73,759

10. Analysis of net assets by funds

	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Total funds
	£	£	£
Net assets	284,168	90,486	374,654

11. Restricted income funds

The restricted income funds comprise the following unexpired balances of donations and grants to be applied for the following purposes:

	Opening balances	Incoming resources	Outgoing resources	Closing balances
	£	£	£	£
Children in Need project	2,015	23,673	(25,688)	-
Young carers projects	17,511	49,198	(28,458)	38,251
Adult projects	22,040	41,920	(42,433)	21,527
Covid relief funds	2,720	91,404	(73,620)	20,504
Other funds	2,500	12,687	(4,983)	10,204
	46,786	218,882	(175,182)	90,486

12. Trustees expenses

Trustees received no expense payments during the year or the prior year. The charity provided indemnity cover for Trustees costing £694 (2021: £683).

13. Related party transactions

No Trustee or other person connected with the charity had any personal interest in any contract or transaction entered into by the charity during the year. The Trustees are not aware of any related party transactions requiring disclosure.

SOLIHULL CARERS CENTRE

England & Wales - Charity number 1092613

Accounts

ANNUAL REPORT AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

April 2020 to March 2021



Solihull Carers Centre is a company limited by guarantee
and a Registered Charity operating as Carers Trust Solihull.

Registered Company in England No. 04378042
Registered Charity No. 1092613

**CARERS
TRUST**
Solihull

COMPANY INFORMATION

The Directors and Trustees are pleased to present their report together with the financial statements of the charity for the year ended 31 March 2021.

The Organisation

Solihull Carers Centre (SCC) is a company limited by guarantee and a Registered Charity operating as Carers Trust Solihull (CTS). The Directors of the charitable company ('the charity') are its Trustees for the purpose of charity law and within this report are collectively referred to as the Trustees.

Company Information

Registered Company in England No. 04378042
Registered Charity No. 1092613

Directors and Trustees 2020-2021

Selina Westwood	Chair
Debbie E Taylor	Deputy Chair
Graham Thompson	Treasurer
David Brown	
Christine Grace	(appointed 12 Oct 2020)
Steve Halliday	
J Malcolm Hamilton	(resigned 15 February 2021)
David Heaselgrave	(appointed 12 Oct 2020)
Sue Jaynes	
Elaine McPherson	
Janice Price	(appointed 20 Dec 2020)
Carol Shiel	
Melanie Stewart	(appointed 14 Dec 2020)

Registered Office & Operational Address

The Carers Centre
Solihull Fire Station Annexe
620 Streetsbrook Road
Solihull
B91 1QY

Independent Examiner

Hannah Justice ACA FCCA
BSN Associates Limited
Chartered Accountants
3B Swallowfield Courtyard
Wolverhampton Road
Oldbury
West Midlands
B69 2JG



CONTENTS

- | | |
|--|--|
| 2. Company information | 8. Our work |
| 5. Our work at a glance | 16. Thank you to our donors and funders |
| 6. Introduction from our Chair | 17. Thank you to our volunteers |
| 7. Adapting for carers: our CEO | 18. Directors' and Trustees' Annual Report and Financial Statements |



OUR WORK AT A GLANCE 2020-21

There are approx.
27,000 carers in Solihull and this number is predicted to rise each year



118 EVENTS & ACTIVITIES
47 YC events & activities
71 adult events & activities



619 ADULT CARER ASSESSMENTS, REVIEWS & PLANS:
41 contingency plans
95 assessment and reviews
80 support plans
387 Covid-19 assessments (50%+ in high risk group)
16 standalone hardship fund assessments

3,876 CARERS REGISTERED WITH CARERS TRUST SOLIHULL (CTS), OVER 4,000 BY OCTOBER 2021

307 PARENT CARER REVIEWS & ASSESSMENTS:
52 SEND* carers assessments
83 carers reviews
147 Covid-19 assessments
25 hardship fund assessments



261 CARERS SUPPORTED WITH IT OR EQUIPMENT TO ACCESS ONLINE SERVICES, SUPPORT AND / OR SOCIAL CONTACT

2,006 VOLUNTEER HOURS
42 VOLUNTEERS INCLUDING:
15 new volunteers
7 new befrienders
12 peer mentors

CARERS REGISTERED WITH CTS:

2,909 carers aged 26+ including 330 parent carers
671 young carers (YCs)
296 young adult carers (YACs)

130 YOUNG CARERS ACCESSED CLUBS
42 MONTHLY GROUP SESSIONS



614 YC & YAC ASSESSMENTS:

63 young carer assessments
27 YAC assessments
369 YC Covid-19 assessments
81 YAC Covid-19 assessments
55 YC hardship fund assessments
19 YAC hardship fund assessments



222,163 FACEBOOK REACH
15,557 FACEBOOK PAGE VIEWS
50 BLOG POSTS



NOTE: Young carers are 5-25 years old; young adult carers are 18-25 years old; and adult carers are 26 years and over.
*Special educational needs and disability.

INTRODUCTION FROM OUR CHAIR

This report highlights the tremendous volume of work carried out by Carers Trust Solihull to provide opportunities and support for our carers over this last year. Whilst the capacity to reach as many carers as possible matters it is a real pleasure to note the innovative, adaptable and enhanced offer that has taken place too.

Inevitably Covid-19 has continued to impact all our lives. Delivery of services and the introduction of new support and respite measures has principally relied on telephone and digital communication with carers. Developing their online presence has been of benefit not least with the requirement to shield, stay at home or follow various social distancing regimes. We have given heightened priority to protecting both the physical and mental wellbeing of everyone associated with our Trust.

Under the leadership of CEO, Brandon Scott-Omenka, the organisation has continued to grow. His calm and considered approach, coupled with quality strategic planning and financial management has been vital throughout some difficult times. The full staff and volunteer team have risen to the task of new ways of working and we regularly have been able to hear about and acknowledge their superb, often innovative, work to support carers and each other. They are exceptional, hold closely to the Trust's vision and values and we are proud of the team.

The advice, financial support and guidance provided by a range of partners has been key to allowing the work of the organisation to thrive. Our thanks to Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council (SMBC), Carers Trust national, Children In Need, Triangle Trust 1949, Quilter, the National Lottery and to the many other local and national funders. We have particularly welcomed partnership working with SMBC and other third sector organisations. For example, Birmingham and Solihull commissioners have ensured that we were able to facilitate at-risk carers receiving early access to Covid-19 vaccination.

We will need to adapt to the huge increase in the number of carers we work with: over 4,000 registered carers, up from half that number seven years ago. Whilst overall numbers matter it remains a core principle that it is individual carer wellbeing, support and assistance that guides our work.

Looking forwards we will return to more face-to-face styles of interaction as well as retaining the appreciated, newer avenues of communication. We will need to adapt to the huge increase in the number of carers we work with: over 4,000 registered carers, up from half that number seven years ago. Whilst overall numbers matter it remains a core principle that it is individual carer wellbeing, support and assistance that guides our work.

