

Supporting Older People CIO



Annual Report

For the year to 31st March 2021

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Charity No. 1155682

Contents

Welcome from the Chair	3
Introduction from the Director	5
The Facts	7
SOP Activities	8
Case Study	12
Risk Management	13
Public Benefit	13
Future Plans and Possibilities	14
Administrative Information	15
Financial Review	16
Examiner's Report	18
The Figures	19

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.

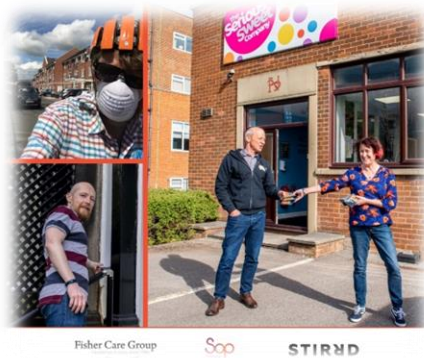


We were awarded a grant from Defra and the Ruby & Will George Trust, enabling us to deliver essential bags of shopping from ASDA on a weekly basis. Along with Bianca Hanakin who volunteered her time I shopped, bagged and delivered 700 bags of shopping to individuals and families who were struggling to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

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 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 reins 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 Kelleth, 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



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