

# Caring in the city: Our priorities for the future

In the year ahead, VOCAL will deliver some major new developments set out in our Business Plan 2016-2021:

VOCAL will relocate the Edinburgh Carers Centre from the top of the Royal Mile to a central city location. We will develop a new, more accessible state-of-the-art Carers Hub, well-connected digitally and through improved transport links so that VOCAL’s carer support services can reach every home and every part of the city.

VOCAL will further strengthen carer support in Midlothian. We are establishing a carer-led Midlothian Committee with delegated powers to steer VOCAL’s development in Midlothian. A revised Midlothian Business Plan will shape future partnerships and developments.

VOCAL will develop new short breaks opportunities for carers through a Short Breaks and Respite Hub, initially with a funding award from the Big Lottery Fund. Through a new Respite Edinburgh & Lothian (REaL) collaborative with some of the city’s key third sector organisations, we will link carers’ needs for short breaks to opportunities provided by the hospitality, tourism and leisure industry as part of their corporate social responsibility commitments.

VOCAL will also launch Treasure Tree - a new social enterprise to help carers maximise their income through online sales of unwanted goods and to help recycle many caring aids and goods which are no longer needed.

Jointly with our statutory partners, VOCAL will prepare for the implementation of the Carers (Scotland) Act 2016 from April 2018. We will be a critical and constructive partner to ensure that the implementation of the Carers Act really reaches carers and helps to provide enhanced support and help in their caring role.

In October 2017, VOCAL Board members and senior staff meet for an annual Strategy Day where these developments will be scrutinised, monitored and evaluated.



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## Our funders and supporters

VOCAL is commissioned by the integrated joint bodies in Edinburgh and Midlothian to provide a wide range of carer support services. The Big Lottery Fund and several trust funds provide valuable additional funding to complement provision. Donations from carers and supporters and VOCAL’s own fundraising efforts contribute much additional capacity to the wide range of supports offered. This includes free and pro bono work from our solicitors, Morisons LLP, and other professionals for surgery services for carers in Edinburgh and Midlothian. For 2017-18, VOCAL’s Board has adopted a fundraising strategy which aims to raise £250,000 from non-statutory sources.

VOCAL’s audited accounts are submitted annually to all main funders, the Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator (OSCR) and Companies House. They can be accessed by the public through these agencies.

We thank all our supporters for their invaluable help!

## About VOCAL

VOCAL is governed by a Board of Directors made up of carers and former carers. Carer services are managed and delivered by a team of 35 full and part-time staff and over 70 volunteers, including those who run the VOCAL Carer Centre reception areas, facilitate carer courses and peer activities and who work with carers as counsellors in Edinburgh and Midlothian.

## Our finances for the year ending 31 March 2017

Statement of Financial Activities		2017	2016
Total incoming resources		1,356,951	1,374,411
Total resources expended		1,305,985	1,269,998
Net income for year		50,966	104,413
Net gain on investments		16,350	97
Net movement in funds		67,316	104,510
Funds at 1 April 2016		758,255	653,745
Funds at 31 March 2017		825,571	758,255
Balance sheet at 31 March 2017			
Fixed Assets	Tangible	298,240	314,586
	Investments	222,427	47,229
		520,667	361,815
Current Assets	Debtors	58,159	66,004
	Cash at bank	439,764	556,437
		497,923	622,441
Creditors due within one year		193,019	226,001
Net current assets / (liabilities)		304,904	396,440
Net assets		825,571	758,255
Funds	Restricted	229,582	154,093
	Designated	548,240	564,586
	General fund	47,749	39,576
Total funds		825,571	758,255



VOCAL's work in 2016-17  
and our priorities for the future



# 16,611 carer contacts

Over the course of the year VOCAL recorded **16,611** one-to-one carer contacts. Our carer centres provide free, confidential support on all aspects of caring including benefits, financial support, short breaks and community care.

# 3,734 carers

VOCAL provided individual support to **3,734** carers, offering a person-centred service delivered through home visits, appointments at our carers centres and local support in the community.