It has been a real pleasure to lead the Trustee Board. Each member contributes rigorously to the discussion, debate and decision-making to keep the organisation on a path of continuous improvement. Board members' enthusiasm, skills and commitment to the Trust deserve high praise and a resounding thank you. All of us remain determined to improve the lives of carers. We recognise that the number of carers is likely to keep growing. This will guide much of our strategic planning if we are to continue to provide a quality service.

Selina Westwood

Selina Westwood
Chair of Trustees



ADAPTING FOR CARERS OUR CEO

As I write we are in October 2021 looking back at a year of service to Solihull carers during two lockdowns and often periods of major restrictions.

2020-21 was a deeply challenging time for Carers Trust Solihull, its Trustees, staff and volunteers and the many carers that we support. We have lost loved ones, sometimes tragically, and lived through a period where our normal working lives have been severely disrupted. I can only thank all staff and volunteers for their flexibility and hard work far beyond the call of duty.

This was a year, where despite the challenges, we were still able to launch new services. With assistance from Carers Trust national, we were able to reach out to carers and enable them to access a range of digital communication channels and make use of online opportunities.

With the support of Carers Trust national and Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council (SMBC), we were able to run a hardship fund and raised over £15,000 to target multiple individual grants to the very young and older carers in need, particularly during the start of the Covid-19 outbreak.

SMBC should also be thanked for supporting us in developing new ways of working, particularly enhancing our digital reach and website development.

We are especially grateful to the Triangle Trust 1949 for their financial support at the start of the outbreak and others at various times including Balsall Common Lions, Tesco-Bags of Help, Ecclesiastical: Movement for Good and Eversfield School, who have particularly supported our younger carers.

Despite being limited by Covid restrictions, and struggling to fill some staff vacancies in a challenging recruitment market, we still managed to reach a record number of carers.

We currently have over 4,000 registered carers on our books. That's a 35% rise in two and half years. Incoming calls rose from 3 calls a day in

2017 to 10 calls a day by March 2020 and then 18.6 calls a day during 2020-21. We played a key role in the vaccination drive to reach vulnerable carers, which saw incoming calls top 40 per day!

Many of our services had to be adapted to work over the phone or via Zoom. During 2020-21 we took over nearly 5,000 incoming calls, and made or received a further 55,000 calls, following up and addressing carers concerns. Often our staff and volunteers were juggling work with support to their shielding families. We can safely say that we reached and supported far more carers than before the lockdowns.

Our staff increased contacts to registered carers from 15,354 in 2019-20 to 15,973 contacts in 2020-21. By targeting our efforts we contacted 81% of our registered carers in 2020-21 up from 65% in 2019-20.

On a sad note, I would like to acknowledge the loss of Dave Henry who was taken by the virus. Dave was a loyal supporter of the Trust, and very popular with carers and staff. A proud Saint Alphege's Rotarian and a volunteer who particularly liked to support young carers with job interview skills; he will be sorely missed.

Lastly, I want to thank our Volunteer Trustees who provided much-needed support and a calming influence despite equally experiencing all the travails of the wider community. Those new Trustees joining the Board have already made a difference whilst our experienced Trustees continue to anchor the organisation.

Brandon Scott-Omenka

Brandon Scott-Omenka
CEO Carers Trust Solihull



OUR WORK DIGITAL CARERS WEEK 2020

Carers Week 2020 was a series of digital events with 10 Zoom sessions, 67 illustrated Tweets, 33 Facebook posts and 26 Instagram posts.



We shared: 20 website blogs including stories from adult carers, parent carers and young carers.

The most well attended activities were the Young Carers Meet and Greet and the Parent Carers Coffee Morning. Thanks are due to staff and volunteers who had to master a different means of communication within a very short timescale.



A PARENT CARER'S STORY REACHED 1,001 PEOPLE



ADULT CARERS VIRTUAL MEET UP



CHRIS BEEBEE MUSIC EVENT REACHED 1,500 PEOPLE



KATIE, A YOUNG CARER'S STORY REACHED 914 PEOPLE

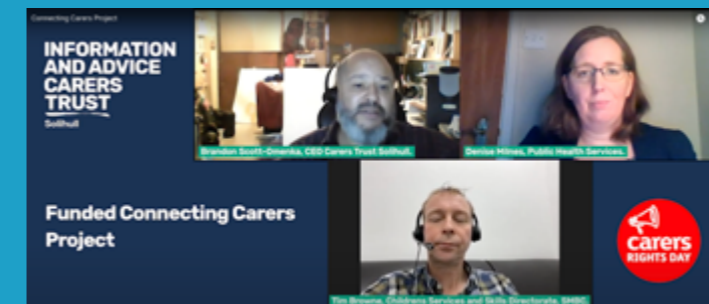


Links to the above activities are at: www.solihullcarers.org/category/carers-week/

OUR WORK CARERS RIGHTS DAY 2020

We made a splash for Carers Rights Day this year with a range of interactive activities, workshops and discussions; we also launched our first set of films made with carers.

We changed how we delivered Carers Rights Day this year and used the opportunity to improve what we offer our carers online. Our team problem solved their way to making sure carers could connect and take part in events and activities together. For interactive workshops carers received what they needed in advance; for example, for the T-shirt activity they received a design pack containing all the materials needed; and for those who couldn't get online our special Connecting Carers project equipped them with equipment or knowledge to take part.



A live public event was out of the question but we shared carers rights throughout the day via social media and our own films featuring young adult carers.

Carers felt connected and were able to talk about issues that affect them with others while enjoying themselves.

All our films and recordings of Zoom Q&As and discussions are available to view at your leisure on our Solihull Carers YouTube channel.



Each right was shared by young adult carers in a series of short films on the day.





“ Thank you for all your help. It’s really nice to finally have my side of things heard without any judgement. You’ve been so friendly and kind throughout.

Parent carer assessment feedback.



OUR WORK WITH ADULT CARERS



OVER 100 BEFRIENDING SESSIONS WERE CARRIED OUT

HIGHLIGHTS PARENT CARERS

We saw a rise in requests for parent carer assessments and support plans demonstrating that carers feel there is a real benefit to having one.

Our reviews with parent carers revealed that overall, there has been an improvement in health, time for themselves and how they feel. They have also felt better about the quality of care they provide and their management of finances.

To expand our support for parent carers we introduced coffee mornings, more activities and online workshops such as Transitioning to Adult Services and Stress Management as well as Relaxation Techniques and Pilates.

We have developed a closer partnership with the SEND** team which helps us to provide more comprehensive support.

Parent carers received COVID assessments alongside their main assessments which gave them additional access to a COVID hardship fund during this challenging year.



