



St Albans Good Neighbour Scheme

ANNUAL REPORT

2023 - 2024

Message from our Chair *Patrick*

This has been a busy and most productive year for the scheme. The demands on the charity sector, and thereby us, seem to be ever increasing. We at St Albans Good Neighbours have been good neighbours to the people of St Albans for 44 years. We do an amazing job helping so many people both now and over the last 4 decades. I know how grateful our clients are, whether that's because we have helped with their shopping, gardening, given them a lift or just popped round for a chat. We are a key player in the charity sector in the St Albans area. The work we do and the difference we make makes me feel very proud to volunteer for St Albans Good Neighbours.

There have been a few administrative changes this year. Trevor, our previous treasurer, retired after many years volunteering for the scheme. We were extremely lucky that Jan already volunteered for us and has taken over the treasurer role seamlessly. Jane B has taken over as the company secretary from Dana. Ali B has very kindly volunteered to take the minutes at our committee meetings. Ellen now helps Nicky with the processing of new recruits, and hopefully they will be kept very busy! Kathryn W has taken over the role of keeping all our volunteer DBS checks up to date. Tessa, due to ill health, has temporarily had to hand the reins of the practical help section over to Mark H, who has transitioned into the role easily and continues to do an amazing job.



Our scheme runs from the end of September. So this annual report will cover the last quarter of 2023 and the first 9 months of 2024. At our year end we have 137 Volunteers and 1230 Clients. Looking over the last year from a statistical perspective our Duty Officers have booked 1924 jobs. On many weekdays they are booking an average of 7 jobs and on many occasions are working late into the afternoon to match drivers to these jobs. Within this period our drivers have completed 1662 driving jobs, a smaller figure than the amount of jobs booked due to cancellations.

St Albans Good Neighbour Scheme

Charity No: 1074638

Company No: 03675149

Registered Office: 18 Chandlers Road, St Albans, AL4 9RS

Message from our Chair *Patrick*

We currently have 25 active befriending partnerships and over the last year have received 35 new befriending referrals. The process of setting up befriending partnerships takes time and a lot of care and consideration so a special thanks to Nigel and Serena here. Our Shopping section currently has 20 active shopping partnerships and we have had 19 new referrals. Dana works tirelessly to make this section work as well as carrying out Driving jobs so big thanks to Dana for her commitment. Finally, practical help has had 118 referrals over the last year and has been excellently managed by Mark in Tessa's absence.

On the recruitment side we have 3 more volunteers than we had this time last year, having recruited 16 new volunteers over the last year. Recruitment is not a simple process. We need to interview, DBS check, take references and place the volunteer into the right section, not easy so our continued thanks to Nicky and Ellen. We are, however, struggling with numbers and demand resulting in a freeze on referrals for Befriending and Shopping. We are also concerned with the number of Duty Officers with a couple leaving soon. So if anyone wants to expand what they do for the scheme why not be a driver and a Duty Officer (done from the comfort of your home one day a month). If any of you know anyone who may want to join our scheme or can think of any new ways to attract new recruits let me know. By far the most successful way we get new recruits is word of mouth from our current volunteers, so please do reach out to local friends, neighbours and family.

With recruitment in mind we are looking at investigating how we could expand into digital marketing. We have spoken to a local company Midnight Blue to help us with this and are currently working through our options. We believe having more of a presence on Facebook would help us attract more interest and volunteers. We will also be updating our website. Midnight Blue will also help us target our marketing approach in a more systematic organised way.

This year we have introduced the drivers app. The purpose of this is to facilitate the process of matching drivers to driving jobs. We have currently matched over 125 jobs using the App. We hope this figure will increase as more drivers start to use the App and see the benefits it offers them. There are a few issues we need to iron out one being how often the app is updated from Optimise, but our IT team are working on this.



