

Registered Charity No. 1161144



***In the Vale  
For the Vale***

16 Market Place  
Wantage  
OX12 8AE

**ANNUAL REPORT**  
2019 - 2020

Supported by



# **Wantage Independent Advice Centre Summary Annual Report 2019-2020**

*Annual General Meeting held virtually using MS Teams,  
12th November 2020 at 12pm*

## **MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE – APRIL 2019 - MARCH 2020**

Hon. Chairman	Peter Harbour		
Hon. Vice Chairman	Ann Rowe / Graham Beith		
Hon. Treasurer	Ian Griffiths		
Hon. Secretary	Keith Robbins		
Committee Members	Helen Bailey	Cllr. Ron Batstone	Geoff Hamer
	Jenny Hannaby	Bill Jestico	Cllr. Kim Morgan
	Cllr. Dave Parry	Cllr. Chris Walters	Chris Warwick
	David Wise		

## **EMPLOYEES APRIL 2019 - MARCH 2020**

Joint Operations Mgr.	Pamela Roscoe
Joint Operations Mgr.	Wendy Watson
Advice Supervisor	Karen Muir
Admin Officer	Celia Cotton
Admin Officer (Transport)	Paula Moore
Community Advice Liaison Mgr.	Kirsty Phillips
Project West Co-Ordinator	Roddy Bedford (contract)



## VOLUNTEER ADVISORS & OFFICE STAFF APRIL 2019 - MARCH 2020

Mokram Alyazji*	Sandie Austin*	Jerry Bird	Roz Boadle
Stella Brecknell	Adrian Buck	Kathy Ethelston	Jeanne Felmingham
David Fox	Malcolm Fretter	Debbie Greenfield	Peter Harbour
Rita Hetherington	Anita Hutchins	Hilary Isaac	Clare Jacobs
Andrew Kerr	Jan Knight	Jonathan Markowitz	Sarah Matthews
Kate McGill	Nicky Middleton	Zelda Moorwood	Lyn Morton
Sylvia Mullin	Clare Pennicott	Ann Rowe	Janet Smith
Jim Wells			

## VOLUNTEER DRIVERS APRIL 2019 - MARCH 2020

Jon Armitage	Colin Bayley*	Alison Boyd	David Boyd	Ann Breen
Brendan Breen	Adrian Buck	Dennis Buckland	Guy Calve	Geoff Corker
Bill Cosgrave	Cathy Cox	John Durban	Charlie East	Ron East
Mel Fernandes	Paul Flint	Dick Graham	Monica Graham	June Grunwald
Mark Harrison	Phil Hine	Clare Jackson	Lyn Johnston	Lyn Jones
David Kent	Andrew Kerr	Sue Kerr	Nigel Kilbey	Jim Kowszun
Nigel Leahy	Caryl MacRandal	Frank Parnell	Jenny Penfold	Paul Penfold
David Penn	Adrien Porter	Dave Powell	Robert Rogers	Peter Rolfe
Tom Saunders	Chris Smyth	Gill Stoter*	Arthur Strain	Maggie Swain
Eddy Todd*	Paul Townsend	Ernie Trimble	Angela Vernon	Malcolm Vernon
Tim Waite	Bob Webb	Ian Weeden	Heather Wells	Lesley Weston*
Mary Whittaker	John Willemsen	Mike Willis	David Wise	

## VOLUNTEER GOOD NEIGHBOURS APRIL 2019 - MARCH 2020

Clare Abolins	Colin Bayley	Roddy Bedford	Lesley Blowfield*	Anna Bradford
Ann Breen	Brendan Breen	Jill Broadley	Adrian Buck	Sharon Champion
Jane Corley	Andy Cowan*	Angela Cox*	Natalie Dale	Penny Dedman
Lucie Eadon	Mike Evason	Dave Fox	Anne Geach	Andy Hamer
Mark Harrison	Eleanor Heck*	Jane Humphreys	Sue Ingrouille	Tony Ingrouille*
Clare Jackson	Sophie Jennings*	Norman Kerr	Nigel Leahy	Debbie Lewis-Pryde
Caryl MacRandal	Bob McLatchie	Kevin Middleton	Helen Middleton-Stewart	Veronica Milligan
Paula Moore	Karen Muir	Rachel Niblett	Mo Nisbet	Joan Palmer
Claire Parry	Dave Parry	Tina Payne	Janene Pemberton	Kirsty Phillips
Dave Powell	Pamela Roscoe	Lisa Sharp	Anna Staggs	Alex Sykes*
Dave Taylor	Shirley Ward*	Phil Wearing	David Wise	Anna Wright
Sarah Wyatt				

