

Chorlton Good Neighbours

Annual Report 2019



Management Committee 2018-2019



CHAIR

Rev Ken Stokes

SECRETARY

Mrs Kate Grand

TREASURER

Mr Michael Schaefer

Representatives from the Churches Together in Chorlton

ST CLEMENTS CHURCH

Rev Jenny King

WILBRAHAM ST NINIANS URC

Mrs Enid Woods

ST JOHNS R.C.

Mrs Joan Constable

ST WERBURGHES

No representative

CHORLTON CENTRAL

Mrs Kate Grand

MANLEY PARK METHODIST

Dennis Haughton

CHORLTON METHODIST

Philip Lloyd

ENGLISH MARTYRS CHURCH

No representative

STANDING COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Mr Bernard Leach

Mr Andrew Dawson

Ms Sarah Mitchell

Mrs Christine Bentley

Mr Marc Grundy

CGN Chair Rev Ken Stokes reflects:

When I was a child, I remember listening to my nan who was 76 or 77 talk about an “old lady” who was a “poor soul” that she went to visit. This lady had, I calculated, reached the grand old age of 62. It was then that I realised what a funny word “old” could be. The adjective “old” seemed to come loaded with all sorts of assumptions and characterisations that I might now want to quibble with. Yet I could understand my nan’s assessment because the lady concerned did seem to be a “poor soul”. My nan defined the lady as “old” because she was widowed, isolated and living on a limited income that made it difficult for her to make any life for herself.



Today the financial position of some, but not all, older people has improved. However, the crippling damage of social isolation remains. There are 9 million lonely people in Britain and 4 million of these are older people. More than 50 years ago Chorlton Good Neighbours was established because there was a recognition of the problem of loneliness amongst older people in our community.

At one time loneliness was viewed as simply a quality of life issue but today we know that loneliness does not simply impact the quality of a person’s life. It seems to have a significant impact on the length of a person’s life too. Human beings are social creatures. Our connection to others enables us to survive and thrive. Yet, as we age, many of us are alone more often than when we were younger, leaving us vulnerable to social isolation and loneliness—and related health problems such as cognitive decline, depression, and heart disease. Loneliness rivals obesity and smoking as a health risk. A recent assessment suggested that loneliness had roughly the same impact on a person’s health as smoking 15 cigarettes a day making it even more dangerous than obesity (Douglas Nemecek, MD, chief medical officer Cigna Health Insurance).



Today Chorlton Good Neighbours is recognised as one of the leading voluntary agencies in Manchester working at the forefront of the struggle to overcome loneliness. We seek to help older people to help themselves to reconnect



and make new friends through our coffee mornings, exercise classes or through participating in our wider rich and varied programme of activities. It is amazing how often and how quickly the table of folk a new person sits with at coffee morning can become a person’s new friendship group. Where this approach is not possible such as with those folks who are largely housebound, we seek to address their needs. We offer friendship through our many excellent volunteers and staff who visit people, who might otherwise be very isolated, in their own homes.

Many of us have always known that Chorlton Good Neighbours transforms the quality of people’s lives. However maybe we need to recognise more than we sometimes do, that though we don’t have the initials NHS in our title, we also make a significant impact on the long-term health of older people in our community.

CGN Treasurer Michael Schaefer reports:

In financial terms this has been our best year for quite some time. Here is what contributed that this fine result: We finally received the outstanding monies from a legacy donation from a few years back and we thank trustee Andrew Dawson for his efforts to make this finally happen. Manchester City Council increased their contribution to CGN via the Wellbeing Grant and will continue to do so for the next two financial years.



On top of this, we also received part funding towards the Exercise classes and also a NIF grant towards our very successful Drama Course. The Allen Lane Foundation continued to support us for the Positive Living Group, and we received contributions via the Assist Partnership for that as well.

In addition to these more official grants and contributions we gratefully received, donations and Gift aid from friends and users of CGN continue to be a crucial source of income for us.

All your donations, big or small, account for more than 10% of all our income and without them we could not run this charity in the same way we do now.

So finally, as always, a very big thank you to all of you who have donated, or gift aided. Your continued support is greatly appreciated.

CGN Co ordinator Helen Hibberd says: Once in a while it is worth looking back at just how far the charity has come and the developments that have taken place. It is fair to say the biggest expansion of activities has come within the last ten years - this has included the monthly History talks and Positive Living group sessions, the Wednesday craft and Friday gardening clubs and the Mens Tuesday snooker meeting at a local cricket club. Our latest new venture with the drama workshops, started only 18 months ago, is also proving popular and now looks set to be incorporated into our regular programme of activities. We delight in our progress, acknowledging it takes time and consideration to achieve it.

