



EVALUATION

Caring Hands Charity

SUPPORTING
INDEPENDENCE AND
QUALITY OF LIFE;
2015/18

An illustration of the need we meet, the services we offer, and the difference we have made over the last 3 years, and a pointer to the work that still is to be done

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Manager

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Introduction

Background

This evaluation is designed to identify our strengths and weaknesses and the degree to which we have achieved our outcomes..

Information

Information used included:

- Caring Hands' current project plan and copies of all finance and monitoring records relating to the project.
- Interviews with key internal and external stakeholders:
 - Dawn Henderson, Project Manager, Caring Hands Charity
 - Team Leaders, direct service providers for Project/Services
 - Cindy Rutherford, Occupational Health Visitor, Community Response and Rehabilitation Team, Newcastle
- A satisfaction survey completed by 59 project users over January, February and March 2017.
- A consultation questionnaire completed by 40 project users in March 2018.
- Project User Case Studies.

Timeframe

The evaluation focuses on the past 12 months of the project, but makes reference to the last three years.

Constraints

We are a small and busy local charity. The depth of this evaluation is proportionate to the resources we have available.

The Need

In 2016, compiling information from a variety of sources, such as the Biennial Residents' Survey and the Department of Health, Know Newcastle (a multi-agency initiative to assess the City's future needs) found significant evidence of need. Specifically:

Poverty: Walker and Byker are the City's 2 most deprived wards, according to the Indices of Multiple Deprivation. Long term unemployment was twice the City's average. Almost a quarter felt that the economic situation resulted in difficulties affording food and more than one in five had encountered difficulties paying their rent or mortgage and/or their council tax. *Isolation and loneliness:* Around 45% of local people did not have friendships with other people or talked to people in their local area on a regular basis. There was evidence of insularity and a lack of community cohesion – People across Newcastle as a whole are around 50% more likely to borrow things and/or exchange favours with neighbours than those who live in Byker and less than half of Byker's residents felt comfortable asking a neighbour for help – compared to a city wide average of two thirds. This insularity has a detrimental impact on the lives of the most isolated and vulnerable. Only 23.6 of people in our beneficial area provide unpaid help by supporting an individual who is not a relative (compared to 34.4% across the City).

Disability: One in every four people reported a long term health problem or disability affecting day-to-day activity; this is 10% greater than the City's average and more than 4 times the rate in the most affluent wards. Emergency hospital admissions were 59% greater than the national average; the rate of deaths from circulatory disease was more than twice the national average, for Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease, it was more than 3 times. Additional evidence that demonstrates the multiple disadvantage in the East End of Newcastle comes from The 2013 Healthworks 'Local Needs' Report stated that the wards of Byker and Walker were included in a small number of areas within the City with 'the worst rates of deprivation and consistently poor rates in a number of other social and health inequalities They have been amongst the most deprived wards in Newcastle for a number of years'.

Social Isolation and Loneliness: According to Age UK's "Evidence Review: Loneliness in Later Life":

- Nearly half of older people say the television or pets are their main form of company.
- Loneliness can be as harmful to our health as smoking 15 cigarettes per day.
- People with a high degree of loneliness are twice as likely to develop Alzheimer's disease than those who are not lonely.
- People who took part in more health maintaining and independence maintaining behaviours were less likely to feel isolated and more likely to feel that their community was a good one to grow old in.
- Nearly half of all people aged 75 over live alone according to research for DWP.
- Nearly a quarter of pensioners do not go out socially at least once a month.
- 17% of older people have less than weekly contact with family, friends and neighbours.

Project Description

Caring Hands Charity was established in June 1994 as a neighbourhood resource to address some of the complex & deep seated problems faced by families on the Shieldfield estate in East End of Newcastle. This is an independent voluntary organisation & a registered charity. It provides a wide range of direct support services to older people & those with physical disabilities.

Ethos

Caring Hands began in 1992 when a group of community activists who had the GM of an idea for a community laundry that served the most vulnerable, knocked on the doors of local people over a one month period to ascertain the degree of need and support for such an initiative. From the beginning our trustees have always recognised that the true ownership of this project belongs with local people. As a consequence of that, we have adopted a process of reflective practice whereby constant, informal conversations take place with service users to identify their wants and needs. From its inception, caring hands has been an example of sustained community action, based on identifying local need, organising a response to that need, listening to the problems faced by local people and acting as a catalyst to ensure the provision of appropriate, flexible services.

Services

The Caring Hands Project offers vulnerable and hard to reach older people a range of services which address positive solutions in relation to their independence & quality of life. . These are:

To address *poverty*:

- Welfare Rights Service.

To address *loneliness and social isolation*:

- Lunch club
- Befriending Service
- Support Helpline

To address *poor mental health*:

- Counselling and Emotional Support Service

To address declining independence and dignity and to ensure that clients are safe in their own homes:

- Laundry Collection and Delivery Service

- Equipment and Small Aids Service
- Handyman Service.
-

Other community services, include:

- A DBS Service
- Caring Hands acts as a credit union collection point
- Caring Hands acts as a food bank donation point



Outputs

Welfare Benefits

There are two relevant figures – ‘cases’ and ‘advice’. The former refers to those people who made formal appointments and who were directly assisted with a Welfare Benefits claim (e.g. helped to fill in a form, accompanied to an appeal, etc). The latter refers to people who asked for advice but subsequently pursued their claim without ongoing support. As the graphs below illustrates, whereas quick interventions (i.e. some advice given over the telephone) have been declining, the more complex and time consuming cases have been on the rise.



