



Voluntary Action South West Surrey

*supporting the voluntary and community sector
in Guildford and Waverley*



annual report

for the financial year of 01 April 2024 to 31 March 2025

Companies House Registration Number: 05841344



Legal and Administrative Information

Charity Registration Number: 1116293

Company Registration Number: 05841344

Registered Office:

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Our Principal Funding Sources



Surrey County Council



NHS Surrey Heartlands ICB



Guildford Borough Council



National Lottery
Big Lottery Fund



Waverley Borough Council

The Chair's Report

for the year ending 31 March 2025

Navigating our role in an ever-changing landscape has had its highs and lows. This year has been no exception—from the fantastic news of securing another successful Big Lottery funding bid to the challenges of adapting to the closure of our North and Central Guildford Social Prescribing Service due to PCN restructuring. While this presented difficulties, we have also embraced new opportunities, launching two exciting Social Prescribing pilots for probation and forthcoming acute care at Royal Surrey. We have high hopes for both, and the probation pilot is already making a meaningful impact.

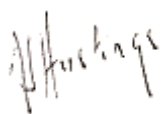
This work lies at the heart of VASWS, yet our role isn't always well understood. We operate beyond formal public sector boundaries while deeply connected to them, breaking down silos and broadening perspectives on what community means and what it can deliver.

Looking ahead, uncertainty remains a major theme. The challenges we face—rising community needs, managing complex caseloads, and navigating shifts in funding amidst the cost-of-living crisis—are nothing new. However, it's vital that we respond collectively rather than retreating into sector-specific concerns. The upcoming devolution in Surrey will undoubtedly bring change, and we must ensure that the voices of our communities are heard and represented. For VASWS, this means standing firm in our advocacy while safeguarding our core mission.

In light of this, the board made the important decision to expand our membership, inviting applications over the summer of 2024. I am thrilled to share that in the financial year we successfully recruited outstanding new trustees, all of whom have already made a fantastic start in their roles. Their dedication will be instrumental as we continue to strengthen VASWS, and we are off to a great start with a full review of our internal policies.

After six years on the board, I feel the time is right for fresh leadership and a new approach. I am delighted to announce that, following a thorough selection process, Valeria Locatelli was unanimously voted in as the new Chair in 2025. As the board moves forward, it will be crucial to revisit our purpose, ambitions, and direction—especially in times of uncertainty. By sharing challenges equally across the sector, we can better work towards the outcomes we seek for the people and communities we serve.

It is customary for an outgoing trustee to extend their thanks, and I wholeheartedly do so. But beyond that, I want to say what a true pleasure it has been to work alongside such dedicated board members, staff, and volunteers. VASWS has navigated a challenging period, and it is thanks to the incredible people here—both paid and voluntary—that we have overcome obstacles together. You never gave up, and you met each challenge with resilience and determination. For that, I am deeply grateful, and I feel privileged to have stood alongside you.



Debbie Hustings

19.05.2025

Outgoing Chair of the Board of Trustees

The Joint CEO Report

for the year ending 31 March 2025

We are pleased to present this year's CEO report, where we reflect on another year of progress and partnership working. As an organisation, we at VASWS have continued to work tirelessly to support, strengthen and amplify the work of voluntary organisations across Guildford and Waverley. We have built on existing relationships with our health and statutory partners, working alongside them to unlock resources, share learning and provide insights.

During this year, charities and community organisations have seen increased demand for services, with the need not being matched with equivalent increases in their funding. This has resulted in many organisations, particularly the smaller grassroots ones, having to operate with limited resources, relying on a mix of small grants, commissioning and community fundraising. With volunteer numbers still not fully returned to pre-pandemic levels, we have seen a shift toward more flexible and one-off volunteering, particularly among younger people. Inevitably this has once again seen an increase in waiting lists for services, leaving gaps in provision locally.

The 2024-2025 financial year saw the commencement of our Volunteer Connections project, funded by the National Lottery Reaching Communities Fund. The additional capacity it has given us has allowed us to focus on increasing volunteering in Guildford and Waverley by providing 1:1 support to charities and communities groups, running networks and training for volunteer coordinators and diversifying the volunteer workforce by working with marginalised groups. This work has been key in helping to enhance the volunteer offer of local organisations. The funding that we have received has also enabled us to update our website and given us an enhanced presence both in person and via social media.

To celebrate Volunteers Week, we held a Volunteers Coordinator Network in Godalming, which provided the opportunity for organisations to come together, share ideas and discuss any key issues, challenges or achievements in a confidential environment. In addition, we invited local volunteers to a free angling day at Marsh Farm Fishery in Milford to thank them for all of their time, given freely during the year, and this proved a great success.

The networks that we run continue to flourish, with many new organisations joining on an ongoing basis. Feedback is always positive and people see it as a good way of sharing their updates and the work they do, either at the networks, or through information cascaded out via email. They continue to help us to build relationships with those attending and have given us strong links with organisations that work across the boroughs.

We are now into the second year of working with the mental health support charity Catalyst as part of The Hope Project to deliver wellbeing walks, which we lead monthly from The Hive in Guildford. We have found that numbers are slowly increasing and it has given the people attending both support and companionship.

The Royal Surrey County Hospital and Surrey Heartlands Integrated Care Board received Workforce Innovations funding to set up a Frailty Academy. As part of the funding they contracted us to employ a Community Frailty Coordinator, who has supported the roll-out of the Frailty Academy programme amongst small charities and voluntary organisations in Guildford and Waverley to help improve the delivery of their services for older people.

We continued to represent the voluntary sector at various different meetings held by health organisations and the county and borough councils, including the Guildford & Waverley Health & Wellbeing Partnership, Frimley VCSE Alliance, Guildford & Waverley Corporate Strategy Group, Guildford & Waverley Integrated Neighbourhood Teams Steering Group and, along with Citizens Advice South West Surrey, we have also set up a Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise (VCSE) Strategic Group for Guildford and Waverley and held our first meeting.

As part of our core offering we have helped to build the capacity of our local voluntary and community organisations by providing support around funding, governance and organisational development.

We are now into the second year of the Surrey County Council SPARKS Funding that we administer on their behalf, which supported small-scale community initiatives in 5 wards across Guildford and Waverley. During the year the panels granted funding to 27 organisations working in some of the most deprived areas of Guildford and Waverley.

We continue to run the Guildford and Waverley Social Prescribing Service across East Guildford, East Waverley and West of Waverley Primary Care Networks. Due to a PCN restructure we no longer run the service in North and Central Guildford. This caused some instability, but fortunately due to other projects coming on board we have navigated our way through this period without losing any members of staff.

With funding from Surrey County Council, we have been commissioned to run two 18-month pilot projects, tailoring Social Prescribing for the Probation Service and for high-intensity service users at the Royal Surrey County Hospital A&E and Acute Care department. For the first pilot, which started accepting referrals in January 2025, we have been working alongside the Guildford Probation Service and the Ministry of Justice to offer Social Prescribing specifically to people on probation. The project has already gathered interest from the Ministry of Justice and the Civil Service, and we look forward to progressing the pilot over the next twelve months. In the coming year, we are excited to be welcoming referrals for the Social Prescribing in A&E and Acute Care pilot project, focusing on introducing Social Prescribing for 'frequent visitors' to A&E.

In the 2025-2026 financial year we will be working towards providing a more comprehensive training programme, open to all, which will include running a mini "funding" conference in October. In addition, we will be looking at our strategy to ensure that we are fully aligned with the needs of the sector and able to respond in a timely matter to the local government reorganisation proposed by Surrey County Council.

We would like to finish by thanking our wonderful staff, volunteers and the board, who do a fantastic job in ensuring that the sector is fully supported, whether it be through our core offer, our Social Prescribing service, or the projects that we run. Thanks also go to our commissioners, whose continued support enables us to develop as an organisation, giving us a voice in the sector.



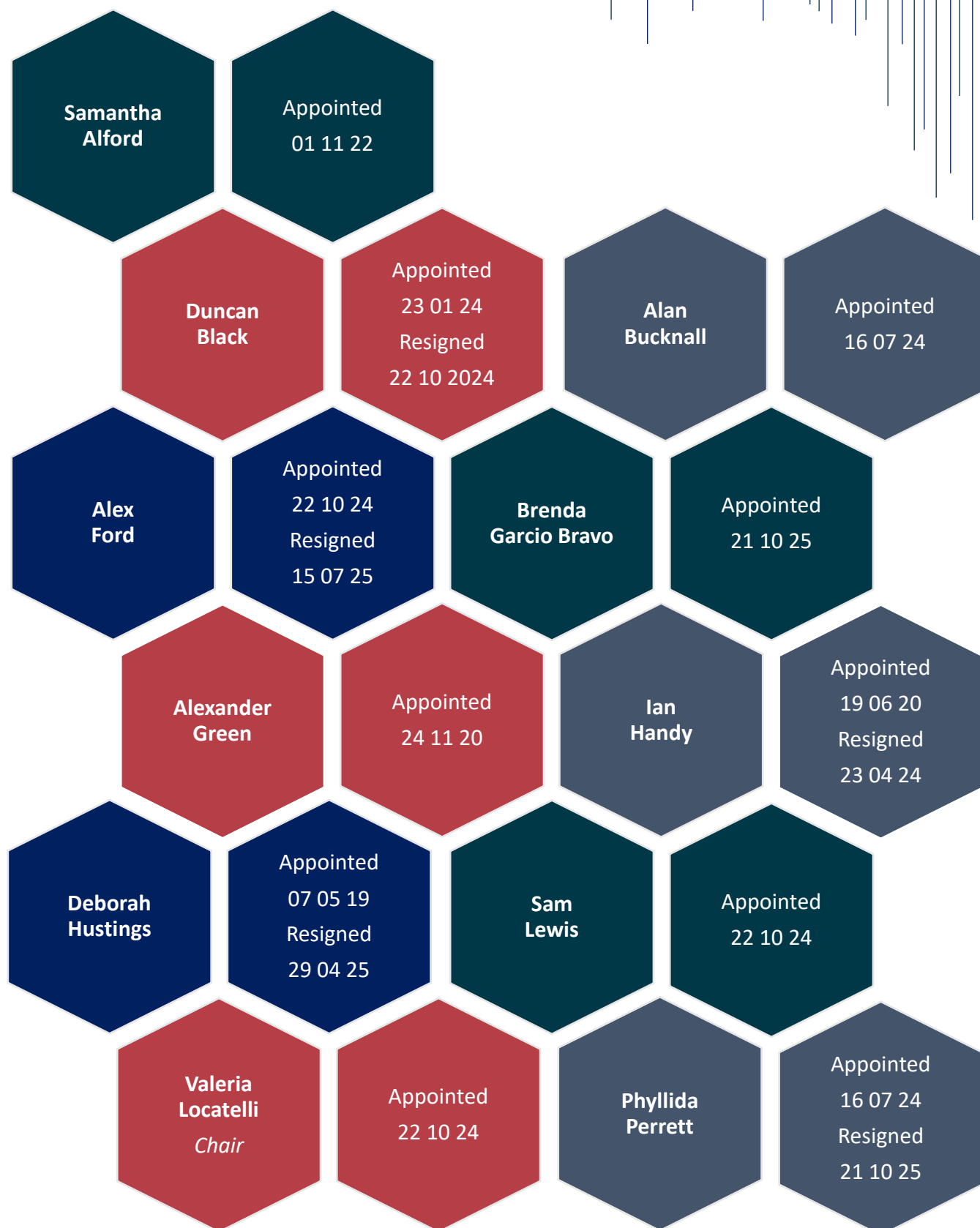
Caroline Keith

*Joint CEO;
Volunteer Development Manager*



Ian Ross

*Joint CEO;
Development Manager*



VASWS Board of Trustees 2024/25

During the 2024/25 financial year, VASWS had ten Board members. Deborah Hustings stepped down as Chair, with Valeria Locatelli appointed as the new Chair of the Board. Between April 2024 and March 2025, five new Board members were appointed, whilst Deborah Hustings, Ian Handy and Duncan Black resigned in this period. We would like to thank Deborah and Ian in particular for their many years of service to VASWS. Jane Weaver (VASWS Finance Manager) remains the Company Secretary.

VASWS Staff 2024/25

During the 2024/25 financial year, VASWS had 18 staff members in total. The year was a period of change amongst the organisation, with low staff turnover, but a variety of role changes as new projects and service changes occurred. The Joint CEOs and Senior Management Team prioritised staff retention and growing the organisation with the introduction of new projects in 2024/25, and further into the 2025/26 financial year.

<i>Thahera Abdulahad</i>	Office Manager
<i>Hilary Holness</i>	Office Manager (Maternity Cover)
<i>Catherine Johnson</i>	PCN Social Prescribing Link Worker
<i>Kate Jones</i>	Volunteer Connections Volunteer Coordinator
<i>Caroline Keith</i>	Joint CEO; Volunteer Development Manager; <i>Senior Management Team</i>
<i>Jonathan Knight</i>	Social Prescribing Internal Team Leader; PCN Social Prescribing Link Worker; Social Prescribing Link Worker for Probation
<i>Amber Linell</i>	Community Frailty Academy Coordinator
<i>Jasmine Moorey</i>	PCN Social Prescribing Link Worker
<i>Diana Rang</i>	PCN Social Prescribing Link Worker
<i>David Rose</i>	Volunteer Centre Coordinator
<i>Ian Ross</i>	Joint CEO; Development Manager; <i>Senior Management Team</i>
<i>Helena Routledge</i>	PCN Social Prescribing Link Worker; Social Prescribing Link Worker for Probation; Volunteer Connections Volunteer Coordinator
<i>Alice Sheppard</i>	Volunteer Connections Volunteer Coordinator
<i>Ben Standring</i>	Operations Manager; Social Prescribing External Team Lead; <i>Senior Management Team</i>
<i>Danielle Stewart</i>	PCN Social Prescribing Link Worker
<i>Helena Steinfeldt-Kristensen</i>	PCN Social Prescribing Link Worker
<i>Rachel Truelove</i>	PCN Social Prescribing Link Worker; Social Prescribing Link Worker for A&E
<i>Jane Weaver</i>	Finance Manager; Company Secretary; <i>Senior Management Team</i>

Our Projects

As an infrastructure organisation we aim to strengthen the voluntary and community sector across South West Surrey. We run a number of different projects all aimed at helping members of the local community to access services to improve their health and wellbeing.



Volunteer Centre

We work with the voluntary, community and public sectors to develop volunteering opportunities, whilst enabling individuals to access brilliant volunteering opportunities that will bolster our community.



Social Prescribing

The Guildford and Waverley Social Prescribing Service addresses the wider determinants of health in the local population. The service links health and community by finding out what matters most to an individual and supporting them to access local and national services that can address their needs. Our Social Prescribing for Probation and Social Prescribing for A&E pilots are developing the service into new areas.



Volunteer Connections

Through our Volunteer Connections project, we aim to increase the level of volunteering amongst small charities and voluntary organisations to enable them to deliver their services more effectively. The project aims to upskill groups to be more proficient in managing their volunteer workforce, and we encourage volunteering amongst underrepresented groups.



Community Frailty Academy Coordinator

Our Coordinator assists in the planning and delivery of frailty education programmes to the voluntary, community and social enterprise (VCSE) sector and provides training where necessary to raise awareness of the issues relating to older people living with frailty.

“The growth of our projects has enhanced the service that we provide to the community and bolstered the stability of the organisation. We at Voluntary Action South West Surrey have championed a resilient, inclusive voluntary sector to enable residents, volunteers and the community to flourish.”