Our focus throughout though is, and has always been, on what we know works, and is of interest and value to our older client group. How do we know this ? Because we ask people, they tell us and they turn up.



Whilst staying steadfast to our core aim of reducing isolation and loneliness, CGN also recognises that its activities and volunteers bring additional benefits such as a having sense of purpose and structure to the week, having chances to contribute to the life of the wider neighbourhood, and creating opportunities for self growth and maintenance of confidence and independence.

The charity has now been operating for more than half a century - 52 years- it is well known, respected and spoken of with warmth and affection - yet the reality is one of hard work, being open to giving things a go, getting the right people involved in key areas, and maintaining a balanced financial position. And all this within the context of a changing landscape for the VCS, with the advent of 'social prescribing', making use of community assets, an age friendly agenda, and ideals around better local partnership working. Its easy to sense the challenges ahead even though we are trying to keep positive and view them as opportunities.

At times it feels as though a lot is happening and evolving around us in the neighbourhood, yet the reality for CGN is that nothing really does change. We will and do carry on regardless of that whirlwind of activity around us and therein lies our strength; having the determination, wherewithall and composure to control our own developmental pace, resisting the urge to chase multiple pots of funding with wide ranging criteria just to secure more money, and being wary of stretching ourselves trying to get to copious meetings with local strategic partners so that 'our voice' can be heard. (Made all the more difficult because our group now operates in two localities as defined by the Local Care Organisation)

The laughter and blossoming of our older people, the kindness of our volunteers, our longevity, our commitment, and our practical 'can do' approach- these are 'our voice' - 'our evidence'- and we must sometimes let that do the talking...



Throughout this booklet you will read about the difference CGN makes to people's lives, both for older residents and the volunteers. As people often tell me 'CGN is a family' - hopefully a joyous one - where it is easy to feel energised and motivated by the evident camaraderie and infectious willingness to forge ahead together.

Our core demographic has not changed much; there are 298 service users registered and a further 62 have received support or accessed an activity this past year. Here are some statistics relating to the year:



93% are 65 years +
51 members are over 90 years
19% are older men
70% are self referred or through family/friends
76% define themselves as white british
66% report living with a disability/ long term health condition
87% are manchester residents



The wide age range, with a few members being in their 50's, and others in their 90's might be considered a challenge but in practice it is not. Having the breadth of activity means CGN can cater for the differing needs of the 'younger old' and 'the frailer old' and there is often overlap. Many of our older members receiving 1-1 visits from volunteers and staff access at least 1 activity so gain the benefits of both. As with the previous 2 years, we have again seen people reach 100 years - this time one of our couples, and another lady Anne White who used to come to our hardest keep fit class in her 90's. Other regular attendees are having birthdays as they reach 96, 98 years so plenty of parties and celebrations to look forward to. Sadly though a number of our regular members have died during the year but it is good to honour and acknowledge them through our 'memory boards' and attendance at their funerals.

It goes without saying that our success is down to so many volunteers giving what time and skills they have, whilst hopefully gaining benefits for themselves. It is perhaps naïve to think only isolated older people are lonely. Our experience suggests many volunteers also gain hugely from forming new friendships, especially if they are new to the area, have no local family or have retired.

Our drivers of course, deserve our special thanks as their commitment ensures we can be as inclusive as possible in getting our less mobile members to activities. And everyone is full of admiration for the befrienders who potentially have the most challenging role of all.

Engaging with our community partners remains a key priority for us, and ensures we bring wider benefits to our client and volunteer members. This past year we have had opportunities for

- **Intergenerational work** with local primary schools, when children from Chorlton Park came to sing xmas carols, and Oswald rd children came in the New Year. Some of our members also went to Brookburn Primary to hear about their wartime learning, and were invited back at Christmas time to work in teams building gingerbread houses and playing the generation game. Strong connections with Chorlton High mean we came together during Chorlton Book Festival, in November, to have an interesting discussion about different forms of remembrance. Then 20 of their choir then came across to Houghend Police club to entertain everyone at the xmas lunch.



- **Enhancing our learning** by inviting a variety of community colleagues to speak and lead sessions. This has included 3 workshops for 38 members, with Cath Brownhill, who talked us through how to use the defibrillator. A Question and Answer session with local Councillors Joanna Midgely and Eve Holt was also popular when members learnt about the current status of plans regarding Chorlton precinct, proposed cycle paths, and raised concerns about drains, buses and pavements.



