

# Caring in the city: Our priorities for the future

VOCAL successfully relocated the Edinburgh Carers Centre from Johnston Terrace to a more accessible location at 60 Leith Walk, Edinburgh EH6 5HB. This year will be dedicated to making best use of our much improved Carers' Hub to expand services to many more carers and to consolidate our training and events programme.

In Midlothian, we welcome promising new partnerships with local agencies to improve services to carers. From our Carers Centre at 30/1 Hardengreen Estate we will expand carer support to more localities in Midlothian.

VOCAL will cement new partnerships with short breaks providers and expand the range of breaks offered by a growing number of businesses in the hospitality, tourism and leisure industry.

Up to 500 carers in Edinburgh and Midlothian will benefit from additional short breaks from their caring role – thanks to VOCAL's funding from the BIG Lottery!

In September 2018 VOCAL will publicly launch Treasure Tree – a new social enterprise to help carers maximise their income through online sales of unwanted goods, and to help recycle caring aids and goods they no longer need. We will build on early lessons from the pilot programme and particularly focus on helping carers to sell and purchase second hand mobility and care equipment.

VOCAL will cooperate closely with Edinburgh and Midlothian Councils to implement new rights of the Carers (Scotland) Act and delivering Adult Carer Support Plans early in the caring role. VOCAL will need to change internal systems to reflect new carer outcomes agreed by local authorities. Jointly with carers we will implement this new commitment from the Carers (Scotland) Act 2016 and help carers to plan for the future, making use of a wide range of experts and resources.

VOCAL will celebrate 25 years of service to carers in April 2019. We will be preparing a six-month programme of events and activities to celebrate and build on our work with carers, and raise further funds to expand the range of support we offer.

## About VOCAL

**We thank all our supporters for their invaluable help!**

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 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. VOCAL is preparing to launch an appeal for £50,000 as part of its 25th anniversary to enable more carers to benefit from services and support in Edinburgh and Midlothian. 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.



| Statement of Financial Activities  |                      | 2018      | 2017      |
|------------------------------------|----------------------|-----------|-----------|
| Total incoming resources           |                      | 1,249,065 | 1,356,951 |
| Total resources expended           |                      | 1,253,007 | 1,305,985 |
| Net income for year                |                      | (3,942)   | 50,966    |
| Net gain on investments            |                      | 4,080     | 16,350    |
| Net movement in funds              |                      | 138       | 67,316    |
| Funds at 1 April 2017              |                      | 825,571   | 758,255   |
| Funds at 31 March 2018             |                      | 825,709   | 825,571   |
| Balance sheet at 31 March 2018     |                      |           |           |
| Fixed Assets                       | Tangible Investments | 1,150,248 | 1,222,427 |
|                                    |                      | 1         | 520,667   |
| Current Assets                     | Debtors              | 31,339    | 58,159    |
|                                    | Cash at bank         | 248,602   | 439,764   |
|                                    |                      | 279,941   | 497,923   |
| Creditors due within one year      |                      | 288,524   | 193,019   |
| Net current assets / (liabilities) |                      | (8,583)   | 304,904   |
| Creditors due after one year       |                      | (315,957) |           |
| Net assets                         |                      | 825,709   | 825,571   |
| Funds                              | Restricted           | 285,076   | 229,582   |
|                                    | Designated           | 540,633   | 548,240   |
|                                    | General fund         | 47,749    | 47,749    |
| Total funds                        |                      | 825,709   | 825,571   |



VOCAL's work in 2017-18  
and our priorities for the future





**16,319** carer contacts

Over the course of the year VOCAL recorded 16,319 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.

**3,874** carers

VOCAL provided individual support to 3,874 carers, offering a person-centred service delivered through home visits, appointments at our carers centres and local support in the community. 1,533 carers attended VOCAL's legal and benefits surgery appointments, including support for setting up Power of Attorney. Over 9,500 carers were supported through our regular e-bulletin, printed newsletter and personalised information on training and events.

**1,756** new carers

We identified and supported 1,756 new carers during 2017-18. VOCAL works in partnership with GPs and health and social care teams to improve early identification and referral of carers.

**£879,352**

VOCAL assisted carers in receiving a total of £879,352 in additional financial support.

**24,265** unique users

24,265 people visited VOCAL's website [www.vocal.org.uk](http://www.vocal.org.uk) in 2017-18.

**1,688** counselling sessions

VOCAL received 341 referrals for counselling and offered 1,671 counselling sessions to 129 carers in 2017-18. Four new volunteer counsellors have been recruited and we have doubled the number of volunteer counsellors working from VOCAL Midlothian Carer Centre from two to four.

**1,854** carers

1,854 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.



**VOCAL Carer Centre**  
Registered address: Edinburgh Carers' Hub,  
60 Leith Walk, Edinburgh EH6 5HB  
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 and provides local carer support in communities across Edinburgh and Midlothian. 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

2,078 carers reported positive outcomes following support from VOCAL:

|   |
|---|
| 87% reported improvements in feeling better informed about issues relating to their caring role               |
| 72% reported improvements in their confidence in managing their caring role                                   |
| 81% reported improved confidence in their ability to shape services   |
| 77% reported that their physical and mental well-being had improved   |
| 68% reported improvements in their ability to deal with changing relationships resulting from the caring role |
| 65% reported improvements in their economic well-being  |
| 58% reported improvements in their personal safety  |
| 72% reported that their social well-being had improved  |

## Case study: Managing a complex caring situation

When Angela\* first contacted VOCAL she was experiencing low mood due to the pressures of caring for her 21 year old daughter who has had lifelong physical disabilities and seizures. She was not confident about being a carer and lacked proper understanding of her daughter's conditions. Money was very tight and she felt that her daughter was not receiving benefits she was entitled to, but she did not have the energy to fight any more.

VOCAL carer support workers specialising in welfare rights supported Angela to appeal a recent awarding Personal Independence Payments (PIP) for her daughter. This was successful and her daughter now receives the enhanced rate of both components of PIP, making a significant difference to their financial situation. Through VOCAL Angela was able to take breaks from her caring role including complimentary therapy sessions and a weekend break provided through the 'Respiteally' programme. She was matched up with a peer mentor who had similar experiences as a carer, and attended some of VOCAL's free carer training courses.

As a result, Angela reported that her own health and wellbeing had improved. She was feeling less stressed and more able to make time for herself. Getting PIP for her daughter had made a big improvement in her family's financial situation. The weekend break gave Angela a real chance to recharge her batteries and her energy levels were much better. She reported feeling more confident about her caring role through meeting other carers at the courses. She also noted that the 'dealing with guilt' course has been particularly beneficial as she is now dealing with her feelings of guilt in a different way.

*\*Carer's name has been changed*