

# Caring Altogether on Romney Marsh



## Annual Report 2023/24

### 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."



**Cornwallis East Kent Freemasons Charity**

### Caring Altogether on Romney Marsh

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Registered charity number 1184552

## Management Committee 2023/24

Shuna Body MBE – Chair

Steve Croke – Treasurer

Susan Graydon

Liam Walsh

Ruth Smith – Vice Chair

Jean Jones

Wendy Body

### CARM Staff

Helen Mattock

Sarah Williamson

Fiona Godfrey

Katie Sokolowska

Kerry Fuller

Zena

Victoria Carmichael

Manager

Administration and Finance Officer

Reminiscence Co-ordinator

Meeting Points Co-ordinator

Befriending Co-ordinator

Befriending Co-ordinator

Development, Funding and Marketing  
Officer

## Chair's Report

Dear Friends,

At this time of year I always look back with great pride as we all recall the activities and support CARM supporters and staff have achieved over the year. And what's more I am acutely aware that there is so much more not documented in terms of friendship, kindness and care that is always so freely given. It's so often the little things that make such a big difference in any organisation.

The other aspect that is very apparent in CARM is the sheer resilience and determination. Funding has been particularly difficult this year, as an ever growing number of charities are chasing the same money pots. So it was reassuring to see the Trustees rolling up their sleeves and helping with funding applications. And my heartfelt thanks must go to Helen who worked many a long day and night, fine tuning a very complex bid to the lottery, where thankfully her hard work was rewarded.

It's also great to have welcomed a good number of volunteers to CARM who seemed to have hit the ground running. So many people are living such busy lives, that it is wonderful to see both existing and new volunteers giving so much of their time.

We have a new member of staff too, and today seems a good place to welcome Jill who is our new "Development and Lasting Friendships Co Ordinator". I am sure you will be a great asset to our amazing staff team.

Many of you will know that I am stepping down as Chair after many years which included 2 office moves, lockdown, 2 managers and endless hours fretting over funding. But it has been such a privilege and sheer joy to have been Chair. A role if I am honest I never planned to do. David stood down as Vice Chair and whilst I took his place, I was very relaxed as Karen was so awesome as Chair. But I had no sooner taken over as Vice when Karen was taken ill, and then moved away from the area. Really didn't see that one coming!

The new Chair will be elected at our next management meeting and I am pleased to say that we have a contender.

So a huge thanks to all of you who have made my journey with CARM an enjoyable one, and I very much look forward to seeing CARM continue to flourish in the years ahead.

***Reverend Shuna Body - MBE***

## **Treasurer's Report**

This year we are reporting a net deficit, and an increase in the deficit over the previous year. This was because of a reduction in our funding income, which in turn required us to draw further from reserves. Despite these challenges, we successfully diversified our income streams and maintained strict control over expenses.

Our income for this reporting year was £100,775 against an expenditure for the year of £173,357 resulting in a net deficit of £72,582.

While this is not a sustainable long-term position, we are fortunate to have reserves to fall back on. Our current reserves stand at £134,410. We consider it prudent to ensure that these reserves are sufficient to cover six months of operational costs and committed projects. After accounting for these commitments, and some restricted reserves our unrestricted reserves are £31,613.

We have diversified our income streams as historically we were heavily reliant on two main funding sources, namely Kent County Council (KCC) and The National Lottery.

This year, we successfully secured 12 individual grants, for which we are very grateful, and for the first time achieved our goal of securing 20% of our funding from non-grant sources, such as individual and corporate donations and other income (we managed 22%).

Despite inflation, we've been able to keep our expenses essentially flat (an increase of just 1%). Our total expenses for the year amounted to £173,357. The largest portion of our expenditure continues to be staff costs, but we maintain a very small team (equivalent to 3.5 FTE). The fact that we are able deliver the services we do is thanks to their hard work and commitment, and the support of our dedicated volunteer network.

We maintain robust financial controls, with regular reviews of our financials at each Management Committee meeting by our Trustees.

As mentioned, it's not sustainable for us to operate with a deficit year after year. But the outlook for next year is much more positive given our award of National Lottery funding. Alongside this we'll continue to diversify our funding, and look forward to continuing the valuable work that CARM does. We sincerely appreciate your continued support.

