



# Annual Review

2019-20



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# A message from the Chair and Chief Executive

**We exist to support and represent those in East Sussex who care for a relative, friend or neighbour who couldn't manage without their help. Caring can be demanding, isolating and stressful – we're committed to ensuring no one is left to care alone.**

Looking back, it is the end of the 2019–20 financial year that immediately stands out – the start of the Coronavirus pandemic in early 2020. Sadly the pandemic was a huge blow for too many carers, in a stroke amplifying all the challenges of caring. We were able to reconfigure our work at pace and the team rapidly adapted to new ways of working remotely, ensuring we were still there for carers during this unprecedented time. We are proud to have maintained all our services and to have developed new support for isolated carers during the pandemic. We commend the Care for the Carers team for their dedication and commitment, and thank them for all their hard work.

In October 2019, we began delivery of a new contract with East Sussex County Council and the NHS, as the Carers Centre for East Sussex for the next 5 ½ years. This brought some stability, but also the challenge of adapting to a reduced contract value. We have continued to manage a gradual move to a more diverse funding base without reducing our services to carers. This would not be

possible without the support of our volunteers, donors and funders – you have our sincere thanks.

We are particularly honoured to have been chosen by Catharine House Trust to take forward the legacy of their work. The Trust closed this year, after over 30 years of providing grants to support health and wellbeing. Having helped many carers over the years, the Board decided to pass its remaining funds to Care for the Carers. It is a privilege to receive this investment into our work, which will enable us to increase the much needed support available to local carers at a crucial time.

**Chris Raper**  
Chair of the Board of Trustees

**Jennifer Twist**  
Chief Executive

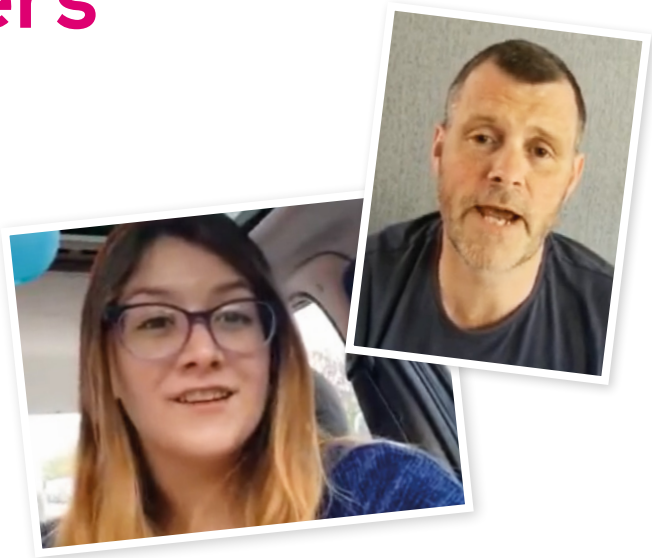


# Coronavirus and East Sussex carers

Government measures to control the virus came into place in March 2020. It was immediately clear to us that this unprecedented event would significantly impact carers, most of whom were already under pressure and juggling multiple responsibilities. Many carers also experience isolation or their own vulnerabilities, and would be doubly impacted by living through lockdown.

Our priority was to act swiftly to adapt our services and the way they were delivered. It was crucial that carers could continue to access support, and that our work did not put carers, staff or volunteers at risk. The organisation was significantly stretched, but we successfully adapted all services to online or telephone delivery, enabled all staff to work from home and launched new services to respond to the changing needs of carers.

- Our new “Carers in Touch” service was developed at pace to enable regular telephone contact with carers at risk of social isolation.
- Our new annual Carers Voices Conference would move online, to ensure that carers’ voices were heard during the pandemic. We increased our collaboration with partner organisations and embraced technology, helping us to keep in touch.



As was the case for many charities, we faced a loss of fundraising income during the pandemic. We are hugely grateful to all of our funders, supporters and partners who enabled us to adapt at pace and weather the storm.

