SUPPORTING OLDER PEOPLE CIO

England & Wales · Charity number 1155682

Details

Status	Registered
Legal form	CIO
Registered	2014-02-06
Register	View on the Charity Commission register

Contact

Address	Supporting Older People 46 East Parade Harrogate North Yorkshire HG1 5RR
Phone	01423531490
Email	Team@supportingolderpeople.org.uk
Website	supportingolderpeople.org.uk

Activities

Objects: THE OBJECTS OF THE CIO ARE THE RELIEF OF ELDERLY PERSONS, BEING OVER 60 YEARS, LIVING IN HARROGATE AND THE SURROUNDING AREA BY SUCH CHARITABLE MEANS AS THE TRUSTEES DETERMINE,INCLUDING THE PROVISION OF A BEFRIENDING AND VISITING SERVICE, ADVICE, INFORMATION AND SUPPORT FOR SUCH PERSONS AND THEIR CARERS AND THE TRAINING OF VOLUNTEERS.

Activities: Supporting older people in Harrogate by a visiting service, social events and advice and information.

Classification

- **How:** Provides Human Resources, Provides Services
- **What:** Disability
- **Who:** Elderly/old People

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Geography

- North Yorkshire

Finances

Period end	Income	Expenditure	Assets	Employees
2025-03-31	£166,343	£150,733	-	-
2024-03-31	£90,784	£123,297	-	-
2023-03-31	£158,153	£100,458	-	-
2022-03-31	£76,458	£74,242	-	-
2021-03-31	£64,602	£64,193	-	-

Trustees

Name	Role	Appointed
Peter Jack Hannon	Chair	2023-11-16
Garrey Lee Haase		2023-11-16
JULIE BARLOW		2016-10-20
James Daniel Fulton Houseman		2021-11-25
Martin Taylor		2020-11-30
Sarah Darbyshire		2024-11-21
THERESA MARY STEARN		2016-10-20

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SUPPORTING OLDER PEOPLE CIO

England & Wales - Charity number 1155682

Accounts

Supporting older people

ANNUAL REPORT

For the year to 31st March 2025

Community House
46-50 East Parade
Harrogate
HG1 5RR

Tel: 01423 531490
Email: team@supportingolderpeople.org.uk
www.supportingolderpeople.org.uk

Charity No. 1155682

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Welcome from the Chair

As Chair of the Board of Trustees for Supporting Older People, (SOP) it is with pride and gratitude that I present the annual review for the financial year ending March 2025.

In a time of persistent economic uncertainty, the urgency of our mission has never been clearer. National data confirms that the scale of loneliness remains staggering, with estimates showing that nearly one million older people in the UK are often lonely, and hundreds of thousands may go a week without any meaningful social contact. Our charity continues to stand as a vital bridge against this tide of isolation, demonstrating that a simple conversation can be profoundly transformative.

At SOP we have a small, dedicated team comprising of Kate, Julia and Lorna. Together they organise and deliver a growing number of events, including befriending and social activities to keep up with the ever-growing demand from our ageing population. They do this with great skill and boundless enthusiasm for the charity. Without them the charity would not be able to continue to grow and bring comfort to isolated older people in Harrogate and Knaresborough. I sincerely thank them for all that they do and for supporting me this year.

We continue to work with a number of Partners including Harrogate Town AFC Foundation and Age UK North Yorkshire & Darlington. This cooperation and coordination is vital in delivering the services and care to our beneficiaries. We do this to support people to stay Healthy, Independent and Connected in our area. We are supported in doing this by the awarded grants from North Yorkshire Council. We will continue to work with them to ensure we deliver the best service we can to our clients.

Our Fundraising Team has worked tirelessly this year to help support the good work of SOP. The events include a Ladies' Day and our Summer Ball. Our annual Summer Ball continues to grow and was a great success which raised over £14k towards supporting our services.

We continue to source providers of local grants for SOP. We work closely with the benefactors to show that the grants awarded are wisely spent and support the local work that we do. This is a vital source of funding for SOP and we dedicate time and resources to ensure that we deliver the service as promised and give value for money. I want to thank those who have awarded us grants and we will continue to build the relationships going forward.

I would also like to thank our dedicated team of Trustees who oversee the charity and provide support and guidance to the SOP team. Their due diligence and critical friend approach means so much to me and the SOP Team.

Our volunteers are vital to SOP and support us in so many ways. We are extremely grateful and thank them for their dedication, kindness and support. We could not function without them. We always need more volunteers and I can vouch that it is so fulfilling.

We face challenges, as a small charity, to provide sufficient funds to support the vital work that we do. We continually look for new ways and events to raise monies. We face competition in grant funding and increased austerity in 2025. We need to work hard in ensuring the charity can continue to provide these vital services to the older people we support. We will continue to work with our partners, volunteers and benefactors to continue taking the charity forward.

Introduction from the Director

Reading this annual report at the end of another incredibly busy and successful year, I am once again so proud of everything our small charity has achieved during challenging economic times. Demand for our services continue to rise and we have reached the end of our second year of partnership with Harrogate Town Community Foundation and Age UK, North Yorkshire and Darlington. We look forward to the third year of "Together in Harrogate" and once again would like to thank North Yorkshire Council for their faith in us. At the time of writing we are waiting to hear if there will be an additional year of this vital funding.

Partnerships have continued to be extremely important to us during 2024-25 and I have enjoyed working with our colleagues in the voluntary and business sectors and at North Yorkshire Council as well as the members of the Harrogate and District Chamber of Commerce, after becoming a member of the management committee in 2023.

You can see from our activity reports that they have gone from strength to strength, with demand for them continuing to grow. Befriending has seen a slight downturn in demand as we have found since the pandemic that, when they are able, people prefer to meet in groups, thus forming wider friendship groups. Befriending, however, still has a valuable place for those less able to go out.

We have continued to diversify our funding sources in light of increased competition for grants. Our third annual ball, organised by our small fundraising team, was another huge success and we were delighted that several local businesses sponsored us and joined us on the evening, helping us raise over £14,000. We also held our first Ladies' Day fundraiser since before the pandemic, hosting a lunch and sweepstake for Cheltenham Ladies' Day at Hotel du Vin, which raised £2,500. A huge thank you to the local businesses which continue to give their staff time to support us as part of their Corporate Social Responsibility, especially by driving our members to our events. This makes a huge difference, and they are acknowledged later in this report.

As chair, Peter Hannon has continued to be a valuable source of support and guidance to me and the whole team, and we look forward to continuing to work with him in the future. Sadly, at this year's AGM, James Houseman is retiring as our Treasurer. We will all miss him and I would like to thank him for his hard work and commitment to our charity over the years. Peter Hannon has agreed to take over as Treasurer from November 2025 and his finance background will stand us in good stead. All our trustees make steering a small charity through sometimes choppy waters much less of a burden and I am extremely grateful to them and indeed to all our volunteers, without whom we would not exist. They make a huge difference to the lives of those with whom they are matched.

Finally, every year I finish my introduction by thanking my wonderful colleagues, Julia Lightfoot and Lorna Daniel, for their continued dedication, commitment and innovation which place us in a strong position to meet the challenges ahead and make Supporting Older People such a wonderful place to work. This year is now different - SOP would not be the organisation it is without you.

Activites

Home Befriending

Our fantastic team of 94 volunteers visit 96 members of Supporting Older (two volunteers visit two members of SOP). Without this support our Befriending Service would not function. Taking an average of one hour a week over a yearly period our volunteers give an impressive 4888 hours of volunteering.

Using the Living Wage as guidance this would amount to £59.682.48.

More than 2 million people in England over the age of 75 live alone, and more than a million older people say they go over a month without speaking to a friend, neighbour or family member.

People can become socially isolated for a variety of reasons, such as getting older or weaker, no longer being the hub of their family, leaving the workplace, the deaths of spouses and friends, or through disability or illness.

Someone who's lonely probably also finds it hard to reach out. There's a stigma surrounding loneliness, and older people tend not to ask for help because they have too much pride.

Supporting Older People’s befriending service works towards alleviating loneliness and isolation. Our Befriending Manager carefully matches volunteers with referrals ensuring a long lasting friendship. Our befriending members look forward to a weekly visit from their volunteer giving them a chance to chat and catch up over a cup of tea.

All our volunteers are DBS checked and are matched with a member according to their interests, location and how much time they can offer.

Activites

Tea & Talk

There are 77 members of Supporting Older People who attend all or some of the Tea & Talks that are held at the Crown Hotel on a monthly basis.
There is an afternoon tea giving everyone the opportunity to catch up and enjoy a meal together.
Our wonderful volunteers give up their time to transport our members to this event ensuring they are picked up from their door and returned safely.
We have great entertainment from choirs, solo singers, magicians and quizzes.

Dining Out Club

Both the Harrogate and Knaresborough Dining Out Clubs have been very popular and around 15 to 20 members attend the monthly event. As far as possible small, independent restaurants are booked. This gives everyone the opportunity to perhaps eat somewhere where they would not normally go to.

Activites

Outings

We have had a wonderful year of exciting trips such as The Astoria, Barnsley - a wonderful renovated theatre with upbeat organ music, Wentworth Garden Centre, seaside trip to Bridlington, Skipton canal, Northallerton, Ilkley, Christmas shopping and a seasonal trip to Nostell Priory to see the Christmas decorations.
Our thanks to the Happy Wanderers and their wonderful volunteer drivers for getting us there and back very safely!

Cinema Club

We were approached by Harcourt Gardens Care Home to use their cinema for showings of popular films on a monthly basis. The Harcourt Gardens and SOP Cinema Club was launched. Up to 12 members enjoy coffee and homemade cake before watching a movie complete with popcorn and drinks.
We are grateful of the relationship with Harcourt Gardens Care Home. Not only do they offer the cinema club but our members are invited to various events at the home. Residents of Harcourt Gardens attended our fund raising Ladies Day.

Activites

Music & Movement

This weekly group has 20 members. The group is run by wonderful volunteers and without their time and dedication the group would not happen. Thanks go to our Chair, Peter Hannon who attends the group and deals with the finances.

Harlow Friendship Group

This group is overseen by Lorna, Supporting Older People's administrator who puts together a varied and exciting programme of speakers, entertainers and quizzes. There is around 25-30 members attending the weekly sessions.

Benefits of eating together in later life

Eating together encourages older people to consume healthier meals, as shared mealtimes often involve a wider variety of food options. It helps to foster an environment where individuals are more likely to try new foods, diversify their nutrient intake, which will in turn help to improve overall nutrition. In addition to this, older people who eat together are more likely to have regular eating patterns, reducing the likelihood of skipping meals, or relying on unhealthy snacks.

Better physical health

Enjoying mealtimes together can positively affect physical health in several ways. Firstly, older adults tend to eat more slowly when they are dining with others, which helps to aid digestion. This in turn can also help with promoting mindful practices, like savouring the flavour and texture of food, which can lead to better digestion.

A healthy and active mind

engaging in conversations and interactions during shared mealtimes can provide valuable mental stimulation for older adults including recalling memories, sharing stories and discussing current events. These conversations help to exercise memory, attention and language skills, ultimately contributing to better cognitive health. Regular social interactions during meals can also help to reduce feelings of loneliness, depression and anxiety, which all helps to improve emotional well-being.

Case Study

The Power of Friendship

It is a big step to join a new group especially if you are older, have lost a loved one or moved to a new town. At Supporting Older People we understand how difficult this is. If we have a call from someone who has built up the courage to come along to one of our events we ensure they are welcomed, are sat with like minded people and are made to feel welcome.

We have some wonderful friendships that have started at Supporting Older People. Coming along regularly to our events gives our members the opportunity to meet new people and form great friendships.

We have had members going to the theatre, out for meals and even going on holiday.

Research suggests that having close ties to friends and family, and participating in meaningful social activities, may help people maintain their thinking skills better in later life and slow down cognitive decline. People who are socially engaged seem to have a lower risk of dementia, but the evidence is not yet strong enough to draw firm conclusions.

Evidence indicates that the numbers of social connections, and the type, quality and purpose of relationships, can affect brain function. So it seems that better social engagement is good for brain health. There is also evidence that loneliness increases the risk of loss of thinking skills in older people.

We are delighted so many of our members have found long lasting friendships through Supporting Older People.

Risk Management

Supporting Older People maintains a risk register and the Board of Trustees ensures that all major risks to which the charity is exposed are reviewed on a regular basis and also that systems and procedures are in place to manage such risks. We also work with our insurance broker, Marshall Wooldridge to ensure that risks are minimised.

The main controls used by the charity include agendas and minutes of all meetings held; reporting through the organisational structure; policies and procedures formally adopted by the board and activity specific or individual risk assessments which are developed and maintained by the staff team and approved by the Director.

Public Benefit

We have referred to the Charity Commission's general guidance on public benefit and are confident that Supporting Older People meets their requirements. Our Home Visiting Scheme is free to all and, whilst we ask for a contribution towards the cost of our activities, these are subsidised by us. Equal access to our services is important to us and people join us regardless of gender, ethnicity, faith, sexual orientation or any other factor. We are now doing specific work with veterans, both male and female.

Provision of our 1:1 befriending and group activities for older people who live alone aims to avoid social isolation, encourages friendships and helps to prevent mental and physical ill health. A significant number of our older volunteers also live alone. Volunteering their time to visit others alleviates their loneliness and gives their lives a focus, without which they may become in need of interventions.

Future Plans and Possibilities

Whilst our work has not changed hugely in the past year, we are thinking about the future. We held a planning day in April 2025 with our staff, trustees and our district lead from North Yorkshire Council, who stated that our activities, mission and geographical coverage sit well with them. As a charity we need to start succession planning, as key staff members approach retirement age. An independent facilitator led the day, and we have developed draft considerations for strategy development around:

- Increased diversification of funding, including a Business Champions Campaign to encourage more local businesses to support us.
- Impact monitoring around key indicators for both beneficiaries and volunteers. This will make sure we are on the right track but also aid funding applications.
- Future proofing and succession planning – streamlining processes and making sure that key staff's operational knowledge is recorded for successors. A Customer Resource Management system will aid this and we have identified and are looking for funding to purchase the Beacon CRM.
- Strengthening our relationship with volunteers moving forward to look after them better and find alternatives to befriending if necessary.
- Strengthening our trustee board – recruiting someone with legal expertise would be particularly helpful.
- Improving our offering and reach via well-chosen partnerships
- Addressing the reduced demand for befriending and considering how to get to those who would benefit from befriending. The success of our group activities has coincided with a downturn in demand for 1:1 befriending. Often we get a referral but when we visit the individual they are not interested in having a visitor. It seems that when they are able, people prefer to form the wider friendships which they get in groups.