**Steve Croke**  
**Treasurer**

## **Manager's Report**

As mentioned by Shuna and Steve, the year we are reporting on was quite testing in terms of finances, our grant from The National Lottery Community Fund had ended and we lost out on many grant applications due to the sheer volume of applications that were received by the grant givers. However, we survived thanks to our healthy reserves, a large chunk of which was from the National Lottery Community Fund restricted reserves.

I spent a great deal of my time completing a grant application for submission to the National Lottery Community Fund, the basis of which was our existing services and a tranche of new services that were highlighted in a Well-being Research Survey that we carried out last Summer. Pleasingly the application was successful, with a new five year grant awarded to us in May 2024, watch this space for some new services in the near future.

The Generations Connect partnership project came to an end in September 2023, having been a three-and-a-half-year project with Lighthouse on the Marsh (formerly Romney Resource Centre). The project was a great success with lots of intergenerational activities happening during the project lifetime. We will be continuing to work with two local secondary schools to continue our reminiscence work with them.

A lovely project completed by Katie and Kerry during the year was the I Was Young Once book, featuring many of our Meeting Point attendees and volunteers, with photos of themselves when they were young and photos of themselves now and a short article about their older photo. A lovely project and is a great lasting legacy.

I'm sure that you will enjoy reading all of the service reports below, I think they make for an interesting and heartwarming read.

As ever I would also like to thank the many individuals, groups and organisations who have financially supported CARM during the year – we are very grateful for all donations and grants, whatever size, as they help us to continue our invaluable work for our communities.

Finally, I would like to thank Team CARM (our amazing staff team), our lovely Trustees and our wonderful volunteers: you are all dedicated and kind people who help to make CARM such a highly valued local charity all pulling together to support our local communities. **Thank you - you are all much appreciated.**



***Helen Mattock***

***Manager***

## **Reminiscence**

### **Talking Reminiscence**

CARM's talking Reminiscence service was established in 2006 with the introduction of Our Memories Matter (OMM) groups. In 2015 Caring To Remember (CTR) was introduced, delivered with the help of a single volunteer the service aims to support care settings to deliver their own sessions. Both OMM and CTR are mainly talking groups with an element of music included. These sessions normally operate in care homes, assisted living and day care facilities in 3 blocks of 8-10 weeks annually.

Each session is themed and materials are provided to encourage and support the sharing of memories. Themes during the year have included The Seaside, Important People in our lives, Shopping then and now and Love and Marriage



Volunteer John pancake tossing at the Broadmeadow

## Musical Reminiscence

Musical Memories Matter (MMM) our musical reminiscence service was set up in 2014 and celebrates its tenth birthday this year! MMM is aligned to the talking service and is a mobile service delivered by pairs of volunteers in wide variety of settings using karaoke type equipment to encourage community singing and the sharing of musical memories.



Clients at Summer Court



Jo and Debbie at Age UK Ashford

## Volunteer Meetings

These are held regularly and give volunteers time to come together for updates and to learn from one another and our speakers.



## Working With Schools



During the year I have had the great pleasure of sharing reminiscence techniques with the Health and Social Care Students at both Homewood School and Sixth Form Centre and The Marsh Academy. Leading on from this the students completed a reminiscence project which was aligned to the National Curriculum. The project involved them undertaking weekly one to one

themed reminiscence sessions with a family member and then recording their learning. Above are photos of me and teacher Charlotte at the Marsh Academy and teacher Charlie at Homewood School and Sixth Form Centre!



## Thank You

Each week volunteers arrive at their respective musical and talking sessions ready to listen with genuine interest, warmth and humour encouraging stories and singing. At the end of the sessions those that attend are left feeling both valued and in touch with parts of their lives that they may not have recalled for many years. Heartfelt thanks to everyone involved with the services for all that you do it is more appreciated than you'll ever know!

## Fiona

### Befriending

#### Our Year (April 2023 – March 2024) in figures:

New referrals to the service	65
New volunteers	21
New befriending matches	37

#### To put the above figures into words....

On average about 6 people per month are referred to the befriending service from local social prescribers, dementia & me coordinators, family members, the hubs,



social services, care navigators or they may self-refer. Of those referrals, figures show that just over 50% progress to clients receiving the service (Being matched with a befriender). That might seem low, this is due to a number of reasons; including at the assessment visit people may decide that the service isn't for them, likewise CARM may decide that they are not appropriate for the service (needs, mental health issues, history of violence) or in some cases people remain so long on the waiting list that their circumstances change so they no longer need the service and that last reason is very sad. So, you can see why we are always on the lookout for new volunteers and much of our befriending social media coverage is asking 'if anyone has a spare hour or two?'

