

Caring Altogether on Romney Marsh



Annual Report 2020/21

Our Mission:

"...to support people living on Romney Marsh and its surrounding rural areas who are socially isolated. Through this support we aim to improve people's well-being, to help people remain independent for longer and to enhance the quality of life of the rural communities where we operate. In pursuing this Mission we will treat people with dignity and respect."



Caring Altogether on Romney Marsh

Unit 12
Mountfield Road
Kent, TN28 8LH
Tel: 01233 758122
office@carmromneymarsh.org.uk
www.carmromneymarsh.org.uk
Registered charity number 1184552

Management Committee 2020/21

Shuna Body MBE – Chair

Colin Potts – Vice Chair

Ruth Smith – Treasurer

Jean Jones

Steve Croke

Susan Graydon

Wendy Body

Richard Sullivan (to 29 January 2021)

CARM Staff

Helen Mattock

Manager

Sharon Harrison (to 13 November 2020)

Administration and Finance
Officer

Fiona Godfrey

Reminiscence Co-ordinator

Katie Sokolowska

Assistant Reminiscence Co-
ordinator to 1 January 2021,
Meeting Points Co-ordinator wef
2 January 2021

Holly Lewis (to 1 January 2021)

Meeting Points Co-ordinator

Benedict Potts

Befriending Co-ordinator

Zena

Befriending Co-ordinator

Victoria Carmichael

Development, Funding and
Marketing Officer

Chair's Report

The last few years have been a challenge to us all. But one thing I have learned from our staff and volunteers is just how resilient and innovative they can be when faced with a crisis.

Obviously our Reminiscence sessions in care settings could not go ahead. So weekly news sheets came into being, together with a prompt sheet to support care staff with reminiscence either on a one to one basis or in smaller groups. Carly Bryant from the Marsh Choir ran the much loved Wartime Wednesday sessions, which proved to be a great success during lockdown.

Our new phone befriending went well and proved a great asset during lockdown. Then thankfully in June face to face befriending resumed outdoors following covid protocols.

Another example of how amazing our staff are: I tentatively suggested encouraging people to get creative with the intention of a post-pandemic exhibition. Before I knew it CARM went into overdrive with a number of initiatives, Activity Sheets, Forget-Me-Not campaign; sunflower seeds mail out; sunflower colouring-in sheets; Happy Post; and Lockdown Stories, to name but a few !! Just as amazing was the deluge of creativity which came pouring in. The talent on the marsh knows no bounds !

CARM is the lead organisation for a partnership project with the Romney Resource Centre funded by the National Lottery Community Fund. This project, Generations Connect, is centred on bringing generations together to connect in a positive way such as learning how to use technology as well as a host of other activities. So watch this space – or better still get involved.

I know how keen people have been to get back to Meeting Points and fortunately they are now all nearly back up and running, having started in July.

None of this would have been possible had it not been for the dedication and determination of our staff, led by Helen - all of whom worked in such a dynamic and positive way. Our volunteers showed great patience and enthusiasm in the way they responded and amongst the difficulties, there was also much joy.

And a group of people behind working tirelessly behind the scenes, are our hard working Trustees, constantly having to rethink and reimagine, but always with a smile. I can't thank them enough for their support and commitment throughout. This year we say goodbye to Colin, who has worked for CARM in so many guises over the years, and has decided to take a break as a trustee – but thankfully staying on as a volunteer. Colin has been a real rock of support, offering much wise advice along the way. So a huge thank you Colin for all your work and support.

A challenging year, but one which has filled me with so much pride in the way that, against all odds we were still able to provide a good (albeit somewhat different) service to our clients. Albert Einstein once said “in the midst of every crisis lies a great opportunity.” CARM staff, volunteers and members have proved this time and time again during the pandemic. So it is with heartfelt thanks that I thank each and every one of you for your dedication, inspiration and support this year.