Future Plans and Possibilities

We are also planning to start a men's group, in response to request from the men we support who occasionally feel overwhelmed by the 75% of our members who are women! We are looking for a partner organisation to work with on this.

Together in Harrogate

In early 2023 we were successful in our application to North Yorkshire Council to deliver this project in partnerships with Age UK North Yorkshire and Darlington who provide specialist Information and Advice Service for older people and Harrogate Town Community Foundation who are expanding their range of physical activity groups for older people, e.g. walking football.
We reached the end of the second year in March 2025 and our project fund supported six charities, including the Happy Wanderers, Resurrected Bites and Harrogate Neighbours Community Hub to support existing work or start new activities with vulnerable people in Harrogate.
We await news on whether there will be an additional fourth year of the grant.

Administrative Information

Legal and Administrative Information:
Charity Name: Supporting Older People CIO
Charity Registration Number:1155682
Principal Address
Community House
46 – 50 East Parade
Harrogate
HG1 5RR

Trustees:
Supporting Older People CIO is a charitable incorporated organisation registered with the Charity Commission on February 6th 2014 and governed by its constitution of December 3rd 2013. The control and governance of the charity are the responsibility of its trustees.

Peter Hannon Chair
Julie Barlow Vice Chair
James Houseman Treasurer
Theresa Stearn
Martin Taylor
Garrey Haase
Sarah Darbyshire

The trustees are responsible for keeping proper accounting records, which disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charity, and for the preparation of accounts for each financial year, which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the association and of its income and expenditure for that period. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charity and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities and for reviewing the risks to which the charity is exposed and the mitigation of these.

Director - Kate Rogata
Examiner - Claire Millington
Bankers - Lloyds Bank PLC
8 -11 Cambridge Crescent
Harrogate
HG1 1PQ

Sources of Funding and other Support

The main source of funding for the core activities of Supporting Older People was our Staying Healthy, Independent and Connected grant from North Yorkshire County Council

Our activities were also funded and supported by:

Albert Hunt Trust
Anton Jurgens Charitable Trust
Carefound
Co-op Local Community Fund
Fisher Care Group
Garrey and Talia Haase
Grace and Morris Architects
Harcourt Gardens Care Home
Home Instead Harrogate, Ripon and Thirsk
Masonic Charitable Foundation
Promedica24 North Yorkshire, Lancashire and South Cumbria
Rebekah French
Rotary Club of Harrogate Brigantes
St. James' Place Foundation
St. Paul's Church, Harrogate
The Linden Charity
The Liz and Terry Bramall Foundation
The Shears Foundation
The Yorkshire Hearing Clinic
Travel Counsellors
Two Ridings Community Foundation
Verity Frearson
Vida Healthcare Ltd
Visiting Angels
Yorkshire Building Society

In addition, Supporting Older People received income from donations from numerous individuals and organisations, together with charges for some group activities. Our fundraising group, chaired by our trustee, Martin Taylor, organised a highly successful ball and Ladies' Day event.

We are extremely grateful to all the organisations and individuals whose generosity has enabled us to carry out our work in 2024-25.

Finance

Treasurer's Report – Financial Year 2024–25

Overview

Supporting Older People ("SOP") recorded a surplus of £15,610 for the financial year ended 31 March 2025 ("FY 24–25") and an increase in total funds from £61,637 to £77,247 over the year. While this represents a marked improvement compared with the prior year, it is important to note that this outcome is not fully reflective of underlying performance.

A significant proportion of the surplus arises from timing differences in relation to North Yorkshire County Council ("NYCC") Stay Healthy, Independent and Connected ("SHIC") funding, with two tranches of funding being received during the same accounting period. As such, similar to the situation described in my report last year (albeit in the opposite direction), headline results should be treated with some caution when assessing the charity's ongoing financial position.

Despite this caveat, SOP has continued to operate effectively in a challenging funding and inflationary environment, and the year reflects the continued commitment of Kate, the staff team, and our volunteers in delivering high-quality services whilst carefully managing resources.

Accounting basis

As a small charity (with gross income below £250,000), the financial statements have been prepared on a receipts and payments basis, consistent with prior years. As previously noted, this accounting basis can result in material timing differences, particularly in respect of large grant receipts such as SHIC funding.

Finance

Funding during the year

Total income for FY 24–25 amounted to £166,343, a significant increase compared with the prior year. Grant income of £125,168 made up the majority of this total.

The most significant element of grant funding was again the NYCC SHIC grant, with £90,000 received during the year. This includes funding relating to more than one programme year, resulting in a compression of income into FY 24–25 and materially inflating the reported surplus for the period. It is also worth explaining that of this £90,000, SOP only keeps £54,000 – the balance is immediately distributed to the SHIC partner organisations, Age UK North Yorkshire & Darlington and Harrogate Town AFC.

In addition to NYCC funding, SOP successfully secured funding from a range of other charitable trusts and organisations, including the Terry Bramall Foundation, Shears Foundation, Two Ridings Community Foundation, Albert Hunt Trust, Anton Jurgens Trust, McCarthy Stone, Rotary Club of Harrogate and the Co-op Food Group. Some grants were restricted for specific activities or purposes, such as Christmas support or particular types of expenditure for example, while others were unrestricted and therefore particularly valuable in supporting core operating costs.

Income from charitable activities and fundraising remained broadly consistent with prior years. The Summer Ball continued to perform well, generating over £13,000 of income, and paid-for activities such as outings, friendship groups, and ‘Tea and Talk’ provided an important supplementary income stream.

Finance

Expenditure

Total expenditure for FY 24–25 was £150,733, primarily relating to direct charitable activities. SOP continues to operate with a strong focus on cost control and value for money.

As in previous years, staff costs represent the largest component of expenditure and reflect both inflationary pressures and the essential role staff play in delivering and coordinating SOP's activities. Other operating costs also increased in line with general inflation.

Of note, £36,000 of expenditure relates to the onward distribution of the NYCC SHIC grant previously discussed.

Fundraising and event-related costs increased broadly in line with associated income, which is to be expected.

SOP continues to rely heavily on its unpaid volunteers, particularly in the delivery of befriending and group activities. As in prior years, their contribution is not reflected in the financial statements but remains critical to SOP's ability to operate efficiently.

Financial position and future

At 31 March 2025, SOP held cash of £77,247, of which £75,050 was unrestricted. This represents a strengthening of the balance sheet compared with the prior year and provides a reasonable level of short-term financial security.

Unrestricted reserves continue to cover in excess of six months' planned expenditure, in line with SOP's reserves policy. However, it should be emphasised that the increase in reserves during FY 24–25 is largely attributable to the timing of SHIC funding receipts, rather than a sustained improvement in underlying surplus generation.

Looking ahead, the funding environment remains highly competitive and uncertain. While SOP is not facing any immediate financial concerns, continued caution is required, and the organisation must remain proactive in seeking grant funding, developing fundraising activity and managing costs tightly. The FY 24–25 result should therefore be viewed as providing short-term stability rather than creating scope for complacency.

Finance

Change of Treasurer

During the year, I have taken the decision to step down from the role of Treasurer due to increasing work and family commitments. I have tremendously enjoyed working with Kate, the staff team and fellow trustees, and it has been a privilege to support the charity during my time in the role. I am delighted that my successor brings extensive financial experience and, being semi-retired, has more time to dedicate to the position, ensuring continuity and strong financial oversight. I would also like to extend my sincere thanks to SOP's wonderful volunteers, whose commitment and generosity of time underpin everything the charity does. Supporting Older People is a fantastic small charity that does truly amazing work, and I wish the trustees, staff, volunteers and service users every success for the future.

Finance

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES		YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025				
		Unrestricted		Restricted		Total
INCOME		**£**		**£**		**£**
	Donations and grants	36,100		98,257		134,357
	Income from charitable activities	31,468				31,468
	Investment income	518				518
	Total income	68,086		98,257		166,343
EXPENDITURE						-
	Charitable activities	50,697		100,036		150,733
NET INCOME/(EXPENDITURE) FOR THE YEAR		**17,389**		**-1,779**		**15,610**
FUND BALANCES AT 31st MARCH 2024		57,661		3,976		61,637
FUND BALANCES AT 31st MARCH 2025		**75,050**		**2,197**		**77,247**

BALANCE SHEET		YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025				
		Unrestricted		Restricted		Total
		£		**£**		**£**
NET ASSETS						
	Cash, bank and building society deposits	75,050		2,197		77,247
TOTAL NET ASSETS		**75,050**		**2,197**		**77,247**
FUNDS						
	Unrestricted	75,050		2,197		77,247
TOTAL FUNDS		**75,050**		**2,197**		**77,247**

CHARITY COMMISSION FOR ENGLAND AND WALES

Independent examiner's report on the accounts

Section A Independent Examiner's Report

Report to the trustees/ members of	Charity Name: Supporting Older People CIO		
On accounts for the year ended	31 March 2025	Charity no (if any)	1155682
Set out on pages	16-19 of the Annual Report (remember to include the page numbers of additional sheets)		

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the above charity ("the Trust") for the year ended 31 March 2025.

Responsibilities and basis of report

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

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

Independent examiner's statement

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no material matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination which gives me cause to believe that in, any material respect:

·the accounting records were not kept in accordance with section 130 of the Charities Act; or

·the accounts did not accord with the accounting records

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

Signed:

Date: 25 Janruary 2026

Name: Claire E Millington

Relevant professional qualification(s) or body (if any): BA CA (ICAS)

Address: 10 Hereford Close WV7 3RL

Section B	Disclosure
	Only complete if the examiner needs to highlight material matters of concern (see CC32, Independent examination of charity accounts: directions and guidance for examiners).
Give here brief details of any items that the examiner wishes to disclose.	No matters that the examiner deems are disclosable.

Supporting older people

@supportingolderpeople

www.facebook.com/SupportingOlderPeople

@HarrogateSop

Community House
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Charity No. 1155682

SUPPORTING OLDER PEOPLE CIO

England & Wales - Charity number 1155682

Accounts

Docusign Envelope ID: 3CDD7D8E-5E3D-4B42-9FC0-BFFFE6FE2503

Supporting older people

ANNUAL REPORT

For the year to 31st March 2024

Community House
46-50 East Parade
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HG1 5RR

Tel: 01423 531490
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Charity No. 1155682

Docusign Envelope ID: 3CDD7D8E-5E3D-4B42-9FC0-BFFFE6FE2503

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Welcome from the Chair

Firstly I would like to introduce myself. My name is Peter Hannon and I am a relative newcomer to the Harrogate area after moving here in 2021. I was keen to continue my involvement in local charities and I joined SOP as a volunteer and then Trustee in 2023. During 2023 I became the Chair of Trustees.

I would firstly like to say a big thank my predecessor, Julie Barlow, who had been the Chair since 2020. Her skills and knowledge as a volunteer, Trustee and then Chair of Trustees has been invaluable to SOP. I am happy to say that Julie remains a Trustee and is our Vice Chair.

I was quickly struck by the care, enthusiasm and expertise shown by our small SOP team of Kate, Julia and Lorna. The number and type of events organised by the team continues to grow and flourish. The demand is increasing with an ageing population and SOP is on the front line helping to improve the quality of life to the local elderly population.

We work as a team with a number of Partners including Harrogate Town AFC Foundation and Age UK North Yorkshire & Darlington. This cooperation and coordination is vital in delivering the services and care to our beneficiaries. We do this to support people to stay Healthy, Independent and Connected in our area. We are supported in doing this by the awarded grant from NYCC. We continue to work with them to ensure we deliver the best service we can to our clients.

Our Fundraising Team has worked tirelessly this year to help support the good work of SOP. The highlight being the very successful summer ball raising nearly £8K to support our services. We look forward to future planned events to help raise needed funds and having fun together.Thanks also must go to the providers of local grants to SOP. We work closely with the Benefactors to show that the grants awarded are wisely spent and support the local work that we do.

We also have a dedicated team of Trustees to oversee the charity, provide support and guidance to the SOP team. I would like to thank them as well for supporting me in my first year of office.

Our Volunteers are fundamental to SOP and without them we could not “Support Local People” A huge thank you for their support, dedication and kindness in what they do, they are amazing.

Whatever the conditions I know SOP will continue to deliver and develop care and services to our local elderly population. There will be challenges but if we face them, with our partners, funders and volunteers then I am confident we will continue to flourish.

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Introduction from the Director

Reading this annual report at the end of another incredibly busy and successful year, I am once again incredibly proud of everything our small charity has achieved during challenging economic times. Demand for our services continue to rise and we have reached the end of our first year's partnership with Harrogate Town Community Foundation and Age UK, North Yorkshire and Darlington. We look forward to the next two years of "Together in Harrogate" and once again would like to thank North Yorkshire Council for their faith in us.

We came to the end of our partnership with Nidderdale Plus to help them set up and develop an outings programme, which was beneficial to people living in the dale, affected by rural isolation and to both organisations and people. Partnerships have continued to be extremely important to us during 2023-24.

You can see from our activity and befriending reports and case studies that they have gone from strength to strength, with demand for them has continuing to grow and so we have continued to diversify our funding sources in light of increased competition for grants. Our second annual ball, organised by our small fundraising team, was another huge success and we were delighted that several local businesses sponsored us and joined us on the evening, helping us raise over £7,500.

We are delighted that local businesses continue to give their staff time to support us as part of their Corporate Social Responsibility, especially by driving our members to our events.

This makes a huge difference and they are thanked later in this report. At our last AGM, in November 2023, Julie Barlow stood down as chair but has remained on the board as vice chair and I would like to thank her for her hard work and the support she has given me over her three-year term. Her successor, Peter Hannon became a trustee and chair on the same day and has hit the ground running! I've really appreciated his hands on support and guidance during his first 6 months in post and look forward to continuing to work with him in the future. All our trustees make steering a small charity through sometimes choppy waters much less of a burden and I am extremely grateful to them and indeed to all our volunteers, without whom we would not exist. They make a huge difference to the lives of those with whom they are matched.