*“Thank you so much for the counselling sessions, they have been intensely and immensely good for me. COVID added extraordinary pressure to what became an intense and distressing caring role which because of COVID was a role I had to do alone. These have been extraordinary times and the counselling has been sanity saving! Life is still hard for those I care for and for some getting harder. It is not going to be easy but I feel better equipped for it.”*

# Our Impact in 2019/20



7,732

carers accessed support in 2019-20



1,234

carers signed up for the carers card this year



68,200

carers in East Sussex



2 in 10

of our services are funded through donations



256

Carer Ambassadors



36,000

visits to our website



234

carers are members of the Carers Voices Network



10,000

carers receive CareLine magazine



7,550

followers on social media

# Support, advice and guidance

We provide a single point of contact, Carers Hub, which carers can reach by phone, email, text, via the website or by dropping in to the Carers' Centre. Our specialist team ensures carers get the support they need quickly, whether it be through Care for the Carers' own services or the range of services available from our partners across the county.

***"You have been more helpful in this single call than anything I have had in the last three years."***

Regular Directions sessions enable support workers to provide one-to-one support, advice and guidance to carers, near to their home or within a carer's home when necessary.

Our counselling services, Time to Talk and, launched in September 2019, Teen Talk, provide emotional support to carers and young carers. These services reduce feelings of social isolation and improve the health and wellbeing of carers.

***"I was losing the ability to cope in my caring role because of the stress that I was under. Since the counselling I have much better been able to cope by not getting so worked up about things. Because my self-esteem has improved I am much happier within myself so our relationship has improved too."***

***"The counsellor has helped me through a very difficult time. I would say she's saved my life."***

**7,732**

carers across East Sussex received information, advice and support



**174**

adult and young carers accessed our Time to Talk and Teen Talk counselling services

**99%**

of carers received a response within five working days

**464**

carers accessed one-to-one specialist support, advice and guidance

**1,486**

were newly identified carers

## CASE STUDY

# Caring through the pandemic



**Ben is a carer who has looked after his wife for 17 years. Here Ben reflects on and writes about how the pandemic has affected his caring role and his wife.**

"It's impossible to reflect on 2020 without doing so through the prism of the Coronavirus, doubly so for carers.

In normal conditions there are things my wife can do, things she can't, then there are things she can do with help or support. This last is the hardest, because it is key to the delicate balance between caring and supporting as much independence as possible. When you get used to someone being fragile and vulnerable it's easy to smother them and hard not to be afraid that you're not doing enough.

Fear of getting it wrong has been pretty intense since March. My wife, like many others, was advised to remain indoors for several months, and even now she has been told she should go to only a very limited number of places. The fact that it left me doing all the shopping was fine. The fact that I was doing so while acutely conscious that I was the only possible source of transmission for a potentially fatal

virus to which she was extremely vulnerable made me -makes me- extremely careful around others.

It's also an interesting challenge to try caring for someone you are not supposed to go within 6 feet of, as that was one of the strictures of shielding during the height of the crisis. Keeping 2 metres away from the person you share a small 1 bed with is hard enough without having to manage their medication and respond to their constant pain.

I think my mental health has suffered more than anything over the last six months and I also think that is where I've benefited most from Care for the Carers. They have connected me with short term counselling on several occasions and while this is not ongoing it has in various ways equipped me with the tools to manage better during this time than I might otherwise have done."

***Ben Moore lives in Eastbourne. When Ben is not caring, working or looking after their pets, he enjoys writing and audio books.***



# Groups and activities

The charity delivered 201 monthly carers' groups attended by 1728 carers.

Carers' Information and Advice Groups (CIAGs) offer carers new to the caring role an opportunity to meet one another and access information, advice and support. Our monthly evening group enables working carers to get together at a time convenient to them. Carers' Wellbeing groups are the 'next step' after attending a CIAG for 12 months, providing ongoing peer support.

Carers focusing on specific needs or interests are available, including 'Making Memories' Dementia Groups and a monthly Mental Health carers' group

*"I don't know what we would have done without CFTC. We meet up a lot, have good chats and a good laugh, chat about our problems, help one another, phone if anything is needed."*

for carers of people with mental health issues. The Young Adult Carers group offers opportunities for carers aged 16-25 to relax, socialise and access support. Donations this year have made it possible to provide additional vocational support and social activities for "YACs" (as they have named themselves!) including bowling trips and partnering with the 'Time to Shine' music project (read more on page 23).



