



Karis Neighbour Scheme

Karis Neighbour Scheme Annual Report 2013 - 2014



Offering practical support, friendship and advocacy
in the local community through volunteers

Registered Charity: 1133510

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REPORT AND INTRODUCTION FROM THE TRUSTEES

It is my privilege as chairperson of Karis Neighbour Scheme to introduce you to this, our annual report. I, as a General Practitioner, have had the opportunity to work alongside this organisation since its inception in the mid 1990s. Those of us who are working in health care are often aware of the unmet needs in people's lives and the difficulties in making connections between those needs and the resources which might meet those needs. Karis Neighbour Scheme came into existence because a chaplain working in General Practice-began making connections between primary health care and faith communities and so an organisation was born dedicated to making connections between needs and resources. Recently Public Health England and NHS England have stated that 'the link between primary health care and community organisations is critical' in promoting health and wellbeing*.

The pages of this report will show you the many and varied connections which Karis Neighbour Scheme has made during this last year:

- enabling people to connect with each other
- enabling community resources to connect with people's needs
- enabling people to connect with faith and faith communities
- enabling community organisations to connect with the statutory services

There have been some significant developments during this year which have enabled more effective connections to be established. Karis Neighbour Scheme now has two contracts with NHS Clinical Commissioning Group to deliver a service known as 'Listening and Guidance'. This is part of a new approach to improving primary mental health and wellbeing (our work in Birmingham is part of the Edgbaston Wellbeing Hub <http://www.wellbeing-hub.co.uk/>). This has involved connecting with local faith communities and training professional volunteer listeners. These listeners now work under the supervision of Chaplains-for-Wellbeing who are enabled by Karis Neighbour Scheme to care for patients in General Practice. The challenge of developing a small third sector organisation to deliver a new service under contract with the NHS has not been insignificant!

All this could not have been achieved without the new role of Karis Neighbour Scheme's Chief Executive Officer, the invaluable NHS experience of Karis Neighbour Scheme's Contract Manager as well the tireless dedication of the Chaplains-for-Wellbeing Team Leader and Chaplain Supervisor. This part of Karis Neighbour Scheme's work is called WholeCare KNS.

Karis Neighbour Scheme would not exist if it were not for the three other staff we employ, our dedicated trustees/ directors and the many dozens of volunteers who give freely of their time and energy. We are honoured to work with so many remarkable people.

As chairperson of this organisation it is my privilege to thank the many people who have supported Karis Neighbour Scheme in so many different ways.

I trust that you will find, within the pages of this report, ample evidence that your support has not been in vain. It has enabled significant connections to be made which are transforming people's lives and the communities in which they live.

Ross Bryson
Chair of Directors

*A guide to community- centred approaches for health and well being.
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/health-and-wellbeing-a-guide-to-community-centred-approaches>

REPORT FROM CEO

Rebecca Cuthbert started in a new Chief Executive Officer role in November 2014, she is looking after the development of both Karis Neighbour Scheme, including all our established projects, and the new KNS Wholecare arm, including the Listening & Guidance service which is being commissioned by two local CCGs.

My appointment at the end of the financial year comes at a very exciting time for Karis Neighbour Scheme. We are at a watershed in our journey as we begin to deliver new services for the NHS. Having been more than two years without a Manager, KNS' need for a CEO/Manager role had been increasing.

These last two years our staff have been stretched to cover over and above their original responsibilities, something they have done willingly and admirably, but something which is not sustainable. Staff going the extra mile has taken its toll on energy levels and on our ability to focus wholeheartedly on the development and funding of our projects. Our operational systems, fundraising strategy and our policies and procedures need reviewing and updating, as does the website and our thinking around monitoring and reporting on activity and data. These issues have become even more of a necessity as we seek, not just to survive but to thrive in a changing economic and socio-political climate, and to deliver quality, efficient services for the NHS.

The new development of our Listening and Guidance service under WholeCare KNS is enabling us to offer a more holistic package of services to improve people's wellbeing. Listening and Guidance provides one-to-one sessions for patients who would like to talk to a GP Chaplain about issues impacting their wellbeing. We are developing stronger links with GPs, commissioners, mental health practitioners and local networks for health and wellbeing. We are excited about the potential that our WholeCare activity brings to the existing Karis Neighbour Scheme projects, and vice-versa, encouraging us to use volunteers in more focussed 'therapeutic' ways, encouraging evidence-based practice and raising the profile of social prescribing.

The start-up phase of the Listening and Guidance service has presented challenges, learning and a lot of hard work for staff and Trustees/Directors. We are a small charity and it is a culture change for us to deliver contracted NHS services, rather than the grant funded services of the past. We have embarked on this learning together with local health commissioners and our partners in the Edgbaston Wellbeing Hub. It is a fantastic to see that our model of a community-centred approach to health and wellbeing is now very much at the heart of NHS vision for the future.

There is much to do in the year ahead to bring stability and growth to Karis Neighbour Scheme.

We need to secure more funding in order to keep our Children and Families Services up and running and to make our Community Advice service sustainable. We need to tighten up operational systems. We intend to expand the work of the older people's services, Karis Befriends. It has been encouraging to see the fruits of the community development work we have been undertaking, we hope that the Ladywood Community Development Trust will become independent and self-governing in the year to come. Our Listening and Guidance pilot will move into its second year, during which we need to recruit and expand the Chaplains for Wellbeing Team.

We will also build the evidence of the impact we are having on improving people's wellbeing, raising the profile of our community-centred approach to holistic care and showing what an effective and efficient a way it can be of bringing about change in people's lives.

INTRODUCING KARIS NEIGHBOUR SCHEME

WHO ARE WE?

Karis Neighbour Scheme is a small community project working in inner city Birmingham. We work throughout various local communities offering support to people facing disadvantage or hardship.

We value working in relationship with people and seek to offer friendship and emotional support as well as helping in more practical ways. As an organisation, from the staff team to the growing number of volunteers who give their time to support our work, we value everyone who we come into contact with and try and demonstrate this in how we work.

We try to meet people where their needs are and have worked to 'fill the gaps' where services do not exist in the area. Over the years this has led to the development of a number of projects offering a broad range of support within the community.