Finally, every year I finish my introduction by thanking my wonderful colleagues, Julia Lightfoot and Lorna Daniel, for their continued dedication, commitment and innovation which place us in a strong position to meet the challenges ahead and make Supporting Older People such a wonderful place to work. Whilst I my say something similar every year, I mean every word.

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Activites

Home Befriending

We have a dedicated team of 120 volunteers visiting 114 members of Supporting Older People. Taking an average of one hour a week over a yearly period our volunteers give an impressive **6240** hours of volunteering per year.

Using the Living Wage as guidance this would amount to **£71385.60.**

1.4 million older people in the UK are often lonely.
The impact of loneliness in older people can be a higher risk of physical conditions, increased risk of mental health issues and reduced quality of life and well-being.

Supporting Older People's befriending service helps considerably with loneliness. Our clients look forward to a friendly face visiting once a week with a chance to chat and catch up over a cup of tea.Sometimes our befriender is the only person the client will see each week.
All our volunteers are DBS checked and are matched with a client according to their interests, location and how much time they can offer.
Our Befriending Manager prides herself on making good matches which lead to long and fulfilling friendship between the client and the befriender.

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Activites

Tea & Talk

We have 65 members of Supporting Older People who attend all or some of the Tea & Talk monthly sessions at the Crown Hotel.

We had a special event to celebrate the Coronation at Follifoot Village Hall. The team at Supporting Older People produced an afternoon tea for 50. Our wonderful volunteers and Brian from the Happy Wanderers provided transport. There was entertainment with a patriotic theme from Karen Clegg.

We are very grateful to Certina, 4Life Wealth Management and our wonderful volunteers for helping with the transport to this event.

certinia

4LIFE WEALTH MANAGEMENT

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Activites

Dining Out Club

The attendance at Dining Out Club continues to grow with around 15 to 20 people attending each event. We aim to book local, independent restaurants to help the community. The Dining Out Club brings people together to enjoy a meal and a chat. It also gives our members the opportunity to visit restaurants they have not been to before.

We have one very nervous lady who came along for the first time. She was too nervous to come in by herself, after a chat with the Befriending Manager she came in and was welcomed by the group.She had a wonderful time and now attends our other events and has made good friends with a fellow SOP member who lives close by.

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Activites

Outings

We are delighted to work with the wonderful charity The Happy Wanderers transport service who provide the bus and a driver for the trip. Our trips are so popular we often need two buses.

Cinema Club

In March 2023 we launched our Cinema Club. Our survey showed that some clients would like to meet up to go to the cinema in a group. We now meet on the third Wednesday of the month to join the Silver Screen film showing.

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Activites

Music & Movement

The group has 20 members who attend each week. The group is run by wonderful volunteers who dedicate their time on a weekly basis – without their input the group would not run and we so appreciate them. Thanks go to Peter Hannon, Chair of SOP who helps with the finances etc. Mandy the instructor continues to lead the group exercise and gives the group a fun and diverse exercise routine each week.

Harlow Friendship Group

This group is overseen by Lorna, Supporting Older People's administrator who puts together a varied and exciting programme of speakers, entertainers and quizzes. There is around 25-30 members attending the weekly sessions.

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Incorporating our new groups into our ethos

Music & Movement/Harlow Friendship Group

Over the years we have realised that our group activities are becoming more and more popular, with more members attending and new people joining.
We were delighted to take over the Movement & Music Group which was run by the original volunteers after Age Uk pulled out of Harrogate. The group meet every Tuesday at the Green Hut. Supporting Older People have sourced a new instructor, Mandy, who is very lively and has something new each week. Our Chair, Peter Hannon, attends the group and deals with the finances and we have introduced a monthly fee rather than weekly which cuts out the paperwork and trips to the bank!
The Harlow Friendship Group has been going for over 60 years. Pat and a small committee ran the group but felt it was getting too much. They approached Supporting Older People with a view to us running the group which involves seeking speakers/entertainers, dealing with the subs, setting up the hall and serving the refreshments.Lorna, SOP's administrator has taken over the group and it has been extremely successful. The original committee are delighted the group can continue.

Extra Activities

Thanks to Promedica 24 we were able to deliver an Easter gift to each of our members – delivered by our fantastic volunteers and help from Harrogate Town Community Foundation.

As usual Christmas was full of fun at Supporting Older People with parties for all our activity groups and finalizing in our big Christmas party at Oakdale Golf Club. 60 members were served a two course Christmas lunch with all the trimmings and entertainment from Harrogate Spa Town Ukes.

With the wonderful support from Nuffield Harrogate, Yorkshire Building Society, Commercial Street Traders, Home Instead and Morrisons who collected or donated Christmas gifts we were able to deliver a Christmas present to our members.

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Case Study

Supporting Older People received a referral from the Living Well Team which was described as a “long shot”!
It was for a befriender for a delightful Italian gentleman who was 95 very recently bereaved and had limited English.
SOP are very lucky to have two wonderful befrienders on their database, one Italian and one who is learning Italian and has been for the last three years.
E (the befriender)was introduced to F (the referral)and had an immediate connection.E has helped F through his bereavement with both emotional and physical help. It is extremely beneficial to F to have someone to talk to in Italian and they enjoy their time together chatting away.
On confirming to the Living Well Team a perfect match had been made we received the following email: “That is fantastic. Made my day and its only 9am – thank you!”.
Every match we make at Supporting Older People takes time and it is important to find the right match taking into consideration hobbies, past times, personalities and distance to travel.We pride ourselves on making long term relationships where the befriending soon looses the be and become friends.

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Risk Management

Supporting Older People maintains a risk register and the Board of Trustees ensures that all major risks to which the charity is exposed are reviewed on a regular basis and also that systems and procedures are in place to manage such risks. We also work with our insurance broker, Marshall Wooldridge to ensure that risks are minimised.

The main controls used by the charity include agendas and minutes of all meetings held; reporting through the organisational structure; policies and procedures formally adopted by the board and activity specific or individual risk assessments which are developed and maintained by the staff team and approved by the Director.

Public Benefit

We have referred to the Charity Commission's general guidance on public benefit and are confident that Supporting Older People meets their requirements. Our Home Visiting Scheme is free to all and, whilst we ask for a contribution towards the cost of our activities, these are subsidised by us. Equal access to our services is important to us and people join us regardless of gender, ethnicity, faith, sexual orientation or any other factor. We are now doing specific work with veterans, both male and female.

Provision of our 1:1 befriending and group activities for older people who live alone aims to avoid social isolation, encourages friendships and helps to prevent mental and physical ill health. A significant number of our older volunteers also live alone. Volunteering their time to visit others alleviates their loneliness and gives their lives a focus, without which they may become in need of interventions.

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Future Plans and Possibilities

Our strategic aims up to 2025 are:

· To diversify our funding base and secure longer-term funding,

· To build, expand and support more flexible, diverse and high-quality volunteers,

· To strengthen partnership working with a range of organisations and agencies to extend our reach and access to other support services for older people,

· To evidence the impact and raise the profile of our work,

· To review, update and strengthen SOP's policies, processes, procedures and governance.

We are planning trustees' and team away day with an independent facilitator to review and update our strategic plan in the second half of 2024-25. This will ensure that it reflects the continued increased demand for our services and the need to meet the challenges of a more competitive funding environment.

By diversifying our funding and applying for larger multi- year grants we will aim to have a funding cushion for the future. Our small fundraising team is planning a third fundraising dinner in July. We aim to hold three larger scale fundraising events each year and would welcome partnering with other charities and organisations to do this, as well as actively seeking business sponsorship. As part of our strategic plan, we will continue to ensure full cost recovery for all our activities and aim to attract more in-kind support, as well as funding and skills from the local business community.

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Future Plans and Possibilities

It is imperative that we continue to raise our profile via the local press and social media to aid local funding and sponsorship opportunities. To this end, our Director has been nominated to join the management committee of the Harrogate Chamber of Commerce in June this year.

We will launch our “Together in Harrogate” Project Fund during 2024

This is with funding designated for this purpose from our North Yorkshire Council Staying Healthy, Independent and Connected (SHIC) Grant. Our primary aim is to give small grants to Harrogate based grassroots organisations or small charities to enable them to start new projects or have continuation funding for existing ones.

Our secondary aims are for more organisations to benefit from the SHIC grant, strengthen the local sector and be in position to apply for further funding.

Towards the second half of 2024-25 we will begin conversations with our colleagues at North Yorkshire Council about future funding.

We have just joined the Humber and North Yorkshire Cancer Alliance, which will enable us to signpost and support older people who have come to the end of treatment and ensure they receive the services they need and have social outlets to alleviate loneliness. Our Director will be doing monthly training seminars during the first half of this year. We will also support our friends at Nidderdale Plus as they set up a befriending service.

We will continue to have conversations with our colleagues in local voluntary sector organisations about joint working to benefit the people we support. This includes IT / digital support and ideas for new activities. We also plan to have three volunteer get-togethers a year, to share information, have training and socialise!

We will identify the most suitable Customer Resource System for our needs and purchase it during 2024-25 to enable us to record and carry out our work more effectively. Our trustee with legal expertise will retire during the year and therefore we would like to recruit someone with this expertise, having carried a trustees’ skills audit during the year. We would also benefit from having a trustee with an HR background and support with our social media.

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Nidderdale Plus Partnership

This pilot of this project concluded in September 2023 when we transferred Laura Crossley, the member of staff we had recruited to run an outings programme for older and vulnerable people in Nidderdale, to our partners at Nidderdale Plus. Funded by the Community Transport Association, the minibus days out programme is specifically designed to counter social isolation and loneliness, by giving people the opportunity to get out to new places, see new things and meet others. It provided a service to Ripon on market day (Thursday) most weeks from Pateley Bridge to Ripon, as there is no bus service linking them. We also provided bespoke trips for local lunch clubs so that their members can go somewhere different for their lunch once or twice a year and experience somewhere new, often a garden centre or a popular restaurant that is not too far away.

In the first 6 months of the project there were 28 days out incorporating Ripon market trips, 155 passengers were taken out, 9 minibus drivers gave their time, and 146 volunteer hours were given.

Someone who benefitted from the service commented: “The day trips are brilliant, It gets us out, and there’s a really good choice. All the ones we have been on have been absolutely wonderful.”

This project is continuing to go from strength to strength and we were delighted to play a part in its establishment and development. Laura has transferred to Nidderdale Plus and we wish her every success.

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Together in Harrogate

On 1st April 2023 we began our three-year project “Together in Harrogate”, funded by North Yorkshire Council’s Staying Healthy, Independent and Connected grant. Together with our partners, Harrogate Town Community Foundation and Age UK North Yorkshire and Darlington. Our aim is to provide more support for older and vulnerable people in Harrogate. Our share of the funding has gone towards the activities you have read about elsewhere in this report.
During the first year, Harrogate Town Community Foundation supported 89 people who attended their walking football sessions, 61 at “Pitch Positive” and 27 at Women’s Walking Football.
Age UK North Yorkshire and Darlington began running a Harrogate phone line for queries and signposting to relevant organisations in April. Five volunteers provide telephone support. They also recruited an Information and Advice Worker and a regular volunteer based in the Harrogate Town Community Foundation office one day per week. The recruitment and training process took longer than anticipated but since December 2023 they have secured £26,335 in benefits for local people. They have supported 112 people in Harrogate, having a total of 286 contacts with them as we have assisted them.

Case Study

Mr and Mrs B contacted Age UK for a benefits check, both over state pension age, both with health conditions and caring for each other. We assessed them for Attendance Allowance, completed application forms. Both were awarded the higher rate AA. We then submitted underlying entitlement for Carers’ Allowance and completed a general benefit check. This showed eligibility for Guaranteed Pension Credit and Savings Pension Credit along with Council Tax Support and Housing Benefit. We have successfully maximised their income. As a result, Mr and Mrs B have informed us that they are able to enjoy their retirement without worrying about their finances.

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Administrative Information

Legal and Administrative Information:
Charity Name: Supporting Older People CIO
Charity Registration Number:1155682
Principal Address
Community House
46 – 50 East Parade
Harrogate
HG1 5RR

Trustees:
Supporting Older People CIO is a charitable incorporated organisation registered with the Charity Commission on February 6th 2014 and governed by its constitution of December 3rd 2013. The control and governance of the charity are the responsibility of its trustees.

Peter Hannon Chair
Julie Barlow Vice Chair
James Houseman Treasurer
Teresa Stearn
Jackie Ashton
Martin Taylor
Garrey Haase

The trustees are responsible for keeping proper accounting records, which disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charity, and for the preparation of accounts for each financial year, which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the association and of its income and expenditure for that period. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charity and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities and for reviewing the risks to which the charity is exposed and the mitigation of these.

Director - Kate Rogata
Examiner - Claire Millington
Bankers - Lloyds Bank PLC
8 -11 Cambridge Crescent
Harrogate
HG1 1PQ

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Sources of Funding and other Support

The main source of funding for the core activities of Supporting Older People was our Staying Healthy, Independent and Connected grant from North Yorkshire County Council. We were also thrilled to receive a substantial grant from the Garfield Weston Foundation and several grants from the Two Ridings Community Foundation.

Our activities were also funded and supported by:

4Life Wealth
Allen Lane Foundation
Certinia
Commercial Street Traders
Good Health Chiropractic
Home Instead
Masonic Charitable Foundation
North Yorkshire Council Stronger Communities
Presence Church Harrogate
Promedica24 North Yorkshire, Lancashire and South Cumbria
Rotary Club of Harrogate Brigantes
St. James' Place Charitable Foundation
The Brelms Trust
The Dulverton Trust
The Fisher Care Group
The Harrogate Round Table
The Institute of Cemetery and Crematorium Management (ICCM) Metals Recycling Scheme
The Local Fund for the Harrogate District
The Local Lotto for the Harrogate District
The McCarthy and Stone Foundation
The Yorkshire Hearing Clinic
Yorkshire Building Society

In addition, Supporting Older People received income from donations from numerous individuals and organisations, together with charges for some group activities. Our fundraising group, chaired by our trustee, Martin Taylor, organised a highly successful ball.

