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Web Site: www.volunteeractionoundle.org.uk

Volunteer Action Annual Statement

Registered charity no. 1161080

1st April 2023 to 31st March 2024

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, Befriending Services and launched new Group Befriending activities.

Operational Activity

Demand for our services

This 12-month period has seen another increase in demand for the car scheme, partly due to an increase in NHS appointments at Hospitals. Miles driven increased to 131,814 (previous year 126,945), fulfilling 12,308 (14,604) passenger trips. We introduced a Membership Fee for the Car Scheme of £24 per year and have seen 498 paid members as of the end of 23/24 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 60% of our drives are for medical related appointments.

Our Befriending service has seen an increase in demand for our services and the proportion of face-to-face to telephone befriending is 81%. The number of members on the befriending scheme remains steady at 68. We have launched a monthly Group Befriending Event which supports 76 members in East Northants and a further 43 members in rural Corby. Group Befriending is a new project we have been invited to join as part of the Countywide Befriending Service which extends our reach to include Corby.



Running the services

It would be impossible for VA to deliver its services without its volunteers. The number of volunteers across the three schemes is 136.

Administration and management

VA runs an administration operation close to the centre of Oundle. Staffed by four part-time employees and one full time (FTE 2.8). A loyal group of 8 office volunteers who usually work on a one-day a week basis. These volunteers have contributed to 904 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. There is also a trustee body of 6 volunteers contributing approximately 350 hours per year.

Community car scheme

Recruiting volunteer drivers for the Community Car Scheme has continued to be difficult. During the year we used nearly 68 different drivers. We paid our drivers 45 pence per mile for their mileage, including home to pick-up point. Our passengers pay the same rate, but only for the passenger return mileage. An annual membership fee to join the car scheme was introduced in September 2023 to new members and existing members from April 2024 to support increasing operational costs and keep the cost of the rurally located passengers' invoices subsidised. 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 11,6913 pa (based upon the average journey/wait time of one hour)

Befriending & Group Befriending

Befriending volunteers contribute approximately 2,978 hours pa. We have a team of 61 volunteers across the three 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.

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, IT, administration 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 we achieved a surplus of £9,876 due in part to the new Group Befriending project income and an increase in grant applications to help support the Charitable purposes.

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 the uncertainty of future statutory funding from local government and the NHS. This continuing uncertainty over the level of funding and increasing day-to-day operational costs remain a key focus for the Trustees.

Taking these factors into account, the trustees have determined to maintain the charity's reserves at a minimum level of six months running costs plus associated wind-up costs.

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 two 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 contribute towards the success of a highly regarded service. For many it provides the opportunity to be a valued member of a team and maintain a more active retirement. Maintaining that balance 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 2023-24 board comprised:

Mr Stuart Anderson - resigned January 2024
Mr Peter G Burrows – resigned January 2024
Mrs Val Chesser – Resigned January 2024
Colin Brown – Resigned November 2023
Ms Moira Froggatt
Mr Charles Wallace (Treasurer)
Mr David Cashmore (Chair)
Mr Lloyd Martin (Vice-Chair)

In 2023-24 we appointed

Mr Richard Allinson
Mr John Pick

Signed on behalf of the board of trustees:

Name: 

Date: 

VOLUNTEER ACTION
RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS ACCOUNT

Charity Number: 1161080

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For the period from 1st April 2023 to 31st March 2024

RECEIPTS

Drives & Shopping Services

Member payments	48,215	-	48,215	45,397
Annual Membership Fees	7,416	-	7,416	-
Organisations	10,136	-	10,136	8,880
	65,767	-	65,767	54,277

Grants

NNC - car scheme funding	-	9,000	9,000	9,000
NNC - Highways	-	6,630	6,630	6,630
NNC - Group Befriending Scheme funding	4,434	25,128	29,562	-
NNC - Other grants	7,670	-	7,670	1,000
NHS	-	778	778	4,312
Augean Fund	8,850	-	8,850	6,500
Masonic Charitable Trust	5,000	-	5,000	-
Serve-Ability	-	1,094	1,094	-
Other grants	2,620	-	2,620	1,500
	28,574	42,630	71,204	28,942

