

ANNUAL REPORT 2024-2025

Helping older people in
West Norfolk feel valued
with regular, quality social
interaction



West Norfolk Befriending works with socially isolated older people living in West Norfolk and aims to reduce isolation and improve overall health.



CONTACT US

Office address:

West Norfolk Befriending,
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Norfolk.
PE30 1HX

Telephone: 01553 763500

E-mail info@wnbefriending.org.uk

Website www.wnbefriending.org.uk

You can also follow us on twitter @WNBefriending
Or Facebook <https://en-gb.facebook.com/westnorfolkbefriending>

NB: We welcome personal callers to the office, but given that the majority of our work takes place out in the community, please phone first to make an appointment to ensure that someone is in the office when you arrive.

West Norfolk Befriending's Aims and Objectives

West Norfolk Befriending aims to reduce social isolation and improve quality of life by matching isolated older people with trained and security checked volunteer befrienders, who will visit them on a regular basis.

The objectives of the organisation are:

- To reduce social isolation and loneliness
- To improve quality of life
- To assist clients in maintaining their independence
- To improve the physical and mental well-being of clients, thus reducing demands on statutory services, including Adult Social Services and the NHS

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT



It gives me great pleasure to present this annual report for 2024/25.

Once again, this was a successful year for WNB in terms of its service delivery and to a significant extent the acquisition of significant funding.

That said, there were some significant staffing and structural changes as a result of Pippa May leaving WNB in early summer 2024. Before I go on to explain those changes I feel it is important to comment on Pippa's excellent service to the charity for approximately 14 years through some very challenging times (including effective leadership of the charity and the development of telephone befriending during the worst of the Covid-pandemic) and her continued efforts to secure funding, culminating in major funding being received (as mentioned below) from The Mercers Charitable Foundation and McCarthy & Stone.

As a result of Pippa's departure, the Board acted swiftly to recruit a new Chief Executive and in August 2024, Colin Perriss joined WNB. Colin came with previous experience as a Charity Trustee and a significant background in Business Development. Linked to his approach to the development of WNB, the Board accepted a proposal to refine the role of the Chief Executive to allow the postholder to focus on: the identification of funding opportunities and applications for funding; quality standards and the oversight of staff. This new structure brought with it a need to establish an Operational Manager role to oversee the delivery of our befriending service and manage our band of volunteers. I am pleased to report that Anna Sylvester was later appointed to the Ops Manager post and subsequently the Board approved an increase in Amanda Tickner's working hours to deal with the assessment and matching of clients and otherwise provide support to the team.

The Mercer's Charitable Foundation became our largest single source of funding over the period 2023/24 – funding that was to be directed towards client assessments and matching in the first instance. As I write, I am pleased to report that Mercer's will continue to provide highly significant funding, to cover our core befriending operations, for the next three years.

At the end of the financial year Sue Gardner, our Finance Officer, retired having provided a superb service to the Board and Chief Executive for many years and we were saddened by her departure. We were fortunate, however, to enlist the services of a new Finance Officer (Kerenza Evans) to work with the Treasurer and ensure our finances are properly monitored and recorded.

Staying on the subject of funding, as mentioned above the identification and acquisition of funding was a priority during 2024/25. As in previous years the Borough Council of King's Lynn and West Norfolk was our only source of funding from a statutory body - that funding is and has been appreciated for many years. The very significant unrestricted funds from The Mercer's Charitable Foundation and McCarty & Stone were used to cover the core costs needed to deliver the service, cover volunteer expenses and staff costs. In addition, I wish to mention the support, financial and otherwise provided by: King's Lynn & District Sugarcraft Club; the LILY Project; Norfolk Community Foundation; and many others – with the full list being available elsewhere in the report. With their help and support, coupled with a financially prudent approach to budgeting and expenditure, we were able to minimise the need to draw-down funds, from reserves, to a minimum.

Membership of the Board remained relatively constant during the reporting year-although, our colleague, Kevin Clarke, did step down as a Trustee in late 2024. As always, we are actively seeking new members. As in previous years, Board Members brought a range of professional expertise and relevant personal experience to their oversight of the charity and in providing practical assistance to staff.