Making Memories dementia groups

Mental Health Carers groups

Young Adult Carers groups

Evening Carers groups

Carers Information and Advice groups

Carers Wellbeing groups



*"Many thanks for arranging the tickets, was lovely to have an afternoon when we could forget our problems."*  
Carer who attended a Blood Brothers show

Our popular Carers' Activities Programme, funded by donations from mainly local trusts, give carers a much needed break, some fun and an opportunity to socialise with one another. Activities have included organised outdoor games for Young Adult Carers, photography workshops, afternoon teas, cinema, theatre, wellbeing and pamper days and Christmas lunches for all our carers groups.

*"It was so nice to meet you today. I'm just writing to say thank you so much for this outing. I hadn't realised that I haven't been anywhere simply for pleasure (except cinema) for a very long time. I had a wonderful time. The house and gardens were really worthwhile and just the right size for the day! Please pass on my sincerest thanks to the organisers who paid for us. It has rejuvenated me."*  
Carer who attended Great Dixter House and Gardens.



**1,728**  
carers attended  
201 carers' groups



**73**  
Young Adult Carers (YACs)  
are registered on our  
closed Facebook group



**20**  
YACs from across the  
County were supported  
at our specialist groups



# Tools and resources

All of our work involves equipping carers with the tools and resources that will support them to manage their caring role.

These include practical tools to help in everyday situations, such as Wellness Recovery Action Planning courses, Carers Groups providing peer support and creative workshops and learning. Our Carers Groups aim to equip carers with skills and information on a wide range of topics, including mindfulness, managing stress, first aid and emergency planning.

Our Carers' Card offers discounts to carers from a wide range of businesses in East Sussex. Offers are from diverse businesses ranging from food and drink, health, fitness and wellbeing, legal and financial, and retail. These local partners pledge their recognition of carers. The card also identifies holders as a carer, and links with a back-up care plan with the Council.

*"It's been a great way for me to support local Carers and their families via Care for the Carers, while at the same time making my own business more visible to those that might need the services I supply."*

Local business owner, Hazel Curtis, Holistic Therapy & Weleda Wellbeing Advisor



31

carers accessed respite through the Healthcare Appointments Respite Grant, enabling them to attend healthcare appointments, training courses or engagement opportunities

1,234

carers signed up for the Carers Card

182

businesses signed up to offer discounts to carers



*"This has been the highlight of my lockdown. Saturday mornings won't be the same now."*

This year, working with arts, education and events organisation 18 hours, we ran two free Photographer in Residence photography courses for carers. The courses gave carers the opportunity to explore their caring role and share experiences of caring through a camera lens. It was also an opportunity for carers to learn about photography and build photography skills, working with inspirational local photographer, John Cole.

We also administer two grants. The Small Grants for Carers fund supports community groups that help carers – both to set up and develop their offer and the Healthcare Appointment Respite Grant enables carers to attend healthcare appointments, training courses or engagement opportunities.

*"I can't thank you enough for the break I had [that the grant funded]. What a lovely hotel. I was so lucky with the weather too! Loved swimming and sitting by the pool."*



*"The whole experience has been uplifting. Loved the practical exercise. The group is so friendly and makes a lovely learning session."*



# Awareness, information and communication

We led awareness campaigns during the year including Carers Week, Carers Rights Day and Young Carers Awareness Day, in partnership with local partners, organisations and businesses.

Our website is often the first point of call for carers and professionals who wish to know more about local services and how to access support. During the year, we wrote and published regular news stories and content for carers to ensure the site is engaging and an up-to-date resource.

Our communications include CareLine, the quarterly magazine keeping local carers updated with information about caring and support available. In addition, our monthly e-newsletter continues to grow and offers opportunities for carers to get involved in local and national consultations as well as information about campaigns, policy updates, events, training and activities.

As part of our 'Building a Carer Friendly Community' programme we work with local businesses and organisations, supporting them to become more carer-aware, for people who access



*"The training was incredibly helpful and I came away feeling very empowered and comfortable around giving support to carers."*

their products and services and their own employees who are carers themselves. We also work with professionals and organisations in the health and social care sector.

Our 'Think Carer' training focuses on raising carer awareness and has evolved into a bespoke programme which is in high demand in health and social care, commercial and voluntary sectors across East Sussex. Through this training we identify Carer Ambassadors who join us in supporting the development of a more carer-friendly East Sussex and are the 'go to person' for carers' issues in their organisation or community.