Donations

General donations	17,774	500	18,274	16,884
Friends account	3,596	-	3,596	4,508
Gift Aid tax reclaimed	1,573	-	1,573	1,726
	22,943	500	23,443	23,118

Other Income

Software licence	650	-	650	650
Sundries	131	-	131	354
Bank interest	1,969	-	1,969	1,231
	2,750	-	2,750	2,235

Fundraising Income

200 Club	6,410	-	6,410	5,630
Quiz & Raffle	2,797	-	2,797	-
Fundraising events	1,180	-	1,180	493
	10,387	-	10,387	6,123

Total Receipts

	130,421	43,130	173,551	114,695
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PAYMENTS

Salary Costs

Salaries	37,753	35,032	72,785	56,231
Payroll bureau costs	935	-	935	941
Pensions scheme (NEST)	2,723	-	2,723	2,408
	41,411	35,032	76,443	59,580

Drives & Shopping Payments

Drivers	52,054	-	52,054	50,578
Shopping	6,475	-	6,475	5,811
	58,529	-	58,529	56,389

Property & Insurance Costs

Rent	4,320	-	4,320	4,320
Business Rates	357	-	357	338
Insurance	795	-	795	753
	5,472	-	5,472	5,411

Marketing

Advertising & publicity	1,495	-	1,495	1,752
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Office Expenses

Stationery & office supplies	2,704	-	2,704	3,082
Telephone	1,281	-	1,281	1,106
Computers & equipment (incl. maintenance)	6,253	-	6,253	4,343
Computer system upgrade	-	-	-	3,350
Accounting & Befriending software	634	-	634	591
Subscriptions	289	-	289	244
Management team expenses	467	-	467	583
Legal expenses	-	-	-	-
Independent Examiner's fee	300	-	300	350
Petty cash	324	-	324	87
	12,252	-	12,252	13,736

Other Expenses

Volunteer expenses	472	119	591	719
Staff & trustee training	903	-	903	172
Staff expenses	-	-	-	255
VA Befriending expenses	963	-	963	806
Group Befriending Expenses	-	4,051	4,051	-
Lunches & Dinners for members	-	381	381	379
Recruitment consultancy	-	-	-	5,760
Bank charges	1,322	-	1,322	1,222
	3,660	4,551	8,211	9,313

Fundraising Expenses

100 Club prizes	1,650	-	1,650	2,250
	1,650	-	1,650	2,250

Total Payments

	124,469	39,583	164,052	148,431
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NET RECEIPTS / (PAYMENTS)

	5,952	3,547	9,499	(33,736)
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VOLUNTEER ACTION**Statement of assets and liabilities at the end of the period****As at 31st March 2024****CASH FUNDS**

Bank and Cash Balances

TOTAL ASSETS**FUNDS**

General Funds

- Unrestricted

- Restricted

Designated Funds

31.03.2024	31.03.2023
£	£
112,164	102,665
112,164	102,665
108,617	97,665
3,547	0
0	5,000
112,164	102,665

Signed on behalf of all the trustees:



Print Name:

D Cashmore

Date of approval:

19/2/24



Section A

Independent Examiner's Report

Report to the trustees/
members of

Charity Name
VOLUNTEER ACTION

On accounts for the year
ended

31 MARCH 2024

Charity no
(if any) 1161080

Set out on pages

1-2

(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 31/03/2024.

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 (other than that disclosed below *) 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.

* Please delete the words in the brackets if they do not apply.

Signed:

Date:

30/9/24

Name:

MR GRAHAM DARBOURNE

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

FCA

Address:

THE OLD TOWN HALL, MARKET PLACE

OUNDL

PETERBOROUGH, PE8 4BA

Only complete if the examiner needs to highlight 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.