**Special educational needs and disability.

JUDITH A PARENT CARER

Judith* cares for her son who has Global Development Delay (GDD). An assessment identified needs such as peer support and technology to connect with others. She was referred to our own Connecting Carers Project (giving IT support and equipment to carers), after which Judith was able to confidently access Zoom for a parent carers meeting and coffee morning registered for other training. She is now able to access support and meet with others online. She recorded improved outcomes in her ‘health’ and ‘how she feels’. She also received a Christmas shopping voucher.

“ The staff at Carers Trust really care. To have someone outside of family and friends who listens and understands is invaluable. They have supported me to find myself again and I am finally starting to make steps towards putting myself first. I was nervous and exhausted when I initially contacted the Carers Trust but I knew I couldn’t carry on as I was. [...] I no longer feel a failure or alone. I was able to offload to someone who “gets it” and it’s surprising how powerful that is. A parent carer.

“ It feels like a weight has been lifted off my shoulders. A parent carer.

Despite the many challenges due to the pandemic, our team worked incredibly hard to support over 600 carers with assessments, reviews and plans to help their situation.

We have completely adapted our way of working: we focused on getting our peer support groups, training and live and recorded workshops all online to ensure carers have access to the support when they need it.

ANNA AN ADULT CARER

Aнна* cares for her adult child, Rosa* who has complex conditions and disabilities such as Cerebral Palsy, Epilepsy, ASD and uses a wheelchair. During lockdown, all the care and support package was suspended and Rosa struggled to understand why she was unable to attend her groups and activities. This added to Anna’s already stressful caring role making it difficult to cope with. We applied to the hardship fund to buy sensory toys for them. Anna was able to use the toys to support Rosa, helping her remain occupied and more content whilst they were at home. This was just one way that we were able to support Anna to cope a little better.

*Not real names.

VACCINATION PROGRAMME

It was important for us to be a vital part of the national programme to get adult and vulnerable carers vaccinated. We contacted all our adult carers and ensured that they were able to access their vaccinations helping to reduce some of their anxieties when supporting the most vulnerable people.



BEFRIENDING PROJECT



Our COVID-19 assessments with carers highlighted that there was some confusion around government guidance and the status of care packages in particular was causing much frustration, stress and draining their mental resources. To respond to this situation we developed a new befriending programme, including a telephone befriending service. This programme provides general support and regular contact to carers who need a little extra human contact, especially through difficult and isolating periods.

It is a huge success with over 100 sessions having taken place during 2020-21.

Visit **YouTube** and search **Solihull Carers** to watch our young adult carers film and others on our channel.



“ I am a young adult carer ”

HIGHLIGHTS YOUNG ADULT CARERS

In 2020-21 young adult carer (YAC) registrations rose as did services. They had their voices heard through an awareness raising film (above). YAC Ambassadors improved college life for other students who are caring and made a splash with their skills on YCYAC Action Day**.

New funding for a Peer Mentoring and Befriending project for YAC's extended

our services to them with provision of IT equipment, driver hours and coaching opportunities. Carers Rights Day created a great opportunity for information exchange amongst YACs who attended a Transition Workshop and Quiz night. Our Young Carers in Schools Scheme supported local colleges to identify-engage-support-refer YACs in their own settings and is a great example of a growing carer friendly community in Solihull.

SARAH A YOUNG ADULT CARER



Sarah*, 17, had been caring for three family members since she was 10. She juggled this with college and work and at times, experiences that had impacted on her own emotional wellbeing. Valuing her own experience and achievements, Sarah became a peer mentor helping other young carers improve their self-esteem and reduce loneliness.

Sarah has also become a Young Leader, assisting with trips and residentials and a Student Ambassador for carers at her college. She speaks about issues affecting young carers in local and national media and raises awareness wherever and whenever she can. Sarah has won several awards including the district and national Lions Young Ambassador Award, and she achieved runner up in international finals. Sarah used her winnings to fund the creation of a very successful young carers book club.

Sarah's role as leader in the community has received recognition at the highest levels across the region. Currently, she is studying criminology at university.

*Not real names. **Young Carers and Young Adult Carers Action Day.

“ Thank you so much, anything is a help and this will really make a difference, and to just hear a friendly voice on the end of the phone was lovely. Family who received a Christmas food voucher. ”

“ Thank you for letting me join the Decision-making Group. I was scared at first but it was better than I thought. I liked helping other young carers, choosing what things young carers need to go back to school and giving ideas on the newsletter and leaflets. A young carer. ”

OUR WORK WITH YOUNG CARERS

Innovative and creative teamwork enabled us to adapt 90% of our services and continue during the pandemic, followed by a return to working in the community in December.

We saw new faces during online activities, created fresh partnerships, distributed hardship funds plus gifts and shopping vouchers for 175 people in families—all this helped provide much needed relief and helped to spread the spirit of Christmas to young carers' homes.



ERIN IS A YOUNG CARER



Erin* is 12 years old and helps her mum provide significant care to her dad, who has disabilities. Erin told us that she had stopped online dance lessons because her phone had broken. Dance has been a huge part of Erin's life since preschool and it is her main escape from her caring role. She had been feeling down about this. Her mum couldn't afford to replace her phone due to financial difficulties caused by redundancy. As her only means of getting online, it also prevented her from accessing education and other activities. We successfully applied to the hardship fund to purchase a laptop for her. This enabled Erin to have some essential downtime doing what she loves and to keep up with online learning and be with others via digital events and activities.



I count down the days until the next activity.
A young carer.

Throughout, we have kept our carers engaged and supported: young carers demonstrated their campaigning skills during Virtual YCYAC Action Day**; Carers Rights Day was a chance for young carers to connect via letterbox activities such as designing t-shirts; and our Young Carers Decision-making Groups continued to give us ideas around how best to adapt our services going forward.



The changes have had some very positive outcomes: young carers who couldn't engage in activities previously due to their caring roles were able to join in with the fun online activities; with our plans to continue with blended methods for delivering services we intend to keep it that way.



