



association of
carers

MAKING A DIFFERENCE TO CARERS' LIVES

Annual Review *2021-2022*



Registered charity 1159551

Who We Help

A carer is someone of any age who provides unpaid support to family or friends who could not manage without this help. The carer does not need to live with the person and the help that they give does not have to include personal care; it might be emotional support, or more practical help.

In 2021 – 2022 the Association of Carers provided in excess of 14,000 hours of support for carers in East Sussex through our core services such as Respite, cover for health care appointments, telephone support and tele-counselling and the Computer Help At Home service. In addition to this we have facilitated Lunches, Carers Cafés, a tablet loan service and an immeasurable amount of direct support in person or over the phone by the office staff.

Carers can refer themselves for support, or be referred by friends, family or professionals.

The charity receives funding from East Sussex County Council (ESCC) to provide respite support to carers across East Sussex until September 2023. Computer Help at Home & Carers Wellbeing and Lunch clubs are funded until April 2023. This funding is managed by Care for the Carers.

Due the Covid 19 pandemic restrictions only ending in March 2022, the charity have been unable to hold their usual fundraising activities. Only a few events were able to run including a quiz in Seaford and the Winter Market in Hastings.

Aims Of The Charity

The aims of the charity are:

- Developing and expanding our services in line with what carers tell us they need to feel supported & able to continue in their caring role
- Promoting the needs and challenges of unpaid carers throughout East Sussex
- Encouraging & developing volunteers & staff via on-going training, support & supervision
- Maintaining a high organisational profile and raising the profile of carers within the local community
- Seeking funds from new stakeholders and retaining the support and integrity of our core funders to ensure the longevity of our services

Acting Chair's Statement

This year the charity has provided thousands of hours of invaluable support to carers throughout East Sussex. This would not have been possible without the exceptional support offered by our volunteers. Our sincere thanks go out to each and every one; we highly appreciate it.

Unfortunately, the Covid 19 pandemic continued into 2021/22, affecting service delivery and staff working arrangements until March 2022. Very much aware of the impact of lockdown on the carers we support, staff offered a regular supportive telephone call to all carers who had their face-to-face services stopped. Every member of our staff team offered these calls until May 2021.

To enable volunteers to re-commence face to face visits, all volunteers were issued with PPE to prevent the spread of infections.

Services began to return to normal and carers were once again able to access support. At the time of writing this report, all services are back to normal, and our volunteers are once again enjoying the full benefits of group training sessions.

Since 2020 the charity has had to adapt and learn different methods of working. Some of these methods have remained, such as the Zoom activities and virtual meets. We are also pleased to say that Carers Cafes and Lunch Clubs are back running and are proving to be more successful than ever before.



Clive Whitehead (ACCA)



Our Services

Respite & Befriending

Carers providing substantial levels of care can sometimes find it difficult to leave the person they look after. This can lead to carers experiencing high levels of stress and social isolation, which can impact on their own health and wellbeing.

Our respite and befriending service supports carers by providing a suitably trained and checked volunteer who will go into the carer's home for around 3 hours, giving carers the opportunity to have some time to themselves.

Visits mostly happen on the same day at the same time. Carers may choose to spend time in a variety of ways such as shopping, having a rest, enjoying a hobby, or meeting a friend for lunch. By receiving regular respite, carers are able to look forward to their break and plan what to do with the time.

The service is also able to benefit the person with care and support needs, finding them a volunteer who has similar interests, to assist the process of building long-term befriending relationships.

During 2021-2022 in excess of 12938 hours of respite support were provided.

Carers Respite Emergency Support Scheme

Also known as 'CRESS', this is a 24 hour a day / 7 day a week service to support carers in an emergency. This service is provided by Adult Social Care, and the Association of Carers assists carers to complete these emergency plans. The charity supported 10 carers to complete these forms throughout this period.

Respite for Healthcare Appointments

Carers sometimes neglect their own wellbeing due to looking after the person they care for. This can have a long-term impact on both their physical and emotional wellbeing, and means they may wait until their health reaches crisis point before they seek help. This could result in their symptoms becoming worse and then taking longer to recover.

The charity supported carers throughout 2021 - 2022 by providing cover for separate health care appointments, amounting to 34 hours of respite. This number is lower than usual due to the disruption in health services as a result of the Covid 19 pandemic.

