

CARING HANDS IN THE VALE
ANNUAL REPORT AND UNAUDITED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

CARING HANDS IN THE VALE

LEGAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

Trustees

S A Wilderspin
M S Hewitt
J R King
D M Nicholls
S Mills

(Appointed 12 April 2024)

Charity number

1167237

Independent examiner

Azets
93 High Street
Evesham
Worcestershire
United Kingdom
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CARING HANDS IN THE VALE

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CARING HANDS IN THE VALE

TRUSTEES' REPORT

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

Annual Report

2023-2024

Caring Hands



In the Vale

**Making a Difference in our
Local Community**

Registered Charity Number: 1167237

Caring Hands in the Vale

Annual Report 2023-2024

During 2024, Caring Hands in the Vale is marking twenty-one years of making a difference in our local community. The 'cost of living crisis' continues to have a significant impact on our local community and in turn on the services provided by Caring Hands. Rising food costs and utility costs are the main drivers of the crisis, with many of our service users barely having enough money to provide even the basics.

The figures and charts included in this report show that during the 2023-2024 financial year, Caring Hands experienced its busiest year in twenty-one years of operation.

However, the last year has also been another significant year for Caring Hands in the Vale, as we are now operating all our services from our own building called The Ken and Hilda Farr Lighthouse.

Core Services

Case Study

K started attending the drop-in diner after her mother passed away. K had moved to Evesham to care for her mother who was diagnosed with a terminal illness. During this period her mother was unable to eat much, so K stopped cooking for herself and ate mostly sandwiches and microwave meals. After her mother passed away, K realised that she had lost the confidence to cook for herself and also did not really know anyone in Evesham. Attending the drop-in diner meant that K was eating at least two cooked meals a week and was also making friends. K was able to take home fresh items from the community pantry and gained the confidence to start cooking for herself again. She has also attended our Shopping and Eating on a Budget session to refresh her skills.

Drop-in Diner:

The drop-in diner continues to provide over one hundred meals each week during its Monday and Wednesday sessions. Since February 2024, the drop-in diner is also open on a Friday lunchtime from 12.00pm-1.00pm for a 'light lunch'.

The drop-in diner provides several different opportunities for individuals who access the service:

- A meal – a free two/three course meal on a Monday and Wednesday lunchtime
- A light lunch on Fridays
- A Community Pantry with surplus fresh produce, non-perishable items which are past their 'best before' dates and other donations that are not suitable for

CARING HANDS IN THE VALE

TRUSTEES' REPORT (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

inclusion in food parcels. This not only reduces waste, but supports individuals with food items and reduces the need for a referral for a food parcel

- Networking with other front-line agencies to organise drop-in support, such as homelessness outreach teams, harm reduction, housing and benefits advice
- Signposting service users to appropriate services to provide support for their ongoing needs
- Volunteering Opportunities – individuals from a wide variety of backgrounds provide invaluable volunteer support. We also provide work experience placements for several local Middle and High Schools, as well as the local colleges.
- Many individuals who access the drop-in diner do so as they are looking for company and support, especially those who are socially isolated. We have seen a significant increase in the numbers of more senior members of our community joining the drop-in diner sessions.

Case Study

P attends the drop-in diner twice a week. P receives a limited income so having meals at the drop-in diner and items from the community pantry help her to manage her finances. P has limited literacy skills and often asked Caring Hands staff to support her in reading paperwork. P was issued with a section 21 notice to quit from her Landlord and brought it in to us for help. A member of staff went with her to the contact centre at the library so that she could contact the local authority to start the process to help with housing. P also received support from the financial inclusion officer at the local authority to sort out her finances and the housing team helped her with a housing application. She has now moved to a housing association flat.

Resource Banks:

Caring Hands in the Vale now offers five different 'banks' of resources. To access each of these 'banks' a service user requires a referral from a network of well over one hundred and thirty referral partner agencies. This is to ensure that our service users are receiving the help, support and advice they need to address the issues they have, which have resulted in the need for a referral to us.

Prior to 2020 and Covid-19, we did not have any schools registered with us to provide referrals. We now have 12 different schools who are able to make referrals and do so regularly. Schools are one of the front-line organisations working with families who are best placed to identify those who are in need.

In partnership with Blue Cross and Pets at Home in Evesham we started a pet food bank providing cat and dog food. The main aim of the pet food bank is to support individuals and families to be able to keep their pets and help shelters not be overwhelmed with surrendered pets.

When pet food has been donated previously, we have made this available when requested, but this is the first time we have had a formal 'bank' with the pet food bank now appearing on our referral form and in our list of resources. During the first year of operating the pet food bank, we have supported almost 300 pets.

CARING HANDS IN THE VALE

TRUSTEES' REPORT (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

Caring Hands was again the recipient of grants from the Household Support Fund, which allowed us to fund some additional projects including providing supermarket vouchers, so that individuals and families could purchase fresh produce in addition to their food parcel, which contains non-perishable items.

Caring Hands also received a grant from the National Lottery Community Fund which was a fund administered by the National Lottery on behalf of the UK Government. As well as providing support to our normal core services, this fund, amongst other things, supported the start of the new Friday Light Lunch.

Our food bank was originally set up to provide short-term crisis support for people in our local community. However, we are now seeing more families and individuals being referred more often as they struggle to cope with the increased cost of living. This is something which is a challenge to our services and we continue to explore further ways of providing additional support to our service users in addition to short-term crisis support.

Caring Hands continues to produce its Food Bank Recipe Booklet, which is available free of charge. In conjunction with Evesham Food Bank Forum, we have produced a Food Aid Projects leaflet covering the Vale of Evesham, which is regularly updated. This gives the information of the various Food Aid Projects, how to access these services and contact details.

Statistics

During 2023-2024 we received the most referrals ever in twenty-one years of operation, continuing the year on year upward trend in our statistics.

In total we received 1527 referrals for 650 different 'households' (up from 518, which is an additional 132 'households' or 'cases') from a total of 76 different referral partner agencies. This provided a total of 1505 food parcels for 3565 people, providing 72,426 meals. This is an increase of 25% from the last financial year. Of the people we were able to support 41% were children (under eighteen years of age). Referrals for family food parcels now far exceed referrals for single food parcels.

Reasons for referral are covered by seven broad categories – benefit issues; homelessness and housing; low incomes and debt; work related issues; health issues, refugee and asylum seeker support and crisis issues.

You will see from the charts at the end of this report that 58% of referrals were due to low incomes of which 12% were families and individuals who are in work. In work poverty is a steadily increasing reason

CARING HANDS IN THE VALE

TRUSTEES' REPORT (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

for referral. Benefit issues (sanctions, benefit delays, benefit changes) accounted for 6% of referrals, which is the same as last year. Homelessness and housing issues 17%, debt 6% and health issues 5%. Referrals for debt issues continue to increase as do referrals for long-term illness, mostly due to mental health crises. However, we have noted that we are receiving referrals for individuals who are awaiting treatment or surgery for medical conditions, which is something we have not experienced before.

Refugee and asylum seeker support has increased from 1% to 5% of referrals, which reflects the use of Evesham Hotel and also dispersal accommodation available in Evesham.

It is important to state that the reasons for referral can be varied and complex. Often there is more than one reason for a referral, so our statistics record the most prevalent issue at the time of referral. For instance, an individual struggling on a low income may also have issues around debt, benefit delays or long-term illness and potential homelessness.

Our charts at the end of this report show that referrals to the homelessness bank have increased, as there has been a significant increase in rough sleeping during the last financial year. However, due to the incredible work undertaken by the outreach teams that cover Evesham, individuals are identified and supported relatively quickly. We also now have additional temporary accommodation services available in Evesham. We continue to work closely with the outreach teams, accommodation services and are regularly involved in rough sleeper group meetings.

As with all other resource banks, there was an increase of 20% in the number of referrals to the Baby Bank. Referrals to the Household Bank have also increased by 24% due to the fact that most referrals for a food parcel include a referral for a full household pack.