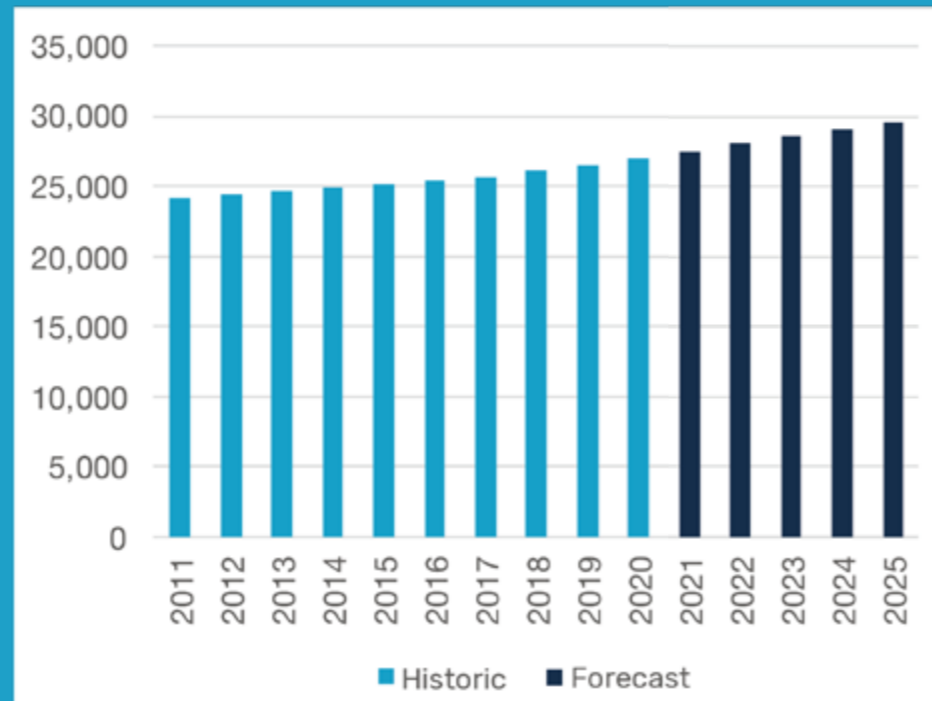
Young Carers Book Group.



OUR WORK RISING DEMAND

From 2016-19 we saw a 40% increase in carer registrations. In the last two years we have seen a further increase of 30% from 3,539 to 4,003; a staggering 1,040 more carers.

NUMBER OF CARERS IN SOLIHULL BASED ON CENSUS, EXCLUDING IMPACT OF COVID



CONTACT ACTIVITY

The number of contacts with registered carers has increased from 15,354 to 15,973 in 2019-2020 and 2020-21.

Contacts per carer have fallen from 7.3 per carer to 5.8 as the number of carers registered have risen and resources have had to be spread further. That said the percentage of those registered with CTS and actively contacted went up from 59% to 71% partly due to proactive Covid-19 assessments, phone, digital and vital mail contact.

OUR WORK COMMUNICATIONS AND DIGITAL



Barry, our Digital Content Creator and Connecting Carers Coordinator, during our trip to the BETT Show before lockdown.

In five short months, we supported 261 carers to get online to participate in digital events, activities, training or to join virtual meet ups with friends and family to reduce isolation and loneliness. We provided a combination of training and/or laptops or tablets.



Our carers were hugely isolated due to social distancing; we responded with a range of support projects called Connecting Carers. We received additional funding for these from the Carers Trust national with further support from SMBC and the Triangle Trust 1949.

We also responded to the huge task of adapting all our office based systems for remote working. Within a matter of a few weeks, we provided all of our 28 staff with equipment, training and resources to work from home.

We moved all our files to cloud storage, equipped our staff to use VOIP at home and made using Zoom a standard way to deliver our services during social distancing. The benefits of doing this, particularly for carers who can't usually attend in person events means that going forward, this will remain a part of our blended approach to service delivery.

During the lockdown year, we also produced countless new designed materials and resources to match the new branding for our network and significantly increased the range of digital and postal communications with our carers.

THANK YOU TO OUR DONORS AND FUNDERS



In these difficult times community fundraising was severely hit as the country locked down twice and schools closed. Many of our supporters were focused on their own caring activities and we were particularly grateful to those volunteer fundraisers and those that still were able to support the trust.

We would like to thank everyone who has helped including:

- Balsall Common Lions
- Ecclesiastical
- Groundwork
- Plastic Company
- Shirley Lions
- Eversfield School




We would also like to thank national funding agencies for vital project support:

- Children In Need
- Triangle Trust 1949
- The Lottery
- Quilter
- Solihull Round Table
- Carers Trust national

Carers Trust national supported us throughout with funding opportunities, advice and assistance.

Lastly, **Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council** assisted us to access temporary Covid funding that has made such a difference. Its support allowed us to develop digital services and other practices to prevent infection transmission and support carers.

THANK YOU TERRY FOR 8 YEARS OF VOLUNTARY SERVICE



It is hard to sum up the breadth and quality of contributions that Terry makes to our charity, she is widely respected within our organisation and her influence is felt throughout.



Having had a highly successful career in IT management within the commercial sector, she uses those skills to help develop our Young Carers Team, supporting them at all levels in and out of work; she regularly hosts social gatherings, team building and planning sessions in her own home.

Terry's role is crucial as she takes on tasks that free up staff to concentrate on face to face work with young carers; she does this at a highly skilled level including administering databases, running meetings, assisting with tasks at management level. Throughout lockdown, she continued to volunteer two days a week without fail and has been known to work at full-time capacity at times. There is no mistaking Terry's immense dedication and focus to supporting young carers in Solihull and our charity; this is only matched by her modesty.

“ I have worked for the Young Carers team for over 8 years now. I volunteered to 'give back' after a career in IT. I provide essential office and database 'management' for the YC team. This hopefully allows them more time to spend with and support the YC/YAC's. They are a brilliant team and I find the role so very rewarding.

THANK YOU TO ALL OUR VOLUNTEERS



Our volunteers are a vital part of Carers Trust Solihull. We support our volunteers and listen to what they feel they can offer; we also establish what we can offer to them in return.

During the pandemic, our staff worked to ensure volunteers were supported regardless of whether they were able to work with us.

We ended 2020-21 with 42 volunteers. We recruited 22 new volunteers in the year including 5 adult telephone befrienders.

The turnover of volunteers partly reflects the closure of the office and various other activities to comply with lockdown requirements. The move from in person working to digital working saw some of our volunteers decide to step down during lockdown and then slowly return when in person activities resumed. But by keeping in touch and supporting volunteers during this difficult time many are keen to return to support the charity.


Following the response to our Covid-19 telephone assessments, we introduced a new Telephone Befriending service to offer carers –without access to friends and family and struggling with loneliness and isolation due to shielding or 'staying home'—support from a volunteer. We recruited experienced volunteers to provide a weekly one hour call. Five volunteers have been supporting a total of 24 carers giving our carers a total of 77 hours of support!

We recruited four new trustees this year, David, Melanie, Janice and Christine who all complement the service in different ways. We are delighted to have their skills and caring experience at the disposal of the Board and the charity.

“ I believe most of us want to help other people—especially those who deserve our help. I volunteer with Solihull Young Carers so that I can raise funds that will help these inspirational young people to make friends, relax, have adventures—or just be themselves. Every day I wake up smiling at the thought of doing this.



THANK YOU PETER FOR 2 YEARS OF VOLUNTARY SERVICE



Peter is a self motivated, tenacious fundraiser who has sought out and secured funding from diverse sources. He has built and developed positive relationships with funders and donors with incredible results. He also ensures donors are part of the journey to see how we have made use of their generosity. With his background in business and marketing management, Peter is an invaluable asset to our charity.