*"The Think Carer training gave a very clear, factual overview of carers nationally and in East Sussex, their needs and services/support available."*



2,500

carers and professionals reached with our monthly e-newsletter



416

volunteers and professionals attend Think Carer awareness training through 33 training sessions



10,000

carers receive CareLine magazine



36,000

visits to our website



256

Carer Ambassadors building a carer-friendly community



7,550

followers on social media



Our social media activities have increased reach to a more diverse range of carers via Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and YouTube.



# Engagement and representation

The Carers Voices Network offers opportunities for carers from across the county to share their views, experiences and needs, and to influence decision making around issues that impact on their lives.

Live issues experienced by carers being understood through our support work enables us to identify themes and ensure carers' voices influence our own service delivery and are represented in our contributions to strategic debate with and for carers. Key engagement debates are shared with all carers' Wellbeing Groups, ensuring they are informed and empowering carers to have their say.

***"It was good to hear what others had to say. As it was my first forum, very enlightening – I felt good giving my viewpoint and sharing with others."***

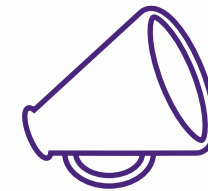
In 2019 Care for the Carers held countywide Carers Voices Forums in February and August. Carers and a wide range of professionals and volunteers attended, and our keynote speakers included representatives from Carers UK, Adult Social Care and the NHS.

The forums give carers the opportunity to explore and share issues important to them, to contribute to shaping services and local strategy and to build their networks. As experts by experience, Carers Voices Network members value being heard and seeing their feedback improving services for carers and those they care for.

The forums also raise the profile of Care for the Carers' work and build strong partnerships with colleagues across health, social care and the voluntary sector. Collaborating with social services, NHS, local charity partners and community organisations, we work together to achieve positive change and reach new carers.

***"You told us that agencies in East Sussex don't communicate well with one another. It's clear that there needs to be a change and it's time to do something different."***