Carers' Wellbeing Service (Talk & Support)

This service provides carers across East Sussex with the opportunity to access telephone support, support to identify and plan residential respite (SCIPRR) and telephone counselling provided by our partners, Counselling Plus. Carers are supported with a weekly telephone call of around 30 minutes for 6 months, or longer if necessary.

Some carers may find it difficult to talk to family and friends about their caring role and the service provides carers with a listening ear and the opportunity to discuss their caring role in confidence, as well as signposting them to additional support if necessary.

The service can also support carers during a time of loss. This might be because the person they looked after has died or because they have moved into permanent care.

59 carers received the service during 2021 – 2022, equating to 460hrs of support.

4 carers were supported to plan a residential break, equating to 12 hours of support.

6 carers were referred to professional counselling and received 60 hours of support.

11 carers received volunteer counsellor led sessions, equating to 106 hours of support.

Computer Help at Home (CHAH)

This service supports carers to learn to use their own computer or digital device in ways that support their caring role, helping them to have more time to themselves and reducing isolation. Carers can benefit from the service by learning to shop or bank online, to purchase equipment, such as printers or tablets, finding out information regarding their caring role and reducing social isolation by learning to use email and/or social media.

It can also help them improve their well-being by accessing GP appointments online. Carers are supported by a trained volunteer for up to 6 weeks in their own home and on their own equipment. 62 carers received the service throughout the year, with 124 hours of support during 2021-2022. This figure is lower than usual due to the disruption with face-to-face services as the pandemic continued into 2022.

Carers Lunch Club

These are funded by East Sussex County Council. The clubs are for carers who would like to get out and meet other carers, to share experiences and increase their support network. Carers and the adult person they care for are invited to have a meal, or just enjoy a drink and a chat in a supportive environment.

Carers Lunch Club (Continued)

The monthly Lunch Club meets on a variety of days and locations in Rye area and at the Bo Peep Pub in St Leonards on a Monday.

Due to the Pandemic, all lunches were put on hold until March 2022. It was wonderful to see so many people at this first meal and see the attendees once more enjoying each other's company.

Carers Community Workers (CCW's)

During the covid pandemic, the charity lost some of their vital volunteer base. ESCC were able to provide Association of Carers with additional funding to employ 2 full time workers who were able to undertake the Respite role. 1 worker was recruited in October 2021 and after a few failed recruitment drives, the other commenced their role in February 2022.

The 2 staff can visit 2-3 different families each day and have an alternating 2-week rota. The feedback for this service has been fantastic. AOC are now able to visit many more families in areas where volunteer recruitment has been historically difficult or visit families where the person with support needs may be reluctant to have a volunteer. Once a permanent volunteer is found then the CCW can be re-matched with another family.

Carers Café

We successfully re-launched carers cafes in Peacehaven and Hellingly in February 2022 following on from the original Peacehaven pilot project which closed in 2020 due to the Pandemic. A dedicated staff member now runs two sessions each month. The Peacehaven café is held on the first Tuesday of every month and the Hellingly café on the second Tuesday of the month. Carers can attend with the person they care for and partake in activities such as chair yoga and arts & crafts. Carers can speak to peers who are in similar situations and not have to worry about obtaining respite for them to attend. If required and suitable the carer can leave their loved one with staff and volunteers and take some time to themselves.

Christmas Lunch Celebrations

We hosted our 2021 Christmas lunches in Uckfield, Eastbourne and Hastings. It was lovely to bring Carers, their loves ones and volunteers together to say a much deserved thank you for everything they do. As carers were still being cautious about the risk of covid infections, the events were not as well attended as usual. Due to the Covid 19 pandemic and businesses having taken a big hit, it was felt that a raffle with donated prizes would not be held. Instead, all attendees were given raffle tickets and a few names drawn at each meal who won prizes such as bottles of wine and chocolates. The charity would like to offer sincere thanks to the Chalk Cliff Trust and Forshaw trust who sponsored the lunches.