We are extremely grateful to all the organisations and individuals whose generosity has enabled us to carry out our work in 2023-24.

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Finance

Overview

Despite the financial statements stating a £32,513 deficit for the financial year ended 31 March 2024 (“FY23-24”), indicating a poor financial performance and a weakening of total funds position from the prior year, this is largely caused by timing differences so can partly be disregarded. If we consider like for like activities, the reality is a ~£5k deficit, which is driven by the competitive funding environment and the high inflationary environment.

Despite this, Kate and the team have done a fantastic job, both in terms of securing other grants/other fundraising activities, and in providing the services we provide to our customers (not forgetting the support of our fantastic volunteers too!), and I am confident that SOP is in the best financial position it could be.

Accounting basis

As a small charity (defined as one with gross income of less than £250,000), the financial statements have been prepared on a receipts and payments basis, in line with the previous year.

Funding during the year

During FY 23-24, SOP received total funds of £90,784, with grant income accounting for roughly half of this amount. This represents a decrease on the financial year ended 31 March 2023 (“FY 22-23”) but as mentioned in my report last year, due to the accounting basis used, we front loaded the new Stay Healthy, Independent and Connected (“SHIC”) grant from North Yorkshire County Council (“NYCC”) within the prior year financial statements, despite this amount being in respect of the current financial year. Furthermore, the SHIC payment in respect of the financial year ended 31 March 2025 (“FY 24-25”) was not received until April 2024, meaning it is not included within the numbers for FY 23-24, thus making the funding posting look worse than it actually is.

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Finance

Aside from the NYCC funding, SOP received ~£44k of other grants, of which ~£32k were restricted funds and ~£12k were unrestricted. These amounts included:

· £10k from the Garfield Weston Foundation
· £5k from The Brelms Trust
· £5k from St. James's Place Charitable Foundation
· £5k from the Two ridings Community Foundation
· ~£19k from other sources.

In terms of gifts and donations, SOP received ~£20k in gifts and donations. Notable amounts were £7k from the Cremation Fund (money raised from selling precious metals salvaged from the cremation process!) and ~£5k from the Presence Church, as well as many smaller donations for which we are extremely grateful for.

Finally, over £26k was generated from charitable activities, including £10k from the paid for activities that SOP provides (regular outings, exercise group, and the ever popular 'Tea and Talk' to name a few), and ~£14k[CEM1] raised from the highly successful Summer Ball; this represents an increase in the amounts raised from the prior year event and we would also like to thank the Yorkshire Hearing Clinic and other companies for the generous sponsorship of the Summer Ball.

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Finance

Expenditure

Despite SOP continuing to operate on a very lean basis, we have seen ~£23k increase in costs from FY 22-23. However, £18k of this relates to the reallocation of the SHIC grant to our partners, meaning a net increase of ~£5k. Part of this relates to general inflationary increases in salaries and other costs, and part relating to an increase in costs on paid for activities/ball costs (which is to be expected given the income received from these increased too).
SOP continues to rely on its very generous unpaid volunteers that provide the befriending activities; this is such a key part of SOP and provides such an amazing service to our clients and we all remain very grateful for your contribution.

Financial position and future

As mentioned, the overall result of a £32.5k deficit for FY 23-24 is not quite reflective of like for like performance; if we add in the net income from the SHIC grant received in early April 2024 (the prior year funding was received during the 2022/23 year whereas this year the amount was received after the accounting year end), SOP achieved a much smaller deficit of ~£5k. Whilst it is rarely good news to achieve a deficit, this is a good result in light of the challenging economic conditions throughout the year.
Cash at 31 March 2024 sat at £61,637, with unrestricted reserves accounting for £57,661. Whilst this is down from the prior year, if we include the delayed SHIC income, reserves comfortably cover >6m of planned expenditure in line with SOP's reserves policy and therefore does not give cause for concern.
Furthermore, I am pleased to say that at the time of writing, we are forecasting to comfortably surpass the FY 23-24 result in FY 24-25. However, care must still be taken; every grant/fundraising opportunity and every cost saving should be pursued to ensure continued operation of SOP.

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Finance

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES

YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

		Unrestricted	Restricted	Total
		£	£	£
INCOME				
	Donations and grants	31,649	32,039	63,688
	Income from charitable activities	26,619	-	26,619
	Investment income	477	-	477
	Total income	58,745	32,039	90,784
EXPENDITURE				-
	Charitable activities	49,838	73,459	123,297
NET INCOME/(EXPENDITURE) FOR THE YEAR		**8,907**	**- 41,420**	**- 32,513**
FUND BALANCES AT 31st MARCH 2023		48,754	45,396	94,150
FUND BALANCES AT 31st MARCH 2024		**57,661**	**3,976**	**61,637**

BALANCE SHEET

YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

		Unrestricted	Restricted	Total
		£	£	£
NET ASSETS	Cash, bank and building society deposits	57,661	3,976	61,637
TOTAL NET ASSETS		**57,661**	**3,976**	**61,637**
FUNDS	Unrestricted	57,661	3,976	61,637
TOTAL FUNDS		**57,661**	**3,976**	**61,637**

Related Party Transactions

During the year, SOP incurred telephony costs of £732 (2023: £732) from XI Comms Limited, a company partially owned by one of the Trustees.

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CHARITY COMMISSION FOR ENGLAND AND WALES

Independent examiner's report on the accounts

Section A Independent Examiner's Report

Report to the trustees/ members of	Charity Name: Supporting Older People CIO		
On accounts for the year ended	31 March 2024	Charity no (if any)	1155682
Set out on pages	22 of the Annual Report (remember to include the page numbers of additional sheets)		

Responsibilities and basis of report

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the above charity ("the Trust") for the year ended 31 March 2024.

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

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

Independent examiner's statement

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no material matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination which gives me cause to believe that in, any material respect:

- the accounting records were not kept in accordance with section 130 of the Charities Act; or
- the accounts did not accord with the accounting records

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

Signed:	Signed by: 06B2104D8D91416...	Date:	1/30/2025
Name:	Claire E Millington		
Relevant professional qualification(s) or body (if any):	BA CA (ICAS)		
Address:	10 Hereford Close WV7 3RL		

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Section B	Disclosure
	Only complete if the examiner needs to highlight material matters of concern (see CC32, Independent examination of charity accounts: directions and guidance for examiners).
Give here brief details of any items that the examiner wishes to disclose.	No matters that the examiner deems are disclosable.

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Supporting older people

@supportingolderpeople

www.facebook.com/SupportingOlderPeople

@HarrogateSop

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Tel: 01423 531490
Email: team@supportingolderpeople.org.uk
www.supportingolderpeople.org.uk

Charity No. 1155682

SUPPORTING OLDER PEOPLE CIO

England & Wales - Charity number 1155682

Accounts

Supporting Older People CIO

Annual Report

For the year to 31st March 2023

Community House
46-50 East Parade
Harrogate
HG1 5RR

Tel: 01423 531490
Email: sop.harrogate@gmail.com
www.supportingolderpeople.org.uk

Charity No. 1155682

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Welcome from the Chair

The year 22/23 was a milestone for Supporting Older people as it was our 40th year, and we celebrated! I hope you were able to join us in some of the events.

This year has again been a challenge but in different ways, maintaining funding in the challenging charity sector and difficult economic environment was and continues to be key component of our work. As I mentioned in my last Chairmans report in 21/22 we needed to prepare and plan for the end of the NYCC Wellbeing and Prevention contract, which was a significant source of funding for us. The team achieved this transition and achieved it through working in effective partnerships. In 22/23 we worked in partnership with Harrogate Town Foundation, Age UK North Yorkshire and Darlington. We were awarded the North Yorkshire Council grant for Harrogate to support people to Stay Healthy Independent and Connected. This started in April 23 so we are looking forward to reporting on that success in the next Annual Report. Continuing on the partnerships theme we also worked with Nidderdale Plus on pilot projects to help alleviate loneliness in rural areas, a area of work close to our hearts.

Our fundraising group has achieved great things this year under the stewardship of our trustee Martin Taylor, with a major fundraising event with the Ball for our 40th Anniversary. My thanks go to the fundraising team for a fantastic achievement.

Our thanks go to all our funders and colleagues at NYCC for their continued support to help us keep SOP thriving for the benefit of our beneficiaries. The SOP team go above and beyond to provide a comprehensive range of activities, as well as our befriending service. Demand continues to grow for all of our activities- meeting that demand is down to the hard work and dedication of the SOP team and of course our wonderful volunteers.

I, on behalf of the Trustees would like to massive thank you to all our volunteers without whom we simply would not be able to do what we do. Lastly a huge thank you from both myself personally and on behalf of the Trustees to the exceptional team we have in Kate, Julia, and Lorna- who through difficult and changing times do keep the show on the road with enthusiasm and expertise.

Julie Barlow

Chairman

Introduction from the Director

Reading this year's annual report, at the end of our 40th anniversary year, I am incredibly proud of everything our small charity has achieved in a difficult economic climate when demand for our services is rising. Financially, we had a strong year culminating in being awarded the only North Yorkshire Council grant for Harrogate to support people to Stay Healthy, Independent and Connected commencing on 1st April 2023. We have formed a partnership with Harrogate Town Community Foundation and Age UK North Yorkshire and Darlington and are looking forward to reporting on the first year of activity in our 2023-24 report. I would like to take this opportunity to thank North Yorkshire Council for their support and faith in us.

Partnerships have been so important to us in 2022-23 and we were thrilled to work with Nidderdale Plus to pilot an outings programme in the dale to alleviate rural isolation. As I write this introduction, we are at the halfway stage and you can read about our progress in this report.

You can see the case studies and reports on our befriending and activities, which this year have gone from strength to strength, including our brand-new Cinema Club and Friendship Group. Demand for our activities and befriending service continues to grow and it is vital that we are able to diversify our funding sources in light of increased competition for grants. To this end, our small fundraising team pulled out all the stops organising our "Fabulous at 40!" ball in July. It was the first time we had attempted such a large event, so we were delighted that it was a huge success, attended by 100 people and raising over £7,300, which for a small charity like SOP was a great result.

We were able to use a grant from the Two Ridings Foundation to buy new laptops for all our team, helping us to work more efficiently and effectively and we are very grateful.

We are continuing to raise our profile via social and local media, memberships of local networking groups and Chamber of Commerce. These have resulted in more businesses supporting us via fundraising initiatives and by giving staff time as part of their Corporate Social Responsibility to volunteer by driving our members to events. This enables more older people to come to our events and makes an enormous difference to us.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank our chair, Julie Barlow and all our trustees for their vision, guidance and support. They make steering a small charity through sometimes challenging times much less of a burden. We would also not exist without our volunteers, who go the extra mile to make a difference to the lives of the older people they are matched with.

Finally, I would like to welcome Laura Crossley to the team in her role as Coordinator of the Nidderdale Outings' Project and thank my wonderful colleagues, Julia Lightfoot and Lorna Daniel, for their continued dedication, commitment and innovation which place us in a strong position to meet the challenges ahead and make Supporting Older People such a wonderful place to work.

Here's to the next 40 years!

Supporting Older People's Activities

Two new activities launched this year:

Cinema Club

Harlow Friendship Group

We currently have 242 clients.

Easter and Christmas gifts delivered to all our clients homes.

We have 75 clients who have requested us to contact them about Tea & Talk, with an average monthly attendance of 45.

We currently have 115 volunteers. Visiting 124 clients.

Taking an average of one hour a week over a yearly period our befrienders give 5980 volunteering hours per year. Using the Living Wage this would amount to £62,311 per year.

HOME VISITING

We have wonderful team of 115 volunteers visiting 124 members of Supporting Older People. Taking an average of one hour a week over a yearly period our volunteers give an impressive 5980 hours of volunteering per year. Using the Living Wage as guidance this would amount to £62,311.60.

We have referrals from the Living Well Team, Occupational Therapy, the Red Cross, Home from Hospital, NYCC, doctors, family and self-referrals.

In order to ensure a good match our Befriending Manager meets with all referrals and volunteers, this helps to get to know the person, their hobbies and interests and where they live. We ask for two references from our Befrienders and a DBS check.

Our Befriending Manager prides herself on making good matches which lead to long and fulfilling friendship between the client and the befriender.

TEA & TALK

We have approximately 55 members who attend Tea and Talk on a regular basis with another 20 or so who attend at least two sessions during the year. The event is held on the second Tuesday of month at the Crown Hotel in Harrogate.

There has been entertainment from Harrogate Ukes and Side by Side, talks by the Masons and the police and a game of Boccia organized by Later Life Hub.

We took Tea and Talk on Tour to the Cuttings, an extra care housing charity. We had delicious homemade cake and entertainment.

To celebrate the Queen's Jubilee in June we hired Follifoot Village Hall and the team at Supporting Older People produced an afternoon tea for 60 people with entertainment from a very patriotic Karen Clegg.

Unfortunately Harrogate Volkswagen were taken over and we lost their support with the transport. We will always be very grateful to Kevin Howe and his team for supporting our charity.

We were delighted when Financial Force's Harrogate offices offered to help with transport. They provide between three and five cars per month. Without their invaluable help with could not manage this event.

We had a meeting with Gary Nash from 4Life Wealth Management who was very keen on becoming involved with Supporting Older People. Part of their involvement was to provide lifts to the Tea and Talk event. They often volunteer two cars per month and again we are so grateful for their help.

DINING OUT CLUB

The attendance at Dining Out Club continues to grow with around 15 to 20 people attending each event. We aim to book local, independent restaurants to help the community. Everyone says that there is a real joy in eating together and enjoying each other's company over lovely food.

OUTINGS

A lot of time and thought goes into providing a full and varied outings programme for the year. Trips this year include Bridlington, Helmsley, Masham market, Harewood, an emotional trip to Eden Camp and pot painting in Knaresborough.

We offer a trip a month. We are delighted to work with the Happy Wanderers transport service who provide the bus and a driver for the trip. Our trips are so popular we often need two buses.