He is the face of young carers to funders as well as being a full member of our Young Carers Team; he is involved at all levels from managing expenditure of funds to organising and delivering presents to carers at Christmas. Our charity and carers are very lucky to have his support.

DIRECTORS AND TRUSTEES ANNUAL REPORT 2020-21

CONTENTS

19. Objectives and activities
20. Achievements and performance
21. Structure, governance and management
23. Financial review
25. Statement of Directors' responsibilities
26. Independent Examiner's report
27. Statement of financial activities for the year ended 31 March 2021
28. Statement of financial position as at 31 March 2021
29. Statement of cash flows for the year ended 31 March 2021
30. Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2021

During 2020-21 Trustees saw a huge effort by the staff to support carers during two major lockdowns in response to the Covid-19 infection. The service also coordinated with SMBC and borough-wide charities to be instrumental in coordinating and delivering support to carers.

We are grateful to our CEO, team managers, staff and volunteers who helped to deliver this support during a particularly difficult year for them and their families. Reviewing the year, we marvel at the changes that were brought into place to re-engineer ways to communicate and support carers.

We note the support of key funding agencies and bodies referred to in this report. We are particularly grateful to Carers Trust national, Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council and Triangle Trust 1949. We are grateful to all those that work for and support our Trust for their valued service to carers in Solihull during these extremely difficult circumstances.

During the year Trustees reviewed their strategic role and received regular reports on performance, risk, planned development and fundraising. Ensuring the retention of high quality strategic governance of the charity has been important in these unprecedented times.

OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES

OUR OBJECTIVES REMAIN:

“To support adult and young carers who are, or were, carrying out a caring role for persons who are disabled, elderly or ill, by the provision of practical help, advice, assistance, service, advocacy and support. Also, to advance education concerning caring amongst carers, professionals and the public.”

Our services are restricted to unpaid carers of family members or friends and neighbours who have physical or mental illness, physical or learning disability, long term or terminal illness or addiction. Carers Trust Solihull (CTS) seeks to support carers regardless of disability, race, gender, age, sexuality, beliefs or social background.

We encourage all people with an unpaid caring role to register with us and receive information, advice and other services or to take an active part in our organisation. The range of services we provide includes:

- Face-to-face support – someone to talk to who understands.
- Events and Activities – a break from caring and a chance to have some fun.
- Information and Advice – an opportunity to find out about services and the help available.
- Adults and young carers clubs and drop-in sessions – meeting other carers.
- Training and Workshops – gain knowledge and skills as you continue to care.
- Carers Assessments – talk about your life as a carer and get help to access support.
- Carers Card – recognising you as an Adult Carer or Young Carer with access to some discounts.
- Exploring the future – supporting you to access education, employment and training opportunities.
- Speak up for adult carers and young carers – tell us what we can do differently and shape future services for carers in Solihull.

CTS provides support for carers across Solihull. There are approximately 27,000 adult carers living within the Borough, according to the latest Census. There are also around 600 young carers although "The lives of young carers in England" (2017) D of E suggests this latter figure could be as high as 4,000.

We recognise that there is a large number of unidentified and "hidden" carers, including those who may not realise that they are in a caring role. To enable these carers to continue their caring role effectively and safely they may need access to information, advice and support.

CTS seeks to address the considerable and on-going needs of carers by the provision of accessible and age-appropriate user-led services. We aim to identify carers as early as possible and support them to prevent their circumstances needlessly deteriorating. We reach out to more carers every year.

Public Benefit Statement: The Trustees consider they have complied with the duty in Section 17 of the Charities Act 2011 to have due regard to public benefit guidance published by the Charity Commission.

ACHIEVEMENTS AND PERFORMANCE STRATEGY

In 2020-21 Carers Trust Solihull reviewed and amended its Strategic Objectives and continued to deliver on its targets as set out in the Strategic Plan:

CUSTOMER CARE

WE WILL ENSURE THE PROVISION OF CONSISTENTLY HIGH QUALITY SERVICES TO CARERS

- CTS will develop 'Carers Interactive' and a comprehensive web-based service offer.
- CTS will work with education and employers to assist carers in their academic, training and employment goals.
- CTS will ensure Solihull's carers influence local and national policy, strategy and services.
- CTS will develop Carers Academy training options to support carers in achieving their goals.

LEARNING AND GROWTH

WE WILL WORK WITH HEALTH & SOCIAL CARE & ENABLE OUR STAFF & VOLUNTEERS TO RAISE CARER AWARENESS

- CTS will work with Solihull Safeguarding Boards and carers to safeguard children and adults.
- CTS will develop staff and volunteers' skills and expertise within their field of interest or CTS priority.
- CTS will ensure staff and volunteer surveys, supervision, training and professional.
- CTS will develop its work with GPs, hospitals, and support carers after hospital discharge.

INTERNAL BUSINESS

WE WILL IMPROVE, DEVELOP AND REDESIGN OUR SERVICE'S EFFICIENCY & EFFECTIVENESS

- CTS will grow collaborations with Carers Trust national's providers and voluntary projects in order to expand our reach and effectiveness.
- CTS will revise our data security, health and safety, and risks at every level or function.
- CTS will grow volunteer capacity and thereby mentoring, contingency, befriending and other projects.
- CTS will increase fundraising and publicity to expand services that promote carer recognition.

Trustees confirm that overall CTS has made considerable progress on meeting our priorities for 2020-21 including:

- Redesigning our website, developing a social media presence and enabling many new and otherwise isolated carers to access the internet and social media communication.
- New services were established from scratch including a hardship fund for carers in crisis with support from Carers Trust national and Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council.
- As face to face support became impossible due to Covid restrictions to limit infection transmission the Trust moved to telephone and digital communication such as Zoom and Microsoft Teams to communicate with carers.
- Opportunities to contact carers via GP surgeries ended so work was directly undertaken with the Clinical Commissioning Group for Solihull to help Carers to access GPs to locally fast track opportunities for vaccination.
- Working with schools, colleges and employers to assist carers in their academic, training or employment goals.
- Being proactive about fundraising, developing volunteer capacity and delivering mentoring, befriending and other support.
- Setting up new services such as the 'Time to Talk' bereavement pilot, and beginning work to launch the volunteer sitting and support service.

During 2021 we:

- Consulted with all our carers on their satisfaction with our services and what if any areas we might improve.
- We supported SMBC in the revision of its Solihull carers strategies and focus groups with carers set up to get "grassroots" views.
- We assisted in the planning and delivery of the 2021 National Carers Survey, a vital tool in assessing carer satisfaction across the country that had had to be delayed by Covid-19.

As we reviewed across 2020-21 we recognised further areas for work. These included:

- Managing an ever-increasing number of registered carers year upon year.
- The need for a major redesign of our website to improve its accessibility for carers.
- The need for more capacity to meet the need for statutory assessments and reviews.

