



Annual Highlights

2022—2023

CAVS



Castle Point Association of Voluntary Services Ltd.
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Chairs Foreward



Dan Garside, Chair

As we mark almost a year since I assumed the role of Chairman, I feel very privileged to serve this remarkable organisation. It has undoubtedly been a year of challenges and opportunities and one that reinforces my endeavours to elevate the invaluable initiatives of the Charity. Knowing that we are making such a tangible and positive difference to the lives of others, propels our collective commitment to serve those across our local communities who need assistance the most.

The current climate has meant that communities are all detrimentally feeling the economic effects, having even less disposable income with the basics like rent, food and heating becoming beyond affordable. In the face of such difficulties, the demand for our services increased, with more and more people relying on the lifelines of support we offer. As winter set in, we championed the winter warmth initiatives and ensured our membership were informed of the government's warm homes discount for those on low incomes.

January 2023 saw the opening of our Canvey Island office in the Health Centre. Not only does it reflect our commitment to positive development, but one of expanded opportunities, enhanced presence and a strengthened connection with the local community.

The impactful events we have delivered in the calendar year have been a wonderful way to showcase our organisational values, exemplifying the spirit of generosity and community engagement that lie at the heart of our work. The celebration of our dedicated volunteers took place at a momentous time during the Queen's Platinum Jubilee Celebrations and truly stood out. Where would we be without our volunteers? Huge thanks to each and every one.

My wholehearted gratitude also extends to the CAVS team for their unwavering commitment. The tireless warmth, passion and professionalism you all deliver, has been instrumental in driving our service commitments. To the Board of Trustees, you are the guardians of our purpose, helping shape the trajectory of our efforts, ensuring we remain true to our core principles in making a lasting impact on the communities that we serve.

Dan Garside

Chair



Janis Gibson, CAVS CEO

CAVS CEO, Overview

As I reflect on CAVS 2022-23 journey and despite the challenges, I write with pride and gratitude, as with the wonderful support of my passionate, caring team and amazing volunteers we have positively navigated the testing times, emerging resilient and committed to serving our local communities.

Transitioning through the lingering effects of the pandemic to confronting the pressing issues of the cost of living crisis, had a profound impact upon the service users we assist; the elderly with no network of support, families with children and young people struggling daily and those seeking advice and guidance on personal health and wellbeing. Strategically, we mobilised our resources to provide assistance where it was needed most.

We supported the government's Winter Warmth initiatives as we witnessed acts of solidarity and kindness that unfolded across our local communities, with public spaces opening up their doors as respite from the cold winter months to help save on heating bills. It was heartening to see local businesses, stepping up and actively contributing to the well-being of local residents making sure they felt cared for and included in the winter months.

The opening of our offices in Canvey Island marked a significant development as we entered the early part of 2023. This occasion was deservedly commemorated, and we were honoured to celebrate the opening with local dignitaries. It signifies not only the growth in our presence, but also an expanding capacity to reach local residents who can be served closer to home.

The year saw a calendar of key events taking place. The delivery of two highly successful Community Breakfasts for our members and partners underscored the importance of these connections, fostering collaborative networking opportunities. We celebrated the wonderful spirit of our volunteers during the Queen's Platinum Jubilee with a garden party, recognising their tireless efforts as well as a festive Christmas luncheon for our Befriending Service and its volunteers. Community engagement was very active as the Volunteering Team worked hard to raise awareness of our services across Castle Point, Rayleigh and Rochford.

Looking forward, the challenges ahead are still substantial, but so too, is our resolve. I would like to thank the Board of Trustees, the CAVS Team, our amazing volunteers and our membership organisations for their incredible commitment, in helping to make a meaningful difference to the lives of those we serve across our local communities.

Janis Gibson

Chief Executive Officer

A Red Ribbon Mayoral Opening CAVS Canvey Office Is Launched

Exciting times took place in the latter part of January 2023 when we launched the official opening of our Canvey Office, located at The Health Centre, Canvey Island.

We were delighted to welcome local dignitaries along to show-case the premises, the lovely garden area and the excellent office facilities.

We value the importance of how the Primary Care Network, GP Practices and other partnerships are working with CAVS teams to assist so many people each year with advice, guidance and more.