- Caroline Keith, Joint CEO and Volunteer Coordinator

Our Mission Statement

As an infrastructure organisation we aim to strengthen the voluntary and community sector across South West Surrey. We support all members of the local community to access services to improve their health and wellbeing.

Our Vision

We at Voluntary Action South West Surrey will champion a resilient, inclusive voluntary sector to enable residents, volunteers and the community to flourish. We will address the wider determinants of health and wellbeing, enhancing accessibility and diversity.

Our Values

The organisation has committed to the following values:

- Recognising and addressing barriers
 - Promoting equality, diversity and inclusion at all times
 - Forming collaborations across the sector to champion health and wellbeing
 - Respecting and valuing each other
 - Striving to be the best we can be
-



Volunteer Centre and Volunteer Recruitment

The Volunteer Centre is the central physical hub of Voluntary Action South West Surrey, connecting potential volunteers with an array of placement opportunities. The centre itself is manned by our Volunteer Coordinator David Rose and helps people to find the right volunteer role for them, whilst working alongside organisations looking to recruit volunteers across Guildford and Waverley. The Centre offers a bespoke service for anyone needing help and support, including specialist advice to people struggling with mental health and other challenges.

Timeline of the 2024/25 Volunteer Centre Year

QUARTER 1

April 2024 – June 2024

- We launched our brand-new National Lottery-funded project 'Volunteer Connections', focusing on increasing volunteering in Guildford and Waverley.
- The 2024-25 edition of our 'Volunteering: It's for Everyone' booklet was published and distributed throughout South-West Surrey, with 2000 copies printed, highlighting a number of volunteer roles at a variety of organisations.
- We celebrated Volunteers' Week by holding a Volunteer Coordinator Network in Godalming with 11 Coordinators attending. The meeting provided an opportunity to get together, share ideas and discuss any key issues.
- We invited volunteers at a range of organisations to a free angling day with us at Marsh Farm Fishery in Milford to thank them for their hard work.
- We began our online Lunch and Learn sessions, where organisations and potential volunteers can meet one another on Microsoft Teams.
- We launched our Community Frailty Coordinator pilot in coordination with the Frailty Academy.
- We attended a gathering of community leaders and learnt about the issues surrounding Modern Slavery, and networked with other organisations.
- Our relationship with Guildford Jobcentre Plus continued to develop, leading to a member of staff visiting the Jobcentre to give volunteering help and advice to people with pre-booked appointments.

July 2024 – September 2024

- We had a stall at Surrey Pride and enjoyed reaching out to the LGBTQ+ community, talking with many festival-goers about barriers to volunteering and how to overcome them.
- We organised Frailty Awareness sessions with the voluntary sector as part of our Frailty Academy pilot.
- We attended an "ageing well" Age UK event at Millmead Baptist Church in Guildford and helped several people to explore volunteering.
- We visited Elysian Animal Assisted Therapy & Learning CIC, in Shamley Green, to learn about barriers to communication in a team building exercise.

QUARTER 2

As part of Surrey Heartlands' support for staff to volunteer with registered local charities, VASWS helped their team choose to spend a day helping with the Care Ashore Estate gardens. They said "it was an extremely rewarding day for everyone involved, with a real sense of connection and shared purpose."

577

New volunteer
registrations

76

New volunteering
opportunities

453

New volunteer
referrals

321

New volunteer
placements

201

Organisations assisted with
volunteer recruitment

48

Organisations assisted with
volunteer best practice

QUARTER 3

October 2024 – December 2024

- We had a stall with information about volunteering at the Guildford Farmer's Market, and had many enquiries during the market and afterwards.
- We hosted a Winter Warmer Giveaway shop at Guildford Railway Station, with an exchange of free second-hand coats, hats, scarves and gloves.
- We celebrated International Volunteer Day in December by inviting volunteers to our office to say thank you for all their hard work.
- We offered a taster volunteer session at a local church where there are twelve war graves that really needed attention. With permission, we organised an event inviting veterans and ex-military to help "spruce" up the headstones. This was a great event, attended by fifteen volunteers.
- We attended a drop-in session at the mental health charity Oakleaf.
- We had a stall at Guildford Spectrum, presenting the benefits and opportunities of volunteering.

January 2025 – March 2025

- We had a stand at the Co-op Stores in Cranleigh and had many people approach us and make enquiries about volunteering. The event was a great success, and we have placed volunteers in charities as a direct result.
- We were invited to attend an Open Community Event at the Ockford School by the Community Link Officer in Waverley. We encouraged volunteering with the local community, and we met the Mayor of Godalming who was keen to promote our volunteering booklets.
- We attended the Christians Against Poverty (CAP) job club and encouraged participants to consider volunteering as part of their returning to work plan.
- We attended a Community Grassroots event held by the local wellbeing team at Guildford, making many connections with local organisations that we have worked with since.
- We ran a stall at the Farncombe Leisure Centre run by the group Everyone Active, and many people were interested in learning more about the needs of local charities and volunteering.
- We held our second war grave cleaning event at The Old Stoke Cemetery in Stoughton in Guildford.
- We started accepting referrals for our new 'Social Prescribing in Probation' pilot project, working with people on probation at the Guildford Probation Office.

QUARTER 4

Organisational Support

During the 2024/25 financial year Voluntary Action South West Surrey continued to work with local groups and organisations across Guildford & Waverley to help build capacity by providing 1:1 support and advice on funding, governance and best practice. Continuing austerity has led to a reduction in public money available for grant funding to the voluntary sector, and pressures on health and social care budgets have also highlighted the importance of the voluntary sector and the critical role that volunteering plays in delivering health and social care outcomes. During the year we provided continued support and guidance to organisations looking to recruit volunteers to help them with their volunteer offer. Nationally there has been a fall in people volunteering and in addition the cost of living crisis is also having a huge impact on people's wellbeing, making the services that we provide even more critical than they were before. Through our networks and bespoke support we have been able to help the local voluntary, community and frontline sector (VCFS) to be able to meet the challenge of current needs and trends.

As an organisation we are committed to supporting local groups and organisations with help and advice on:



Charity Registration



Governance



Funding Advice



Setting Up New Groups



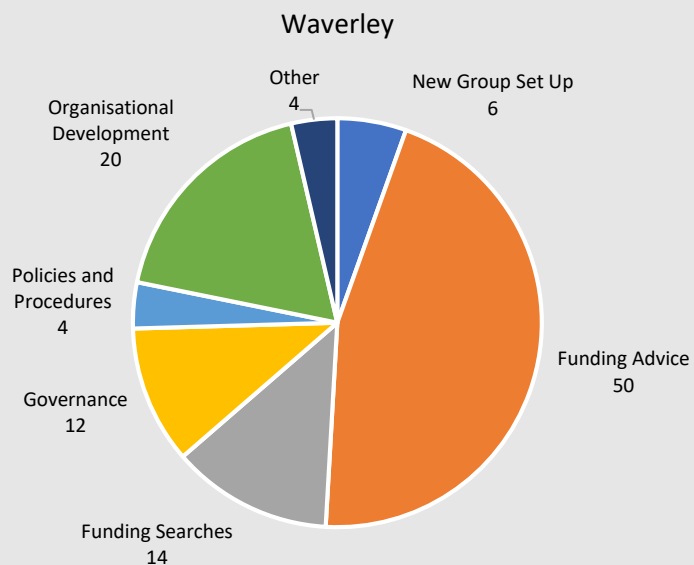
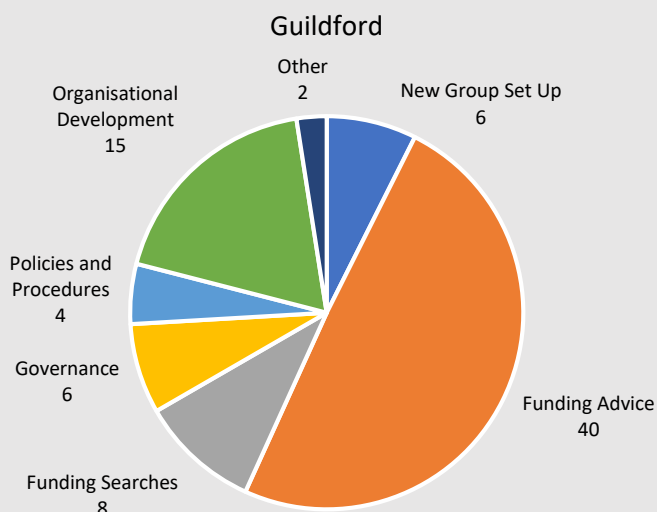
Funding Searches



Policies and Procedures

Areas of support

In 2024/25
we supported
200+
groups and
organisations



"Voluntary Action South West Surrey have been a fantastic ally to St Peter's Shared Church, supporting our community by helping us find volunteers, connect with partners like Surrey Sports Park, and offering invaluable guidance on our successful £850,000 grant application to Your Fund Surrey."

- Jonny Snowball, St Peter's Shared Church

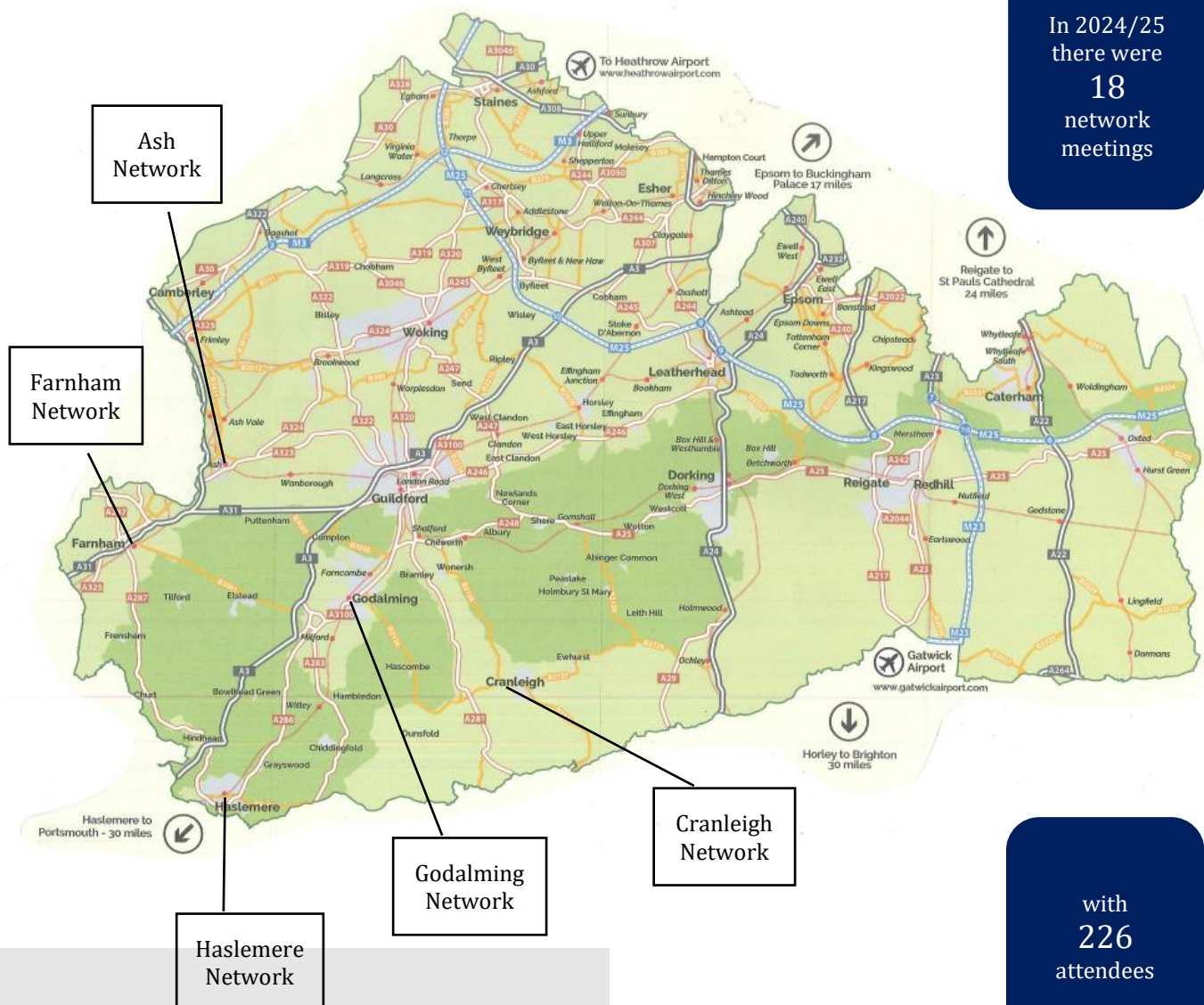
"Thank you for all your help, especially in relation to our conversations on fundraising and volunteering. It's difficult to quantify how much time and money you have saved us. Your ongoing support, being able to discuss things and run ideas by you has also been really helpful and your connections and updates of what's going on locally is invaluable, especially to new staff and volunteers. Thanks again."

- David Carter from Energy Manage CIC

Network Meetings

As part of our aim to connect local groups and organisations to each other and to the communities we all reside in, VASWS organises a variety of network groups online, meeting three times a year. Alongside the networks outlined below, we are proud to also run the Mental Health Forum, which also runs three times a year. As part of our Volunteer Connections project, we run a Volunteer Coordinators Network on a regular basis. In addition, we compiled monthly e-newsletters of sector-relevant local information, for distribution to all networks and contacts. Information was cascaded out on behalf of network members on a regular basis.

In 2024/25
there were
18
network
meetings



with
226
attendees



Image (above): Our office at Old Millmead House

Events at VASWS

During 2024/25 Voluntary Action South West Surrey was delighted to participate in and organise events once more, celebrating the organisation's work and connecting with our enthusiastic community. We were excited to kick off the financial year with the launch of our Volunteer Connections project, which brought with it a host of opportunities. Throughout the year our staff enjoyed presenting at, and attending, events both in the community and online, highlighting the positive work of both the organisation and the voluntary sector as a whole. With new projects and pilots starting throughout the year, we were pleased to increase the amount and variety of our outreach work, including events being run.

Volunteer Connections Events

Through our Volunteer Connections project, we aim to increase the level of volunteering amongst small charities and voluntary organisations in South West Surrey to enable them to deliver their services more effectively. We were privileged enough to run a variety of events this year.

We were thrilled to offer our first face-to-face training session at The Guildford Institute, teaching Volunteer Coordinators the basics of managing their volunteer listing on our Better Impact database. This included showing them tips and tricks to make their listing stand out to potential volunteers, and giving them time to practise these new skills.

Our Lunch and Learn sessions were perfect opportunities to discover how volunteering could become a part of everyone's life. Each month we invited our communities to come along to our Volunteer Lunch & Learn sessions on Microsoft Teams, where we were joined by an array of organisations that presented and highlighted the roles they have on offer.

We held a very successful Open Morning in March in celebration of National Lottery Week, as the project is funded by the National Lottery. We had 20 attendees from local charities and organisations as well as potential volunteers who came for coffee, cake and a chat, giving the opportunity to network and share volunteering experiences.



Image (above): Our first Better Impact training session with Volunteer Coordinators from a variety of charities

Image (below): VASWS' David Rose, Alice Sheppard and Kate Jones celebrating National Lottery Week with an Open Morning for charities, organisations and volunteers.



"Being a tech dinosaur, I very much appreciated your kindness and understanding, I am leaving with a much better understanding. Thank you."

