



York Neighbours

...for that little bit of help

Annual Report of York Neighbours

October 2017 - September 2018



Registered Charity No. 1163768

Foreword from York Minster

One of the chief concerns for older people is losing their independence and becoming reliant on other people to do simple tasks; struggling to get out and about can also mean older people can become very lonely and isolated. York Neighbours provides a vital response to both these problems through its network of volunteers who do simple, practical tasks and maintain regular contact either through visits or on the telephone. This means that older people can maintain their independence and continue to live in their own homes knowing that help is there when needed.

York Minster has been delighted to support the work of York Neighbours for the last couple of years, not only with financial donations but also by helping to promote, celebrate and pray for the excellent work done by those who volunteer for the charity. We know that many people in the community at York Minster have benefitted hugely from the services provided by York Neighbours and so we have seen first hand how important York Neighbours is for the increasing number of older people in York and the surrounding area.

We look forward to continue working with and supporting York Neighbours through the many and varied activities at the Minster.

Canon Michael Smith, Veronica Pearson, and Tina Funnel

Letter from the Chair

As we reflect on our third year as a charity I am very aware of and grateful for the faithful support of so many without whom this charity would not exist – volunteers, staff, trustees, referring agencies, donors and, of course, the Neighbours themselves. They are all essential to the work of York Neighbours.

Our Annual Report contains, inevitably, lots of statistics – and as our nation struggles with its future we may feel overwhelmed by statistics – but each figure converts into individual people in need. It was the awareness of this need & its prevalence in our city that led to the development of our charity as highlighted in “Our History” on pages 5-6 of this report.

York Neighbours has the incredible privilege of serving the needs of the isolated and disabled elderly in our community. We help with small, maybe seemingly trivial, tasks but which are major struggles or even impossible for those with limitations, whatever their cause, and with no one to turn to for help. The peace of mind and gratitude for such people when a volunteer appears is no small thing.

We are now in our fourth year and we are aware there is much yet to do. We do need more volunteers and, alongside them, we need to make known more widely that we are here to help. We are longing to respond to the needs and pain of the isolated, lonely, anxious or depressed elderly people living in almost every street of our city.

Finally, I want to express my special appreciation and thanks to all the trustees and staff who have coped brilliantly in the face of 2 periods of maternity leave with all the adjustments that have been required.

Walter Stockdale
23rd February 2019

York Neighbours Report of the Board of Trustees

Reference and Administrative Information

Charity name: York Neighbours

Charity Registration Number: 1163768

Contact Details

Registered address: The Raylor Centre, James Street, York, YO10 3DW

Website: www.yorkneighbours.org.uk

Email: info@yorkneighbours.org.uk

Tel: 01904 891627

Board of Trustees

Dr. Walter Stockdale (Chair)

Paul Luxton (Treasurer)

David Casswell

Tessa Denbeigh (resigned January 2019)

Matt Nelson (appointed January 2019)

Lis Ramage

Wendy Smart (resigned May 2018, co-opted October 2018)

Rachel Thistlewood

Kelly Wheatley

Caroline Wilson

Eileen Green (September 2018 to October 2018)

Principal Bankers

CAF Bank Limited, 25 Kings Hill Avenue, Kings Hill, West Malling, Kent, ME19 4TD

Reserves Policy

The policy of York Neighbours is to hold an amount of reserves equal to the average expenditure over a six month period and for this amount and the financial risks of the charity to be reviewed every six months.

Structure, Governance and Management

York Neighbours is a Charitable Incorporated Organisation.

Each member of our Board of Trustees brings specific areas of expertise to the task of supporting York people aged over 65 within their own home, which gives us a detailed knowledge of the statutory framework of working with vulnerable people. It also provides us with excellent access to other agencies in the same field.

The experience of Board members – including Age UK York, safeguarding and social work, general practice, management of voluntary organisations, IT, community care, HR, welfare benefits and law – means we are well-equipped to deliver and develop our work.