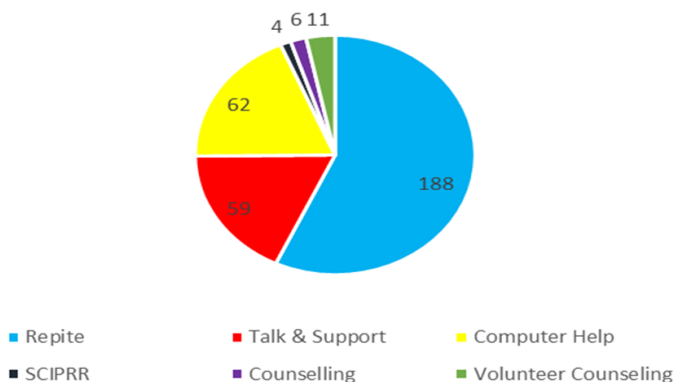
Quality & Partnership

Last year, the Charity referred 42 Carers on to other voluntary bodies, including Adult Social Care, Fire Service, Care for the Carers, British Red Cross, Age Concern Eastbourne, Age UK Sussex, and DISC. The charity works closely with other agencies so that Carers can get the support they need.

Throughout the year, staff attend meetings and networking events to ensure they are aware of what other organisations are offering to support carers and the person they care for. This also gives opportunities to share knowledge & information with other voluntary sector organisations and the CCGs, such as Carers Networks, the Safeguarding Board (CCSAN) and Volunteer Coordinator's Forums.

The charity carries out regular reviews of their services, and these are used to monitor satisfaction with the service, monitor what carers' needs are, and assess whether our services are meeting these needs.

Service Statistics to March 2022

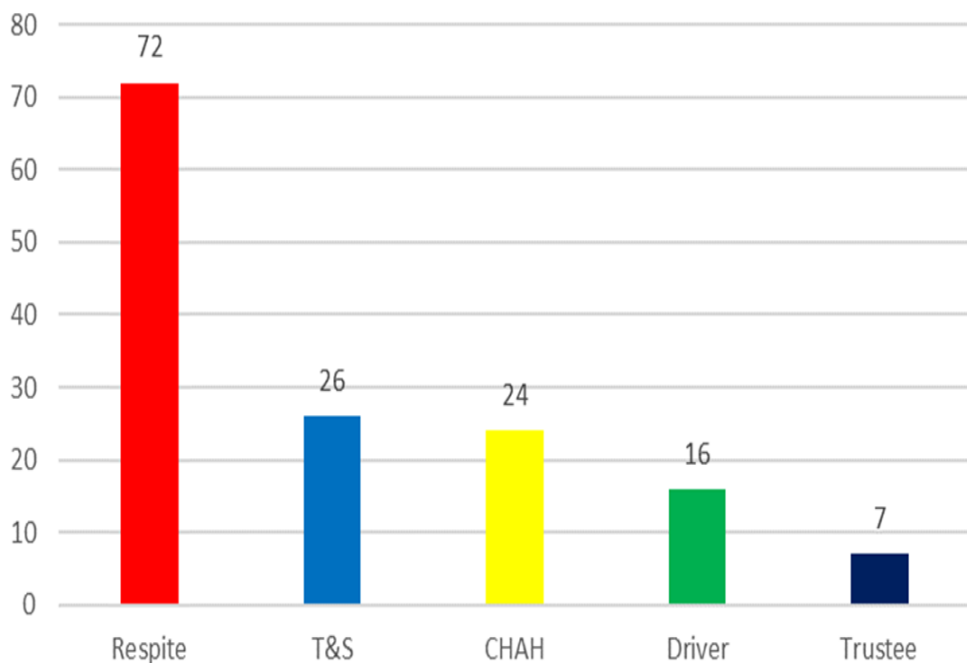


Our Volunteers

At the end of March 2022 the Charity had 145 active volunteers in a variety of roles, including:

- 72 Respite and Befriending volunteers
- 26 Talk and Support volunteers
- 24 Computer Help at Home volunteers
- 16 Driving volunteers
- 7 Trustee volunteers

Volunteers at 31st March 2022



The charity supports its volunteers by:

- Giving them opportunities to learn new skills by providing free, relevant training.
- Giving them opportunities to meet like-minded people and build new networks.
- Allowing them the opportunity to make a useful contribution to their community following retirement or when seeking work, or when they feel they wish to give back to the local community. Many of our volunteers have been a carer themselves.