Message from our Chair *Patrick*

On many occasions we as a charity go above and beyond. One example of this is Jeffrey T. We take Jeffrey to see his wife in a local care home every week without fail. Jeffrey would be unable to visit his wife without our help. We have a rota of drivers who are very happy to help him do this on a Sunday. Recently I spoke to another client who is blind who has used our driving service over a number of years to get to various appointments including taking his guide dog to the vets. Recently his wife, also a client, was in hospital. The challenges for this client visiting his wife were more than most as he needed to be helped to the ward. Over a 12 day period we took him 6 times and he wanted everyone who helped him to know how grateful he was for their kindness towards him and his wife. I believe this is what we do: we help those who need our help when they really need it. His mother is now at the same hospital and we are again taking him to the hospital on a regular basis. I have many stories I could share, as I'm sure you all do. Perhaps, if you do get a client who is especially grateful or we have gone above and beyond for, you could share them with me. It would be lovely to get all these testimonials in one place to help promote the great work we do.

Over the last year we have had 2 coffee mornings, one in April and one in September. On both events we had an attendance of over 40. A couple of thoughts about these I'd like some feedback on: Do we hold enough? Is the format correct with a brief formal update then just a chat with refreshments? Are there any other sort of social events you would like us to hold?

Last year at the AGM we acknowledged volunteers who have volunteered for the scheme for over 20 years. This year we will be acknowledging any volunteer who has contributed more than 15 years to the scheme.

Finally thank you to you all for your contribution to our scheme and our local community, you make a huge difference to many people's lives.



Mission, Vision and Values

Our Mission

To be a dependable good neighbour to any St Albans resident in need, providing support quickly and informally

Our Vision

To reach into our community, seeking out people in need, regardless of background or personal circumstances, to connect them with Good Neighbours, so we can support as many residents as possible in leading fulfilling, independent lives

Our Values

As a trusted community charity, we provide 'organised kindness' with

- **Respect** - valuing diversity, equality, inclusion, fairness and consideration, and respecting our natural environment
- **Integrity** - maintaining strong moral principles and high standards of welfare, including health and safety, always in line with our procedures and policies
- **Teamwork** - recognising and valuing the vital contribution of our volunteers and encouraging a culture of working together with support.



Volunteer Coordinator's Report *Nicky*

Our current number of active volunteers is 137. In the last year, we have recruited 16 new volunteers and archived 11.

The source of new volunteers was as follows:

Google	4
Referral by volunteers	5
Flyers & posters	1
Communities 1st	4
Own use as a client	1
Facebook	1
Cathedral Volunteer Day	2

The most successful method of recruiting new volunteers remains by referral from current volunteers, closely followed by referral through Communities 1st and Google.



Encouragingly, the 2 potential volunteers from this year's Cathedral Volunteer Showcase are currently progressing through onboarding. One of these potential new volunteers is recently retired and is keen to be involved in a number of different sections of the Scheme. So if you know of anyone else about to retire that would like to do something useful with their time, please refer them to us!

And a huge thank you to all those of you who have referred new volunteers to us, especially Ali B and Serena D who have referred/encouraged at least 2 new volunteers each (Serena persuades clients to volunteer while driving them!).

One of our new volunteers over the past year has gone on to become our new Treasurer and several are active drivers, including one that received a testimonial from a grateful client on his first drive. Another is a much-needed DO and a few are awaiting a match as Befrienders.

It is important to stress that volunteers do benefit from volunteering itself as well as our social calendar of Coffee Mornings and Tea Parties and AGM not to mention the refresher Safeguarding Training involved.

Ellen T has now been actively involved as my Deputy since March and her assistance is enormously appreciated. Thanks are also due to Andre B, who worked hard on fine-tuning the new referencing system, which is working well. He and Bill are now working on automatically archiving references, once they are six months old.



Safeguarding *Lauren*

This annual safeguarding report outlines St Albans Good Neighbours commitment to safeguarding vulnerable adults engaged in our programs and services. It summarises our policies, training, incident reporting, and plans for improvement over the past year.

Safeguarding Policies and Procedures

Policy Review: Our safeguarding policy for vulnerable adults was reviewed on 27 May 2023. This policy outlines our commitment to protecting individuals who may be at risk of abuse or neglect and aligns with current legislation.