Key points:

- The number of service users has stayed about the same over 3 years.
- Complex ‘cases’ have increased by 78%
- These complex cases have resulted in a total of £307,681.70 in previously unclaimed benefits for service users.
- 149 people received in depth support over 3 years.
- A further 248 received ‘light touch’ support over the same period.

Conclusions: Caring Hands should make provision to focus on the complex cases, prioritising these over ‘light touch interventions’. This is where a real difference can be made

to people's lives, and crucially, where this difference can be easily measured. Assuming that the current levels of need will remain stable for the next 3 years, Caring Hands should plan to focus resources on opening and successfully closing around just over 200 cases during this period.

Lunch Club

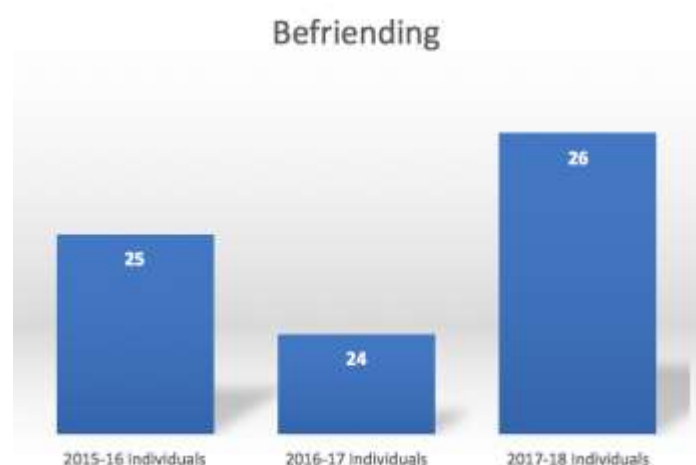
This service has also seen a healthy rise of 71% in users:



Conclusion: The service is valued by clients and a great deal of collected anecdotal evidence is testament to this. The service should continue much as it is, whilst remaining sensitive to increases or decreases in user need.

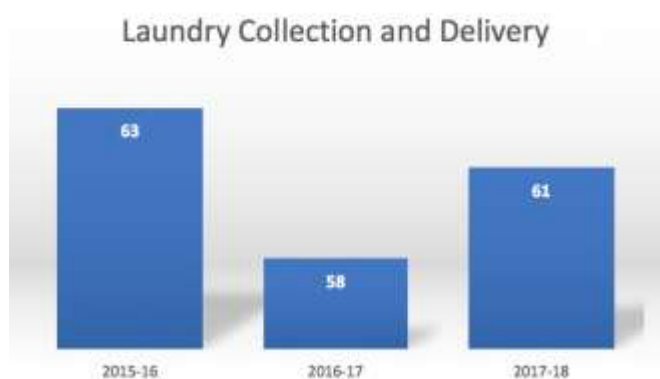
Befriending

This service has maintained a steady number of beneficiaries. This is not because need is not growing (we believe that it is), but because we are operating 'to the max' with the resources we have available:



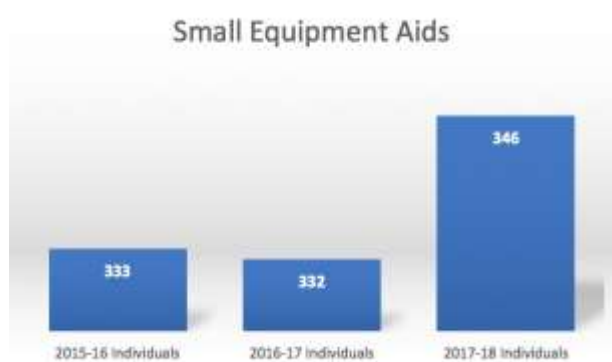
Conclusion: Users greatly value the service. It increases the quality of life for some of our most vulnerable beneficiaries.

The Laundry Collection and Delivery Service also, has seen a steady demand over the last three years.



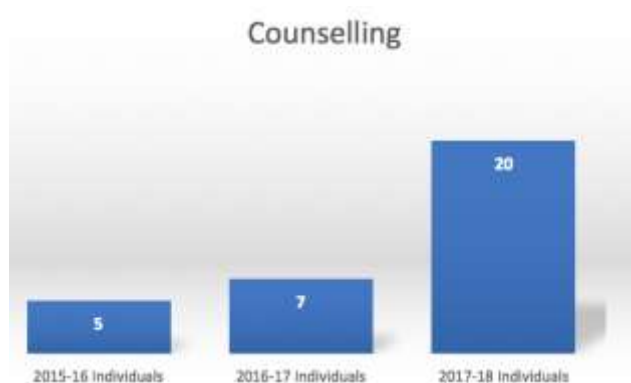
Small Equipment Aids

This service has seen roughly steady demand.