The impact of extreme loneliness is regularly highlighted in the media and of late there has been a report that such loneliness, in terms of overall health is worse than smoking fifteen cigarettes per day. Therefore the entire team – volunteers, staff and Trustees, with support from our funders and donors, should take credit for the fact that collectively we have continued to play an important local role in preventing unnecessary worsening health among older folk in West Norfolk.

On behalf of fellow Trustees, I wish to record my sincere thanks to each and every Volunteer and member of Staff for all your hard work and support during 2024/25 and look forward to your continued involvement and commitment, to WNB, during 2025/26.

Alan Hayes

CHAIR OF BOARD OF TRUSTEES
WEST NORFOLK BEFRIENDING

CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S REPORT

I was appointed as CEO of West Norfolk Befriending in August 2024, so almost five months into the 23-24 financial year and with the charity in a good position, thanks to the work of my predecessor Pippa May, Anna, Amanda and the team of volunteers. Not forgetting the contribution of the long standing board of trustees who have guided the charity throughout the 20 plus years of its existence.



Much of the first few months of my tenure was taken up with learning about the concept of what the charity does, getting to know how the organisation functions and starting to formulate strategies to fulfil the boards remit of taking the charity forward in the coming years , focussing on future longer term strategies.

As a result of my initial review of operations, I felt that maximising the use of existing talent and experience within the team was particularly important and a subtle restructure was suggested to and accepted by the board of trustees. Anna was subsequently appointed to the new role of operations manager, where her years of knowledge and experience can be used to full effect, very well supported by Amanda.

The work of Pippa created a strong financial foundation to move forwards, but additional funding will be required to continue to deliver the much needed befriending services and we will need to ensure that there are appropriate strategies in place to ensure the continued availability of funds.

Applications are being prepared for additional grants to cover the costs for 25 -26 and options are being considered as to how it may be possible to secure finance to cover expenditure for multiple years and to invest in the existing structure and expand the number of clients that WNB is able to work with as we move forward.

The Quality in Befriending award falls due in June 2025 so the time invested by me (and the team) in achieving reaccreditation of this this important quality mark will provide me with an 'in depth' study of the policies and methods that form the basis of how the organisation operates and the quality of service for which WNB is renowned.

I would like to thank everyone that has helped and supported me in my first few months at West Norfolk Befriending, I consider it a privilege to have been appointed CEO of such a well established and respected organisation that makes such an important contribution to those who find themselves lonely and isolated in West Norfolk.

I am very much look forward to seeing what we can achieve together in the coming year.

