

**SHIRLEY NEIGHBOURHOOD CARE**  
**(Registered Charity No. 1137581)**  
**MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING HELD ON**  
**MONDAY 11<sup>TH</sup> OCTOBER 2021**

|                 |                 |   |
|-----------------|-----------------|---|
| <b>PRESENT:</b> | Jonathan Baxter | Chair, Trustee and Volunteer                |
|                 | Sylvia Jones    | Hon. Secretary and Volunteer                |
|                 | Barbara Donegan | Trustee, Management Committee and Volunteer |
|                 | Ian Jones       | Gift Aid Secretary and Volunteer            |
|                 | Bernard Maguire | Trustee                                     |
|                 | Suzy Stoyel     | Manager                                     |

Liz Bebington, Gill Clements, Maggy Flook, Michael Pardon and Liz Walkley (Volunteers).

- 1. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION:** Jonathan Baxter welcomed everyone and opened the meeting with prayer.
- 2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE** were received from Mike Plymsol (Hon. Treasurer and Trustee), Clive Fisher and Sonia Jacobs (Management Committee), Steve Gayfer and Christine Graham (Volunteers), Neil Garratt (London Assembly Member), Sue Bennett (Croydon Councillor) and Andy Bebington (Auditor).
- 3. MINUTES** of the AGM held 16<sup>th</sup> November 2020 (via 'Zoom') had been circulated earlier. All were in favour of their acceptance. There were no matters arising.
- 4. CHAIRMAN'S REPORT:** When I look back at our last financial year I am thrilled with what we achieved. At the start of that year we were in lockdown and could do very little. We had employed a chef, Kevin Worrall, for the Thursday Lunch Club at the beginning of February 2020, but we joined forces with his main employer, UNACC, to provide meals cooked by Kevin to be delivered frozen to clients' homes. Lunch Club restarted in October with smaller numbers, but a further lockdown brought that to an end with frozen meals continuing.  
We introduced personal shopping and telephone befriending with our wonderful volunteers taking part.  
Medical transport – the backbone of our services – has continued but we have fewer volunteer drivers available.  
At Christmas we delivered 200 large gift bags to our elders, thanks to an anonymous benefactor, and at Easter we delivered around 180 bags, each containing a chocolate egg, a plant and Easter cards from local schools.  
At the end of April 2021 we were approached by Jon Hills, Minister of West Wickham and Shirley Baptist Church wanting to help SNC with its space problem. Suzy and Assistant Frances had been working from home for some months but returned to the office at Shirley Methodist Church in April. There was no room to allow volunteers to return and the limited space caused health and safety concerns. Discussions continued and involved running the Monday Lunch Club in addition to the Thursday Lunch Club, and on 6<sup>th</sup> August SNC moved to WW&SBC, which has meant savings for us. There have been teething problems, which may take time to resolve. We have resumed all our services even though Suzy, our Manager, has had to put up with situations which should not have arisen.

On the staffing front, Frances walked out on 21<sup>st</sup> June never to return. Danuta Plummer returned to work following her illness and joined the befrienders. She decided that she did not wish to resume her role as Lunch Club Supervisor, so as there was no alternative role she left with a redundancy package. We thank her for over 11 years of service with SNC. Our Chef Kevin left at the end of September having accepted a full-time job which he needed to pay the mortgage. He will be missed. We have advertised for a new Admin Assistant and part-time chef and hope to fill these vacancies soon.

We await the Council's decision in December re funding for next year. We think there may be none, in which case we shall have to plan the future carefully. The idea of having our own minibus seems a distant project.

In closing, I want to thank Suzy for all she does for SNC almost single-handed. Last month she received an award from Barchester Care Homes for keeping SNC going through the pandemic. Well done Suzy! I also thank the Trustees and Management Committee for all their hard work and all our wonderful volunteers for all they do.