Training and Awareness

Training: We take our Safeguarding responsibilities very seriously here at the Scheme, with fully documented policies and procedures, and training for all volunteers. On joining the Scheme, new volunteers are given access to our Safeguarding Policy, which sets out in clear and simple language how a volunteer can recognise and report a Safeguarding concern. They are also given the link to our specially tailored training video, providing a step by step guide to the Safeguarding process. We currently have 4 volunteers who have had no safeguarding training whatsoever, and 2 new volunteers who need to be trained which is a vast improvement from last year. At every board meeting we have a standing item on the agenda for Safeguarding issues. As Safeguarding Lead, I attend external training courses for Levels 1 and 2 Adult and children Safeguarding, and update my knowledge regularly. I'm immensely grateful for the support I get from everyone at the Scheme and thank all the volunteers for responding with such diligence and care to any signs of neglect or abuse.

Incidents and Concerns

Reported Incidents: A total of 3 safeguarding concerns were reported this year. Each incident was investigated following our safeguarding procedures.

Types of Concerns: Concerns reported mainly included signs of self-neglect and clients struggling to look after themselves, and one was a victim of emotional abuse

Investigation Outcomes: 1 was referred to social services for assessment and a package of care to be put in place, 1 was referred to the police for attention and the last client had more help from their family.

Feedback and Improvement

Feedback Collection: We actively seek feedback from service users, families, and staff regarding our safeguarding practices. We would encourage volunteers and clients to give feedback to the trustees if you would like further training or with any questions or related queries.

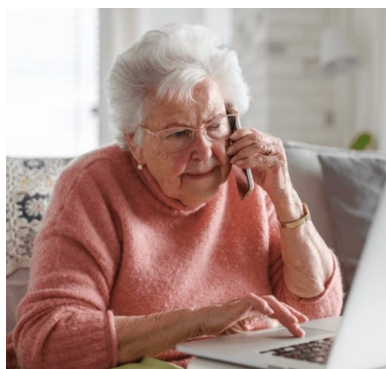
St Albans Good Neighbours is dedicated to ensuring the safety and well-being of vulnerable adults in our care. We will continue to refine our practices and policies to foster a safe and supportive environment for all. At every board meeting we have a standing item on the agenda for Safeguarding issues.



Duty Officer Report *Paul*

Duty Officer Numbers

At the end of the scheme year in 2024 we have 31 operational Duty Officers (this excludes one temporarily unavailable), which is 4 below our target, and the lowest we have had since the end of 2020. With known leavers at the end of the year, I believe we will be at 29 in January.



	Dec <u>2020</u>	Oct <u>2021</u>	Oct <u>2023</u>	Oct <u>2024</u>	Jan <u>2025</u> (Projection)
Operational DOs	26	38	35	31	29
<u>Changes</u>					
Newly Trained DOs			11	1	
Attrition			(14)	(5)	(2)
Total Change			(3)	(4)	(2)

Attrition has been worse than I expected this year. We lost 14 DOs in 2 years between 2021 and 2023, and it will be 7 in just one year in 2024 (including 2 finishing at year end). The 14 was mainly in 2022 and I believe it was largely people who volunteered during early lockdown phases of the pandemic, who no longer had the time available as they returned to other roles. The pace of attrition did slow in 2023, and I thought that might persist, but it has picked up again in 2024. This seems to be partly for unavoidable reasons (people moving out the area) but partly also people struggling to juggle the requirements of the role with other responsibilities.

On the other side of the coin, we have seen a sharp fall off in the number of volunteers we are taking into the role. After training 11 in the 2 years to 2023 we have only had one new trainee this year. I know there are plenty of efforts being made, so I am not sure why things have fallen off to this degree. I am aware of one and maybe two possible new trainees, but nothing firm to go ahead with at this point.

The position this leaves us in is a big concern to me. In January, for the first time since 2020, I am going to have to ask some DOs to handle more than one duty if we are to fill the rota. I am concerned that if we start asking more of existing DOs then we risk pushing more beyond the point which they feel is a reasonable balance with the rest of their lives, and that risks getting into a dangerous spiral.