Colin Perriss

CHIEF EXECUTIVE

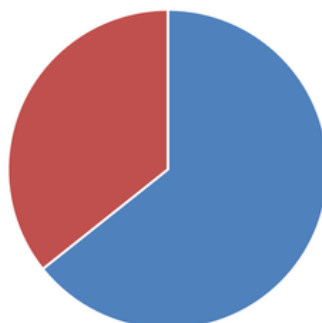
OUR CLIENTS

Age of Clients



■ 55-65 ■ 65-74 ■ 75-84 ■ 85-90 ■ 90+

Client's gender



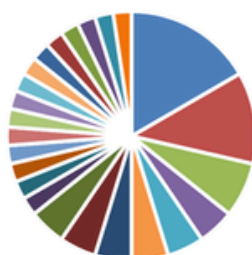
■ Female 27 ■ Male 15

Supporting unpaid family carers



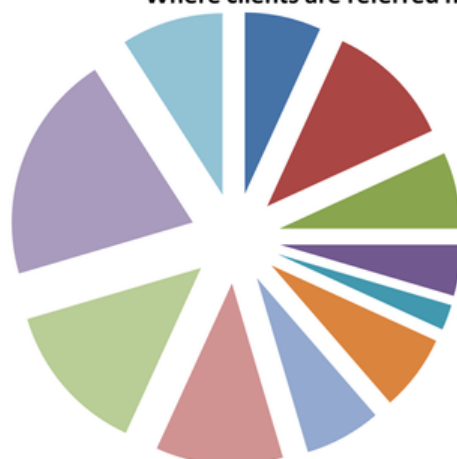
■ Yes 21 ■ No 21

Where Our Clients Live



■ King's Lynn ■ Downham Market ■ Heacham
 ■ North Wootton ■ Watlington ■ Clenchwarton
 ■ Hunstanton ■ Outwell ■ Snettisham
 ■ Castle Acre ■ Hockwold ■ Emneth
 ■ Hilgay ■ Sandringham ■ South Creak
 ■ West Lynn ■ Brancaster ■ Wormegay
 ■ Castle Rising ■ Gayton ■ South Wootton
 ■ Wolferton ■ Wiggenhall St Mary ■ West Winch

Where clients are referred from



■ ABC 3
 ■ Another Voluntary Organisation 5
 ■ Community Matron 3
 ■ GP surgery 2
 ■ Hospital 1
 ■ LILY 3
 ■ Other 3
 ■ Relative 5
 ■ Self-referral 6
 ■ Social Prescribers 9
 ■ Social Service 4

OUR VOLUNTEERS

At the very core of West Norfolk Befriending you will find a dedicated and committed team of volunteers who spend their time making a real difference to the lives of a significant number of isolated and lonely elderly people living in West Norfolk.

As well as providing befriending, our volunteers help the staff team with administration, events, recruitment of additional volunteers as well as many other tasks that contribute to the operations of the charity.



The charity supports the volunteer team by providing support, training and help with any concerns or challenges that may arise during the course of their befriending activities.

It can be a challenge to ensure that there are enough volunteers available to meet the ambitions of the charity, volunteers move away, their circumstances can change and for completely understandable and valid reasons, they are not always able to continue to volunteer. Combine this with the competition from other charities for volunteers and it can be an ongoing challenge to ensure that sufficient resources will be available to supply the ever increasing demand for befrienders.

With this in mind we as an organisation will be putting increased attention on our strategies in an attempt to ensure that we provide the best possible operating environment for our existing volunteer team and look at how we can attract and retain more volunteers during the coming year. This is a clear priority if we are to ensure that WNB continues to do what it has been doing for decades and into the future.

If you can help, or know someone that may be interested in talking to us about volunteering, our contact details can be found on Page 3 of this report.

A huge **THANK YOU** to our volunteers for all that they do for West Norfolk Befriending!

OUR BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Alan Hayes	Trustee (Chair & Secretary)
Richard Curtis, MVO	Trustee (Vice - Chair)
Linda Woodley	Trustee (Vice - Chair)
Karl Jermyn	Trustee (Treasurer)
David Annable	Trustee
Mike Lee-Evans	Trustee
Valerie Woods	Trustee
Lisa Cook	Trustee

OUR STAFF

Colin Perriss	Chief Executive
Anna Sylvester	Operations Manager
Amanda Tickner	Client Assessor/Volunteers
Chris White	Database Developer
Mike Lee-Evans	Client Assessor Volunteer & Trustee
Jean Ellis	Data Input Volunteer
Jean Cook	Data Input/Admin Volunteer
Janet Atkins	Office Admin Volunteer



West Norfolk Befriending are proud to be holders of the Quality in Befriending award.

This award is a UK-specific accreditation for befriending services, aimed at enhancing service quality and ensuring best practices in supporting individuals facing social isolation.

Overview of the Award

The Quality in Befriending Award is the only award in the UK specifically designed for befriending services. Launched in 2010 and revised in 2021, it is developed by Befriending Networks in consultation with member organizations and experts in the field. The award is recognized by referrers, befrienders, commissioners, and funders, making it a valuable asset for organizations involved in befriending.

Benefits of the Award

Organizations that achieve the Quality in Befriending Award enjoy several benefits, including:

Increased Confidence:

The award enhances the confidence of potential referrers, befrienders, and funders in the organization's capabilities and quality of service.

Quality Improvement: It provides an opportunity for organizations to review and reflect on their befriending services, leading to improvements in practices and policies.