Community Engagement/Awareness



Caring Hands takes part in a number of community events during the year to raise awareness of the services we offer, including the Primary Care Network Community Engagement Event, Bretforton Open Gardens, Volunteer Event at Evesham Town Hall organised by Evesham Volunteer Centre, Battle of Evesham Medieval Market, Wychavon Community Network Conference together with the Christmas Tree Festival All Saints Church, Evesham.

We were able to provide a number of awareness sessions free of charge to the local community, local community groups and also our volunteers. These sessions included Shopping and Eating on a Budget, Homelessness Awareness, Basic Drug and Alcohol Awareness and Dementia Awareness. We were delighted to be awarded

CARING HANDS IN THE VALE

TRUSTEES' REPORT (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

Dementia Friendly status. We are always looking for other organisations to visit to give us talks which are appropriate to the services we provide.

We have also been able to give presentations to a number of local organisations and community groups, including WI's, Rotary Club plus a number of school assemblies.

Christmas 2023

We were delighted to be able to provide a Christmas Day Meal again in 2023, the first time at The Lighthouse. We provided around fifty meals, including a number of meals which were provided to one of the local sheltered housing schemes.



We had anticipated an increase in the number of nominations for Christmas Hampers and Gift Hampers, and the final total was 274, which is the most we have ever provided. This provided support for 617 people, over 50% of whom were children (under eighteen years of age).



Due to the generosity of local churches and individuals, we were able to include small, wrapped gifts in many of the Christmas Hampers, especially for children. We were approached by a number of referral partners to provide Gift Hampers for families who were struggling to buy Christmas presents.

Donations

We continue to receive incredible support from our local community, shops, supermarkets, families, individuals, schools, churches and community groups. We continue to be amazed and in awe of the incredible generosity of our supporters.

We received support from many schools, pre-schools and churches with donations of produce from their Harvest Celebrations, which as always is an incredible boost to our stock levels.

We also were blessed by the many organisations, schools, families and individuals, who undertook a 'Reverse Advent Calendar', which provided wonderful support for the Christmas Hampers.

During 2023 there were two food bank collections at Evesham Tesco, three at Evesham Morrisons, organised by Rotary in the Vale, and two at Evesham Waitrose. The collections all help to boost to our stock levels and Christmas activities.

CARING HANDS IN THE VALE

TRUSTEES' REPORT (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

We would like to take the opportunity to thank everyone in our local community who have generously supported Caring Hands in the Vale through another really difficult year. We definitely would not have been able to provide the support we have without you.

Volunteers

We continue to boast a wonderful team of volunteers, without whom the work of Caring Hands in the Vale simply would not happen. During the last twelve months we have also seen another influx of new volunteers and we are enjoying getting to know everyone.

We produce a monthly Volunteer Newsletter to keep our volunteers informed of developments and events.

We endeavour to have a volunteer get-together at least once a year so that we can spend time together and get to know each other whilst also celebrating the incredible work that they all do.

In addition, we are able to support work experience placements from a number of schools and colleges plus volunteering for the Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme.

Our volunteers currently provide in the region of 9,000 hours volunteering each year across all our different projects and events. If these hours were paid at the 2024 national living wage it would amount to over £100,000.00.

Employees



Caring Hands now has three paid employees.

CARING HANDS IN THE VALE

TRUSTEES' REPORT (CONTINUED) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

Diane Bennett is our full-time Community Outreach Manager; Emma Goodge part-time Deputy Community Outreach Manager and Paul Mills is our part-time Resource Bank Supervisor.

The team works alongside our wonderful team of volunteers to provide our growing number of services.

Homelessness

Case Study

E was rough sleeping in a tent in Evesham. E came into the drop-in diner for lunches as this was his only access to a hot meal. E also regularly used our showers and we washed his clothing and other items for him in our laundry. We signposted him to the outreach teams and he was offered temporary accommodation by the local authority in a supported environment. We supported E during the time he was in temporary accommodation from the food and other resource banks and when he first moved into his own accommodation, where he has now settled.

Homelessness remains a significant issue within the Vale of Evesham. Caring Hands in the Vale is a member of the Wychavon Homeless Partnership and Evesham and Pershore Rough Sleeper Group.

Due to this partnership working and encouraging the community to use Streetlink as a way of notifying the relevant organisations about individuals who are rough sleeping, there have been many positive outcomes for individuals.

The outreach teams who cover Evesham have been doing an incredible job in supporting individuals, in addition to which we now have temporary accommodation services in Evesham. We work closely with all these services, providing as much support as we are able.

CARING HANDS IN THE VALE

TRUSTEES' REPORT (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

Now that The Lighthouse is fully operational, we are able to offer showers, laundry, lockers, health and wellbeing hub, phone charging and to be a care of address.

During 2023 we ran a very well attended Homelessness Awareness Session with the support of Wychavon District Council, for the local community, our volunteers, church members and Evesham Street Pastors. This highlighted what homelessness actually is and the services available in the Evesham area to support and help individuals facing or experiencing homelessness.

Our Homelessness Handbook has been updated and reprinted. It is available to local organisations, referral partner agencies, churches and particularly to anyone who is worried about being made homeless, is at risk about being made homeless or are homeless.

Case Study

At Caring Hands, we have known S for a number of years. He had previously been a rough sleeper and was drug dependent but had eventually become drug free, had employment and his own accommodation. After not seeing S for a number of years, he came into the drop-in diner for advice as he had again become homeless and was sleeping in a derelict building. We helped him with lunch and some items from the homelessness bank (including a homelessness handbook) and food bank and signposted him to the local authority housing team and outreach teams for further support. He came to see members of the housing outreach team at a drop-in session at The Lighthouse two days later. The team supported him with a housing application and within a couple of weeks was offered temporary accommodation in a supported environment. We supported S with items from the food and other resource banks whilst in temporary accommodation and he also continued to use the drop-in diner. After a short while S was allocated his own housing association flat, where he has now settled.

Networking

Networking continues to be a significant and important part of the work of Caring Hands in the Vale. This helps us to know about and understand the work of other support agencies and organisations in Evesham. We are then able to signpost individuals and families to relevant organisations for the support that they need.

We are involved in several networks including Evesham Food Bank Forum, Evesham Charity Network, Wychavon Homeless Partnership, Evesham and Pershore Rough Sleeper Group, Worcestershire Communities of Practice and Wychavon District Health Collaborative.

Caring Hands is a member of the Fareshare network and also Neighbourly network which organises the collections from supermarkets, particularly surplus fresh produce.

CARING HANDS IN THE VALE

TRUSTEES' REPORT (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

Caring Hands in the Vale is a member of the Independent Food Aid Network and regularly attend national zoom meetings. This has been incredibly helpful in understanding the national context of how food banks and charitable food aid is operating. IFAN also keeps all its members up to date with information, any changes in legislation and any grant funding available.

In partnership with IFAN and Act On Energy, we have produced a leaflet called 'Worrying About Money'. This will contain information to point individuals and families towards other organisations who are able to offer help, advice and financial support. IFAN adopts a 'cash first' approach which aims to help those in need to move away from charitable food aid provision.

In conjunction with Evesham Food Bank Forum, we have produced a leaflet called Community Food Aid Projects in the Vale of Evesham, which has recently been updated.

Both leaflets will be available to anyone in the community who would like one.

We are currently exploring joining the new Worcestershire Alliance VCSE Forum, the first meeting of which is in May 2024.

The Ken and Hilda Farr Lighthouse

The food and other resource banks moved to the Lighthouse in October 2022 and the rest of our services, including the drop-in diner and community pantry moved in February 2023. This means that we have been operating fully from The Lighthouse for over a year.



In April 2023 we ran a number of Open Days, a Celebration for our volunteers and an Official Opening. The Official Opening was attended by members of Ken and Hilda Farr's family and Trustees of the Hilda Farr Charitable Trust. The ribbon was cut by Hilda Farr's Goddaughter and the then Mayor of Evesham, Cllr. Mark Goodge.



In addition to our core services, we are able to provide showers, a laundry, Health and Wellbeing Hub, lockers, phone charging facilities and a care of address for our homeless service users.

CARING HANDS IN THE VALE

TRUSTEES' REPORT (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

There are three spaces available for meetings and training ranging from two to three people and up to forty people.