Activity Levels

It is evident that we have seen a steady increase in bookings over the past 3 years, now up to 5.3 per day, which would translate to almost 7 per average weekday. Along with referrals for new



Duty Officer Report *Paul*

clients, practical help, shopping and befriending, and dealing with miscellaneous queries, an average day is typically now a fairly full day for a DO.

	<u>2021CY</u>	<u>2022CY</u>	<u>2023CY</u>	<u>2024 (scheme yr)</u>
Average Bookings/Day	2.5	3.5	4.3	5.3

A busier than average weekday, sometimes up to mid teens of jobs booked, is an extremely challenging day for even the most experienced DO. I have DOs that I only allocate weekends to because I don't think it's realistic to expect they could handle a busy weekday. I also have DOs who could handle weekdays, but need or prefer to do weekends (and we are volunteers so I'm of course grateful for any days people offer). One of the challenges of planning the schedule is filling both weekdays and weekends given these multiple constraints.

Ongoing Roles and Responsibilities

Last year I indicated that if the Board of Trustees felt my frequent absences while travelling meant I was not able to offer the amount of input they require, then I would be ready to step down.

I repeat that offer here, particularly in the knowledge that I was probably away even more in 2024 than 2023, which I plan and hope to continue in 2025. With the experience of this year, I do believe that I could continue to handle the rota planning even whilst travelling, so that if you wanted to split the roles, I could step down as section leader but continue handling the rota.

I am not asking to step down but I do certainly imagine it could come to the point where you want somebody in the role who is a bit more consistently present.

In the meantime, I want to record my appreciation for the great support provided by Ali (who always handles in-month rota changes, and steps in to help whilst I am away) and Anne (who does the telephone rota). On top of that I appreciate the understanding and support of the other section leaders and committee, particularly related to my travel.

Highest Priority

The biggest issue today for whoever is carrying out the DO Section Leader role, and indeed the Rota planning role, is the current shortage (below 31) of Duty Officers. I think it is vital that the Scheme finds and then trains new volunteers in the next couple of months.



*Your offer is rejected (again)
—we are thrilled to keep you!*



Transport Report *Michelle*

I always think it's important to start by thanking each and every one of you for your continued support, whether you are a busy driver or not. I am sure you are all aware of how very grateful all of our clients are, so well done each and every one of you!

We currently have 71 active drivers. I thought I would start by talking numbers, so last year we completed 1376 jobs for the period October 2022-September 2023 and this year for the same period 1662 jobs. How amazing is that!

One of the main jobs of the year has been getting you all to complete again our annual Volunteer Driving Declaration from May, to ensure that all of our drivers are adhering to the Scheme's driving guidelines. I'm pleased to report that you have now all responded.

You have also been kindly continuing to update me on parking information at all the various locations we visit, so I have been updating the intranet and continuing to send this out to all drivers after any updates received.

I have also worked on creating a contact list of Duty Officers' telephone numbers, so you would be able to see that it was the Scheme calling you, therefore feel more comfortable picking up the call and not an unknown number.

Without a doubt the biggest most exciting new project for this year has been the introduction of our new Drivers' App. Andre has been working tirelessly on this all year, with my full support. It has been quite a task with all 71 drivers now having been invited to use it. Currently 53 have confirmed they are up and running, with 7 not being interested and the remaining 11 still to respond. It is an ongoing project, with regular improvements and updates, and I sincerely hope that you have found it useful in some way.

There are two sides to the app, the first being able to see any daily unfulfilled jobs that are still outstanding around 13.30 and offering to take them, to help reduce the amount of calls the D/O's have to make.

The second being to assist you in carrying out your driving jobs by showing the client details, both phone number and address and then the destination along with the pickup and appointment time and any notes for drivers, not forgetting google maps for both home and destination.

I sincerely feel that it has enhanced my experience as a driver and has made it so much simpler for me and I am hoping for those drivers, who still feel a little apprehensive about using the app, that you will come along to the informal workshop or have a chat with me, where you can gain some help and confidence.