Reverend Shuna Body MBE
Chair

Treasurer's Report

Last year's Treasurer's Report was for the last 'normal' year before the Coronavirus pandemic. We have now spent a whole year and at the time of writing, 18 months, under the most extraordinary circumstances with multiple lockdowns, continual restrictions on mixing with others and loss of most away from home activities.

So, our range of activities this year have departed dramatically from our usual ones. Shuna had detailed these changes in her report above. These changes have led to different and innovative uses for our funds. As most of our money comes from grants with designated uses, this has involved Helen in renegotiations with each donor, to allow us to use their grants to help people even more isolated than usual.

Our income in this reporting year was £232,594, an increase on last year due to our partnership with the Romney Resource Centre (RRC) – we are given the funds from the National Lottery and we disburse the RRC's share to them. Again, our major donors were Kent County Council and the National Lottery, with smaller sums from the Freemasons, Colyer Fergusson, the Kent Community Foundation

and the Whitehead Monckton Charitable Foundation. They have all been very understanding of us using their money for different Covid related projects.

Our expenses this year have been £184,139, which is also an increase on last year due to partnership funds being paid over to the RRC and the Romney March Community Hub for partnership projects / work . Our main expenses have been staff salaries and staff pensions, which have of course been unchanged by the pandemic. Our expenditure on postage and stationery has been high due to regular contact with our volunteers and clients. There were also costs due to our move from Appledore to New Romney (July 2020) and new computer equipment. However, of course our spending on Meeting Points, Befriending and Reminiscence dropped dramatically.

Our reserves are healthy with an amount being a designated reserve in case we had to wind down. We have some restricted reserves for projects work, such as Meeting Points and Generations Connect which we have been unable to spend over the last difficult year. The balance of our reserves being unrestricted.

As I expected, our community fundraising has been decimated this year, but our big funders have kept us afloat during a time when many charities have had to close. As the world opens up again, we will need to revisit how to fund ourselves from more efforts on our part.

I have reviewed the financial controls and disciplines at CARM and found them robust and sufficient to ensure that the resources of the charity are protected, and that management and Trustees may rely on the accuracy of reporting to enable them to make funding bids and also to meet the requirements of the Charity Commission.

As Treasurer it is my job to ensure that money is spent wisely and on the activities for which it was given; and that income and expenditure are recorded accurately. As Mr Micawber says in David Copperfield – “Annual Income £20, annual expenditure £19, 19 shillings and sixpence, result happiness. Annual income £20, annual expenditure £20 and sixpence, result misery”. From a financial view ONLY, I am very happy with our situation this year!!

Dr Ruth Smith
Treasurer

Manager's Report

As both Shuna and Ruth have said, we have lived through some challenging times recently, and it has been particularly difficult working through so many restrictions during a pandemic when our core purpose is to support people who are already socially isolated and lonely. The challenges were many as you will read in the service reports below, risk assessments are now part of our every day.

Who had heard of ZOOM before April 2020? Not many of us I suspect, but video conferencing is another thing that has become part of our everyday. We save time and money in travel costs, but its not the same as a meeting in person.

I would like to thank all who have funded us during the financial year that we are reporting on. Funding and donations range from a few pounds, to books of stamps, Christmas decorations, homemade cards to grants of many thousands of pounds as well as in memoriam donations and a special fundraised walk which you can read about later in the report.

Partnerships are also the norm now for many charities, there are many benefits associated with partnership working. We work very closely with the newly named Romney Marsh Community Hub (previously Romney Marsh Day Centre) and have a formal partnership with the Romney Resource Centre for the Generations Connect project.