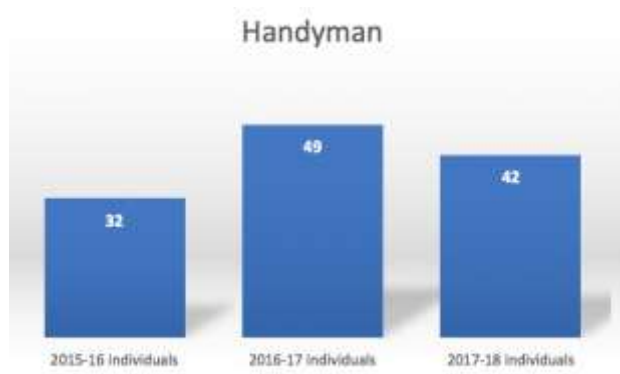
Counselling Service

Although one of the charity's smaller offerings, the Counselling Service has seen a rather dramatic upsurge of 400% over the past 3 years:



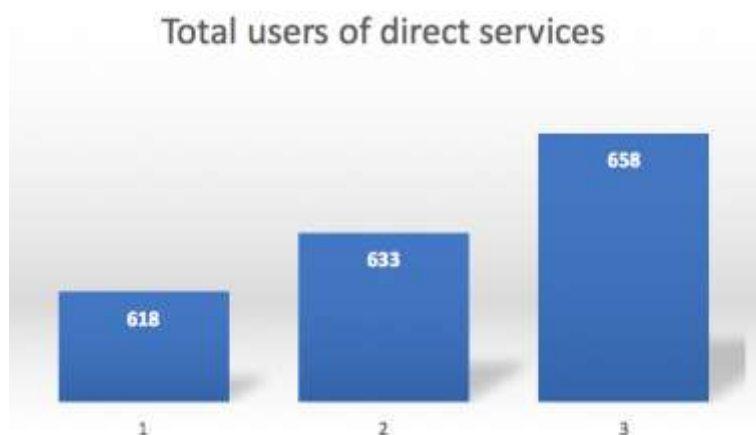
Handyman Service

Again, we see steady demand (with slight variations) over 3 years.



Summary:

Service Description	2015-16 Individuals helped	2015-16 Client contacts	2016-17 Individuals helped	2016-17 Client contacts	2017-18 Individuals helped	2017-18 Client contacts
Welfare Benefits Advice	99	477	93	629	56	697
Welfare Benefits Cases	40		38		71	
Lunch Club	21	614	32	855	36	859
Befriending	25	589	24	393	26	367
Laundry Collection and Delivery Collection	63	1234	58	1290	61	1154
Small Equipment Aids	333	855	332	757	346	865
Counselling	5	116	7	147	20	172
Handyman	32	119	49	151	42	139



Conclusion: Over the past 3 years, Caring Hands has seen a small, but steady rise in the number of people that have been helped via access to the charity's direct services characterised by the following:

- Overall, demand for services has increased by 6.3% since 2015/16.
- The 'complex cases' part of the Welfare Rights service has seen the biggest increase in demand, at 78%
- The Counselling Service has seen the biggest leap in % terms – of 400% - although this was from a very small initial base.

What do these numbers tell us? All services have either grown, or remained stable (in terms of demand). There is a continued appetite amongst local older vulnerable people for the services we currently offer.



Outcomes and Impact

Historical data collection

In the past we have concentrated on demonstrating user satisfaction. This has used devices like a 'star system' to allow people to tell us how much they like/appreciate what we are providing – and this has given us a 'snapshot' of what has been achieved. This system has been supplemented by limited, focused consultations with small groups of typical users.

Consultation

In the autumn of 2017 and the spring of 2018 we undertook a consultation exercise with service users to ensure that our services were aligned with their most urgent and important needs. 27 people were asked to rate how important our services were to them. 89% found our welfare rights, laundry service and lunch club work 'important or very important'. 85% said our handyman service was 'important or very important'. 81% delivered the same verdict on our small aids service. 78% expressed the same view regarding our counselling, befriending and telephone support services.

Impact

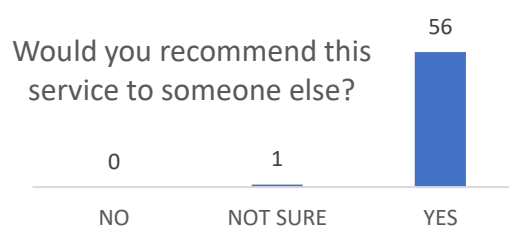
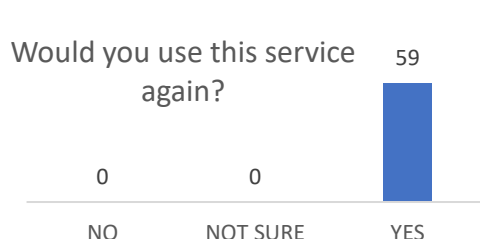
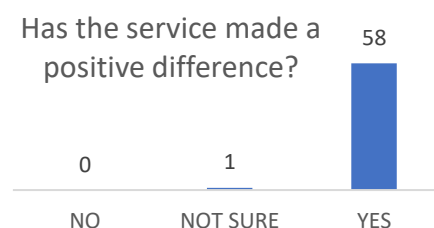
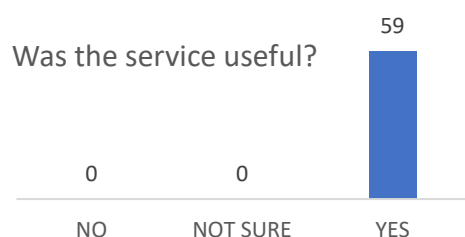
Some headlines, covering the *average annual* impact over the past 3 years are:

- Over 3,600 have benefited (including 'direct' services and 'indirect' (i.e. signposting to other agencies).
- Over £300,000 has been raised in unclaimed benefits for clients in poverty, shared by 71 individuals and families. (2017/18 figures only).
- 55 people per year have found new social connections that have resulted in less isolation and reduced loneliness
- 41 people per year have benefited from a safer home environment
- 60 have received assistance with the absolutely essential right to enjoy clean and laundered clothes – and are thus able to live with greater personal dignity
- 10 have reported feeling better emotionally and less prone to negative thoughts and low moods and/or depression after receiving counselling.
- 337 have been given the tools to help them continue to live independently at home.
- Average annual impact (all of the above direct services) = 544 people.