\* Volunteer's involvement changed during the year



## CHAIRMAN'S REPORT 2019/2020

It is hard to remember life before the pandemic and so much has happened since then that talking about the previous year seems almost irrelevant.

We had a good year providing our three services to the ever-expanding community. We continue to provide a high-quality service and as can be seen from our feedback from clients we do a good job.

Thanks to you all.

Who do I thank first? There is no doubt that without our hardworking, committed and dedicated paid staff we could not function and yet again they have been brilliant. They act as a shock absorber between the clients and the volunteers and field some sad and difficult conversations from clients which we volunteers may not even know about. So on behalf of the charity, thank you.

Our volunteers also have some very stressful and sad cases to deal with. Again our volunteers face this task with skill and sensitivity. So on behalf of the charity, thank you.

We could not have achieved all we do without the money provided by our funders big and small. The Vale of White Horse District Council and Oxfordshire County Council are the largest donors but fortunately there are many others. Due to COVID-19, we have been granted additional funds and a 12-months extension of our grant from the VWHDC. So on behalf of the charity, thank you.

Our sole objective is to work for the benefit of the clients and the communities. We support our volunteers and recognise that although the volunteers find great satisfaction in providing help to people, they too may need support. It is vital that we communicate with others if we feel under stress or overwhelmed by clients or events.

We recruited a Project Manager, Roddy Bedford, in October 2019 to undertake a review of our services for the west of the Vale and progress has been made establishing a full provision in this area. It is very important that we can staff and recruit volunteers for the west of the Vale and we are working towards this.

We responded to feedback from communities in the west that our name does not reflect our work and breadth of area that our services cover. Work started on a name change at the beginning of the year – more information may be found below...!

We cannot ignore the colossal impact Covid has had on all of us. With the amazing hard work and dedication of the staff we have managed to adapt our services within the Government guidelines to protect staff, volunteers and clients. The fact that we can continue to operate is testament to the flexibility and dedication of the staff and volunteers. The pandemic has highlighted that we are vulnerable due to the age profile of our volunteers.

Finally, I wish to inform the Board and Membership that I will be resigning as Chairman and as a member of the Board of Trustees on 30 June 2021. I will of course step-down before that date if appropriate.

Peter Harbour, Chairman

## OPERATIONS MANAGERS' REPORT 2019/20

I will be honest it is a challenge to write about the charity's Operations for 2019/20 and not focus on the immense challenge faced since March 2020 or the overwhelming sense of pride and wonder Wendy and I feel when considering the incredible achievements of the volunteers and the staff team of Karen, Celia, Kirsty and Paula in the 8 months of 2020/21 that have already passed.

I ask you all to cast your minds back somewhere between 7 and 18 months....rather a shame that we don't have the power to fast forward and leave this crazy and worrying pandemic very much behind us!

Unlike previous Annual Reports this summary style one for the year 2019/20 will not offer one report per service, instead Wendy and I have prepared a single overview within which we will share the operational headlines as a whole.

The unique blend of our three entwined services sets us apart from other organisations and anchors us as a source of distinct help specifically targeting a broad user group reflecting the rural area, thus addressing loneliness and isolation over and above pure advice from a single base location.

One of the most important roles that community transport plays is caring for people. It is not just taking someone for a journey. It is a commitment to making sure that the human being in their care is safe and looked after, beyond just the provision of transport. It is a commitment and a calling that all our volunteer drivers buy into, they also get a lot out of volunteering and it is what makes our community transport scheme valuable and cherished.