The aim of the Generations Connect collaboration is to enable young and older people to be connected and become an active part of their community, giving purpose and providing opportunities to come together. The two generations will learn with and from each other, share knowledge, skills and experiences, engage in activities and socialise together too. During the pandemic it was not possible to progress the project at the pace that we would have preferred, but nevertheless good progress has been made. A couple of examples being students from the RRC potted up geraniums to be given to all Meeting Points attendees at their first Meeting Point back. Students from the Marsh Academy created the content for an Activity Workbook, the design and compilation was put together by a young volunteer from the RRC. 450 copies of the workbook have been distributed to older people across our operating area. Many community activities are planned for the future within the project.

I must finally comment on the wonderful group of volunteers that support our clients in so many ways, and the also amazing staff team who support our volunteers and clients, it is an absolute pleasure to work with them all.

Helen Mattock
Manager

Reminiscence

Talking Reminiscence

CARM's original talking reminiscence service began in 2006 and was called Our Memories Matter (OMM) and sessions are delivered by a team of 2-3 CARM volunteers supported by a member of care staff. Its sister service Caring to Remember (CTR) was established in 2015 and aims to train and support care settings to deliver their own reminiscence sessions with the support of a single CARM volunteer. Under normal circumstances both models deliver sessions in a variety of care settings including day centres, assisted living settings and residential homes. Sessions are run in 3 blocks of 8-10 weeks over the course of a year.



Prop packing from home!
Everyday objects that were
used to run an introductory
session

Careful attention is paid to theming the sessions as many of our clients have visual, physical and/or cognitive impairments. Multi-sensory props help to focus on a subject in a variety of ways to stimulate memories of a theme so for example if we were discussing holidays, we may bring along a passport, suitcase, and a train ticket!

Face to face sessions were suspended in March 2020

and since then we have produced a weekly newssheet CARM Catch Up (at the time of writing now in its 75th week) which are themed and draw on memories shared.

This is emailed to each of the talking groups each week and copied to their relevant volunteer(s) aiming to keep us all connected.

Following our regular programme (a three-year rotation of themes), we have continued to provide sessions and found innovative ways to do this some which have been more successful than others! These have included a prompt sheet to enable care staff to run sessions in our absence, telephone reminiscence sessions and zoom sessions. At times we have had issues with technology and have learnt to adapt as we go along. It's been heart-warming to connect with settings and share memories and laughter under these unusual conditions and it never ceases to amaze me how well our attendees have adapted to the zoom sessions. Special thanks must go to our wonderful care partners for making sessions possible, we know first-hand what a challenging and difficult time this has been and their dedication to those they care for has been so uplifting.



Fiona running a telephone reminiscence session



Fiona and Kath from Romney Resource Centre (RRC) running a zoom reminiscence session

Musical Reminiscence

Our musical reminiscence service Musical Memories Matter (MMM) was established in 2014 and is run with the support of volunteers working in pairs. The MMM programme is aligned to the OMM schedule and we aim to deliver between 10-12 sessions each time. This service has been on hold since March 2020 due to COVID restrictions. We have though been able to maintain the use of music within the zoom sessions.

Volunteer Meetings



These are usually held three times a year and aligned to face to face sessions so that we can discuss ideas and share good practice as well as problem solve as we go along. In April we held a zoom meeting and everyone was invited to bring along an item of interest or that made them smile which included a handknitted scene of

Dickensian Mice and a Children's book that had been designed by a volunteer for her Grandchildren. The consensus at the meeting by all the volunteers was how much they had missed being involved with the service, their clients and each other and they looked forward to resuming their regular volunteering with CARM.

The Future

At the time of writing, I am in the process of connecting with individual volunteers and care settings for talking reminiscence sessions and pleasingly several are hopeful that we may be able to return and deliver some sessions in the Autumn. Our Musical Memories Matter service remains on hold for now.

Thank You

It has certainly been a period that I am sure that none of us will forget in a hurry. I want to offer thanks to all our reminiscence team of volunteers both musical and talking for all that you do for CARM. You are such a dedicated team and I know how much you have missed spending time with your regular attendees. Thank you to you all for your on-going support to me with messages for your clients, feedback and suggestions on how to keep things running. I am grateful to those of you that helped pilot and run the telephone reminiscence sessions and to Katherine Jones my colleague from Romney Resource Centre who helped make the zoom reminiscence sessions possible. I am really looking forward to being able to reminiscence with you all in the not-too-distant future!