We are aware that as a small organisation we are not always best equipped to deal with every problem. We work closely with other groups, charities and services to ensure that people can get the help they need if we cannot offer it ourselves. We do not seek to compete with, replace or duplicate existing services.

WHO DO WE HELP?



We currently work across the Ladywood, Edgbaston and Harborne areas of Birmingham. The communities in these areas face different challenges and have a diverse range of needs.

We support a broad cross-section of the communities in these neighbourhoods through our various projects, however, we have a particular focus on those who are marginalised or isolated. For example we work with a large number of refugees and asylum seekers in the Ladywood and North Edgbaston area, and in Harborne we support mainly older people who are living on their own.

However, we do work with all sorts of people, who are facing hardship and disadvantage in various ways, both material and emotional.

WHAT DO WE DO?

We offer support to lonely and isolated older people through our befriending project, Karis Be Friends. This includes visiting people in their homes and putting on various social events.

We also support local families, through a *Welcome to Ladywood* Drop-In group and also our English for Speakers of Other Languages classes, particularly for refugees and asylum seekers. Our Children & Families worker also visits families in their homes to offer befriending and support.

We provide an advocacy and advice service, in partnership with several other local organisations, with a weekly drop-in session where we offer money advice and advocacy such as help with explaining letters, filling in forms, making phone calls and signposting to other support.

We offer support with practical tasks such as gardening, decorating and DIY. We offer food, toiletries and other essential provisions to those most in need as well as some limited provision of furniture and household appliances through donations we receive.

We are also working more widely with other groups and local residents as part of a community regeneration project, this has included a variety of initiatives from a Ladywood Community Development Trust to a community newspaper and website, an annual community fun day and a local job club.

OUR TEAM...

TRUSTEES

We currently have a board of five trustees. **Dr Ross Bryson** is a GP at the Karis Medical Centre, he has been at the practice for over 20 years and has been a trustee since Karis was set up in 1999, he is currently the Chair of Trustees. **Mrs Rebecca Cuthbert** worked at Karis for several years as the Children & Families' Worker, she previously worked as an Extended Schools Cluster Co-ordinator and has a great deal of experience of working with families in disadvantaged areas. **Mr Russell Lowman** is an elder at Churchcentral, a citywide church, with responsibility for operations and communications. **Mr Chris Poole** is currently Operations Director at Friends of the Elderly, having also previously been head of strategy, innovation and organisational development at World Vision, and innovation and business improvement leader at Atkins architecture. **Mr Steve Watts** is an elder at Church Alive, a local church in Ladywood, and has been involved in the area for around 20 years, having previously worked as a secondary school teacher, he is also involved in a number of other community groups in the area.

STAFF

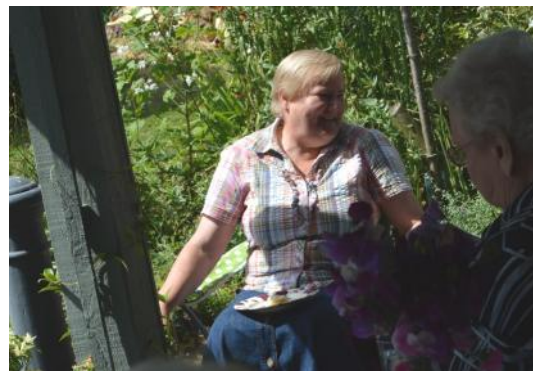
We have a team of six staff who oversee and co-ordinate Karis' activities. **Rebecca Cuthbert** is our CEO, **Ruth Fuller** is the Children & Families' Worker, **Helen Bell** is the Elderly Support Worker, **Harry Naylor** is the Community Regeneration Worker and Project Administrator, **Bram Scott** is the Money Advisor and **Sam Clarke** is the Administrative Support Worker, both as part of the Ladywood Community Advice partnership project.

VOLUNTEERS

We rely on a team of around eighty volunteers, who give their time in various ways, to provide the friendship and support Karis offers, whether this is giving time to visit someone in their home, helping look after children at the ESOL classes, clearing someone's garden or helping at the office. Without their considerable efforts and commitment so much of what we do would simply not be able to continue.

Our volunteers represent a broad range of backgrounds and come from all different walks of life. Having been set up as a community group, out of the concerns of people living and working in the area, we have always sought to maintain our grounding in the local area and build and strengthen links within the community. Most of our volunteers live in the south west area of Birmingham and nearly 60% are residents in the area we work in.

Sometimes, those we have supported or befriended move on to volunteering and this is fantastic to see, especially when people who were isolated or lonely or struggling, when we first met them, have become settled or confident enough to then go on to help others in similar situations.



SUPPORTERS

Our supporters are also invaluable and contribute a great deal to our work as a charity. This is not just financial support, though their generosity in this regard is not to be underestimated, but also in offering support in kind such as donations of food or clothing, responding to particular practical needs, getting involved in fundraising and raising awareness of our work. We do have a formal 'Friends of Karis' scheme, however, we also receive support from others who give of their time and resources. We are also grateful for the support of numerous local churches and the partnership of other organisations and community groups we work alongside. A list of many of our supporters, along with a list of funders who have supported our work this year, can be found at the back of this report.

A SNAPSHOT OF THE PAST YEAR



54 practical jobs done for local people including gardening, decorating and DIY

around **58** items of furniture and appliances passed on to those in need

around **200** referrals to the local foodbank and/or emergency food parcels given

13 local residents involved at the community allotment

28 visits by the group over the year



Over **75** volunteers have given their time and skills to Karis Neighbour Scheme

we had **24** new volunteers start their volunteering



446 people given help with advocacy & advice

nearly **1000** enquiries dealt with through the Ladywood Community Advice project

over **£150,000** of debt dealt with





more than **180** local families supported in various ways over the year

had contact with over **260** children

provided activities for over **50** families with more than **84** children during school holidays

140 adults and **183** children came to the 'Welcome to Ladywood' drop-in

79 adults and **29** children came to our ESOL classes

133 home visits to around **60** families



91 elderly people visited in their homes

50 people came to regular Sunday afternoon tea parties

16 older people came to a regular Tuesday morning group



more than **£24,000** granted to local groups through Ladywood Community First

over **400** people came along to a Summer Fun Day held in Ladywood



THE STORIES...