The Board meets monthly to set objectives and policy and to oversee our work, with most Trustees also acting as hands on volunteers, enhancing their understanding of the nature of our work.

Objectives and Aims

The purpose of York Neighbours is to reduce social isolation for people over the age of 65 within the City of York and to support them in retaining their independence in their own home.

Our aim is to complement, not duplicate, other services - so we will refer on/signpost to other provision where possible.

We offer support in three main areas:

1. **Help with practical one-off tasks** – eg changing a lightbulb, small repair and maintenance jobs, disposal of broken or unwanted items, shopping during temporary illness, etc
2. **A regular phone call** to the most isolated who may not speak to anyone for days or even weeks
3. **Individual and group outings** – eg trips to the coast, garden centre, theatre, exhibitions or other places of interest.

Our History

York Neighbours began as a pilot project in 2012 in response to gaps in services for the over 65's in York. We discovered that people were reluctant to ask for help with small tasks and feared a loss of their independence.

We began as Belfrey Neighbours, supported by St Michael le Belfrey Church. As our vision to work city-wide developed we changed our name to York Neighbours and moved under the umbrella of One Voice York. We are a church-led initiative but positively welcome people of any or no faith as volunteers and users of our service. To avoid duplicating, or competing with, existing provision in the voluntary sector, we met with the Chief Officer at Age UK York and she agreed with our assessment of the needs and offered to work with us by establishing a Memorandum of Understanding. Today these links are maintained through Trustees from One Voice York and Age UK York.

The need for our services continues to be clear. We are growing rapidly, with more Neighbours and volunteers registering each week as we receive referrals from other charities and statutory services.

Achievements in 2017/18

Between October 2017-September 2018, our volunteers helped us to undertake:

214 one-off tasks;

1829 regular phone calls;

42 Neighbours joined one or more of our group outings

This totals 905 hours of volunteer support for some of the most isolated and vulnerable of York residents.

Public Benefit

Statistics show that York's ageing population is above the national average and therefore the issues we seek to address are going to increase considerably over the next 10-15 years. Our vision is to encourage the community to become a city of good neighbours, with a volunteer in nearly every street. As an intermediary and facilitator, York Neighbours offers a safe and supportive setting for people to help, and engage with, vulnerable older people in their neighbourhood.

We have a good reputation in the community and particularly with Adult Services, Age UK York and others, including the new social prescribing service. Feedback shows that we offer just what is needed to fill gaps in services, and our 'can do' attitude is appreciated.

We can also respond quickly to emergency situations such as when a carer is unexpectedly unavailable and has been unable to organise a stand-in, or an older person is advised to bring their bed downstairs but there is no-one to help. In severe weather, such as flooding or ice and snow, we can shop for people normally able to get out.

By working closely with older people and getting to know them, we can make it easier for them to ask for help sooner and for them to realise that a little assistance means more independence – a fall when attempting a task, or the frustration of not being able to

cope with small maintenance jobs, can lead to mental and emotional problems as well as physical ill-health and huge costs to health and social care services.

Neighbours tell us that it is often easier to ask a volunteer organisation for help rather than always bothering a neighbour, friend or relative which can affect the relationship. Contact with our volunteers helps Neighbours to feel more part of the community thanks to their ability to chat and engage with friends and neighbours without constantly having to ask for assistance.

A Trusted Service Provider

With the Care Act Statutory Guidance (March 2016), we are receiving increasing numbers of referrals from Social Services and other agencies. The Care Act 2014 (section 14) refers to preventative services – what is currently offered and what could be delivered in the future. This means that when Social Services come across older people who have no family, friends or neighbours to help them, and there is no funding or other ways of meeting the need, they can refer them to York Neighbours.

Several referrals have involved people being discharged from hospital. In one case, a woman had come home from an unexpected stay in hospital and had no food and no money in the house. Our volunteers were able to help our Neighbour to the bank and then to the supermarket, making the return home a little easier.

