



# Impact report 2020/21



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## Need help or advice?

If you or someone you know have a role looking after a family member or friend, you can contact Caring Together on 0345 241 0954, by emailing [hello@caringtogether.org](mailto:hello@caringtogether.org) or visit [caringtogether.org](https://caringtogether.org)

If your organisation would like to know more about how we can help you identify and support carers, or be given recognition through the Carer Friendly Tick Award, please email [carerfriendlytick@caringtogether.org](mailto:carerfriendlytick@caringtogether.org) or visit [caringtogether.org/carers-friendly-tick](https://caringtogether.org/carers-friendly-tick)

# Welcome

It is difficult to believe that it is over a year since we first heard the word 'coronavirus'. It has turned everyone's lives upside down. But for carers, it has had a devastating effect.

The necessary restrictions put in place to tackle the pandemic eroded the usual ways in which carers are supported in our communities. These were challenging times for us all but for carers, their world shrunk even further. It is overwhelmingly clear that the coronavirus crisis has taken its toll and carers are closer to breaking point than ever before.

During this unsettling time, and as we anticipate lockdown measures being relaxed, we remain certain of one thing, that carers and their families will need our support more than ever. With your help, together, we have and will continue to ensure our services offer the greatest possible impact to carers of all ages and the people they care for.

Throughout the year we acted quickly to meet the needs of carers, reaching 17,500 carers, their families and the people who support them across Cambridgeshire, Peterborough and Norfolk. Whilst our fundraising efforts did not realise our ambition for growth, we were able to benefit from emergency funding. We are so grateful for the support of funders whose reactivity enabled us to respond to the coronavirus crisis and to continue with our planned investment and commitment to becoming a more efficient and sustainable organisation.

As the way we interact with each other has changed in the last 12 months, our digital transformation has taken on new meaning as we continue to implement our plan, introducing new systems to improve the experience of those who use our services, as well as well as equipping our team of 157 staff and 43 volunteers to work remotely.

We started to deliver support for adult carers as part of a three-year contract commissioned by Cambridgeshire County Council and Peterborough City Council. We are delighted to further grow our support for carers as part of Norfolk County Council's Carers Matter Norfolk partnership providing advice for adult carers.

If this year has taught us anything, it is about the power of caring together. During a year like no other, people – our staff, our volunteers, our supporters, our friends in other organisations and, most importantly the carers in our communities – have worked together to be there for each other and for those who need it most, and for this we would like to say a big thank you.



**Stuart Evans**  
Chair of trustees



**Miriam Martin**  
Chief executive

# A year like no other

It has been a year like no other. We balanced moving forward with our planned activities with responding to the unforeseen challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic. These are the steps we took to make sure that we were there to support carers when they needed us most.

## May 2020

We **conducted a survey** of carers in Cambridgeshire, Peterborough and Norfolk to understand how the pandemic was affecting them and what we could do to help.

Our **carer hubs went virtual** as we resumed our regular support for carers using Zoom.

## July 2020

With the support of Carers Trust, we **launched the carers emergency fund** to provide swift support to carers to address the emergencies and difficult situations the coronavirus crisis has created.

## April 2020

We **moved to a remote model of working** using Teams and Zoom to communicate across the charity.

We **procured the personal protective equipment (PPE)** needed to protect our care team, making sure they were fully briefed in how to safely support those we care for.

Furlough helped us to **safeguard some of the charity's income** where workload had reduced and protect our colleagues where it was needed.

## June 2020

During Carers Week we **promoted our caring for carers emergency fundraising appeal** to make sure that we were there for carers.

We **distributed carer care packs**, including essential PPE, to give peace of mind when looking after someone.

We **switched IT providers** to ensure reliability of service.

We **changed our care management platform** to make our homecare operations more effective.

## August 2020

Cambridgeshire County Council and Peterborough City Council's new **all age carer service commenced** which sees Caring Together deliver carer services to adult carers across Cambridgeshire and Peterborough on behalf of the two councils.