Our face to face waiting list averaged at 24 over the year, resulting in us implementing a priority system for the service. Those clients given highest priority lived alone and could not leave their home unaided. CARM does recognise that people who can leave their home or even live with someone can express loneliness, so, unlike other charities accept them to the waiting list but as a lower priority. On a positive 37 new clients received a service last year 😊 and in the 2023 survey one extremely satisfied client said, *'It's something to look forward to every week. Very enjoyable'*

Over the reporting year 21 new volunteers began befriending which is fantastic. We held 6 group inductions (3+ attendees) over that time and several 1 to 1



sessions. The 2-hour compulsory induction session is a great opportunity to get to know new volunteers to help us coordinators match them with the right person. Volunteers give positive feedback on the session and many comment that it gives them an understanding of safeguarding, issues that could arise at the visit and what actions to take. They also realise the importance of befriending boundaries, helping them to manage expectations for all.

## Volunteer Recruitment and Service Promotion

The Strategic plan 2023 -2025 objective 2 states *To grow the volunteer base by 20% (15 new volunteers) for the befriending service in order to reduce the waiting list and waiting time for people on the waiting list* in order to achieve this we developed a befriending volunteer recruitment plan for 2023. Over the year we implemented the actions.



On a cold April day Kerry and Zena donned the new CARM T-shirts and spent a couple of hours at Waitrose, Tenterden promoting the service and trying to recruit



new volunteers. It was a bit of a challenge as we were unable to approach shoppers - we just had to smile 😊 and hope they came to us! We did, however, recruit 1 potential volunteer at this event.

Later in April 23 Zena held a 'Cuppa & Cake' promotion afternoon at Brew 32 in Lydd. From this we recruited 3 volunteers; only 1 of whom is still volunteering.

We produced new leaflets and over the course of the year we distributed them over the befriending areas. Thank you to the befriender who delivered them around Lydd.

By the end of 2023 we had completed all the tasks on the plan, Coastal area had seen good growth, but the Tenterden area's growth was very low and thus reflected in number of new matches.

In February 24 Kerry held a 'Cuppa & Cake' event in EC30 in Tenterden she recruited 4 volunteers here. On a positive in early 2024 we processed 7 new volunteers 😊 which will impact our waiting list (hopefully)

## Face to Face befriending

Over the period we saw the usual ups and downs – as new matches are made others close for various reasons (over 25 matches closed in the year) this was mainly due to clients passing or moving into residential homes. With 46% of our clients over 85 years many can no longer leave their homes independently and our service can be real lifeline to them in their final years. The befriending volunteers build a friendship when people feel so alone - often partners of many years have died and family live some distance away.

We also support carers by visiting their loved ones who can no longer socialise due to their health conditions; one beautiful match closed this year between an amazing volunteer and a lady whose dementia advanced until she was no longer verbal or able to move. The volunteer continued to visit her client until the end, she held her hand, spoke gently to her, brushed her hair (as a hairdresser she had curled it for fun over the time) and just sat with her. She also provided a listening ear to the carer husband – it was so hard and heart breaking in the final months – the kindness and commitment our volunteer gave will always be remembered by

the family and CARM. Our befriender now visits the husband who has struggled with his own health and well-being since losing his beloved wife.

As mentioned, over the year the service's waiting list averaged at 24. The Tenterden area struggled with new matches due to the lack of volunteers. For a short time in March 24 the Coastal area had 50 matches (highest recorded) – most new volunteers have been in this area.

In April 23 we sent out the volunteer survey – the responses we got were very positive with:

100% of volunteers saying that they would encourage others to volunteer for CARM

100% of volunteers felt valued



Volunteers rated their volunteering experience as 4.86 out of 5 (5 being excellent) – that's something to celebrate – it's good to hear our befrienders enjoy their volunteering.

Comments included *'Thank you for giving me the chance to help'*

*'I enjoy the company as much as the client and we have long talks and a few laughs, and he is so appreciative of my visit'*

*'I feel that I have brightened the day of the person I visit. I'm enchanted by the wisdom and history that they portray'*

With the summer newsletter we sent the befriending client survey, of those returned we received very positive feedback:

100% of clients saying they felt more cheerful following their visit.

100% would recommend the service to others.

100% were satisfied with the service.