We have utilised our knowledge of other services available in York to signpost Neighbours to other services, including the Good Gym befriending and missions service, The Besom Project, The Carers' Centre and Age UK York.

Our model appears to address many of the issues covered by the Care Act 2014 by offering a community response to some of the problems of an ageing population. Our service works, is low cost and avoids duplication with other agencies.

As can be seen from our accounts York Neighbours annual running costs are low, similar to the annual cost of a place in a care home for just one of our Neighbours. Utilising community volunteers gives us the ability to increase capacity with minimal cost increase.

Our initial assessment visit when registering a new Neighbour is holistic and invariably leads to information on, or referral to, further support and services which will help to reduce isolation. Staff and volunteers are trained so that if they have any concerns about health, safety, unmet needs etc. our links with a wide range of related bodies mean that the Neighbour can be referred to the appropriate agency.

Strengths and Opportunities in our Community

York is relatively small and both statutory and voluntary agencies can easily work well together.

There is a real desire throughout York's churches to support local charities, and one of our Trustees represents One Voice York – the charitable umbrella for cross-denominational

churches in the city. It has been wonderful to have the support of the Minster community during this year. We are also supported by local shops and businesses and we plan to build on this.

Our team of volunteers includes social workers, nurses, and retired social and healthcare professionals, who enjoy being able to help in a practical way. Frustrated by seeing people in practical need, but often unable to help within the constraints of their work role they are delighted to be involved as volunteers. Their wealth of experience means they are well aware of the great need facing older people today. We continue to recruit and train working professionals and newly retired who find a sense of purpose and the opportunity to give back to the community at the same time as retaining the freedom that retirement can offer.



Each year when term begins in September, we experience a flurry of enthusiastic students signing up to volunteer through the University of York's Students in Community scheme. We are thankful for the team involved in our three main areas of service, as well as office volunteering and fundraising. In May 2018 representatives from Langwith College met with office staff. Langwith College have been fundraising for us over the past two years organising events on and off campus and are aiming to raise £2000 for York Neighbours. Office staff and trustees attended the Freshers

Fair in September and a high proportion of our student volunteers this term have come from Langwith College. Neighbours and volunteers benefit from these opportunities for intergenerational involvement.

As Chair of the All Party Parliamentary Group for Ageing and Older People, local MP Rachael Maskell was interested to visit York Neighbours in May to learn more about how we make a difference to the quality of life for older people in York.



Neighbours

It is great to see the vision of York Neighbours being realised on a daily basis. Our volunteers make a real difference to people who are feeling isolated, lonely, frustrated and often depressed. During the period between October 2017/September 2018, 88 new Neighbours registered.

We work to make a lasting difference to people's lives rather than just alleviating the symptoms or solving current problems. We do this in various ways:

On receiving a referral, or a call from someone in need of help, we conduct an assessment visit at the home, which takes about an hour. Undertaken by a trained volunteer or our staff, the visit serves as a risk assessment and ensures that both Neighbours and volunteers are safe and that we can offer an appropriate response.

This assessment visit is comprehensive and holistic. We recognise that people from other caring bodies, who have already been to see a Neighbour, are often acting in specific, skilled roles with greater time restraints and therefore may not have time to address the bigger picture. For example, the Neighbour might be eligible for Attendance Allowance or benefit from a particular aid, or their mobility may be improved by a simple visit to a chiropodist.

Many new Neighbours we meet do not know about the transport schemes available in York or they may be lonely and unaware of social and support networks nearby. During the assessment we talk through these things and give the relevant leaflets and information, or with their consent refer them on, if appropriate, and this can make a lasting difference to their lives.

Although some older people only ring us occasionally for help with a one-off task, they tell us that just knowing there is someone they can ring if they are 'stuck' reassures them. It can also encourage family members/carers who know they can ring us if they are going away or fall ill.