Fiona

Befriending

As we began this reporting year, in March 2020, life across the globe changed for all of us and CARM's befriending service adapted to the restrictions and challenges we all faced.

Holly temporarily joined the befriending team in April 2020 to help Zena and Benedict support our clients who felt lonely and isolated, many of whom were shielding or choosing to self-isolate over the local area. We worked in partnership with the Romney Marsh Community Hub (RMCH) to provide telephone befriending calls. New volunteers were recruited through the RMCH, with them initially processing applications, we had over 85 volunteers express an interest in volunteering for CARM. The befriending team stepped into the new world of ZOOM and trained over 40 new volunteers this way.

Most of our existing face-to-face befriending volunteers switched to calling their clients except for those for whose clients find it difficult to speak on the phone, for example those with hearing or speech impairments or memory problems.

At the most strange and uncertain of times in Lockdown 1 we asked volunteers to make two phone calls a week to their clients so that they felt there was someone there for them.

Zena went to the RMCH each week to help in the call centre dealing with requests for prescriptions pick-ups, shopping, befriending and also welfare calls.

We also supported Meeting Point clients who wanted to have someone call them for the duration, now, 18 months later, as Meeting Point groups return many still receive befriending calls as they have become 'friends' with their volunteers and look forward to their calls.

In Lockdown 1 we reached a total of 50 new telephone befriending matches. The highlight of this period was the incredible response of volunteers. At the peak in June 2020 our amazing volunteers spent 14,000 minutes calling their clients. This figure includes the existing face to face befrienders who were also calling their clients.

In early June 2020, as restrictions began to lift many of our face-to-face befriending volunteers began socially distanced garden visits whilst following strict COVID-19 guidelines for everyone's safety. We carried out the first of many risk assessments for the service.

In July 2020, a first for CARM, the befriending team held a virtual volunteers' meeting – where we shared our lockdown feelings, everyone who attended enjoyed the get together.

Zena continued to support our Givaudan volunteers who like many, now, spend their days hybrid working at home or on site. Over the lockdowns they felt they were a real lifeline to their clients. We have held a virtual lunch about every 6 months since the beginning of the pandemic.

August 2020 also brought changes to the COVID-19 telephone befriending service as many volunteers returning to work and clients began to get out more, resulting in closing of several matches.

Following further risk assessments, face-to-face befriending indoors resumed in September 2020 for about half of our matches. Benedict and Zena began to make new matches, carry out assessments and conducted review visits. Other than wearing masks and keeping socially distanced life seemed to be back to 'normal' for the befriending service.

We also held a couple of socially distanced training sessions for new volunteers.



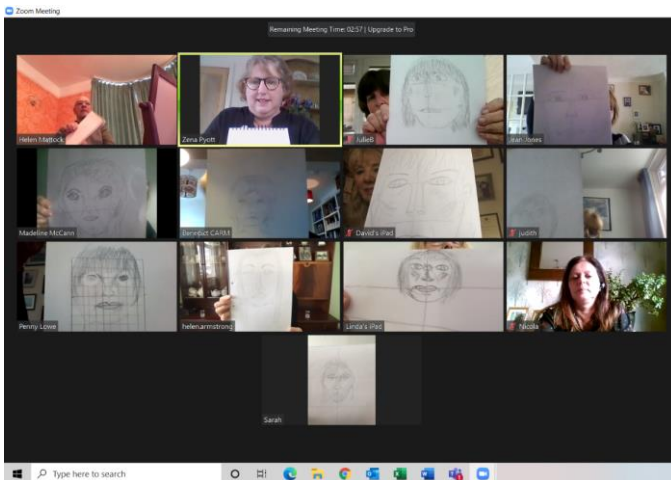
Sadly, but understandably, in November as we entered another Lockdown and all volunteers had to stop home visiting. If the situation allowed, they phoned their clients instead.