Baroness Randerson is a member of the House of Lords and Liberal Democrat Lords spokesperson for transport. In 2019 in an article for the Community Transport Association she wrote: -

"Community transport is the can-do member of the transport industry. Pose a transport problem and somewhere within the many versions of community transport you will find the answer".

In 2019/20 there was a whisker off 6,000 transport requests taken, with only 200 that we had to turn down. The reason for turning down the requests was perhaps for their complicated nature, Sunday involvement, extreme short notice or occasionally, despite our 60 drivers, sadly for a lack of available volunteer resource. 4500 clients were transported, and 87,000 miles travelled in 2019/20. The breakdown behind these numbers is: -

- 71% of the clients were aged 80 or over
- 43% were medical in nature i.e. hospital or health centre/GP surgery appointments, scans, dental, podiatry or ophthalmic appointments
- 35% were enabling the client to access a Day Centre type service.

The year was working towards an exciting and financially beneficial close for the Transport scheme with a partnership with South Central Ambulance service, unfortunately the pandemic placed this project on hold in February 2020, but we are hopeful before the next AGM a new normal will be established that will allow the partnership to take shape.

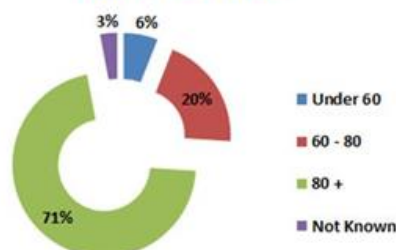
## Transport Analysis: -

**1 Transport Requests - 5911**  
**2 Transport Cancelled - 1271**  
**3 No Booking - 204\***  
**4 Clients Transported - 4436**  
**5 Miles Driven - 86,729**  
**6 Clients using Wheelchairs - 338**  
 \*Unable to provide transport

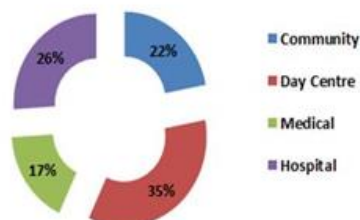


Post Town	Clients	Cancelled	Non Booking	Miles
Harwell	4	1		74
West Hendred	9	6		77
Lockinge	4		2	87
Steventon	53	13		718
Denchworth	15	1		984
Ardington	38	11	2	1171
Sparsholt	59	14	2	1330
Other	81	40	3	1623
Letcombe Bassett	137	41	3	1693
Charney Bassett	91	28	2	1694
West Hanney	146	31		1749
Childrey	78	11	4	1914
East Challow	230	44	4	2147
Stanford in the Vale	79	14	1	2173
East Hendred	137	28	1	2755
East Hanney	130	13	11	3019
Faringdon	180	56	8	4361
Letcombe Regis	381	74	31	10080
Grove	1308	264	48	13382
Wantage	2751	581	82	35698
<b>Total</b>	<b>5911</b>	<b>1271</b>	<b>204</b>	<b>86729</b>

### CLIENTS BY AGE



### CLIENTS BY DESTINATION



Turning now towards our Good Neighbour scheme, reading an article in the Guardian a little while ago something struck me as rather thought provoking: -

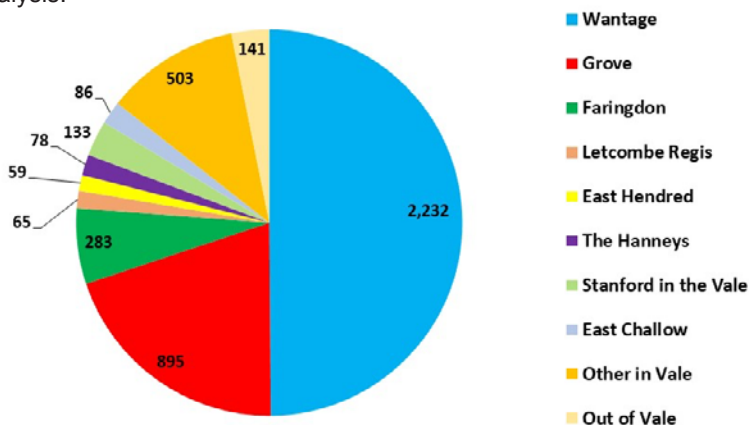
“Let us imagine there was a virus you’d never heard of which [increased the likelihood of mortality](#) by 26%, or a condition which had a [death rate](#) comparable to smoking 15 cigarettes a day... A national health crisis would be declared, and judging by the reaction to the coronavirus, panic would ensue. This public health crisis, which leaves its victims more than twice as likely to develop Alzheimer’s and other dementias, has a name: **LONELINESS**.

