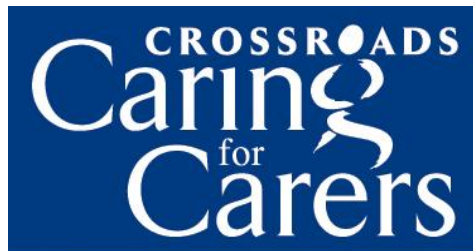


CHESTER CROSSROADS

CARING FOR CARERS



ANNUAL REPORT

2007/2008

**Chester Crossroads Limited
Richmond Place
125 Boughton
Chester
CH3 5BH**

MISSION STATEMENT

CROSSROADS 'Caring for Carers' promotes, offers, supports and delivers high quality services for Carers and people with care needs.

INFORMATION ABOUT CHESTER CROSSROADS

- Chester Crossroads provides practical help where it is most needed – in the home by way of our respite service
- Chester Crossroads runs three social and leisure groups per week:
 - Friday Club provides a break for carers of adults with learning difficulties
 - Connections group support for adults with physical disabilities
 - All Stars provides a break for carers of adults with learning difficulties
- Chester Crossroads supports a number of activity groups for young people, plus social skills groups for children, young people and adults with Aspergers Syndrome
- Chester Crossroads runs a CAMEO Club to support those affected by dementia, both clients and carers. Clients and carers are invited to meet each other for a chat/activities
- Chester Crossroads provides a Bathing Service to enable the person needing help to use their own existing bathroom facilities
- Chester Crossroads provides a Carer Support Service for carers who are caring for a terminally ill person at home.
- Chester Crossroads provides a respite service for carers. This service was made possible by a legacy kindly bequeathed by a local lady.
- Chester Crossroads provides extra breaks for carers of children with special needs. This service is funded by a grant from the Sobell Foundation
- Chester Crossroads provides support to carers of adults with learning difficulties who are in respite care. This service is funded and referred through Mencap.
- All families receiving our service receive an assessment visit to determine their needs – the care plan is agreed with all those involved.
- All Chester Crossroads Carer Support Workers are highly trained and senior staff provide a 24 hour 'on call' service to support care staff.
- Chester Crossroads works closely with the statutory authorities and a wide range of local organisations to develop and evolve services to carers.
- Chester Crossroads liaises with other Crossroads schemes to develop services for carers and is affiliated to the National Association of Crossroads Care Attendant Schemes.

CHESTER CROSSROADS LIMITED

ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

Name of Charity: Chester Crossroads Limited

Charity Number: 1057379

Company Number: 3200810

Office Address: Richmond Place, 125 Boughton,
Chester CH3 5BH

Telephone: 01244 346699

e-mail Address: chester@crossroads.org.uk

Website: www.chestercrossroads.org

Area of Operation: Chester City and Rural Areas

Organisation: Chester Crossroads is an independent charity.
A company limited by guarantee.
Affiliated to the National Association of
Crossroads Care Attendant Schemes.

Auditor: Tollit and Stockton
24 Nicholas Street
Chester CH1 2AU

Solicitor: Walker Smith Way
26 Nicholas Street
Chester CH1 2NX

Bank: Barclays Bank plc
St Werbergh Street
Chester CH1 2DY

Insurance: Watson Laurie Sinclair Ltd
234 St Georges Road
Bolton BL1 2PH

CHESTER CROSSROADS

CHAIRMAN'S MESSAGE 2007-8

On behalf of the Board of Trustees of Chester Crossroads I am pleased to introduce the annual report for financial year 2007-8. Chester Crossroads has been in existence for 21 years and as previous reports have shown development and change have been ongoing themes. The report this year sets out briefly the extent and variety of the activities to support carers and these are summarised in the Scheme Manager's report.

There continues to be concern in the charity sector about the availability of the necessary resources to carry forward their caring work particularly given government pronouncements about the expected contribution from the 'third sector' set against the evidence of unmet needs. However financial support to Crossroads from Cheshire County Council and from the PCT has grown and we thank them for keeping faith with us and hope that these important partnerships will be continued into the future.

During the year the Board has revisited the management of risk exercise with particular reference to the forthcoming need to apply the standards of due diligence to major decisions. An evaluation of customer satisfaction has been possible through a further survey undertaken by Maire Gibson. This analysis of carers responses is used in planning and improving services. Three external evaluations by the Commission for Social Care Inspection, Crossroads Croquet Auditors and Investors in People have confirmed that Crossroads in Chester had met the highest standards set by these bodies. Credit for these achievements is due to the effort of Tom Livingstone, the staff and volunteers and the Trustees thank them for their commitment.

Making sure that the public are aware of Crossroads and the help it can offer has been another Board concern and John Taylor has taken a lead on this by bringing forward some marketing ideas and producing an updated and user friendly brochure.