Health and social care partner



## 234

carers are members of the Carers Voices Network



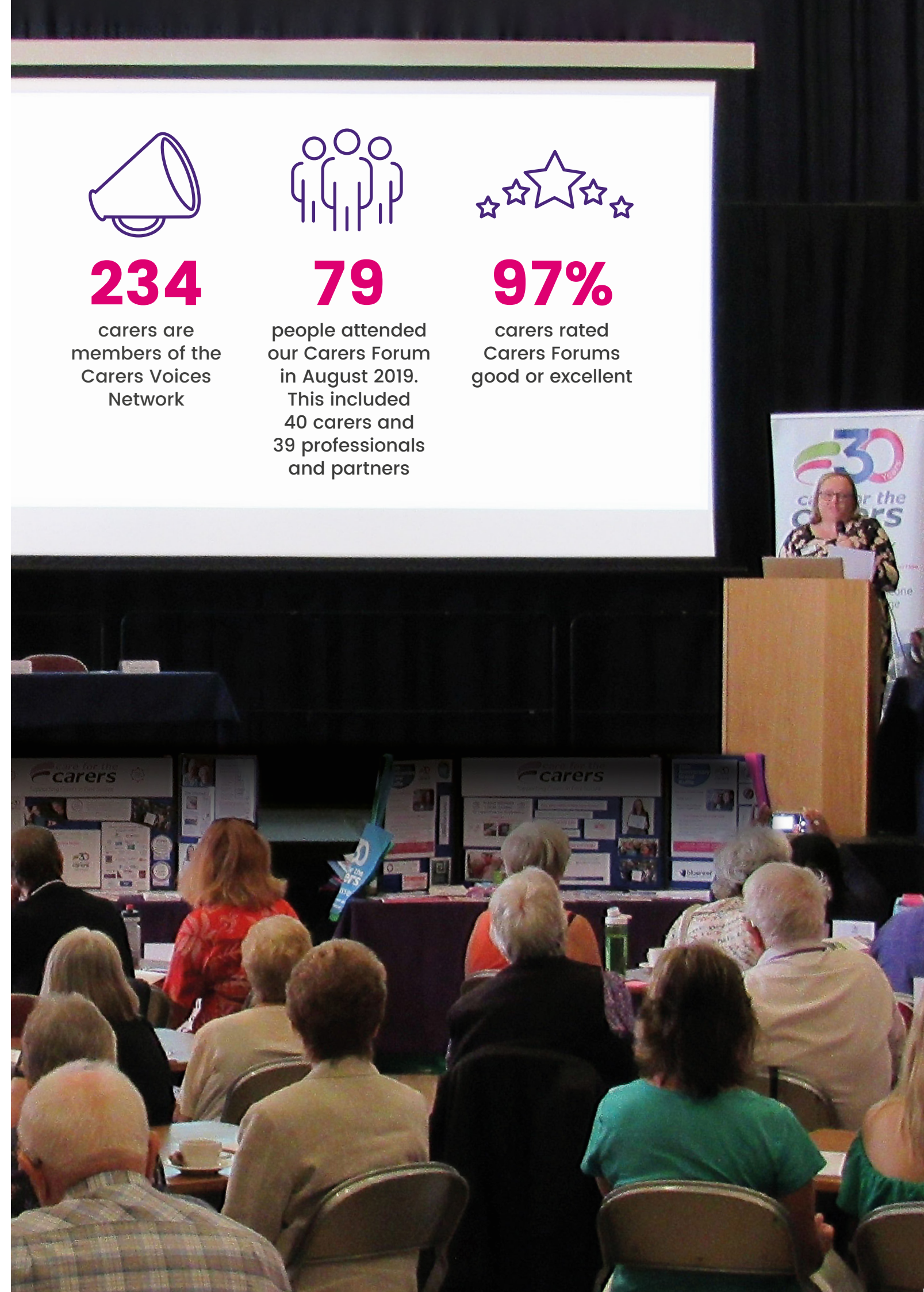
## 79

people attended our Carers Forum in August 2019. This included 40 carers and 39 professionals and partners



## 97%

carers rated Carers Forums good or excellent





# Governance and management

The charity has a Board of Trustees who are all volunteers. Since Care for the Carers is also a Charitable Company, our Trustees are also our Directors.

The Board governs our organisation, setting the overall strategic direction. The Board delegates the day to day management of the charity to our Chief Executive and small management team.

Most of our Board have personal experience of caring, as well as bringing a wide range of professional skills and expertise to the organisation. We thank our Trustees for their support, commitment and dedication to the cause.

## Trustees in 2019–20

- **Chris Raper** (*Chair*)
- **Mandy Curtis** (*Vice Chair*)
- **Jenny Ballard**
- **Sara Geater**
- **Alan Botterill**
- **Susan Lilja**  
(from 26th September 2019)
- **Polly Evans**  
(from 24th October 2019)
- **Stephen Lloyd**  
(until 26th September 2019)

*"I'm so grateful for Care for the Carers, a wonderful organisation and thank you for your support."*

This financial year saw a major transition for the organisation as we began a new 5 ½ year contract with East Sussex County Council and the NHS, as the Carers Centre for the County. Managing the transition, and reduced value of the contract, was a key focus for both our Board and Management Team during the year. Alongside this the Board has continued to prioritise fundraising, as part of its long term strategy to transform the organisation's income and achieve a more diverse – and sustainable – funding base.



## CASE STUDY

# Seaside Medical Centre

Seaside Medical Centre achieves Carer Friendly Award.

As part of our Think Carer initiative that focuses on building carer-friendly communities, Seaside Medical Centre achieved a Carer Friendly Award for their support to carers. The Practice raises awareness and refers patients who are looking after someone to Care for the Carers. The Centre has 11,500 patients and aims to identify patients in their caring roles as early as possible.

The staff at the centre took part in our Think Carer training, and then went on to set up processes to ensure that the Practice is carer-friendly. New initiatives include starting and building a carers' register and providing clear and dedicated information and contact details for patients in the Practice. Claire Fenwick and Jane Willard are care leaders in the practice, responsible for identifying carers, raising awareness of the service through practice communications and working with the Patient Group to develop and promote the service.



"We signpost our patients to Care for the Carers who are a dedicated charity with an excellent team in East Sussex that provide support to unpaid carers, we are promoting this service at every opportunity. It's thanks to the surgery team and our dedicated Patient Group for their hard work in promoting Care for the Carers that made this award possible."

*"Sometimes carers only identify when they are in a crisis situation, we feel strongly as a practice that we need to explore all ways possible in screening for carers, so that they have access to the support available to them as early as possible."*

Jane Willard, Seaside Medical Centre

Seaside Medical Centre in Eastbourne provides medical services to 11,500 patients. [www.seasidemedicalcentre.co.uk](http://www.seasidemedicalcentre.co.uk)



# Our finances at a glance

Care for the Carers was in a good financial position at the end of 2019–20, with cash balances of £551,966 and reserves of £1,724,732.