We held a befriending volunteer's meeting via zoom in November which was a real success with 16 volunteers attending. We enjoyed a cup of tea together and with a speaker from South Kent MIND we discussed together the topical subject of Mental Wellbeing.



In December 2020 our area entered Tier 4 restrictions, so the lockdown continued with telephone calls instead of visits.

Just before Christmas customers of the Spar in Greatstone and the Romney Marsh Rotary Club donated food parcels to CARM clients. 11 parcels of essentials and Christmas goodies were delivered to clients living alone in the Coastal area. They were very pleased to be thought of and we thank the Rotary club.



As lockdown continued, to keep connected with our volunteers we held another virtual befrienders' meeting in February. We sent out invitations along with a 4B pencil ahead of the Zoom session. We had a theme of self-portraiture led by Benedict's artistic daughter, Sarah and some examples of which will be shown at the upcoming CARM art exhibition.

As we entered March 2021, the Government released the 'Roadmap out of Lockdown' and we began planning how CARM's befriending service would begin to resume safely as we know the importance of the befriending visit in improving our clients' wellbeing.

We have found over this time some of the challenges for the team have been; supporting the mental health of clients during the pandemic; home working with childcare and home schooling for some; no face to face contact with clients, volunteers and staff; Zoom meetings including training new volunteers; and packing up our old office after many years as a tenant in Appledore.

One thing is clear: our response to Covid-19 could not have been done without the incredible dedication and kindness of our volunteers who didn't hesitate to get involved. A massive THANK YOU from us all.

Zena and Benedict

Meeting Points

I started as Meeting Point Co-ordinator in January 2021, replacing Holly Lewis. It was a strange time to begin, when no Meeting Points were running, face to face meetings weren't possible and there was so much uncertainty about when we could return to 'normal'. During this break, some volunteers decided to step back for various reasons. Of those, I would particularly like to mention Margaret R, Lead Volunteer at Greatstone Meeting Point and Margaret P, Lead Volunteer at Lydd Meeting Point, who retired after 30 years each as CARM Meeting Point volunteers. Their dedication and commitment to providing a friendly and welcoming place for their local community over such a long period is truly inspiring.

After a year and a half of lockdowns and social restrictions, we were finally able to open our Meeting Point doors again in late July 2021. By early September, at this time of writing, ten of our Meeting Points have welcomed back members new and old with tea and cake – and a geranium! It has been absolutely wonderful to get back to doing what we do best – sitting with one another, talking, listening, and sharing. For many of our members this has been a very long and lonely time with very little social contact. Some felt quite nervous about returning; others couldn't wait; but it took only a very short time for the smiles and laughter to be heard as old friends and acquaintances met again and newcomers began to get to know one another. It really was wonderful to see.

I have been pulled aside by various Meeting Point members over these past few weeks eager to tell me how grateful they feel to have their Meeting Point volunteers. In several areas, the volunteers have telephoned their members on a weekly basis throughout lockdown. They have delivered newsletters, cards, flowers and gifts on birthdays and at Christmas. They have taken the time to talk on doorsteps and have even delivered meals. They are someone who the members feel they can go to if they need help. The commitment

Gwen from Greatstone with her welcome back geranium



of our Meeting Point volunteers stretches far beyond the meetings themselves, and this past year and a half has highlighted their generosity and thoughtfulness.

Excitingly, we have welcomed fourteen new Meeting Point volunteers to our ranks, who have flung themselves into their new roles. All of our volunteers have had to adapt to lateral flow testing, mask and glove wearing, hand sanitising and more paperwork and cleaning than they have been used to. It has been challenging, even uncomfortable at times, but they have managed admirably. A warm welcome to you all and another thank you to our existing volunteers for making them feel welcome.