The trend for public bodies to hold consultation exercises as a preliminary to announcing policy changes has become the order of the day. Trustees have used their contacts to pass on the views of carers and the Board made representations about local government reorganisation, on social care legislation and for the inclusion of carer information in the next census

The Board has also released the Scheme Manager to undertake representative activities as a member of Skills for Care, the Crossroads Chief Executives focus group and a number of planning groups both local and national. It is hoped that these activities will lead to the best possible decisions being made for carers.

In addition to ensuring that support to carers is maintained and enhanced the Board has been considering the impact of changes to social care policy. It is evident that smaller schemes however viable at the moment face limitations if they are unable to grow and adapt. The Board has explored the possible ways forward with the benefit of external advice and over the year have reached the decision, subject to the necessary safeguards, to merge with other Crossroads schemes. This will pool management resources, share best practice and establish significant partnerships with organisations with common aims.

As we move into a period of change I would like to pay tribute the elected board members, the Secretary, Treasurer and the other members for their commitment and support over the years. Once the formalities of the change over are completed some Trustees may decide to step down and we thank them for their help in sustaining services to carers. Other Trustees will continue to serve on the new body and will have a real contribution to make in transferring the strengths and values of Chester Crossroads to the Cheshire West and Wirral Crossroads.

Craig Cawthorn

CHESTER CROSSROADS LIMITED

TREASURER'S REPORT 2007/8

I am pleased to report herewith on the accounts for the year ended 31st March 2008.

Our total incoming resources for the year amounted to £269,173 (2007 £279,204). Of this £255,869 represented grants and donations, £8,862 bank interest and £9,919 other income.

Total expenditure for the year amounted to £306,715 (2007 £294,696). The increase relates principally to salary awards in line with inflation and additional costs supporting Aspergers' Projects. Other administrative costs have largely been contained.

The net result shows an excess of expenditure over income of £37,542 compared with £15,492 last year. As mentioned previously this remains within the Board's budget for the continued development of the service.

Net cash resources at 31st March 2008 were £157,080.

If any member would like a full copy of the accounts, a copy may be obtained from the office.

The company maintains a Risk Register to look in detail at Governance, People, Quality and Services and this is under continual review. The board are confident that adequate resources remain in place to cover the continued working of the scheme.

Throughout 2007/8 difficulties continued over obtaining funding from Statutory Bodies and this was exacerbated by the uncertainties surrounding local government re-organisation. Additionally, Cheshire County Council decided in mid-year to require all organisations receiving Carer's Grant to re-submit bids in order to review priority areas. Despite these ongoing difficulties the Scheme Manager was able to negotiate additional funding for 2008/9. We can therefore look forward to the ensuing year with confidence.

In closing I would like to thank both Shirley Sheen and our accountant Messrs Mitchell Charlesworth for their assistance throughout the year and in the preparation of the annual accounts.

David Atkinson
Treasurer

Scheme Manager's Report

The year 2007/8 was a busy and successful year in relation to funding opportunities and service development. It was also a period during which our expertise and success in developing our work with people with learning disabilities and Aspergers Syndrome received considerable recognition. A number of consultative exercises were launched nationally, regionally and locally and further reference to this is made to this in the Chairman's report. Under quite difficult circumstances in relation to recruitment and retention of staff we did manage to increase our overall provision of respite to families in excess of 2000 hours on 2006/7. The hours delivered in 2007/8 were 15,540 in the home and 8,044 in group care. Specific objectives for 2008/9 and outcomes for 2007/8 are covered in the Trustees' Report and Accounts.

The Government announced continuation of the Carers Grant and whilst bids had to be submitted to the County Council for existing projects funded via this grant, I am pleased to say we were successful in retaining those projects and also in extending some of them to provide additional services to Hidden Carers and adults with a learning disability. We are entering a new era of local government funding and commissioning with the forthcoming local government reorganisation and the creation of Cheshire West and Chester unitary council and this will bring both challenges and opportunities for us. The Primary Care Trust have continued to be supportive and have also increased the amount of funding available to support carers.

The services which we developed for adults with a learning disability have been validated by MENCAP and have been regarded as good practice worthy of showcasing with other interested groups. The sports club made a very smooth transfer into our service and the increasing use of volunteers is both crucial and beneficial to all concerned. The College Break scheme continues to be a very valuable resource and a source of great pleasure to those who attend. Similarly our work with children and adults with Aspergers Syndrome has achieved national acclaim and we have assisted a number of organisations both voluntary and statutory to develop social skills groups based on our model.