Activities

Help with one-off tasks

Our volunteers help with a wide variety of one-off practical tasks. Examples include: changing a light bulb, taking down curtains and then re-hanging them once cleaned, defrosting a freezer, setting up a new phone or help with remote controls, resetting central heating thermostats, small household repairs, moving heavy items, getting something out of the loft and one-off gardening jobs.

A Neighbour whose husband had recently gone into care needed help to dismantle a wardrobe. She approached York Neighbours and a volunteer attended within a week. Our Neighbour said, *"He was very kind and sympathetic. He worked really hard, and I appreciated his help"*.

Another Neighbour commented on the security it gives her knowing she can call if she needs help and cannot find it elsewhere: *"Just before Christmas, I had an important appointment and, at short notice, requested help from York Neighbours. A volunteer was able to go with me, and kindly waited while I attended my appointment and then took me home. I used to feel anxious, but it is a great comfort to know this help is available especially as I am on my own. York Neighbours' volunteers are kind, sociable and helpful – what more could one ask for?"*

Regular Phone Calls

Some people can go for days, or even weeks, without talking or chatting socially with someone. Regular phone calls from York Neighbours make a lasting difference, helping



people to feel less isolated and lonely and more part of the local community. Our team of office volunteers, many of them students, make fortnightly or monthly calls as requested. Neighbours tell us they really look forward to this contact. These calls are a lifeline for some of our Neighbours as they know we will follow up if we are unable to make contact with them. For those that find it hard to ask for help, the regular phone calls

provide an opportunity for them to reach out.

A Neighbour we call regularly had a fault on her phone line and being unable to get through to her, we managed to connect through her warden call, and she was able to sort out her phone line. She said: *"how reassuring to know that you would get someone to check that I am okay"*.

During the period of this report, volunteers helped us to make 1829 regular calls, totalling 323 hours of call time!

Outings

We organise individual and group outings for people with consideration for their various needs and difficulties. These needs often prevent them from taking part in other organised trips, maybe because they have poor mobility, are wheelchair users, have continence issues, dementia, mental health or confidence problems.

Volunteers use their own cars in order to tailor arrangements to each person's need. The trips might include helping someone with limited mobility to shop for items other than

general household goods, offering transport for appointments and at the same time providing support in what might be a stressful situation, or perhaps assisting someone to place flowers on a loved one's grave.



We aim to help Neighbours feel at ease and supported. We also arrange group outings, meeting up at such venues as a garden centre or farm shop for lunch and chat.

"Everybody was so friendly and the driver and helper were kind and I met some people I knew. The food was superb", was the feedback from one Neighbour after one of our Christmas lunches in 2017. Another Neighbour said following the

Pantomime at the Theatre Royal "It was brilliant, it made my Christmas, I will never forget the hospitality and kindness".

Throughout the year 2017/18, group outings have included:

- Christmas lunches at a local garden centre
- Outing to York Theatre to see the Pantomime.

In total 42 Neighbours took part in these trips.

After a few outings Neighbours and volunteers start to get to know each other and it becomes a real social event. For many, it's a treat to have a drive out and see spring flowers or autumn colours they would otherwise miss, choose from a menu and eat in company rather than a ready microwave meal prepared by a carer who has no time to stay and chat. Not only do the outings offer something to look forward to, they also provide memories to think or talk about afterwards.

Feedback and evaluation is very important to us. Within a few days we contact all the Neighbours who came along, and their suggestions and comments guide us in our choice of venues and activities for the year ahead.

Volunteers

Without our volunteers York Neighbours would not be. They contribute their time, energy and skills to help make a real difference to some of the most vulnerable older people in York. Our volunteers come from all walks of life, some working, some retired, some students. All share a desire to contribute to their community.