I look forward to another exciting year with our wonderful charity!



Shopping Report *Dana*

The past year has seen an increase in demand on the Regular Shopping Service. 19 new referrals have been received but of these only 6 have resulted in a new shopping partnership. Some of the referrals were made on behalf of a client, who, on enquiry, did not want/need a regular shopper. Often a one-off or occasional shop is all that is required. Others we were unable to fulfil, either because the prospective client's requirements were too complex or we did not have volunteers available on the day the client wanted the shopping done and was inflexible about changing.

Our volunteers are now helping 20 clients with fortnightly shops (16 last year), 11 are taken to the supermarket and 9 are shopped for. 17 volunteers are engaged in Regular Shopping, 3 having two clients each. This is the first time that more than one volunteer has had more than one client and reflects the fact that we are short of available volunteers. Over the past year one Regular Shopper has moved away and another has had to give up their clients for health reasons. Few new volunteers have come forward to do Regular Shopping this year which means that the service is fully stretched and is close to capacity. Regrettably, it is unlikely that we will be able to take on any new clients for Regular Shopping until some new volunteers can be recruited. In the meantime one-off shops are always an option for any client who finds themselves in need of help with a basic shop to tide them over.



Befriending Report *Nigel*

The Year In Focus

Current Befriender and Client Pairings	25
New Volunteers paired during year	11
New Approved Volunteers who withdrew	3
Old Befriending Pairings ending during year (died or illness)	5
New Befriending Pairings ending (incompatibility, change mind)	5
Clients Approved Waiting to Pair	5
New Client Requests being investigated	5
Befrienders available (including two to be approved)	5
Requests which we investigated but dropped by client or we could not accommodate	18
Befrienders withdrawing	3



Befriending Section has had another busy year. We recruited 11 new volunteers and paired them successfully during the year. So we end the year with 25 paired befrienders and clients, 5 more than last year. This is a positive sign of life in the section given that we also lost five pairings through illness or clients passing away.

Demand has been high: in addition to these 11 new pairings, we considered 28 new client requests, 10 of which we approved for befriending. Of these, 5 were paired but stopped either through incompatibility or not being well enough to continue, and 5 are still waiting to be paired.

Supply and Demand

Although supply of volunteers has been enough to meet the number of clients for much of the year, we have twice, including currently, had to impose a temporary freeze. We currently have five befrienders available and 10 potentially needing pairing (if we approve the five still needing investigating). We are hoping that the SAGNS recruitment drive will bring a new batch of volunteers.

The increase in the numbers of requests from clients, (or referring relatives, social agencies and social prescribers) who have dementia or an illness which has laid them low continues and this can make the pairing process a lengthy and unsmooth one. It can take a time to set up visits to assess them, and to find volunteers who are suitable. We have started to give volunteers opportunities of attending short online courses on dementia offered by Communities 1st and face to face training at a local care home. Since training in understanding dementia clients' needs and behaviour is important, we want to provide it for all volunteers who will work with such clients and Communities



Befriending Report *Nigel*

1st will be able to offer face to face training if we request it. Whilst training is important and valuable we do not want to make it more difficult to attract volunteers since we find ourselves again facing a shortage, so any training will be targetted, light-touch and short.

Who we befriend and what we do: Stories from the Year

We befriend all sorts - from those who are still quite fit and independent, to those who are restricted to their room or bed. We have some pairings where we visit both the client and their partner-carer because we believe that carers have to be supported too and our visits bring some diversion and relief once a week. We still have a shortage of younger volunteers and have to turn down requests from young clients seeking befrienders nearer their own age.