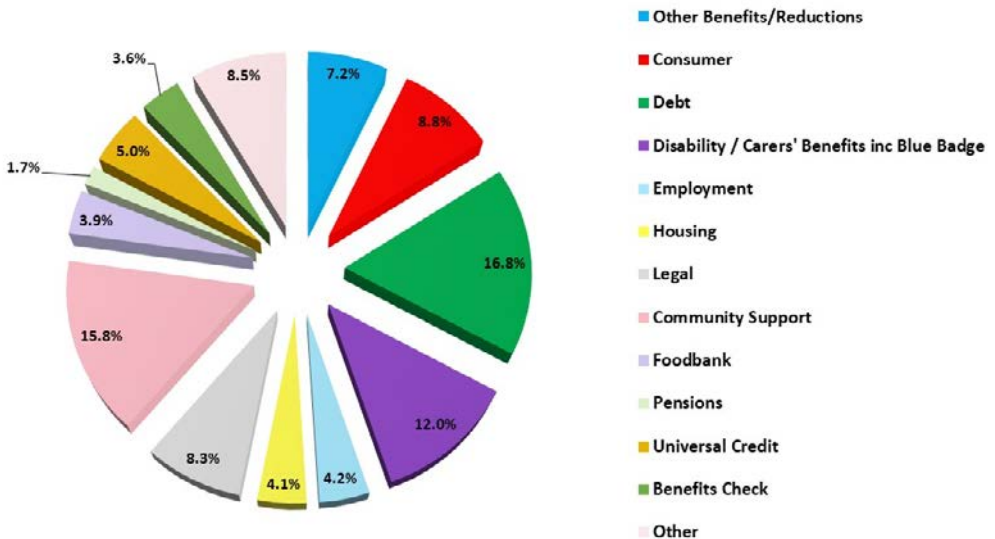
More than [2 million adults](#) suffer from chronic loneliness; and although its most severe form is more prevalent among Britain’s oldest citizens, [younger adults report loneliness more](#) than any other age group. The long drift towards isolation is not inevitable. All of us need to connect with others, even as society has robbed us of opportunities to. [Loneliness](#) is devastating our mental and physical health and, at its worst, is killing us.”

Kirsty as our Community Advice Liaison Manager and the Good Neighbour volunteers processed over 200 cases involving 3,250 consultations and visits collectively, these made a difference to more than 130 different Vale residents. This put the year 2019/20 as tracking closely to the previous 12 months but a rising trend, which is encouraging, in referrals coming from the Social Prescribers, GP surgeries and Social Services teams. We continue to strive to extend our network and build relationships, but it can be hard to focus on strategy when a client case presents itself, there is always a juggle of time and need.

Lastly, but by no means least, the Advice Services’ team was busier than ever last year with a record high number of consultations, just under 4,500 were recorded with a 3:1 split between enquiries and casework. As with last year the profile of geography was quite similar about 50% were Wantage residents, 20% Grove and 7% Faringdon. Last year saw a sad upturn in the need for family law and Domestic Abuse support and it will come as no surprise that that rise has not only continued but escalated significantly during the first half of the current year.

Advice Analysis: -





In addition to these advice consultations, a further 1,178 enquiries or activities of help took place relating to transport support. This assistance may relate to the amendment or cancellation of an existing drive, the discussions needed to make arrangements for a new recurring drive, liaising with porters or clinics, invoicing of third parties or, and this is a frequent occurrence, putting a client's mind at rest about how the drive will happen and explaining how the driver will do all they can to put them at ease. Sometimes a client may contact twice or even three times after the booking is made as they are anxious about the transport.