5. **Manager's Report:** At our AGM we are reporting on the 12 months ending the previous spring, but I would like to take the opportunity of bringing you completely up to date with our situation. We all live and work in a fast-changing environment and what was true in March no longer applies.

**Fundraising:**

This is something that is so important to us now. We are currently in the middle of our three-year agreement with Croydon Council. However, as soon as the contract started, Croydon Council revealed their financial woes and just before Christmas last year, we were advised that year 2 of our contract was in question. Along with other Voluntary and Community groups, we fought hard to resist cuts and eventually Croydon conceded that they would not cut our second year grant. They warned us that the third year of our contract would need to be reviewed. We will not know the outcome of the Council's decisions until December of this year. This will be the point when contractually the Council must give us three months' notice of amending or removing our grant. So, planning for the future is extremely difficult at the moment and has led to a feeling of great insecurity.

During most years we have been fortunate enough to benefit from our local ward councillors' budgets. This fund has been removed completely so no money has been available.

Our general fundraising activities have been hit during the pandemic as we have not been able to hold our two fundraising events – the Big Summer Tea or our Quiz night. We hope to be able to plan for these next year.

Fortunately, we have been accepted for this year's Co-op Community Fundraising scheme and we should hear how much we will receive in November. One of the sources of customer spend which contributes to the fund– the Shirley Co-op Funeralcare – has closed so we expect to see a reduction on the amount we have received in the past.

We have applied to the Ros Harding Trust for £2,000 to fund our Christmas gift bag distribution and are waiting to hear the result.

**Office:**

Over the last 18 months we have been working in a variety of surroundings. As soon as the pandemic was announced in March 2020, we kept our office running throughout all levels of lockdown with either working in the office or from home. When we returned to some form of normal life, we felt that our office at Shirley Methodist Church was too small for two staff members and our volunteer office team. Fortunately, West Wickham & Shirley Baptist Church offered us alternative office space and we moved in on 6 August. There have been practical hurdles to meet, including moving the broadband and telephone lines, but these are gradually being sorted. Part of the arrangement with the Baptist Church was taking over responsibility for their lunch club so we can now offer our clients

two lunch clubs per week. We have also agreed to widen our catchment area and offer our services to the elderly of West Wickham to replicate the Church's neighbourhood.

**Staff:**

In April 2020 we appointed a new Admin Assistant as our grant from Croydon enabled us to employ an extra part time member of staff. Unfortunately, Frances Harley decided to leave Shirley Neighbourhood Care in June and we are currently recruiting for a replacement on a six-month contract. We cannot offer a permanent position due to the insecurity with Croydon Council's grant. Our wonderful chef, Kevin Worrall, has also recently resigned and his last day was 30 September. We shared Kevin with Upper Norwood Community Care Association (UNACC) and unfortunately the insecurity surrounding both organisations' financial future with our inability to look further forward than next March meant that Kevin needed to find a role which would offer more security. Again, we are in the process of recruiting a replacement and we are hopeful we have found a solution.

**Volunteers:**

We are fortunate to have many wonderful volunteers who help us provide our services for the elderly but, like other organisations, we are suffering from a significant reduction in the numbers of people who are willing to give their time. I am sure there are a multitude of reasons for this, but I can only speculate. Our biggest problem is finding enough volunteer drivers. So please spread the word that we are looking for more help.

**Lockdown Services:**

During the lockdown we managed to successfully offer a range of essential services to our clients including personal shopping, telephone befriending, delivery of lunches to the lunch club clients and, when medical appointments were permitted, our medical drive service.

During the last full financial year we delivered:

- 501 shopping lists amounting to £7780.72; volunteer drivers covered 1,350 miles to deliver this shopping
- 1,368 phone calls to an average of 40 clients who asked to receive regular calls
- 678 meals to clients at home including a special Christmas dinner just before Christmas.