We have as ever a talented, kind team of volunteers and many stories of their befriending going beyond a 'chat over a cup of tea.' Some partnering has brought great pleasure both to volunteers and their clients. One lonely gent who missed his wife and dog has been really cheered up by the volunteer who brings his own dog along to entertain him, and they often take a walk to local pubs. One volunteer helped his client build up the story of his family via ancestry.com to trace his family back to the 1700s. The same client had never been abroad in his life, and the volunteer took him for a trip to Paris for the day! Another client, suddenly bedridden by a stroke, with a lively mind is very cheered up by conversations with his volunteer, finding common ground for chats since both have technical backgrounds and interests. One lady who cannot get out has her dog walked by the volunteer (also a dog lover!) has been taken out to various Elvis impersonator gigs, whilst another is regularly accompanied to Bingo by her volunteer - something she would not have the confidence to do by herself. In lots of cases befrienders take their clients out either walking, for a drive, a visit to a garden centre and this provides a great diversion for the client who would otherwise be restricted to staying at home. One partially sighted client has her correspondence read and written by a befriender, whilst another joins a singing and exercise class with her client. In some cases, our volunteers have alerted our Safeguarding officer if they are concerned about the health or home condition of a client, or have helped arranging medical and community appointments.

All our volunteers are performing really valuable work and to all of them, we extend our warmest thanks and appreciation.



Practical Help Report *Tessa*

During the year 1st October 2023 - 30th September 2024 the Practical Help Section received 118 referrals of which 89 were completed during the Scheme's year, the other two being completed in the year 2024 - 2025.

The figures show the categories of the 89 jobs requested. The number of referrals in the two most popular categories, Gardening and DIY, continue to be very similar to previous years.

Acceptance of Practical Help referrals is based on jobs that can be completed within a two hour period, however many volunteers are involved. Over the last year we happen to have had no painting and decorating requests but as a decorating job, even with two volunteers, will take much longer than 2 hours we have taken the decision not to provide this service in future.

Of our 27 Practical Help volunteers, one person deserves a special mention. Mark Harrison, the Deputy Section Lead for Practical Help, has been involved in at least 50% of our referrals and in addition, since March, he has also run the section while I have been out of action for medical reasons. I can't thank him enough. 15 other volunteers worked on the other jobs, either on their own or, sometimes when gardening, in teams of two or three. Huge thanks go to everyone who gives up their time so generously and cheerfully. I know how much the clients appreciate all that is done for them because they say so and are all happy to give a donation - often offering far too much!

In order to give Mark a less busy time, it would be wonderful if we could recruit some more volunteers with experience in DIY and simple electrical jobs, who have their own tools and are happy to tackle a myriad of requests. If you know of anybody who fits the bill please point them in our direction!

I very much hope to return to my volunteering soon - I miss it.

...and we all miss you x



Jobs by status

Completed	89
In progress	2
Cancelled by client	14
Duplicate	4
Inappropriate referral	0
Refused	9
Not yet assessed	0
TOTAL of above	118

Job Category (completed jobs)

Gardening	32
DIY	27
Technology	5
Plumbing	2
Electrical	6
Decorating	0
Move large items	2
Assembly	2
Misc	13
TOTAL of above	89



IT Support *Andre*

The Drivers App was designed for drivers to take advantage of the smartphone user interface, providing easy access to job details, accessing navigational tools (such as Google Maps), phoning the client as well as being a handy tool to record mileage and donations.

Over 100 jobs were booked via the app since a small number of drivers started to use it six months ago, meaning a multiple of this number in avoided phone calls between Duty Officers and drivers has been achieved, making the process of the Duty Officer jobs less stressful and allowing drivers to choose the best jobs.



All the drivers have been invited to use the app, 20% of them have yet to start using it.

The app data is currently updated twice daily manually. The full benefits of the app cannot be realised until Data Capture (Suppliers of Optimise) enables us to update the data automatically, so that jobs appear on the app near enough in real time.

The Drivers App is currently further developed to enable drivers to submit expenses and donations directly into the Scheme accounts spreadsheet and send reminders to drivers the day before a job.

The app's uptake has been slow, probably an indication of the average age (65) of the Scheme's 70 drivers and perhaps also a lack of awareness of its benefits, something which is currently addressed by arranging drop-in sessions.