## September 2020

Thanks to funding from Cambridgeshire, Norfolk and Suffolk Freemasons, we **provided a back to education bursary** for young carers to help reduce the impact of COVID-19 on their education.

## November 2020

As part of our commitment to improving our workforce diversity, inclusion and serving our customers better four members of our team were **trained and went on to deliver equality, diversity and inclusion training** to all staff across the charity.

## January 2021

We helped carers to attend their **COVID-19 vaccination appointments** by providing support from our dedicated care workers and transport arrangements.

We **opened applications to our carer choices fund**, providing support for carers to help reduce the effect of the pandemic on their own health, wellbeing and opportunities.

## October 2020

We were able to **resume face-to-face** activities for young carers, organising a number of COVID-safe visits during half-term.

## December 2020

We **supported carers at Christmas** providing hampers and foodie treats along with organising festive virtual get togethers to make sure they knew that they were not alone.

## February 2021

As lockdown continued, we asked our supporters to **take part in our walk your walk for carers** virtual fundraising challenge.

## March 2021

We started to **deliver the advice, marketing and community engagement service** for adult carers in Norfolk as part of the Carers Matter Norfolk Partnership.

How we are...

## reducing isolation and loneliness

Caring for a friend or family member can make you feel very alone for many reasons. Reasons that are not always within your control.

The impact of feeling alone and with little contact with the outside world has been linked to premature death and an increased risk of dementia and other serious conditions affecting health and wellbeing.

Eight out of ten carers have felt lonely or socially isolated as a result of their caring role. The COVID-19 pandemic has only made this worse for carers. In response to our survey on the impact of the crisis on carers, 77% of carers felt even more lonely or isolated since the start of the pandemic. This rose to 80% of young carers or young adult carers.

Through our services we make sure carers have someone to talk to and can create vital connections with others.

" Sometimes it's hard – I'm a bit down. It just builds my spirits up a bit after speaking to Pat – we chat about different things – I miss that socialising... I definitely think they do help me to cope – I really do – I look forward to them.

"It feels it is my 'me' time and it's nice. "

Liz, on her conversations with one of our listening ear volunteers.



## What we did



**1,385**

Made 1,385 calls to 81 carers as part of our listening ear service giving carers the chance to talk to someone who cares.



**109**

Ran 109 carer groups and workshops giving 113 carers the opportunity to get together with others.



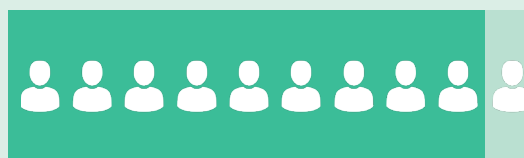
**91**

Organised 91 activities as part of the Norfolk young carers forum and five COVID safe trips for young carers.

## The difference we made



100% of carers attending virtual hubs reported that the group helped them feel better connected to other carers and to their community.



Nine out of ten of young carers who are part of the Norfolk young carers forum feel less isolated.



92% of young carers said spending time with other young carers helped them feel less alone.

How we are...

## reducing health inequalities

We are told day in, day out, that looking after someone who cannot cope without your support is hard. It can have a devastating effect on your own health and wellbeing.

Attending even routine medical appointments can be difficult for carers when they are looking after someone. Finding time to spend with friends, to relax, or take part in exercise can feel near impossible. Nearly nine out of ten carers say that caring has a negative impact on their own health.

The COVID-19 pandemic has driven carers closer to breaking point than ever before; 78% of carers have not been able to take a break from caring, a role which has increased for 76%. As a result 82% are feeling more stressed.

We work to reduce inequalities. Together with others we provide breaks for carers that suit them and help them to keep on top of their own medical and emotional needs.

"The break has enabled me to have time to myself to get out of the house knowing my husband is well looked after. It has helped me to relax and feel refreshed. I was becoming tearful and stressed, but now I have something to look forward to, this has helped my personal wellbeing immensely."

Tina\*, on a break made possible by support from a dedicated care worker.

\* name changed to protect the identity of the individual.

## What we did



342

Supported 342 carers when their physical or mental health was at crisis point or they could not attend their own health appointments.