The Health and Wellbeing Hub currently offers homelessness prevention sessions, homelessness support, housing and benefit advice. In addition, we have hosted a teen maternity clinic with bumps and babies sessions, counselling and family counselling sessions. We have also hosted a number of visits from the NHS Health Bus.

Further initiatives and services that we will seek to offer are as follows:

- A job club to assist those seeking work with job searching and job applications
- Debt advice and budgeting
- An IT suite which will allow service users access to the internet to help with job searching and job applications, bidding on properties from the local authority, checking emails, accessing social media, etc. Many vital government services and universal credit applications are only accessible on-line
- Basic cooking classes and other ways to use limited resources well – further developing our 'Shopping and Eating on a Budget' course. We have received funding from Evesham Town Council to provide the Basic Cookery Skills Course.

There will be the opportunity to develop the services we already provide:

- Developing networking opportunities to be able to signpost individuals for further support.
- Increase the number of volunteering opportunities we have available
 - Helping individuals to develop their skills and knowledge and offer support to be able to change their circumstances.
 - Further developing partnership working such as Wychavon Homeless Partnership, Evesham and Pershore Rough Sleeper Group, Evesham Food Bank Forum, Evesham Charity Network, Independent Food Aid Network, Worcestershire Communities of Practice and Wychavon District Health Collaborative.



CARING HANDS IN THE VALE

TRUSTEES' REPORT (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

We will also keep everyone up to date via our social media pages and our websites.

Diane Bennett MBE
Community Outreach Manager
April 2024

Caring Hands



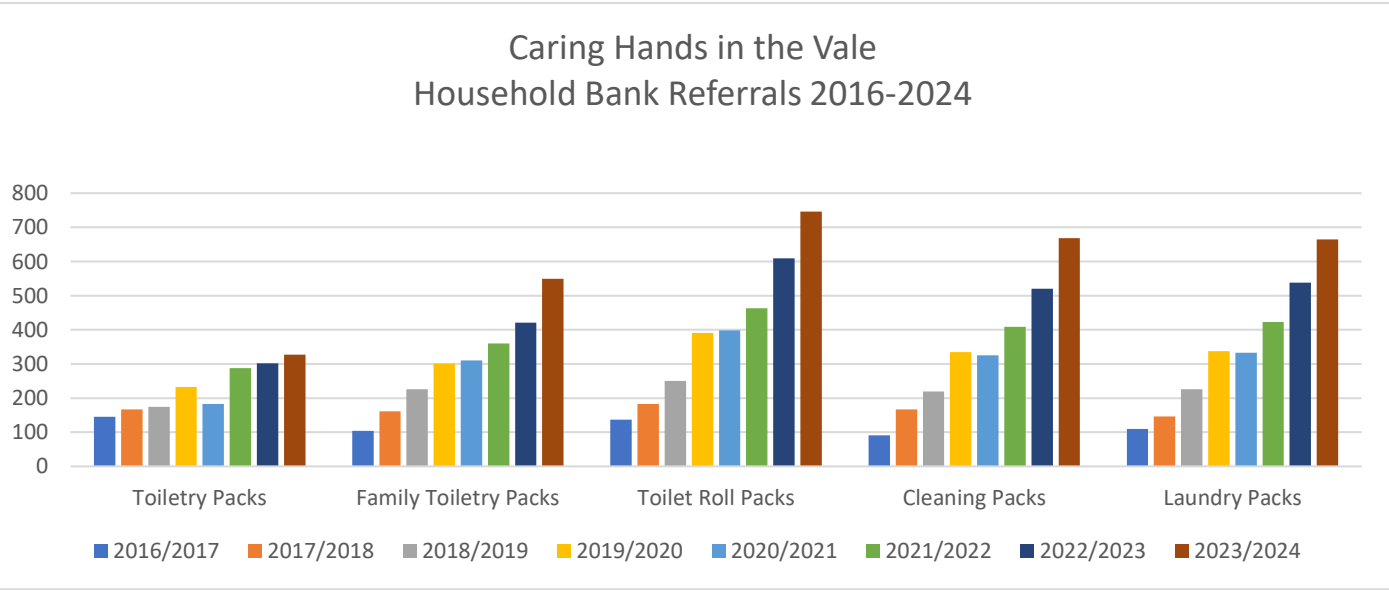
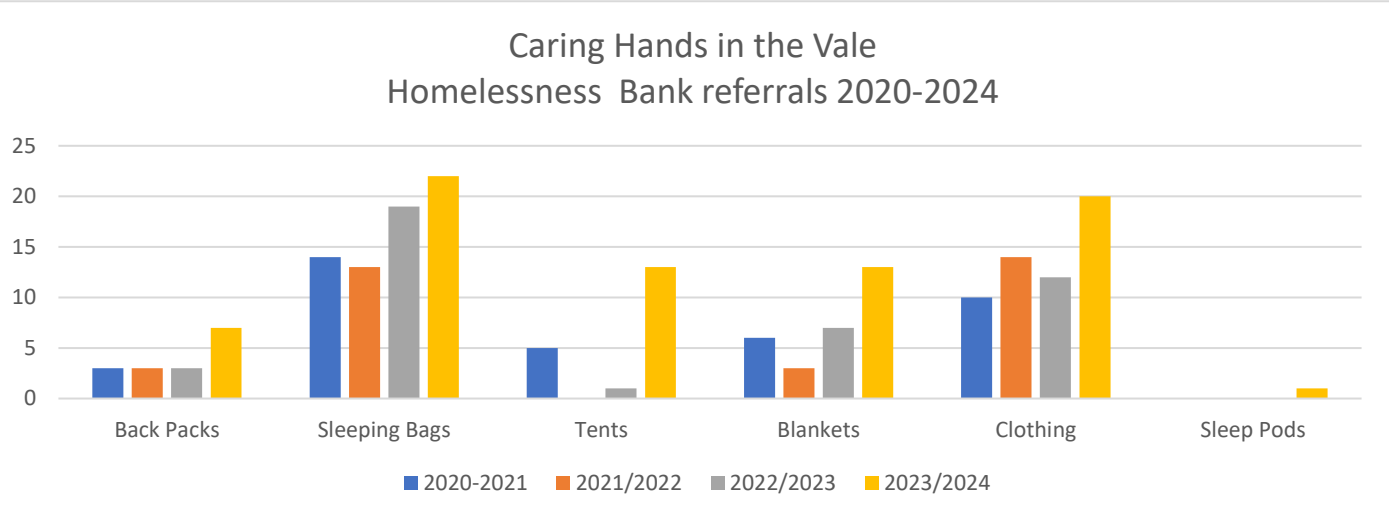
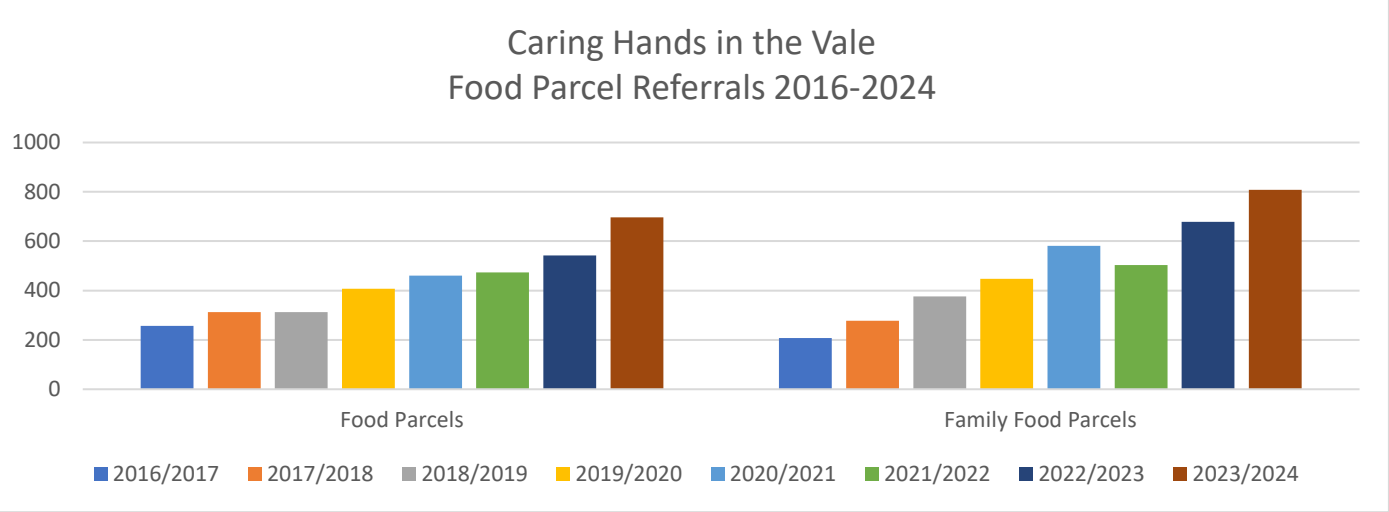
In the Vale