We had some lovely comments including:

*My newly found friend is my ray of sunshine, and I so look forward to her visits for long chats, tea and cake. She listens without getting bored and we laugh together, she's, my angel.*

*It helps with my mental health; I feel I can talk to her about anything. We teach other and I feel like I have known her all my life.*

We held befriending volunteer meetings in May and November both had a high turnout of volunteers with around 50% attendance. At the May meeting Jon Lambert from Hi-Kent (the local hearing charity) gave a very engaging presentation and helped us understand hearing loss which many clients live with. In November Liz Taylor (CEO of Romney Marsh Community Hub) attended and ran a Dementia Friends training session. The responses from the volunteer survey asked for more training on dementia and this session really gives a better understanding of what someone living with dementia is experiencing and how best to support them.



### Telephone Befriending

In this period, we saw the 3<sup>rd</sup> anniversary of the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic when the telephone befriending service was a lifeline for many; since those days many matches have closed, and we find people prefer to opt for a face-to-face match.

Over the year we managed around 17 active matches. Telephone befriending is a great service for lonely people who do not feel comfortable opening their home to a 'new' person. We do see that in time clients like to put a face to the voice and we support this meeting, in a few cases the telephone relationship becomes a face to face one.

For their own health reasons some telephone befrienders cannot easily leave their homes and in volunteering for this service they are doing their bit and helping others – it improves their own well-being as well as their clients.

With the summer newsletter the telephone befriending clients received the annual survey – the feedback was very positive:

100% of the clients felt happy with the service, 100% said they enjoyed the calls, felt less lonely, more cheerful and had an improved sense of well-being – fabulous!

One heartwarming comment was:

*As I live alone, I don't see many people and I get lonely for a human voice, my caller fills that necessary void.*

Our partnership with Givaudan continues and we had a 'get together' lunch at the site in May. In November two of the original volunteers stepped down (they had volunteered since the launch of the service in 2015). With the support of the lead volunteer the service was promoted on the internal intranet but sadly at this time there was no response.

Finally,

**Thank you to our amazing befriending volunteers** without whom we could not support those lonely, isolated people in our local community.

**You make the difference** 😊



**Zena & Kerry**

## Meeting Points

One of the highlights of my working year has been visiting the Meeting Points at the beginning of 2024 with the annual attendee surveys. My intention was to alleviate some of the workload of the volunteers in taking on this yearly task – they are already busy, so to sit with every person and ask questions that can at times elicit long responses can be difficult to manage alongside the regular tasks of making teas and coffees and organising activities (my thanks to those MPs who took on this task themselves). I had the luxury of just focusing on spending time listening to the attendees' views about their Meeting Points and their volunteers. We know from the fact that over 200 attendees now regularly go to MPs that they are very popular, and the survey confirmed why this is so. Of the 124 attendees who gave their feedback, 98% look forward to going to their MP; 94% feel more upbeat; 91% feel they have made friends; and 99% would recommend it to others. These statistics show very clearly the positive impact and value of MPs, and when I asked the attendees to put into their own words what MPs meant to them, their responses were truly heartwarming. Here are just a few:

- It's nice to have somewhere to come out to.
- Gives you a sense of well-being, and a feeling that you really matter.
- Chatting to people I wouldn't normally see, eating lovely cakes and coffee.
- It's just that I can be with people. It's a very nice group.
- It makes such a difference - I get to meet people! I am mostly on my own.
- It means a lot. I know that once a fortnight I have something to look forward to.
- It gets me out, rather than being stuck indoors staring at four walls. I never used to speak to anyone before - now, I speak to everyone! It's really given me a new life. I walk for an hour to get here.



- It gives me something to look forward to. After Covid, I went through two years of depression. I was very low. CARM turned my life around and I'm very grateful.
- It means instead of being alone in one's apartment, you can get out and meet people. I have expanded my friendship group through MP.
- It's somewhere to go that's nearby and friendly. I have to force myself to get out - that's why I said I didn't look forward to going - but I know it's good for me to come here.
- It gives me friendship. A reason to get out the house and have some human company. I feel very lonely on my own.
- It's a reason to get up.
- Friendship, and escape from loneliness and home. I would be lost without it.
- I look forward to having a chat with people. We compare our news and things like our knitting. I see people from here and about, and say hello, so it has increased my connections.
- I come here and everyone is friendly. We chat and we laugh. On a Friday I lock my door at home and don't see anyone until I open it again on Monday. It's a lonely life. These Meeting Points are my lifesaver.