The charity respects and values its volunteers by holding “thank you” lunches every year. At these lunches, volunteers were presented with long service awards and certificates. Unfortunately, due to Covid restrictions their lunches were put on hold. Staff recognised volunteer achievements by sending thank you’s by email, through the newsletter, and certificates were sent in the post.

The charity could not provide its services without the amazing volunteers who give their time for free to help unpaid carers. We hope they realise what a difference they make.

Staff Training & Development

In addition to an induction to the volunteer roles, the charity offers a variety of training and support sessions to volunteers throughout the year, in a variety of locations throughout East Sussex. These include Basic First Aid, Dementia Awareness, Signposting, Safeguarding, Active Listening Skills, Bereavement Training and more.

At the end of March 2022, the charity had 6 office staff members working a total of 185 hours per week. 2 roles remained vacant equating to 52.5 hours per week. The 2 CCW's work a total of 74 hours per week in the community.

Staff members are supported through regular supervision and annual appraisals. They have access to a wide range of training, including Equality and Diversity Training, Making Every Contact Count, Dealing with Stress, Understanding Dementia, Parkinson's Awareness, East Sussex in Figures, Dying, Death and Bereavement training, First Aid, Fire Safety, Safeguarding, Lone Working, Health & Safety, Signposting training and more.



PR & Fundraising

Due to Covid restrictions, the usual timetable of events was somewhat reduced.

Fundraising events during 2021/2022 included:

- Santander instore collection
- Quiz night at Seaford golf club
- Winter Market held at the Stade Hastings
- Online quiz

The charity also received income from numerous other donors, fundraising initiatives and events, including:

- Hastings Direct
- Foreshore Trust
- Park Lane Group
- Sussex Community Foundation
- St Leonards Rotary Club
- Hastings Winkle Club
- Eastbourne Lottery
- Homity
- Chalk Cliff Trust, Kings Church - Hastings
- Ninfield Carnival Fund

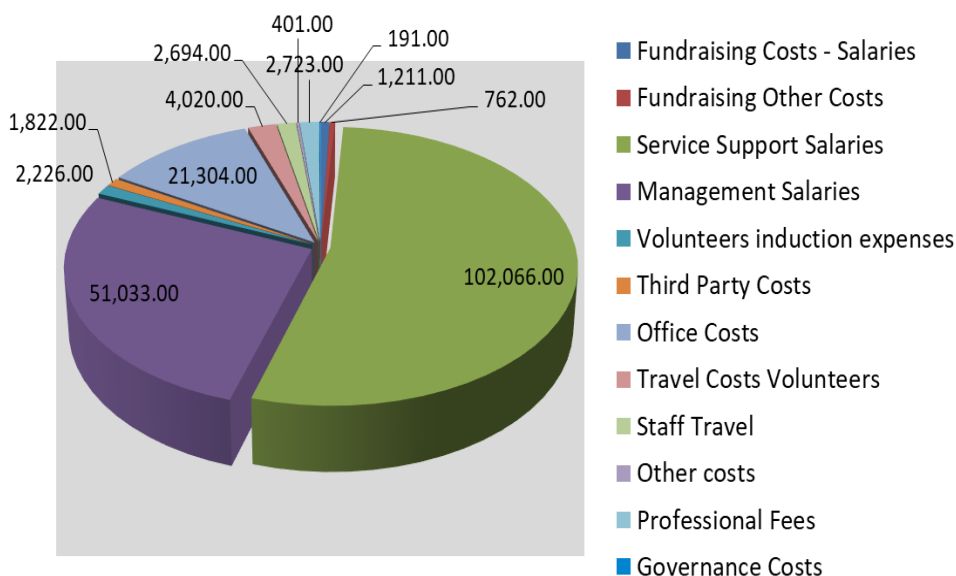
We would like to thank those individuals who provide a regular payment made via direct debit and to all carers and their loved ones who have remembered the charity through legacy gifts.

Treasurer's Report

In summary, the association's balance sheet shows an improvement on last year, with the total balance seeing an increase in the reserves of £72,665. This year, the total is £501,144, compared to 2021 where the total was £428,479. You will see from this that over the last 2 years, the charity has managed to increase its surpluses by £133,889. The surpluses have increased as a percentage in the last 2 years by 36.5%.

I have summarised the income received for the year which totalled £263,118 on a pie chart.

The Expenditure of the Association has been split and is shown on the pie charts.