- Attendee of one of our training sessions

Volunteers' Week

Volunteers' Week celebrates the amazing contributions volunteers make to communities across the UK.

The celebration starts on the first Monday in June every year. It's a chance to recognise, celebrate and thank the UK's incredible volunteers for all they contribute to our local communities, the voluntary sector, and society as a whole.

To celebrate this year, we held a Volunteers Coordinator Network on Monday 3rd June in Godalming with 11 Coordinators attending. The meeting provided an opportunity to get together, share ideas and discuss any key issues, challenges or achievements in a confidential environment.

Image (across): VASWS celebrating International Volunteer Day with some of our amazing volunteers

International Volunteer Day

On 5th December 2024, which was International Volunteer Day, we invited volunteers to our office to say thank you for all their hard work.

Some of the attendees volunteered for grave cleaning, whilst others regularly volunteer in gardens, charity shops, cafes or for us at VASWS. It was a festive occasion, with *Nosecco*, lots of tea and mince pies.



Winter Warmer Store

At the beginning of December 2024, we hosted a Winter Warmer Giveaway shop at Guildford Railway Station, with an offering of free second-hand coats, hats, scarves and gloves. We encouraged our community to donate unwanted items beforehand ahead of the giveaway, where people visited and could take away items.



University of Surrey Outreach

Our outreach at the University of Surrey was a great success with Alice Sheppard and one of our project volunteers, Gillian, holding a stall in the university library.

Due to funding cuts, the university was no longer able to offer support for students finding volunteering in the community, so they were keen to link up with VASWS. We had previously worked closely with them and were happy to re-establish these links, especially connecting with the Community and Thrivewell teams, who support students' wellbeing. We know how beneficial volunteering can be for improving mental health and we want to reach a younger demographic. Seventeen students gave us their contact details with many more expressing an interest in volunteering.

Fishing Experience

As part of our Volunteers' Week celebrations, we invited volunteers at a variety of charities to a free angling day with us at Marsh Farm Fishery in Milford on Thursday 6th June to thank volunteers for their hard work.

In conjunction with Godalming Angling Society, the day was suitable for complete beginners or experienced anglers. All tackle and bait were provided, plus light refreshments. Coaches were on hand to help people.

Feedback from one of the volunteers, who was originally from India and came with his brother and friend, was that it was the best day they have had since they came to the UK three years ago!

Image (across): VASWS' Helena Routledge and Kate Jones celebrating Surrey Pride by promoting the opportunities of volunteering

Events 2024/25

Community Talks and Events

June 2024: Modern Slavery Event

We attended a gathering of community leaders and learnt about the issues surrounding Modern Slavery, and networked with other organisations.

September 2024: Age UK Event

We attended an "ageing well" Age UK event at Millmead Baptist Church in Guildford. It was sad but not surprising to hear how financial pressures and caring responsibilities stop people from volunteering. The barriers people shared are common and part of the reasons for the nationwide drop in volunteering. Despite this, we still helped several people to explore volunteering and raised VASWS's profile.

September 2024: Surrey Pride

Attending Surrey Pride in September was a fantastic way for us to reach out to the LGBTQ+ community. We talked with many festival goers, and several reported that they didn't feel confident about volunteering and whether they would be accepted. The event provided ample opportunities to network, and we linked up with several new organisations who support other marginalised groups, such as disabled people. They were very appreciative of the additional support that we could offer to find their clients a role as they know how vital this support is to place someone.

October 2024: Oakleaf Centre

We attended a drop-in at the mental health charity Oakleaf twice and are keen to attend more going forward.

November 2024: Guildford Farmer's Market

We had a stall with information about volunteering at the Guildford Farmer's Market. We had many enquiries during the market and afterwards. Gillian, a VASWS volunteer, is now volunteering regularly on our project.

January 2025: Co-Op Cranleigh

In January we held a stand at the Co-op Stores in Cranleigh. We had a stand at the front of the store and had many people approach us and make enquiries about volunteering. We were joined by the Community Link Worker for Waverley from Surrey County Council and the Community and Member Participation Team from Co-op Stores, Surrey. We have been in discussion with the Co-op Communities Manager, and they are very keen on us using any of their stores to showcase Volunteer Connections. The event was a great success, and we have placed volunteers in charities as a direct result.



February 2025: Ockford Wellbeing in Community Event

We were invited to attend the Ockford School event by the Community Link Officer in Waverley. This was an Open Community Event for the public and to provide a networking opportunity for various organisations. This was a great opportunity to encourage volunteering with the local community. We also met many great organisations and the Mayor of Godalming who was keen to promote our volunteering booklets!

February 2025: Christians Against Poverty Job Club

In February, we attended our second Christians Against Poverty (CAP) job club where we encourage participants to consider volunteering as part of their returning to work plan. One of our volunteers featured as part of our presentation and she shared the immense satisfaction that she gains from volunteering. She was a great advert for the benefit of volunteering! These meetings lead to forming new connections and we've helped several people to explore the volunteering world.

March 2025: Community Grassroots Event

In March we attended a Community Grassroots event held by the local wellbeing team at Guildford. It was a speed networking event where we spent 10 to 15 minutes with each organisation so throughout the afternoon, we again made many connections who we have worked with since.

March 2025: Farncombe Leisure Centre

In March we ran a stall at the Farncombe Leisure Centre run by the group Everyone Active. This was a great event, we had several people who engaged and showed great interest in learning more about the needs of local charities and volunteering. Since the event we have followed up with each person and sent ideas about organisations and charities that they expressed interest in on the day. Already we have referred three people from this event to charities on our database and we are in the process of referring more.



Image (across): VASWS's Kate Jones (left), at the Co-Op Cranleigh event

Wellbeing Walks

Voluntary Action has continued teaming up with the mental health support charity Catalyst as part of its project called The Hope Project. It offers a range of services, one being wellbeing walks. We are leading these on the first Monday of each month.

These short one-hour walks start and finish at The Hive community centre (run by Guildford Borough Council) in Park Barn, Guildford. The walks give details of the area's local history, and take in the green spaces and adjoining countryside of this housing estate on the edge of Guildford.

A number of routes are taken that include the nearby greenspace. These are short, easy and friendly walks, which offer people valuable time to get out, have some exercise, meet and chat to each other. Afterwards tea and cake is enjoyed at The Hive's café.

Team Building Day at Elysian

On 30th July the VASWS team spent a fantastic morning team building at Elysian Animal Assisted Therapy & Learning CIC in Shamley Green to learn about barriers to communication. This included trying to dress up and persuade some rather stubborn donkeys to co-operate whilst having various communication limitations - not an easy task!

The animals were, of course, the absolute stars of the show; including goats and donkeys, rabbits and guinea pigs, a bearded dragon, a python, a tortoise, a green tree frog, cat, puppies, alpacas and pigs. There was even a Polish Chicken. We were made to feel incredibly welcome by Kay, Integrated Services Co-ordinator, and the Team.



Image (above): Attendees at our first War Graves Volunteer Taster Session



Image (above): Our war grave event in Stoughton at The Old Stoke Cemetery

War Graves Cleaning Events

We offered a taster volunteer session at a local Church where they have twelve war graves that really needed attention. With permission, we organised an event inviting veterans and ex-military to help "spruce up" the headstones.

This was a great event, attended by fifteen volunteers. Everyone felt they were doing something worthwhile and giving back. The veterans also really enjoyed being together, especially as some have PTSD and do not socialise very much at all. We created a link with the Commonwealth Grave Commission who had been in touch asking us to work with them going forward with events in 2025.

At the end of March 2025 we held our second war grave event at The Old Stoke Cemetery in Stoughton in Guildford.

With the help of some of our veterans, ex-military and regular volunteers, and spearheaded by Kate Jones and David Rose from VASWS, we begun the incredibly meaningful task of cleaning 27 war grave headstones.

15 veterans and other volunteers attended the event, and they are now forming a great team. They worked very hard and they left feeling very proud of the difference they had made. We used the local scout hut for our refreshments, and everyone sat in the sun chatting, laughing and comparing stories. The lady who offered us the facilities decided to come and volunteer with us for the day and is now looking at other projects. The veterans can't wait for the next event!

Social Prescribing

Improving health, wellbeing and social welfare through the community

Social Prescribing Senior Management Team Report
for the year ending 31 March 2025

The Guildford & Waverley Social Prescribing Service was set up in 2019 to address the wider determinants of health in the local population. It was recognised that the social, emotional and practical needs of people were having a significant impact on their emotional and physical wellbeing and that the community and voluntary sector had a wide range of services that could support people with these needs. The Social Prescribing Service provides the link between health and community by finding out what matters most to the person and supporting them to access local and national services that can address their needs. The service is funded by NHS England and Surrey County Council.

2024/25 was a year of development and change, internally and externally, as a result of a number of uncontrollable factors. We started the financial year period, in April 2024, with Social Prescribing Link Workers (SPLWs) working in four Primary Care Networks (PCNs). As the financial period concluded in March 2025, we were operating in three PCNs, had launched a new pilot project focused on providing Social Prescribing to people on probation, and were about to launch another pilot project focusing on Social Prescribing in A&E. After a few years of consolidation and stability, the past year was one of widespread change.

Throughout the year referral numbers remained at a consistent level, with little deviation from our maximum capacity threshold, demonstrating the trust displayed in the service by referrers, as well as the continuous need for the service for clients. We have worked continuously alongside our PCN partners to determine how the service can be used most effectively, and for whom, and the expertise of our SPLWs has led to the service assisting patients with increasingly complex needs. We have experienced a larger increase in the number of referrals of clients with enduring long-term mental and physical health conditions and disabilities; clients requiring multiple avenues of support; clients with safeguarding needs; and clients living across

county borders. The increase in complexity has demanded more time and resource from our link worker team, whose resilience and skill has been demonstrated throughout the year. Our team have been proud to support patients in a number of environments, through face-to-face and virtual appointments, and the introduction of a self-referral pathway in East Guildford provides a new avenue of referral for the community.

In continuation with 2023/24, we have processed an increase in data gathering and monitoring requests, as we work with health and community partners to better understand and manage factors that impact the wider determinants of health in our communities. We have renewed our commitment to creating stronger neighbourhood links and better integrated neighbourhood teams, through increased participation in meetings and events in the communities we operate within. The conversations generated at these meetings highlight the demand for a system of care and support which places social prescribing at the heart of the community.

A community-based approach to social prescribing is a development that recognises the changing landscape in need, provision, and often finances. The cost of living crisis, changes in employers' National Insurance rates, and the increasing question of local council financing and devolution are just some factors that have caused both an increased demand for services and a reduction of community groups and organisations for the link workers to access to support clients. Our service has not been exempt from this phenomenon. We have experienced not only the reduction of PCN SPLWs, but also from October 2024 we stopped providing our service to Central and North Guildford PCN, following changes in the internal PCN structure and its funding. Despite this, the demand for social prescribing in our communities remains high.

The increasing prevalence of social prescribing has been seen over the past year in the commission, production and development of two new social prescribing pilot projects. Commissioned by Surrey County Council, we were pleased to announce a Social Prescribing in Probation pilot project, working in conjunction with the Guildford Probation Office, aimed at people on probation. The pilot started accepting referrals in January 2025 and has been an instant success in helping people on probation better integrate into the community. Our Probation SPLWs have had to adapt to working over a larger geographical area to include the whole of Surrey and border areas of Hampshire, working with increased safeguarding concerns and complexity, adopting a trauma-informed approach, in an environment where many local services cannot accommodate the needs of somebody on probation due to both perceived and actual risk. Alongside the Social Prescribing in Probation pilot, we were pleased to start developing a Social Prescribing in A&E pilot project, again commissioned by Surrey County Council, and working alongside the Royal Surrey County Hospital (RSCH). The pilot aims to support high-intensity users of the RSCH A&E department who require greater holistic and community support, and will start accepting referrals from the beginning of the next financial year, April 2025.

The upcoming year presents itself as one of great promise and potential. The Senior Management Team would like to extend our gratitude to the Social Prescribing Link Workers who continue to work tirelessly to provide a service that best supports the growing needs of our diverse communities. Their expertise, time and compassion are never taken for granted, and alongside our health, local government, and voluntary and community sector partners, we will continue to work to create a neighbourhood team that strives to support all of our community.



Caroline Keith

*Joint CEO;
Volunteer
Development
Manager*



Jonathan Knight

*Social Prescribing
Team Leader;
Social Prescribing
Lead (Internal)*



Ian Ross

*Joint CEO;
Development
Manager*



Ben Standring

*Operations Manager;
Social Prescribing
Lead (External)*

In the 2024/25 financial year, the Guildford and Waverley PCN Social Prescribing team supported...



42

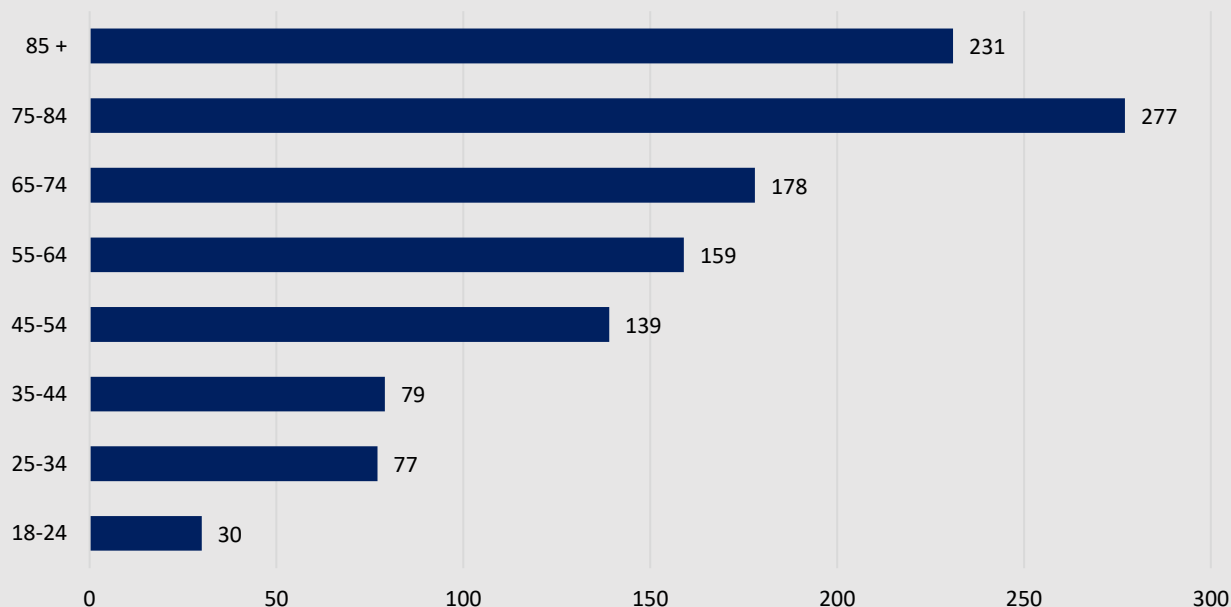
different referrer organisations, including GP surgeries, allied health partners, governmental organisations and councils, and charities

Primary Care Network (PCN) Breakdown

During 2024/25 the Guildford and Waverley Social Prescribing Service worked in four PCNs: East Guildford; Central and North Guildford; East Waverley; and West of Waverley. The four PCNs incorporate a total of twenty GP practices. In October 2024 the service stopped operating in Central and North Guildford.