I realise in this edit that their appreciation of cakes and scones hasn't come across! But I think seeing these responses does bring home to us the loneliness and isolation felt by so many older people in our rural towns and villages, and how a small team of wonderful volunteers hosting a meeting once a week, or once or twice a month, can make such a difference to these individuals' lives. I usually leave the thank yous to the end of my annual report, but this seems a good moment to say again to our volunteers a wholehearted thank you from me, CARM, and your MP attendees.



It seems a long time ago now, but at the start of the year it was the Coronation, and all of our MPs marked the occasion with Royal face masks, Union Jack flags and bunting, themed quizzes and, of course, very British cakes and scones. The Mayor and Mayoress of New Romney, Paul Thomas and his wife Janet, came to visit The Bridge MP. Paul was travelling up

to London the following day to attend the Coronation only a few seats away from the Royal family, so we felt very close to this special event. Donna with her tiara, and Helen in her union jack sequinned dress, nearly outshone the Mayor in all his regalia! Lydd MP also enjoyed a coronation lunch at The Pilot in Dungeness, courtesy of Lydd Town Council – one attendee said she felt quite spoilt!



Six volunteers retired in this period. Three were young helpers who moved on into education and work, one person retired due to health reasons, and two others needed to prioritise family commitments. Five new volunteers joined us, including Pat Hood in the newly created role of MP Activities Volunteer for the Romney Marsh area. Pat has proved very popular, delivering Kurling, Quoits, Cornhole Tossing and Musical Memories and is a wonderful addition to the team. At the end of the period, we had 40 volunteers delivering 10 MPs to the milestone figure of 200 attendees.

Wittersham have really grown in popularity. We reminded ourselves how, after the COVID lockdowns, we only had one married couple attend for the first three meetings. They were thinking of stopping coming, given they could 'talk to one another over their own kitchen table' and we were worried Wittersham wouldn't get established. The couple agreed to come along for one more meeting, and thankfully, the following week, a few more turned up. Wittersham now have 30 regular attendees squeezed into the back room at their village hall enjoying the truly excellent array of baked goods provided by Jill and the team.

We had our annual MP volunteer meeting at Brookland Village Hall in August which was enjoyed by all. I demonstrated a chair-based exercise class, and then Liz Taylor from RMCH delivered an excellent First Aid training session. Half of the MP volunteers attended.



Christmas can be a difficult time of year for some people who live alone and don't have family or friends they can be with, and it is so clear to see the value of Meeting Points and CARM at this time. Every Meeting Point had a Christmas meal; each attendee received their CARM package with a handmade card from a schoolchild; most of the Meeting Points organised cards, or gifts, or a Christmas raffle, so everyone received something. I spoke to one attendee who was going to be alone on Christmas Day and had been invited by another attendee to their house and saw others asking when their next MP would be and writing the date in their diaries so they knew when they would see their friends again. I went to two MP Christmas dinners this year – The Ship with Dymchurch, and The George Hotel with Lydd. Lydd had about 30 people there; Dymchurch, about 22. Tenterden, Wittersham

and Rolvenden had over 20 people each at their dinner. I'd like to say a big well done to our volunteers, who put a lot of effort into organising these outings.

We rolled out our new grants system this year. Historically, CARM gave each MP a grant of £400 per annum but rising rent costs meant this grant wasn't stretching far and needed review. We set up a steering group and decided to separate the grant into a venue grant, covering the rent and heating costs; and an activity grant



of £10pp payable twice a year for trips and outings. To help cover this considerable rise in financial support for our MPs, so we decided to seek sponsorship for individual MPs from local businesses and organisations for the next financial year.

Most of the MPs raise additional funds via raffles and games, or donations. Two of our Wittersham MP volunteers, Jill and Jules, raised £156 at a local fundraising event, where they hosted an extremely popular game of 'beer pong' and sold some wood and leather items made by one of their attendees. Donna and Sabrina at The Bridge MP team raised £460 through a tombola and raffle at a local community event, which funded an extra outing for their attendees. A huge well done to these volunteers.

As well as the regular HiKent clinics, Community Warden, and Community Navigator visits, The Bridge MP enjoyed a cupcake decorating masterclass from their cake volunteer, Annabel. Such was its popularity that word spread, and other



MPs asked if Annabel could visit them. She very generously agreed to do so and is now a regular fixture at several of our MPs. SEK delivered a bowel cancer screening awareness talk to Tenterden, Brookland and Greatstone. SEK also visited Lydd and Greatstone in partnership with MacMillan to ask for feedback on NHS cancer pathways to treatment.