In 2017/18 we recruited 25 volunteers. This was mostly through word of mouth or via our website, bringing our total number of volunteers to 60. We held seven training sessions during the year for both new and experienced volunteers. Apart from giving people valuable insight into safeguarding, these sessions present a good opportunity for new volunteers to meet and hear from experienced volunteers. Volunteers also attended a Dementia Awareness training session which was hosted for us by Dementia Friends from the Alzheimer's Society. *"What impacted me the most was how a greater awareness of dementia could enhance the quality of life for the individuals living with the condition",*

says one volunteer. Giving volunteers the opportunity to learn more about issues which face older people is something York Neighbours is always seeking to develop.



Innovative and Flexible

The way to volunteering at York Neighbours starts with an application form followed by an informal interview, DBS check and training. Once this process is completed the volunteers are ready to

begin working with us. At York Neighbours we do not ask for a regular commitment. This is attractive to those who work full-time, or are away from home, those who are at university and therefore away from York for weeks or months at a time, or busy parents, and those retired people who don't want to be tied down.

In the office at the Raylor Centre we enjoy regular volunteer support – answering the phones, making regular calls to Neighbours, working with the database and providing us with information and help on which we can base decisions and develop.

The majority of volunteers help with requests for assistance with the practical one-off tasks. We email exact details of what is required and when, and only volunteers who are able to help need to reply. This flexibility means that volunteers are not faced with tasks outside their skill or comfort level and, if short of time, they can choose tasks which can be easily completed on the way to or from work or when children are at school or nursery.

Our work also makes a positive difference to the lives of our volunteers.

Volunteers who are new to York, or have just retired, or parents working at home or caring for young children have found working with York Neighbours has been a great way of meeting new people (other volunteers and Neighbours) and gaining a sense of purpose and fulfilment.

We are able to provide valuable work experience, skills and training for students or unemployed office volunteers which helps build a c.v. and can then provide a reference when they apply for work.

It can be hard for younger people to get involved in their local community, particularly if they know they are only in York for 3-4 years, and volunteering with York Neighbours gives them this opportunity as well as helping to combat the negative messages about younger people often portrayed by the media.

All volunteers complete induction and safeguarding training before making a visit. In the past 12 months we have supplemented our training sessions with those offered by associated charities, such as offering dementia awareness, welfare benefits, moving and handling etc.

Last but not least, our volunteers gain in all sorts of ways through their contact with our Neighbours, enjoying outings and sharing life stories and experience together.

Funders and supporters

The following trusts, organisations and private businesses have supported us during the 2017/18 financial year (1st October 2017 to 30th September 2018).

Ambiente Tapas
Arlish & Chambers
Clifton PCC
Dringhouses Church Women's Fellowship
First Fruits
Forest of Galtres Golf Club EGGs Section
Friargate Quakers
G & R Henderson
Gwyneth Forrester Trust
Joseph Rowntree Foundation
Langwith College (York University)
Paristamen
Persula Foundation
Queens Hotel
St. James The Deacon Church
Tang Hall Big Local
Tesco
Two Ridings (Comic Relief)
Waitrose
Westhorpe Methodist Women
York Common Good Trust
York Minster

A big thank you goes out to them and to our many individual supporters.

Treasurer's Report

This is the third year for York Neighbours as a charity and financially the organisation is on a firm footing. Almost 80% of the income comes through grants. Some donors restrict their grants so that we must use them only for the stated purpose. First Fruits and their founders G&R Henderson have again supported us this year with a grant that has covered over 90% of the cost of the rent and rates of the office in the Raylor Centre on James Street. The office has enabled a professional service to be given.

Our computer equipment has been enhanced through a grant from Comic Relief. All computer equipment is depreciated over 3 years, which shows in the total assets of £935.

The grant from Comic Relief also funded salaries, volunteer, office and promotions costs. The grants from Tang Hall Big Local and Woodthorpe & Dringhouses Ward of City of York Council have been used to support people in those particular areas of York City. The Persula Foundation grant has been used to help fund the co-ordinator's salary.