Income

The majority of the income, £218,530, was received from East Sussex County Council's grants for the Respite, Computer Help at Home and the new CCW service.

Other substantial income that was received in the year:

- Legacy- £4,140
- Donations and Grants- £23,696
- Computer Help at Home- £11,715
- Talk and Support-£8,988
- Other Income- £5,037

The income is £30,226 higher than the previous year, due to the fact we were able to offer the new CCW service which was funded by East Sussex CC. There was no income received for supper clubs due to this being put on hold during the pandemic.

The income for 2022/23 from ESCC will be consistent with the funding provided in this year. The CCW funding will continue into 2022/23. The Carers cafes are now up and running and will be funded by the underspend in this years funding from East Sussex County Council.

Expenditure

The total costs incurred by the association in the year were £190,453.

This is an increase of £18,783 from last year and will be mainly due to the increase in staffing costs of £13,604, and the recruitment of staff for the new service. Travel costs have also risen this year, due to changes put in place to allow some face-to-face sittings etc.

There were some savings in the year, mainly database costs as this moved to a maintenance arrangement with most of the development now completed.

The remainder of the expense headings remained reasonably consistent with last year. The major expenses were staff costs at £154,310, this has been split between service, fundraising and management costs.

Expenditure (Continued)

The board of trustees have acknowledged that during this year the issues around Covid have restricted the services that were available and that these services will be expected to return to normal service as soon as guidelines allow. The new CCW service has commenced as the initial feedback is that this will be a successful addition to the services the charity offers.

The accounts for the charity show that it has a very sound footings allowing for the continuation of the services that are currently being provided. We will be working closely with the ESCC and Care for the Carers over the next 18 months to ensure that all funding levels are maintained where possible.



Clive Whitehead (ACCA)

Our Trustees

Trustees have overall legal responsibility for the charity. They must ensure that:

- The charity pursues its objectives or purposes, as set out in its governing document
- The assets (including funds, investments and property) of the charity are protected and used exclusively to pursue its purposes
- The charity complies with the law and its governing documents
- The charity remains solvent and is not exposed to undue risk

Trustees give their time for free. At the time of writing this report the charity currently has seven Trustees, they are:

- **Clive Whitehead**, Acting Chair and Treasurer
- **Toni Paine**, Trustee
- **Luke Apps**, Trustee and Volunteer
- **John Piper**, Trustee and Volunteer
- **Linda Witten**, Trustee
- **Roger Service**, Trustee and Volunteer
- **Andy Thomas**, Trustee

The Trustees hope to fully welcome

- **Gillian Scollay**, onto the board by the end of the year

If you are interested in finding out more about becoming a Trustee, then please contact us!

Membership

If you would like to be able to vote at the charity's AGM and have a say in who is elected, you need to become a member of the Association of Carers. Membership is FREE, and you'll also receive updates about fundraising initiatives and changes to the way it delivers services.

If you would like a membership form, then call the office, or download the form from our website.

The charity wants to continue to build a strong membership of people who care about what it does and want to have a say in the way the organisation is run and would love to have you on board.



Looking Forward

The charity offers free services to carers and will continue to do so.

The charity will continue to develop high-quality services that can be delivered safely and are in line with what carers say they need. The charity will remain aware of competition and ensure it offers good value for money.

The charity will seek to recruit more Trustees to support the charity moving forward.

To enable the charity to be able to continue to offer full support, it will ensure it:

- has a fundraising strategy with less reliance on statutory funding in the next 5 years
- maintains a good relationship with current funders
- targets new sources of funding during 2022/2023, including identifying legacies and sponsorship opportunities

The charity will continue to be a source of motivation to its volunteers and will focus efforts on the substantial recruitment of volunteers, especially in the more rural areas of the county. It will also aim to recruit ambassador and fundraising volunteers who have a true passion and understanding for the work that the charity does and are able to promote it to others.

A Final Thank You

The charity would not exist without the many people who tirelessly care for someone they love, without pay and often with limited support.

Thank you to anyone who is providing, or has in the past provided, unpaid care to someone who would not have been able to manage without this help.



Thank You!



association of
carers

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Get in touch!

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This is what one carer said about their volunteer:

"She gives me something to look forward to, its so great to have someone like this to give me extra freedom, I feel secure for the first time in ages"