Three special deliveries took place throughout the year and our volunteers distributed these to around 200 elderly clients on each occasion:

- An afternoon tea in July – consisting of sandwiches, cakes, scones, clotted cream and jam
- A Christmas gift bag valued at over £10 each full of Christmas presents and Christmas cards from local primary schools. This was funded by an anonymous benefactor.
- An Easter delivery consisting of a chocolate egg, a beautiful colourful plant and more cards from local children.

**Re-launch of services**

This summer we were able to successfully re-introduce all our services and we have worked hard to ensure that we could give the clients plenty of opportunity to take advantage of fairer weather and get out and about. Since July we have been running two lunch clubs per week; we have re-started the monthly film clubs – and our clients have enjoyed the latest David Copperfield film as well as Quartet and they have seen Rene Zellweger play Judy Garland. Later this week they will be watching Military Wives the light-hearted story of the formation of the famous choir; we have re-started the shopping bus trips and we organised a range of outings including two popular lunches at the Toby Carvery at Eden Park and the Apple Tree Pub, a sunny afternoon in Coombe Gardens, and visits to Polhill and Woodcote Garden centres. The lunch club clients were also invited to a five-star high end free lunch at Peony Court – the latest Barchester Homes re-furnished care home near East Croydon. Throughout the summer, with the help of our volunteers, we have delivered a minimum of four days' activities per week and the clients have enjoyed a fantastic time.

Our medical drive service has continued, although fortunately with the lack of drivers, there is a lighter demand as GPs have still not returned to face to face appointments.

Some of our lockdown services are continuing for the clients who have a greater need. We are still delivering meals each week to three elders who cannot attend lunch club; there is one client who needs personal shopping, and the telephone befriending service is continuing and helps many of our lonely, isolated clients.

Our Thursday lunch club is currently rested whilst we find a new Chef, but we are hopeful that this can be resolved soon. In the meantime, our Monday lunch club is being supported by UNACC's temporary chef cover arrangements. Our plan is for our new Chef to cover both Monday and Thursday. Since we have re-started the lunch clubs, we have just focussed on delivering a decent two course meal, but as soon as we have a replacement chef organised, we hope to be able to re-introduce our after lunch activities including the Reader, bingo, and other games.

With most of our activities, we have endeavoured to protect our elders from COVID as much as we can, so we have tried to ensure that we give adequate space and ventilation and have reduced capacity numbers where necessary.

Today, we also arranged for some of our lunch club members to receive the COVID booster. The Baptist Church is a vaccination centre on some days of the week, and this seemed an opportunity too good to miss. Most of these elderly had to have previous vaccinations at home, so taking advantage of the onsite clinic will save the NHS Community nurses some valuable time.

### **Minibus**

Before lockdown we had planned to buy a bus with Selsdon Contact. Fortunately, we had not made the purchase otherwise it would have been sitting unused for a year. In the meantime, Selsdon changed their mind about buying a joint bus and purchased one on their own. So now we are planning our own future regarding a minibus. We have money reserved but we cannot make any decisions regarding a minibus until we know where we stand regarding our Croydon Council grant. In the meantime, we are working closely with Croydon Accessible Transport who have allocated us the most accessible bus for our frail elderly and allowed us to brand the bus with our logo. This is an extremely helpful interim situation, but the bus is about ten years old and has a short life ahead of it. Finally, I just want to say a special thank you to our wonderful supportive Chair, Jonathan Baxter, our Treasurer Mike Plymsol and all our trustees and management board who all give their time freely to support our charity. And of course, I cannot forget our fantastic team of volunteers who work so hard to deliver our services. Thank you everyone.

Ian Jones suggested that the extra volunteers recruited for the Christmas Bags could be approached for regular volunteering, especially driving. He also asked whether there would be any funding available from Bromley Council now that we were taking clients from West Wickham. Suzy said that Bromley Council operates in a different way.

Liz Walkely said that we did not have enough volunteers to take clients from West Wickham – Suzy said that she was not going out looking for new clients. Several Monday Lunch Club members were from West Wickham.