The service serves a population of just over 220,000 and covers diverse areas including Guildford, Cranleigh, Godalming and Haslemere.

Age range of clients



282

referrals from
East Guildford
GP Surgeries

188

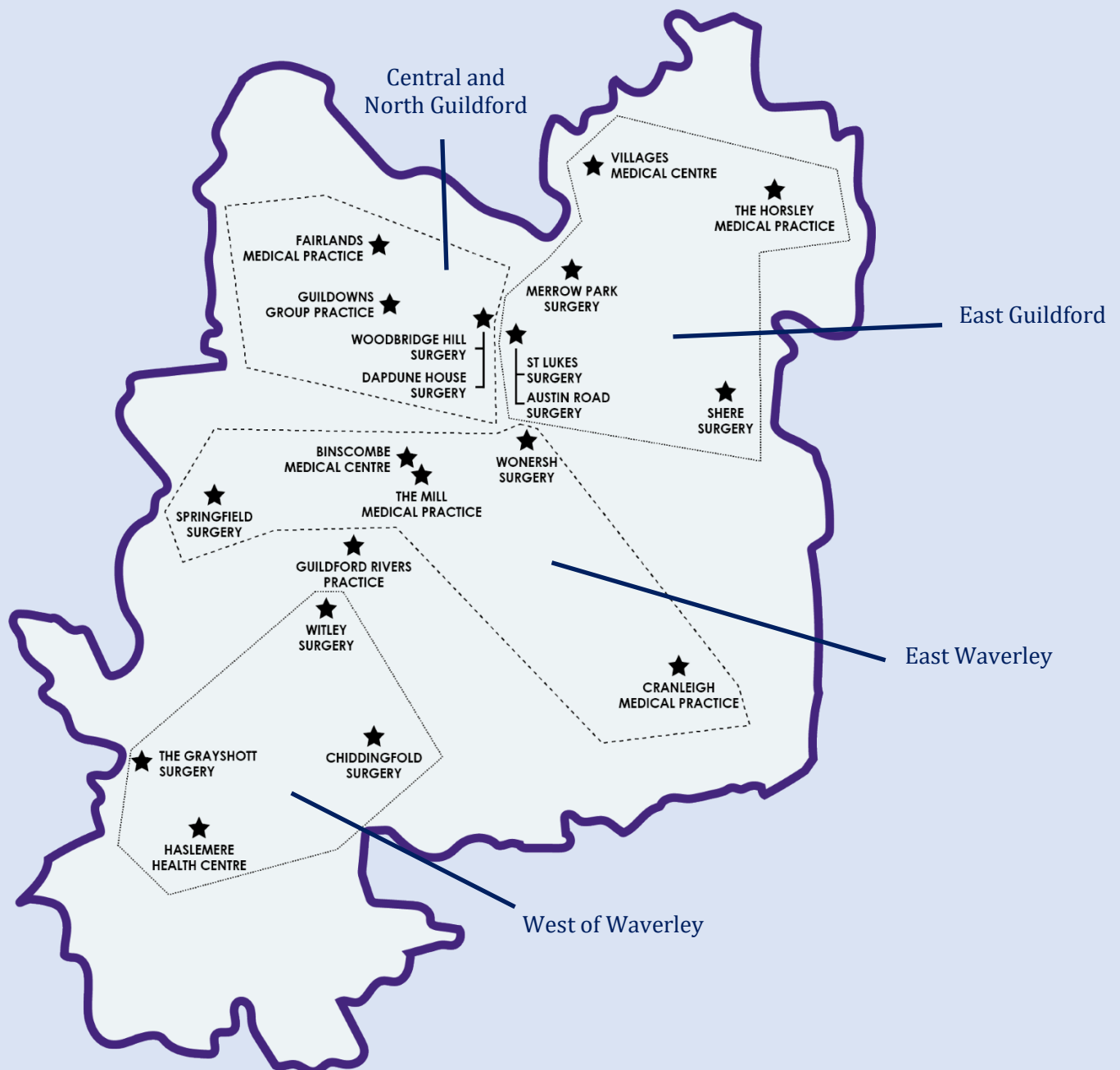
referrals from
Central and North
Guildford
GP Surgeries
(1 Apr 24 – 7 Oct 24)

317

referrals from
East Waverley
GP Surgeries

383

referrals from
West of Waverley
GP Surgeries



Map courtesy of Guildford and Waverley Health Care Alliance

Case Study: Mark

Mark was referred to Social Prescribing by the Care Coordinator at his GP surgery. He is 51 years old and lives with a rare neuromuscular condition. He lives independently, with a carer attending once during the day. He uses an electric wheelchair to get out, and can use public transport, but he wanted support to attend more social activities locally to reduce his isolation and loneliness, and support to engage with a support group for his health condition.

One of our Social Prescribing Link Worker's (SPLW) contacted Mark to find out how he could be supported by social prescribing. Mark explained that his condition is rare and that he would like to find others who also have it to discuss symptoms and gain peer support. He also said that he would like to get out more and meet people in groups to increase his friendship group. He was currently receiving input from the Phyllis Tuckwell Hospice Care and attended an art group once a week.

During the first appointment the SPLW referred Mark to Surrey Coalition of the Disabled, but struggled at first to locate specific support groups for Mark's neuromuscular condition. This led a discussion about Mark joining lobby groups to highlight the difficulties he and many others face when in a wheelchair. A number of support group options were provided to Mark to look through and discuss at the next appointment, including arts groups, sports groups and faith and community sector groups.

When the SPLW next called Mark he said that he had had an accident in his wheelchair and was struggling to chat, which led to a delay in his appointment. Mark then experienced a deterioration in his asthma, which also led to further delays. When Mark was feeling better again, he spoke about looking at possible courses or sessions that he could access online as the weather had changed which was affecting his ability to get out and about. He had a discussion with the SPLW about his interests, and the SPLW emailed a list of online offerings he could look at and engage with.

On the last follow-up call, Mark said that he thought he would engage with a few options that the SPLW had provided to him, as they matched his interests and ability to engage with them. He managed to complete the registration for these groups himself, and mentioned that one of the charities that the SPLW had signposted him towards was looking to find a volunteer who might be able to take Mark out for trips. Mark has a National Trust card which allows a carer free entry, and so this was something he was looking forward to. Mark was hopeful of getting to his local community garden, and whilst he said he might not be able to assist much, he would like to meet others and use the facility. He also said he could meet up with his uncle who lives in the nearby area. Upon closure of the referral, Mark emailed to thank the SPLW for all their work, stating that he was looking forward to considering all the information sent to him.

Additional client compliments

"Thank you, you're the only person who has really taken the time to listen to us in years. Thank you so much for helping to find support for my daughter."

- Anonymous client feedback

"You have really helped with filling the gap when my life has been turned upside down. Everything has been very complex and you have been very kind and it is such a relief."

- Anonymous client feedback

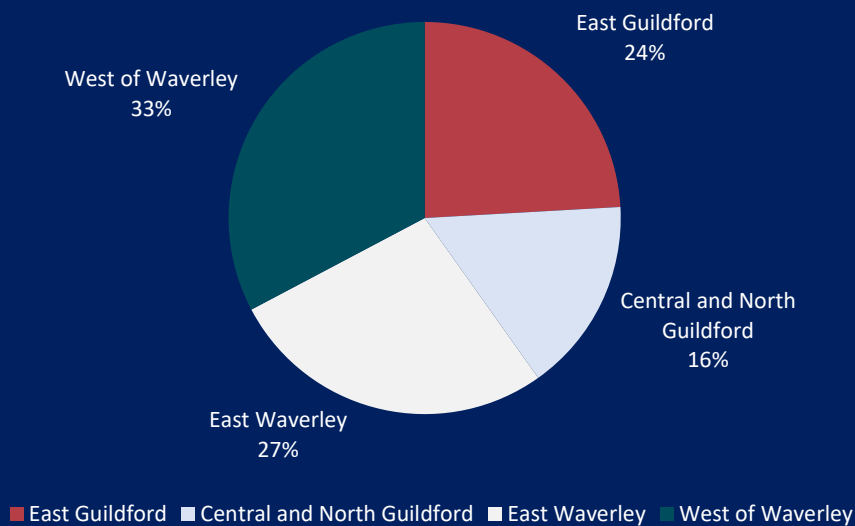
883

referrals from
GP Practices

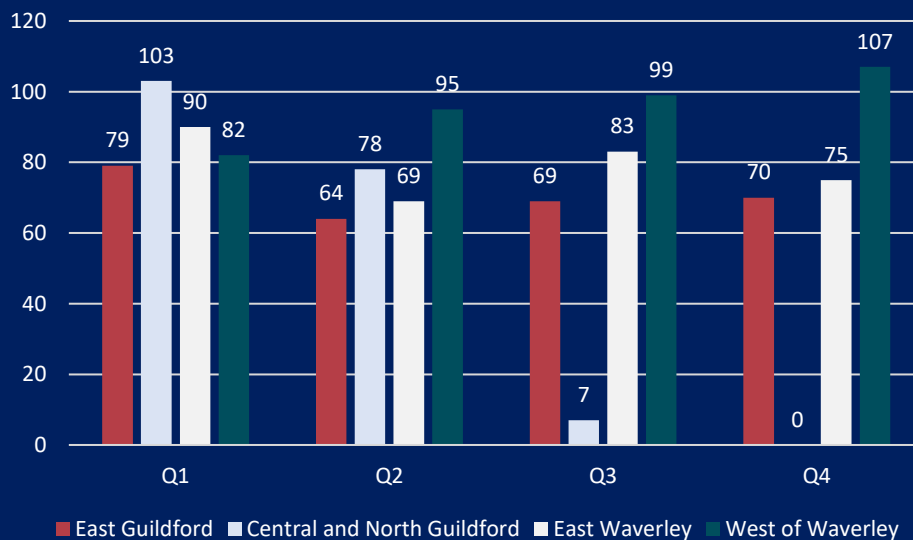
287

referrals from
other organisations

Referrals by PCN



Referral breakdown by PCN



17%

of clients supported were identified as carers

25%

of clients supported were identified as being cared for

50%

of clients were identified as living alone

1876

long-term health issues and disabilities supported in referrals

83%

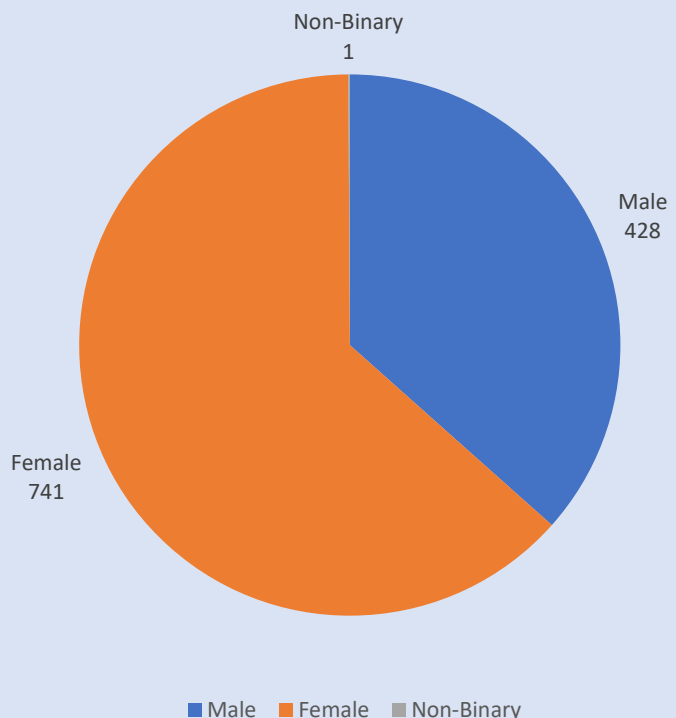
of patients surveyed reported that the service made a positive difference

In 2024/25 the number of referrals deemed highly complex increased by 16% in comparison to 2023/24, the number of referrals for multiple non-complex issues increased by 9%, whilst the number of simple signposting referrals decreased by 16%.

1377
closed
referrals

3405
destinations
referred to from
1377 closed
referrals

Gender Breakdown of Clients



Case Study: Leanne

Leanne was referred to Social Prescribing by the community matron as she required support with accessing Attendance Allowance. Leanne additionally was interested in learning about help at home services as she was experiencing some distress in her life. During the initial telephone consultation, Leanne highlighted that she would like to learn about any agencies that could listen to the support she required.

Our Social Prescribing Link Worker (SPLW) was able to contact Leanne quickly to arrange an appointment. The client wanted to find out more about Attendance Allowance support as her family was no longer in a position to be able to support her with this. The SPLW gained permission to complete a Citizens' Advice referral on Leanne's behalf as a result.

Leanne discussed that she felt that she would benefit from some support around completing paperwork and helping with cleaning. Due to incontinence issues, Leanne was having to do laundry and cleaning tasks every day, which caused her to struggle with the demands of other daily tasks. The SPLW and Leanne discussed a variety of support options, which the SPLW emailed over to keep as a record.

During the conversation, Leanne shared that she had lots of steps in her accommodation which were challenging to move on, especially when she is carrying items. The SPLW discussed an Adult Social Care referral and Leanne consented to the SPLW completing this on her behalf. She also informed the SPLW that she had previously had a fire safety check, which she found was very helpful. Following the conversation, professional referrals were made to Adult Social Care for a Needs and Occupational Therapy assessment, and to Citizens' Advice for support with Attendance Allowance. In addition, Leanne was signposted to a variety of services

During a follow-up appointment, Leanne was positive and optimistic about her situation, saying to the SPLW "thank you very much for all you have done!". Leanne had had a phone assessment with Adult Social Care, and had arranged a home visit with them. She also had an Occupational Therapy worker visit and complete a home assessment, which led to Leanne receiving a four-wheel walker. Leanne was able to meet a Citizens' Advice Advisor, which led to her receiving a grant for her pension, and support in applying for Attendance Allowance. She was also being supported in looking at reducing her rent. Leanne had been in contact with a charity that the SPLW had signposted her towards for help with cleaning support, and she was able to receive this help on a continuous basis. She stated many times how grateful she was for the support given, and at the point of the referral closing, felt in a position to be more in control of her life.

Additional client compliments

"Well think I have died and gone to heaven... what an amazing organisation. You may have realised I have always been a very independent person so asking for any help has been alien to me, so thank you so very much. Your kindness is so greatly appreciated to me and restored a bit of faith and self-worth."

- Anonymous client feedback

"I am feeling so much more inspired and positive since we spoke two weeks ago at the surgery. I have joined the exercise classes and really enjoying them. Social Prescribing is the reason I'm feeling more inspired, you make me feel listened to and not judged."

- Anonymous client feedback

Case Study: Anna

Anna was referred to Social Prescribing by her GP surgery. She had always been very active and sociable but as a result of living in a fairly rural cottage and no longer being able to drive, she was becoming more isolated and lonelier. Whilst she enjoyed walking her dogs, her husband at home was physically frail and her friends were getting frailer so her social world had become reduced, which was escalating her dementia. During the first appointment she confirmed that she would benefit from advice on what social activities were available to her, community transport links, community meals information, technology support, a companion to go walking with her and her dogs and to take her out for coffee, and a face-to-face appointment with her GP.

At the first consultation a SPLW met with Anna and her son to discuss Anna's current situation. The SPLW made a variety of suggestions as regards to her support needs, and provided information from community and support agencies. Anna gave permission for the SPLW to signpost her to a number of companion and technology support services straight away, and other support options were discussed with Anna and her son.

