



Supporting Older People in our Community since 1995

Caring Together in Woodhouse & Little London

Annual Report 2022

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OUR TRUSTEES

Cllr Al Garthwaite – Chair
Ann Shaw – Secretary
David Wigglesworth
Ben Anson
Tracey Noble
Ann Dudzinski
Myrna Ruttledge
Cllr Abigail Marshall-Katung

PATRONS

The Lord Mayor of Leeds
Hilary Benn MP

STAFF

John O'Dwyer – Manager
Valerie McGregor – Advice
& Support Worker/Deputy
Manager
Lisa Argyle – Community
Resilience Worker
Ashley Rose – Finance Worker

The relief of older people (without distinction of colour, ethnic origin, nationality, political or religious opinion or sex) in any way considered to be charitable in law as the trustees may determine within the geographic area of Woodhouse and Little London and its neighbourhood within the City of Leeds.

To advance the education of older people on matters such as finance, health, housing, security and welfare entitlements.

Aims & Objectives

Caring Together in Woodhouse and Little London is established for the following objectives

To promote the mental and physical welfare of older people and relieve those with disabilities.

To further any other charitable purposes as the trustees may determine for the benefit of the residents in the area of benefit.



Foreword



Rt Hon Hilary Benn
MP for Leeds Central and Patron of Caring
Together in Woodhouse and Little London

It is a great pleasure once again to write these few words for the Caring Together annual report.

It has always been a great privilege to be your patron and, as ever, I want to express my profound thanks to John and all the staff and volunteers for the fantastic work you do on behalf of the community of Woodhouse and Little London.

The past two and a half years have been very difficult because of COVID, but you have found new ways of keeping in touch with your service users and now – thankfully – we are coming out of the other side. It has also been a bittersweet

year, with the passing of the Queen such a short time after we celebrated her Platinum Jubilee. And I know how worrying the big increase in energy bills has been for so many people.

It is at times like this that we realise just how important organisations like Caring Together are. As ever, it's the work that you do, week in and week out, that really makes such a difference whether it's trips, exercise classes, health awareness, IT, stalls at community days or just advice and support, fun and friendship.

People often talk about community spirit, so if you want to see it in action then look no further than Caring Together.

With best wishes for another successful year.



“Caring Together” (Volunteering)

In the last report I talked about community kindness in relation to volunteering. I feel this still stands where we as a community come together with or without the title or label of volunteer.

We benefit from this and offer our humble thanks to each and everyone who has offered their time, in whatever way.

From telephone and meeting in person befriending, as trustees, gardening, catching up with neighbours, newsletters, sharing skills and knowledge, singing, money box counting, walking, making a cuppa and so on.

We are truly ‘Caring Together’ and this is priceless.
Thank you!

Lisa Argyle, Community Resilience Worker

If you would like to get involved then please email:
lisa@caringtogether.org.uk or call 07436 530073



Chair's Report



Cllr Al Garthwaite
Chair, Caring Together in Woodhouse and Little
London. Councillor for Headingley, Hyde Park and part
of Woodhouse

It has been a pleasure and a privilege to be part of Caring Together this year, and to chair the trustee meetings now we have, at last, been able to meet in person again. Of course, the option of joining in online also exists, and is helpful. Getting together with members is always fun, and I particularly enjoyed the Platinum Jubilee festivities.

The staff have worked as hard as ever to ensure a great service and I congratulate them on their continued success in gaining funding, supporting those in need and arranging popular events and activities in the centre and elsewhere. The bulbs planted in spring have flowered and look amazing. Among our future plans is the possibility of reaching out to more city centre residents, now that increasing numbers live there.

We have a vacancy for a treasurer on the trustee board: please do consider putting yourself forward for the role. Plenty of help will be given, and our meetings are friendly and interesting.

I hope to see many of you in the coming months, either online or in person, for example at the Christmas event, which was such fun last year. Finally, I wish everyone a healthy and happy Christmas and send everyone my best wishes for 2023.