CARING HANDS IN THE VALE

TRUSTEES' REPORT (CONTINUED)

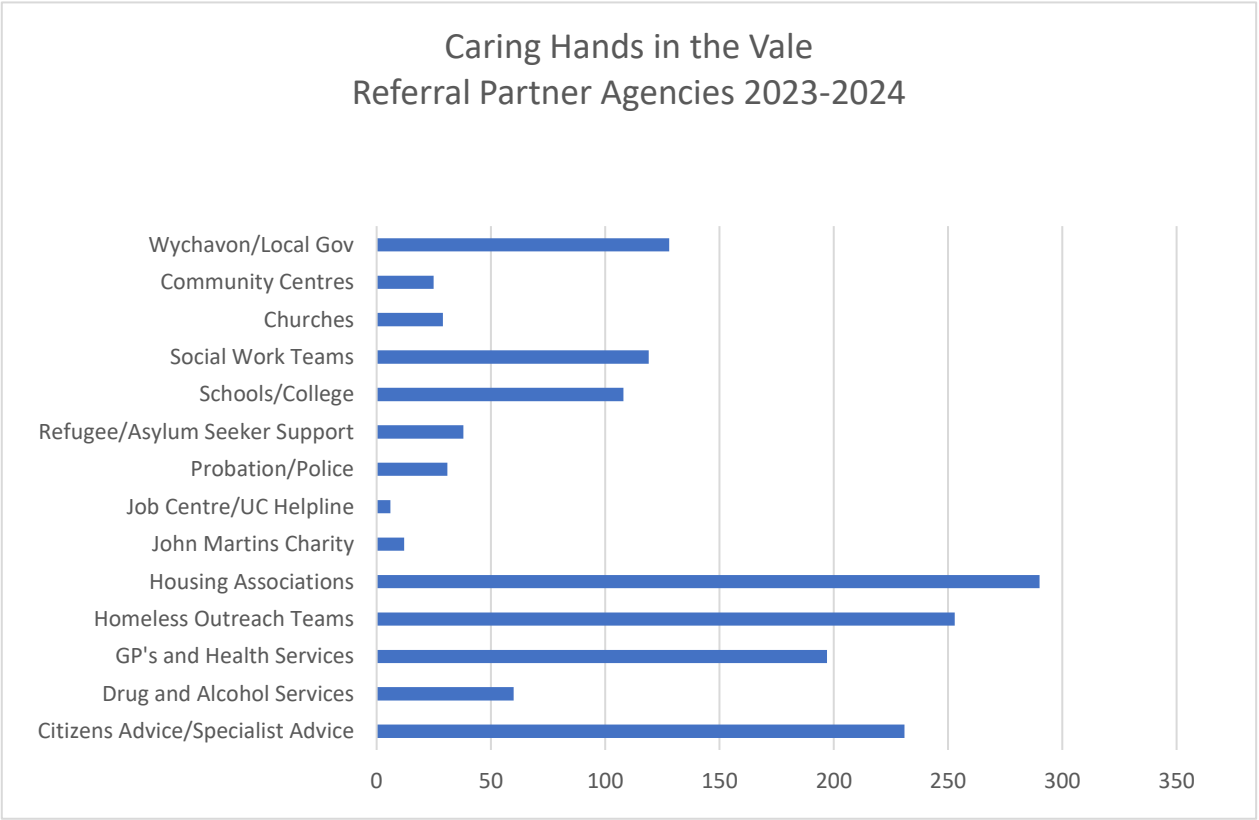
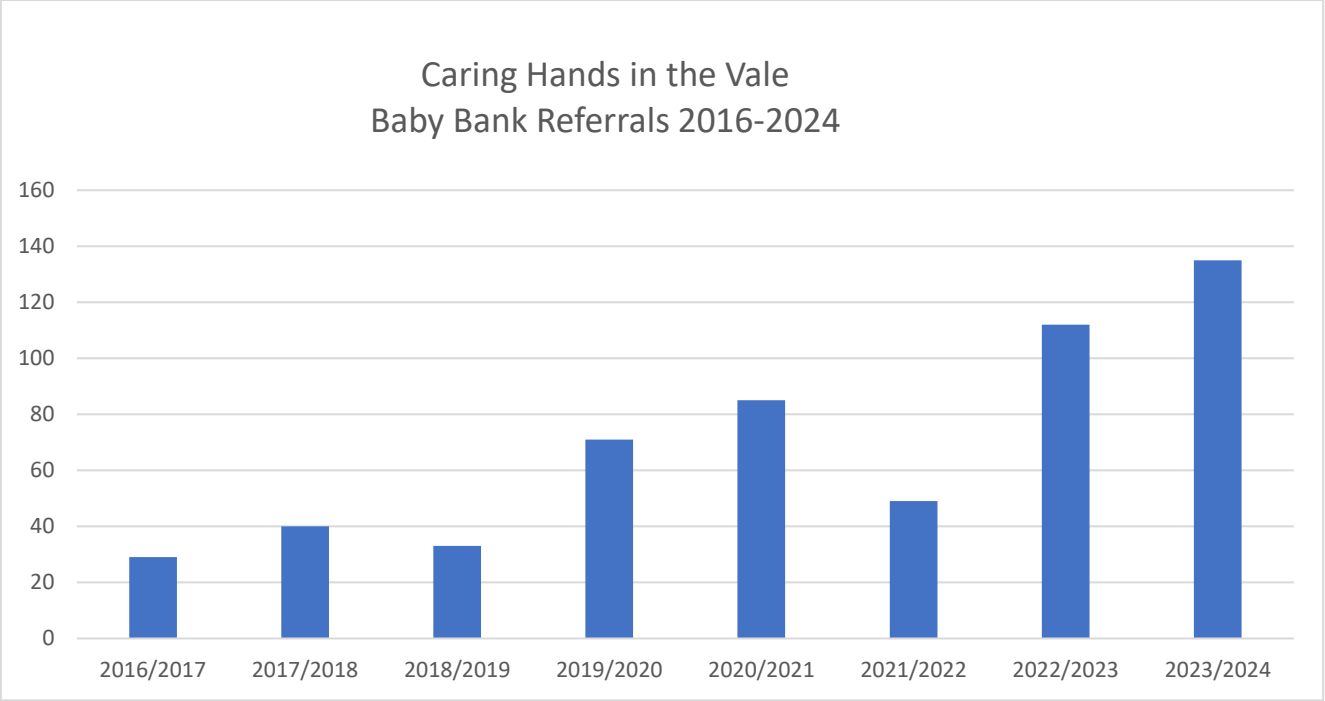
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024



CARING HANDS IN THE VALE

TRUSTEES' REPORT (CONTINUED)