In relation to quality I am both pleased with, and proud of, the following achievements which recognise our commitment to high standards. In early 2007 we obtained Investors in People Award with a very positive report from the assessor. We were also graded as maintaining excellent status for the second time by our inspectors; the Commission for Social Care Inspection and an audit carried out by Crossroads National Association staff confirmed our status as operating at CROQUET Level 3 which is the highest quality rating within the Crossroads network.

Of course none of this is possible without a dedicated workforce and a Board of Trustees committed to supporting and developing the organisation to deliver quality innovative services to carers. I am grateful for the support from staff and the Board. Our staff are our ambassadors and I am impressed by the number of compliments received. Carers appreciate the practical and emotional support provided by our team and the quality and consistency of their approach.

There are many changes and challenges facing us in the near future. I can confidently say that we are well prepared to meet those challenges, embrace change and still deliver business as usual at the level of quality which is synonymous with our organisation.

Tom Livingstone

The period 2007-2008 has been notable for the range and diversity of the services developed and offered; nevertheless the core respite service has been retained at the heart of all we do.

We continue to go from strength to strength with our group provision. This has led to the identification of additional needs which we hope to meet in the future. At present, we are in the developmental stages of setting up further groups for adults with learning difficulties and those diagnosed with Aspergers who wish to share social and leisure opportunities and exchange support on an informal basis. For this latter group, we hope to involve the clients in both the set up and organising the sessions.

In addition to this, we are working in partnership with the Speech and Language Therapists at the Asperger's social skills group to identify those clients who would benefit from individual support.

In order to underpin this continuing support all staff involved in working with this group of clients, including Scheme and Care Managers, received specialised Aspergers Awareness training. All other staff has received mandatory training updates as required. Future plans include in depth palliative care training for staff identified as potential specialists in this area. I am also on course to finish my Registered Managers Award shortly.

The service we provide continues to be greatly valued by all of our clients as evidenced by the number of compliments received-28 over the period. The staff team continue to be committed, enthusiastic and responsive to client's needs for which I thank them. Once again, particular thanks to the Seniors, Libby and Trish, who so ably support all of that work.

28 compliments.

Friday Club 2007/2008

The Friday Club has had another successful year. There are 18 service users that attend the club regularly.

We have” rejoiced “in the move to the new premises. We are now based at the Chester Salvation Army on St Ann Street. The new premises hosts an abundance of facilities open for our use.

This includes a number of rooms a fully equipped kitchen, storage, and even an out door area. This has enabled the service users to widen their horizons when planning activities they have enjoyed a range of new events from basic cookery to planning a themed evening meal---craft—and various other new activities.

We are still able to make choices and plan evenings out such as meeting in the pub for a meal or going out for nature walks and we are still able to walk into town to visit McDonalds which the clients enjoy doing. The clients also enjoy having the choice to arrange two lots of events that can be held on the same evening this allows people the choice to plan their social and leisure activities to accommodate individual preferences.

We are sharing the venue with the All Stars group this has also proved beneficial to the groups as we can share equipment and all clients are looking forward to our joint Christmas events that we have planned.

I would once again like to thank the staff and our “fantastic” volunteer –Kevin –for all their dedication and hard work that they put into the club without them we would not be so successful---“Good team work”---they have taken the time to get to know each client individually and it is clear to see that the clients have a lot of respect for them. I am sure that we will continue to be a great group of friends that meet on a regular basis and have fun.

Trish Owen.
Club Organizer.