The new office premises provides a facility that greatly benefits the local community, making it easier for Canvey residents to access vital wellbeing and advice services on their doorstep.



Photo: Top L-R, Doreen Anderson, Town Mayor, Canvey Island, Martin and Doreen Tucker, Mayor and Mayoress Castle Point

Photo: Bottom L-R, Steven Cole, Deputy Leader Castle Point Borough Council, John Anderson, Consort Town Mayor Canvey island, Doreen Anderson, Town Mayor Canvey Island, Martin and Doreen Tucker, Mayor and Mayoress Castle Point, Rebecca Harris, MP Castle Point, Janis Gibson, CEO CAVS, Ray Howard, Freeman of the Borough and Wayne Johnson, CAVS Trustee

CAVS Announces A New Chairmanship

In early February 2023 we were delighted to announce the appointment of Dan Garside as the new Chairman of our Board of Trustees, following the retirement of Barry McCarthy, who supported and chaired CAVS for almost ten years.

Dan previously served CAVS as a Trustee since November 2013 and brings extensive experience and a wealth of knowledge to the new appointment. As a qualified Chartered Accountant, Dan has worked locally in this capacity for over twenty-five years.

He is a fellow member of ACCA (the Association of Chartered Certified Accountants). Reacting to his new appointment, Dan commented:

"It is an honour to take on board the Chairmanship of CAVS. It is a Charity whose values I care deeply about and the need for vital community work remains clear; to support our local beneficiaries the very best way we can."

Following in the footsteps of the former Chairman, Barry McCarthy, I am confident, that with a caring and capable team in place, we will admirably continue to serve as many people as we can, in very real need, across our communities."

A Snapshot Of CAVS 2022-23 Community Events Enjoyable and Successful



The Snapshot, Top Left-Right:

CAVS Befriending Christmas Luncheon, December 2022 and Inspire Women's Network Christmas celebration, CAVS Queen's Platinum Jubilee Volunteer celebration, June 2023 and winners of the Pawtriotic competition, Baxter, Winner and Fizzy.

Bottom Left-Right:

Ben Brook Strategy, Policy and Performance Manager, Castle Point Borough Council, Al Green, Station Manager, Rayleigh & Canvey Island Essex County Fire and Rescue Service, Steven Cole, Deputy Leader Castle Point Borough Council, Angela Hutchings, CEO Castle Point Borough Council, Janis Gibson, CEO, CAVS.

Membership participation at the Community Breakfast. We held two highly successful Community Breakfasts in March and September 2023 and thank CAVS Membership for their valued attendance and support at these networking events.

Cost of Living Crisis and Winter Challenges

Supporting Our Community

Winter Warmth



Vicky, CAVS Volunteer and Kim CAVS
Ways to Wellness

As winter set in and the cost of living crisis deepened even further, the pressing issue of winter warmth at a very cold time of year, was uppermost in our minds.

With Winter Warmth Essentials and Top-Up funding, we were able to assist over 300 residents in need, across Castle Point, Rayleigh and Rochford with winter warmth bags containing items such as winter hats, scarves, gloves, flasks, blankets and torches.

Struggling families were also supported with electric blankets, duvets, clothing, heaters and food vouchers, ensuring they could keep warm in what was very difficult economic times.

Warm Hubs Initiatives



In these trying times, more than 370 warm hubs opened for people to access across Essex. The Warm Welcomes initiative aimed to bring social benefits and emotional warmth to households, affording the opportunity to make use of warm and comforting spaces, to help save on expensive heating bills. Libraries, Cafés, Churches, Social Groups, Supermarkets, the Fire Service and Mobile Library units were just some of the venues who all took part in opening their doors. Our collaboration with Castle Point Borough Council, ensured that through our extensive membership and cascading of information, as many people as possible were reached with the warm welcomes information.

United In Kindness



Despite difficult times being faced by many, community spirit held strong. Giving the gift of kindness, through the Christmas Tree of Kindness, a United in Kind project, helped spread festive cheer and make wishes come true for many Castle Point residents.

Located in Morrisons Hadleigh and Morrisons Canvey Island, pretty festive stars lit up the stores. The extraordinary kindness of the community shone through for many local people, who received lovely gifts and we were delighted that over 100 of CAVS service users were recipients, making their Christmas wishes come true at this very special time of year.