There have been many trips and outings – Tenterden went to Teapot Island and had afternoon tea at London Beach Hotel. Dymchurch also organised a trip to Teapot Island and Nottcutts Garden Centre, and Wittersham visited Tenterden Garden Centre. Rolvenden went on a boat trip on the Medway, and Brookland went for fish and chips in Dungeness with a ride on the miniature railway. Appledore and Lydd have been on the larger steam train to Bodiam. Lydd had spaces on their coach and kindly offered these to The Bridge. Lydd also squeezed in a visit to Penshurst Place. Woodchurch had a lovely outing to their local café to celebrate three birthdays in their group. The Bridge very much enjoyed The Great Escaper at the cinema, based on the true story about a 90-year-old WWII veteran who 'broke out' of his care home to attend the D-Day commemorations in France! The survey showed that these trips are a real highlight in the lives of many of our attendees, and I'd like to thank the volunteers once again for their time and effort in making these happen. None of this would be possible without you.

**Katie**

## Development, Funding and Marketing Officer

### Networking

We were chosen, once again, as one of the charities that The Marsh Network supported. They held a Halloween quiz in November to raise money for their 2 chosen charities. The CARM Knit Wits created some fantastic table decorations that were also sold to raise money for CARM.

The Wealden Business Network Group in Tenterden also selected CARM as their charity of the year raising £2000 over the course of the year including a race night that they held to raise money for CARM. I visited their meetings on a number of occasions updating them on CARM. Zena and I visited the last meeting of the financial year and we were awarded with a cheque.





## Social Media

Alongside in-person networking, social media has been used to build a network of followers online. Followers have increased, in particular on Facebook where our reach has increased over 50% compared to the previous year. Social media helps to connect us to the community allowing us to share news, ask for support and show our community links to schools, and other local groups. Our followers love seeing what we and our volunteers have been up to.

## Newsletters

Regular newsletters have been sent out to CARM clients, volunteers and supporters. They have included, some tasty recipes, funny jokes as well as articles on volunteering, our services and events.

## Funding

We are part of the Ashford Community Lottery and with only a few supporters we have raised over £700 as 60% of every £1 ticket goes to CARM as their chosen charity.

The staff team and one of our trustees did a sponsored walk, raising well over £1500 between them.

One of our volunteers Becky did a 10km run and raised almost £400 for CARM.

We have been using Easy Fundraising as a format to allow our supporters to raise money as they shop. If you shop online just sign up to Easy Fundraising and CARM will receive a small donation each time you shop at an eligible store (most online shops). It is an easy way to raise money for us, and it doesn't cost you a penny.

Littlestone Warren Golf club Ladies Captain also chose to support CARM as their chosen charity. They raised money throughout the year including a captains charity day when a lady had her head shaved to help raise funds.

Various other pubs and organisations raised funds for CARM via quiz nights, race nights, other events and general donations.



## Volunteer Thank You

We held a volunteer thank you event in March 2024 at London Beach Hotel. It was fantastic to have most of our volunteers all in one place. We enjoyed a quiz and afternoon tea and the room was filled with smiles and laughter. It was a real celebration of our wonderful volunteers. To top it off London Beach Hotel presented Helen with a cheque for £1739.50, so the event didn't cost us a penny.



## Victoria

### Nifty Crafters



In May 2023 the knitted wall hanging of the Dungeness old lighthouse was sited at The End of the Line Café at Dungeness, a lovely event supported by the Romney Hythe and Dymchurch Railway who were delighted to be able to keep this legacy item for all to see.

The group moved to The Ship Hotel in New Romney in September 2023 and continue to meet there every other week. They also took the opportunity to rename themselves **The CARM Knit Wits**.





They did an amazing job of decorating a Christmas tree for the Tenterden Christmas Tree Festival.

They also knitted and crocheted lots of lovely Halloween items, wrist warmers, snoods, fancy wreaths and flowers. Many items have been sold to raise funds for CARM and some wreaths were prizes at the Volunteer Thank You event.

## *Helen*

### **CARM Community Allotment**

Since April 2023 during the Spring and Summer, we had weekly allotment sessions and with 3 regular volunteers attending every week. During that time the daffodils bulbs that were planted have flourished and Helen and I gave out bunches to Befriending Clients, Meeting Point attendees and the Romney March Community Hub as well as a few random people we passed on our travels!