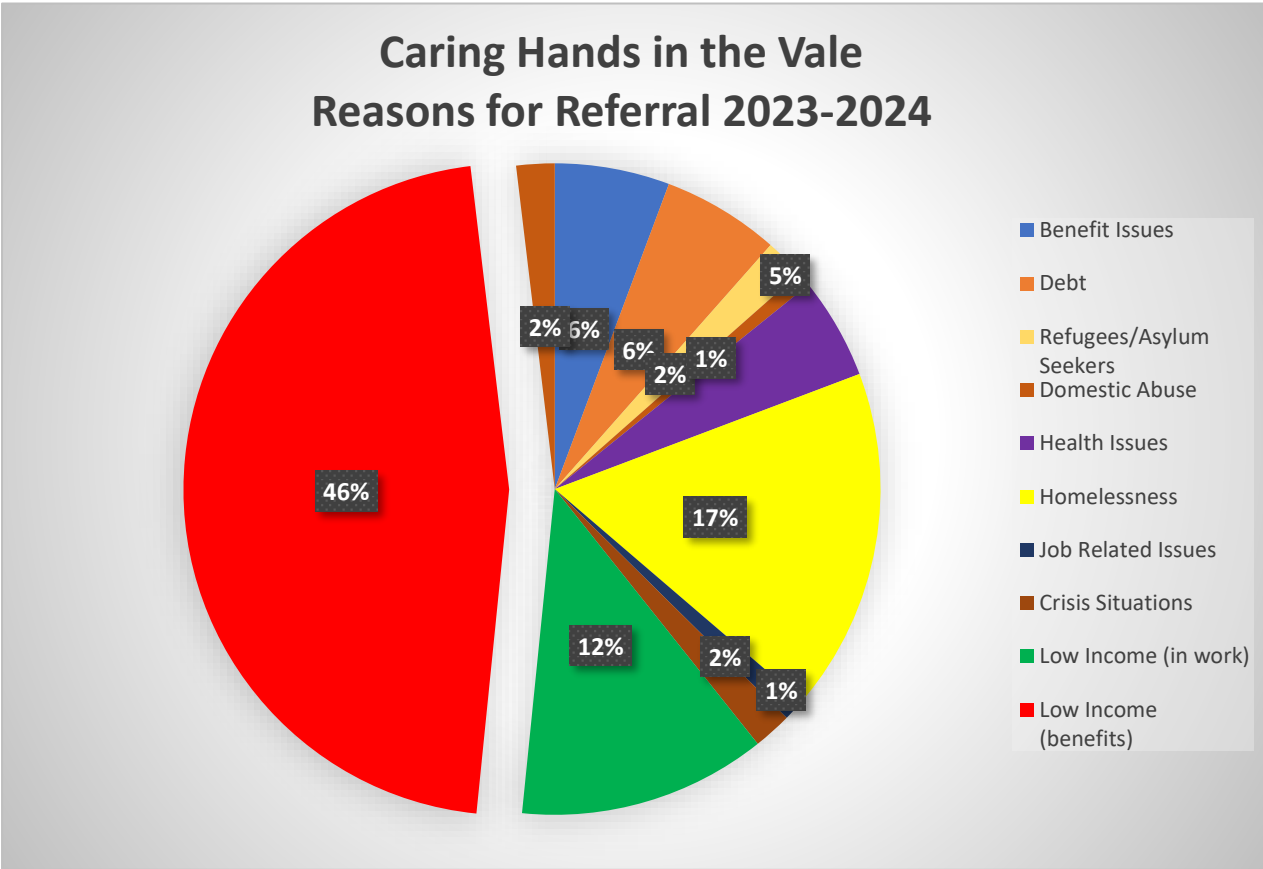
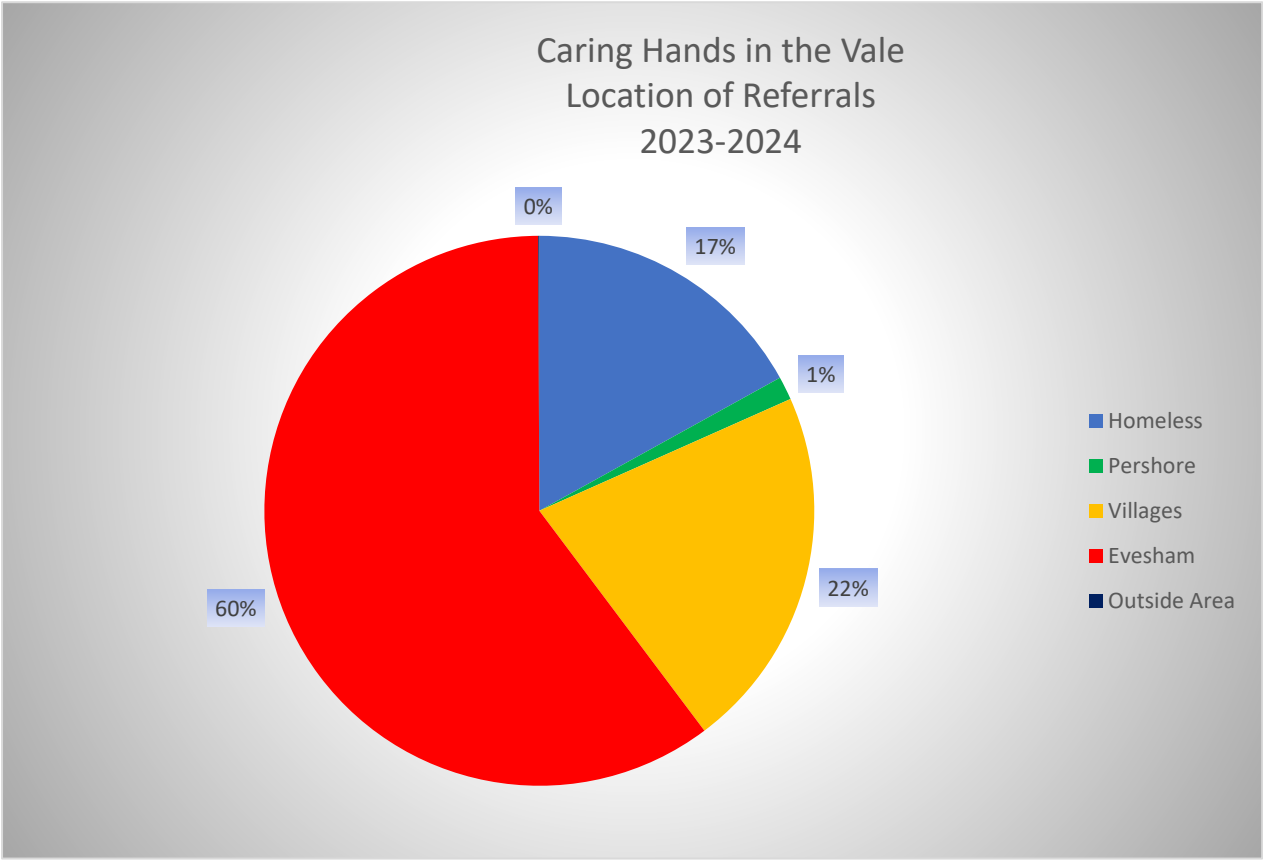
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024



CARING HANDS IN THE VALE

TRUSTEES' REPORT (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024



CARING HANDS IN THE VALE

TRUSTEES' REPORT (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in, I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me.'

Then the righteous will answer him, 'Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you something to drink? When did we see you a stranger and invite you in, or needing clothes and clothe you? When did we see you sick or in prison and go to visit you?'

The King will reply, 'Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me.'

Matthew 25:35-40

Caring Hands in the Vale

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Twitter: @chandsevesham



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X**

CARING HANDS IN THE VALE

TRUSTEES' REPORT (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

The trustees present their annual report and financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2024.

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the accounting policies set out in note 1 to the financial statements and comply with the charity's Constitution, the Charities Act 2011 and "Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (effective 1 January 2019)".

Objectives and activities

The aim of our charity, Caring Hands in the Vale, is as follows:

The prevention and relief of poverty and to relieve the needs of those who are in conditions of need, hardship or distress as a result of their social and economic circumstances in Evesham and the surrounding area by such means as the trustees shall from time to time decide.

The trustees have paid due regard to guidance issued by the Charity Commission in deciding what activities the charity should undertake.

Public Benefit

The activities of Caring Hands are all for the benefit of the public. There is a target group of clients, demonstrating genuine need, who must be referred by local agencies. Anyone who feels the need can attend the diner (operating Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays), and we cater for the lonely and senior citizens as well as those in financial need.

Everyone referred to Caring Hands receives the support they need unconditionally, non-judgmentally and totally free of charge. The geographical area we cover is the Vale of Evesham, although we do sometimes receive referrals from outside this area. We received 1527 referrals during the year, a significant increase on the previous year and increased throughout the year as the cost-of-living crisis worsened. Referrals are in addition to the attendees at the diner, who are all self-referred.

