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Web Site: www.volunteeractionoundle.org.uk

Volunteer Action Annual Statement

Registered charity no. 1161080

1st April 2022 to 31st March 2023

Mission

Volunteer Action's mission is "Volunteering to improve the lives of local people in need".

Strategy

This mission is fulfilled by running a Community Car Scheme and Befriending Services.

Operational Activity

Demand for our services

This 12-month period saw an increased demand for the car scheme as the impact of lifting restrictions allowed people to return to normal post pandemic. Miles driven increased to 126,945 (previous year 103,000), fulfilling 14,604 (10,000) passenger trips. We signed up 152 (200) new people to the scheme, which still operates with no membership fee, although this has been reviewed with the proposal to introduce a membership fee in the next financial year. We are continuing to support a small number of the community with a weekly shopping service, where we shop for our members and deliver to their house, restricted to the most vulnerable. Over 66% of our drives are for medical related appointments.

Our Befriending service has seen an increase in demand for the services and the ratio of face-to-face to telephone befriending is 79.55% (face-to-face bias). The number of members on the face-to-face scheme remains steady at 42. We have launched a monthly Group Befriending Event which supports 39 new community members. There is a slow turnover as people leave, but this is matched by new people joining. Funding has not been available to help us expand within this year.

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Running the services

It would be impossible for VA to deliver its services without its volunteers. The number of volunteers across the two schemes is 149.

Administration and management

VA runs a small administration operation close to the centre of Oundle. It has started the year being staffed by three part-time employees (FTE 2.0). This altered in October 2022 when the role of manager was upscaled to a full-time position (37 hours pw), leaving one full-time and two part time (FTE 2.0) staff members. A loyal group of 7 office volunteers who usually work on a one-day a week basis. These volunteers have contributed to 888 hours within this year. Apart from the normal activities of a small charity, the main workload is the weekly task of receiving bookings for drives and then matching them with drivers. In addition, the befriending service is supported by one administrative volunteer and a volunteer assessor who visits people who have been referred. We have continued to supply monthly invoices and have seen an increase of member payments being received via BACS payment – however the majority are still on the phone via card. We have migrated to a new cloud-based booking system for the car scheme which has seen some administration roles being supported by automation. There is also a trustee body of 8 volunteers contributing approximately 250 hours per year.

Community car scheme

Recruiting volunteer drivers for the Community Car Scheme has continued to be difficult post pandemic. During the year we used nearly 75 different drivers. We paid our drivers 45 pence a mile for their mileage, including home to pick-up point. Our passengers pay the same rate, but only for the passenger return mileage. A £1 booking fee for each completed journey was introduced on 1st January 2023 payable by our members and retained by the charity to help support the administrative costs. We provide training for our drivers on subjects such as manual handling, lone working and safeguarding.

Both passengers and drivers generally thoroughly enjoy the opportunity for conversation, contributing towards reducing loneliness and social isolation, over and above getting the member out of their house.

We estimate volunteer driver hours at approximately 13,874 pa (based upon the average journey/wait time of 0.95 hours)

Befriending

Befriending volunteers contribute approximately 1136 hours pa. We have a team of about 75 volunteers across the 2 schemes.

Risk Assessment

The charity maintains a wide range of risk assessments in relation to both the services we provide to our members and to our administrative operations. These are reviewed on an annual basis or as required.

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Financial matters

Income and expenditure

VA receives its income from a range of sources - Local Authorities, NHS, donations, fundraising and contracts. Salaries are the largest expense, however there are office costs including rent, and we continue to fund the cost of mileage to get drivers to members' pick-up points. In a large rural area, this is a key consideration.

During the year expenditure exceeded income by £33,706. This was less than the forecasted deficit for the year, due to an increase in donations seen from January 2023 to the end of the year.

Reserves

In the Trustees' view, the reserves should provide the charity with adequate financial stability and the means for it to meet its charitable objectives for the foreseeable future.

A number of significant risk factors for the future have been identified, including: uncertainty over future statutory funding from local government and the NHS; the continuing uncertainty over the level of voluntary donor funding; and general unforeseen day-to-day operational costs.

Taking these factors into account, the trustees have determined to maintain the charity's reserves at a minimum level of £70,000 which is derived from a risk based calculation.

Reserves remain in excess of this minimum level, which allowed us to budget for and sustain a deficit year 2022-23. This is continued into 2023-24. We have designated £5,000 from reserves for an identified need to migrate the computer systems to a cloud-based operation.

With no new developments on rural bus services in the area, it is important that services are maintained in the long term to meet demand and it is anticipated that this will be increasingly expensive. Our reserves will help to ensure that we have a long-term future.

Public Benefits

The trustees confirm that they have complied with the duty in section 4 of the Charities Act 2006 to have due regard to the Charity Commission's general guidance on public benefit.

Rural isolation and loneliness are well known to be closely associated with poor mental well-being and we know that our services help tackle this. Older people value independent living, and we can help maintain that for longer by providing a reliable way to get to vital appointments or just getting the shopping. Bus services have been withdrawn entirely through most of our surrounding villages and are very limited in the 2 small market towns we support. These same issues are also alleviated to some extent by our befriending scheme.

In addition to the services provided, VA offers an opportunity for volunteers to engage with their communities and make a contribution towards the success of a highly regarded service.

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For many it provides the opportunity to be a valued member of a team and maintain a more active retirement. Maintaining that reciprocity is a key ethos of our thinking.