During the sessions we dug over the allotment, planted a mixture of vegetables and flowers, some from seeds and some having been planted and potted by Romney Resource Centre as well as some of our volunteers and when ready they were planted at the allotment.

The NFU staff team volunteered in May and were a huge help in the large task of digging over the allotment ready for the seed planting to take place. The areas that were dug over by the NFU were rotavated and seeds both flowers and vegetables planted.

Weekly sessions continued and thanks to our 3 wonderful volunteers who kept the allotment ticking over and looking its best, we grew some beautiful flowers and produce. Many bunches of flowers were given out to our Meeting Point and Befriending Clients as well as to local Care Homes too. We also provided flowers from the allotment for the tables at the AGM last year! The produce was given to the Romney Marsh Community Hub. I gave a bouquet to one of my befriending clients in Tenterden that I was visiting and she was so pleased with them that she donated around 10 packet of seeds for us to plant for next year! Another highlight

of the flower distribution was when I visited Lydd Meeting Point to distribute flowers, it was Margaret's 93<sup>rd</sup> birthday so she obviously had to have the flower bouquet!



Due to the success of the flowers, it was decided that we would only plant flowers at the allotment going forward with a view to distributing them again to our clients, attendees and local community.

In September Helen, myself, and the volunteers had a meeting to discuss and decide what flowers will be planted ready for next year, this will be a mixture of donated seeds and cuttings from volunteers and staff gardens.

At the end of September, the GENCON grant funding and my hours ceased. The allotment continued with the 3 volunteers, one who agreed to take over as the lead and they happily kept it maintained and running, with me occasionally volunteering too. Pleasingly, due to the new lottery grant I have some work hours to support the allotment again.

**Kerry**

# **Caring Altogether on Romney Marsh (CARM)**

## **Annual Accounts**

**For the year 1 April 2023 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2024**

**Registered Charity Number: 1184552**

**Charity name:** Caring Altogether on Romney Marsh (CARM)

**Registered Charity Number:** 1184552

**Charity's principal address:**

Sunflower House  
Rolfe Lane  
New Romney  
Kent TN28 JR

### **Current trustees:**

Shuna Body	Chairperson
Ruth Smith	Vice Chairperson
Steven Croke	Treasurer
Wendy Body	
Sue Graydon	
Jean Jones	
Liam Walsh	

Manager: Helen Mattock

### **Structure, governance and management**

CARM is a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) and registered charity with a maximum of ten trustees who have overall responsibility for the charity's business. CARM became a registered charity in 1997 (charity number 1067189) and changed to a CIO in 2019. CARM is governed by a constitution dated 23 July 2019, amended 30 September 2020.

### **Charity objectives and activities**

To relieve persons on Romney Marsh and the surrounding areas who are in need by reason of their age or disability, in particular by providing a range of services and activities which promotes their social inclusion and good health and wellbeing.

### **CARM's Mission and Services**

CARM's mission is to support older people living across Romney Marsh, Tenterden and its surrounding rural areas who are socially isolated. Through this support, we aim to improve

people's wellbeing, 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.

Please see our separate Annual Report for 2023/24 for full details of services and activities that were carried out during the period.

## **Report of the Management Committee for the year ended 31<sup>st</sup> March 2024**

The Management Committee presents its report in a separate document entitled Annual Report 2023/24 and the independently examined financial statements for the year-end 31<sup>st</sup> March 2024 are within this document.

### **Results:**

The incoming resources for the year amounted to £100,775 expenditure was £173,357 resulting in a net deficit of £72,582. Reserves stand at £134,410.

### **Reserves Policy**

The trustees consider it prudent that general reserves should be sufficient:

[a] to cover six month's administration and support costs;

[b] to provide a pool equal to 10% of the average charitable expenditure over the preceding two years, from which funds can be designated to specific projects.

Administration and support costs include the salary costs of CARM's day to day administration, the rent for CARM's office base, and the costs of meeting the legal obligations relating to staff redundancy and termination of contracts should sufficient funds be unavailable or unlikely to become available to continue specific projects or pieces of work or the charity be dissolved.



Specific projects include services deemed by the trustees to be necessary in order to continue to support the beneficiaries of the charity so that the objects of the charity are met.

Currently reserves stand at £134,410 of which £86,354 is a designated reserve to cover the above items [a] and [b], £16,443 are restricted funds with the remaining £31,613 being unrestricted reserves.