This year we've helped 766 people from the local area. While a number of people need help with a particular problem and we only see them once or twice, there are many who are facing ongoing hardships or difficult circumstances.

We come alongside people to offer friendship and support, especially those who are isolated and don't have help from anywhere else. In doing this we have the privilege of getting to know people and not only support them through the lowest points but celebrate with them in the successes and joys as well.

The stories below give some sense of the difference we have made to people's lives, however, we have also been working on a set of social accounts this year, these will show in more detail the impact of our work. Please contact us for a copy.

As always, we have changed the names of the people in the following stories.

Betty was referred to us eight years ago by a nurse from a GP practice in Harborne, requesting a befriender. Our Elderly Support Worker visited her at home, where Betty was a full-time carer for her husband. Sadly her husband passed away shortly after we first met her. Most of their lives Betty and her husband had spent time doing things together and suddenly she was on her own. We were able to introduce her to a volunteer to visit her regularly at home and befriend her.

The volunteer was a student, who visited Betty throughout her time at Birmingham University. Even when her studies finished and she went abroad for several months before moving to live and work in Oxford, she kept in touch with Betty by letter and telephone and still visits her every time she is in Birmingham.

During this time Betty's confidence increased and she started to come to social events we organise, including Time for Tea and the Senior Life Group, where she is now a regular. Betty has really flourished in the group, offering care and encouragement to others, calling other members during the week. She often brings cakes she has baked for the group and has even taught several of the volunteers who help at the group to knit.

Last year she had the opportunity to go to a fundraising event in London, to share the difference the support we've given has made to her. She was delighted, having thought she wouldn't get the opportunity to visit London again as she is now 87 years old. One of her highlights was having her photo taken on the Southwark Bridge over the Thames with The Shard in the background.

Anna is originally from Lithuania and has a new born baby, she was referred to us by a Health Visitor for benefits advice. Our Children & Families Worker went on a joint visit and took Anna to the food bank where she received a food parcel and we were able to provide her with a buggy, baby bath, bouncer, steriliser and some baby clothes from the 'Baby Bank'.

She was also signposted to the Ladywood Community Advice drop-in where she saw our money advisor for advice and help with ensuring she was getting the correct benefits.

Later in the year, Anna and her family were evicted from the flat where she was staying and we helped at short notice to move their belongings to temporary accommodation.

Shaeda was first referred to us at the end of 2012, she was isolated due to speaking very little English despite having lived here for several years. When we first met her it became clear that one of her difficulties in getting out and about was that she only had a single buggy, despite having a new-born and a young toddler.

She was thrilled to receive presents for her and the children at our 'Welcome to Ladywood' Christmas party and even more so when on her first visit to our English for Speakers of Other Language classes one of the volunteers arrived with a double buggy they were looking to donate. The family began to regularly attend our 'Welcome' group and ESOL classes.

In particular Shaeda's children have really benefitted from the groups, they were both very reluctant to leave their mother at first and found it difficult to interact with the other children who attended, but in time we've seen her little boy grow in confidence to play with others, including seeing him laugh for the first time.

Lilly lives alone in sheltered accommodation. She was referred by her GP in August, asking for a befriender as she was lonely, immobile, registered blind and rarely able to get out. When our Elderly Support Worker first visited Lilly expressed she had used to enjoy a lot of hobbies and getting out, particularly to classical music concerts and plays, which she now missed.

We were able to introduce Lilly to David and Mary, a couple who had recently started volunteering and lived close to Lilly. When our Elderly Support Worker made the introduction it soon became clear they shared similar interests. David and Mary now visit Lilly each week and all three enjoy lively and interesting conversation, giving Lilly a way of connecting once again to the hobbies and interests she used to enjoy.

Marie found her son was born with a genetic disorder. Marie was referred to us for befriending and support as she is a refugee and doesn't have the support of friends or family. Our Children & Families Worker visited a number of times and got to know the family, she was also able to introduce Marie to another mum, who shared Marie's Christian faith and has a 25 year old son who also has the same condition. This has been a real help to Marie. The advice and encouragement the other mum has been able to offer has been invaluable.

A particularly memorable occasion with the family this year was when Marie and her son, now nearly a year old, attended a party we put on for local families. Apart from hospital appointments and other essential outings, this was the first time he had been out of the house.

Fatima is a young mum who had been in temporary accommodation due to homelessness. We received a referral from Shelter because Fatima had been offered a house to move to but it was unfurnished and in a poor state. We were asked if we could help decorate the house ready for Fatima to move in a week's time, as this was when she would get the keys and have to leave the temporary accommodation.

A team of staff and volunteers were able to spend a day decorating the house, painting the bedrooms and living room, alongside Fatima, who finished the day exhausted and covered in paint but very grateful.

...AND THE STATISTICS

We collect a range of information about the people we've been supporting and our contact with them over the course of the year. In presenting this information we've tried to pick out the headline facts and figures that will be most informative, relevant and useful.

The following statistics cover the period from 1st December 2013 to 31st November 2014 (unless otherwise stated):