The other grants shown on the previous page have been unrestricted. This means that the charity is free to spend them on whatever it thinks is the most appropriate. This grant money is then added to the donations received by individuals, who donate either directly or through Local Giving. There are more than 80 individuals who have donated directly during the year and over 20 have donated via Local Giving.

Salary and office costs make up the largest part of the expenditure, which is then followed by stationery, postage and telephone/internet charges. This is as expected as communicating with Neighbours and volunteers by telephone, e-mail and post is a large and essential part of what we are here to do.

The Reserves Policy is to hold an amount of reserves (unrestricted funds) equal to the average expenditure over a 6 month period and for this amount and the financial risks of the charity to be reviewed every 6 months. These risks include the chance that a grant may not be renewed or that there is a short term deficit whilst waiting for a promised grant to be made available. At the end of the financial year 6 months of expenditure amounted to just over £17,000 and with unrestricted funds available in the bank of over £35,000 the Trustees have no concerns.

The debtor in the accounts is HMRC as they owe York Neighbours the net amount of Statutory Maternity Pay (SMP) less tax, which can only be claimed at the end of the Government tax year (5th April 2019). The liability in the accounts is the pension payment due in September 2018, but paid in October 2018 (financial year 2018-19) and costs of room hire and postage at the Raylor Centre incurred in 2017-18, but only paid in 2018-19.

The Accounts have been drawn up using the Receipts and Payments method, as approved by The Charity Commission for a charity of this size. There are no funds in deficit at the year end. York Neighbours is most grateful to Alan Greenwood FMAAT who has kindly given his skills and time without charge to conduct the independent examination of this year's accounts.

Paul Luxton, Treasurer

York Neighbours CIO Charity Number 1163768

Receipts and Payments Account

For the year ended 30th September 2018

	Unrestricted Funds 2017-18	Restricted Funds 2017-18	Total 2017-18	2016-17
Receipts				
Donations, Legacies	£7,407	NIL	£7,407	£5,947
Grants	£29,454	£11,700	£41,154	£32,346
Debt Recovered	NIL	NIL	NIL	£426
HMRC Repayment	£3,033	NIL	£3,033	NIL
Total Receipts	£39,894	£11,700	£51,594	£38,719
Payments				
Salaries	£30,818	£3,486	£34,304	£20,095
Salary Administration	£561	NIL	£561	£364
Rent & Rates	£277	£3,600	£3,877	£4,281
Other Expenses	£2,346	£3,592	£5,938	£4,408
Total Payments	£34,002	£10,678	£44,680	£29,148
Net Receipts	£5,892	£1,022	£6,914	£9,571
Cash Funds Brought Forward			£30,503	£20,932
Cash Funds Carried Forward			£37,417	£30,503
Details of Restricted Funds				
	B/F from 2106-17	Received	Used	C/F to 2018-19
Tang Hall Big Local	£87	£400	£487	NIL
Woodthorpe & Dringhouses Ward	£542	NIL	£542	NIL
First Fruits	NIL	£1,800	£1,800	NIL
Persula Foundation	NIL	£1,500	£1,500	NIL
Two Ridings (Comic Relief)	NIL	£5,000	£4,549	£451
G & R Henderson	NIL	£3,000	£1,800	£1,200
Total	£629	£11,700	£10,678	£1,651

Statement of Assets and Liabilities at 30th September 2018

	2017-18	2016-17
Unrestricted Funds	£35,766	£29,874
Restricted Funds	£1,651	£629
Represented by Cash at Bank	<u>£37,417</u>	<u>£30,503</u>
Other Monetary Assets (Debtor)	<u>£3,236</u>	NIL
Fixed Assets	<u>£935</u>	£700
Liabilities	<u>£269</u>	NIL

Signed - Paul Luxton, Treasurer

23rd February 2019