User Satisfaction

A user satisfaction survey in 2017 achieved a 90.9% five star positive rating, the remaining 9.1% achieved four star positive rating. Regarding how useful the services have been, we have achieved 100% positive rating. The positive difference achieved a 98.3% yes. User opinion was between 98% and 100% positive (including four star as positive)

Details of satisfaction surveys below:



Case Studies

1) *Jimmy* came to live in the area in June 2015. At that time he was 69 and walked with the aid of a zimmer frame. He came into the office with his support worker, who asked about any services or advice we could offer Jimmy, to support his independent living.

Jimmy was a gent who had travelled around the country most of his life and he'd lost touch with his relatives many years ago.

Jimmy was very difficult to understand, having suffered a stroke. His speech was very slow and slurred, so he needed time and patience.

There have been bumps along the way, an arrangement for a care worker to help Jimmy with hygiene issues was not started well, since Jimmy would be sitting in the café next door instead of waiting in his home!

The fact that Jimmy refuses to accept that he is not physically able to safely do what he once could, is often a tough challenge to deal with. He now has a wheelchair for outings which poses a safety issue. He is convinced that he can push himself. The chair is to be used by someone who will take him out and push him, so we are now monitoring his safety and looking for extra volunteers to help him 'get around'.

Too often, the support is not co-ordinated or thought through (as above) which can lead to great problems for all concerned. We now work with the care workers, rehabilitation team, social workers and other voluntary agencies, to make sure that Jimmy can access the best possible support. Meetings with all support agencies are now co-ordinated by a volunteer in the Caring Hands Office, we provide a laundry service, he attends the lunch club and his benefits are all now all in order, thanks to our Welfare Advisor.

Jimmy is enjoying a better quality of life now. Since accessing our services he is less isolated, more financially stable and more independent at home.

Jimmy has also adopted us as his personal assistant for any and all matters arising!

2) *Patrick* was referred to us for counselling through the Primary Care Navigator based at the Medical Centre in Byker. He had visited his GP very regularly for several months and the team thought that we would be able to offer him a shorter wait time for our counselling service. At this time our wait was 6 – 8 weeks and theirs was around 6-8 months. Patrick was soon given an appointment to attend his first session.

Patrick arrived with his sister Mary and they sat with a cuppa waiting for the time to go through, he went into the meeting alone and the Mary enjoyed an hour of chat with the volunteers in the office. She explained, they had always lived local, her brother was one of seven and they were very close. He had worked all of his life until very recently, but now he was becoming more isolated and felt unable to cope with even the smallest of things. It was obvious from her conversation that the family had suffered some tragic personal circumstances over the years, listening to her was quite a sad experience, although it was clear, she was not seeking any sympathy at all, she was merely offering an 'outline' of their lives, still, she was a remarkable person.

On the second visit, they both arrived and Mary duly sat with a fresh cuppa chatting to the volunteers. She was offered information on the Benefits Service after mentioning about a problem with a disability benefit for her grandson who suffered from a severe medical condition. The benefits had just stopped! We had experienced this many times and booked in an appointment for her to see our advisor that same week. Patrick came out of the meeting looking more at ease, a little happier in himself.

After several appointments, each one following the same format, Mary was pleased to announce that the disability benefit was now successfully dealt with, her brother was more active and visited her more, he was enjoying his grandchildren and his confidence had grown tremendously.

Patrick too had appointments with the Benefits Advisor and was able to claim for his medical condition, this then had the knock on effect of allowing him to become financially stable and being more able to afford to travel to visit friends and family.

Although the initial referral was for one person to one service, we were happy to support two people with three services, the third being informal befriending for Mary. A cuppa and a chat can make all the difference!

(Permission has been given to report these cases, but we have changed the names for privacy)

Client opinion

The following quotes are typical of user responses to the project

Thanks to everyone at Caring Hands for the present brought over for me over the Christmas.
Phillis, service user

Thanks to all of you for helping me to stay in my old house and family manage to visit me with my two grandchildren. With thanks and love.
Eva, service user

Thank you so much for your help and support. I would've not known what to do without you. You are helping me so much. *Tina, services user*

We would like to thank you for all your hard work in providing us with a Lunch Club, also for the lovely festive celebrations provided by yourself & other contributors. Thank you for our Christmas gifts.
Glancy & John, service users

Thank you very much for your support. I couldn't manage without you.
Eva, service user

I think it is a wonderful service you offer (laundry collection) along with all the other caring thing you do!
Ann, service user

Thanks for sending a handyman to do the garden for me. Ray does a very good job of it.
Phillis, service user

With much appreciation. Once again thank you so much. 😊
Vicky, Handyman service user

Thank you for the wonderful work you do in the community. I hope me little contribution helps to make your work reach more people in need.
An area resident of 3 years

I am always pleased with the work done by handyman. He never stops until it's finished. He does a very good job and is clean and tidy.
Anne, service user

Partner Opinion

The following quotes are typical of support agencies responses to the project:

I have been involved with clients in the community with complex medical needs affecting ones independence. I have used Caring Hands service for many years and the services

offered have been invaluable. Also the support and advice offered to me as a therapist has been absolutely fantastic. May this service continue for many years to come.