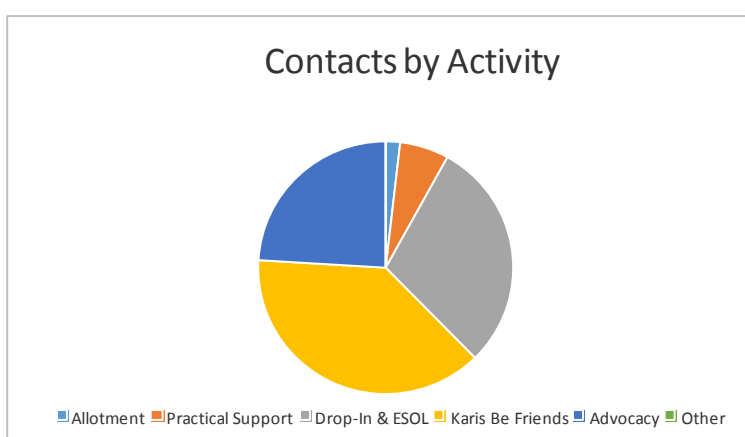
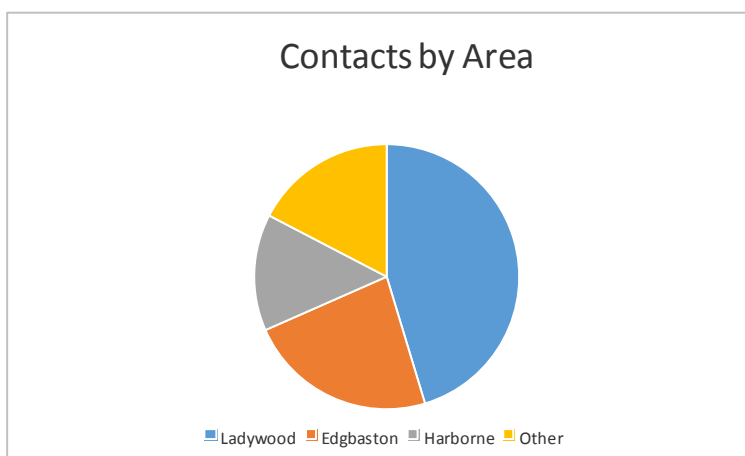
	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014
Total no. of individuals supported:	743	790	798	766
Total no. of contacts:	6273	4842	4653	5310
Average contacts per month:	523	404	388	443
“ “ “ week:	125	97	93	106
“ “ “ day:	25	19	19	21

Demographics

	Individuals (%)	Contacts (%)
<i>By Gender</i>		
Male	34	22
Female	66	78

<i>By Age</i>		
16-24	5	3
25-34	23	23
35-44	25	21
45-54	13	8
55-64	10	8
65+	17	35
Undisclosed	7	2

<i>By Ethnicity</i>		
White (British)	30	39
White (Irish)	2	2
White (Other)	11	8
Mixed (Wh. & Carib.)	2	1
Asian (Indian)	4	4
Asian (Pakistani)	4	4
Asian (Bangladeshi)	<1	<1
Asian (Other)	5	9
Black (Caribbean)	8	4
Black (African)	27	23
Other	6	8
Undisclosed	2	1



ADMINISTRATION

Harry Naylor has been working in the Project Administrator post at Karis Neighbour Scheme for a little over seven years now. The administration of the scheme covers a broad scope of activities including record keeping, monitoring and evaluating, producing publicity materials, welcoming people to the office, answering phones, fundraising and supporting other staff.

My time has continued to be split between our Community Regeneration work and the administration of the charity in the Project Administrator role.

The administration of the charity covers a wide range of tasks, including keeping accounts and financial records, processing new referrals and keeping our database and other records up to date, sorting out references and CRB checks for volunteers, stocking office supplies, dealing with incoming and outgoing post and being on hand to answer the phone and responding to requests for information about the scheme.

Although this time has become more pressured, it is still part of the role to extend a welcome to clients who come in to see us at our office, and although I do have a lot of contact with clients, through the various projects, some of the most memorable moments this year have been in sitting across from people on a sofa in our office, listening to their story over a cup of tea. Some people we see only once or twice, but they often express warmth and gratitude for the time taken to listen to them and the offer of help, and others pop in so often they start to offer to make us a drink before we can offer them a cup of tea.

Either way, it is a joy to be working in the Karis office, even if it isn't always the ideal environment to be getting on with administrative work!

My thanks in particular to Linda, who gave her time at the start of the year to help with the administration around volunteer recruitment and induction. Also, a big thank you to Jan, who has so ably assisted Helen with a great deal of administration around the Karis BeFriends project.

FUNDRAISING

We have had a successful year with fundraising for Karis Neighbour Scheme's work, this has allowed us to increase our expenditure on existing projects from just over £100k last year to £123k this year, and still return a small surplus in our unrestricted funds.

We are grateful to all the funders and donors who have contributed towards Karis Neighbour Scheme's work over the past 12 months. Grant funding saw a big increase this year, rising by nearly 40% to a total of £97,805. The first payment of a two year grant from Tudor Trust towards the Ladywood Community Advice partnership project was a significant proportion of the new grant funding received.

The amount raised from individual giving and donations this year remained steady, with a total of £36,695 raised in all, although this is marginally down on the previous year, we did see an increase in gift aid to £3592. Overall this represented around 20% of our total income. A huge thank you to all our Friends who give regular monthly donations, as well as the churches and other groups who have supported us financially.

We are also grateful to Veolia Environmental Services, whose Credit Control Team have supported us as one of their partner charities again this year. A fundraising day held at their offices raised a total of £1009.97 for our work as well as supporting several other charitable causes.

Our own fundraising efforts have helped to raise over £1,500 this year. A great deal of this has been from small fundraising events like craft or bake sales, however, a special thanks goes to Peter Dalton, from St John & St Peter's Church, who ran yet another half marathon in aid of our work, and raised over £250.

The other big increase in the charity's income is due to Wholecare KNS receiving £66,000 in contract funding from Birmingham South Central and Sandwell & West Birmingham CCGs.



ADVOCACY

Advocacy has been a significant part of our work for a number of years now, and, following a successful pilot last year, we received funding from The Tudor Trust to develop Ladywood Community Advice, a joint project between ourselves, the Ladywood Project and Birmingham Central Foodbank.

Ladywood Community Advice sees our existing advocacy work linked with similar support provided by the Ladywood Project, and importantly, the addition of a part time Money Advisor, Bram Scott, who has been employed since April this year.

There has been an increasing need for money advice, particularly with an increase in issues with benefits, including delays, sanctions and reductions in entitlement, such as the under occupancy charge or 'bedroom tax'. This often has a knock on effect and can lead to debts, particularly with housing or utilities.

However, there also remains a need for advocacy, support with basic issues, such as filling in forms, help getting online to find information or make applications, requesting repairs, making phone calls, or explaining letters. This help is even more important for people for whom English is a second language, where speaking to someone face to face is easier than making yourself understood on the phone and reading and writing can be a challenge.