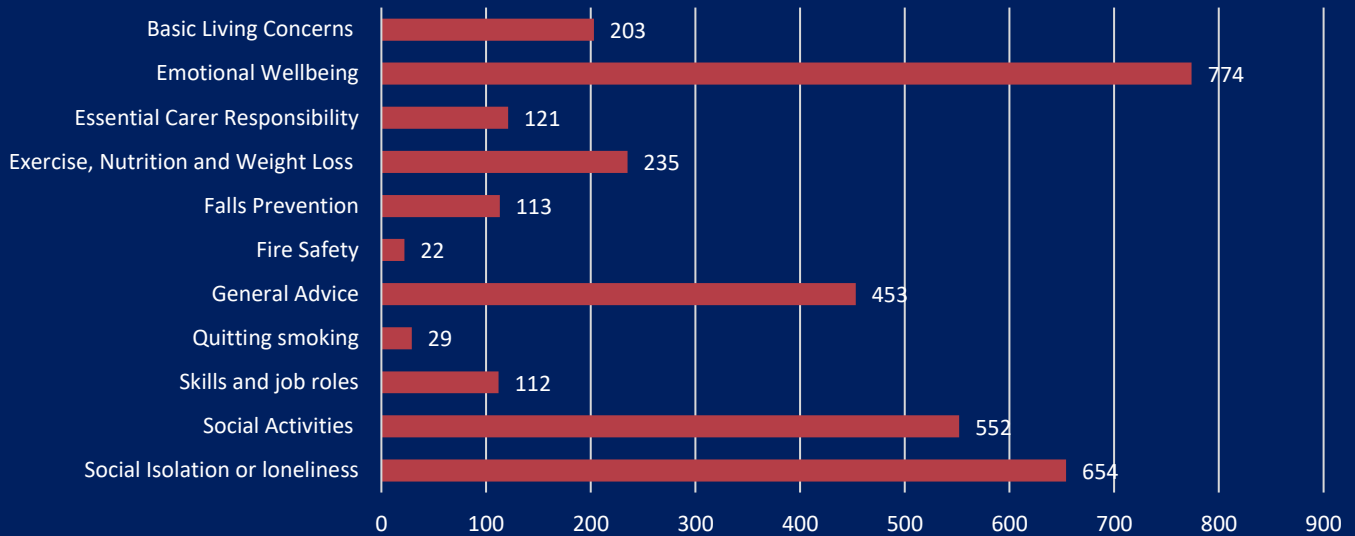
A number of follow-up appointments had to be rescheduled due to Anna's declining dementia diagnosis, and distress of feeling confused about what support she requires. However, it was soon confirmed that Age UK had been in contact with Anna, following the SPLW referral to them, and had provided Anna a companion to see her twice a week, who would take Anna and her dogs for a walk. Anna's son confirmed that Anna was enjoying this interaction, and requested some information about local transport and community services, as well as Attendance Allowance for his mum. The SPLW emailed him the information, including a money advice service to advise him on benefits that Anna might be entitled to receive.

The SPLW asked Anna's son whether his mum might consent to a discussion at a Multi-Disciplinary Team (MDT) meeting run by the Primary Care Network. Following discussion with both his parents, Anna's son confirmed that he would like both his mum and dad to be discussed due to their complex needs. The son asked the SPLW to make referrals to Adult Social Care for Care Needs Assessments as well, and mentioned over a few appointments that Anna was struggling to shop, arrange her medication or complete administrative forms such as bills. Anna was struggling to keep the house clean or wash the clothes properly.

Whilst a cleaner visited every fortnight, Anna struggled to clean in-between, and could not get into a bath or sit on a cross bar provided by Occupational Therapy. At night she had a commode by her bed to reduce the risk of falls. She experienced restricted movement due to hip pain and general deconditioning, and could no longer use her iPad or phone, often forgetting details of calls. She could only prepare basic meals, usually microwave meals, and had lost a lot of weight due to poor appetite. Anna's son wondered whether she would benefit from a dietician review. He also said that there had been a significant progression in her care needs over the last year following the dementia diagnosis, and that the steps on the cottage where they live were loose, with no bannister to hold onto.

The SPLW and GP presented both Anna and her husband at the MDT meeting, leading to a variety of positive outcomes. A referral was made for rails to be fitted to the loose steps outside the home. An Adult Social Care Case Worker was assigned to the couple, and a referral was made to an organisation to help with walking the dogs more regularly. A dietician review was arranged, alongside a face-to-face GP appointment. A number of referrals were made to other support organisations and Anna and her son contacted the SPLW to thank them for their work and support over a period of many months.

Referral Reasons



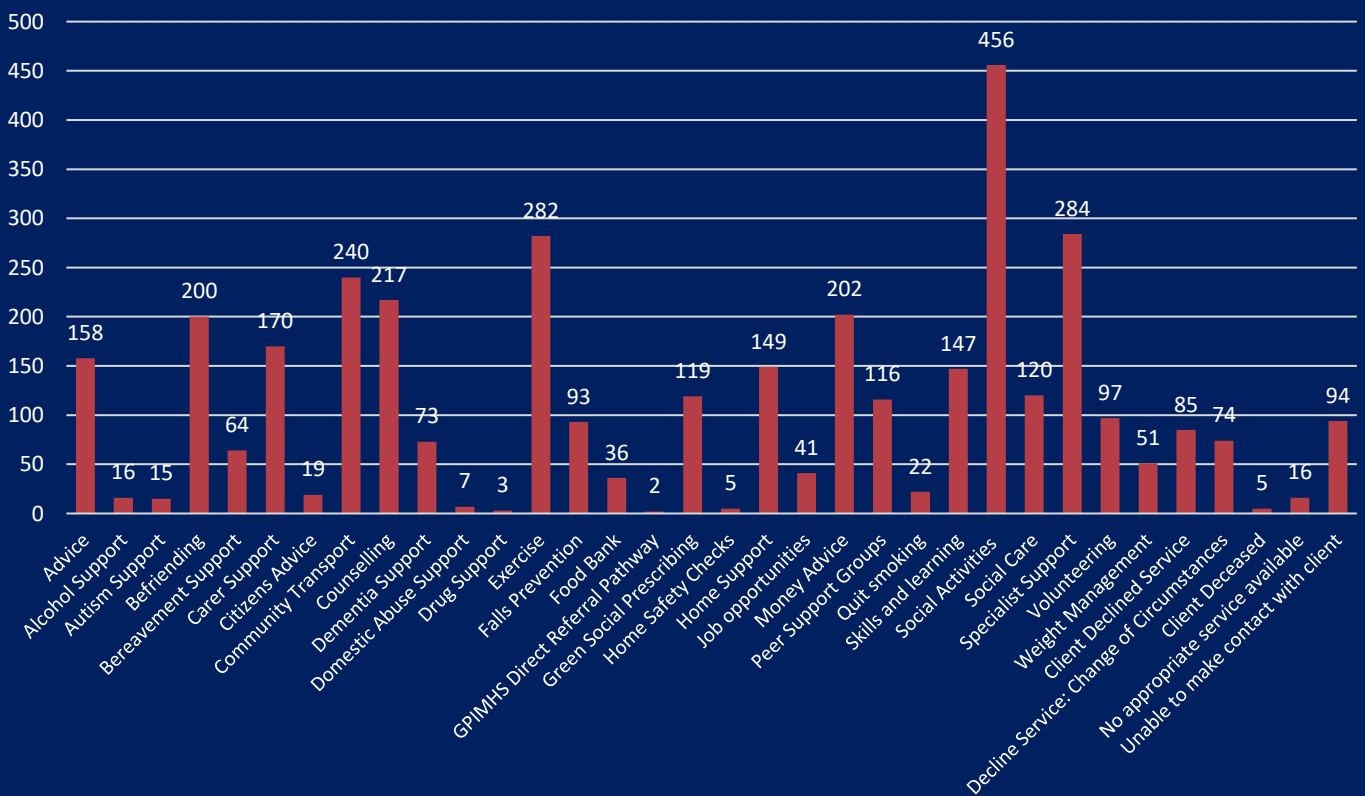
Client Ethnicity

18

different ethnic
groups recorded

Of the referrals that the Social Prescribing team received in 2024/25, 78.4% were for clients who identified as White British, 5.1% of clients supported identified as White Other, whilst approximately 0.4% identified as Asian, and 0.8% identified as being from Any Other Asian Background.

Referral Destinations



Social Prescribing in Probation Pilot

Improving health, wellbeing and
social welfare through the community

Pilot project run in conjunction with



Summary

In the 2024/25 financial year VASWS started working in partnership alongside Surrey County Council and the Guildford Probation Service, to produce and start an 18-month pioneering pilot project tailoring Social Prescribing to individuals on probation. Only the second pilot project of its kind (the first was trialled in Flint, Wales, over a period of 6 months and only received 6 referrals), the pilot started accepting referrals in January 2025. In its first quarter of operating, we were pleased to already have received 16 referrals, and have two highly qualified Social Prescribing Link Workers working on the project.

Who will benefit?

Social Prescribing in Probation addresses health inequalities and the wider determinants of health by supporting people on probation (PoP) with their non-clinical needs and by connecting them to sources of help and support within local communities. It takes a holistic 'whole person' approach to health and social care asking 'what matters to you?' to create a shared plan to support people to take control of their health and wellbeing. The service is non-mandatory for PoP, and as such requires a service user to want to engage in the support that the service offers.

Aims

Provide wider,
holistic
support for
People on
Probation

One route into
the community

User-focused
support

Reduce
pressures on
Probation
Service and
Criminal
Justice System

An example of feedback received by one of our link workers went from: *“Am just in self-destruct mode really, not a particular thing that’s causing it, this is just how I am I guess. Is sad but oh well, it’s life”* to *“Definitely am proud of myself for the first time in so long”*

Who will benefit?

The pilot aims to support those people on probation who need support with reintegrating into society to access services. The project aims to support PoP who would benefit from a broader range of holistic support, connecting them with a range of services and organisations in their local community and supporting them to access a variety of services. The pilot aims to free up capacity within the Probation Service to allow a Probation Practitioner to focus on their role, whilst a Social Prescribing Link Worker can support with the broader holistic and community support, in helping a PoP link into appropriate community support.

How does it work?

Social Prescribing Link Workers (SPLWs) take referrals directly from the Guildford Probation Service, via a referral form, to support the health and wellbeing of the PoP. The SPLWs provide a high-level triage after referral and consent form received. The SPLWs are working with the PoP during a series of appointments, identifying health and wellbeing needs, what support is needed, and discussing the various support streams available to the PoP. The SPLWs offer face-to-face, virtual or telephone appointments to the PoP. In-person appointments are carried out at the Probation Office, or in a community setting, it depends on what will make the PoP most comfortable, and therefore likely to engage in the service. Examples of some of the many services we signpost to include: mental health counselling; debt management advice; addiction support; transport advice; support groups; skills support; volunteering; health and leisure activity support; support to access services; and isolation and loneliness support.

16
new
referrals

*Partners
worked with
in Q1*

VASWS Annual Conference; Police Liaison and Diversion Service; Care leavers on Probation; The Forward Trust; DWP employment advisers; Green Social Prescribing – Dose of Nature; Workwell Employment; Watts Gallery; The Lighthouse Woking; Surrey Care Trust; Social Prescribing; Volunteer Connection Service

Case Study: Simon

Simon was referred to the Social Prescribing in Probation service by his Probation Officer to receive community support with his mental health, especially around the impact of the offence that he committed. He additionally wanted support to reduce social isolation, and get back into work. Simon had to leave his job following his arrest and has not worked since. In his own words, he became “stuck”. Simon had been put onto Probation Reset when our Social Prescribing for Probation Link Worker, Jonathan, first spoke to him.

After receiving the referral Jonathan was able to contact Simon quickly and arrange an initial appointment. During the first consultation Simon explained to Jonathan that his main priority was to receive support for his mental health, as he did not feel able to move forward with the way he was feeling. Jonathan was able to make an immediate referral to We Are With You NHS Talking Therapies, and also signposted him to online and face-to-face mental health peer support groups in Guildford, which would bolster the level of community support and interaction for Simon.

During the first consultation Simon disclosed that he was feeling very socially isolated, expressing that he did not have any friends and had very few interests. He was keen to start socialising but was only interested in what he described as “light touch” interactions. He informed Jonathan that he had been diagnosed with high blood pressure, and was cycling and walking to improve his physical health. Together, Simon and Jonathan explored the option of turning these activities into a social activity to help reduce his isolation, and help integrate him back into the community again, as such activities would provide him with the “light touch” interaction he was after. Following this discussion, Simon was keen to join walking and cycling groups.

Jonathan and Simon also explored employment opportunities, as Simon had lost his job as a result of his offence, which had been a number of years ago. Jonathan discussed the charity Unlock with Simon, so that he could be best informed about the need for potential disclosure. Simon said that he feels that, alongside therapy, this would be a great time to start exploring his options and a potential change of career. Jonathan discussed the new Work Wise programme, being run by Surrey County Council, and offered to make a referral for Simon, but he was keen to try and apply for roles himself without support to begin with. He was grateful for the information should he need their support moving forward.

In order to further support Simon, Jonathan discussed the new style of Job Seekers Allowance that Simon should be eligible for, as this is not restricted by the amount of savings one has. Jonathan gave Simon details of the application process, and at the end of the second appointment together Simon said “Thank you so much. It’s so great to feel listened to and be told what support is out there to help me”.

A follow-up appointment was booked in for two weeks, allowing Simon the opportunity to feed back any issues he was facing in accessing support, and to receive additional support and knowledge if needed. Simon confirmed that he was accessing appropriate support and did not require anything further. The referral is now closed, but Jonathan made Simon aware that should he require further support from Social Prescribing and he is still on Probation, he can speak to his probation officer directly who would be able to re-refer him immediately.

“Thank you so much. It’s so great to feel listened to and be told what support is out there to help me”.

Case Study: John

John was referred to the Social Prescribing in Probation service by his Probation Officer to receive community support to help integrate after moving into the area. He wanted to look at meaningful pursuits, including voluntary work, and wanted to explore future employment opportunities, especially training with a new skill. John was in the army for 12 years and was medically discharged with PTSD. He also lives with a personality disorder, and needed our Social Prescribing for Probation Link Worker to tailor engagement and support options that would be more comfortable to him.

After receiving the referral our Social Prescribing in Probation Link Worker Helena was able to contact John quickly and arrange an initial appointment. During the first consultation John explained to Helena that he was currently about to go through a divorce, and has two young children aged 3 and 5. There was currently a restraining order in place, and social care were involved as well. Although supervised access is allowed, he reported that this was not currently working well as he has to travel from Surrey to Yorkshire, and have someone accompany him during supervised visits.

John explained that he wanted support with mediation around his divorce, and visiting arrangements to see his children. He also wanted financial advice on selling his property, alongside help obtaining training for a career change. John expressed a deep desire to seek support with his emotional wellbeing and managing PTSD.

John reported that he would like to train as a paramedic or an ambulance technician, although he was aware that his conviction may restrict this. When Helena asked what support he feels would help him in his current situation and moving forward, John explained that he would love to access a gym but financially could not afford it. He said gym access and exercise would greatly benefit his mental wellbeing. He mentioned that he was also struggling financially with funding payments to start the divorce and sell his property, stating that this was holding him back from moving on with his life. As part of his ambitions moving forward, he mentioned that he was interested in volunteering, and also retraining with a view to more sustainable employment.