64,526

Provided 64,526 hours of homecare so that carers are able to take a break.



200

Helped over 28 carers attend their COVID-19 vaccination appointments and delivered 200 carer care packs, including essential items such as PPE.

## The difference we made



84% of young carers part of the Norfolk young carers forum said their resilience and wellbeing had improved.



Nine out of ten carers accessing our services said our support has helped to maintain or improve their wellbeing.



83% of carers felt better supported in their caring role.

**How we are...**

## **increasing resilience and ability to care for longer**

**Carers are the hidden backbone of our society. It is often not a role that you expect. It's a role that is different for everyone and one that doesn't come with a manual.**

Looking after someone can be challenging. But being able to find the strength to overcome these challenges can help carers to avoid breakdown, maintain their relationships with friends and family and care for longer.

Every day 6,000 more people across the UK step up to care for a family member or friend. This saves the government an estimated £132billion every year. The COVID-19 pandemic has had a significant impact on the mental health of carers and one in four have reported being unable to cope with their situation.

We help people to plan ahead and provide support and training so that they are better equipped to take on their caring role.

**"The course covered all the things we struggle with as carers - food, sleep - and gave hints and tips about how to improve things. It's all about self-care really, how to look after yourself. I liked the fact I could dip in and out for ten minutes, 20 minutes. I'm much more patient now, I don't get angry as easily."**

Ian, on taking part in the Hope online programme.

## What we did



882

Registered 882 emergency plans so that carers know what to do if something happens that means they cannot care.



170

Delivered the Hope programme to 170 parent carers to boost their self-confidence and resilience, to help them cope.



18

Together with Don't Tone Alone supported 18 carers and the people they care for with the Mindfulness with Dementia project.

## The difference we made



76% of carers feel more confident in their caring role.



Seven out of ten of carers are more able to manage at home.



67% of carers are more able to cope with challenges and prevent them escalating.

How we are...

## increasing choice and control

We know that most people find themselves in caring roles without choosing to be there and the idea of being able to have a choice in anything, can feel far removed from daily life.

The COVID-19 pandemic and the restrictions in place has given us all just a tiny glimpse into what life can be like for carers; feeling like you no longer have any choices in your day-to-day life.

Too many carers are going without the support they need and all too often they are going without any support at all. But navigating "the system" can be complicated, tiring and time consuming.

Our vision is a world in which all carers have choices – in their own lives and for the people they care for.

We provide support and services to give carers information and options so they can make decisions – both for themselves and the people they care for.

"The laptop we purchased has been an absolute lifeline. It is enabling both the girls to be able to keep up with the work being set. Caring Together have made it possible for the girls to be able to do the things that any other child can do at this difficult time."

Mark\*, on the bursary provided to support his daughters' education.

\* name changed to protect the identity of the individual.



## What we did



**13,484**

Answered 13,484 calls to our carer helpline, providing vital information, advice and guidance.



**87**

Helped provide 87 young carers and young adult carers with devices so that they could keep up with their education and access virtual support.



**£40,613**

Provided £40,613 of bursaries to help reduce the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.

## The difference we made



83% of carers felt better supported in their caring role.



Seven out of ten carers are less likely to go to a GP as first port of call.



76% know who they can turn to in a crisis.

How we are...

## supporting carers earlier

Most people who are caring for someone don't recognise themselves as a carer. You might be a husband, wife, mother, father, partner, grandparent, son, daughter or friend.

Looking after someone can turn a carer's life upside down. Over one third of carers have given up work to care, resulting in many struggling to make ends meet. Young carers gain lower grades at school compared to their peers affecting their life chances.

We know that we cannot reach the 178,000 carers in our region alone. We work together with local education, healthcare and community organisations and businesses to raise awareness of how to identify and support carers and provide opportunity to demonstrate this commitment through our carer friendly tick award.

We place carers at the very heart of how we deliver information, services and campaign and, in collaboration with carers, created a carer voice and involvement plan to ensure their voices are heard. By using the carer voice, we challenge organisations to make sure that carers of all ages are consulted and have choices.