For others, getting online is a problem, either because of a lack of access or a lack of computer literacy. And for yet others, navigating the system and speaking to the right person is proving difficult, or they need someone to speak up on their behalf to resolve an issue.

The Ladywood Community Advice project has provided a drop-in session one day a week, which is open for people to come in and see either an advisor or an advocate. Money advice is also provided through appointments two days a week.

Our office remains open for people to come in to use the phones themselves, access a fax machine or to print forms. Towards the end of the year we've seen an increase in the number of people using these facilities, and are receiving a high number of referrals from the local jobcentre where the phone lines have been removed, meaning clients are coming to us to make calls to speak to the benefit offices about their claims.

We also provide basic advocacy through staff and volunteers, particularly within our befriending activities. Although, we do signpost to the drop-in sessions or other specialist advice where necessary.

Signposting is an important part of the work, we cannot offer specialist advice on every issue and because we work with a number of asylum seekers, immigration is a particular area we will help people access advice about. We have sadly also seen an increase in the number of people who have needed advice around homelessness or the risk of homelessness.

As well as specialist advice, we often signpost to help with practical needs, particularly emergency food vouchers from the foodbank, or crisis fuel grants provided by the Ladywood Project.

In the first eight months Ladywood Community Advice has had 661 contacts with 291 clients and dealt with 968 enquiries. The most common enquiries were about housing benefit, council tax support and utilities debts. The service has helped clients access more than £375,000 of benefits they are entitled to, and to deal with £151,118 of debt.

More broadly our advocacy & advice work has helped 446 individuals and includes 1283 contacts across all our projects.

We have also been delighted that three of the seven volunteers involved in the Ladywood Community Advice project found paid employment over the course of the year.



ALLOTMENT & OTHER GROUPS

COMMUNITY ALLOTMENT

Last year the community allotment was under utilised, although a great deal of work went into maintaining and developing the plot from two of our volunteers, Andy and Pat. We began this year looking at the future of the community allotment and how we could make the sessions more accessible for the community.

The main change this year was to add a second session, on a Tuesday afternoon, to the existing Thursday session which was moved to the afternoon to avoid a clash with the Workshop Job Club. The Tuesday session followed the community coffee morning in Summerfield and lifts were provided from the coffee morning to the allotments on Meadow Road where our plot is located.

Thanks to a great deal of hard work from Andy and Pat, promoting the sessions and providing lifts, we did see a great deal more use of the community allotment over the course of the year. Thirteen individuals were involved in all and we had a total of 98 contacts across the 28 visits. The people attending the allotment ranged in age from their early twenties to an 80 year old.

The volunteers involved helped to grow fruit and vegetables, and continued to shape the plot, building raised beds, composters, and marking paths. A number of the helpers had poor mental health, suffering from anxiety or learning difficulties, and were ably supported by the other volunteers.

The produce grown was shared between the helpers first and foremost, but the surplus was often brought back to the office and distributed through our other groups and activities.

Unfortunately, although we had seen considerable progress with the community allotment project this year, we will be unable to continue with the allotment next year due to the key volunteers being unable to continue their commitment because of other demands on their time. This is disappointing given all the hard work that has been put in by the volunteers, however, we are able to hand the plot on to another project we have worked closely with before, Spring to Life, and hope they will continue to make good use of the plot.

ARTS & CRAFTS GROUP

The Arts & Crafts group runs on the second and fourth Wednesday of the month at our office. A local resident runs the sessions and helps the clients who attend with a range of arts & craft projects.

There is a small but regular group of attendees, with nine clients being involved this year, including a number of older people from the neighbouring Edgwood Court, and we had a total of 97 contacts over 20 sessions.

The group is an opportunity for people to socialise in a relaxed environment, with the focus on a particular activity. Several of the clients have been able to share their own craft skills and also work on their own projects with input from our volunteer.

FRUIT & VEGETABLE BAGS

We have continued to partner with the Ladywood Project to enable our clients to access affordable fruit & vegetable bags. There is a need for this provision because the only place many residents can easily buy fruit & vegetables is from a supermarket, where prices are more expensive. An arrangement with a greengrocer in Bearwood has meant we are able to provide fruit, vegetable or salad bags, suitable for a family, for only £3.50 a bag.

Thanks to funding received by the Ladywood Project, these bags have been subsidised at several points during the year, meaning each bag only costs clients £2. We have provided around 80 bags of fruit and veg to clients over the course of the year.



CHILDREN & FAMILIES

Our work with local families continues to provide much needed support through the 'Welcome to Ladywood' drop-in, ESOL classes and home visits, as well as trips and activities during the school holidays. Ruth Fuller is our Children & Families Worker and has been working with the project for six years now.

It has been a busy year in the Children & Families project at Karis Neighbour Scheme; we worked with more families across the project than ever before and had a record breaking 918 contacts with 140 adults and 183 children at our weekly Welcome to Ladywood Drop-in! Over all the aspects of the work we had 2040 contacts with 343 adults and 263 children.

Christmas: Our financial year at Karis starts in December and Christmas 2013 was particularly special. We worked together with Birmingham Christian Centre and NIA Community Hall to host three back-to-back parties at which we welcomed 85 children and 45 adults. It a truly lovely event, the children loved the Bouncy Castles (the use of which the NIA provided for free) games, dancing and food. We were so grateful to Birmingham Christian Centre's 'Secret Jesus Campaign' which undertook the cost and preparation of the food and provided thoughtful, named presents for all the children. We were thrilled to have the cheerful help of volunteers from St John's & St Peters, Ladywood Project, Karis Neighbour Scheme and Church Alive who made sure the children were safe and had fun. We purposely ran three small parties to make sure the parties intimate and special for the children and to avoid nasty pile ups on the bouncy castles!

Welcome to Ladywood Drop-in: In January 2014 we employed a sessional worker for three months to look after the children at the Drop-in because the numbers had doubled and we were short on voluntary help. We're pleased to report that since the summer we have a larger team of dedicated volunteers committed to helping at the Drop-in, which has been an immense help. Our normal programme of crafts for the adults, hospitality, sharing food and celebrating together, continued over the year. We also organised 15 trips or outings; four trips to NIA to play on their bouncy castles, three to the cinema taking advantage of the Odeon's 'Kids Club', one to the theatre, one to Sandwell Valley Park Farm thanks to a donation from Ladywood Methodist Church, several walks organised by the Council, we took 57 people to Telford Wonderland thanks to funding from the Mothers' Union, enjoyed a Zumba session provided free by CdVision, hosted an Easter Party for 50 children generously supported by Viola, and took our annual trip to Polesworth Abbey.