Following the initial consultation appointment Helena researched opportunities of support that could benefit John's situation. Helena made a plan to contact SSAFA, the Armed Forces Charity, for mentoring and PTSD support. She also looked into volunteering opportunities, financial advice for the house sale and divorce proceedings, and looked into retraining and employment opportunities for John.

On follow-up appointments Helena was able to make John aware of a number of different support avenues that could help him. Helena mentioned that Andy's Man Club and Mentell were two options to support his emotional wellbeing. She signposted him to Unlock and Surrey Lifelong Learning and the Work Wise project for retraining and employment advice and opportunities. John was given information for the Surrey Armed Forces portal and Guildford Fire Station Veterans Hub as avenues of support for veterans and providing John with closer ties to the community. To assist with his personality disorder, John was linked to the SUN (Service User Network) run by Catalyst.

To assist with financial issues John was signposted to Christians Against Poverty. He was provided information on Combat Stress, a 24-hour helpline with self-help treatment programmes for PTSD, anxiety and depression. One of John's main priorities was regarding exercise, and as such Helena signposted him to the Guildford Spectrum Exercise on Referral scheme, and Sport in Mind, a charity that uses sport and physical activity to improve the lives of people experiencing mental health problems.

John has already started to benefit from his work with the Social Prescribing in Probation service. He has been contacted and is receiving support from Surrey Lifelong Learning with regard to training and a new career. A member from SSAFA has contacted John and will offer mentoring support. The charity is looking into the potential for mentoring support with advice regarding his divorce and seeing his children. The referral is currently still open, allowing John the opportunity to feed back any issues he might be facing in accessing other support, but there is now a network of potential support opportunities around him to help guide him into the next phase of his life.

Volunteer Connections



volunteer connections

Through our Volunteer Connections project we aim to increase the level of volunteering amongst small charities and voluntary organisations in South West Surrey, to enable them to deliver their services more effectively

The Volunteer Connections project extends our Volunteer Centre capacity to support groups with service delivery and individuals wishing to volunteer. The project also aims to upskill groups to be more proficient in managing their volunteer workforce. By strengthening the infrastructure support currently provided by VASWS, we are able to give more hands-on support to smaller local groups who don't have the capacity and skills needed to recruit volunteers in an age where digital platforms and the use of social media dominate our communications with each other.

Our Volunteer Connections Volunteer Coordinators provide training where necessary to organisations, in order to enhance their volunteer recruitment process. Through our network of contacts, we are able to raise awareness amongst potential volunteers of the organisations looking to recruit volunteers. We recognise that, for some groups in our communities, there might be challenges preventing them from volunteering, and as such we work to encourage volunteering amongst underrepresented groups as well.

The overwhelmingly positive response that we have received to the Volunteer Connections project has shown that there is a real need for the support and connection that we are offering to our local community. We are excited by the opportunities that have arisen and the impact that our work has made in this first year. As you will read, we have explored many ways of supporting our local community and have learned a lot along the way. It has been an exciting, challenging journey and we are constantly evolving and working with people's needs.

Aims



One-to-One
Support



Volunteer
Coordinator
Network and
Trainings



Supported
Marginalised
Groups



Diversifying
Volunteer
Workforce

Our Community Outreach

We are continuously working with local community groups, good neighbour schemes, local events, farmer's markets, outreach events with local stores, leisure centres and churches. We have held "open mornings" and "drop in" sessions for volunteers and organisations so that we can build stronger relationships and show them how we can support.

We are building relationships with many local charities and organisations, supporting them by promoting their volunteer roles via our social media platforms and outreach events.

A quote from a Wellbeing Link Worker who invited us to the Waverley Event:

"Thank you for attending my event and for your lovely enthusiastic response to it, during and after! I would really like to further discuss the ideas for my team for a volunteering day"



Image (right):
Meeting the
Mayor



Image (above): Outreach at Guildford
Farmer's Market



Image (above): Gillian and Tony, our Project Volunteers
Image (right): Volunteers Christmas Event

Our Project Volunteers

We currently have three volunteers working with us on our project, we thoroughly enjoy their enthusiasm in supporting us and feel we have great relationships with them. They are keen to help us in many ways from photographing events, administrative tasks, manning stalls and helping with making digital flyers and posters and much more. We held a volunteer "thank you" event at Christmas and continue to listen and involve them in our work.



16

organisations worked with
on a one-to-one basis

110

different organisations
worked with

85

volunteers placed with
different organisations

10

training sessions run,
attended by 16
organisations

6

Volunteer Coordinator
Networks run, attended
by 61 organisations

We are proud of the differences that we have made in the first year of Volunteer Connections and we look forward to building upon these foundations as we develop the project. There are several initiatives that have been going well. Whilst it has been good to work with organisations on a deeper level, we have over 300 organisations on our database which we want to support. In addition to the 16, we have supported 110 organisations this year, with a variety of volunteering related queries, and we have onboarded 19 new ones to our database.

Staff Volunteering Day

We were pleased that several of our VASWS staff and trustees volunteered for a staff volunteering day at the Phyllis Tuckwell donation centre in Farnborough. We plan to offer these on a twice-yearly basis.



Image (above): VASWS staff and trustees volunteering at the Phyllis Tuckwell donation centre

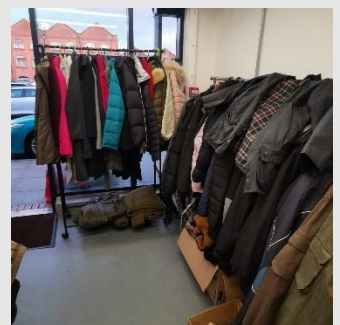
Partnerships

We formed a partnership with South East Community Rail Partnership (SECRP) and Zero Carbon to hold an event at Guildford train station called "Winter Warmers". This was held in a vacant shop unit and took place over two days. During the first day people dropped off donated coats, jumpers, hats and scarves and the second day was open for anyone "in need" to choose items. We had twelve volunteers helping us and worked with the community to hold a very successful event. Any surplus clothing was then donated to charities for the homeless and domestic abuse survivors. The response from the community was very positive and we plan to run another event in 2025.

As Sarah from SECRP said: "People planned special visits to the station to drop stuff off and one woman even took the coat off her back (she said that it was planned!)."



Images (above and below): Our Winter Warmers shop and event



"I really enjoyed the network meeting; it was so useful and lovely to meet other volunteer coordinators in the area. Thank you again for all this support, it's amazing!"

"Very well organised, and topics were very relevant. Very friendly and felt part of the group from the start."

- Feedback from our network meetings

Networks

We have started offering two network sessions each quarter, one on Teams and one face-to-face, in different locations around Guildford and Waverley. These have attracted volunteer coordinators from a diverse range of charities and local groups. The attendees value the opportunity to connect with others, to share ideas and best practice. It's helpful to know that you aren't the only one facing challenges.

We find the networks an invaluable learning tool, and they are helping us to shape the future of the project. We recognise the power of coming together to bring about change. In our most recent networks we discussed the changing landscape of volunteering, and we will offer two workshops on this topic at our conference in April. One challenge we've encountered is how we engage with the organisations who are advertising roles on our database but don't respond to emails. We are tackling this with the help of a volunteer and a staff member, who are calling and offering support. We are also visiting organisations whenever time allows. This work goes hand in hand with managing our database, ensuring roles and admin details are up to date. We want potential volunteers to feel engaged and excited when they look at the opportunities, and receive timely responses to their applications.

Training

We ran a "Train the Trainer" course in October 2024, which was a fantastic springboard and led us to offering our own training course in January. Writing the course, "A beginner's guide to using our database, Better Impact" was an interesting learning experience. We focused on the basics of how to manage and enhance your Better Impact listing to attract more volunteers. It was a very practical session and people enjoyed showing their improved listings to the rest of the group.

One attendee said we provided a "really clear step by step guide!" and another, who was feeling anxious about getting to grips with the database said: "Being a tech dinosaur, I very much appreciated your kindness and understanding, I am leaving with a much better understanding. Thank you."

We plan to offer this again in year two, alongside other trainings, such as trustee training, "volunteers and the law" and "attracting and retaining volunteers". As is often the case, we had lots of interest and then some last-minute dropouts, which are usually because people are too busy to attend.

*Image (right):
Our Level 1
Better Impact
Training Event,
January 2025*



"I presented at a VASWS Lunch and Learn online session to inform about our volunteer mentoring programme. I was really pleased to see that there were several people in attendance. After the event, one of these contacted me to find out more, and another who works for a local corporate invited me to a meeting to discuss how we might partner with them to promote our programme to their staff (60 in total at their Guildford office), as they have an employee volunteering programme. Overall, I am so pleased that I attended this event and hope very much to do another one in the future."

- Feedback from anonymous client

Volunteer Lunch and Learn Events

Our online "Volunteer Lunch and Learn" meeting features two organisations. They each have ten minutes to talk about their work and the voluntary roles that are available. We started these in quarter two and have refined them. As numbers were initially small, we decided to record them and share the videos on our website and social media.

Nine potential volunteers attended our latest meeting, our largest audience yet, which might be in response to promoting it more widely. Despite the small numbers, the meetings have been successful, and organisations have found volunteers.

Organisations are keen to present, and we have regular meetings scheduled throughout 2025. Another benefit of these meetings is that we are building relationships with organisations, finding out what support they need and increasing our knowledge about the valuable work they do. We are also gaining the trust of potential volunteers, which may encourage them to volunteer.

4
events
run

18
attendees

One-to-One Organisational Support

In our bid, we said that we would work with 16 organisations on a 1:1 basis and we have achieved this target.

This has involved meeting with an organisation, learning about their volunteering challenges, reviewing roles and recruitment, upskilling them on using the Better Impact database and promoting their roles to potential volunteers and through our networks and social media.

One of these, a domestic abuse charity, gained two volunteers, one through our Lunch and Learn event and another is one of the Volunteer Connections project coordinators. They are particularly pleased as they only have six active volunteers.

We have also worked with an organisation that distributes surplus food to charities, that would otherwise go to landfill.

We have visited this organisation's warehouse twice and met with volunteer coordinator and volunteers. We have promoted their volunteer roles and placed three volunteers with them, one being a young man who was struggling as he couldn't find work and was sitting at home every day. He really needed support and something to give him confidence.

This organisation has matched him up with a buddy and he is now gaining experience in the workplace.

Both Volunteer Connections coordinators have volunteered because of this project, and it has had a knock-on effect as their family members have started volunteering too!

16
organisations
worked with on
a 1:1 basis

Case Studies

George came to us with extreme anxiety and learning disabilities. We talked to him about volunteering and found out that he really enjoyed photography. He has since taken photos for the Guildford Dragon, our local online newspaper, and he has attended our Veteran War Grave event “sprucing up war graves” where he was a brilliant photographer. He said he really enjoyed the morning and is due to come to our next event in March

Jenny wanted to volunteer and find something to get her out of the house. She volunteered for a local club which was for the lonely and isolated and was in partnership with the NHS. She has become an integral part of the club. She was asked to make tea and coffee but has become so involved she brings lovely fresh flowers, cakes and little presents for everyone at Easter and Christmas. She has received a Volunteer Award!

1:1 Organisation Support Case Study: Care Ashore

We visited Care Ashore, a charity providing housing and support to Merchant Seafarers and former members of the Royal Navy. It is a wonderful estate, but they were in desperate need of volunteers to help in the vast gardens. We managed to place four volunteers with Care Ashore and their CEO, Joe Nicholson, was thrilled with our support.

We also placed several corporate groups with them and Care Ashore have arranged bespoke days for each event. These organisations thoroughly enjoyed their day volunteering and plan to use the estate for future events.

We are regularly asked by corporates for team volunteering opportunities, and we now have a list of organisations that can offer this. These can be seasonal and depend upon what sort of activity the group would prefer. One corporate attended one of our “volunteer lunch and learn” events and is partnering up with a mentoring charity who were presenting. We have recently been asked to present to a group of retired people about the diverse range of volunteering opportunities available when they retire.

“A brief message to say thank you all for the work you have done here. I popped down last week and was amazed at the difference you have made. It is incredible, thank you.”

- Joe Nicholson, Care Ashore CEO

Diversifying Volunteer Workforce

In the first year we have been diversifying the volunteer work force by focusing on working with veterans, reconnecting with mental health services and the University of Surrey.

In our previous project, Welcome to Volunteering, we worked closely with Oakleaf, a local mental health charity. We have rekindled this connection and attended several of their drop-ins to meet potential volunteers. As we found with our previous project, it is not always easy to engage with and place clients as they often have complex needs. Coupled with this, some charities do not have the capacity to support. Going forward, we will be more targeted by giving presentations at their job club. We also want to engage their clients with our volunteer taster sessions as we know this can be a good confidence boost and help them to step into a regular volunteering role.

Over the years VASWS has worked with the University of Surrey, but we haven't been able to do this recently due to lack of capacity. The Volunteer Connections project has allowed us to connect with their community and wellbeing teams. Through our outreach in February 2025, we met lots of students and linked up with the Surrey Sustainability Society. We plan to offer some group volunteering after the exam period and will attend their Fresher's Fair in September 2025.

Veterans

We decided to work with local veterans as one part of our marginalised groups. We visited the Guildford Veterans Hub which is located at Guildford Fire Station and engaged with organisations who support veterans and ex-military, many suffering from PTSD and not able to engage with life. About thirty people attended the hub and we introduced our new project.

We talked about the idea of a "taster event" and invited them to a "cleaning up" and coffee morning at a local church where there are twelve war graves. This proved to be a really great event where we all gathered and made a real difference to the headstones.

As well as this, our guests really enjoyed interacting with each other and it was heart-warming to see them socialising. Since this was such a successful event, we are now registered with the Commonwealth War Grave Commission.

We held another event in March and eighteen volunteers attended. We have also involved a young man who struggles with anxiety and poor mental health, and he takes wonderful photos for us.

*Image (below):
Veteran taster
volunteer event*



Case Studies

National Lottery Open Morning

On 21st March we had an Open Morning to celebrate National Lottery Week. We invited volunteers and charities and had 20 visitors who celebrated with us. It was a great mix of people, and a couple of volunteers showed a huge interest in a couple of organisations that attended, so we are hoping to place them soon. Cake and treats went down well, and we had a great response to our morning.



Image (above): Our National Lottery Open Morning Event

John came to us because he wanted to be involved with the community. He has been made redundant as has been diagnosed with epilepsy, although this is well managed. He is struggling with nothing to do and had lost his sense of purpose. We have a good relationship with a wonderful centre for people struggling with complex needs along with epilepsy, and this centre is very close to him. We arranged an informal visit for him, and he has now been taken on by them as a volunteer. He has always known about this organisation and has donated money to them for years, so he is now thrilled to be part of their team.

Conclusion

Over the course of our first year we have learnt that outreach is an integral part of the project. We have attended many events in Guildford, Godalming and Cranleigh so far. Some of them are small and some larger but we find these events are fantastic for spreading the word and becoming known in the area. We have had several “Open Mornings” and encourage people to visit us at our office. We regularly visit local groups and feel that they are getting to know us better. We find that the better we get to know organisations, the easier it is to find volunteers for them. We have featured in several local magazines and promoted the project far and wide. We even did an interview for Internet TV, and have many more outreach events and partnerships planned for the coming year.

We have been offering one-to-one support to organisations and are trying to encourage them to look at their roles differently, being more flexible and inclusive, and attract more volunteers. It can be a challenge for people to make this change, but we really feel they can benefit from it. We have also learnt to keep changing and evolving as organisations contact us and give us different challenges.