This year, the charity received a hugely generous gift from Catharine House Trust, made up of a shareholding investment and cash funds totalling £1,489,687. This additional income will be held in a designated fund, with the sole purpose to increase activity that supports carers. It is the substantial reason for the significant increase in cash balances and reserves. We thank the Trust’s former Trustees unreservedly for this tremendous support – please see page 22 to read more.

Our main sources of regular income during the year were grants and donations. Grant funding decreased by £90,250 to £671,293. This reduction can be principally attributed to the impact of a full year of reduced funding from East Sussex County Council/NHS. Income from donations also decreased somewhat – by £6,305 to £41,725. The year end result is a surplus of £1,289,135.



*“I don’t know what we would have done without CFTC. We meet up a lot, have good chats and a good laugh, chat about our problems, help one another, phone if anything is needed.”*

Care for the Carers continues to look to one funding stream for the majority of its income: our core work commissioned by East Sussex County Council and the NHS. Trustees acknowledge the risk inherent in relying on one main funding stream. We continue to prioritise diversifying the organisation’s funding and increased our fundraising income from £89,009 last year to £102,107 in 2019/20.

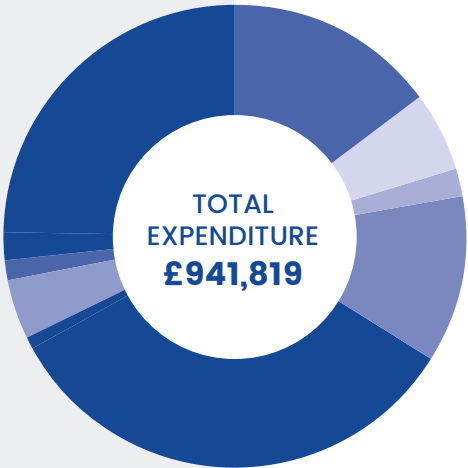
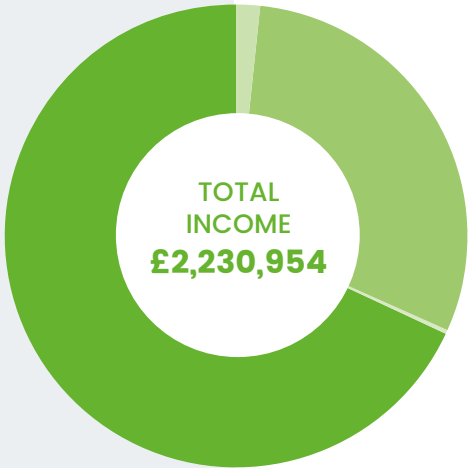
We have budgeted a deficit for the coming year 2020–21, however, we now expect to mitigate most, if not all, of this forecasted deficit thanks to the generous support of a range of funders.

**2 in 10**  
of our services are funded through donations.

INCOME	(£)
Donations and Gifts	41,725
Grants	671,293
Other Income	1,923
Investments	1,516,013
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>2,230,954</b>

EXPENDITURE	(£)
Support & Advice	139,002
Groups & Activities	51,972
Involvement (Engagement & Representation)	18,835
Carer Awareness	110,005
Information & Communication	310,488
Tools & Resources	9,093
Raising Funds	38,426
Development	13,474
Governance Costs	19,406
Loss on Investment	231,118
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>941,819</b>

FUNDRAISING	AMOUNT RAISED (£)
Corporate	14,757
Community	15,222
Individual	1,789
Gifts in Wills	0
Trusts	70,339
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>102,107</b>





# Here's to the carers!

We had a great year in fundraising, celebrating our 30th Anniversary among other events.



## Fundraising update



Thanks to the generous support of our donors, we were able to fund projects such as specialist groups for dementia carers, photography courses and our activities programme enabling carers to take a much needed break.

We celebrated our second year as the charity partner for Heringtons LLP and thank them for all their fantastic support. We were also charity partner for Sainsbury's the Beacon and received wonderful support from the Tesco Bags of Help schemes in Uckfield, Willingdon, Hailsham, Battle and Hastings, as well as the Waitrose Community Matters in Lewes Crowborough and Uckfield.