English for Speakers of Other Languages Class: Our ESOL class continues to run weekly thanks to the kindness of 15 volunteers who either teach or care for our students' children. Over the year we had 655 contact with 79 adults and 29 children. Our focus remains on students for whom the commitment and requirement of formal college is too much due to their low level of English, difficulties at home or childcare. As such the attendance at the class is very sporadic making the delivery of lessons doubly hard for our teachers, despite the challenges we remain keen to reach out those who appear to fall through the gaps of the formal system. This year we've particularly noticed the progress of the children in the crèche who came with no English and limited social skills, it's been lovely to see how the kindness and attention of our crèche workers has helped the children grow and flourish.

Home Visits: Over the year our Children & Families Worker has made 166 home visits to 66 individual families. These home visits are an invaluable opportunity to provide support, deepen friendship, deliver practical help such as food parcels and baby equipment, help with odd jobs around the house, fill in forms, make phone calls and celebrate birthdays, new homes and babies. Additionally we encounter clients in very difficult situations who require lots of on-going friendship. This year, this support has included attending court, helping with homelessness, supporting women to flee domestic violence and supporting families whose children are in danger. We're grateful at Karis Neighbour Scheme that we are able to offer this long term flexible support and see clients through some of their darkest hours.

Baby Bank: Over the year we've been working with Birmingham Central Foodbank (BCF) to start a 'Baby Bank'. This project formalises the work we've done at Karis for many years, distributing baby clothes, nappies and equipment to families in need. BCF received a £5000 grant from Grantham and Yorke to purchase nappies, toiletries and changing mats. We're in the process of receiving donated items and organising the warehouse and intend to start taking referrals early 2015.



COMMUNITY REGENERATION

Our community regeneration project has just come to the end of its sixth year. Harry Naylor has continued in the community regeneration worker role and has been working to support local residents by helping to build stronger community connections, developing resident led initiatives and enabling residents to have more of a say about and take action on their priorities.

There has been a really broad range of work carried out within the Community Regeneration project this year, from helping new and fledgling groups establish themselves, to working with more established resident or community groups to help develop new initiatives, reflect on and learn from what they're already doing, or making new connections and accessing resources that can help them achieve what they're setting out to do.

LADYWOOD COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT TRUST

The Ladywood Community Development Trust has been the main focus for the project this year. I've been supporting a group of local residents, representing a number of local residents' associations, and one of the ward Councillors., to form the CDT. The Trust has received some initial funding from the Ladywood Ward Community Chest.

The CDT is still in its early stages of development, and we've supported the trust to hold a number of community lunches to engage with a wider group of residents, particularly those who may not otherwise have had opportunity to hear about the trust. As a result the membership of the CDT has grown and feedback was received about the board's initial priorities.

We also supported the CDT to organise a funding fayre for local community groups, and twenty community groups benefitted from the opportunity to meet with funders and discuss their funding needs.

COMMUNITY FIRST

This year saw the final year in the four year Community First programme. We've continued to be the panel partner for the Ladywood ward Community First panel and the residents involved allocated more than £24,000 in small grants to local projects. As part of our involvement we helped promote the fund, discussed potential projects with interested groups and supported smaller groups who had little or no previous experience of grant funding to make applications.

LADYWOOD COMMUNITY FUN DAY

The annual Ladywood Community Fun Day took place in mid-July. We supported the organising committee to apply for funds, including accessing funds to buy, rather than hire, tables, chairs and gazebos which have become a resource for other community events in Ladywood throughout the year. Although this year's event saw heavy downpours during the day, with a thunderstorm bringing the event to an early finish, there was still a good turnout and a fantastic resilience and good humour shown by the numerous community groups and residents involved.

We also supported the group to reflect on and learn from this year's event, to hopefully help with the planning and organisation of next year's event.

The equipment now held by the fun day committee also supported a number of other big events in the community during the summer, including several Active Parks launch events, an Arts Festival at Summerfield Park and a table top sale organised by a local residents association.

We have also worked with a number of other groups, including Summerfield & Ladywood Timebank (SALT) and the Friends of Chamberlain Gardens, as well as helping to connect residents to existing groups.

The project has also benefitted from having an office space at The Square on Broad Street, this has been provided rent & rate free and has been well used for community meetings. It also enabled our resident run arts & crafts group to run extra sessions during the summer and has been used by a number of community groups for one off events.



KARIS BE FRIENDS

Helen Bell is our Elderly Support Worker and manages the Karis BeFriends project. Karis BeFriends offers support to older people in Harborne, Edgbaston and Ladywood, particularly those who are isolated or lonely. As well as regular home visits from befrienders, the work has included regular social events and other one-off activities.

Our Karis Befriends project continues to focus on befriending support to older people in their own homes and within their local communities, in particular in the Ladywood, Harborne and Edgbaston areas of Birmingham. Throughout the year we have supported 130 older people, through 2039 contacts, mainly through visits to them at home, telephone contact, or accompanying them out into the local community, trips, or regular group or social activities in the local area. Out of those older people we have supported, 90 older people have been visited in their own home and 61 have regularly attended group activities, whether they be our Sunday afternoon “Time for Tea” events held five times during the year at the Onneley Centre in Harborne, or our weekly Senior Life Group at the Kenrick Community Care Centre, or other coffee afternoons, Christmas parties or trips out during the year.

Here are some comments from those who come along to our Senior Life Group; “I enjoy coming because of the people and I feel lonely at home. It all makes your mind strong and healthy especially when you learn a lot from good activities. I especially like questions and answers which make me interested in things.”; “It is good to meet with people of the same age group... It helps me to keep going.”; “I love meeting together with such lovely people and the banter that we sometimes have with each other. We have much to be thankful for!” and those who come to the “Time for Tea” events; “It’s fantastic from start to finish and there are so many people to talk to and great cake to eat!”; “It is always a real joy to be at Time for Tea. Everyone always seems to want to be there.”; “Time for Tea is a highlight for me. I really like the company of the old and young together. It’s such a friendly event”; “There are always interesting people to talk to. It’s good to be able to get a lift there and back.”