Location

Our eligibility covers addresses in a largely rural area of approximately 340 square miles incorporating more than 50 villages and 2 small towns. We are fortunate to have drivers throughout most parts of this, however matching members to local drivers or befrienders is a constant challenge and contributes to running costs.

Governance

The charity has been a CIO since 2015.

Recent recruitment of trustees has been by application from people who bring the skills needed to run the organisation. The 2022-23 board comprised:

Mr Stuart Anderson (Chair)
Mr Colin Brown
Mr Peter G Burrows
Mrs Diana Charles resigned June 2022
Mrs Val Chesser
Ms Moira Froggatt
Mr Charles Wallace

In 2022-23 we appointed

Mr David Cashmore May 2022
Mr Lloyd Martin May 2022

Signed on behalf of the board of trustees:



Name: C.H. WALLACE

Date: 2nd June 2023

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RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS ACCOUNT

For the period from 1st April 2022 to 31st March 2023

	2022-23			2021-22
	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Total Funds	Total Funds
	£	£	£	£
RECEIPTS				
Drives & Shopping Services				
Member payments	45,397	-	45,397	39,348
Organisations	8,880	-	8,880	4,533
	54,277	-	54,277	43,881
Grants				
ENC	-	9,000	9,000	9,860
NCC	-	6,630	6,630	6,630
NHS	-	4,312	4,312	2,665
Augean Fund	6,500	-	6,500	6,500
NNC Members' Empowerment Fund	-	1,000	1,000	-
Other grants	1,500	-	1,500	-
	8,000	20,942	28,942	25,655
Donations				
General donations	16,884	-	16,884	9,333
Friends account	4,508	-	4,508	4,831
Gift Aid tax reclaimed	1,726	-	1,726	1,987
	23,118	-	23,118	16,151
Other Income				
Software licence	650	-	650	650
Sundries	354	-	354	20
Bank interest	1,231	-	1,231	914
	2,235	-	2,235	1,584
Fundraising Income				
100 Club	5,630	-	5,630	4,565
Quiz & Raffle	-	-	-	283
Fundraising events	493	-	493	-
	6,123	-	6,123	4,848
Total Receipts	93,753	20,942	114,695	92,119
PAYMENTS				
Salary Costs				
Salaries	36,289	19,942	56,231	52,227
Payroll bureau costs	941	-	941	963
Pensions scheme (NEST)	2,408	-	2,408	1,726
	39,638	19,942	59,580	54,916
Drives & Shopping Payments				
Drivers	49,578	1,000	50,578	35,889
Shopping	5,811	-	5,811	8,153
	55,389	1,000	56,389	44,042
Property & Insurance Costs				
Rent	4,320	-	4,320	4,320
Business Rates	338	-	338	169
Insurance	753	-	753	754
	5,411	-	5,411	5,243
Marketing				
Advertising & publicity	1,752	-	1,752	120
Office Expenses				
Stationery & office supplies	3,082	-	3,082	2,369
Telephone	1,106	-	1,106	875
Computers & equipment (incl. maintenance)	4,343	-	4,343	5,555
Computer system upgrade	3,350	-	3,350	2,160
I.T. costs for covid-secure working	-	-	-	-
Accounting & Befriending software	591	-	591	358
Subscriptions	244	-	244	469
Management team expenses	583	-	583	508
Legal expenses	-	-	-	-
Independent Examiner's fee	350	-	350	350
Petty cash	87	-	87	71
	13,736	-	13,736	12,715
Other Expenses				
Volunteer expenses	719	-	719	568
Staff & trustee training	172	-	172	1,404
Staff expenses	255	-	255	223
Befriending expenses	806	-	806	784
Lunches & Dinners for members	379	-	379	-
Recruitment consultancy	5,760	-	5,760	-
Bank charges	1,222	-	1,222	848
	9,313	-	9,313	3,827
Fundraising Expenses				
100 Club prizes	2,250	-	2,250	1,925
	2,250	-	2,250	1,925
Total Payments	127,489	20,942	148,431	122,788
NET RECEIPTS / (PAYMENTS)	(33,736)	0	(33,736)	(30,669)

VOLUNTEER ACTION**Statement of assets and liabilities at the end of the period****As at 31st March 2023****CASH FUNDS**

Bank and Cash Balances

TOTAL ASSETS**UNRESTRICTED FUNDS**

General Funds

Designated Funds

31.03.2023	31.03.2022
£	£
102,665	136,401
102,665	136,401
97,665	116,401
5,000	20,000
102,665	136,401

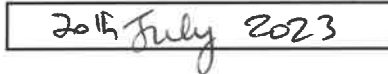
Signed on behalf of all the trustees:



Print Name:

S. Anderson

Date of approval:





Section A

Independent Examiner's Report

**Report to the trustees/
members of**

Volunteer Action

**On accounts for the year
ended**

31 March 2023

**Charity no
(if any)**

1161080

Set out on pages

Accounts 1-2, Trustees Report 1-4

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the above charity ("the Trust") for the year ended **31 / 03 / 2023**.

**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 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:

- accounting records were not kept in accordance with section 130 of the Act or
- the accounts do 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 order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Signed:

JEWoods

Date:

July 2023

Name:

Judie Woods

**Relevant professional
qualification(s) or body
(if any):**

ICAEW – FCA and DChA

Address:

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Peterborough PE8 4BP