Recognition: Award holders receive a certificate, the right to use the Quality Award logo, and inclusion in the public directory of Quality Award holders, which can aid in marketing and funding opportunities.

OUR FUNDERS

A big thank you to all of those organisations that have helped to fund us throughout the past year, including,

King's Lynn & West Norfolk Borough Council

LILY

Mercers - Earl of Northampton's charity

McCarthy Stone

Garfield Weston

Norfolk Community Foundation

Red Socks Charitable Trust

Charles Littlewood Hill Foundation

Geoffrey Watling

Simon Gibson Charitable Trust

Our Supporters

Our grateful thanks to all of the individuals and organisations that have supported us this year, including,

Chris White, Downham Aid In Sickness, The Live & Let Live Public House King's Lynn & District Sugar Craft Club, West Norfolk Wins(Community Lottery) Tesco Extra Hardwick' The Parish Council Rooms South Wootton, The Filling Station, Your Local Paper, The Lynn News, Radio West Norfolk, King's Lynn Samaritans, Elements at the Manor, West Norfolk Carers, Derek Friend Electrical.

TRESURERS REPORT

During the course of the financial year our previous Chief Exec, Pippa May, was successful in securing significant funding from the Mercer's Charitable Foundation and McCarthy & Stone - as a result yearly income increased from £58k in 23/24 to £75k in 24/25. The majority of this income is used to cover salaries for staff – which increased from £46k in 23/24 to £50k in 24/25.

Total expenditure for the financial year was £65k with salaries being the single greatest expense. At year end there was a surplus of £10k compared to a slight deficit of £2k for 2023/24. £54k, in the bank account, was carried forward to 2025/26 compared to £43k carried forward from 2023/24.

WNB continues to operate on a narrow range of funding sources - and, in effect, at any one time has either sufficient funds or very limited funds. Future success depends on continued efforts to secure funding from this limited number of sources - this builds upon recent successes, in year, in terms of some very significant funding.

In terms of Reserves, the relevant policy has been amended to increase the level of reserves to cover four-months operating costs. At present, with cash held in accounts there is sufficient funding to continue operating for nine months - however, in the context of charities, this is not a significant amount.

Finally, I wish to record thanks to the charity's previous Finance Officer (Sue Gardner) who retired from the role at the end of March and to note the subsequent appointment of Kerenza Evans who has taken on the role

Karl Jermyn
Treasurer

INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT

INDEPENDENT EXAMINERS REPORT TO THE TRUSTEES OF WEST NORFOLK BEFRIENDING, CHARITY NUMBER 1111735

I report of the accounts of the Charity for the year ended 31 March 2024

Respective responsibilities of the trustees and examiner

As the charity's trustees you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts; you consider that the audit requirements of section 43(2) of the Charities Act 1993 (the act) does not apply. It is my responsibility to state, on the basis of the procedures specified in the General Directions given by the Charities Commissioners under section 43(7)(b) of the Act, whether particular matters have come to my attention.

Basis of the independent examiner's report

My examination was carried out in accordance with the General Direction given by the Charity Commissioners. An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the Charity and a comparison of the accounts prepared with those records, and seeking explanations from you as trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit, and consequently I do not express an audit opinion on the view given by the accounts.

**INDEPENDENT EXAMINERS REPORT
TO THE TRUSTEES OF WEST NORFOLK BEFRIENDING,
CHARITY NUMBER 1111735**

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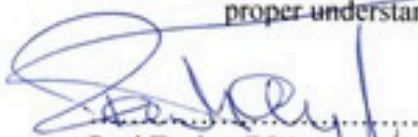
Independent examiner's statement

In connection with my examination, no matter has come to my attention:

- 1 which gives me reasonable cause to believe that in any material respect the requirements
 - a. to keep accounting records in accordance with section 41 of the act;
and
 - b. to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and to comply with the accounting requirements of the Act

have not been met; or

- 2 to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.



