



Helping Angels
Charitable Association

Trustees' annual report and accounts

For year ending June 2021



Contents

Summary & Purpose of the charity

Message from the CEO

Objects and Activities

Our Impact

Covid-19 Update

Sustainability

Financial Overview

Structure, governance and management

Reference and Administrative Details



Summary and purpose of the charity

Helping Angels Charitable Association is a registered Charity (CIO - 1183838) The objects of the CIO are to relieve the needs of adults and children with disabilities and complex needs in Stoke-on-Trent and the County of Staffordshire for the public benefit. We do this by enabling them to explore activities that will promote independence and develop their skills and abilities. The Organisation was set up as a Community Group in April 2018 and as a Charity (HACA) in June 2019.

As a Community Group we worked with the local community and saw firsthand the deprivation and complex needs of the families that we were working with. We saw that often the most vulnerable did not have opportunity to have a voice. We decided to form the Charitable Association to enable our members to have a vote and a say in how our services are shaped to serve them. Our areas cover some of the most deprived in the UK. Stoke on Trent is ranked as 12th in the Deprivation Index of 2019 and as a result vulnerable adults, children and families are facing further complex barriers to accessing the support and services that they need.

Message from the CEO

COVID-19 cast a shadow over 2020 and this continued throughout 2021. We faced lockdown after lockdown as a charity and as a healthcare provider and this provided us with a tremendous challenge that we and the whole country had never faced before. As a charity we adapted our workplan immediately to support the wider health and social care system.

As a charity, we began providing emergency COVID-19 support during the first national lockdown. HACA worked throughout three national lockdowns, and we delivered varied support in this time.

Our emergency support focuses on:

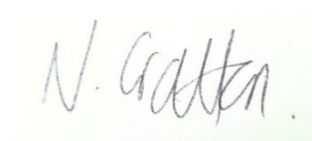
- Collection of emergency medication
- Collection of emergency food parcels where disabled adults and children have had to isolate due to symptoms or testing positive (this is extremely important as many of the adults and children we support have specific diets and cannot rely on foodbanks to cater for their needs)
- Drop offs of emergency meals, household items, art packs, clothing etc.
- 'Walk and Talk' and emotional wellbeing phone calls with people who are shielding or isolated
- COVID-19 support groups three times a week for adults that are living independently with disabilities who support their peers.
- Outreach at doctors' Surgeries, homes, etc.

In latter part of the month of May, civil society began to adjust to normality, and we as organisation we

Near the end of the year in May things started to get back to normal and we started to evolve our organisational development plan and started our new 'were here for you project' is funded by the national lottery. This has led to our staffing structure being expanded and the number of members we support surging throughout the year.

Looking to 2021-2022 we will build on our work across priority programmes ensuring this meets our long-term aim of inclusion for all.

Natasha Gratton

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "N. Gratton". The signature is written in a cursive style and is positioned on a light green rectangular background.

CEO

Objects and Activities

Supporting vulnerable adults and children with complex needs and disabilities and their families to reach their full potential across Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire.

Our essential key services:



Digital Life Skills



Educational Life Skills



Emergency Support



Group Activities



Sensory Provision



Social & Digital Inclusion



A focus on:

Digital inclusion and life skills

Improved communication for our children and adults who struggle to express themselves due to their disability to decrease social isolation and to improve their emotional wellbeing. The pandemic has illuminated the depth of social inequality across the United Kingdom. During the pandemic there was a societal shift towards working online, and this impacted many members of the community. The people supported by HACA are unable to carry out functions that most would take for granted such as personal shopping, ordering their medications, communicating with their support network. It is imperative this digital gulf is decreased through the undertaking of digital upskilling of children, adults, and families, by teaching them how to both use and improve their use of digital technology in a safe manner. This ensures that the children and adults will be learning new skills that will enhance their lives, and it will enable them to navigate the online world for functional and practical purposes. Our digital inclusion worker will work with other organisations, families, professionals, and members of the community to help create a more digitally inclusive environment for everybody. We would like to factor this in on our grant application for the next 12 months, however, we hope to gradually change this role to being community outreach support.

Group Activities and Educational life skills


Prior to the pandemic, group activities and educational life skills were at the forefront of our operations. We strived to upskill adults and families whilst supporting them to create a network of friends and people to trust. This side of the project focuses on support people to:

Join in activities that they enjoy and meet new people.

- Social groups
- Gardening Groups
- Walk and Talk groups
- Yoga and meditation groups
- Swimming, trampolining, biking and other physical activity sessions.
- Parent carer support groups

Learn new skills that will support them to live a happier more independent life.

- Travel training
- How to do your laundry
- Cooking and food and hygiene
- Meet and greet – communication skills



Our members who participate in the skills sessions above have the fantastic opportunity to become a mentor. This position involves supporting fellow members to become independent.

Sensory Provision

Our lodge is fitted with a state of the art sensory, relaxation, and art therapy room. This sensory provision was set up during the height of the COVID-19 pandemic. Many other facilities across the city were shut, and the families we support still required respite, social inclusion, and emotional and physical well-being support.

Our impact

- We provide services that are open to whoever needs them. With the growing cost of social care, and increasing issues related to mental health locally, we provide a safe space to those who need us.
- We shine light on issues where change is needed through our work locally.
- We offer new and innovative ways of thinking, working and share our ideas.
- We are inspiring other organisations and health and social care to work in new ways.
- We bring people together people from diverse backgrounds, lived experiences, and perspectives through our community events, fundraising initiatives, and support and networking sessions.
- We use our two community venues to provide safe and stimulating spaces where people can learn and build relationships.