" I think the most beneficial thing about achieving the carer friendly tick award has been the identification of more young carers that we may not have known about, along with the recognition that we, as a school, do all we can to make sure that their school experience is a good one. "

Mohammed\*, on the benefits of the carer friendly tick award.

\* name changed to protect the identity of the individual.

## What we did



51

Made 51 carer friendly tick awards to recognise organisations' support for carers.



4,526

Issued 4,526 carer cards to help carers identify themselves and get support.



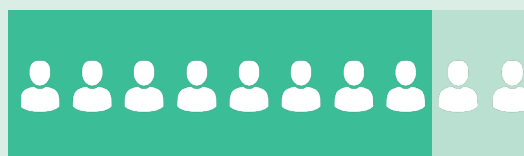
503

Enabled 503 carers to have their voices heard through surveys, forums and the media.

## The difference we made



95% of people who attended a carer awareness session reported an increased knowledge of carers and their needs and available services.



Eight out of ten carers say their role as a carer is now more recognised.



98% of carers felt heard.

## Our people

We believe that the combination of different life experiences, attributes and contributions from our colleagues makes the charity more effective, inclusive and a better place to work.

The challenges of the past year have meant that Caring Together really does mean caring together. Along with our 12 mental health first aiders, we have provided a variety of wellbeing support resources for our colleagues to help them to cope.

Despite these challenges, we have continued to develop our workforce with regular and varied training opportunities and are hugely proud of the nine members of our care team who were able to work towards external accreditations during the year.

As always, we cannot do this alone and our 44 strong team of volunteers have made a unique and valuable contribution, delivering 1,360 hours of support across the charity.

As part of our commitment to becoming a more equal, diverse and inclusive charity we launched a dedicated steering group and appointed an inclusion officer.

"I find the weekly email updates reassuring and thought the lovely touch of sending a 'thinking of you' card while I was on furlough was a really nice gesture.

"These kind of personal touches really do help boost staff morale."

Meyrem\*, member of the Caring Together team.

\* name changed to protect the identity of the individual.

## What we did



108

Trained 108 staff and volunteers in equality, diversity and inclusion, raising awareness of unconscious bias.



53

Grew our workforce welcoming 53 new people to the Caring Together team (and saying goodbye to 40).



800%

Increased the number of volunteers supporting the listening ear project by 800%, bringing the team to eight.

## The difference we made



95% of volunteers said they felt supported in their role.



Nine out of ten staff said they felt proud to work for Caring Together.



94% of staff said they felt confident in their role.

# Looking to the future

The coming year will continue to be challenging for charities. We are yet to see the full impact of the pandemic and the issues facing us before this remain; including a growing demand for our services.

Whilst we are mindful of these challenges, there are also a number of opportunities that we can realise through careful investment in and prioritisation of activities.

Our purpose and commitment to carers remains the same and our strategy is unchanged as we support carers, our people and the charity to recover from the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic.

## Our strategy

**Focussed growth**  
reaching more people

**Excellence**  
being the best we can

**Innovation**  
delivering future solutions for carers

## Our goals 2021/22

Develop and grow our relationships and partnerships to help us reach more people who can support or benefit from our activities, to reach carers earlier and to identify hidden carers.

Raise awareness of carers, the challenges they face and the support available through increasing the number of organisations with the carer friendly tick award and growing our engagement activities.

Implementing our carer voice and involvement plan to help evidence need, shape our services and influence others to ensure they respond to carers' own experiences.

Continue our digital transformation to improve our customers' experience.

Create a new workspace for our team that embodies the charity's brand and values to enhance our ways of working.

Establish fundraising as a sustainable and growing unrestricted income stream to enable us to support more carers.



## Our outcomes

Carers receive entitlements and support.

Carers are heard, recognised and valued.

Carers have more confidence in their caring role.

Carers' health and wellbeing has stopped deteriorating or improved.

Carers are supported in their life before, during and after caring.

## Our impact

Reduced isolation and loneliness.

Reduced inequalities.

Increased social value.