Completed and other ongoing developments include:

- development of a monthly report for the board of Trustees
- assisting Jan with improvements to the accounting spreadsheet
- tidy-up of shared drives (in progress)
- updated forms for new clients and new volunteers (shopping, befriending and PH had been done previously)
- development of a new report on source of volunteers (how they heard about us)
- development of a Expenses and Donations app

Use of the IT Support help has somewhat decreased (83 requests) this year compared to the previous year (146 requests).



Treasurer's Report *Jan*

First of all I would like to thank Trevor Fake, my predecessor, my fellow Trustees, Section Leaders and volunteers for your kind support over the past 6 months as I have transitioned to the role as Treasurer for the Scheme.

Please find below the Scheme's Final Accounts and Analysis as at 30.9.24.

<u>FY2024 Financials</u>	<u>£</u>
Bank Balance	43,047
Donations	18,457
Gift Aid Claim	141
Expenses	<u>15,290</u>
Surplus	3,309

Income

Included in the Donation Total, we kindly received £500 received from St. Albans Lodge and £180 raised by Clare Lodge at the Open Morning in August.

The Scheme, this year registered with HMRC for Gift Aid and was successful in claiming £141 on donations received from previous years.

We hope to take advantage and make further claims.

Expenditure

Mileage and phone expenses increased as volunteers are encouraged to claim these allowances.

Further Expenditure

Going forward we can expect to see the Scheme's funds being invested in Digital Marketing as we continue to expand and showcase to the local community.

Surplus

£3,309 versus £1,643 last year

The Scheme's Administration Costs are kept low due to the fact we do not have any premises or employees as unusually we are all volunteers.

The Accounts have again been independently examined by Peter Harrison, FCA. I am pleased to confirm that Peter has indicated he is happy to continue next year.



St Albans Good Neighbour Scheme

Registered Charity No. 1074638
[A Company (No. 3675149) limited by guarantee and not having a share capital]

Income & Expenditure Account for the year ended 30 September 2024

30/9/23	%	<u>Income</u>	30/9/24	%
£0	0%	HMRC Gift Aid	£141	1%
£750	6%	Legacy	£0	0%
£10,870	94%	Donations	£18,457	99%
£11,620	100%		£18,598	100%
		<u>Expenditure</u>		
£6,216	62%	Mileage	£11,423	75%
£152	2%	Phone	£254	2%
£277	3%	Insurance	£289	2%
£981	10%	Stationery	£267	2%
£126	1%	Stamps	£239	2%
£292	3%	Meetings	£348	2%
£1,010	10%	IT	£1,276	8%
		Marketing	£258	2%
£558	6%	DBS	£252	2%
£214	2%	Gifts / Cards	£470	3%
£0	0%	Training	£0	0%
£63	1%	Subs	£93	1%
£88	1%	Sundries	£121	1%
£0	0%	HCF/QAVS	£0	0%
£9,977	100%		£15,290	100%
£ 1,643	14%	Surplus/(Deficit) for the year	£ 3,309	18%
30/9/23		<u>Balance Sheet as at</u>	30/9/24	
£38,095		Balance b/f	£39,738	
£1,643		Surplus / (Deficit)	£ 3,309	
£39,738			£43,047	
£39,738		Cash at Bank	£43,047	



**INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT TO THE TRUSTEES
OF THE ST ALBANS GOOD NEIGHBOUR SCHEME ("THE SCHEME")**

Charity number 1074638

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of The Scheme for the year ended 30th September 2024, which are attached.

Responsibilities and basis of report

As the charity trustees of The Scheme, you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 ("the Act").

You consider that an audit is not required for this year under section 144 of the Act and that an independent examination is needed.

I report in respect of my examination of The Scheme's accounts carried out under section 145 of the 2011 Act and in carrying out my examination, I have followed the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the Act.

Basis of independent examiner's statement

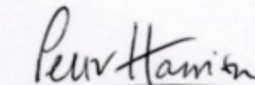
My examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by The Scheme and a comparison of the accounts presented with the records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts and seeking explanations from the trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit and consequently no opinion is given as to whether the accounts present a "true and fair view" and the report is limited to those matters set out in the statement below.