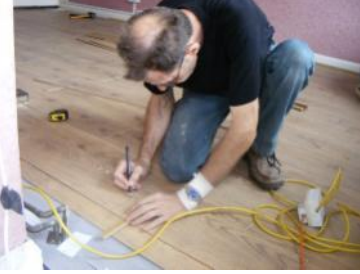
For some they find it more difficult to get out, therefore having a regular visitor to them is really beneficial, someone to look forward to seeing and opportunity to connect with others and enjoy friendship and conversation together, helping to reduce the feeling of isolation and loneliness. One client expressed it like this; “I look forward to Margaret coming because I’m here so much on my own, her visits relieve the monotony and gives us time to have a chat and a cup of tea. We chat about many things, we talk about our families, what’s in the news, we even talk about politics which we don’t agree on! But we enjoy spending time together and enjoy each other’s company.”

As a result of building relationship through visiting and bringing people together we often find they are more likely to ask for help sorting out practical tasks, maybe accompanying them out into their local community or to appointments, or visiting whilst in hospital, or helping sort through tasks they find difficult at home, hanging curtains, moving furniture for example. Also we often provide advocacy support while visiting them, sorting through post, making phone calls and liaising with other services. On occasions referring them onto other agencies, for example for equipment to assist them, for a social work assessment, or assessment regarding the difficulties they are having due to sight loss, or services which can provide ongoing help with household tasks or shopping. During the year we have had requests to assist moving furniture/take items into hospital to enable an older person to return home from hospital.

Referrals often come from local GP surgeries, social workers, other health professionals, relatives or older people themselves. As the Elderly Support Worker I look after the work supporting older people, I visit all the elderly people referred to our Karis Befriends project and match them up with a volunteer when available, invite them to social activities or continue to support them while they are waiting for an available volunteer. Just under 60% of our contacts last year were from volunteer involvement in the project, split more or less half and half between individual befriending and group activities, our volunteers are such a valuable part of our work.

Our partnership working with churches and other organisation is key, with support from Birmingham Christian Centre, Waitrose, Veolia Environmental Services, St.John’s Church (Harborne) and Crosscity CCG for our Christmas party. Ongoing support from Churchcentral, the Onneley Centre and the Kenrick Community Care Centre with our Time for Tea and Senior Life Group activities. Being part of the Moving together in Body, Mind and Spirit partnership which connects us with other organisations across the city providing support to older people and working with Birmingham City Council.

Over the last year there have been many highlights and challenges as the work of Karis Befriends has been sustained and developed and it continues to be apparent that there is more and more need for befriending support for a growing population of older people.



PRACTICAL SUPPORT

Our provision of practical support is currently delivered primarily through our other projects, and covers a range of activities to help people who are in need because of either financial hardship or another disadvantage, such as isolation or poor health.

The types of support offered include help with jobs in and around the home, such as decorating, gardening, DIY or other odd jobs, to crisis support such as emergency food parcels, passing on furniture and appliances, applying for grants and financial assistance, and help moving to or from temporary accommodation.

We have seen an increase in the provision of this support over the past year, in all we provided practical support to 153 individuals and families this year (12-13, 134) and had 334 contacts (12-13, 299). More than 1 in 5 people supported received more than one kind of practical support from us, and 5% of people we supported were acute cases where we provided three or more different types of support.

The help we have provided this year has included, help for a lady leaving her flat with a young child due to domestic violence, we helped at short notice to take down the cot and move her belongings to her temporary accommodation.

Similarly another family we knew, who had a new baby, were evicted from their flat and needed help moving to temporary accommodation on the other side of the city. We were able to move their things as well as store their washing machine and fridge freezer so they didn't lose them, and we have since been able to move them into their new permanent accommodation.

One older man had been suffering from depression and his flat had become very untidy, one of our volunteers visited a number of times to help clear and clean the flat so it was in a more manageable state.

We helped several older people with their gardens, clearing and tidying them where they were getting overgrown. We received a referral for another family from social services to help clear several van loads of rubbish from their garden and take it to the tip.

Another referral came from Shelter for a young mother who needed help decorating, a team of volunteers spent the day painting several rooms to get the flat ready for her to move into the flat.

Smaller jobs have included getting boxes out of a loft for an older lady who lives on her own, and fitting stairgates for several families.

In all we completed 54 such jobs in the past 12 months. There is still more of a need in this area and we would like to see this area of work grow.

We were able to pass on a total of 58 donations of furniture, appliances and other household items this year, up nearly 50% on last year. This included cots, beds, sofas, dining tables, wardrobes, fridges, freezers and crockery. We also made a number of referrals to the Ladywood Methodist Church Outreach Shop for clothing and referred several families to The Gift Project, a new social enterprise working across South West Birmingham to provide recycled furniture to individuals and families in need.

A total of 99 individuals or families were supported with food parcels in the last year, the majority of cases these people were referred to Birmingham Central Foodbank, a local Trussell Trust foodbank run by Birmingham Christian Centre, but we continue to provide small emergency parcels from our food store, often when it is several days before the client can next go to a distribution session at the foodbank. In all 191 parcels were distributed to these clients, meaning on average each client was supported with two food parcels.

The BabyBank at Birmingham Central Foodbank, which we've been partnering with to run informally over the past year, is now moving towards being set up as a formal project with a similar referral process to the foodbank.

We hope this will increase the provision of items like prams, cots, nappies and other baby equipment, which is being stored at the foodbank's warehouse.

INTRODUCING WHOLECARE KNS

In April 2014 KNS began delivering a new pilot project, our Listening and Guidance service.

As the funding and delivery of the project would be markedly different from our other projects, we set up a distinct Management Board and organisational structure to deliver our GP Chaplaincy activities under the name WholeCare KNS.