MOVEMENT & MUSIC

This year saw the retirement of Carol the instructor. Carol had been with the group for many years and we wish her every happiness in her future endeavours. We were very lucky to introduce Mandy Tennant to the group. As with everything new, Mandy has put her flair and expertise into the group and everyone is enjoying the new exercise routines. The group has 20 members who attend each week. The group is run by wonderful volunteers who dedicate their time on a weekly basis – without their input the group would not run and we so appreciate them.

FRIENDSHIP GROUP

We were approached by Pat from the Harlow Friendship Group who was looking for another group to take over the running. Supporting Older People felt the group would be excellent under the SOP banner and agreed to take over. Lorna, the administrator at SOP runs the group which entails booking guest speakers or an act, taking the money and making the refreshments. We have up to 30 members who attend the group each week.

CINEMA CLUB

In March 2023 we launched our Cinema Club. Our survey showed that some clients would like to meet up to go to the cinema in a group. We now meet on the third Wednesday of the month to join the Silver Screen film showing.

EXTRA ACTIVITIES

With financial support from Harrogate Brigantes Rotary Club we arranged an Easter egg delivery to each of our members. Everyone received an egg and a bunch of daffodils to brighten their Easter. Our wonderful volunteers helped with the delivery of over 320 gifts.

Full Circle Funerals raised funds for Supporting Older People to thank our volunteers with an event at Horticap in Harrogate. There was a wonderful buffet for 40 guests.

We were invited to present SOP to the AFC workshops. This is an event run by Harrogate Town Community Foundation where local charities present what they do to local sixth form schools and colleges. We were lucky to be the chosen charity and the team arranged plant pot painting for a group of 15 members and presented us with a cheque for over £200.

As usual Christmas was full of fun at Supporting Older People with parties for all our activity groups and finalizing in our big Christmas party at Oakdale Golf Club. 60 members were served a two course Christmas lunch with all the trimmings, entertainment from the Duchy Belles and a visit from Santa and his elf.

Case Study

*Names have been changed to protect the client's privacy.

CASE STUDY

How volunteering can make such a difference
William came to Supporting Older People as a referral from the Living Well Team. He was feeling isolated and lonely with lack of family contact and limited time with friends. William had many interests including creative writing and working on a screen play.
He had become agoraphobic and unable to venture out. He had two small dogs who were limited to runs in the garden.
Ernest was introduced to William as his home visitor. Ernest had already been a home visitor with SOP but his client had passed away and he felt ready to start visiting someone again. On first meeting they realised they had a lot in common and chatted away easily.
William was enjoying the visits but he was still unable to leave the house. He discussed this situation with Ernest who said he would support him to get out and about.
With the support of Ernest William ventured out for a short walk with his dogs. He felt fantastic and that he had achieved something he felt would never happen.
With Ernest's solid support William now has regular trips to Lidl and Aldi where they share their love of wine, food and the middle aisle!

The power of friendship
We all feel slightly vulnerable attending new events alone even more so when you are older, perhaps just lost your partner or have not been out and about for a while. At Supporting Older People we totally understand what a big step it is to join a new group. We pride ourselves on being there to greet and make sure anyone new is introduced to other members of SOP.
What we have found is that members are making friends and getting together to enjoy social times together. Fabulous friendships have formed. Individuals are meeting up to enjoy coffee, meals out, day trips and even holidays together. A member of SOP said "I felt so lonely before joining but now I have a lovely circle of friends to chat to and enjoy their company".
Friendships are so important and having someone to call on to tell them about your day can make such a difference.

Risk Management

Supporting Older People maintains a risk register and the Board of Trustees ensures that all major risks to which the charity is exposed are reviewed on a regular basis and also that systems and procedures are in place to manage such risks. We also work with our insurance broker, Marshall Wooldridge to ensure that risks are minimised.

The main controls used by the charity include agendas and minutes of all meetings held; reporting through the organisational structure; policies and procedures formally adopted by the board and activity specific or individual risk assessments which are developed and maintained by the staff team and approved by the Director.

Public Benefit

We have referred to the Charity Commission's general guidance on public benefit and are confident that Supporting Older People meets their requirements. Our Home Visiting Scheme is free to all and, whilst we ask for a contribution towards the cost of our activities, these are subsidised by us. Equal access to our services is important to us and people join us regardless of gender, ethnicity, faith, sexual orientation or any other factor. We are now doing specific work with veterans, both male and female.

Provision of our 1:1 befriending and group activities for older people who live alone aims to avoid social isolation, encourages friendships and helps to prevent mental and physical ill health. A significant number of our older volunteers also live alone. Volunteering their time to visit others alleviates their loneliness and gives their lives a focus, without which they may become in need of interventions.

Future Plans and Possibilities

Our strategic aims up to 2025 are:

- To diversify our funding base and secure longer-term funding,
- To build, expand and support more flexible, diverse and high-quality volunteers,
- To strengthen partnership working with a range of organisations and agencies to extend our reach and access to other support services for older people,
- To evidence the impact and raise the profile of our work,
- To review, update and strengthen SOP's policies, processes, procedures and governance.

We are looking forward to the second half our outings project pilot with Nidderdale Plus and hope then to support them to develop a befriending offering for older people who are lonely and isolated in the Dale.

At the time of writing, our new partnership "Together in Harrogate", with Age UK North Yorkshire and Darlington (Age UK NY&D) and Harrogate Town Community Foundation (HTCF). This three year "Staying Healthy, Independent and Connected" project will enable us to provide more support for older and vulnerable people in Harrogate. HTCF will offer a range of activities to support physical and mental wellbeing and Age UK NY&D will recruit an Information and Advice Worker to support people to fill in forms and offer help with welfare benefits, care, housing, local services and utilities. We hope to strengthen the voluntary sector in Harrogate by inviting other groups to join "Together in Harrogate" and eventually apply for larger funding pots.

During the next twelve months we will update our strategic plan to ensure that it reflects the continued increased demand for our services and the need to meet the challenges of a more competitive funding environment. By diversifying our funding and applying for larger multi- year grants we will aim to have a funding cushion for the future. Our small fundraising team is planning a second fundraising dinner "Even More Fabulous at 41!" in July and we aim to hold three larger scale fundraising events each year and would welcome partnering with other charities and organisations to do this. As part of our strategic plan we will continue to ensure full cost recovery for all our activities and aim to attract more in-kind support, as well as funding and skills from the local business community. It is imperative that we continue to raise our profile via the local press and social media to aid local funding and sponsorship opportunities

To reflect the growing numbers of older people living in Knaresborough being referred to us, we aim to start a monthly Dining Out Club in the town in October 2023. This will give people living in the town their own local activity rather than always travelling into Harrogate. This will be combined with a volunteer befriender recruitment campaign in Knaresborough.

We aim to restart volunteer information and training events at least twice a year and explore ways to improve our communication with them. To this end, we will send out a volunteers' survey early in 2024 following a client survey in the second quarter of 2023. We have been invited to apply for the King's Award for Volunteering and will do this in 2024 to give us time to prepare.

As we expand our services and support more people, we need a more efficient way of recording what we are doing. We will therefore spend time this year exploring Customer Resource Management (CRM) systems and purchasing the best one for our needs. Two members of our trustee board will be retiring at our 2023 AGM. We therefore hope to recruit people with HR, public sector and business expertise to replace them.

NIDDERDALE PLUS PARTNERSHIP

During the first half of the year we talked with our friends at Nidderdale Plus about the rural isolation in the Dale, compounded by the difficulties in accessing public transport. We agreed that it would be fantastic if we could combine their knowledge of the Dale and the fact that they own a minibus with our Befriending and Activities' Manager's expertise in running an outings' programme. We made a joint application to the Community Transport Association and were awarded a grant which has enabled SOP to recruit Laura Crossley as Outings' Coordinator for a year and support her to develop a monthly programme of outings plus weekly trips to the shops and markets in Skipton and Ripon. So far the outings have been fully subscribed and we did a joint trip for a Christmas lunch at the Hawthorn in Yeadon, which everyone loved. In next year's report we will be able to share the outcomes of this pilot but so far the signs are that it is very successful and will continue after the pilot.

Administrative Information

Legal and Administrative Information:

Charity Name:	Supporting Older People CIO
Charity Registration Number	1155682
Principal Address	Community House 46 – 50 East Parade Harrogate HG1 5RR

Trustees:

Supporting Older People CIO is a charitable incorporated organisation registered with the Charity Commission on February 6th 2014 and governed by its constitution of December 3rd 2013. The control and governance of the charity are the responsibility of its trustees.

Julie Barlow	Chair
Teresa Stearn	Co-Vice Chair
James Houseman	Treasurer
Jackie Ashton	
Trevor Chapman	
Martin Taylor	
Jenny Huddleston	

The trustees are responsible for keeping proper accounting records, which disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charity, and for the preparation of accounts for each financial year, which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the association and of its income and expenditure for that period. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charity and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities and for reviewing the risks to which the charity is exposed and the mitigation of these.

Director Kate Rogata

Examiner Claire Millington

Bankers

Lloyds Bank PLC
8 -11 Cambridge Crescent
Harrogate
HG1 1PQ

Financial Review

Funding during the year

The main source of funding for the core activities of Supporting Older People was the Wellbeing and Prevention contract with North Yorkshire County Council. We were also thrilled to receive a substantial grant from the Postcode Neighbourhood Trust and several grants from the Two Ridings Community Foundation.

In addition, Supporting Older People received income from donations from numerous individuals and organisations, together with charges for some group activities. Our Fundraising Group, chaired by our trustee Martin Taylor, organised a highly successful 40th anniversary ball and a number of our supporters raised money doing the Nidderdale Walk.

We are extremely grateful to all the organisations and individuals whose generosity has enabled us to carry out our work in 2022-23

Overview

Following the Covid-19 related challenges of the past few years, the 2022/2023 financial year started off with a great deal of optimism; SOP was back at its pre-Covid operational level, with face-to-face befriending and social events taking place, a number of large grant applications in the pipeline, and a bank balance in line with the reserves policy.

It also presented a challenge and a number of unknowns – the end of the NYCC H&RCVS Wellbeing funding, uncertainty around grant funding in future, a number of new activities, and economic uncertainties.

However, I am pleased to say that SOP has weathered these uncertainties and ends the year in an excellent financial position thanks to the hard work Kate and the Team, our volunteers, and my fellow Trustees.

Accounting basis

As a small charity (defined as one with gross income of less than £250,000), the financial statements have been prepared on a receipts and payments basis, in line with the previous year.

Funding during the year

Whilst the Charity has had an excellent year from a funding perspective (certainly the best year since I have been involved with SOP), the picture painted by the numbers is somewhat misleading. A new local authority grant of £45,000 was agreed and entered into during the year. Despite the new grant commencing from 1st April 2023, the funds were received on 30th March 2023. Furthermore, an element of amount received from NYCC included amounts that were to be distributed to the partners in the grant. Due to the accounting basis used, this must all been recognised during the current financial year. We have therefore in effect front loaded income in

respect of the coming year, plus recognised an amount which isn't actually due to the Charity in the current accounts meaning the results aren't as good as the accounts indicate.

Ignoring the above though, it has still been a very successful year from a grant perspective. The Charity received more than £63k in other grants, of which £50k was restricted funding and £13k unrestricted. These amounts include the final £11k of the NYCC H&RCVS Wellbeing funding, £13k from the Community Transport Association in partnership with Nidderdale Plus, £12.5k from the Two Ridings Community Foundation across two funds for various purposes, as well as several others.

Away from grant funding, the charity received over £29k in gifts and donations. Notable amounts include over £19k from Postcode Neighbourhood Trust, £1,500 from the Mayor of Harrogate's Fund, and many smaller donations.

In addition to those highlighted above, our activities were also funded by donations and grants from:

Allen Lane Foundation	Postcode Neighbourhood Trust
Brelms Trust	Nidderdale Plus
Financial Force (Certinia)	Rotary Club of Harrogate
Foyle Foundation	The Yorkshire Charity
Home Instead	Mayor of Harrogate's fund
Linden Charitable Trust	West Riding Fund
Masonic Charitable Trust	Woodlands Methodist Church
Groundwork UK	Yorkshire Building Society
Harrogate Round Table	The Local Lotto for the Harrogate District
Freemasons of Yorkshire West Riding through West Riding Masonic Charities Ltd.	

Finally, over £20k was generated from charitable activities. This amount includes the income generated from the various paid for activities the charity provides (Tea and Talk, Music and Movement, Friendship Group etc), as well as the very successful SOP "Fabulous at Forty" Ball that took place over summer, which raised over £10k, and amounts raised for the Nidderdale Walk.

Expenditure

The Charity continues to operate on a very lean basis. Despite this, costs have increased by circa £29k from the prior year. There are several reasons for this increase:

- the largest contributor being an increase in employment costs. These costs remain by far the largest element of expenditure, with costs increasing during the year due to a cost of living salary increase, and an additional member of staff being temporarily taken on to support with the activities taking place in Nidderdale.
- 2022-2023 was the first year in a number of years where a full calendar of activities have taken place, and accordingly costs have increase comparatively. Additionally, 2022-23 also includes the cost of the ball.
- finally, as we're all aware, the general inflationary environment has led to numerous supplier price increases.

It is worth mentioning that all befriending activities organised by the Charity operate thanks to the fantastic contributions of our many volunteers; without you, SOP would not be what it is today.

Financial position and future

Looking at the overall position, the Charity had an operating surplus of £57,694 for the full year. If we disregard the £45k of income in respect of the 2023/2024 NYCC funding, this represents an actual surplus of nearly £13k, and is a fantastic result. As at 31 March 2023, cash sat at £94,150, representing roughly 1 year of operating expenditure.

However, care must be taken to ensure that these funds remain, and I am pleased to say the 2023-2024 is off to a good start, with income and expenditure roughly in line with budget.