COVID-19 update

How has it affected the org and your beneficiaries?

During the first lockdown we had to adapt to meet the changing needs of our beneficiaries. This entailed HACA providing emergency COVID-19 support as the community buildings we used for groups we all shut under the government's Covid mandate (they have still not opened back up now as the council are refusing to do so).

March – July. We concentrated on what was vital:

Food packages, medicine, and the emotional well-being of our members was prioritised. Alongside this getting our members online and fundraising via online resources was crucial. Additionally, we supported our members with art therapy packs. This time was particularly pivotal as we had to get our own venue (Hanley Park Lodge) up and running. We concentrated on painting and renovating the Lodge building during this period and worked to get the premises ready to be opened to the public as soon as we possibly could.



August - October. We started to run sessions again in a strict COVID-19 environment.

These sessions differed to those in the months before, and we very much centred on face-to-face contact, and the emotional and physical well-being of members. Many members were still not leaving their residences during this time frame. We felt it was imperative to make sure we were actively communicating and providing the COVID-19 support program to those confined to their residences. We ran 5 groups a week for four hours at a time.

November – The second lockdown. Things hit us harder in this period than any other.

The case numbers of COVID-19 were extremely high in Stoke-On-Trent in this period. We were able to continue holding sessions, as we have our own building. However, we had to drastically reduce session participation from 10 participants to 4. All participants adhered to the strict government guidelines and were placed in colour bubbles and separated into groups that had the capacity to wear PPE, and groups that were unable to do so. Alongside this we witnessed further closures of specialist schools due to insufficient staffing. HACA provided support by increasing the number of sessions we delivered, and the Lodge was open for 7 days a week. We observed a huge increase in referrals from people unable to access vital items such as medication and food.

January – April. We concentrated on supporting our members and rebuilding our community.


It was during this timeframe that the council offered the Sneyd Green Community Centre, and HACA embarked upon our new community venture.

Sustainability

Our members all donate when they attend sessions this is a suggested donation. However, it is not mandatory to donate, as some members cannot afford to do so. These sessions currently raise £600 per month. We predict in a post lockdown era, this figure will total £1,500, as our schedule will include regular monthly discos. There will be two larger group sessions, that will take place on Monday, and Friday, with higher member attendance. Our members regularly take the initiative to fundraise for themselves via partaking in charity fashion shows, toy drives, and Christmas market stalls. Our members regularly hold bucket drives at the local supermarkets.

Facebook Marketplace/eBay

During the first lockdown, HACA started up an eBay shop, and this continues to operate into the present day. HACA kindly asks members of the public for donations, and we either give these items to families in need or place them on eBay and Facebook marketplace to raise funds. This has brought in a sustainable income, which we previously struggled to gain from any kind of fundraising. This sustainable income totals around £800 per month. We predict this monthly income will increase significantly once we are able to open this to the



wider public. As part of our 12-month plan, HACA aims to open a community shop and café. The adults we support will contribute towards the daily running and operation of the café.

Amazon Smile/ Easy Fundraising/ PayPal Giving

These are simple online fundraising tools where large corporations pay a percentage of their purchase to you as a charity. We get local businesses and families to sign up for these online.

Business networking and corporate sponsorship

HACA has designed a corporate/small business CSR package that we send out to local businesses. We provide these businesses with advertisement opportunities to highlight the great work there are doing to support our charitable endeavours. This can either be a financial support package or a skill share. Natasha, our CEO attends a weekly business networking meeting, where HACA is supported by many local businesses across the city.

Online virtual fundraising

Our online virtual fundraising activities range from quiz nights to virtual runs. Although this does not bring a massive amount of fundraising, it supports us along the way. We currently have two fundraising appeals active online, with one being a virtual 50-mile challenge, and another is a valentine's raffle that also helps to promote small local businesses.

Grants

We apply to grant making trusts and to government and local grant schemes to support with the work we do. A full list of this income is listed in our accounts.

Financial Overview





Structure, Governance and Management





In total we have 2 FT Members of staff, 2 part time and 1 sessional worker.

Trustees

Lyndsey Ellis – Senior social care manager

Sharon Salt – runs multiple businesses including those in the care sector.

Nikki Wooliscroft – business manager at several special schools

Steven Talbot – Social Worker and trainer

Helen Biddington – Senior Learning Disabilities Nurse

Lindsey Bestwick – HR Manager

We are an association that is member led so all our members are involved in the running of our charity. We have a fantastic team of volunteers and mentors that help run with day-to-day service running and fundraising. Before the pandemic hit, we had 80 fantastic active volunteers and mentors. Due to a new campaign, we have been running with university's we have had several student volunteer applications this month which is something we are going to continue with. All staff and volunteers are given 1:1 support and supervision every month. We are an incredibly open organisation so are happy to have conversations on a day-to-day basis as well as in supervisions.

We currently support members accessing our services regularly in our local community but have a reach of nearly 600 people. We would like for this to expand to a reach of 3000 people over the next three years.

Reference and Administrative details



Charity name: Helping Angels Charitable Association

Other name the charity uses: HACA

Registered charity number: 1183838

Charities principal address: Burslem Park Lodge, Moorland Road, Burslem St61EA

Declarations

Signed on Behalf of the Trustees

Date

Position