Ability to care for longer.

Increased choice, control and life chances.

Being supported earlier.

Increased resilience.

# Thank you

We exist to make sure that carers get the practical and emotional support that they need and we cannot do this without you; whether it is by donating, fundraising, volunteering, taking part in an event or championing the cause of carers. Whilst unfortunately many of our fundraising activities were cancelled due to the coronavirus crisis, from virtual challenges to Zoom quizzes, you found new and exciting ways to show your support for carers!

On behalf of everyone at Caring Together and the carers we support, thank you.



£4,664 raised

Elves from **Maxine Lester Lettings and Property Management** delivered 79 Christmas gifts to carers.



£1,288 raised

**Angela** from **Women on Wheels** rode 100 miles.



£1,048 raised

**Burwell Belles W.I.** spread kindness through making cakes and facemasks.



£3,613 raised

**Nine people** joined **#TeamTogether** skydiving 12,000ft.



£1,662 raised

**#TeamTogether** walked 1.8m steps to **walk their walk for carers**.



£707 raised

**301 balloons** pitted it out in our **Christmas virtual balloon race**.

## To help us support even more carers you can:

- ✿ Make a donation
- ✿ Organise a fundraiser
- ✿ Take part in an event or challenge
- ✿ Give a gift in memory of someone
- ✿ Support us in your workplace
- ✿ Leave a gift in your will
- ✿ Volunteer your time.

Our fundraising team are here to support you every step of the way.

**£9**

could enable a staff member to answer a call to our carer helpline.

**£30**

could help provide a young carer with a bursary for school resources.

**£60**

could train a listening ear volunteer to give carers someone to talk to.

**£175**

could provide a day of homecare to give a carer a break.

[caringtogether.org/donate](https://caringtogether.org/donate)

## We would like to thank the following organisations for supporting Caring Together:

- ✿ BBC Children in Need
- ✿ BGL Group
- ✿ Cambridgeshire Community Foundation
- ✿ Carers Trust
- ✿ CAST
- ✿ East of England Co-op Community Cares Fund
- ✿ Good Things Foundation
- ✿ Huntingdon Freeman's Trust
- ✿ Julia and Hans Rausing Trust
- ✿ Masonic Charitable Foundation
- ✿ Norfolk Community Foundation
- ✿ Quilter PLC
- ✿ Norfolk Community Foundation
- ✿ The Hinchingsbrooke Foundation
- ✿ The National Lottery Community Fund.



## Financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2021

### Statement of financial activities (including income and expenditure account)

	2021			2020
	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Total funds	Total funds
	£000	£000	£000	£000
<b>Income</b>				
<b>Donations and legacies</b>				
Donations and legacies	68.6	7.7	76.3	104.1
Grants receivable	10.6	752.2	762.8	967.2
<b>Income from charitable activities:</b>				
Care fees and contracts	3,024.6	-	3,024.6	2,651.2
Other charitable income	19.6	-	19.6	43.5
<b>Investment income</b>	1.6	-	1.6	2.2
<b>Other income</b>	105.0	-	105.0	-
<b>Total income</b>	3,230.0	759.9	3,989.9	3,768.2
<b>Expenditure</b>				
Costs of raising funds	89.9	-	89.9	51.4
Expenditure on charitable activities	3,132.1	753.9	3,886.0	3,765.6
<b>Total expenditure</b>	3,222.0	753.9	3,975.9	3,817.0
<b>Net income/(expenditure) before transfers</b>	8.0	6.0	14.0	(48.8)
<b>Net movement in funds for the year</b>	8.0	6.0	14.0	(48.8)
<b>Reconciliation of funds</b>				
Total funds brought forward	828.5	1.9	830.4	879.2
<b>Total funds carried forward</b>	836.5	7.9	844.4	830.4

Please see [caringtogether.org/about-us/annual-reports](https://caringtogether.org/about-us/annual-reports) for our full set of accounts for the year ended 31 March 2021.