Cindy Rutherford, Occupational Therapist, Community Response & Rehabilitation Team, Newcastle upon Tyne

I write to give support and show appreciation for Caring Hands, on behalf of the Community Response & Rehabilitation Team. The aids make a significant, positive impact on patience/clients safety at home, quality of life and enhanced personal independence. There is no doubt that people of Newcastle would be disadvantaged without this excellent charity. *Lynn Davison, Clinical Manager, Community Response & Rehabilitation Team, Newcastle upon Tyne*

We would like to say a huge thank you for the wonderful work which you have done and continue to do, to support our services users. You are the people that make it possible for individuals to remain at home, by providing them with the aids which make a huge difference to their life style, and promotes independence. We have received nothing but praise for your services; our staff team speak highly of all the aids available to support people.

Andrea Marshall, Resource Manager, Care At Home, Newcastle upon Tyne

Going Forward

We recognise that this system, whilst helpful, could be improved. From 2018/19, We intend therefore to use a 'journey travelled' approach that will measure the *difference* that has been made by our services. This will entail taking a numerical 'reading', or measurement against key indicators of progress at the beginning and end of our intervention, for every client that accesses one of our main service areas.



Management

Where we think we are doing o.k.

Line Management: The Accountable Manager for the Project is Dawn Henderson, who is responsible on a day-to-day basis, for all aspects of the project's delivery including the supervision of the staff and volunteers. The Trustees provide overall strategic management of the project.

User involvement: Users are regularly asked to say what went well and what could be improved upon. This helps improve current and future design and delivery of service. Some users become volunteers and are then fully involved in planning and delivering activities. We encourage users to become members of the organisation's management committee, and/or offer their comments to influence project direction at a strategic level. We maintain a 50%/50% split on our management committee of local residents and individuals with specialist skills such as strategic planning, finance, community care and social policy. Beneficiaries and stakeholders are invited to attend consultation meetings to gather information on the existing project benefits, to identify any gaps in provision and to explore ideas regarding the development and introduction of new projects. Regular contact with all beneficiaries allows us to explore the full range of Caring Hands Charity services in terms of their quality, benefit and positive outcomes. (NB: Also see below).

Staff/Volunteers experience, expertise and support: Our Manager joined the project 20 years ago as a volunteer. She worked first in admin, and then in service delivery, spending some time working directly with service users in all of our services. She has degree in Business and Finance and a Further and Adult Education Teaching Certificate and has used this to create a 'learning environment', with a strong focus on helping both paid staff and volunteers to acquire the skills they need to be effective. She is a trained book-keeper who has taught computer sage accountancy courses at Newcastle College. All service team leaders have received appropriate training in Volunteer Management. Volunteers themselves are given practical 'hands-on' training in areas such as customer service, lifting and handling, health and safety, food hygiene, etc. All of these are accredited to NVQ level 2 or 3.

Evaluation: As the project has developed, and mindful that 'informal conversations' are helpful, but may not tell the whole story regarding user needs and satisfaction, we have identified more formal ways to elicit service user ideas and encourage their involvement in the development of services. These include:

- A) A 'star rating' system to allow service users to feedback their opinion on individual parts/aspects of our work.
- B) Formal consultation on the main challenges people face in their day to day living and the most appropriate ways we can help.

(NB: See below)

Partnerships: Considerable effort goes into building ties with other voluntary and statutory organisations working in our area, and this will continue. Specifically, in 2018/19, informal working arrangements (in areas ranging from client referral to publicity drives) are in place, or being negotiated with the following agencies:

Statutory:

- The Fire Service, NHS Primary Care Navigators
- Local Authority Occupational Therapy Teams
- Local Authority Rehabilitation Team
- NHS Dementia and Stroke Teams

Voluntary:

- Greater Walker Community Trust
- Age UK Gateshead
- Search Project
- St. Martins Centre
- St. Anthony of Padua
- Silverline
- Dementia Care
- Chain Reaction

Accessibility: The Project is open to all older residents who live within the Newcastle upon Tyne area, but we take particular care to reach out to those who are socially isolated and with additional needs. The building is designed to ensure that wheel chair users and others with limited mobility can gain access.

Publicity: The Manager and her team has designed and published all publicity materials ‘in house’ Leaflets have been widely distributed across the area and regular visits are made to stakeholder organisations to ensure information is continually updated and staff in those establishments are aware of what the project offers users.

The project works closely with health and social care workers take an active role in promoting the project amongst local residents they visit. To ensure that residents not registered with these professionals have equal access to the project, it is also promoted by: -

- Our Annual Report which is distributed widely to partner organisations and funders, and available to members of the public.
- The Information Now web site, <https://www.informationnow.org.uk>
- The Newcastle City website, <https://www.newcastle.gov.uk>
- Networking and distributing information through agencies which have contact with our potential client groups. These might be health visitors or social workers who may refer beneficiaries to services.
- Manager or Volunteer representative attends networking events.
- All employed staff and volunteers, promote Caring Hands project at every opportunity.
- Users of the project are encouraged to tell their friends and family.

Users were asked how they found out about the project and their responses (from highest % to lowest %) were as follows:

- Friends
- Existing
- Relatives
- Social Worker
- Health Care Professional
- Google Search
- Local News Sheets
- Newcastle Website
- Information Now Website
- Friends at Carers Centre

Where we think we could improve?