Inevitably the Covid-19 pandemic directly impacted our service delivery model. We redoubled our efforts to secure grants and funding. This has enabled us to ensure services were Covid-19 risk-assured for staff, volunteers, carers and the cared for. Our support for the staff and volunteers has meant improving access to appropriate equipment, resources and facilities. We continue to source funds to adapt support services and meet the needs of carers

STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

Solihull Carers Centre operating as Carers Trust Solihull, (CTS), is a company limited by guarantee and a registered Charity governed by its Memorandum and Articles of Association. The Directors of the charitable company ("the charity") are its Trustees for the purposes of charity law and within this report are collectively referred to as the Trustees. The Trustees are listed on page 2.

The Board of Trustees has actively sought to recruit new Trustees with appropriate skills and knowledge. The Articles of Association require that at least 50% of Trustees must be current carers. During 2020-21 the Trustee board was stable with the recent recruits to the board fully integrating into its work and participating in joint events with the staff team as appropriate. Various aspects of the Trustee role have been reviewed including:

- Responsibilities of Trustees.
- Trustee / Staff liaison and communication.
- Governance, strategy, management and policymaking.
- Future horizon plans, risk assessments and strategic objectives.

The Trustees have agreed to policies and procedures for the recruitment of trustees and these are followed for every new appointment which includes taking up references. Checks by the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) are no longer required for trustees of charities. However, we have decided that all CTS's Trustees are DBS checked. Trustees have job descriptions and operate within an agreed Code of Conduct.

The Trustees meet at least six times each year and receive a data-rich, "balanced scorecard" of performance as well as supplementary reports covering progress against the overall business strategy, key performance indicators and action plans, detailed fundraising progress, financial reports, risk register audits and an overarching Chief Executive Officer summary.

After an independent annual assessment of CTS's Quality Management System, we retained our ISO 9001 certification with a consecutive highest score.

STAFFING

At the time of writing, we have a full-time Chief Executive Officer, 10 other full-time posts, 17 part-time staff and 23 sessional staff. (Total non-sessional hours being the equivalent of 23 hours a month). No employee received emoluments in excess of £60,000 during the year or previous year.

At the time of writing, there are 12 Trustees. The Trustees give freely of their time and expertise and do not receive any emoluments or other benefits. In 2020-21 Trustees met four times for a short Executive Meeting, four times for a full Executive Meeting, and convened an Annual General Meeting. A joint workshop with staff, a full Trustee Board strategic away day, and various supplementary meetings have taken place.

The charity is supported by a number of volunteers. At the close of 2020-21, the number of volunteers stood at 42 adult volunteers and 12 young peer mentors. Currently, these numbers have risen to 53 adult volunteers and 11 young peer mentors. CTS did not offer any student placements in 2020-21 due to Covid-19. Some of our valued volunteers have been restricted by stay-at-home, caring functions and have not been able to access the office due to the peak of Covid-19 related workplace restrictions. That said the number of volunteer hours in 2020-21 was 2,006. Without these valued volunteers we would be restricted in the support we can provide to carers.

NETWORKING

During the year we strengthened our links to the Carers Trust national. We accessed various Covid related grants to establish support to carers at the local level as well as support and assistance.

We are members of the National Council for Voluntary Organisations (NCVO) and the Association of Chief Executives of Voluntary Organisations (ACEVO) who connect, represent and support UK charities with consultancy, training, advice, and support on governance issues, toolkits, a support line and more.

We are active in The Voluntary and Community networks and during the Covid lockdowns participated in weekly and fortnightly Zoom meetings with SMBC and a full range of our voluntary sector colleagues. This enhanced joint working was one of the positive features of the year. We are active members of various local partnerships including the Carers Partnership Board, Adult Safeguarding and Children Safeguarding Boards.

During Covid-19 restrictions, we have been key members of weekly or fortnightly video conferencing, conference calls and other liaison with SMBC, Public Health and the principal Third Sector organisations.

FINANCIAL REVIEW

Our finances were significantly impacted throughout the year by the Covid-19 pandemic in two main ways. Firstly, elements of our usual expenditure, in particular on activities and events for carers, were severely curtailed thus reducing spending on normal activities and generating other savings. On the other hand, applications for grants were a major success in raising additional income to fund the exceptional expenditure incurred in supporting carers in many and new ways to cope with the lockdowns and other difficulties imposed by the pandemic. This combination of a sizeable increase in income and yet reductions in normal expenditure has left the year with a surplus of income over expenditure of £96,525.

With the impact of the pandemic continuing well into the current year, this surplus is budgeted to be almost wholly spent by next year-end.

YEAR END FINANCIAL POSITION

We finished the year with total reserves of £304,475 up from £207,950 at the start of the year. An element of the reserves is restricted, deriving from income received to be spent on specific projects with the balance unrestricted, available to be spent as necessary to support the work of the charity. As outlined above, restricted income and restricted expenditure were increased in the year significantly above usual levels.

Restricted Funds

Restricted funds amounted to £46,786 (2020: £24,957). Details of restricted fund balances are shown in Note 11.

Unrestricted Funds

During the year unrestricted funds increased from £182,993 to £257,689 which equates to approximately 5 months of ongoing expenditure. The policy of the Trustees is to maintain sufficient unrestricted funds to provide financial stability and ensure that the work of the charity is not affected by unexpected events, delayed receipts or a short-term lack of incoming funds. Also, to ensure that in the event of a significant and permanent reduction in income, sufficient funds are available to meet all liabilities and provide an acceptable winding down of operations.

The Trustees have reviewed both the reserves policy and the level of reserves as of 31 March 2021 and are satisfied that the reserves are adequate.

INVESTMENT POWERS

The Charity has the power to make any investment which the Directors see fit. Our funds are only invested in deposit facilities protected under the Financial Services Compensation Scheme and within the limits of the Scheme. We aim to maximise interest income using both fixed and variable rate deposits.

RISK MANAGEMENT

The Board regularly considers risks to the organisation and agrees measures to mitigate the identified risks. The Trustees regularly undertake a review of their Risk Management and Opportunity Register which enables the service to plan for and mitigate threats to the service we provide to the public.

During 2020-21 the Trustee Board and CEO established a subgroup to review the service's strategic risk register and a major revision resulted in recognising:

- Ten strategic risks covering Contractual, Customer, Staff and Volunteers, Financial Risk, Health & Safety, Insurance & Security, IT Information Security, Legal & Regulatory, and Market Resilience.
- Six Operational Risks were deemed worthy of Trustee Board oversight.

These risks continue to be reviewed quarterly and written mitigation made available. In addition, the Trustees discussed risks arising from Covid-19 leading to the CEO reviewing the Business Continuity Plan.

The key risk remains the withdrawal of funding to meet ongoing operational costs. Reserves are held to mitigate this risk.