Volunteering, Community Engagement and The Queen's Platinum Jubilee Celebrations

Volunteering Matters

Post pandemic, we faced fresh challenges in recruiting new volunteers to support our work, as economic uncertainties changed the way people connect and engage.

Our busy Volunteering team were out and about in the local community raising awareness of CAVS volunteering opportunities and through other activities such as talks to social groups, coffee mornings, school visits and dedicated social media campaigns we actively encouraged people to join our cause. Our efforts have been rewarded in welcoming a significant number of new volunteers to our existing and portfolio of individuals who give their generous spare time and commitment to those we serve.

The focal point of our volunteer celebrations were inspired not only by Volunteers Week in early June but also that of the Queen's Platinum Jubilee Celebrations. We held a wonderful summer garden party, where volunteers, local dignitaries and the CAVS team enjoyed a right royal occasion and red carpet welcome!

It was a wonderful opportunity to pay tribute to our volunteers, but also to Her Majesty, The Queen, for her long serving and historical reign.



L-R: Kia, Jo, CAVS with volunteers Phoebe and Alan



Community Awareness Raising



Celebrating our Volunteers



L-R: Debbie CAVS Volunteer and Kia, CAVS Digital Assistant



Rebecca Harris, MP Castle Point with Cllr. Andrew Sheldon



Wonderful guests enjoying the occasion



Doreen Anderson, Town Mayor, Canvey Island with Consort John Anderson

Inspire Women's Network

The Inspire Women's Network was established to help women over the age of forty with wellbeing support.

Craft Groups, Walking groups, 1-1 assistance and other social gatherings took place. We carried out over 1,240 interactions and 300 hours of work that involved helping individuals with a wide range of wellbeing issues.

Firm friendships have been made and they too joined in with the Queen's Platinum Jubilee Celebrations to mark the joyous occasion!



Top Left: Helen, CAVS Wellbeing Coach with some of the Inspire Women's Network Ladies Craft Group

CAVS Befriending and Buddy-Up Service

CAVS Befriending Services witnessed a notable surge in demand, a reflection on the profound impact of social isolation on many people's lives, affecting mental health and wellbeing, particularly as a result of the pandemic aftermath.

Now into its 11th year, and led by Laura and Sophie, we have risen to the challenges and changing landscape, with our passionate Befriending Volunteers continuing to provide home visits, as well as telephone befriending that provides a lifeline of support to isolated residents in very real need of contact and companionship.

We also introduced a new, popular and growing Pen Pal Service, enabling volunteers to correspond with people who reach out to us for help, by way of hand written letters.

Over 1,015 welfare calls providing social and practical support were made, ensuring individuals felt supported and cared for. Ageless Inspirations, a social group open to all Befriending and Buddy-Up clients was formed, where through informal gatherings, people enjoyed art and craft sessions, played cards and board games, as we tackled loneliness and isolation with fun and socially interactive activities.



L-R: Laura and Sophie CAVS Befriending Service



CAVS Family Mentoring Service

Family Mentoring continued to provide vital assistance to families with children and young people. Unquestionably, the impacts of the pandemic were still being felt due to major disruptions to children's lives, affecting emotional wellbeing and mental health. With the return to schools routines, anxiety levels and loss of coping mechanisms rose, children with complex needs required even more additional help and the referrals for our mentoring services increased considerably.

The dedicated and skilled team, with the support of amazing Family Mentoring Volunteers, adapted at pace to meet the needs of struggling families, carrying out extensive group sessions with schools, worked collaboratively with partners, delivered highly successful online FLASH and STOP Parenting courses and ran special, free Wellbeing Days throughout the summer months for families and children waiting to be assessed.

We reached out to families experiencing hardship at Christmas 2022 and in collaboration with United in Kind we brought festive cheer to them, delivering Christmas gifts of kindness and making festive wishes come true.

Funded by the Lottery since its inception in 2017, the service has gone from strength to strength. Over 300 referrals in 2022-23 were made and skillfully managed by our professional and caring team.



L-R: Wendy, Alison, Bobbie, Leanne and Claire, CAVS Family Mentoring Team



CAVS Ways To Wellness and Social Prescribing

In its seventh successful year of operation, the CAVS Ways to Wellness Social Prescribing team, managed by team members Kellie and Kim had a very busy year supporting and signposting many client referrals of a non-clinical nature to community services and support groups within Castle Point, Rayleigh and Rochford, assisting individual's with their health and wellbeing matters.