Supervision and appraisal: In recent years we have improved our systems so that now the Manager receives regular supervision from a board member, both staff and volunteers, have regular supervision from the manager. Team Leaders are available for additional support in relation to their chosen service. There are plans in to make supervision and appraisal more formal and goals based in 2018/19.

Administration: Like many small, community organisations, Caring Hands has limited resources for back office administration. One weakness that the creation of this evaluation report has demonstrated is that our data collection, and the way that usage figures are expressed could probably be improved. Specifically, whilst the Manager knows where to go for information and what this means – other staff, volunteers and trustees may not be able to access data easily.

User involvement: Caring Hands was born out of a specific piece of community needs research – and close user involvement remains part of our 'DNA'. However, when the project was young, and there was only the Community Laundry to worry about, informal contacts sufficed to identify user needs and wishes. As we have grown more complex, and in order to embed our ethos of 'user ownership' more deeply within our practices, we think now that the process should be more formal, transparent and measurable. At the same time, we realise that we are relatively poorly resourced, and that any actions should be proportionate to our size and resources. We intend therefore to establish a 'Quality Group' that will include staff, trustees, volunteers, service users and fellow professionals to meet once per year to help us plan strategically, ensure that we are focussed in the right areas and amplify user voices in this process.

Evaluation: We feel that this would be improved if, instead of measuring 'snapshots' of how people felt about our services, we could demonstrate a 'start position', and an 'end' position (after our intervention) to clearly show the difference that has been made.

Funding and Finance

The Caring Hands Project has been funded since 1994 by a variety of funders – Esmeé Fairbairn, Lloyds Foundation, Henry Smith, The Community Foundation, Northern Rock, Greggs and Newcastle Fund etc. In the first year it was supported by a grant from St Mary Magdalene and the local council.

Despite widespread and demonstrable support from the trust and foundation sector, Caring Hands has often struggled to hit its annual budget target. The trustees and the Manager recognises that this is not ideal and that to ensure sustainability the project should work towards being less grant reliant. The current application to the BIG Lottery Reaching Communities Fund (ironically!) will be crucial to achieving this goal because it will give us the time and space to leverage the relationships we have worked so hard to build, turning these into statutory and community support for our project.

Unit Costs: During 2017/18 the whole of the project we supported 1,591 individuals providing 6,187 'services' (i.e. individual interventions such as visits, appointments, sessions, general enquiries and signposting etc). The per person cost of achieving the project outcomes is therefore £72 over the full year or £6 per person per month

Lessons Learned:

- At £72 per person for a potentially life changing intervention over 48 - 52 weeks, the project offers fantastic value for money. The unit cost is low when considering the positive impact this project has for not only the user, but indirectly for family, friends and carers of the individual. This low 'unit cost' is only achievable with the help of our volunteers. We will continue to make the fullest use of community support for the project and our volunteers will always be one of our strengths.
- Whilst we envisage charitable trusts continuing to provide an important proportion of our funding, going forward, we are too dependent upon them. We will continue to grow our fee earning model and seek to diversify from grant support, into community and statutory income streams.
- In the context of the above bullet point, our bid to Reaching Communities is designed to give us the stability from which to build a more robust financial model over the next 3 years.

Summary of findings

Impact

In the past 3 years, over 3,600 individuals have benefited.

User satisfaction has consistently achieved a 90.9% five star positive rating, the remaining 9.1% achieved four star positive rating. Regarding how useful the services have been, we have achieved 100% positive rating. The positive difference achieved a 98.3% 'yes'. User opinion (on most measures) was between 98% and 100% positive (including four star as positive)

The greatest benefit has been felt by those who are most vulnerable as we have reacted to local need by catering increasingly for isolated, older people with various levels of disability.

Key lessons - what we have learned?

1) Is the need still there? - Are our services still relevant? There is overwhelming evidence that the needs of our predominantly elderly and disabled client group have not lessened to any degree over the past 36 months. The 3rd party evidence of continuing difficulties for older people (quoted on page 4) is borne out by our observations on the ground and the results of the consultation with service users. The service users who took part in this evaluation expressed strong feelings regarding how important they saw the services we have offered, and continue to offer. All services have either grown, or remained stable (in terms of demand). There is a continued appetite amongst local older vulnerable people for all of the things we currently do.

2) On the value of partnership: In the early days found that trying to build the Caring Hands Project in isolation from other service providers had certain disadvantages, including duplication of services, competition for funding and slower responses to client need. Over the years, improved working relationships with a number of bodies have meant that more users have been served more quickly and a cooperative and collaborative ethos has developed. This evaluation process has demonstrated to us the depth and degree to which the work we do is appreciated both by many peer professionals in both the voluntary and statutory sector. The message we are repeatedly sent can be summarised as “*your work improves the lives of older people*” and “*your work helps us to improve the lives of older people*”.

3) Improving our systems and processes: We know that there are elements of our process that we need to improve. We can and will constantly strive to do this. Starting here:

- Supervision and appraisal: There are plans in to make supervision and appraisal more formal and goals based in 2018/19.

- Administration: We have a comprehensive database but how data is recorded and retrieved could be improved and knowledge of how to use the database effectively spread more evenly across the organisation..
- User involvement: We intend to establish a 'Quality Group' that will include staff, trustees, volunteers, service users and fellow professionals to meet once per year to help us plan strategically, ensure that we are focussed in the right areas and amplify user voices in this process.