Hopefully, we get most of it right at least most of the time and we try to keep communications open and proactive with the volunteers throughout the year where we can, but our annual volunteer satisfaction survey offers an additional route for the volunteers to share their thoughts and offer suggestions. I am pleased to be able to report that in 2019/20 we received a 95% satisfaction or very satisfied rating from across the responses with more than half of our 130 volunteers submitting a reply.

Both Wendy and I are proud to be part of the WIAC family and together with the team we feel privileged to be able to take the Advice Centre through the next year, no matter what may unfold. There is a certainty that there will always be someone who needs help and we at WIAC will do our utmost to be there for them.

We are so grateful for all our volunteers; without them we would not be the organisation we are nor would we deliver the value and results that we do.

Three services, one place to get help and an amazing willingness from so many wonderful volunteers.

**Pamela Roscoe and Wendy Watson**  
Joint Operations Managers



# TREASURER'S REPORT 2019/20

## Financial Activities for the Year Ended 31 March 2020

	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	Total £
Income from:			
Donations and legacies	119,461	1,832	121,293
Charitable activities	55,379		55,379
Investments	473		473
Total income	175,313	1,832	177,145
Total resources expended	182,578	-	182,578
Net outgoing/incoming resources	7,265	(1,832)	5,433
Fund Balance as at 1 April 2019	103,836		103,836
Net outgoing/incoming resources	7,265	(1,832)	5,433
Fund Balance as at 31 March 2020	96,571	(1,832)	98,403

A complete set of our independently examined accounts is available upon request, the accounts can also be downloaded from our web site [www.wantageadvice.org.uk](http://www.wantageadvice.org.uk) or alternatively they can be found lodged with the Charity Commission as per the requirement as a Charitable Incorporated Organisation.

Ian Griffiths, Treasurer

## RECRUITMENT 2019/20

It would be fair to describe 2019/20 as a stable year building on the foundations Miriam and I put in place the year before. Further steps were taken to streamline the forms and touchpoints to simplify and aid the process itself of someone becoming involved with the WIAC as a volunteer.

Although our volunteer recruitment via the AMI programme remains low, we have an excellent rate of conversion in respect of potential volunteers who approach us directly. For the 12 months in question there were new additions to the volunteering family for each of the services, 9 new Good Neighbours for example and a Project Manager with the responsibility of leading Project West.

Kathy Ethelston, Volunteer Recruitment Officer

## PROJECT WEST REPORT 2019/20

As Peter mentioned in his Chairman's Report, I joined WIAC in Autumn 2019. The purpose of my role was initially to scope existing community provision and whether there was a requirement for a higher profile of WIAC in the West of the Vale. Our tag line has long been "in the Vale for the Vale", but how many residents in Shrivenham, for example, knew of the charity, and, importantly, did the residents know that our services were available in their communities?

After fact finding and reaching out to community groups, parish councils and care providers etc, we organised an event in Watchfield Village Hall in January 2020. This was a well-attended and revelatory session for the WIAC staff and as a result, we set about developing the strategy for recruiting volunteers and promotion of our services in the West of the Vale.

A frequent comment, from both potential users and current staff and volunteers was that the name, Wantage Independent Advice Centre, was a hindrance to our tag line "in the Vale for the Vale". We explored the different ways in which we could look to rebrand and identified that the most efficient and beneficial way was to retain our Constitution, Charity Registration number and FCA licence but seek permission to use a new "Trading As" name. We used local marketing knowledge, volunteer and client input as well as a global virtual platform, to brainstorm and develop the new "Trading As" name for WIAC. From the virtual platform, "CrowdSpring" we had over 100 creative minds respond to the brief and the name Vale Community Impact was born! A new logo and artwork have been created and we hope to start using our new "Trading As" name, along with rebranded literature and a new website in the spring of 2021 in time for the new financial year.