Three brave fundraisers took on their own challenges. Herington's legal secretary Caroline Foord became our first ever London Marathon runner, our Director of Services, Jo Egan and her family walked the South Downs Way, and Chief Executive Jennifer Twist cycled from East Sussex to Paris.

We had some great support from local community groups, including Uckfield and District Lions Club, Hastings Winkle Club, Hastings Lions Club, Rotary Club of Hastings and Eastbourne Soroptomists. We were also the charity beneficiary of events by Hailsham Bonfire Society and Hastings Old Town Carnival Association.

We are grateful to Trusts including BBC Children in Need, The Childwick Trust, Sussex Community Foundation, Dorothy Wharton (MEH) Foundation, Carers Trust, John Jackson Charitable Trust, St James Place Charitable Foundation, Ernest Kleinwort Charitable Trust, The Souter Charitable Trust and Chalk Cliff Charitable Trust.

And finally thank you to everyone who sold and purchased tickets for our 30th Anniversary Grand Raffle, and all our Amazon Smile, Facebook and community fundraisers.

*"Over the past two years we have enjoyed and learned a lot from our first ever charity partnership with Care for the Carers. It has been fabulous to hear from them how they have benefited from the increased awareness we have been able to raise about the charity's valuable work. And we are delighted to have been able to send their way much needed funds to enable them to continue helping the wonderful unpaid carers on whom so many rely, both in good and in bad, times."*

**Richard Fisher, Managing Partner, Heringtons**



# Catharine House Trust

Hastings-based Catharine House Trust announced its closure in 2018. This was received with much sadness at Care for the Carers, as the Trust had for very many years supported so many of our most vulnerable carers through individual grants.

The Catharine House Trust Board of Trustees understood the impact that caring can have on peoples' lives, having reviewed our grant applications over the years. When the Trust closed, the Board agreed unanimously that they wanted to pass their remaining funds to Care for the Carers – they knew how we work and had developed trust in the organisation over the years. The Board wished to support Care for the Carers' non-statutory work with carers, and enable us to do more.

The assets were comprised of a shareholding investment of £1,392,211 and cash funds of £97,466. The investment will generate additional long term income of approximately £30,000 per year which will enable us to increase our activities that support carers. In the coming year, this will enable us to significantly expand the support we provide to young carers, for whom there are very few services locally, and to develop our work with volunteers.

We thank unreservedly the former Trustees of Catharine House Trust – a small team of volunteers whose work over the years made a huge difference to local people in their time of need. It is a privilege for Care for the Carers to receive this support and we are committed to continuing the Trust's legacy, and making the most of this wonderful opportunity to build the support for local carers.

*"You wish that it was normal, and you could just be like the other kids running round, having fun."*

Young Carer.

## CASE STUDY

# YAC Time to Shine project

For Young Carers Awareness Day on 30th January 2020, young adult carers in Hastings wrote and produced their own song for other young carers.



The young adult carers (who call themselves "YACs") created and developed their own lyrics and song and produced a professional music video working with experienced musicians, singers, recording engineers and film makers in a project led and inspired by all those participating.

The song highlights the day-to-day experiences, difficulties and hurdles that children and young adults who care face, combined with a positive message to encourage other younger carers to speak up and reach out for help. The YACs also express why being with other young adult carers at their regular meet-up group is so important to them.

The music project, working in collaboration with Care for the Carers, took six months to complete. It aims to spread the word and raise awareness, as well as nurture new creative and singing skills.

The project was conceived and delivered by the co-founders of The Time to Shine Project charity, Alison Cooper and Michael Grant. The finished song and video was premiered in Hastings, East Sussex, with an intimate performance by the YACs singing for their friends and family.

*"Creating the song and video has given me a lot more confidence and belief in myself. I hope the song will help other carers to realise they are not alone and that there are lots of other people in a similar situation. The song is a realistic example of carers' daily lives, and I hope this will be a powerful tool to help educate and inform people about the lives of carers."*

Alannah Megan Jones,  
Young Adult Carer.

The song received air time on BBC Sussex and Uckfield FM. You can view the song on YouTube at: [www.bit.ly/YoungCarersSong](http://www.bit.ly/YoungCarersSong)



**"I couldn't have done it without  
you and your team. I would have  
lost it without your help."**



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