4) *Regarding our finances:* £72 per person for a potentially life changing intervention over 48 - 52 weeks, we believe that Caring Hands offers fantastic value for money. The unit cost is low when considering the positive impact this project has for not only the user, but indirectly for family, friends and carers of the individual. That said, we need to work harder to widen our funding base and supplement the money we get from fees, and grants with statutory, corporate and community support.

Strengths to build on

Caring Hands Project has been offering services to local people for 24 years. It is firmly rooted in the community, offers excellent value for money, and is greatly valued by its users. We have a number of partnerships that will continue to make our job easier and result in the more effective delivery of services. The staff, volunteers and management team are dedicated and have a great deal of relevant experience – a lot of it specific to the locality. We are working hard to improve our systems and procedures and deliver a sustainable business model. We constantly try to improve what we do and how we do it, based on the feedback we receive from users and partners alike.

Challenges to meet

The population is growing older, over a decade of austerity has led to very deep poverty in the East End of Newcastle, local service provision has reduced significantly over the years, culminating in the withdrawal of all services previously offered by the now defunct, Age UK Newcastle. Brexit brings uncertainty regarding the future. All of this has had a detrimental impact on the lives of the most vulnerable people in our community. Not enough money, too much stress, prolonged isolation and loneliness and fewer places to turn for help – this sums up their daily reality. In order to remain as an effective bulwark against these pressures for our users, we will need to:

- *Continue* to offer a cost effective, volunteer led, delivery model
- *Further develop* close, productive partnerships and collaborative relationships with other agencies
- *Widen* our funding base – and to do this we need to improve the way we measure impact and the difference we have made
- *Improve* aspects of our management – to constantly strive for improvement should be as important to us as our other dearly held values, (such as, for example, 'bottom – up' empowerment for service users).

Conclusions

What difference did we make to whom and why?

Over the past 3 years Caring Hands has continued to work with the most vulnerable people in the East End of Newcastle. Our client group are almost exclusively over 55 years of age (or 45 years if disabled). Almost all of our service users demonstrate some sort of disability.

The user satisfaction surveys and user consultations we have carried out demonstrate exceptionally strong approval amongst our client group of the services that we offer and how they are delivered. Users overwhelmingly report (in formal surveys/consultations, in ongoing evaluations and conversationally) that our services are very important to them, valued by them and make a significant positive difference to the quality of their lives. The areas in which we have impacted include the alleviation of poverty, increased emotional wellbeing and greater independence.

What worked well?

With a very small core staff we have continued to maintain our services, and in some cases, grow them considerably. We continue to support and benefit from a substantial pool of volunteers, without whom we could not deliver our services. Staff 'churn' is low.

If we ran the project again – what might we do differently

We have identified a need to improve the systems by which we collect data, demonstrate 'distance travelled' for service users. If starting from scratch we would harmonise the way we collect data across all services more quickly.

We would probably undertake a full skills audit of the trustees and staff and identify the additional skills that would help us achieve things more effectively, efficiently and better.

Are we on track?

We believe that we are. There will always be a need to serve more people, but we are a small and focussed agency and we believe that it is important not to over-extend ourselves. Rather, we prefer to 'punch above our weight' by working closely with other organisations. That said, we would assert that the number of people we help directly is impressive, considering our size.

Do we demonstrate value for money?

As stated a little earlier, we believe that a 'unit cost' of £72 to provide services that are often life changing and can last for up to a year, would be hard to improve upon.

CARING HANDS

(Registered Charity No. 1039527)

STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED

31ST MARCH 2018

CARING HANDS

(Registered Charity No. 1039527)

ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR **1st APRIL 2017 TO 31st MARCH 2018**

STATEMENT OF RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS

RECEIPTS

2016/2017

2017/2018

9,893.70	Laundry/Lunch Club	9,684.10
19,592.63	Community Launderette	23,611.29
10,997.59	Donations and Gift Aid	7,195.01
514.71	Aromatherapy	445.68
50.68	Photocopying	41.00
22.30	Interest on Reserve Account	15.95
-	H. M. Revenue and Customs - Tax Repayment	-
9,321.00	Disclosure & Barring Service	7,527.00
1,200.00	Hire of Premises	300.00
-	Handyman Fees	174.00
51,592.61		48,994.03

GRANTS

22,728.15	Newcastle City Council - Newcastle Fund	23,420.00
-	Mary Magdalene	7,342.00
20,000.00	Garfield Weston Foundation	-
22,800.00	Henry Smith Charity at the Comm. Foundation	23,600.00
5,590.00	Community Foundation Grants Award	-
-	Newcastle City Council - Ouseburn Ward Committee	2,000.00
		56,362.00

£122,710.76

£105,356.03

PAYMENTS

2016/2017

70,460.40	Employment Costs
1,952.05	Volunteers Expenses
2,518.42	Small Aids
3,886.50	Meals
3,736.68	Transport costs
1,175.00	Hire of Premises
2,806.70	Telephone charges
2,020.56	Insurances
1,668.37	Water Rates
6,104.61	Electricity and Gas
2,961.92	Office Furniture, Equipment and Repairs
825.61	Office Expenses and Sundries
400.00	Audit
1,605.66	Stationery, Publications, Subscriptions, Adverts etc.
-	Handyman/Garden Equipment
156.00	Trade Waste
9,449.00	Welfare Rights / Benefits Advice
2,624.80	Launderette Equipment & Volunteers Expenses
6,520.00	Disclosure & Barring Service
-	Training
2,585.00	Counselling Service
-	Adviser Net User License
-	Aromatherapy Equipment
122.50	Befriending Services