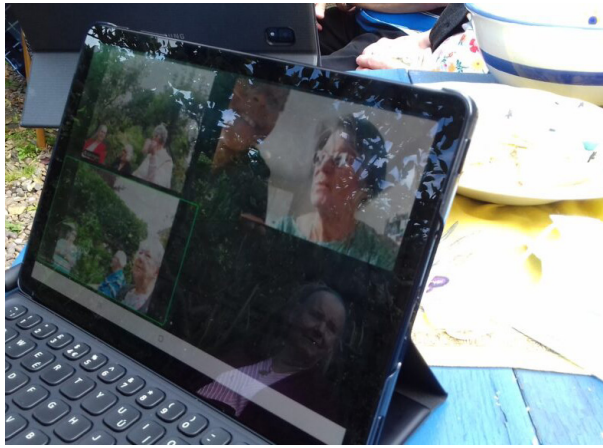
Staff & Activities

After all of the changes imposed on us over the past few years it is good to be able to reflect on what this meant to Caring Together, how those changes have impacted on us, our work patterns, our members and whether this leaves us in a stronger or weaker place than before the pandemic.

Certainly, like many small charities, we saw an explosion in demand for our services with a parallel demand on the organisation, our members, staff team and resources. That it changed us is not within doubt. What probably needs further examination is the extent to which we were led by the changes or whether our new ways of working were as a result of Caring Together facing the new realities with invention and redesigning our services to reflect contemporary need.

All of this is, of course, nothing new to Caring Together. The visible street level recognition of the organisation and its perception as belonging to the local area is a source of great satisfaction to us. Being the first point of call for many people needing advice and assistance displays a confidence in us built up over 27 years. This is, I believe, a consequence of continually reviewing what we offer, and maintaining relevance through listening to our members and being aware of and reacting to changes in the community profile and patterns of need.

The range of support we provide has correspondingly increased in size and scope. The demands on Caring Together for more extensive individualised support has put



demands on our service but so far we have managed to meet this expectation, though workloads are at capacity. Amongst our exercise and social groups it is particularly pleasing to note the development of our Carers Group, Bereavement Group, Dementia Cafe and Craft Group. The first three in collaboration with other services, Carers Leeds, Leeds Bereavement Forum and Alzheimer's Society, and the latter resurrected after requests from members.

Our members have remained enthusiastic in their support of Caring Together. Whether in terms of attending groups, events and functions or trusting us to help navigate any problem or issue they may face, they have constantly reaffirmed why we do the job that we do and the reason why we continue to maintain a freshness to our daily schedules.

However, particularly after a whirlwind period during which change has been forced upon us, we felt that an independent eye was needed to help us reflect on what we have achieved, what we have lost and the next steps for Caring Together. Have we changed too quickly or just become more streamlined and how much of the change is likely to be permanent?



We applied to, and were successful, the Leeds Strategic Resilience Grants Fund for help in looking at our current governance model, and the training needs of the team, trustees and volunteers, as we navigate any organisational change deemed necessary. In addition, this also gave us access to support and advice on developing more formal partnership working with other groups and the organisational implications and responsibilities that this brings.



Change can be difficult. However, we have a staff team and volunteers who have proved once more that they are more than ready to face any challenges presented to them. Aligned with the oversight provided by our wise and experienced board of trustees, we have focussed on the development of a 2 year action plan to reboot ourselves, facing the future, and any obstacles, with confidence in the value of our work.

As members and supporters you should rightly be proud of them. Indeed, as we all are of you.

John O'Dwyer - Manager

Grants & Donations

Caring Together in Woodhouse & Little London
is grateful for the following grants and donations in 2021/22

52 Lives	£400
Charles Brotherton Trust	£150
GMB union	£200
Harrison & Potter Trust	£4,000
Leeds Benevolent Society for Single Ladies	£30,000
Leeds City Council (Adult Social Care)	£52,267
Leeds City Council (HAP Refurb)	£4,055
Leeds City Council (HPT)	£10,000
Leeds City Council (INW/HAP)	£141
Leeds Community Foundation (Stay Well)	£2,475
Leeds Older Peoples Forum	£1,550
Sylvia & Colin Shepherd Charitable Trust	£500
Wades Charity	£3,000
Members & Supporter donations	£8,948
Other donations	£505

Thank You In Memoriam

Caring Together is deeply grateful to many individuals and supporters. Patrons, Trustees and all our volunteers and helpers.