Four of our new volunteers have started a brand new Meeting Point at our CARM office in New Romney – The Bridge – which meets on the first and third Friday of the month. This is our first Generations Connect Meeting Point, where we are involving young people as volunteers and giving the younger and older people opportunities to connect and learn with and from one another. About a dozen people came along to the inaugural meeting and Kath, Project Manager at Generations Connect made a fantastic chocolate cake oozing with icing.

Whilst some Meeting Points, such as Rolvenden, Tenterden, Lydd and Dymchurch, have been established for years and had a larger membership base keen to return, it has felt like a new start for other Meeting Points after such a long time away. Greatstone and Brookland had a quiet return, as did Wittersham, which had only had a couple of meetings when the first lockdown began. We hope to spread the word and encourage more older people in these areas to grasp this opportunity to get together, and form friendships.



**Rolvenden Meeting Point with volunteers
Graham, Lisa and Rosemary and twenty
members**

Katie

Development, Funding and Marketing Officer

Networking

Attendance of Networking events such as the Marsh Network Twilight Network and The Brunch Network has increased CARM's presence in the local area and beyond. Many of our sponsors are network members and heard about CARM via meetings and 1-2-1 zoom sessions. The Marsh network has generously supported CARM as a pledger in our Big Give campaign.

Social Media

Alongside in person networking, social media has been used to build a network of followers online. Followers on all 3 sites (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram) have increased. A CARM LinkedIn page and profile has also been created to help forge even more business links. We have successfully used social media to recruit both volunteers and a member of staff, Facebook, in particular, provides a good platform to both advertise and recruit. Facebook also played a big part in our Big Give campaign, helping to increase funding as well as raise the charity's profile.

Newsletters

Throughout lockdown monthly newsletters were sent out to both Clients and Volunteers. This has allowed us to stay in touch and share activities and craft suggestions whilst people were staying at home. The CARM creative sheets were a great stimulus to help people get creative at home. These were shared both on social media and sent out with newsletters. The limericks sheet was particularly popular, with some funny results.

*There was a young lady called Joan
Who spent a long time on the phone
The size of her ear
Meant no one came near
And the doggie thought it was a bone*

Funding

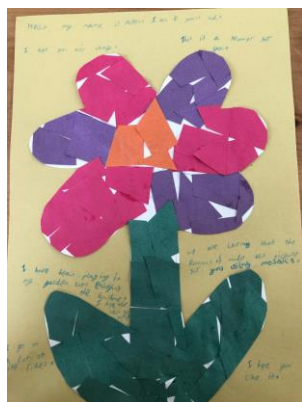
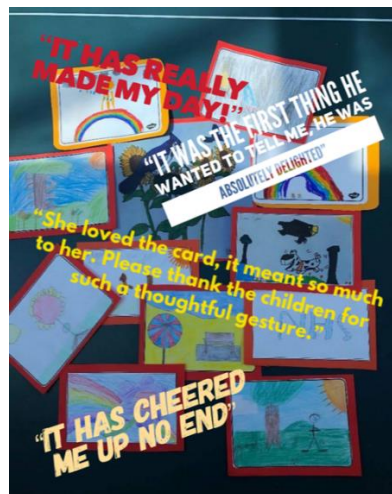
In May 2020 an incredible young man, Harry, raised money for CARM by challenging himself to walk a mile. He smashed his initial target raising over £1800.