Roddy Bedford, Project Manager

### THANK YOU to...

Vale of White Horse and Oxfordshire County Council may be considered our key funders however grants from Wantage and Faringdon Town Councils, Grove and several other Parish Councils also comprise a significant part of our funding strategy and WIAC would not be able to effectively help the Vale residents and the community without all of their support.

We also very much appreciate the generosity of local groups, organisations and individuals all of whom, where appropriate and permitted, are separately named within our published, independently examined accounts.

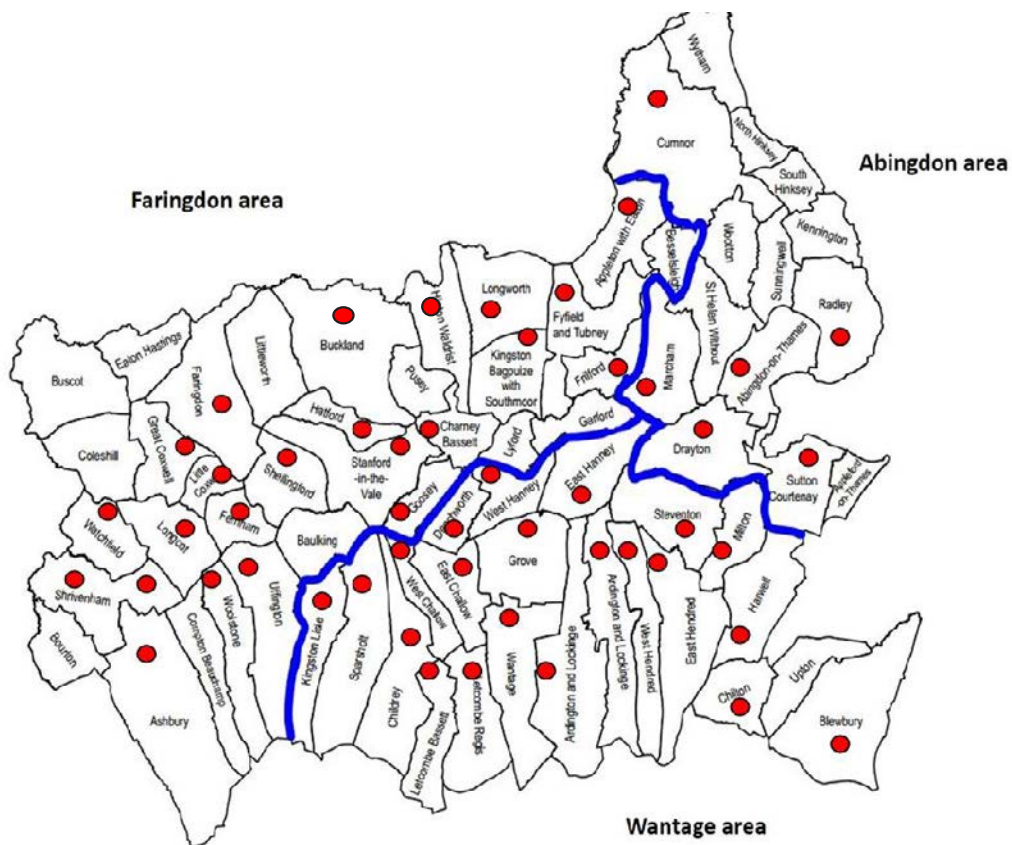
WIAC and its clients have also been incredibly fortunate this year to again receive the donation of time, expertise and resource from Chapman Worth, Howard Hill from First Ideas, Sandy Millikin from Star Legal and Elaine Edgington from Coffin Mew.

We would truly like to take this opportunity to thank everyone who has supported Wantage Independent Advice Centre during the past year.

Keith Robbins, Hon. Secretary

Illustration to show that our clients are truly based across the whole of the Vale

and that the WIAC is, very much, for the Vale in its entirety



Use of map outline approved by JBolton, VWHDC – Oct '17



***In the Vale***

***For the Vale***

*empowering people!*

***Funded by:***

Vale of White Horse District Council

Wantage Town Council

Faringdon Town Council

Grove Parish Council

Oxfordshire County Council

and other Parish Councils



unsung heroes



**The Queen's Award for  
Voluntary Service 2008**