## Balance sheet

		2021	2020
	Notes	£000	£000
<b>Fixed assets</b>			
Tangible assets	13	36.2	-
<b>Current assets</b>			
Debtors	14	542.4	410.7
Cash at bank and in hand		822.2	681.5
Total current assets		1,364.6	1,092.2
<b>Liabilities</b>			
Creditors falling due within one year	15	546.4	251.8
Provision for dilapidations		10.0	10.0
<b>Net current assets</b>		808.2	830.4
<b>Net assets</b>		844.4	830.4
<b>The funds of the charity</b>			
Unrestricted funds	16	836.5	828.5
Restricted funds	17	7.9	1.9
Total charity funds		844.4	830.4

The accounts have been prepared in accordance with the special provisions for small companies under Part 15 of the Companies Act 2006.

The financial statements were approved and authorised for issue by the trustees and signed on their behalf, by Stuart Evans and Alison Griffiths.



Stuart Evans  
Chair  
29 September 2021



Alison Griffiths  
Honorary treasurer  
29 September 2021

## Our trustees



### Stuart Evans - chair of trustees

Entrepreneur Stuart previously chaired the Arthur Rank Hospice and was a board member of the East of England Development Agency. He and his wife adopted three children and have first-hand experience of caring.



### Alison Griffiths – honorary treasurer

Alison, a chartered accountant, brings vast professional expertise to the board and was a director of taxation in international FTSE 100 groups. She is a trustee of Cambridgeshire Community Foundation.



### Christina Wells

Christina spent over 25 years working at a senior level in the public sector and has a wide range of experience, particularly within the NHS. Her interests include promoting the health and wellbeing of carers, developing carer friendly communities and safeguarding.



### Matthew Lester

Matthew is currently a director of Sunday Times and ESTA Gold Award winning Maxine Lester Residential Lettings and Property Management. He spent ten years as operations director for the Papworth Trust where he was responsible for service delivery by 200 staff.



### David Hipple

David brings considerable financial and general management skills to the charity having spent over 35 years as a chartered accountant and director of finance for a number of large and medium sized groups in both the public and private sector.

We welcomed four new trustees to the board in 2021 after the year-end.

### Mandy Hill

As managing director of Academic Publishing at Cambridge University Press, Mandy is skilled in delivering improved performance, strategic innovation and collaborative engagement.

### Christy O'Connell

Christy has worked in the legal sector for over ten years and is currently a managing associate in the corporate team at Linklaters LLP.

### Donna Talbot

As director of fundraising and communications at Arthur Rank Hospice, Donna has extensive experience in generating voluntary income from a variety of sources.

### Howard Tidman

Howard is a registered psychiatric nurse with 11 years' experience of supporting carers within the Norfolk and Suffolk Foundation Trust.

Please see our website for full biographies



# Our senior leadership team



## Miriam Martin – chief executive

Miriam has worked in the charity sector for over 20 years, including as chief executive at Action for Blind People, a UK-wide charity with a budget of £23mn, 900 staff and 400 volunteers, supporting 90,000 people each year.



## Melanie Gray – deputy chief executive

A qualified applied psychologist, Melanie has a wide range of sector experience and her skills include change management, project management, commissioning, research, consultancy and business development.



## Robert Keegan - director of finance and resources

Robert joined Caring Together in February 2021; he is a Chartered Management Accountant with 25 years' experience of financial management in the private and charitable sectors.



## Sarah Harvey – head of care services

Joining in November 2020, Sarah is an experienced senior manager in adult and child social care, having worked for the local authority, private and charitable organisations.



## Anna Bainbridge - head of people

With a background in psychology and the third sector, Anna has a broad range of experience covering contracts and partnerships, project management, grants and tenders, quality standards and people management.



## Andy McGowan - head of carer services

Andy has over 15 years' experience of carers' policy, awareness-raising and participation on a local and national level and was part of the national campaign to introduce legal rights for young carers.



## John Platten - digital transformation manager

John has a broad experience of delivering customer-centred digital services with a focus on user experience and change management in the academic, local government and property sectors.



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Caring Together Charity  
Charity Registration Number 1091522  
Company Registration Number 4379948