Independent examiner's statement

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no material matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination which gives me cause to believe that in, any material respect:

- accounting records were not kept in accordance with section 130 of the Charities Act; or
- the accounts do not accord with the accounting records.

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.



Peter Owen Harrison FCA

Fellow of the Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales.

9 Marshals Drive, St Albans, Hertfordshire, AL1 4RB.

4 November 2024



Reserves Policy

Background

The Charity Commission for England and Wales describes reserves as that part of a charity's unrestricted funds that is freely available to spend on any of the charity's purposes. The starting point for calculating the amount of reserves held is the amount of unrestricted funds held by the charity. However, some or all of the unrestricted funds of a charity may not be readily available for spending. This is because spending those funds may adversely impact on the charity's ability to deliver its aims. The items that should be excluded from reserves are:

- tangible fixed assets used to carry out the charity's activities, such as land and buildings
- programme-related investments held solely to further the charity's purposes
- designated funds set aside to meet essential future spending, such as funding a project that could not be met from future income
- commitments that have not been provided for as a liability in the accounts

Purposes for holding Reserves

The Trustees of the St Albans Good Neighbour Scheme (the "Scheme") take the view that sufficient reserves should be maintained to cover the following purposes, in order to ensure the continued operation of the Scheme in accordance with its charitable objects:

- repair and replacement of equipment necessary to carry out the Scheme's objects. (These items are written off at purchase and therefore considered as zero value assets.)
- increased volunteer demand for reimbursement of expenses
- payment of contractors or professionals for unanticipated, yet essential, operational duties and professional services that cannot be performed by available volunteers
- the premium required for essential insurance (including public liability insurance) in the absence of sufficient income
- unforeseen expenditure
- unexpected reductions in sources of income, for example, client donations or grants not renewed
- unanticipated financial commitments, if any

Level of Reserves

The Scheme's Trustees have resolved to maintain reserves at a level equivalent to the Scheme's average annual expenditure over the preceding three years. They have made this decision on the basis that they consider this is an appropriate level to meet any unforeseen expenditure or reduction in income, whilst not restricting availability of funds to meet clear charitable need within the objects of the Scheme.



Structure, management and governance

The Directors of the Company are also Charity Trustees for the purposes of Charity Law and are also known as members of the Management Committee. They give their time voluntarily and receive no benefits from the Charity. Any expenses reclaimed are included in the Accounts.

Management Committee (known as Members/Directors/Trustees), from October 2023 to September 2024:

Patrick Brooks, Chair

Lauren Breed

Andre Bottin

Jane Burstow

Jan Caley (from March 2024)

Trevor Fake (until April 2024)

Sue McElroy

Lucie Tate

Company Secretary: Jane Burstow

Treasurer: Trevor F until March 2024, then Jan C



Post Holders

Minutes Secretary: Ali B from January 2024

Designated Safeguarding Lead: Lauren B

Volunteer Coordinator: Nicky S

Deputy Volunteer Coordinator: Ellen T

Duty Officer Section Leader: Paul M

Deputy DO Section Leader: Ali B

DO Rota Coordinator: Paul M

Befriending Section Leader: Nigel R

Deputy Befriending Section Leader: Serena D

Practical Help Section Leader: Tessa P

Deputy Practical Help Section Leader: Mark H

Shopping Section Leader: Dana C

Transport Section Leader: Michelle P

Helpline Administrator: Anne H

IT Advisor: Andre B

IT Support Team: Keith A; Adam F; Jeremy H; Bill W

DBS Rechecks: Lauren B until March 2024, then Kathryn W

Independent Advisors

Accounts Examiner: Peter Harrison

Legal Advisor: Niall McAlister



Declaration

The trustees declare that they have approved the Annual Report.

Signed on behalf of the charity's trustees

Signature	<i>P. Brooks</i>
Name	Patrick Brooks
Position	Chair
Date	16/11/24



St Albans Good Neighbour Scheme