All our funders and those individuals who generously donate to us.

The other agencies and organisations and local businesses who support us and our members in so many ways.

Last, but very definitely not least, to the local community for supporting our project in so many different ways.

We, sadly, lost a number of members during the period covered by this report (01/04/2021 – 31/03/22)

Martin Clarke
Dave Swann
May Sproule
Jenny Stead
Wilfred Alexander
Fred Heron
Gary Marsh
Erol Gordon

John Bedford
Maureen Binns
Stephen Collinson
Vionna Gordon
Eric Jones
Winston Kellman
Fred Dunne

If we have inadvertently omitted anyone from this list, please accept our sincere apologies and please let us know.



Leeds Benevolent Society
For Single Ladies

Charles Brotherton
Trust





Finance Report

The financial performance of Caring Together has remained fairly stable for 2021/22.

We recorded a small deficit which would ordinarily have been avoided were it not for unforeseen circumstances in the final quarter of the financial year. We continue to spread our risks by maintaining support from a wide range of funders. Caring Together has been successful in attracting funding from the Leeds Strategic Resilience Grants Fund to look further at our funding policy, amongst other things, and is actively pursuing more long-term funding options. This is imperative if, during this period of fluctuating economic uncertainty, we are to face the future confident in our ability to showcase the value of our service provision to potential donors and benefactors.

In addition to the above, Caring Together would like to develop more practical and financial links with organisations working in areas outside of our remit and in particular, with other Neighbourhood Networks with similar inner city profiles. This will be a priority in the coming year.

The charity's free reserves, excluding fixed assets, at the year-end were £87,687. The board has discussed the reserves policy and felt that the current policy, in times of economic uncertainty, should be amended to 6-9 months running costs. In addition, we are planning to have more alterations to the office in the coming year which should considerably reduce the reserves and provide us with a more useful space to run activities.

I would like to offer huge thanks to all those who have funded us through grants and donations, both large and small, including a special reference to those members, supporters and families in the local area who have contributed individual donations and through remittances after the deaths of loved ones.

We still have a vacancy for a treasurer on our board of trustees. This is an important role, particularly when planning for the future in a challenging economic landscape. If you know of anyone interested in speaking with us about the position and what it entails please get in touch with us.