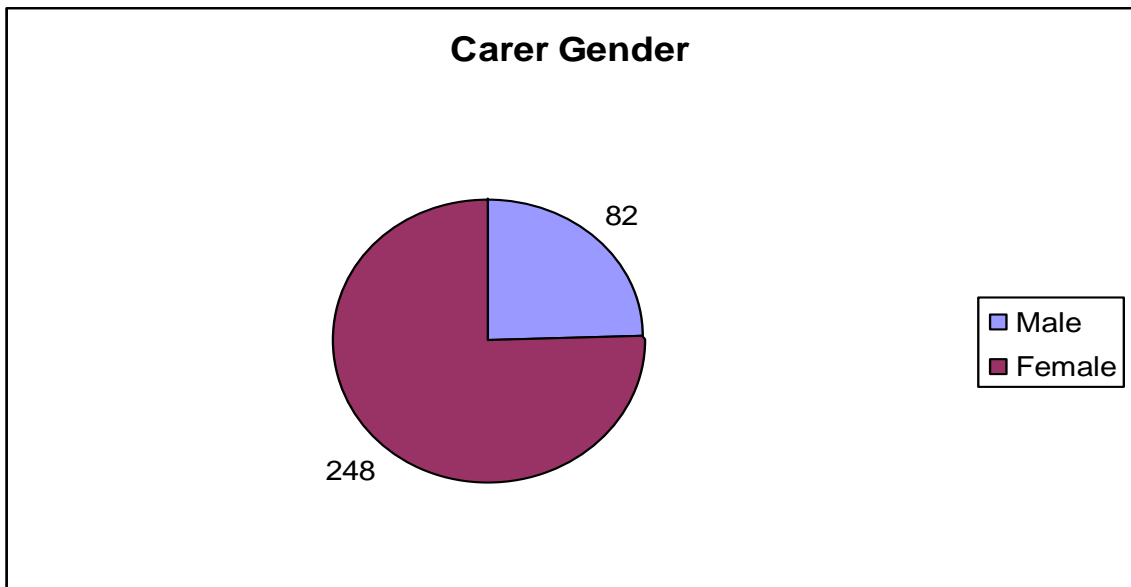
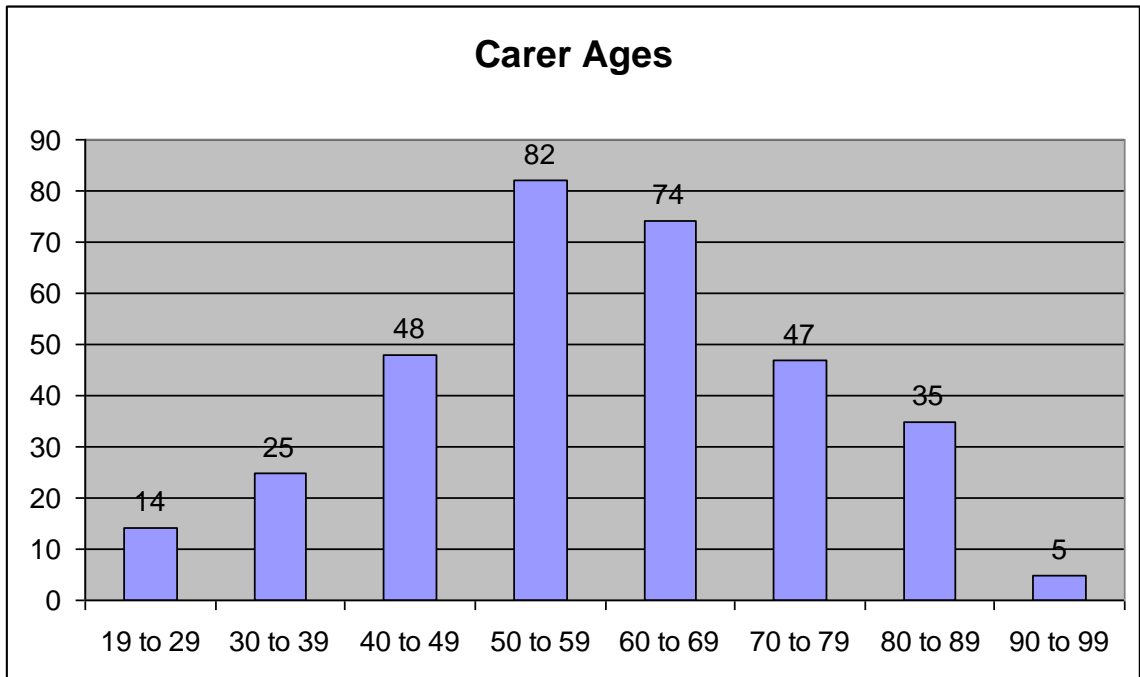
All Stars 2007/2008

The All Stars Club has had another exciting year, with many positive changes, allowing it to continue to be a club for Adults with Learning Difficulties that goes from strength to strength. We have welcomed our move to new premises, and the club is now based at the Chester Salvation Army on St Ann Street. We have been very happy at the Northgate Arena, however our new location allows us to extend and expand the variety of activities offered to service users.

The new building has a number of rooms that we can use, along with an outdoor area and a fully equipped kitchen. We have run flower arranging, baking evenings and outdoor games evenings along with numerous other new activities, and also continued with many of the clients' favourite nights too. The main benefit from our new premises is that we are able to offer the clients more choice. As there are a number of rooms and is storage there, if a client does not want to join in the planned activity, they can still attend the club and socialise, but can also play games or do crafts in one of the other rooms. The service users continue to enjoy the social evenings out to the bowling alley, cinema and pubs too.

There have also been some staff changes over this year too. The club has a new supervisor, Cheryl and new carer support workers, Berri and Shelagh. Crossroads continues to provide their service users with a supportive, caring and fun staff team, who do their very best to enable clients to run the club how they would like it to be run. Every service user's ideas and preferences are taken into consideration, which has given the All Stars Club the great reputation it has, and allows the club to continue developing in a positive manner. A great year all round!

CARER STATISTICS



CLIENT STATISTICS