We have in excess of 60 volunteers all of whom make a very valuable and essential contribution to the work of Caring Hands.

Achievements and performance

We have provided food for a large number of families in financial crisis and signposted them to additional help to work their way out of their situation.

Service users work to become self sufficient which benefits the wider community with less poverty and homeless needs.

We have provided rooms where other organisations can meet with their service users which may well not have happened without.

Our main achievements during the year are:

- 1) Expanding the use of all the facilities in our building, The Lighthouse.
- 2) Adding a third diner session.
- 3) Fulfilling all requests for resource parcels.

We have successfully obtained sufficient grants and regular giving to fund 1 part time additional staff member and fund all existing and planned additional services.

CARING HANDS IN THE VALE

TRUSTEES' REPORT (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

Financial review

The trustees have reviewed the reserves policy and consider that due to the known level of monthly recurring income the minimum funds required are the amount required to continue the activities of the charity for four months.

Total cash reserves at 31 March 2024 amount to £69,655 (2023: £89,478) including restricted funds £23,562 (2023: £43,552) and unrestricted funds £46,093 (2023: £45,926). Unrestricted cash funds are well above the figure required for four months of £26,117.

There are no funds in deficit at present

Our principal sources of income are:

- Regular giving
- Grants
- Donations
- Fundraising events such as Quiz, Tabletop sales, breakfast, and other meal events.

Our main risks are:

- Reliance of one-off grants
- Loss of key staff including Trustees – we would benefit from a greater number of Trustees with a wider range of expertise

Structure, governance and management

The charity is a Charitable Incorporated Organisation governed by its Constitution.

The trustees who served during the year and up to the date of signature of the financial statements were:

S A Wilderspin

M S Hewitt

J R King

D M Nicholls

S Mills

(Appointed 12 April 2024)

The trustees are elected by existing trustees. Selection is via application form, interview and references.

The day to day management of Caring Hands is undertaken by the Community Outreach Manager. This role includes general administration, supervision of volunteers, liaising with referral agencies, developing relationships with local churches, community and other organisations, which can include talks, school assemblies and church services, finances and ensuring all necessary resources required are in place.

In addition to Diane Bennett who is our full-time Community Outreach Manager, Caring Hands now employs Emma Goodge as part-time Deputy Community Outreach Manager and Paul Mills as Resource Banks Supervisor.

We are continuing to look to add Trustees to our group to give us wider expertise in the areas which we address and areas such as IT and Fund raising.

On appointment, Trustees undertake an induction meeting with the chair of trustees to provide full details of the charity, any role which the new trustee is to undertake and further meetings as necessary.

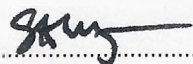
We have a large networking base with both referrals agencies and other organisations involved with our service user base.

CARING HANDS IN THE VALE

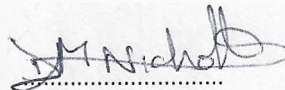
TRUSTEES' REPORT (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

The trustees' report was approved by the Board of Trustees.



S A Wilderspin
Trustee



D M Nicholls
Trustee

Date: 27 AUG 2024

CARING HANDS IN THE VALE

INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT

TO THE TRUSTEES OF CARING HANDS IN THE VALE

I report to the trustees on my examination of the financial statements of Caring Hands in the Vale (the charity) for the year ended 31 March 2024.

Responsibilities and basis of report

As the trustees of the charity you are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 (the 2011 Act).

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

Independent examiner's statement

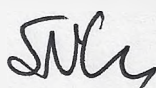
Your attention is drawn to the fact that the charity has prepared financial statements in accordance with Accounting and Reporting by Charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) in preference to the Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice issued on 1 April 2005 which is referred to in the extant regulations but has now been withdrawn.

I understand that this has been done in order for financial statements to provide a true and fair view in accordance with Generally Accepted Accounting Practice effective for reporting periods beginning on or after 1 January 2015.

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

- 1 accounting records were not kept in respect of the charity as required by section 130 of the 2011 Act; or
- 2 the financial statements do not accord with those records; or
- 3 the financial statements do 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 financial statements to be reached.



Stuart Christy FCA
Azets
Statutory Auditors and Accountants
93 High Street
Evesham
Worcestershire
WR11 4DU
United Kingdom

Dated: 29/08/2024

CARING HANDS IN THE VALE

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES INCLUDING INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

		Unrestricted funds 2024 £	Restricted funds 2024 £	Total 2024 £	Unrestricted funds 2023 £	Restricted funds 2023 £	Total 2023 £
	Notes						
<u>Income from:</u>							
Donations and grants	3	36,117	62,177	98,294	40,190	269,125	309,315
Charitable activities	4	25,791	2,555	28,346	20,143	3,899	24,042
Investments	5	755	-	755	140	-	140
Total income		<u>62,663</u>	<u>64,732</u>	<u>127,395</u>	<u>60,473</u>	<u>273,024</u>	<u>333,497</u>
<u>Expenditure on:</u>							
Raising funds	6	-	128	128	-	-	-
Charitable activities	7	65,364	78,222	143,586	53,237	77,252	130,489
Other	11	-	-	-	247	-	247
Total expenditure		<u>65,364</u>	<u>78,350</u>	<u>143,714</u>	<u>53,484</u>	<u>77,252</u>	<u>130,736</u>
Net (expenditure)/income for the year/							
Net movement in funds		(2,701)	(13,618)	(16,319)	6,989	195,772	202,761
Fund balances at 1 April 2023		<u>71,707</u>	<u>499,423</u>	<u>571,130</u>	<u>64,718</u>	<u>303,651</u>	<u>368,369</u>
Fund balances at 31 March 2024		<u>69,006</u>	<u>485,805</u>	<u>554,811</u>	<u>71,707</u>	<u>499,423</u>	<u>571,130</u>

The statement of financial activities includes all gains and losses recognised in the year.


CARING HANDS IN THE VALE

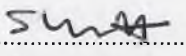
BALANCE SHEET

AS AT 31 MARCH 2024

	Notes	2024 £	£	2023 £	£
Fixed assets					
Tangible assets	13		475,550		478,851
Current assets					
Stocks	14	9,562		4,210	
Debtors	15	3,272		3,581	
Cash at bank and in hand		69,655		89,478	
		82,489		97,269	
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	16	(3,228)		(4,990)	
Net current assets			79,261		92,279
Total assets less current liabilities			554,811		571,130
Income funds					
Property - restricted funds		443,197		445,937	
General restricted funds		42,608		53,486	
	18		485,805		499,423
Unrestricted funds			69,006		71,707
			554,811		571,130

The financial statements were approved by the Trustees on 27 AUG 2024


S A Wilderspin
Trustee


M S Hewitt
Trustee

CARING HANDS IN THE VALE

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

1 Accounting policies

Charity information

Caring Hands in the Vale is a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) with charity registration number 1167237. The charity's principal address is The Lighthouse, Vine Street, Evesham, Worcestershire, WR11 4RE.

1.1 Accounting convention

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the charity's constitution, the Charities Act 2011 and "Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (effective 1 January 2019)". The charity is a Public Benefit Entity as defined by FRS 102.

The charity has taken advantage of the provisions in the SORP for charities applying FRS 102 Update Bulletin 1 not to prepare a Statement of Cash Flows.

The financial statements have departed from the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 only to the extent required to provide a true and fair view. This departure has involved following the Statement of Recommended Practice for charities applying FRS 102 rather than the version of the Statement of Recommended Practice which is referred to in the Regulations but which has since been withdrawn.

The financial statements are prepared in sterling, which is the functional currency of the charity. Monetary amounts in these financial statements are rounded to the nearest £.

The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention, modified to include the revaluation of freehold properties and to include investment properties and certain financial instruments at fair value. The principal accounting policies adopted are set out below.

1.2 Going concern

At the time of approving the financial statements, the trustees have a reasonable expectation that the charity has adequate resources to continue in operational existence for the foreseeable future. Thus the trustees continue to adopt the going concern basis of accounting in preparing the financial statements.

1.3 Charitable funds

Unrestricted funds are available for use at the discretion of the trustees in furtherance of their charitable objectives.