Impact Report

We have worked with
383
 older people this year



1068
visits/drop-ins



9751
phone calls



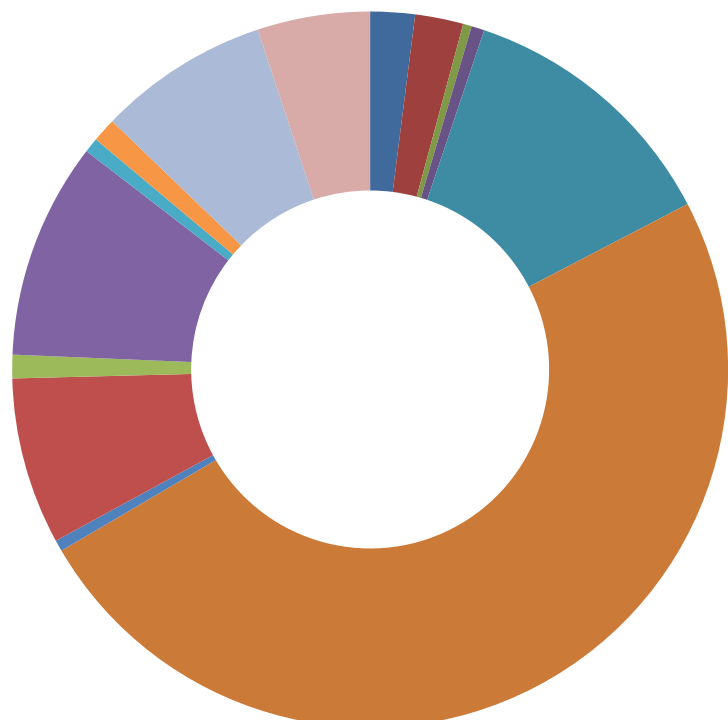
2350
emails/letters



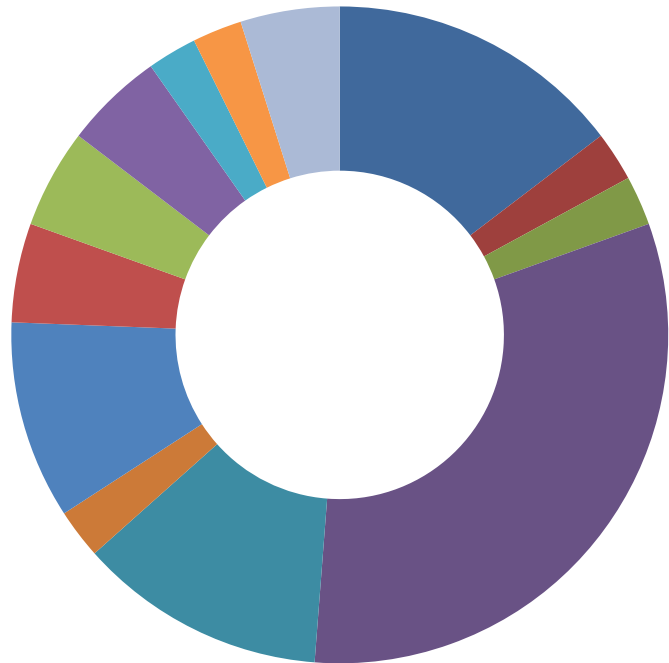
756
website/social media

Issues Covered

- Advocacy
- Benefits Advice/Support
- Enquiry about NHS Services
- Funding
- General Advice/Support
- Health & Wellbeing
- Initial Assessments
- Other Agencies on behalf of Members
- Outreach & Publicity
- Social Activity
- Training
- Transport
- Volunteering
- Winter Wellbeing



Referrals to Other Agencies

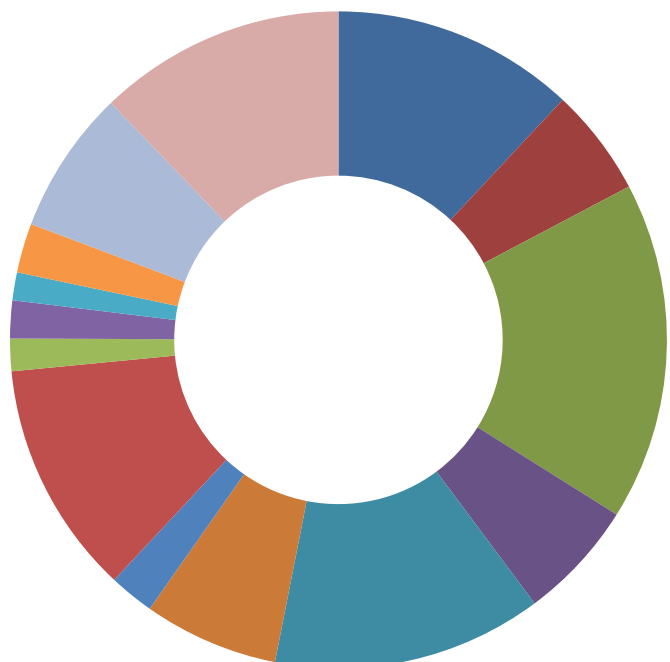


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attendances at our social/educational activities this year

- Occasional lunch/coffee outings - in line with covid rules at the time
- Continued Covid related support
- Benefits advice and support from claim through assessments, appeal and tribunal if needed. Bringing extra income for members ranging from £2.63 to £161.80 per week.
- Online AGM in November.
- Christmas Celebration event with carol singers from Luumic in Charing Cross Square.
- Springtime/Remembrance get-together - including planting up our remembrance garden.
- Festive gift bags delivered to all members
- Winter warmth/wellbeing items given out
- Food/toiletries available for members who may need them
- 'Lending library' of books, magazines, dvds in our premises

Social & Educational Activities





Promoting the Welfare of
Older People in the Community