In summary, the first year of Volunteer Connections has been a period of significant learning and adaptation. As we move into year two we will continue to refine our support processes, enhance our database, and expand our promotional efforts. We look forward to implementing new strategies and receiving valuable feedback to guide us.

Frailty Academy Community Coordinator

Pilot project run in conjunction with



History

The Frailty Academy was set up in 2021 by Dr James Adams, Consultant Geriatrician, Frailty Academy Chair and Chief of Service for Frailty and Community Services at Royal Surrey. He created a vision of making extensive education and training available for all, so that everyone in the health and care system, including people living with frailty themselves, is at least frailty aware. The work plan of the Academy is directed by a multi-professional steering group including staff from both the Royal Surrey and the University of Surrey's Faculty of Medicine. The Frailty Academy ambition is for everyone in Guildford and Waverley to have awareness of what frailty is and to provide training in the use of resources, so that people who are living with frailty can be best supported to age well and live life to the full. They are committed to developing staff to the highest standard through their development programmes. The Frailty Academy's vision is for everyone to age well, for volunteers and staff to have the skills and knowledge in frailty to support our older population and for the experience of people living with frailty and their carers to inform and improve how we provide care and support

Our Involvement with the Frailty Academy

The Royal Surrey County Hospital and Surrey Heartlands ICB received Workforce Innovation funding for a 'Frailty Academy'. As part of the funding, they contracted us to employ a Community Frailty Coordinator, initially on a 12-month basis, to support the roll-out of the Frailty Academy programme amongst small charities and voluntary organisations in Guildford and Waverley to help improve the delivery of their services for older people.

Our Community Frailty Coordinator, Amber Linnell, started the project on 1st July 2024. With experience in community development, and having previously set up and run local projects, Amber's role is split between VASWS and the Frailty Academy with the aim of rolling out Tier 1 training to local voluntary organisations.

Firstly we conducted a mapping exercise of the organisations across Guildford and Waverley, who would benefit from the training, starting with Haslemere and the West of Waverley Primary Care Network.

“Excellent delivery, good relevant slides, new information and facts. Let’s hope it can be rolled out across the board!”

“Pitched at the right level. Very interesting, warm and friendly delivery.”

- Feedback from our Frailty Awareness Training

Frailty Awareness Training

We organised Frailty Awareness Training in November 2024 at the Hunter Centre in Haslemere. These sessions served as a consultation opportunity to gather feedback from the voluntary sector on the content and structure, helping us identify areas for improvement. As the initial Frailty Academy Tier 1 training was originally designed for NHS staff, the training session was useful to establish whether the training content was suitable for the voluntary sector. A few initial changes have been made to the training, including less focus on medical interventions and more emphasis on frailty services available to community members. The feedback from the training was overwhelmingly positive, with 100% of participants strongly agreeing that the content of the training was appropriate to them, and that the trainer delivered the training in an interesting and engaging way. Additionally, all attendees reported an improvement in their knowledge and skills after attending the training session.

Following this session, we held a second consultative session with Voluntary Sector organisations on the 24th February 2025 in Farncombe to gather further feedback before rolling the training out more widely. By the end of April 2025, work was well underway to deliver the next phase of training for voluntary sector colleagues. Our Community Frailty Coordinator has scheduled new training dates across the region, and is working to a plan that would ensure Tier 1 training for the voluntary sector could be delivered in each of the Primary Care Network (PCN) areas before the end of the project.

Older People’s Frailty Awareness Training

We are collaborating closely with the Frailty Academy team to adapt the current frailty awareness training materials for older people and their carers, incorporating their insights and experiences to ensure the content is practical, relevant, and impactful. Our initial focus is on developing two consultative training sessions, which will allow us to refine the content based on direct feedback. This will inform a wider roll-out across all four PCN areas later in the project.

Voluntary Sector Awareness Training for NHS Staff

As the pilot started developing, we started experiencing an increase in interest to educate clinicians on the role of the Voluntary Sector, in addition to our original remit of rolling out the work of the frailty academy within the third sector. By the end of the financial year period, we had successfully delivered three Voluntary Sector Awareness Training sessions to NHS staff, aimed at strengthening collaboration and improving understanding of how the NHS can better integrate with voluntary services to enhance patient care and support people living with frailty.

Financial Review

Income

Our income increased by a modest 7% year on year. The very welcome funding from the Big Lottery for our new Volunteer Connections initiative was offset by the gradual but marked reduction (29% reduction in income) in demand for our GP surgery-based social prescribing services. We are very pleased to have commenced (late the financial year) the provision of social prescribing in the Probation Service, and the A and E department of the Royal Surrey County Hospital; and to start to deliver on a contract for a Community Frailty Coordinator

As ever, we are grateful for and reliant on the core funding we receive from Surrey County Council, Guildford Borough Council and Waverley Borough Council; and from Surrey Heartlands ICB. This enables us to continue to deliver our core services. It is noteworthy that none of the four core grants included an inflationary uplift in 2024/25 (and only one out of four did so in the previous year), and this against inflationary pressures of 2.5% and average wage growth of 5%.

Expenditure

Our staff base continued stable during the year, reducing only in response to completed or reduced service contracts; and we were happily able to redeploy staff from one service to another as demand changed. Our staffing costs constitute 86% of our total costs, and time and effort are invested by the management in ensuring as far as possible that our people, our most important asset, are cared for.

Our premises expenses inevitably increased year on year following our office relocation in February 2024; we created a provision for future legal costs if we need to relocate again; and in addition we invested in some replacement IT equipment.

Reserves and Investments

It is the policy of the charity that unrestricted funds which have not been designated for a specific use should be maintained at a level equivalent to between three and six months' expenditure. The Trustees consider that reserves at this level will ensure that, in the event of a significant drop in funding, they will be able to continue the charity's current activities while consideration is given to ways in which additional funds may be raised.

Our reserves increased modestly in the financial year. At 31st March 2024 our general reserves of £237,368 represented 5.3 months' expenditure. The position at 31st March 2025 of £277,397 represents 5.9 months' expenditure, so we continue to hold reserves in line with the charity's reserves policy.

Cash sufficient to cover day to day cashflow requirements, and potential demands on the significant client trust funds we hold (which increased during the financial year by some £65,000) is held in a current account and on instant access, with surplus cash held in a charity investment fund - CCLA COIF Charities Deposit Fund. In addition, we hold £85,000 with Redwood Bank on relatively short notice, thus increasing our interest income without jeopardising our operational cash requirements. Our cashflow is "front-loaded" to the first half of the financial year, and there is potentially more room to manoeuvre in this area.

No other investments are held.

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT: TO THE MEMBERS OF VOLUNTARY ACTION SOUTH WEST SURREY

Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of Voluntary Action South West Surrey for the year ended 31 March 2025 which comprise the Statement of Financial Activities, the Balance Sheet, statement of cash flows and the related notes. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards, including Financial Reporting Standard 102: The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

Opinion on financial statements

In our opinion the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the state of the charitable company's affairs as at 31 March 2025 and of its income and expenditure for the year then ended;
- have been properly prepared in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice; and
- have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006.

Basis for opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK) (ISAs (UK)) and applicable law. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements section of our report. We are independent of the Charity in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in the UK, including the FRC's Ethical Standard and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

Conclusions relating to going concern

In auditing the financial statements, we have concluded that the trustees' use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements is appropriate.

Based on the work we have performed, we have not identified any material uncertainties relating to events or conditions that, individually or collectively, may cast significant doubt on the charity's ability to continue as a going concern for a period of at least twelve months from when the financial statements are authorised for issue.

Our responsibilities and the responsibilities of the directors with respect to going concern are described in the relevant sections of this report.

Other information

The trustees are responsible for the other information. The other information comprises the information included in the annual report other than the financial statements and our auditor's report thereon. Our opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and, except to the extent otherwise explicitly stated in our report, we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon.

In connection with our audit of the financial statements, our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements or our knowledge obtained in the audit or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If we identify such material inconsistencies or apparent material misstatements, we are required to determine whether there is a material misstatement in the financial statements or a material misstatement of the other information. If, based on the work we have performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, we are required to report that fact.

We have nothing to report in this regard.

Opinion on other matter prescribed by the Companies Act 2006

In our opinion, based on the work undertaken in the course of the audit:

- the information given in the trustees' report (incorporating the directors' report) for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements; and
- the trustees' report (incorporating the directors' report) has been prepared in accordance with applicable legal requirements.

Matters on which we are required to report by exception

In the light of the knowledge and understanding of the Charity and its environment obtained in the course of the audit, we have not identified material misstatements in the Trustees' Annual Report.

We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters where the Companies Act 2006 requires us to report to you if, in our opinion:

- adequate accounting records have not been kept or returns adequate for our audit have not been received from branches not visited by us; or
- the financial statements are not in agreement with the accounting records and returns; or
- certain disclosures of trustees' remuneration specified by law are not made; or
- we have not received all the information and explanations we require for our audit.

Responsibilities of the trustees

As explained more fully in the Trustees' Responsibilities Statement, the trustees (who are also the directors of the charitable company for the purposes of company law) are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements and for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view and for such internal control as they determine is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, the trustees are responsible for assessing the Charity's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the trustees either intend to liquidate the Charity or to cease operations, or have no realistic alternative but to do so.

Our responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with ISAs (UK) will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

Irregularities, including fraud, are instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations. We design procedures in line with our responsibilities, outlined above, to detect material misstatements in respect of irregularities, including fraud. The extent to which our procedures are capable of detecting irregularities, including fraud are set out below.

In identifying and assessing risks of material misstatement in respect of irregularities, including fraud and non-compliance with laws and regulations, our procedures included the following:

- We enquired of management, which included obtaining and reviewing supporting documentation, concerning the charity's policies and procedures relating to:
 - Identifying, evaluating, and complying with laws and regulations and whether they were aware of any instances of non-compliance;
 - Detecting and responding to the risks of fraud and whether they have knowledge of any actual, suspected, or alleged fraud;
 - The internal controls established to mitigate risks related to fraud or non-compliance with laws and regulations.
- We inspected the minutes of meetings of those charged with governance.
- We obtained an understanding of the legal and regulatory framework that the charity operates in, focusing on those laws and regulations that had a material effect on the financial statements or that had a fundamental effect on the operations of the charity from our professional and sector experience.
- We reviewed the financial statement disclosures and tested these to supporting documentation to assess compliance with applicable laws and regulations.
- We performed analytical procedures to identify any unusual or unexpected relationships that may indicate risks of material misstatement due to fraud.
- In addressing the risk of fraud through management override of controls, we tested the appropriateness of journal entries and other adjustments, assessed whether the judgements made in making accounting estimates are indicative of a potential bias and tested significant transactions that are unusual or those outside the normal course of business.

A further description of our responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements is located on the Financial Reporting Council's website at: [www.frc.org.uk/auditorsresponsibilities]. This description forms part of our auditor's report.

Use of our report

This report is made solely to the charitable company's members, as a body, in accordance with Chapter 3 of Part 16 of the Companies Act 2006. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the charity's members those matters we are required to state to them in an auditor's report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the charity and the charity's members as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.

.....
Anthony Epton (Senior Statutory Auditor)
for and on behalf of
Goldwins Limited
Statutory Auditor
Chartered Accountants
75 Maygrove Road
West Hampstead
London NW6 2EG

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES: INCORPORATING AN INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT

For the year ended 31 March 2025

				2025	2024
		Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Total funds	Total funds
	Note	£	£	£	£
Income from:					
Donations and legacies	3	-	-	-	10,075
Charitable activities	4	357,958	220,068	578,026	532,870
Other trading activities	5	11,212	-	11,212	10,188
Investments	6	12,091	-	12,091	9,520
Other income		-	-	-	150
Total income		381,261	220,068	601,329	562,803
Expenditure on:	7				
Charitable activities		341,232	220,068	561,300	534,139
Total expenditure		341,232	220,068	561,300	534,139
Net income / (expenditure) for the year	8	40,029	-	40,029	28,664
Transfers between funds		-	-	-	-
Net movement in funds		40,029	-	40,029	28,664
Reconciliation of funds:					
Total funds brought forward		237,368	-	237,368	208,704
Total funds carried forward		277,397	-	277,397	237,368

All of the above results are derived from continuing activities.
There were no other recognised gains or losses other than those stated above.
The attached notes form part of these financial statements.

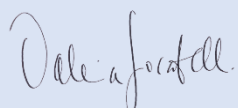
BALANCE SHEET

As at 31 March 2025

	Note	2025 £	2025 £	2024 £	2024 £
Fixed assets:					
Tangible assets	10		-		-
			-		-
Current assets:					
Debtors	11	81,268		28,875	
Cash at bank and in hand		<u>359,756</u>		<u>262,309</u>	
		441,024		291,184	
Liabilities:					
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	12	<u>163,627</u>		<u>53,816</u>	
Net current assets			<u>277,397</u>		<u>237,368</u>
Total assets less current liabilities			<u>277,397</u>		<u>237,368</u>
Creditors: amounts falling due after one year			-		-
Total net assets			<u>277,397</u>		<u>237,368</u>
The funds of the charity:	14				
Restricted funds			-		-
Unrestricted funds:					
Designated funds		-		-	
General funds		<u>277,397</u>		<u>237,368</u>	
Total unrestricted funds			<u>277,397</u>		<u>237,368</u>
Total charity funds			<u>277,397</u>		<u>237,368</u>

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the special provisions for small companies under Part 15 of the Companies Act 2006.

Approved by the trustees on 25/11/2025
and signed on their behalf by:



Name: Valeria Locatelli
Trustee

Company registration no. 05841344

The attached notes form part of the financial statements.

STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS

For the year ended 31 March 2025

	Note	2025 £	2025 £	2024 £	2024 £
Net cash provided by / (used in) operating activities	15		97,448		(32,967)
Cash flows from investing activities:					
Sale/ (purchase) of fixed assets		-		-	
Cash provided by / (used in) investing activities			-		-
Cash provided by / (used in) financing activities			-		-
Change in cash and cash equivalents in the year			97,448		(32,967)
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the year			262,309		295,276
Change in cash and cash equivalents due to exchange rate movements			-		-
Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the year	16		359,756		262,309

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

For the year ended 31 March 2025

1 Accounting policies**a) Basis of preparation**

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102 - effective 1 January 2015) - Charities SORP (FRS 102) and the Companies Act 2006.

The charitable company meets the definition of a public benefit entity under FRS 102. Assets and liabilities are initially recognised at historical cost or transaction value unless otherwise stated in the relevant accounting policy or note.

b) Going concern

The trustees consider that there are no material uncertainties about the charitable company's ability to continue as a going concern. The trustees do not consider that there are any sources of estimation uncertainty at the reporting date that have a significant risk of causing a material adjustment to the carrying amounts of assets and liabilities within the next reporting period.

c) Income

Income is recognised when the charity has entitlement to the funds, any performance conditions attached to the income have been met, it is probable that the income will be received and that the amount can be measured reliably.

Income from government and other grants, whether 'capital' grants or 'revenue' grants, is recognised when the charity has entitlement to the funds, any performance conditions attached to the grants have been met, it is probable that the income will be received and the amount can be measured reliably and is not deferred. Income received in advance for the provision of specified service is deferred until the criteria for income recognition are met.