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES		YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023		
		Unrestricted	Restricted	Total
INCOME		£	£	£
	Donations and grants	24,025	113,434	137,459
	Income from charitable activities	20,465	-	20,465
	Investment income	229	-	229
	Total income	44,719	113,434	158,153
EXPENDITURE				-
	Charitable activities	32,421	68,037	100,458
NET INCOME/(EXPENDITURE) FOR THE YEAR		**12,298**	**45,396**	**57,694**
FUND BALANCES AT 31st MARCH 2022		36,456	-	36,456
FUND BALANCES AT 31st MARCH 2023		**48,754**	**45,396**	**94,150**

BALANCE SHEET		YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023		
		Unrestricted	Restricted	Total
		£	£	£
NET ASSETS				
	Cash, bank and building society deposits	48,754	45,396	94,150
TOTAL NET ASSETS		**48,754**	**45,396**	**94,150**
FUNDS				
	Unrestricted	48,754	45,396	94,150
TOTAL FUNDS		**48,754**	**45,396**	**94,150**

Related party transactions

During the year, the charity incurred £732 (2022: £732) of costs from XI Comms Limited, a company partially owned by one of the Trustees, in respect of telephony services.

CHARITY COMMISSION FOR ENGLAND AND WALES

Independent examiner's report on the accounts

Section A *Independent Examiner's Report*

Report to the trustees/ members of	Charity Name Supporting Older People CIO		
On accounts for the year ended	31 March 2023	**Charity no (if any)**	1155682
Set out on pages	19 of the Annual Report (remember to include the page numbers of additional sheets)		

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the above charity ("the Trust") for the year ended 31 March 2023.

Responsibilities and basis of report

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

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

Independent examiner's statement

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no material matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination which gives me cause to believe that in, any material respect:

- the accounting records were not kept in accordance with section 130 of the Charities Act; or
- the accounts did not accord with the accounting records

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

Signed:		**Date:**	31 January 2024
Name:	Claire E Millington		
Relevant professional qualification(s) or body (if any):	BA CA (ICAS)		
Address:	The Coach House OL14 6HA		

Section B Disclosure

Only complete if the examiner needs to highlight material matters of concern (see CC32, Independent examination of charity accounts: directions and guidance for examiners).

Give here brief details of any items that the examiner wishes to disclose.	No matters that the examiner deems are disclosable.

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46-50 East Parade
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HG1 5RR

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www.supportingolderpeople.org.uk

Charity No. 1155682

www.facebook.com/SupportingOlderPeople

@HarrogateSop

SUPPORTING OLDER PEOPLE CIO

England & Wales - Charity number 1155682

Accounts

Supporting Older People CIO

Annual Report

For the year to 31st March 2022

Community House
46-50 East Parade
Harrogate
HG1 5RR

Tel: 01423 531490
Email: sop.harrogate@gmail.com
www.supportingolderpeople.org.uk

Charity No. 1155682

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Welcome from the Chair

We have come to the end of another challenging but rewarding year. This year saw us restart, regroup and move forward coming out of the pandemic. We have successfully restarted our face-to-face befriending, our day trips and other groups such as tea and talk. It is worth reflecting on the fact that demand has increased across all our activities, perhaps this is as a result of coming out of the pandemic. Our beneficiaries are once again taking part and enjoying the activities Supporting Older People offers.

The continual drive for funding has seen a very positive year. This puts us in a steady position as we move into 22/23 in which we need to prepare and plan for the end of the NYCC Wellbeing and Prevention contract.

Our grateful thanks go to all our funders, and our colleagues at NYCC, for their support and encouragement as we tackle what is a very competitive process to apply for grant funding. This environment is unlikely to improve, indeed with the challenges with cost of living rises the environment may be even more challenging. but we have built a strong reputation with a strong an impressive offer which leaves us in as good as position as possible as we move into 22/23.

Last, but certainly not least, I on behalf of the Trustees, would like to offer a massive thank you to all our volunteers without whom we couldn't provide the services we do. Kate, Julia and Lorna continue to rise to the challenge of increasing demand and getting the show back on the road - we couldn't help our beneficiaries without you three ladies! And to my fellow Trustees who have supported me in this role, and continue to steer "Supporting Older People" with their experience and expertise. Thank you!

Julie Barlow

Chairman

Introduction from the Director

At the end of last year's report, I wrote that Supporting Older People were continuing to provide telephone befriending and a food project instead of our core activities and so we were delighted to restart face to face befriending and our activities' programme during 2021. In our Befriending and Activities' Report, you will read, and we share case studies about how our return to face-to-face befriending and group activities brought enormous joy to our members and volunteers and the positive impact on the mental and physical wellbeing of our members which resulted from this. It was wonderful to be back in the office with our amazing team of Julia Lightfoot and Lorna Daniel, after so many months working from home.

Referrals and demand for our services have grown. Financially we ended the year on a positive footing after several months at the start of the year when we were concerned about future funding as competition for grants was extremely fierce. We are extremely grateful to our colleagues at North Yorkshire County Council, especially Liz Meade from the Stronger Communities Team and Helen Sams and Helen Thirkell from their Commissioning Team for their support, encouragement and for funding an external consultant, Nick Scott, to help us diversify our funding base and strategic plan. They also added us to the group of Community Support Organisations working across the county and this additional funding was invaluable. Large grants from the Two Ridings' Community Foundation amongst others also demonstrated to us how much our small charity is valued within the county. This was also apparent when, together with the CEO of Nidderdale Plus, I was privileged to be invited to represent the voluntary sector in North Yorkshire at the Duchess of Cambridge's Carol Service at Westminster Abbey. It is important that we maintain this momentum as we prepare for the end of the NYCC Wellbeing and Prevention contracts in 2022-23.

We have continued to develop strong partnerships with our colleagues from NYCC, especially the Living Well Teams and with other organisations across the public and voluntary sectors. We have raised our profile on social media and in the local press thanks to our Trustee, Jenny Hudlestone of Avem Marketing and were thrilled to be featured by ITV Calendar in a piece about the impact of our befriending service, interviewing members and a volunteer about the difference it has made to their lives.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank our trustees for their vision, guidance and support, especially Julie Barlow, our chair, who has ably steered us through some choppy waters this year. We would not exist without our volunteers, who go the extra mile to make a difference to the lives of the older people they are matched with.

Finally, I would like to thank my wonderful colleagues, Julia and Lorna, for their continued dedication, commitment and innovation which places us in a strong position to meet the challenges ahead. It is our 40th anniversary in 2022-23 and we will share the events we are holding to celebrate in next year's report – here's to the next 40 years!

The Facts

Charitable Objectives

Supporting Older People's mission is to provide relief of elderly persons, being over 60 years, living in Harrogate and the surrounding area, by such charitable means as the trustees determine, including the provision of:

- A befriending and visiting service
- Social events
- Advice, information and support for elderly people and their carers
- The training of volunteers

We currently have 234 clients.

12,000 meals prepared by Paul Welch which we delivered to our clients.

42 clients came along to our re launch event at Hotel Du Vin.

75 of our clients have asked us to contact them each month about our tea & talk with an average monthly attendance of 42.

We currently have 102 volunteers.

Taking an average of one hour a week over a yearly period our befrienders give 7800 volunteering hours per year. Using the Living Wage this would amount to £74,100 per year.

Supporting Older People's Activities

April 2021 saw the country still with restrictions which impacted on the activities of Supporting Older People.

Supporting Older People were still involved with delivering the Pablo Kitchen's meals, cooked by Paul Welch. This project ended in July mainly due to lack of demand and Paul wanting to end the project. Our thanks go to Paul Welsh for cooking over 12,000 meals, helping vulnerable and isolated people in the Harrogate and Knaresborough area.

We currently have 234 clients with 102 volunteers. Without the wonderful support of our volunteers, Supporting Older People would not exist – our thanks go to everyone who gives up their time to help.

We have referrals from the Living Well Team, social prescribers, Home from Hospital, Occupational Therapists, CMHT, other charities, families and self-referrals. We average two to three referrals per week.

Volunteers are recruited by hearing about our work from other volunteers, publicity and recruit campaigns. Often the volunteer gets as much out of the home visiting as the client. We had this email from a volunteer:

"I just wanted to let you know how I have been getting on with Wendy, she is the loveliest lady ever, I enjoy her company very much and I get the impression she looks forward to our meetings, we have been taking advantage of the dry weather and going for a walk and having a coffee out. Getting out is great and Wendy loves walking. I always walk her back home and fill in the calendar for our next visit, thank you for introducing us".

HOME VISITING

We recommenced our Home Visiting in May, taking precautions i.e.hand sanitizing, face masks etc. There was a backlog of referrals and lots of telephone volunteers chose to visit their client in person.

We have a comprehensive recruitment process. The new volunteer meets with the Befriending Manager for a "get to know you" meeting. We ask for two references and a DBS check. Personalities, location, interests and hobbies are all taken into consideration to ensure a good match between the volunteer and client.

Taking an average of one hour a week over a yearly period our befrienders give 7800 volunteering hours per year. Using the Living Wage this would amount to £74,100 per year.

TEA & TALK

After much discussion we decided to bite the bullet and arrange our first get together after the lockdown. The Hotel du Vin very kindly hosted the afternoon tea. We did expect around 8 or so members attending but were astonished to welcome 42 to the event. Although some restrictions were in place i.e. staying in your seat and wearing masks whilst moving about everyone had a wonderful time and were delighted to be out and about again.

After this successful event we went back to our monthly visits to the Crown Hotel for Tea and Talk.

SINGING GROUP

After much discussion and taking into consideration the Covid restrictions regarding singing groups we decided to pause the group for the foreseeable future.

DINING OUT CLUB

The Dining Out Club was relaunched in August with a lovely meal at Buon Gusto attended by 20 of our members. We celebrated Christmas at the Inn at Cheltenham and a memorable Valentine's Day at Buon Gusto with a free drink on arrival and wonderful decorations.

OUTINGS

Our first outing after restrictions had been lifted was a trip on the Endeavour Barge on the Skipton Canal. It was lovely to be all together again enjoying the company, fresh air and good food. We also had a trip to Breezy Knees, Harewood Arms and a Christmas Shopping trip. February 2022 was a trip to Tropical World. We have taken up to 20 people on these outings.

MOVEMENT & MUSIC

The group restarted their activity at the end of August. Everyone was pleased to get back to the weekly exercise and a catch up over refreshments. Up to 20 people attend this activity every week.

CHRISTMAS

All of our group activities celebrated Christmas with entertainment from Kitty le Mare at the Tea and Talk Christmas party and a wonderful Christmas lunch at the Inn at Cheltenham Parade with free wine too!

We held our main Christmas Party at the Crown Hotel thanks to the Round Table who sponsored and helped at the event. 50 people enjoyed entertainment from the Harrogate Ukes, a lovely Christmas lunch and a visit from Father Christmas.

Case Study

*Names have been changed to protect the client's privacy.

The Importance of Friendship

The monthly Tea & Talk event at the Crown Hotel sees around 45 to 50 members of Supporting Older People getting together to enjoy either a guest speaker, entertainer or partaking in a game of bingo or a quiz.

Everyone enjoys the "Talk" element of the afternoon but what makes the event so special is the chance to chat with other members of SOP over an afternoon tea. This gives everyone the chance to make new friends.

A wonderful example of this is two ladies who had never met before joining the Tea and Talk and found themselves sitting next to each other. Pat and Eve found they had a lot in common, similar family situations, a love of shopping and both enjoy baking. They arranged to meet in town for lunch and now this is a regular event.

Two of our gentleman, again attending Tea & Talk now meet up and have both decided to join a bowls club in Harrogate.

Our outings always involve a journey and during this time it gives everyone a chance to get to know each other. Everyone always says it is lovely to have a day out with like minded people.

It is often difficult to make new friends especially when you may have lost friends and find yourself going from an active social life to wondering what to do. Our events at Supporting Older People encourage people to chat and find out about each other. When connections are made this leads to solid friendships which offer support and, more importantly, something to look forward to.

Risk Management

Supporting Older People maintains a risk register and the Board of Trustees ensures that all major risks to which the charity is exposed are reviewed on a regular basis and also that systems and procedures are in place to manage such risks. We also work with our insurance broker, Marshall Wooldridge to ensure that risks are minimised.

The main controls used by the charity include agendas and minutes of all meetings held; reporting through the organisational structure; policies and procedures formally adopted by the board and activity specific or individual risk assessments which are developed and maintained by the staff team and approved by the Director.

Public Benefit

We have referred to the Charity Commission's general guidance on public benefit and are confident that Supporting Older People meets their requirements. Our Home Visiting Scheme is free to all and, whilst we ask for a contribution towards the cost of our activities, these are subsidised by us. Equal access to our services is important to us and people join us regardless of gender, ethnicity, faith, sexual orientation or any other factor. We are now doing specific work with veterans, both male and female.

Provision of our 1:1 befriending and group activities for older people who live alone aims to avoid social isolation, encourages friendships and helps to prevent mental and physical ill health. A significant number of our older volunteers also live alone. Volunteering their time to visit others alleviates their loneliness and gives their lives a focus, without which they may become in need of interventions.

Future Plans and Possibilities

Our strategic aims up to 2025 are:

- To diversify our funding base and secure longer-term funding,
- To build, expand and support more flexible, diverse and high-quality volunteers,
- To strengthen partnership working with a range of organisations and agencies to extend our reach and access to other support services for older people,
- To evidence the impact and raise the profile of our work,
- To review, update and strengthen SOP's policies, processes, procedures and governance.

During the next twelve months we will update our strategic plan to ensure that it reflects the increased demand for our services post-pandemic and the need to meet the challenges of a more competitive funding environment. By diversifying our funding and applying for larger multi-year grants we will aim to have a funding cushion for the potential loss of £11,000 a year when the NYCC Wellbeing and Prevention contracts end during 2022-23.

We aim to develop new partnerships and have begun discussions with Nidderdale Plus about the possibility of developing a joint befriending service and group activities to reach older people who are lonely as a result of rural isolation

We will plan a campaign to recruit more volunteers in Knaresborough to reflect the increased number of referrals we are getting from that part of the district. We also wish to contact our existing volunteers to ensure that they are receiving the support they need and aim to hold a thank you event during the year for them, as well as restarting regular information and training events.

In response to requests from members, we will research the feasibility of starting a cinema club for people who do not wish to go to the cinema alone and look for opportunities to link with and signpost to other community activities in Harrogate and other parts of the district.

We have received funding form the Two Ridings' Community Foundation to update our IT systems and aim to do this during 2023. This will improve our efficiency and ensure we are GDPR compliant.