**1,273** carers attended VOCAL's legal and benefits surgery appointments, including support for setting up Power of Attorney.

Over **8,800** carers were supported through our regular e-bulletin, printed newsletter and personalised information on training and events.

# 1,795 new carers

We identified and supported **1,795** new carers during 2016-17. VOCAL works in partnership with GPs and health and social care teams to improve early identification and referral of carers.

# £1,150,433

VOCAL assisted carers in receiving a total of **£1,150,433** in additional financial support.

# 30,161 unique users

**30,161** people visited VOCAL's website [www.vocal.org.uk](http://www.vocal.org.uk) in 2016-17.

# 1,671 counselling sessions

VOCAL received **339** referrals for counselling and offered **1,671** counselling sessions to **187** carers in 2016-17. We were able to secure continued funding for carers of people affected by dementia as well as new funding for carers of someone on the autistic spectrum.

# 1,680 carers

**1,680** carers registered for our *Caring with Confidence* training programme and groupwork sessions. These offer courses, seminars and workshops designed for carers in different caring situations to enable carers to develop skills and knowledge to improve their confidence in their caring role.

Groupwork sessions included dealing with guilt, changing relationships, loss & bereavement and stress management. VOCAL also supported several hundred carers to access leisure, health and wellbeing courses and events.



To Linda & all at Vocal,  
Just a wee card to send massive Thanks for your help & support. you gave us a lovely break at aberdeen to spend quality family time & then helped us go as a family to the 2017 Special Olympics which without your support we would never have been able to afford so would never have seen our girl win 2 gold medals in boccia, you not only provided us with a break but with the experience of a lifetime & for that I'm eternally grateful x

Thank you all  
So Much  
Leanne, Scott  
skye & Jacob x x x  
Thank you very much  
from Chloe @

## VOCAL Carer Centre

Registered address: 8-13 Johnston Terrace,  
Edinburgh EH1 2PW T: 0131 622 6666  
E: [centre@vocal.org.uk](mailto:centre@vocal.org.uk) W: [www.vocal.org.uk](http://www.vocal.org.uk)

## VOCAL - support for carers

VOCAL manages two carer centres in Edinburgh and Midlothian and provides local carer support in communities across Edinburgh. Our services include:

- person-centred support, information and planning for the future
- emotional support, stress management and counselling
- training, learning, social and leisure opportunities
- benefits, legal, long-term care and power of attorney surgeries
- support for people affected by someone else's addiction
- creative short breaks and Respite
- gateway to many other services.

## Making a positive impact

The number of carers reporting positive outcomes following support from VOCAL increased to **2,607** from **1,388** the previous year:

84% reported improvements in feeling better informed about issues relating to their caring role

80% reported improvements in their confidence in managing their caring role

80% reported improved confidence in their ability to shape services

79% reported that their physical and mental well-being had improved

81% reported improvements in their ability to deal with changing relationships resulting from the caring role

63% reported improvements in their economic well-being

58% reported improvements in their personal safety

75% reported that their social well-being had improved

## Creative approach to family break leads to gold!

Leanne and her husband Scott have three children – Jacob, Chloe and Skye. Jacob and Chloe have physical and learning disabilities, and Leanne and Scott, along with Skye, provide the additional care and support they need.

Chloe is an excellent athlete, excelling in boccia, and was selected to take part in the Special Olympics in Sheffield. The family were determined to find a way to get to Sheffield to support Chloe, and to ensure that Jacob's specialist care needs could be met during this time - but it was just too expensive.

Leanne mentioned this to VOCAL's carer support worker who suggested looking at funding options for the family. After sourcing support from the Lothian branch of the Special Olympics to cover the hotel costs, a successful application was made to Clevedon Forbes Foundation to cover transport, parking and other miscellaneous items.

As the family celebrated Chloe's huge success at the Games (pictured right, winning two gold medals) Leanne reflected on the changes in her daughters self-esteem and confidence and the difference this had made to Leanne's own well-being. She also spoke about the positive impact of spending quality time together as a family, commenting 'you not only provided us with a break, but with the experience of a lifetime'.