£123,579.78

2017/2018

65,018.40
1,963.85
2,376.97
3,501.50
4,789.27
1,015.00
1,904.50
1,228.79
1,585.63
5,999.58
2,462.64
1,203.56
400.00
1,049.27
-
150.00
9,718.67
2,534.36
5,200.00
-
2,640.00
-
2.85
70.70

£114,815.54

2016/2017**2017/2018**

(869.02)	Surplus / (Deficiency) for the Year 2017/ 2018	(9,459.51)
<u>76,577.81</u>	Balance (In Hand) Brought Forward 1 st April, 2017	<u>75,708.79</u>
<u>£75,708.79</u>	<u>Balance (In Hand) Carried Forward 31st March, 2018</u>	<u>£66,249.28</u>

REPRESENTED BY NATWEST BANK

12,266.01	Current Account	6,190.55
<u>63,442.78</u>	Reserve Account	<u>60,058.73</u>
<u>£75,708.79</u>		<u>£66,249.28</u>

RECONCILIATIONBalances as per Bank Statements at 31st March, 2018

Current Account	6,993.59	
Less: Unpresented Cheques (6)	803.04	
	<u> </u>	6,190.55
Reserve Account		<u>60,058.73</u>
	<u>BALANCE AS PER CASH BOOK</u>	<u>£66,249.28</u>

(1) Independent Examiner's Certificate

I have examined the foregoing Statement of Receipts and Payments of Caring Hands in respect of the year ended 31st March, 2018 and find it to be in accordance with the Books of Account, Documents, Vouchers and other records provided, or explanations given, to me during the course of my examination.

(2) Independent Examiner's Report to the Trustees of CARING HANDS (Registered Charity No. 1039527)

I report on the accounts of the Trust for the year ended 31st March 2018.

Respective responsibilities of trustees and examiner:

The charity's trustees are responsible for the preparation of the accounts. The charity's trustees consider that an audit is not required for this year under section 144 of the Charities Act 2011 (the Charities Act) and that an independent examination is needed.

It is my responsibility to:

- examine the accounts under section 145 of the Charities Act;
- to follow the procedures laid down in the general Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the Charities Act; and
- to state whether particular matters have come to my attention.

Basis of Independent Examiner's Report

My examination was carried out in accordance with the general Directions given by the Charity Commission. An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the charity and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts, and seeking explanations from you as trustees concerning any such matters. **The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit and consequently no opinion is given as to whether the accounts present a 'true and fair view' and the report is limited to those matters set out in the statement below.**

Independent Examiner's Statement

In connection with my examination, no matter has come to my attention:

(1) which gives me reasonable cause to believe that in any material respect the requirements:

- to keep accounting records in accordance with section 130 of the Charities Act; and
- to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and comply with the accounting requirements of the Charities Act

have not been met; or

(2) to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

(John T Henderson)
Retired Local Authority Treasure
15th June 2018

8 Camden Square
North Shields
Tyne & Wear NE30 1NR
0191 2581582

15th June 2018

Mrs. S. Brown
44 Highfield
Prudhoe
Northumberland
NE42 6EZ

Dear Mrs. Brown

CARING HANDS - REGISTERED CHARITY NO. 1039527
INDEPENDENT EXAMINATION OF ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST
MARCH, 2018

1. I have completed my examination of the Accounts of Caring Hands in respect of the year ended 31st March, 2018 and, as requested, have pleasure in enclosing twenty signed copies of the Statement of Receipts and Payments which is in accordance with the Books of Account, Documents, Vouchers, other records and explanations provided to me during the course of my examination.

2. I also enclose two signed copies of the Independent Examiner's Report on the Accounts. Please note that a copy of this report is also incorporated into the Statement of Receipts and Payments.

3. I can confirm that on this occasion there are no significant matters which I need to bring to the attention of the Trustees. I have, however, detailed below (a, b and c)) other matters which need to be brought to your attention -

(a) Receipts from - (1) Disclosure & Barring Service (£7,527.00); (2) Donations and Gift Aid (£7,195.01); (3) Aromatherapy (£445.68); (4) Photocopying (£41.00) and (5) Other (£474.00). As in previous years I have not been provided with any or at least sufficient supporting documentation (receipt books, remittance books etc) which would assist me in fully verifying these amounts and I have, therefore, been obliged to accept them as being correct.

(b) Monthly Standing Order Payments to Ellison Services (via Yorkshire Bank) totalling £61,200 - As referred to here last year, again I have not been provided with any documentation in support of these payments, I have not seen any year end statement detailing how the total amount due for the year was made up, or whether any balance was owed by or to the Charity at the financial year end. It would be most helpful to have this information available in future years.

(c) Insurance - Once again I would respectfully remind you that it is most important for the Trustees to maintain and review all appropriate insurance cover, the sums insured, as well as any excesses and claims limits if or where applicable, on an annual basis or whenever is otherwise deemed necessary in order to ensure that these always remain adequate and appropriate to current circumstances.

4. Please accept my thanks for your help and assistance in providing information which I have required from time to time in order to enable me complete my examination of the accounts.

5. An account in respect of my fee in the sum of £400 is enclosed. This covers the examination of the accounts; the provision of 20 signed copies of the Statement of Receipts and Payments; the provision of two signed copies of the Independent Examiner's Report on the Accounts (as required by the Charity Commission), telephone calls and other incidentals.

6. An extra copy of this letter is enclosed for the information of your Chair.

Yours sincerely

(John T. Henderson)