Restricted funds are subject to specific conditions by donors as to how they may be used. The purposes and uses of the restricted funds are set out in the notes to the financial statements.

Endowment funds are subject to specific conditions by donors that the capital must be maintained by the charity.

1.4 Income

Income is recognised when the charity is legally entitled to it after any performance conditions have been met, the amounts can be measured reliably, and it is probable that income will be received.

Cash donations are recognised on receipt. Other donations are recognised once the charity has been notified of the donation, unless performance conditions require deferral of the amount. Income tax recoverable in relation to donations received under Gift Aid or deeds of covenant is recognised at the time of the donation.

Legacies are recognised on receipt or otherwise if the charity has been notified of an impending distribution, the amount is known, and receipt is expected. If the amount is not known, the legacy is treated as a contingent asset.

CARING HANDS IN THE VALE

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

1 Accounting policies

(Continued)

Government grants are recognised at the fair value of the asset received or receivable when there is reasonable assurance that the grant conditions will be met and the grants will be received.

A grant that specifies performance conditions is recognised in income when the performance conditions are met. Where a grant does not specify performance conditions it is recognised in income when the proceeds are received or receivable. A grant received before the recognition criteria are satisfied is recognised as a liability.

The value of any volunteer help received is not included in the accounts but is described in the trustees' annual report.

1.5 Expenditure

Expenditure is recognised once there is a legal or constructive obligation to transfer economic benefit to a third party, it is probable that a transfer of economic benefits will be required in settlement, and the amount of the obligation can be measured reliably.

Expenditure is classified by activity. The costs of each activity are made up of the total of direct costs and shared costs, including support costs involved in undertaking each activity. Direct costs attributable to a single activity are allocated directly to that activity. Shared costs which contribute to more than one activity and support costs which are not attributable to a single activity are apportioned between those activities on a basis consistent with the use of resources. Central staff costs are allocated on the basis of time spent, and depreciation charges are allocated on the portion of the asset's use.

Governance and support costs

Support costs have been allocated between governance costs and other support. Governance costs comprise all costs involving public accountability of the charity and its compliance with regulation and good practice.

Support costs include central functions and have been allocated to activity cost categories on a basis consistent with the use of resources e.g. allocating property costs by floor areas, or per capita, staff costs by the time spent and other costs by their usage.

1.6 Tangible fixed assets

Tangible fixed assets are initially measured at cost and subsequently measured at cost or valuation, net of depreciation and any impairment losses.

Depreciation is recognised so as to write off the cost or valuation of assets less their residual values over their useful lives on the following bases:

Freehold land and buildings	2% straight line on cost less residual value
Plant and equipment	20% reducing balance
Motor vehicles	20% reducing balance

The gain or loss arising on the disposal of an asset is determined as the difference between the sale proceeds and the carrying value of the asset, and is recognised in the statement of financial activities.

1.7 Impairment of fixed assets

At each reporting end date, the charity reviews the carrying amounts of its tangible assets to determine whether there is any indication that those assets have suffered an impairment loss. If any such indication exists, the recoverable amount of the asset is estimated in order to determine the extent of the impairment loss (if any).

CARING HANDS IN THE VALE

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

1 Accounting policies

(Continued)

1.8 Stocks

Stocks are stated at the lower of cost and estimated selling price less costs to complete and sell. Cost comprises direct materials and, where applicable, direct labour costs and those overheads that have been incurred in bringing the stocks to their present location and condition. Items held for distribution at no or nominal consideration are measured the lower of replacement cost and cost.

Net realisable value is the estimated selling price less all estimated costs of completion and costs to be incurred in marketing, selling and distribution.

1.9 Cash and cash equivalents

Cash and cash equivalents include cash in hand, deposits held at call with banks, other short-term liquid investments with original maturities of three months or less, and bank overdrafts. Bank overdrafts are shown within borrowings in current liabilities.

1.10 Financial instruments

The charity has elected to apply the provisions of Section 11 'Basic Financial Instruments' and Section 12 'Other Financial Instruments Issues' of FRS 102 to all of its financial instruments.

Financial instruments are recognised in the charity's balance sheet when the charity becomes party to the contractual provisions of the instrument.

Financial assets and liabilities are offset, with the net amounts presented in the financial statements, when there is a legally enforceable right to set off the recognised amounts and there is an intention to settle on a net basis or to realise the asset and settle the liability simultaneously.

Basic financial assets

Basic financial assets, which include debtors and cash and bank balances, are initially measured at transaction price including transaction costs and are subsequently carried at amortised cost using the effective interest method unless the arrangement constitutes a financing transaction, where the transaction is measured at the present value of the future receipts discounted at a market rate of interest. Financial assets classified as receivable within one year are not amortised.

Basic financial liabilities

Basic financial liabilities, including creditors are initially recognised at transaction price unless the arrangement constitutes a financing transaction, where the debt instrument is measured at the present value of the future payments discounted at a market rate of interest. Financial liabilities classified as payable within one year are not amortised.

Debt instruments are subsequently carried at amortised cost, using the effective interest rate method.

Creditors are obligations to pay for goods or services that have been acquired in the ordinary course of operations from suppliers. Amounts payable are classified as current liabilities if payment is due within one year or less. If not, they are presented as non-current liabilities. Trade creditors are recognised initially at transaction price and subsequently measured at amortised cost using the effective interest method.

Derecognition of financial liabilities

Financial liabilities are derecognised when the charity's contractual obligations expire or are discharged or cancelled.

CARING HANDS IN THE VALE

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

1 Accounting policies (Continued)

1.11 Employee benefits

The cost of any unused holiday entitlement is recognised in the period in which the employee's services are received.

Termination benefits are recognised immediately as an expense when the charity is demonstrably committed to terminate the employment of an employee or to provide termination benefits.

1.12 Retirement benefits

Payments to defined contribution retirement benefit schemes are charged as an expense as they fall due.

2 Critical accounting estimates and judgements

In the application of the charity's accounting policies, the trustees are required to make judgements, estimates and assumptions about the carrying amount of assets and liabilities that are not readily apparent from other sources. The estimates and associated assumptions are based on historical experience and other factors that are considered to be relevant. Actual results may differ from these estimates.

The estimates and underlying assumptions are reviewed on an ongoing basis. Revisions to accounting estimates are recognised in the period in which the estimate is revised where the revision affects only that period, or in the period of the revision and future periods where the revision affects both current and future periods.

3 Donations and grants

	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Total	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Total
	2024 £	2024 £	2024 £	2023 £	2023 £	2023 £
Donations and grants	36,117	62,177	98,294	40,190	269,125	309,315
Grants receivable for core activities						
Hilda Farr Charitable Trust	-	-	-	-	70,000	70,000
John Martin's Charity	-	-	-	-	75,000	75,000
Eveson Trust	-	-	-	-	40,000	40,000
New Homes Bonus	-	-	-	-	26,686	26,686
Donations	31,872	4,834	36,706	40,190	27,077	67,267
Wychavon District Council	-	28,000	28,000	-	-	-
National Lottery Community Fund	4,245	21,975	26,220	-	-	-
Household Support Grant	-	-	-	-	17,225	17,225
Other Grants	-	7,368	7,368	-	13,137	13,137
	36,117	62,177	98,294	40,190	269,125	309,315

CARING HANDS IN THE VALE

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

4 Charitable activities

	2024 £	2023 £
Standing orders	22,125	19,375
Fundraising	2,963	-
Grants and donations	-	429
Gift Aid	2,910	3,729
Expenses recharged	70	70
Other income	278	439
	<u>28,346</u>	<u>24,042</u>
Analysis by fund		
Unrestricted funds	25,791	20,143
Restricted funds	2,555	3,899
	<u>28,346</u>	<u>24,042</u>

5 Investments

	Unrestricted funds 2024 £	Unrestricted funds 2023 £
Interest receivable	<u>755</u>	<u>140</u>

6 Raising funds

	Restricted funds 2024 £	Total 2023 £
<u>Fundraising and publicity</u>		
Other fundraising costs	128	-
	<u>128</u>	<u>-</u>