FUNDING

Our funding relies on the secured service level agreement with SMBC. The current agreement expires in March 2022 with a potential 2-year extension available thereafter, subject to a review of costs and outcomes. As we write the contract renewal discussions are proceeding positively and a 30 month extension is being finalised. During the lockdown, there were several grants from Solihull MBC, Carers Trust national, Triangle Trust 1949 and other local funders. We are also very grateful to those who have raised money for the charity, organised special events, sponsored walks and corporate activities.

STATEMENT OF DIRECTORS' RESPONSIBILITIES

The Trustees (who are the Directors of Solihull Carers Centre/Carers Trust Solihull for the purpose of company law) are responsible for preparing the Trustees Annual Report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and regulations.

Company law requires the Trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year. Under that law the Trustees have elected to prepare the financial statements in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice (United Kingdom Accounting Standards and applicable law). Under company law the Trustees must not approve the financial statements unless they are satisfied that they give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charitable company and the income and expenditure of the charitable company for that period.

In preparing these financial statements, the Trustees are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- observe the methods and principles in the Charities SORP;
- make judgments and accounting estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- state whether applicable UK Accounting Standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements;
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charitable company will continue in operation.

The Trustees are responsible for keeping adequate accounting records that are sufficient to show and explain the charitable company's transactions and disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charitable company and enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 2006. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charitable company and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

Small company provisions

This report has been prepared in accordance with the provisions applicable to companies entitled to the small companies' regime.

On behalf of the Board

Selina Westwood
Chair of Trustees

3 November 2021

INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT TO THE TRUSTEES OF SOLIHULL CARERS CENTRE

I report to the trustees on my examination of the financial statements of Solihull Carers Centre ('the charity') for the year ended 31 March 2021.

Responsibilities and basis of report

As the trustees of the company (and also its directors for the purposes of company law) you are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006 ('the 2006 Act').

Having satisfied myself that the accounts of the company are not required to be audited under Part 16 of the 2006 Act and are eligible for independent examination, I report in respect of my examination of the charity's accounts as carried out under section 145 of the Charities Act 2011 ('the 2011 Act'). In carrying out my examination I have followed the Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5) (b) of the 2011 Act.

Independent examiner's statement

Since the charity's gross income exceeded £250,000 your examiner must be a member of a body listed in section 145 of the 2011 Act. I confirm that I am qualified to undertake the examination because I am a member of the Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales (ICAEW), which is one of the listed bodies.

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

1. accounting records were not kept in respect of the charity as required by section 386 of the 2006 Act; or
2. the financial statements do not accord with those records; or
3. the financial statements do not comply with the accounting requirements of section 396 of the 2006 Act other than any requirement that the accounts give a 'true and fair' view which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination; or
4. the financial statements have not been prepared in accordance with the methods and principles of the Statement of Recommended Practice for accounting and reporting by charities applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102).

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.

Hannah Justice ACA FCCA
Independent Examiner

On behalf of BSN Associates Limited

3B Swallowfield Courtyard
Wolverhampton Road
Oldbury
West Midlands
B69 2JG

Date: 3 November 2021

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2021

(incorporating the Income and Expenditure Account)

	Notes	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total 2021 £	Total 2020 £
Income from:					
Grants and donations		4,601	2,500	7,101	20,337
Investments: Bank interest		1,413		1,413	1,946
Charitable activities: Grants	2	511,252	199,571	710,823	603,828
Total income		517,266	202,071	719,337	626,111
Expenditure on:					
Charitable activities	3	442,570	180,242	622,812	588,064
Total expenditure		442,570	180,242	622,812	588,064
Net income/(expenditure) for the year					
		74,696	21,829	96,525	38,047
Net movement in funds					
		74,696	21,829	96,525	38,047
Reconciliation of funds:					
Total funds brought forward		182,993	24,957	207,950	169,903
Total funds carried forward		257,689	46,786	304,475	£207,950

The Statement of Financial Activities includes all gains and losses in the year. All incoming resources and resources expended derive from continuing activities.

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION 31 MARCH 2021

	Notes	2021 £	2020 £
Fixed assets	6	12,835	18,815
Current assets			
Debtors and prepayments	8	757	715
Investments	7	233,437	216,713
Bank current account		131,058	21,949
Cash balances		147	583
		365,399	239,960
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	9	73,759	50,825
Net current assets		291,640	189,135
Net assets	10	304,475	207,950
Unrestricted funds			
Restricted income funds	11	46,786	24,957
Total funds		304,475	207,950

For the year ending 31 March 2021 the charity was entitled to exemption from audit under section 477 of the Companies Act 2006 relating to small companies.

Trustees' responsibilities:

- The shareholders have not required the charity to obtain an audit of its financial statements for the year in question in accordance with section 476;
- The Trustees acknowledge their responsibilities for complying with the requirements of the Act with respect to accounting records and the preparation of financial statements.

These financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the provisions applicable to companies subject to the small companies' regime.

The financial statements were approved by the Directors on 3 November 2021 and were signed on their behalf by:

Selina Westwood
Chair of Trustees

STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2021

	2021 £	2020 £
Net cash provided by operating activities	125,397	38,359
Cash flows from investing activities	-	(21,100)
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the reporting period	239,245	221,986
Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the reporting period	364,642	239,245

RECONCILIATION OF NET INCOME TO NET CASH FLOW FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES

	2021 £	2020 £
Net income for the reporting period	96,525	38,047
Adjustments for:		
Depreciation of fixed assets	5,980	2,285
Gain on disposal of fixed assets	-	-
(Increase)/decrease in debtors	(42)	(542)
(Decrease)/increase in creditors	22,934	(1,431)
Net cash provided by operating activities	125,397	38,359

ANALYSIS OF CASH AND CASH EQUIVALENTS

	2021 £	2020 £
Cash in hand	131,205	22,532
Notice deposits (less than 3 months)	233,437	216,713
Total cash and cash equivalents	364,642	239,245

NOTES FORMING PART OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2021

1. Accounting policies

Status

The Charity is a company registered in England and Wales that is limited by guarantee and does not have a share capital. The liability of members is limited to £1. The registered office is shown on page 2. The charity constitutes a public entity as defined by FRS 102.

Statement of compliance, basis of preparation and assessment of going concern

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the Statement of Recommended Practice: Accounting and Reporting by Charities preparing their financial statements in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (SORP FRS 102) issued on 16 July 2014, the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the United Kingdom and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) and the Companies Act 2006. The financial statements are prepared under the historical cost convention with items recognised at cost or transaction value.

In common with many charities the organisation is heavily dependent on grant income. Founded over 15 years ago we are a service-led organisation considered as the lead agency supporting carers in the area. The accounts have been prepared on the going concern basis in expectation that there will not be a significant decrease in support from funding bodies.