We will continue to ensure full cost recovery for all our activities and continue to run our own fundraising events to supplement our grant income. As part of our strategic plan we aim to attract in-kind support, together with funding and skills from the local business community via networking.

Finally, we are celebrating our 40th anniversary in style in 2022-23!

Administrative Information

Legal and Administrative Information:

Charity Name:	Supporting Older People CIO
Charity Registration Number	1155682
Principal Address	Community House 46 – 50 East Parade Harrogate HG1 5RR

Trustees:
Supporting Older People CIO is a charitable incorporated organisation registered with the Charity Commission on February 6th 2014 and governed by its constitution of December 3rd 2013. The control and governance of the charity are the responsibility of its trustees.

Julie Barlow	Chair
Teresa Stearn	Vice Chair
James Houseman	Treasurer
Jackie Ashton	
Trevor Chapman	
Martin Taylor	
Jenny Huddleston	

The trustees are responsible for keeping proper accounting records, which disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charity, and for the preparation of accounts for each financial year, which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the association and of its income and expenditure for that period. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charity and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities and for reviewing the risks to which the charity is exposed and the mitigation of these.

Director Kate Rogata

Examiner Claire E Millington

Bankers
Lloyds Bank PLC
8 -11 Cambridge Crescent
Harrogate
HG1 1PQ

Financial Review

Change of Treasurer

Having been a volunteer at the charity, I joined the board of trustee 12 months ago following Ian Shay's stepping down. Ian provided a fantastic support to SOP, and his financial experience helped steer that charity through some challenging times. I owe Ian a personal thank you for his guidance with my handover.

In terms of my experience, I am a chartered accountant with 10 years post qualification experience. I have worked in a number of roles, both in industry and with large accounting firms. I've been looking to 'give something back' for a number of years, and when the request came around for a replacement Treasurer with SOP, it seemed like the perfect opportunity. I am very much looking forward to the future and continuing to work with the fantastic team.

Accounting basis

As a small charity (defined as one with gross income of less than £250,000), the financial statements have been prepared on a receipts and payments basis, in line with the previous year.

Funding during the year

The year began with continued uncertainty due to the ongoing impact of the Covid-19 pandemic, and the impact of lockdowns on the charity's operations. Fortunately, during the year, lockdowns and social distancing measures were completely relaxed, meaning SOP could return to its pre-Covid operational activities, with a return to face-to-face befriending and social events.

Funding presented a challenge through the year – due to the impact of Covid, fundraising activities were decreased, leading to some volatility in cash. However, I am pleased to say that thanks to the hard work of the team, several large additional grants and donations were secured.

Of the £72,642 of donations and grants received during the year, £25,000 were restricted grants provided by Harrogate & District Community Action (H&DCA) (as part of their Wellbeing and Prevention contract with North Yorkshire County Council) and the Two Ridings Community Foundation.

The remaining £47,642 of funding came from grants and gifts from the private sector, charitable trusts, and private individuals, and we are extremely grateful for the generosity demonstrated here; without this funding, the charity would not have been able to carry out its work during the financial year.

The main source of funding for the core activities of Supporting Older People was the Wellbeing and Prevention contract with North Yorkshire County Council. We also received a substantial grant from NYCC Stronger Communities and several grants from the Two Ridings Community Foundation.

Our activities were also funded by:

52 Lives	Albert Hunt Trust
Arnold Clark Community Fund	Asda Foundation
Blackrock UK via Benevity	Charities' Trust
Co-op Local Community Fund	George A Moore Foundation
Harlow Lodge 4404 – Mrs Hinchley's Bequest	Harrogate Bowling Club
Harrogate Round Table	Home Instead Harrogate
Liz and Terry Bramall Foundation	Meadowside School
NatWest Harrogate	Rotary Club of Harrogate Brigantes
Stonebridge Homes	Techbuyer
The Brelms Trust	The Linden Charity
The Local Fund	Vertu Volkswagen Harrogate

In addition, Supporting Older People received income from donations from numerous individuals and from charges for some group activities and our Fundraising Group, chaired by our trustee Martin Taylor, has recommenced event planning.

We are extremely grateful to all the organisations and individuals whose generosity has enabled us to carry out our work in 2021-22

Expenditure

The charity operates on a very lean basis, with a small team of 3 part-time members of staff working out of a single office, rented from H&DCA at a subsidised rate. As a result, overheads are kept to a minimum, with over 75% of the costs relating to staff costs.

Despite a continued focus on minimising expenditure throughout the year, overheads have increased compared to the previous year.

Befriending activities organised by the charity operate thanks to the fantastic unpaid contributions that our many volunteers; without them, SOP would not be what it is today.

Financial position and future

During the year, income exceeded expenditure by £2,216, meaning as at 31 March 2022, cash at bank was at £36,456. This represents enough to fund operational costs for roughly six months.

I am pleased to say that 2022/23 is off to a great start, with cash reserves increasing to considerably more than 2021/22's closing balance, thanks to fundraising activities and donations received.

The Figures

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES	YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2022		
	Unrestricted	Restricted	Total
INCOME	£	£	£
Donations and grants	45,752	29,600	75,352
Income from charitable activities	1,107	-	1,107
Investment income	-	-	-
Total income	46,858	29,600	76,458
EXPENDITURE			-
Charitable activities	46,642	27,600	74,242
NET INCOME/(EXPENDITURE) FOR THE YEAR	**216**	**2,000**	**2,216**
FUND BALANCES AT 31st MARCH 2021	34,240	-	34,240
FUND BALANCES AT 31st MARCH 2022	**34,456**	**2,000**	**36,456**

BALANCE SHEET	YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2022		
	Unrestricted	Restricted	Total
	£	£	£
NET ASSETS			
Cash, bank and building society deposits	34,456	2,000	36,456
TOTAL NET ASSETS	**34,456**	**2,000**	**36,456**
FUNDS			
Unrestricted	34,456	2,000	36,456
TOTAL FUNDS	**34,456**	**2,000**	**36,456**

Related party transactions

During the year, the charity incurred £732 (2021: £213) of costs from XI Comms Limited, a company partially owned by one of the Trustees, in respect of telephony services.

James Houseman

James Houseman (Jan 27, 2023 17:08 GMT)

Treasurer, November 2022

The Examiners Report

CHARITY COMMISSION FOR ENGLAND AND WALES

Independent examiner's report on the accounts

Section A *Independent Examiner's Report*

Report to the trustees/ members of	Charity Name Supporting Older People CIO		
On accounts for the year ended	31 March 2022	**Charity no (if any)**	1155682
Set out on pages	14 to 16 of the Annual Report (remember to include the page numbers of additional sheets)		

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the above charity ("the Trust") for the year ended 31 March 2022.

Responsibilities and basis of report

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

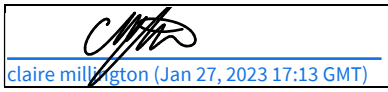
I report in respect of my examination of the Trust's accounts carried out under section 145 of the 2011 Act and in carrying out my examination, I have followed all the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the Act.

Independent examiner's statement

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no material matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination which gives me cause to believe that in, any material respect:

- the accounting records were not kept in accordance with section 130 of the Charities Act; or
- the accounts did not accord with the accounting records; or
- the accounts did not comply with the applicable requirements concerning the form and content of accounts set out in the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 other than any requirement that the accounts give a 'true and fair' view which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination.

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

Signed:	 claire millington (Jan 27, 2023 17:13 GMT)	**Date:**	Jan 27, 2023
Name:	Claire E Millington		
Relevant professional qualification(s) or body (if any):	BA CA (ICAS)		
Address:	The Coach House OL14 6HA		

Section B	*Disclosure*
	Only complete if the examiner needs to highlight material matters of concern (see CC32, Independent examination of charity accounts: directions and guidance for examiners).
Give here brief details of any items that the examiner wishes to disclose.	No matters that the examiner deems are disclosable.

Community House
46-50 East Parade
Harrogate
HG1 5RR

Tel: 01423 531490
Email: team@supportingolderpeople.org.uk
www.supportingolderpeople.org.uk

Charity No. 1155682

www.facebook.com/SupportingOlderPeople

@HarrogateSop

Annual Report 2022 for signature

Final Audit Report 2023-01-27

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By:	James Houseman (james.houseman@bhp.co.uk)
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SUPPORTING OLDER PEOPLE CIO

England & Wales - Charity number 1155682

Accounts

Supporting Older People CIO

Annual Report

For the year to 31st March 2021

Community House
46-50 East Parade
Harrogate
HG1 5RR

Tel: 01423 531490
Email: team@supportingolderpeople.org.uk
www.supportingolderpeople.org.uk

Charity No. 1155682

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Welcome from the Chair

In November 2020, at the Annual General Meeting I had the privilege of being elected Chair of the Trustees after Jackie Ashtons tenure came to an end. I would like to thank her on behalf of myself, other Trustees, staff and volunteers for her 4 years of service as Chairman and her many years before that as a Trustee. Jackie continues to serve and offer her invaluable expertise as a Trustee.

As Jackie alludes to in her last report, the year of 19/20 was indeed an unusual and challenging one for the charity sector as a whole and Supporting Older People was no exception. The pandemic meant we had to shut down our methods of working, we couldn't do face to face befriending, hold our monthly meetings such as Tea and Talk, nor go on any trips, and we couldn't hold our Christmas celebrations! On top of this our ability to fundraise was severely curtailed. This was a blow for our clients and the bank balance. However out of adversity came some success – by demonstrating our adaptability as a charity we bid for and were able to deliver a contract for food to go to our clients and other needy people. This was indeed a very different venture for us, for which we engaged Paul Welch who we estimate to have cooked around 12000 meals which we delivered to our clients and others. This contract will come to an end in June 2021. We offer massive thanks to all those involved especially Paul, Julia and all the drivers!

Also, during the pandemic we moved from face-to-face befriending to telephone and managed to recruit more and different volunteers to help us with this. The telephone never replaces face to face visits but it did go some way to help us alleviate loneliness for our clients. We also asked for donated Christmas gifts and treats, which we delivered personally to our clients in a COVID safe manner. An added benefit of this was that we were at least able to make face to face contact, on the doorstep, which seemed to be appreciated by our more vulnerable clients.

As I write this COVID restrictions have lifted and we are slowly beginning to get up and running with our usual range of activities - we are now almost back to a full range of activities. As a charity we have emerged from the pandemic having learnt we are adaptable and can deliver even in challenging circumstances.

There is no doubt that the fundraising effort during the pandemic was significantly reduced. Our thanks go to the new National Emergency Trust and DEFRA amongst others who helped us weather the storm. I would like to thank all our supporters and funders for their continued and invaluable help this year.

Last, but certainly not least I on behalf of the Trustees would like to offer a massive thank you to all our volunteers without whom we couldn't have got through this last 18 months. Kate, Julia and Lorna continue to provide the hard work and professionalism needed to keep the show on the road! And my fellow Trustees who have supported me in this new role, and continue to steer "Supporting Older People" with their experience and expertise.

Thank you!

Julie Barlow

Chairman

Introduction from the Director

At the end of my 2019-20 report, I wrote that the Coronavirus pandemic had just begun. Little did we know that now, at the end of March 2021, we would still have not returned to our core activities. Our amazing team, Julia Lightfoot and Lorna Daniel adjusted quickly and effectively to the impact of the pandemic on the older people we support, whilst working from home and meeting on Zoom!

In our Befriending and Activities report, you will read how we rapidly transformed our offering to provide telephone befriending, recruiting and supporting over 100 new volunteers to make weekly calls to our members, many of whom, at the time of writing have been isolating in their homes for a year. This service has been a lifeline for them, and we adapted our recruitment processes to safely match volunteers with befrienders as quickly as possible. At the service's peak, 408 calls were being made to older and vulnerable people every week.

You will also be able to read about the incredible difference made to the lives of over 600 people and families who are benefitting from our food project, which we set up in response to evidence showing a large increase in numbers of people of all ages who are struggling to put food on the table. We joined a partnership of local Voluntary and Community Sector organisations, facilitated by North Yorkshire County Council Stronger Communities and Harrogate Borough Council, which aims to ensure that no one who needs food is excluded. We are also indebted to Paul Welch, a local resident who has cooked thousands of delicious, nutritious fresh meals, which the recipients look forward to immensely

For many of our beneficiaries, and for the team, the high point of a long and difficult year has been the deliveries of treats and newsletters, sponsored by local companies. A knock on the door to find a familiar face with something lovely and being able to have a doorstep chat has been described as “wonderful!”

Our work has seen us recognised by North Yorkshire County Council as a “vital delivery partner,” and we are very grateful to their commissioners and social care teams, as well as funders and supporters old and new, a list of whom can be found later in this report. We had our highest ever level of funding from grants and trusts, which made up for this year’s loss of fundraising income, and the reduction in our local authority funding via our Wellbeing and Prevention Contract partnership with Harrogate and District Community Action and Boroughbridge Community Care, which is now in its third year. We were thrilled to be featured in a video made by the National Emergencies Trust via Two Ridings Foundation, in which I was interviewed by the UK CEO of Blackrock Investments about the difference their funding made to our ability to support a 50% increase in beneficiaries compared to April 2020. However, we exist in an increasingly challenging environment in which more organisations are chasing a shrinking pot of funding.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank our trustees for their vision and support, our volunteers for everything they have done to support older people in our community during this incredibly challenging year and, of course, my wonderful colleagues, Julia Lightfoot and Lorna Daniel for their dedication, commitment and innovation, which has enabled us to continue to punch above our weight as a small organisation. We look forward to a continued gradual relaxation of Covid restrictions so that face to face befriending and group activities can start again, bringing people together, reducing the loneliness and mental health difficulties experienced by so many.

The Facts

Charitable Objectives

Supporting Older People's mission is to provide relief of elderly persons, being over 60 years, living in Harrogate and the surrounding area, by such charitable means as the trustees determine, including the provision of:

- A befriending and visiting service
- Social events
- Advice, information and support for elderly people and their carers
- The training of volunteers

12000 meals prepared by Paul Welch which we delivered to our clients.

Christmas Dinner and Christmas packages sent out to over 300 clients.