Over 8,000 enquiries have been handled since the scheme commenced, where the skills, knowledge and expertise from the team have been utilised to best serve local residents.



L-R: Kim and Kellie, CAVS Ways to Wellness



Wellbeing Link Coordinators and Social Prescribing

Social Prescribing Services witnessed a surge in demand with referrals more than doubling from the previous year. The cost of living crisis, mental health issues, an ageing population, coupled with life's general challenges, all taking their toll on residents health and wellbeing.

Our dedicated and skilled team of Wellbeing Link Coordinators located in Benfleet, Canvey Island, Rayleigh and Rochford served a pivotal role in providing personalised support through an holistic approach, collaborating with Primary Care Networks, multi-disciplinary teams in-house and membership groups expertise on a wide range of non-clinical issues, helping meet the practical, social and emotional needs affecting a persons health and wellbeing.

Over 2,500 referrals have been made since the Schemes inception in 2016, supporting individuals to take greater control of their own health whilst helping to reduce pressures on healthcare services.



Nicky, CAVS Wellbeing Link Coordinator,
Canvey Island



L-R: Mira, Becky, Julie, Jazz, Emma and Kay, CAVS Wellbeing Link Coordinator's

ECL South East

Our collaborative working with ECL continued to provide vital lifelines of support for residents in very real need of assistance across Castle Point, Rayleigh and Rochford.

The coordinated approach to helping service users covered a myriad of issues, from practical home support, personal care, befriending, community advice and much more, enabling client needs to be best met.

The information and advice provided by Sam, assisted to help with both low and high level of needs, which also included home visits and wellbeing support to families.

Over 3,295 interactions were made with a significant number of referrals for home-help and advice on community issues.



Sam, CAVS Senior Information &
Advice Coordinator for ECL
South East



Membership

CAVS Membership of over four-hundred organisations is an amazing network of skilled professionals that we highly value and one that is strong and vibrant.

Our Membership offers a range of benefits. Not only is it FREE to join, but fortnightly bulletins and news updates are circulated to ensure everyone is kept up-to-date and informed of the fantastic opportunities that happen across our local communities, including grant funding, training, community events and many other interesting topics.

We always welcome new members to join us!



To join CAVS as a member please contact:
office@cavsorg.uk
or Tel: 01268 214 000

What Our Members Think

“Thanks for all your great work, I really look forward to reading the information sent”.

“A huge thank you for these informative updates”.

“Thanks for keeping us informed with all that’s going on. It’s really appreciated!”

Words Of Praise Across our Local Communities

We are very grateful for the many positive comments and heartfelt expressions of gratitude that we receive about our charitable work. Our team are truly inspired and it is heart-warming to know that we are making a tangible and positive difference to the lives of local residents facing genuine need. A snapshot ...

Social Prescribing

“Thank you so much, you have been an absolute life-saver! I couldn’t have done this without you”.

“Your heart and willingness to help made me very happy”.

“I can’t thank you enough for all the support that you have given me over the weeks”.

Befriending

“Without my volunteer Befriender, my life would be very lonely ”.

“Very grateful for all the companionship that my volunteer befriender brings to me”

Family Mentoring

“The FLASH parenting group has allowed me to know that we are not alone with our challenges”.

“It’s been great to talk to other parents experiencing similar things”.



Thank You To All Our Wonderful Volunteers

Huge Thanks To All Of Our Wonderful Volunteers

We are proud to have such an exceptional army of wonderful volunteers, who underpin all that we do in carrying out the vital work we deliver across local communities. In a challenging year we have seen dedication and selfless contributions that are truly the driving force behind the positive impacts we make every day.

With such commitment our charitable mission gets publicly noticed, and we are fortunate to have such an incredible team supporting us. We could not deliver what we do without you.



CAVS Volunteers Phoebe and Alan



CAVS Volunteer Brigitte



CAVS Volunteer Debbie

And Thank You To CAVS Administrative and Finance Team



L-R: Beverley, Andrea and Mandy, administration and finance

Where would we be without all the internal administrative and finance support that takes place across our busy operations? Thank you Beverley, Andrea and Mandy for helping steer our operational efficiency.