### **Independent Examiner**

This report has been prepared in accordance with the Charities Act 2011 and the examination was carried out under section 145 of the Act.

Approved by the Management Committee and signed on its behalf by:

<b>Reverend Shuna Body MBE (Chair)</b>	
<b>Date: 17/8/2024</b>	
<b>Steven Croke (Treasurer)</b>	
<b>Date: 17/8/2024</b>	



Section A

Independent Examiner's Report

Report to the trustees/  
members of

Caring Altogether on Romney Marsh

On accounts for the year  
ended

31/03/2024

Charity no  
(if any)

1184552

Set out on pages

4 and 5

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the above charity ("the Trust") for the year ended 31/03/2024.

Responsibilities and  
basis of report

As the charity trustees of the Trust, you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 ("the Act").

I report in respect of my examination of the Trust's accounts carried out under section 145 of the 2011 Act and in carrying out my examination, I have followed the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the Act.

Independent  
examiner's statement

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no material matters have come to my attention (other than that disclosed below \*) in connection with the examination which gives me cause to believe that in, any material respect:

- accounting records were not kept in accordance with section 130 of the Act or
- the accounts do not accord with the accounting records

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

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

Signed:

S.A. Wood-Brignall

Date:

13/8/24

Name:

Sandra Wood-Brignall

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

Chartered Management Accountant – qualified

Address:

47 Poplar Lane, Lydd, KENT TN29 9LA



## Caring Altogether on Romney Marsh

### Receipts and Payments Accounts

For the period from	1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024	1 April 2022 to 31 March 2023
	<b>Total funds</b>	<b>Total funds</b>
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
<b>Receipts</b>		
Grants	57,627	160,481
Gift Aid	409	414
In memoriam donations	305	-
Corporate donations	6,900	19,403
Individual donations	4,073	2,568
Meeting Points	22,010	12,704
MP Income transfer		100
Sponsors	140	40
Knitting donations income	147	-
Lottery / shopping income	1,064	697
Fundraised Income / donations	4,042	90
Interest earned	4,057	2,079
<b>Sub total</b>	<b>100,775</b>	<b>198,576</b>
<b>Payments</b>		
Partnership Payments - joint projects	-	50,790
Salaries	114,092	111,975
Staff pension scheme	5,620	5,339
Props and client activities	331	4,326
Premises overheads	8,297	5,965
Staff and volunteers' expenses	5,375	6,567
Training: staff and volunteers	449	673
Volunteer Thank you event / expenses	2,283	2,045
Telephones	1,251	1,709
Printing, publicity and stationery	646	1,724
Postage	765	877
AGM	793	552
Subscriptions	1,135	1,189
Newsletter production	415	400
Computer and general maintenance	1,086	987

Insurances	980	954
Sundry costs		1,193
Office moving costs	-	767
Meeting Points - individual spending	21,617	13,315
Donation - Meeting Points	7,992	4,047
Alliance IT project	-	663
Correction of reserves classification of 2 MP balances in 2021/22 (the Bridge + Greatstone) / 2023 24 - monies paid out to the 2 MPs.	(1,549)	1,549
External Consultancy fees	984	3,150
Accounts and payroll costs	657	616
Bank charges / interest paid	137	164
<b>Sub total</b>	<b>173,357</b>	<b>221,536</b>
<b>Net of receipts/(payments)</b>	<b>-72,582</b>	<b>-22,960</b>
<b>Transfers between funds</b>		
<b>Balance from 2022/23</b>	<b>206,992</b>	<b>229,952</b>
<b>Cash funds this year end</b>	<b>134,410</b>	<b>206,992</b>
<b>Total funds - cash and bank</b>	<b>134,410</b>	<b>206,992</b>
<b>Total cash funds</b>	<b>134,410</b>	<b>206,992</b>
<b>Breakdown of Reserves as at 31 March 2024</b>		
Restricted: Meeting Point individual balances	16,173	15,782
Sponsor a MP & Reminiscence income	270	49,254
Designated:	86,354	80,850
Unrestricted:	31,613	61,105
<b>Total reserves</b>	<b>134,410</b>	<b>206,992</b>



Section A

Independent Examiner's Report

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Independent  
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Signed:

S.A. Wood-Brignall

Date:

13/8/24

Name:

Sandra Wood-Brignall

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

Chartered Management Accountant – qualified

Address:

47 Poplar Lane, Lydd, KENT TN29 9LA