Karis Neighbour Scheme has previous experience of delivering therapeutic mental health interventions, including 'stress-less' courses and other group and individual sessions, but this is the first time we have been commissioned to deliver our services for the NHS.

Our Listening and Guidance service provides a team of Chaplains for Wellbeing who offer one-to-one sessions where people can talk about issues that are impacting their wellbeing. This 'talking therapy' complements our other services and enables us to deliver a more holistic package of care.

HISTORY OF THE SERVICE

In the West Midlands, Chaplains for Wellbeing have worked from Medical Centres such as Karis Medical Centre since 1997, from Cape Medical Centre since 2005 and Malling Health Centre since 2009.

The Chaplains for Wellbeing have been offering pastoral and spiritual care to patients of all faiths and of no faith whilst remaining true to their own particular beliefs.

More recently with changes in NHS funding, Clinical Commissioning Group's (CCG's) have taken a new approach to the health needs of the populations they serve. With increased awareness that many people were experiencing mental and emotional distress and their needs were not being met by the existing services Sandwell and West Birmingham CCG developed a "Hub concept". This brought together many varieties of psychological interventions all designed to promote recovery and increase wellbeing. Chaplaincy was one of the "Talking therapies" included.

Based on similar principles Birmingham South Central CCG (BSC CCG) started a Pilot Hub in April 2014.

This Pilot Hub includes our Listening and Guidance Service to be delivered by Chaplains for Wellbeing across 6 practices including Karis Medical Centre.

WholeCare KNS now hold contracts to deliver Listening and Guidance Service in both these CCG's and appointed two new Chaplains for Wellbeing in September 2014 to meet the requirements to deliver 20 hours a week of Chaplaincy time in SWBCCG and 40 hours a week of Chaplaincy time in BSC CCG.



Our 'Chaplains for Wellbeing' team leader, Anne Horder, has been in a chaplaincy role based at Karis Medical Centre since 2012, she is heading up our team of Chaplains delivering the Listening & Guidance service across a number of GPs surgeries within Sandwell & West Birmingham and Birmingham South Central CCGs.

Across the two CCG's we now have a team of five Chaplains for Wellbeing all offering therapeutic listening to people within their local GP surgery. This is person centred and offered without agenda, apart from that of the patient. Individual patient appointments in a safe space allow the patient to tell their story. Sometimes through being listened to, the patient feels heard and is enabled to carry on. Sometimes there is the opportunity for the patient to explore inner sources of strength, search for meaning and recovery of hope and sense of purpose.

All those working in Chaplaincy in General Practice are encouraged to be members of the College of Healthcare Chaplains and the Association of Chaplains in General Practice (<http://www.gpchaplaincy.com/>). They are required to adhere to the Code of Conduct developed by the UK Board of Healthcare Chaplaincy and to practise in accordance with the Capabilities and Competencies described by the UK Board of Healthcare Chaplaincy.

As part of the BSC CCG work, the Chaplains for Wellbeing identified a training course in Listening skills suitable to use to train up volunteers from the local community. Working with Acorn Christian Healing Centre this course was modified to fit the needs of the service. Over the course of this year, Chaplains for Wellbeing have recruited, trained and are beginning to work with Professional Volunteer Listeners (PVL's).

The 10 week training period ended with an assessment process recognised both by Acorn and by the Association of Chaplaincy in General Practice. Under the supervision of Chaplains for Wellbeing PVL's will offer intentionally therapeutic, attentive listening and spiritual encouragement to the patients they see. PVLs work to agreed standards and adhere to the Code of Conduct developed by the UK Board of Healthcare Chaplaincy.

They are known as "Listeners" to patients. Our first group of Listeners are now getting established and are growing in confidence. We are immensely grateful for their commitment and willingness to help patients in this way.

Every patient we see is unique but many say they feel "lighter" after they have told their story. Some find it easier to speak to someone outside of their own immediate family and some have no one else to talk to.

It is a privilege to journey with people as they come to terms with their loss, and to sit with people who for a time can see only darkness. It is a joy to be with those who rediscover a first glimpse of light and begin to grasp a glimmer of hope for their future.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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We couldn't do it without you!

Thanks also to,

Age UK, Philippa Allenby, ASIRT, BHSF, Birmingham Central Baptist Church, Birmingham Central Foodbank, Birmingham Christian Centre, Birmingham Churches Together, Birmingham Mother's Union, Birmingham Settlement, Birmingham Voluntary Service Council, Blue Coat School, Business In The Community, Central Ladywood Neighbourhood Forum, Christ Church Summerfield, Church Alive, Church of the Redeemer Edgbaston, churchcentral, The Cinnamon Network, Circul8 Credit Union, City Centre Neighbourhood Forum, Coplow Street Grow Site, Councillor Carl Rice, Deaf Cultural Centre, The Digbeth Trust, Friends of Chamberlain Gardens, The Gift Project, Graham Harvey Services Ltd, Harborne Medical Practice, Hope Projects, Jewellery Quarter Neighbourhood Forum, Karis Medical Centre, Kenrick Centre, Knowle Parish Church, Ladywood Children's Centre, Ladywood District Office, Ladywood Furniture Project, Ladywood Health & Community Centre, Ladywood Methodist Church, Ladywood Project, Loaves 'n' Fishes, Lordswood House Medical Practice, Meadow Road Allotments, Midland Heart, Narthex, Newman Trust Homes, NIA Sport & Leisure Centre, Norman Power Centre, North Summerfield Residents' Association, Onneley House, Oratory RC Primary School, Outreach Shop, Polesworth Abbey, Quinton Methodist Church, Restore, Ring & Ride West Midlands, Shencare Community Transport, Shiloh Computers, Sport4Life UK, Spring to Life, Springhill Library, St Augustine's Church Edgbaston, St George's Church Edgbaston, St George's C of E Primary School, St Germain's Church Edgbaston, St John's Church Harborne, St John's & St Peter's Church Ladywood, St John's C of E Primary School, St Patrick's Catholic Primary School, Summerfield & Ladywood Timebank, Summerfield Resident's Association, Thrive Together Birmingham, TNT Ladywood, Veolia Environmental Services Ltd and Waitrose.

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