Paul Taylor, FCA
22 Middleton Street, Wymondham, NR18 0AD
5th September 2025

WEST NORFOLK BEFRIENDING
Charity Number 1111735
Statement of income and expenditure for the year ending 31.03.2025

INCOME	2024-25		2023-2024	
	Unrestricted	Restricted	Unrestricted	Restricted
Borough Council of King's Lynn & West Norfolk	4,200	0	4,200	0
ULY Project	13,367	0	12,978	0
Earl of Northampton's Charity (Mercer's)	20,000	0	0	20,512
Downham Aid in Sickness	0	0	400	0
The Central Co-op Community Fund	0	0	500	0
Red Socks Charitable Trust	0	0	0	2,236
Norfolk Community Foundation Love Norfolk Fund	0	0	0	4,395
The Charles Littlewood Hill Foundation	0	5,000	0	1,000
Clan Trust	0	0	700	0
Foyle Foundation	0	0	0	7,500
Antelope Trust	0	0	400	0
Geoffrey Watling	0	1,500	0	0
Simon Gibson Charitable Trust	0	4,505	0	0
McCarthy Stone	10,000	0	0	0
Garfield Watson	6,000	0	0	0
Trinity Rotary Club of King's Lynn	0	0	500	0
West Norfolk Wins Lottery	432	0	556	0
Bank Interest & Other Sundry Income	677	0	528	0
Other Donations & Fundraising	9,983	0	2,449	0
Gift Aid			218	0
	64,659	11,005	23,428	35,643
EXPENDITURE				
Salaries	42,996	10,374	28,811	20,447
Less Employment allowance	-2,085	0	-2,171	0
Staff travel & expenses	0	1,333	0	1,316
Staff training	0	0	0	30
Property Costs	0	4,920	619	3,198
Volunteer Support events	0	0	0	225
Volunteer Travel	0	1,102	0	1,796
Client Support Events	0	0	0	362
Telephone & Internet	722	297	531	160
Stationery, postage & other admin costs	0	1,202	0	1,088
Computer expenses	657	0	130	0
General expenses	0	163	0	269
Insurance	0	700	0	642
Memberships & subscriptions	0	570	0	522
Audit & financial administration	2,268	0	2,694	0
Depreciation	150	0	150	0
Recruitment & Advertising	670	0	0	0
	45,377	20,660	30,763	30,053
NETT INCOME	19,282	-9,655	-7,335	5,590

Fund details	BBF	INCOME	EXPENDITURE	BCF
General Reserves	34,243	64,659	45,377	53,525
Red Socks Charitable Trust	1,304		1,304	0
NV Love Norfolk Fund	2,800		2,800	0
Charles Littlewood Hill Foundation	667	5,000	5,667	0
Norfolk Community Foundation Love Norfolk	5,635		5,635	0
Geoffrey Watling		1,500	1,500	0
Simon Gibson Charitable Trust		4,505	3,754	751
Total	44,649	75,664	66,037	54,276

WEST NORFOLK BEFRIENDING

Statement of Assets & Liabilities to 31.03.2025

	2024-2025	2023-2024
Fixed Assets		
COMPUTERS, EQUIPMENT & FURNITURE	300	450
Current assets		
LLOYDS TREASURERS ACCOUNT	4,479	1,359
LLOYDS DEPOSIT ACCOUNT	49,490	41,813
	54,270	43,622
Prepayments	270	233
Outstanding income	1,114	1,082
Total assets	55,654	44,937
Liabilities		
ACCRUALS	1,378	288
Total net assets	54,276	44,649
REPRESENTED BY		
Surplus funds	54,276	44,649
Balance of Red Socks Charitable Trust	0	1,304
Balance of Norfolk Community Foundation Love Norfolk Fund	0	2,800
Balance of The Charles Littlewood Hill Foundation	0	667
Balance of The Foyle Foundation	0	5,635
Simon Gibson Charitable Trust	751	-
	Reserves	34,243
	54,276	44,649

Approved by the Board of Trustees and signed on its behalf by:

Al Hayes Chairman

11th September 2025 Date

‘Sometimes the only thing that's written
on a clients calendar is a West Norfolk
Befriending volunteers name’

Anna - Operations Manager

‘You feel like you're not entirely alone
and forgotten’

A Client

‘I Like helping people and giving back
to the community’

A Volunteer