Income recognition

Income is recognised once the Charity has entitlement to the income, it is probable that the income will be received and the amount of income receivable can be measured accurately.

Voluntary income is recognised as above except where the income is subject to conditions that require a level of performance before the charity is entitled to the funds, when the income is deferred and not recognised until either those conditions are met, or the fulfilment of those conditions is wholly within the control of the Charity and it is probable those conditions will be fulfilled in the reporting period.

Grants specifically for the provision of services to be provided as part of the charitable activities or services to beneficiaries are accounted for on the basis of amounts receivable for the year.

Interest arising on cash balances is included when receivable and the amount can be measured reliably by the Charity. This is normally upon notification of the interest paid or payable by the bank.

Expenditure recognition

Liabilities are recognised as expenditure as soon as there is a legal or constructive obligation committing the Charity to that expenditure, it is probable that settlement is required and the amount of the obligation can be measured reliably. All expenditure is accounted for on the accruals basis, inclusive of any value added tax which cannot be recovered.

Tangible fixed assets

Depreciation is provided at rates calculated to write off the cost of each asset over its expected useful life, being three years for computers and other equipment and five years for motor vehicles. Items of equipment are capitalised where the purchase price exceeds £2,500.

Taxation

The Charity is exempt from taxation on its charitable activities.

Fund accounting

In order to differentiate the availability of funds they are categorised according to the following definitions:

Unrestricted funds are donations and other incoming resources receivable or generated for the objects of the charity without further specified purpose and are available as general funds.

Restricted funds are to be used for specific purposes as laid down by the donor. Expenditure, which meets these criteria, is charged to the fund together with a fair allocation of management and support costs.

Pension costs

The Charity operates a defined contribution pension scheme for many of its employees. The pension charge represents the amount payable by the Charity to the scheme during the year.

Operating leases

Lease payments are recognised as an expense over the lease term on a straight-line basis. The aggregate benefit of lease incentives is recognised as a reduction to expense on a straight-line basis over the lease term.

Functional currency

The financial statements are prepared in sterling which is the functional currency of the entity.

2. Income from charitable activities

	2021	2020
	£	£
Unrestricted funds - grants		
Solihull MBC	511,252	511,252
Restricted funds - grants		
Solihull MBC		
Adult carers	40,000	50,000
Carers Trust national		
Young carers	6,748	2,500
Children in Need		
Young carers	39,572	40,076
Other grants		
Young carers	8,600	-
Covid relief grants	104,651	-
	199,571	92,576

Incoming resources include amounts receivable after the year end in respect of expenditure incurred by the year end.

NOTES FORMING PART OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2021

3. Expenditure on charitable activities

Direct and support

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total 2021 £	Total 2020 £
Carer support and activities	12,024	14,587	26,611	35,629
Staff costs	369,570	115,039	484,609	458,992
Recruitment	1,351	215	1,566	2,412
Premises	13,908	2,227	16,135	22,759
Communications and office costs	22,257	44,703	66,960	35,787
Motor and travel expenses	6,491	96	6,587	11,592
Training and consultancy	334	-	334	3,616
Publicity/information	67	3,375	3,442	2,376
Insurance	2,356	-	2,356	2,301
Professional fees and subscriptions	6,549	-	6,549	4,257
Other	2,166	-	2,166	2,270
	437,073	180,242	617,315	581,991

Governance costs

			2021 £	2020 £
Independent examination	1,800	-	1,800	1,800
Professional fees	3,277	-	3,277	2,017
Other	420	-	420	2,256
	5,497	-	5,497	6,073

Total expenditure on charitable activities

	442,570	180,242	622,812	588,064
2020	476,892	111,172	-	588,064

4. Staff costs

The total staff costs for the year amounted to £484,609 (2020: £458,922). The costs for 2021 include employer national insurance contributions amounting to £28,333 (2020: £29,206) and pension costs of £20,289 (2020: £18,877).

The charity during the year had on average 9 full time employees (2020:9) and 17 part time employees (2020: 14) corresponding to an estimated 19 full time equivalents (2020: 18).

No employee received emoluments in excess of £60,000 during the year or the previous year.

In addition, at the year-end there were 12 directors (2020: 9). The directors all give freely of their time and expertise and did not receive any emoluments or other benefits.

5. Operating lease commitments

The charity has commitments under an operating lease for land and buildings expiring in 2023 amounting to £28,000 (2020: £42,000).

	2021 £	2020 £
Amounts falling due within 1 year	14,000	14,000
Amounts falling due within 2 to 5 years	14,000	28,000

6. Fixed assets

	Motor Cars £	Computer Equipment £	Total £
COST			
At beginning and end of year	17,650	13,200	30,850
ACCUMULATED DEPRECIATION			
Opening balance	10,935	1,100	12,035
Charge for the year	1,580	4,400	5,980
Closing balance	12,515	5,500	8,015
NET BOOK VALUE	5,135	7,700	12,835

There were no capital commitments at the year-end (2020: none).

NOTES FORMING PART OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2021

7. Investments

At cost and valuation

	2021	2020
	£	£
Short term deposits held at UK banks	233,437	216,713

8. Debtors

	2021	2020
	£	£
Prepayments	757	715

9. Creditors: amounts falling due within one year

	2021	2020
	£	£
Accruals	52,930	37,646
Deferred income	10,679	10,387
Pension contributions	10,150	2,792
	73,759	50,825

10. Analysis of net assets by funds

	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Total funds
	£	£	£
Net assets	257,689	46,786	304,475

11. Restricted income funds

The restricted income funds comprise the following unexpired balances of donations and grants to be applied for the following purposes:

	Opening balances	Incoming resources	Outgoing resources	Closing balances
	£	£	£	£
Children in Need project	122	39,572	(37,679)	2,015
Young carers projects	4,127	15,348	(1,964)	17,511
Adult projects	20,708	40,000	(38,668)	22,040
Covid relief funds	-	104,651	(101,931)	2,720
Other funds	-	2,500	-	2,500
	24,957	202,071	(180,242)	46,786

12. Trustees expenses

Trustees received no expense payments during the year or the previous year. In addition, the charity provided indemnity cover for Trustees costing £683 (2020: £670).

13. Related party transactions

No Trustee or other person connected with the charity had any personal interest in any contract or transaction entered into by the charity during the year. The Trustees are not aware of any related party transactions requiring disclosure.

@solihullcarers



**CARERS
TRUST
US TO
MAKE A
CHANGE**

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www.solihullcarers.org

**CARERS
TRUST**
Solihull

SUPPORTED BY:



Solihull Carers Centre (SCC) is a company limited by guarantee and a Registered Charity trading as Carers Trust Solihull (CTS). Registered Company in England No. 04378042. Registered Charity No. 1092613.

Registered Office:
The Carers Centre
Solihull Fire Station Annexe
620 Streetsbrook Road
Solihull B91 1QY

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