We took on over 100 new volunteers and 200 new members during lockdown.

1100 bags of shopping delivered to individuals and families struggling during covid.

Supporting Older People's Activities

In March 2020 lockdown was announced. We packed our desks away, took essential paperwork and laptops home never believing we would not meet again face to face for months.

The face of Supporting Older People changed overnight. Face to face befriending was banned and all activities had to be cancelled with immediate effect.

Over Zoom in the first week of lockdown the Supporting Older People team discussed how they could make SOP work. The first task was to contact all our members to ensure they were ok and find out if we could help in any way.

We changed our face-to-face befriending to telephone befriending and put together a campaign to attract more volunteers – mainly for telephone befriending but also help with shopping and prescription collection. We took on over 100 new volunteers and matched them to our existing members and the 200 new members who required our help.

As time passed it became obvious that many people of all ages were struggling to put food on the table. We partnered with the Round Table who donated £3000 to help people struggling with food delivery and financial difficulties. I became a logistics expert putting together route plans for 50 Waitrose bags delivered on a weekly basis.

Paul Welch a local man was desperate to help. Paul's daughters were working on the frontline and Paul wanted to give something back. His idea was Pablo's Kitchen. He would cook nutritional, tasty, individual meals to be distributed to the elderly and vulnerable. Supporting Older People was the perfect partnership. SOP and Paul worked together to distribute over 12,000 meals during the pandemic. This made a huge difference to the people in receipt of the meals both nutritionally and financially. Thanks go to Dolores for her help in the kitchen, and the fantastic team of volunteer drivers.

We were awarded a grant from Defra and the Ruby & Will George Trust, enabling us to deliver essential bags of shopping from ASDA on a weekly basis. Along with Bianca Hanakin who volunteered her time I shopped, bagged and delivered 700 bags of shopping to individuals and families who were struggling to put food on the table.

A huge thank you goes to Techbuyer who donated £10,000 towards the essential meal and bags project and also towards my salary to enable the project.

The SOP team understood that although a telephone call helped to alleviate the loneliness there was nothing like face-to-face contact. It was decided to send a treat to all our members. I had a contact at the Serious Sweet Company, Rob Whitehead, who very kindly donated 300 treats. A goody bag was put together and a wonderful team of volunteers delivered the gift to all our members. The joy on the faces of the recipients was wonderful, just having the chance for a chat and a catch-up.

Throughout the pandemic we delivered:

* Cupcake treats

* Christmas gifts

* Valentine's treat courtesy of Rudding Park, consisting of a lovely red bag full of biscuits and chocolates

* Easter treats – an easter egg and floral gift

Christmas was always going to be a difficult time for many of our members. Paul from Pablo's Kitchen put together a Christmas dinner complete with pigs in blankets and cranberry sauce to be sent out to over 300 people. The team put out requests for Christmas presents and we were delighted to receive over 300 gifts to distribute in a Christmas bag complete with sweets and crackers to all our members.

The team at Supporting Older People reacted very quickly once lockdown hit, keeping to our mission – alleviating loneliness and isolation in older people.

Case Study

*Names have been changed to protect the client's privacy.

Lesley was struggling with lockdown, feeling isolated and lonely when a help leaflet dropped through her door with details of Supporting Older People (SOP). She picked up the phone and spoke to Julia who encouraged her to contact her Doctor to help with her anxiety and depression. Julia explained about the befriending service and how she could be matched with a friendly volunteer for a regular telephone call, which is how we operated during the pandemic. Sophie had come forward to volunteer and she was matched with Lesley. They get on like a house on fire! Enjoying getting to know each other and looking forward to their chats. Lesley says "she adores Sophie". Lesley also had frozen meals delivered from Pablo's Kitchen, who worked with Supporting Older People supplying homemade meals – and just to say we also linked with Harrogate Asda who supplied 15 bags of essential food items a week for a year to anyone in need. Lesley found Paul's dishes amazing. She describes herself as a plain cook and said Paul's meals are varied and delicious and not something she would choose on a menu. Before Paul's meals, Lesley was barely eating and had lost weight, but has now gained weight. She enjoyed the deliveries and a little chat with the driver. Lesley's Doctor referred her to the Mental Health Service. She was contacted by Mary and the therapist team - Her Mental Health rate was 18 and after support from SOP her rate went down to 8. Her panic attacks have stopped, she no longer feels isolated and alone. Lesley now feels part of something and feels happy, she enjoys our newsletter and has recommended SOP to two other people. Since the pandemic, she has started attending our group activities. Lesley told our team, the day she contacted Supporting Older People changed her life and she cannot thank us enough.

Risk Management

Supporting Older People maintains a risk register and the Board of Trustees ensures that all major risks to which the charity is exposed are reviewed on a regular basis, and also that systems and procedures are in place to manage such risks. We also work with our insurance broker, Marshall Wooldridge, to ensure that risks are minimised.

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We have referred to the Charity Commission's general guidance on public benefit and are confident that Supporting Older People meets their requirements. Our Home Visiting Scheme is free to all and, whilst we ask for a contribution towards the cost of our activities, these are subsidised by us. Equal access to our services is important to us and people join us regardless of gender, ethnicity, faith, sexual orientation or any other factor. We are now doing specific work with veterans, both male and female.

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Future Plans and Possibilities

Our strategic aims up to 2025 are:

· To diversify our funding base and secure longer term core funding,

· To build, expand and support more flexible, diverse and high-quality volunteers,

· To strengthen partnership working with a range of organisations and agencies to extend our reach and access to other support services for older people,

· To evidence the impact and raise the profile of our work,

· To review, update and strengthen SOP's policies, processes, procedures and governance.

We will continue to develop our strategic plan, which was put on hold during the pandemic to ensure it is fit for purpose. We are beginning to plan a cautious return to our core work of befriending and group activities, to ensure that we support older people to regain the mental and physical wellbeing lost during the pandemic. The long-term impact of the pandemic will certainly determine the support and activities we offer as unmet needs and new challenges emerge. It is vital that we retain as many of the new volunteers who have joined us during the last year as we can, as well as supporting pre-Covid volunteers to return to face-to-face befriending at the appropriate time. We look forward to being able to resume our information sharing and training events for volunteers when restrictions allow.

We plan to consult with our beneficiaries to find out if they would like any changes or additions to our activity programme. Pre-pandemic, we were concerned about the viability of our singing group as there has been a low take up for a couple of years. We propose asking if beneficiaries would be interested in information sessions on topics such as safe online banking or scams, or a cinema group, both of which have been suggested by members of our groups. We would also like a beneficiary to join our trustee board, after the retirement of the last member-trustee, to ensure that they are fully involved in our decision-making processes.

We propose exploring partnership opportunities to enable older people to access a range of opportunities, both in Harrogate and other parts of the district.

We must ensure full cost recovery for all our activities and diversify our funding sources. We plan to restart our Fundraising group led by a member of the trustee board when appropriate to do so. We need to develop a marketing strategy enabling us to secure funding, skills and in-kind support from the local business community. It is imperative that we continue to raise our profile via the local press and social media to aid local funding and sponsorship opportunities.

Administrative Information

Legal and Administrative Information:

Charity Name:	Supporting Older People CIO
Charity Registration Number	1155682
Principal Address	Community House 46 – 50 East Parade Harrogate HG1 5RR

Trustees:

Supporting Older People CIO is a charitable incorporated organisation registered with the Charity Commission on February 6th 2014 and governed by its constitution of December 3rd 2013. The control and governance of the charity are the responsibility of its trustees.

Julie Barlow	Chair
Theresa Stearn	Co-Vice Chair
Ian Shay	Treasurer
Jackie Ashton	
Trevor Chapman	
Martin Taylor	
Jenny Huddleston	

The trustees are responsible for keeping proper accounting records, which disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charity, and for the preparation of accounts for each financial year, which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the association and of its income and expenditure for that period. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charity and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities and for reviewing the risks to which the charity is exposed and the mitigation of these.

Director Kate Rogata

Examiner Stuart Kellett

Bankers

Lloyds Bank PLC
8 -11 Cambridge Crescent
Harrogate
HG1 1PQ

Financial Review

Funding during the year

We began the year in great uncertainty as the impact of the covid pandemic became clearer and we quickly had to make sweeping changes to the way we were operating. One immediate change was to cease all our interactive social events, and so we have not generated any income throughout the year from this source. This has not impacted on our overall financial position, as the income from these activities was used to cover the costs, which likewise have been negligible. We raised a small contribution of £510 from our own lottery operation.

The pandemic had a major impact on many charities, and likewise those charitable organisations whose funding is the lifeblood of smaller charities like ours who receive minimal state funding. Recognising this, the National Lottery Community Fund made significant funds available to charities working in the community, and we were able to benefit from this. We are still heavily reliant on local charitable funding, and throughout this difficult year we received outstanding support from this source to enable us to cover all of our costs during the year and record a small surplus.

Expenditure

We operate through a small team of three part time staff, and work hard to keep our operating overheads to a minimum. We recognised the need to not only support our clients' mental wellbeing, but also provide practical support through the provision of meals and groceries. We are indebted to local "chef" Paul Welch who spent most of the year in his kitchen cooking and freezing more than 10,000 meals for us to deliver. We also received great support from local supermarkets who provided many of the ingredients and groceries for us to assist many housebound clients who were struggling to get provisions. As a consequence of the expansion of our activities our costs increased, but we were able to attract financial support specifically for these activities.

Financial Position and Outlook

Through careful financial control we kept our expenditure below our income, and as a consequence the cash reserves increased by £409 to £34,240 at 31st March 2021. We have however since seen a significant reduction in the levels of funding available to us, in many cases as a result of the increased funding provided to charities throughout the pandemic. We are not alone dealing with this challenge, as the funds available to support charities like ours have diminished nationwide. As we begin to resume face to face social activities the extra effort needed to source the funding we need puts a considerable strain on our small team, and we may therefore have to consider alternative sources of income to cover our costs.

Change of Treasurer

At the forthcoming AGM I will be handing over the financial reigns to another treasurer who is well placed to work with the Trustees and the team to help SOP to go from strength to strength. I have enjoyed working with the charity over the last two and a half years, but a change in personal circumstances means I cannot give the time necessary to give Kate the support she needs. The work that the charity does makes an outstanding contribution to our local community, and I wish everyone involved every success in continuing this excellent work.

Source of Funding

The main source of funding for the core activities of Supporting Older people was the Wellbeing and Prevention contract with North Yorkshire County Council. We were also thrilled to receive a large grant from the National Lottery Community Fund and an unexpected but very welcome five-figure donation from Techbuyer, a Harrogate-based Company.

Other activities were funded by:

29th May 1961 Trust, Albert Hunt Trust, Allen Lane Foundation, Co-op Local Community Fund

Covid Co-operation Group – Harrogate, DEFRA (administered by NYCC), Fisher Care Group

Full Circle Funerals, Harrogate Round Table, Harrogate Waitrose,

Liz and Terry Bramall Foundation, Meadowside School, NYCC Stronger Communities

Persimmon Community Champions, Rotary Club of Harrogate Brigantes

Ruby and Will George Trust, Rudding Park Hotel, Serious Sweet Company,

Tesco Bags of Help, The Linden Trust, Two Ridings Community Foundation

Warm and Well North Yorkshire

In addition, Supporting Older People received income from donations from numerous individuals and from charges for some group activities.

We are extremely grateful to all the organisations and individuals whose generosity has enabled us to carry out our work in 2020-21.

Ian Shay, Treasurer, October 2021

INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT TO THE TRUSTEES OF SUPPORTING OLDER PEOPLE CIO

I have been asked to report on the accounts kept by Mr Ian Shay in respect of the charity mentioned above. The year end to which I have been working is 31st March 2021 and the accounts are set out on the following page.

Respective responsibilities of Trustees and Examiner

As the Charity's Trustees, you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts. You consider that the audit requirement of Section 144(2) of the Charities Act 2011 (the Act) does not apply. It is my responsibility to examine the accounts under Section 145 of the Act and state, on the basis of procedures specified in the General Directions given by the Charity Commissioners under Section 145(5)(b) of the Act, whether particular matters have come to my attention.

Basis of the Independent Examiner's Report

My examination was carried out in accordance with the General Directions given by the Charity Commissioners. The examination included a review of the accounting records kept by the Charity and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. I have also taken consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in a full audit and, consequently, I do not express an audit opinion on the view given by the accounts.

In connection with my examination, no matter has come to my attention which gives me reasonable cause to believe that, in any material respect, the requirements to keep accounting records in accordance with Section 130 of the Act and to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and comply with the accounting requirements of the Act have not been met, or to which in my opinion attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

I therefore submit that, in connection with my examination, no matter has come to my attention.

I believe that the accounting records give a true and honest view of the Charity's financial position.

Stuart Kellett, Apartment 3, 5 Church Square, Harrogate HG1 4SP

1st November 2021

The Figures

Supporting Older People

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES
YEAR ENDED MARCH 31 2021

	2020/21			2019/20
	Unrestricted	**Restricted**	**Total**	**Total**
INCOME				
Donations and Grants	53065	11000	64065	57341
Income from Charitable Activities	510		510	10015
Investment Income	27		27	375
Total Income	53602	11000	64602	67731
EXPENDITURE				
Charitable Activities	53193	11000	64193	69357
NET INCOME/(EXPENDITURE) FOR YEAR	409	0	409	-1626
FUND BALANCES AT MARCH 31 2020	33831		33831	35457
FUND BALANCES AT MARCH 31 2021	34240	0	34240	33831

BALANCE SHEET
YEAR ENDED MARCH 31 2020

	2020/21			2019/20
	Unrestricted	**Restricted**	**Total**	**Total**
NET ASSETS				
Cash, Bank & Building Society	34240	0	34240	33831
TOTAL NET ASSETS	34240	0	34240	33831
FUNDS				
Unrestricted	34240		34240	33831
TOTAL FUNDS	34240	0	34240	33831

Community House
46-50 East Parade
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HG1 5RR

Tel: 01423 531490
Email: team@supportingolderpeople.org.uk
www.supportingolderpeople.org.uk

Charity No. 1155682

www.facebook.com/SupportingOlderPeople

@HarrogateSop