CARING HANDS IN THE VALE

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

7 Charitable activities

	2024 £	2023 £
Staff costs	55,029	41,054
Depreciation and impairment	13,095	12,932
Resources	36,845	25,640
Diner	5,259	4,267
Christmas	3,021	1,080
Rent	4,935	8,568
Motor expenses	2,684	2,355
Administration and service contracts	11,440	6,001
New building fees	-	14,807
Equipment under £250 and other expenses	5,448	7,766
Utilities and rates	2,793	1,939
Repairs & maintenance	965	493
Volunteers	-	252
Lighthouse equipment	713	2,285
Other charitable expenditure	213	-
	<u>142,440</u>	<u>129,439</u>
Share of governance costs (see note 8)	1,146	1,050
	<u>143,586</u>	<u>130,489</u>
Analysis by fund		
Unrestricted funds	65,364	53,237
Restricted funds	78,222	77,252
	<u>143,586</u>	<u>130,489</u>

8 Support costs

	Support costs £	Governance costs £	2024 £	2023 £
Independent Examiners' Fees				
	-	1,146	1,146	1,050
	<u>-</u>	<u>1,146</u>	<u>1,146</u>	<u>1,050</u>
Analysed between				
Charitable activities	-	1,146	1,146	1,050
	<u>-</u>	<u>1,146</u>	<u>1,146</u>	<u>1,050</u>

CARING HANDS IN THE VALE

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

9 Trustees

None of the trustees (or any persons connected with them) received any remuneration during the year, but one of them was reimbursed a total of £1,274 (2023: £6,290) and another of them £175 (2023: £173) in respect of expenses incurred on behalf of the charity.

10 Employees

The average monthly number of employees during the year was:

	2024 Number	2023 Number
	3	2
	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
Employment costs	2024	2023
	£	£
Wages and salaries	53,625	39,858
Other pension costs	1,404	1,196
	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
	55,029	41,054
	<u> </u>	<u> </u>

There were no employees whose annual remuneration was more than £60,000.

11 Other

	Total £ 2024	Unrestricted funds 2023
Financing costs	-	247
	<u> </u>	<u> </u>

12 Taxation

The charity is exempt from tax on income and gains falling within section 505 of the Taxes Act 1988 or section 252 of the Taxation of Chargeable Gains Act 1992 to the extent that these are applied to its charitable objects.

CARING HANDS IN THE VALE

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

13 Tangible fixed assets

	Freehold land and buildings	Plant and Motor vehicles equipment		Total
	£	£	£	£
Cost				
At 1 April 2023	480,140	15,892	9,450	505,482
Additions	6,595	3,200	-	9,795
At 31 March 2024	486,735	19,092	9,450	515,277
Depreciation and impairment				
At 1 April 2023	14,603	4,560	7,468	26,631
Depreciation charged in the year	9,735	2,965	396	13,096
At 31 March 2024	24,338	7,525	7,864	39,727
Carrying amount				
At 31 March 2024	462,397	11,567	1,586	475,550
At 31 March 2023	465,537	11,332	1,982	478,851

14 Stocks

	2024	2023
	£	£
Supermarket vouchers and stocks of purchased (not donated) goods	9,562	4,210

15 Debtors

	2024	2023
	£	£
Amounts falling due within one year:		
Other debtors	-	731
Prepayments and accrued income	3,272	2,850
	3,272	3,581

16 Creditors: amounts falling due within one year

	2024	2023
	£	£
Other creditors	1,637	150
Accruals and deferred income	1,591	4,840
	3,228	4,990

CARING HANDS IN THE VALE

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED) *FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024*

17 Retirement benefit schemes

Defined contribution schemes

The charity operates a defined contribution pension scheme for all qualifying employees. The assets of the scheme are held separately from those of the charity in an independently administered fund.

The charge to income and expenditure in respect of defined contribution schemes was £1,404 (2023 - £1,196).

CARING HANDS IN THE VALE

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

18 Restricted funds

The income funds of the charity include restricted funds comprising the following unexpended balances of donations and grants held on trust for specific purposes:

	Movement in funds				Movement in funds				
	Balance at 1 April 2022	Incoming resources	Resources expended	Transfers	Balance at 1 April 2023	Incoming resources	Resources expended	Transfers	Balance at 31 March 2024
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
Household/Food banks	28,110	8,861	(40,881)	16,613	12,703	4,430	(23,579)	19,539	13,093
Baby bank	1,684	285	(205)	64	1,828	565	(27)	105	2,471
Homelessness	297	350	(150)	-	497	1,000	(1,493)	-	4
Christmas	2,069	3,631	(1,405)	-	4,295	1,658	(3,468)	-	2,485
Salaries	-	-	-	-	-	11,408	(11,408)	-	-
Utilities	-	-	-	-	-	430	(430)	-	-
Diner	1,192	-	(4,057)	3,749	884	2,292	(2,363)	1,705	2,518
Shopping & Eating on a Budget course	359	-	(21)	-	338	-	(26)	-	312
Drop in Centre / Lighthouse	18,479	32,532	(18,907)	(11,478)	20,626	-	(1,772)	(9,775)	9,079
Property	245,000	210,140	(9,203)	-	445,937	-	(9,335)	6,595	443,197
Resource bank - general	2,133	-	-	(1,000)	1,133	-	-	(1,133)	-
Emergency Assistant grant	4,328	-	-	(4,328)	-	-	-	-	-
Cookery Skills	-	-	-	-	-	734	(35)	-	699
Insurance	-	-	-	-	-	240	(240)	-	-
National Lottery Community Fund	-	-	-	-	-	21,975	(21,644)	(321)	10
Household Support Grant	-	17,225	-	(15,225)	2,000	20,000	-	(19,895)	2,105
Motor and travel	-	-	(127)	127	-	-	-	-	-
Drop in Centre / Lighthouse - capitalised items	-	-	(2,296)	11,478	9,182	-	(2,530)	3,180	9,832
	<u>303,651</u>	<u>273,024</u>	<u>(77,252)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>499,423</u>	<u>64,732</u>	<u>(78,350)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>485,805</u>

CARING HANDS IN THE VALE

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

19 General unrestricted funds

	Movement in funds				Movement in funds			
	Balance at 1 April 2022	Incoming resources	Resources expended	Transfers	Balance at 1 April 2023	Incoming resources	Resources expended	Balance at 31 March 2024
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
General fund	64,718	60,473	(53,484)	-	71,707	62,663	(65,364)	69,006
	=====	=====	=====	=====	=====	=====	=====	=====

CARING HANDS IN THE VALE

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

20 Analysis of net assets between funds

	Unrestricted funds 2024 £	Restricted funds 2024 £	Total Unrestricted funds 2024 £	Restricted funds 2023 £	Total 2023 £
Fund balances at 31 March 2024 are represented by:					
Tangible assets	22,520	453,030	475,550	23,731	478,851
Current assets/(liabilities)	46,486	32,775	79,261	47,976	92,279
	<u>69,006</u>	<u>485,805</u>	<u>554,811</u>	<u>71,707</u>	<u>571,130</u>

21 Related party transactions

Transactions with related parties

During the year the charity entered into the following transactions with related parties:

Three of the four trustees of Caring Hands are also trustees of Vale of Evesham Christian Centre (VECC). Caring Hands shared the premises of VECC in previous years but this year, following the move of its operations to The Lighthouse, only the office has been shared. Following a decision by the non-conflicted VECC trustees no rent has been charged since June 2023. The amount of rent paid to VECC in the year was £1,035 (2023: £4,140).

Diane Bennett is not a trustee of Caring Hands but is a trustee of VECC. Diane is employed full-time by Caring Hands as Community Outreach Manager and is also available to assist with VECC's operations and activities on a voluntary basis. The office at VECC is used by Diane for both roles.

VECC has made regular donations to Caring Hands in furtherance of one of VECC's aims which is 'to assist and relieve persons who are in conditions of need, hardship or distress or who are sick or in poor health'. The total amount received by Caring Hands for the year was £9,440 (2023: £9,120).

Caring Hands paid expenses of £70 (2023: £70) on behalf of VECC and this was reimbursed to Caring Hands during the year.

VECC received payments totalling £708 (2023: £350) intended for Caring Hands and this was passed on to Caring Hands during the year.