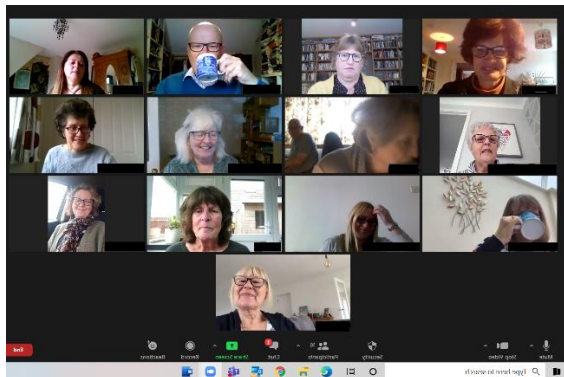
We took part in the Big Give Christmas campaign in December 2020. It was an incredibly successful campaign for us raising £3410, this will be used to provide an art exhibition as a celebration of the CARM communities lockdown art work. The Big Give also allowed us to increase our profile in the local area amongst local businesses and artists.

Happy Post

Happy Post was really successful. It was launched as a way of CARM providing an extra point of contact for our most isolated clients. We encouraged children (and adults) to send in pictures and postcards to be sent on to our clients. It proved to be incredibly popular, we have continued to send out Happy post out when relevant. Our clients all received a piece of Happy Post with their Christmas newsletter and another at Easter.



Technology



We have started to use Microsoft Forms to create our surveys, where possible these will be filled out online, data is then automatically stored and analysed. CARM have embraced technology where possible to keep in contact with clients and volunteers during lockdown. Zoom has been used effectively to hold team meetings, volunteer training, and the reminiscence team have held some incredible virtual sessions.

Victoria

Caring Altogether on Romney Marsh

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Caring Altogether on Romney Marsh

Receipts and Payments Accounts

For the period from 1 April 2020 to 31 March 2021

	Total funds	Last year
	£	£
Receipts		
Grants	217,594	-
Gift Aid	138	-
In memoriam donations	205	-
Art Project fundraised income / donations	3,352	-
Corporate donations	3,391	-
Individual donations	5,358	-
Meeting Points	54	-
Sponsors	135	-
Fundraised Income / donations	1,916	-
Interest earned	52	-
Sub total	232,195	-

Payments

Partnership Payments - joint projects	55,914	-
Salaries	99,435	-
Staff pension scheme	4,284	-
Props and client activities	793	-
Premises overheads	6,718	-
Staff and volunteers expenses	1,917	-
Training: staff and volunteers	18	-
Volunteer Thank you event / expenses	385	-
Telephone	728	-
Printing, publicity and stationery	1,251	-
Postage	3,222	-
Subscriptions	1,061	-
Newsletter production	565	-
Computer and general maintenance	222	-
Insurances	696	-
Sundry costs	406	-
Office moving costs	2,468	-
Meeting Points	504	-
Donation - Meeting Points	10	-
New computer equipment	2,111	-
Accounts and payroll costs	1,330	-
Bank charges / interest paid	100	-
Sub total	184,139	-

Net of receipts/(payments)	48,055	-
Transfers between funds	-	-
Cash funds last year end transferred from charity 1067189	138,628	-
Cash funds this year end	186,684	-
Restricted funds		
	£	
Cash funds - cash and bank	186,684	-
Total cash funds	186,684	-

Breakdown of Reserves:

Restricted:	Meeting Points	£14,922
	Art Project	£3,352
	Dulverton Trust	£4,000
	Generations Connect	£28,220
Designated:	Closure planning	£75,000
Unrestricted	Gen Con - allocated by Trustees	£5,000
	balance	£56,190
Total reserves		£186,684



CHARITY COMMISSION FOR ENGLAND AND WALES

Independent examiner's report on the accounts

Section A

Independent Examiner's Report

Report to the trustees/
members of

CARING
~~FAIR~~ Altogether on Romney marsh
2020

On accounts for the year
ended

31 March 2021

Charity no
(if any)

1184552

Set out on pages

(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 DD/MM/YYYY.

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").

Independent
examiner's statement

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.

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: S. A. Wood-Brignall

Date: 24/8/21

Name: SANDRA GILLIAN WOOD-BRIGNALL

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

CIMA

Address:

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LYDD, KENT

TN29 9LA