For legacies, entitlement is taken as the earlier of the date on which either: the charity is aware that probate has been granted, the estate has been finalised and notification has been made by the executor(s) to the charity that a distribution will be made, or when a distribution is received from the estate. Receipt of a legacy, in whole or in part, is only considered probable when the amount can be measured reliably and the charity has been notified of the executor's intention to make a distribution. Where legacies have been notified to the charity, or the charity is aware of the granting of probate, and the criteria for income recognition have not been met, then the legacy is treated as a contingent asset and disclosed if material.

d) Donations of gifts, services and facilities

Donated professional services and donated facilities are recognised as income when the charity has control over the item or received the service, any conditions associated with the donation have been met, the receipt of economic benefit from the use by the charity of the item is probable and that economic benefit can be measured reliably. In accordance with the Charities SORP (FRS 102), volunteer time is not recognised so refer to the trustees' annual report for more information about their contribution.

On receipt, donated gifts, professional services and donated facilities are recognised on the basis of the value of the gift to the charity which is the amount the charity would have been willing to pay to obtain services or facilities of equivalent economic benefit on the open market; a corresponding amount is then recognised in expenditure in the period of receipt.

e) Interest receivable

Interest on funds held on deposit 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.

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

For the year ended 31 March 2025

1 Accounting policies (continued)**f) Fund accounting**

Unrestricted funds are available to spend on activities that further any of the purposes of charity. Designated funds are unrestricted funds of the charity which the trustees have decided at their discretion to set aside to use for a specific purpose. Restricted funds are donations which the donor has specified are to be solely used for particular areas of the charity's work or for specific projects being undertaken by the charity.

g) Expenditure and irrecoverable VAT

Expenditure is recognised once there is a legal or constructive obligation to make a payment to a third party, it is probable that settlement will be required and the amount of the obligation can be measured reliably. Expenditure is classified under the following activity headings:

- Costs of raising funds comprise of trading costs and the costs incurred by the charitable company in inducing third parties to make voluntary contributions to it, as well as the cost of any activities with a fundraising purpose.
- Expenditure on charitable activities includes the costs of delivering services undertaken to further the purposes of the charity and their associated support costs.
- Other expenditure represents those items not falling into any other heading.

Irrecoverable VAT is charged as a cost against the activity for which the expenditure was incurred.

h) Allocation of support costs

Support costs are those functions that assist the work of the charity but do not directly undertake charitable activities. Support costs include back office costs, finance, personnel, payroll and governance costs which support the charity and its and activities. These costs have been allocated between cost of raising funds and expenditure on charitable activities. The bases on which support costs have been allocated are set out in note 7.

i) Operating leases

Rental charges are charged on a straight line basis over the term of the lease.

j) Tangible fixed assets

Depreciation is provided at rates calculated to write down the cost of each asset to its estimated residual value over its expected useful life. The depreciation rates in use are as follows:

Fixtures and fittings	33% Straight line basis
Computer equipment	33% Straight line basis

k) Debtors

Trade and other debtors are recognised at the settlement amount due after any trade discount offered. Prepayments are valued at the amount prepaid net of any trade discounts due.

l) Cash at bank and in hand

Cash at bank and cash in hand includes cash and bank deposit or similar account.

m) Creditors and provisions

Creditors and provisions are recognised where the charity has a present obligation resulting from a past event that will probably result in the transfer of funds to a third party and the amount due to settle the obligation can be measured or estimated reliably. Creditors and provisions are normally recognised at their settlement amount after allowing for any trade discounts due.

n) Financial instruments

The charity only has financial assets and financial liabilities of a kind that qualify as basic financial instruments. Basic financial instruments are initially recognised at transaction value and subsequently measured at their settlement value with the exception of bank loans which are subsequently measured at amortised cost using the effective interest method.

o) Pensions

The charity operates stakeholder pension schemes.

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

For the year ended 31 March 2025

2 Detailed comparatives for the statement of financial activities (prior year)

	2024 Unrestricted £	2024 Restricted £	2024 Total £
Income from:			
Donations and legacies	10,075	-	10,075
Charitable activities	448,793	84,077	532,870
Other trading activities	10,188	-	10,188
Investments	9,520	-	9,520
Other	150	-	150
Total income	<u>478,726</u>	<u>84,077</u>	<u>562,803</u>
Expenditure on:			
Charitable activities	450,062	84,077	534,139
Total expenditure	<u>450,062</u>	<u>84,077</u>	<u>534,139</u>
Net income / expenditure	28,664	-	28,664
Transfers between funds	-	-	-
Net movement in funds	28,664	-	28,664
Total funds brought forward	208,704	-	208,704
Total funds carried forward	<u><u>237,368</u></u>	<u><u>-</u></u>	<u><u>237,368</u></u>

3 Income from donations and legacies

	Unrestricted £	Restricted £	2025 Total £	2024 Total £
Donations	-	-	-	1,000
Donations of services	-	-	-	9,075
	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>10,075</u>

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

For the year ended 31 March 2025

4 Income from charitable activities

	Unrestricted	Restricted	2025 Total	2024 Total
	£	£	£	£
Surrey County Council	52,627	-	52,627	52,627
NHS Surrey Heartlands ICB (QXU)	30,065	-	30,065	30,065
Guildford Borough Council	9,747	-	9,747	9,747
Waverley Borough Council	30,000	-	30,000	30,000
National Lottery Community Fund	-	102,903	102,903	-
Procure Health: Social Prescribing Link Workers	232,304	-	232,304	325,639
Surrey County Council: Better Care Social Prescribing	-	71,253	71,253	81,417
Surrey County Council: A&E Social Prescribing	-	7,500	7,500	-
Surrey County Council: Probation Social Prescribing	-	22,500	22,500	-
Catalyst	715	-	715	715
Alliance Community Services	2,500	-	2,500	-
Royal Surrey County Hospital NHS Foundation Trust	-	15,912	15,912	-
Screwfix Foundation	-	-	-	814
Stoughton Area Community Funding	-	-	-	300
SCC Members Booklet Funding	-	-	-	1,546
	<u>357,958</u>	<u>220,068</u>	<u>578,026</u>	<u>532,870</u>

5 Income from other trading activities

	Unrestricted	Restricted	2025 Total	2024 Total
	£	£	£	£
Fees	11,212	-	11,212	8,140
Learning & networking lunches and others	-	-	-	2,048
	<u>11,212</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>11,212</u>	<u>10,188</u>

6 Income from investments

	Unrestricted	Restricted	2025 Total	2024 Total
	£	£	£	£
Bank interest	6,576	-	6,576	4,175
Investment income	5,515	-	5,515	5,345
	<u>12,091</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>12,091</u>	<u>9,520</u>

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

For the year ended 31 March 2025

7 Analysis of expenditure

	Charitable activities	Support costs	2025 Total	2024 Total
	£	£	£	£
Staff costs (Note 9)	396,005	84,052	480,057	476,454
Direct costs				
Project expenses	439	-	439	600
Networking & lunch events	-	-	-	1,821
Training events	2,386	-	2,386	382
Staff & volunteer travel expenses	1,012	-	1,012	496
Recruitment	164	-	164	195
Administration expenses				
Printing, postage & stationery	2,678	568	3,246	2,468
Telephone & Internet	7,589	1,611	9,200	9,105
Rent and utilities	11,411	2,422	13,833	10,545
Insurance	-	2,204	2,204	1,762
Repairs and maintenance	-	277	277	(3,346)
IT & computer equipment	15,255	3,238	18,493	7,343
Audit and accountancy	-	4,234	4,234	4,200
Legal and professional	-	13,780	13,780	11,686
Marketing & publicity	-	343	343	1,289
Subscriptions	-	4,771	4,771	7,310
Sundry expenses	89	19	108	1,756
Bank charges	-	60	60	73
	437,028	124,272	561,300	534,139
Support costs	124,272	(124,272)	-	
2025 total	561,300	-	561,300	

Support and governance costs were allocated pro rata to total direct costs.

Of the total expenditure, £341,232 was unrestricted (2024: £450,062) and £220,068 was restricted (2024: £84,077).

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

For the year ended 31 March 2025

7 Analysis of expenditure (cont.)

Analysis of expenditure (prior year)

	Charitable activities	Support costs	2024 Total
	£	£	£
Staff costs (Note 9)	392,402	84,052	476,454
Direct costs			
Project expenses	600	-	600
Networking & lunch events	1,821	-	1,821
Training events	382	-	382
Staff & volunteer travel expenses	496	-	496
Recruitment	195	-	195
Administration expenses			
Printing, postage & stationery	2,033	435	2,468
Telephone & Internet	7,499	1,606	9,105
Rent and utilities	8,685	1,860	10,545
Insurance	-	1,762	1,762
Repairs and maintenance	-	(3,346)	(3,346)
IT & computer equipment	6,048	1,295	7,343
Audit and accountancy	-	4,200	4,200
Legal and professional	-	11,686	11,686
Marketing & publicity	-	1,289	1,289
Subscriptions	-	7,310	7,310
Sundry expense	1,446	310	1,756
Bank charges	-	73	73
	421,606	112,533	534,139
Support costs	112,533	(112,533)	-
2024 total	534,139	-	534,139

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

For the year ended 31 March 2025**8 Net income / (expenditure) for the year**

This is stated after charging /
(crediting):

	2025	2024
	£	£
Auditor's remuneration (excluding VAT):		
Audit fees	3,500	3,500
	<u>3,500</u>	<u>3,500</u>

9 Analysis of staff costs, trustee remuneration and expenses, and the cost of key management personnel

Staff costs were as follows:

	2025	2024
	£	£
Salaries and wages	420,695	419,169
Social security costs	32,561	32,134
Employer's contribution to defined contribution pension schemes	26,801	25,151
	<u>480,057</u>	<u>476,454</u>

No employee earned more than £60,000 during the year (2024: nil).

The total employee benefits including pension and national insurance contributions of the key management personnel and support staff were £80,673 (2024: £61,675)

The trustees were not paid or received any other benefits from employment with the Trust or its subsidiary in the year (2024: £nil).

Staff numbers

The average number of employees (head count based on number of staff employed) during the year was as follows:

	2025	2024
	No.	No.
Charitable activities	14.4	14.3
Support	3.0	2.2
	<u>17.4</u>	<u>16.5</u>

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

For the year ended 31 March 2025

10 Tangible fixed assets

	ICT equipment £	Furniture £	Total £
Cost			
At the start of the year	15,963	2,575	18,538
Additions in year	-	-	-
Disposals in year	-	-	-
At the end of the year	<u>15,963</u>	<u>2,575</u>	<u>18,538</u>
Depreciation			
At the start of the year	15,963	2,575	18,538
Charge for the year	-	-	-
Eliminated on disposal	-	-	-
At the end of the year	<u>15,963</u>	<u>2,575</u>	<u>18,538</u>
Net book value			
At the start of the year	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>
At the end of the year	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>

All of the above assets are used for charitable purposes.

11 Debtors

	2025 £	2024 £
Trade debtors	73,028	24,488
Prepayments & accrued income	8,240	4,387
	<u>81,268</u>	<u>28,875</u>

12 Creditors: amounts falling due within one year

	2025 £	2024 £
Trade creditors	3,578	1,149
Taxation and social security	7,357	8,204
Other creditors	113,617	39,263
Deferred income	9,505	-
Accruals	29,570	5,200
	<u>163,627</u>	<u>53,816</u>

Deferred income

	2025 £	2024 £
Balance at the beginning of the year	-	15,880
Amount released to income in the year	-	(15,880)
Amount deferred in the year	9,505	-
Balance at the end of the year	<u>9,505</u>	<u>-</u>

Other creditors includes £91,522 held on behalf of Real Change, £12,408 held on behalf of SPARKS fund, £485 held on behalf of Green SP fund and £400 held on behalf of Guildford Philanthropy Loneliness Initiative.

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

For the year ended 31 March 2025

13 Analysis of net assets between funds

	General unrestricted £	Designated £	Restricted £	Total funds £
Net current assets	277,398	-	-	277,398
Net assets at the end of the year	277,398	-	-	277,398

14 Movements in funds

	At the start of the year £	Incoming resources & gains £	Outgoing resources & losses £	Transfers £	At the end of the year £
Restricted funds:					
Better Care Social Prescribing	-	71,253	(71,253)	-	-
A and E Social Prescribing	-	7,500	(7,500)	-	-
Probation Social Prescribing	-	22,500	(22,500)	-	-
Frailty Coordinator	-	15,912	(15,912)	-	-
Volunteer Connections	-	102,903	(102,903)	-	-
Total restricted funds	-	220,068	(220,068)	-	-
Unrestricted funds:					
Designated funds:					
Organisation Contingency	-	-	-	-	-
Total designated funds	-	-	-	-	-
General funds	237,368	381,261	(341,232)	-	277,397
Total unrestricted funds	237,368	381,261	(341,232)	-	277,397
Total funds	237,368	601,329	(561,300)	-	277,397

Purposes of restricted funds

Income, which is received for specific projects, as for example grants, donations and earned income is accounted for as restricted funds, with expenditure usually attributed over a specific period of time.

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

For the year ended 31 March 2025**15 Reconciliation of net income / (expenditure) to net cash flow from operating activities**

	2025	2024
	£	£
Net income / (expenditure) for the reporting period (as per the statement of financial activities)	40,029	28,664
Depreciation	-	528
(Increase)/ decrease in debtors	(52,393)	13,493
Increase/ (decrease) in creditors	109,812	(75,652)
Net cash provided by / (used in) operating activities	97,448	(32,967)

16 Analysis of cash and cash equivalents

	At 1 April 2024	Cash flows	Other changes	At 31 March 2025
	£	£	£	£
Cash at bank and in hand	262,309	97,448	-	359,756
Total cash and cash equivalents	262,309	97,448	-	359,756

17 Operating lease commitments

Total future minimum lease payments under non-cancellable operating leases are as follows:

	Equipment	
	2025	2024
	£	£
Less than 1 year	1,385	1,385
1 - 5 years	3,809	5,194
	5,194	6,579

18 Legal status of the charity

The charity is a company limited by guarantee and has no share capital. Each member is liable to contribute a sum not exceeding £1 in the event of the charity being wound up.

19 Related party transactions

The charity has no related party transactions during the year. (2024: Nil)

There are no donations from related parties which are outside the normal course of business and no restricted donations from related parties.

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

For the year ended 31 March 2025

20 a. Analysis of net assets between funds (prior year)

	General unrestricted £	Designated £	Restricted £	Total funds £
Tangible fixed assets	-	-	-	-
Net current assets	237,368	-	-	237,368
Net assets at the end of the year	237,368	-	-	237,368

b. Movements in funds (prior year)

	At the start of the year £	Incoming resources & gains £	Outgoing resources & losses £	Transfers £	At the end of the year £
Restricted funds:					
Better Care Social Prescribing	-	81,417	(81,417)	-	-
Screwfix Foundation	-	814	(814)	-	-
Stoughton Area Community Funding	-	300	(300)	-	-
SCC Members Booklet Funding	-	1,546	(1,546)	-	-
Total restricted funds	-	84,077	(84,077)	-	-
Unrestricted funds:					
Designated funds:					
Organisation Contingency	20,000	-	-	(20,000)	-
Total designated funds	20,000	-	-	(20,000)	-
General funds	188,704	478,726	(450,062)	20,000	237,368
Total unrestricted funds	208,704	478,726	(450,062)	-	237,368
Total funds	208,704	562,803	(534,139)	-	237,368

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Voluntary Action South West Surrey

Annual Report 2024/25

Produced in house

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Company Registration Number: 05841344