Jonathan Baxter thanked Suzy for her wonderful report. We really appreciate all you do!

**6. Treasurer's Report:** In the absence of Mike Plymsol, his report was read by Jonathan Baxter. I am pleased to report on the accounts for SNC for the year ending 1<sup>st</sup> April 2021, a copy of which should have been circulated.

Despite the difficulties caused by the Coronavirus, the charity continued to maintain a strong position financially throughout the year, with a regular healthy level of income to support the various services we provide for our clients. Although some of our usual activities have been curtailed by the pandemic, other areas, such as personal shopping, have increased dramatically. The key points to draw to your attention are:

- We started the year with general funds for day-to-day activities in our Natwest current account of £24,000
- By March 2021 the balance had risen to over £36,000, i.e. a surplus for the year of £12,000
- The £20,000 legacy received the previous year has not been called upon and continues to provide a useful financial safety net against future income shortfalls.

- In addition to our general funds we have been putting money aside to purchase our own minibus. At the year-end we had just over £28,000 set aside in an interest bearing designated account for this purpose. A further £8,000 has since been transferred from general funds to this designated fund. Our plans to acquire our own vehicle are on hold at present, but hopefully we will be able to look at options in more details during the next 12 months.
- The pattern of income exceeding expenditure has continued into the current financial year.

Our sources of income can be broken down as follows:

- General income, donations and gift aid – 20%
- Croydon Council – 46%
- Fund Raising and events – 10%
- Donations for medical and shopping journeys – 2%
- Payments for lunch club meals – 6%
- Churches together in Shirley – 2%
- Shopping – 14%

And our breakdown of expenditure:

- Office overheads including Manager's salary and pension – 53%
- Fundraising and event costs – 6.5%
- Transport – 1%
- Lunch Club – 22.5%
- Shopping – 17%

We have been fortunate to receive several significant donations this year, including ones from the Co-op, the Sun newspaper, Tesco, Addiscombe and Shirley Rotary Club, and donations in memory of Margaret Robins. I would like to thank all our supporters for their generous donations and ongoing contributions to our work.

I would also like to thank Andy Bebington who has acted as independent examiner and has passed the accounts as a true record.

Finally, I will be standing down as Treasurer this year having held the position for over ten years, although I will continue to serve as a Trustee. I would like to thank my fellow Trustees and members of the Management Committee for all the help they have given me in undertaking this task during that time and particularly Suzy for her accurate and comprehensive record keeping, efficiency and positivity which has made my job a lot easier. I would like to thank Ian Jones who has agreed to step into the role and wish him every success.

Bernard Maguire proposed acceptance of the accounts and Liz Bebington seconded. All in favour.

Mike Plimsoll had proposed the re-appointment of Andy Bebington as Independent Examiner. This was seconded by Ian Jones. All in favour.

7. **Gift Aid Report:** How wrong I was! At last year's AGM I said that gift aid repayments for the coming year were expected to be minimal. In fact, during our 2020-21 financial year, HMRC refunded £1878.60.

53% of that was in respect of 33 of the people who have signed gift aid forms. The other 47% was from GASDS (the gift-aid small donations scheme under which we can claim on small cash donations for things like medical drives).

Ian Jones was thanked for his report.

**8. Election of Officers, Trustees and Management Committee:**

**Officers:** Chair: Jonathan Baxter  
Secretary: Sylvia Jones  
Treasurer: Ian Jones

**Trustees:** Jonathan Baxter  
Barbara Donegan  
Bernard Maguire  
Mike Plymsol

**Management Committee:** Clive Fisher  
Steve Gayfer  
Sonia Jacobs

All were in favour of these appointments.

9. **Any Other Business:** Mike Plymsol enquired as to Danuta Plummer's health. Jonathan Baxter said that she was doing very well and was now in remission. She was not involved with SNC anymore, but may have applied for a job with a neighbouring organisation.

There being no further business, the meeting ended at 8.30 pm.