- **Engaging in research with different university staff.** Examples here include 2 visits from Eduardo Fe and his team who encouraged 25 older members and volunteers to have a go playing incentivised games on tablets, to better understand what determines decision making in strategic situations. Dr Kingsley Purdam also visited to gather information from older participants about their voting habits and a PHD student Alison Tngle has been involved with the drama group, learning how we engage local residents in our 'cultural offer'



- **Working with local NHS colleagues.** CGN has continued having representation at the GP led neighbourhood meetings, or other NHS staff led developments such as those involving social prescribing. CGN members have also benefitted from Be Well colleagues running a health check day one Thursday, and a meeting with GP lead Dr Tim Greenaway saw 20 volunteers and staff feedback to him about the support and conversations they had with the older people they visited, touching briefly on advocacy and end of life issues. Another meeting with Dr Adab and his team from Chorlton Health centre meant we learnt how they were improving links with their more housebound patients.
- **Giving Access to other community colleagues through inviting them to speak at coffee mornings.** Examples here include MacMillan Solutions, Greater Manchester leisure, local PCSO's various medical students, Health Development co ordinators, and other colleagues from the MLCO.
- **Taking part in community events** such as the Chorlton Book Festival when 110 people came to our November event to watch the drama group perform 'Snowed In' in the presence of the Lady Mayor. CGN has also had stalls at smaller events run by the local Health visiting team, and Barlow Moor Community centre (volunteer recruitment) and recently at Chorlton's Great Get together event. See small film by Marc Grundy at <https://vimeo.com/346870551>.



Funding , Fundraising and Council Outcomes

CGN is very grateful that so many local people and their families support us with money and gift donations. We could



not run the services and activities without this ,so thank you everyone. Special acknowledgement goes to Moira who knitted loads of poppies to sell, to Arthur for his fundraising raffle and to Lorraine and Sue for the cards and gifts they make.



Local businesses and organisations have also been keen to support our work so thank you to Manley Park Methodist church, Beech Rd Pharmacy, Unicorn, Riley's Wednesday night pool League, Skin HD, Ivygreen Allotments, Nicolas Rd carol singers, and to Morrisons and the Co op.

Core funding is currently through an OMVCS grant; again we are very grateful for this support from Manchester Council. However it does only cover around 50 % of the income needed to run the organisation so we continue to rely on 4 other sources – other grants, such as the NIF grant for the drama group and the funding from GMMHT for the exercise classes, small fee charging, donations and fundraising, and rental income from a property.

We also send in quarterly monitoring information to the OMVCS team which asks us to describe our activities, demonstrate how we are making a difference to manchester residents and give examples of progress towards the 3 outcomes we have agreed to:

1. *Increase volunteering*
2. *Support current members and more older people to engage with activities to reduce isolation and loneliness and maintain good mental and physical health.*
3. *Support older people to make a positive contribution through representing CGN at networking meetings, cultural activities and intergenerational events*

With regard to volunteers CGN is fortunate to have had plenty of inquiries this past year and been able to interview and induct about half of them. However we have seen quite a turnover of volunteers (15 have come off the books). As brilliant as it is to have younger volunteers begin 1-1 visits /support some activities, there is often a greater risk that their involvement will be short term; having children, moving away, changing jobs are all possibilities so newer volunteers are often taking over and maintaining visits, rather than supporting CGN to have an increased number of older people having that 1-1 support.

For volunteers not having the time to regularly commit to something, their skill base is often of equal value. Thanks again to Marc Grundy for making some excellent snapshot films for us and to Louise Kennedy for redesigning our leaflet and writing a report on the Positive Living Group. All this work is invaluable when we need evidence to apply for grants.

Much appreciation also goes to Treasurer Michael, Hamish who does the banking and updates the finance spreadsheet, and to Bernard for maintaining the website.

Volunteers Leah Cavanagh and Verna Hoyle who run the weekly Melodics and Wednesday craft groups, deserve a special mention for their commitment and energy.

We also thank a few volunteers who left this past year , including Simon Aldred and Amanda Walsh, but especially to Bob McCormack for his fantastic contribution over 7 years.

In terms of **making a positive contribution to neighbourhood and city life**, most people who join CGN contribute in some way, possibly without realising it, such as taking registers, washing up, welcoming new people and looking out for each other. Additional examples include



- Members volunteering to 'cut the ribbon' at the re openings of two local co op stores, after re furbishment
- Groups of older members supported 3 events at the Bridgewater hall, organised by LIVEmusic Now, where they were treated to performances by young music students
- Several members agreed to sit on a panel at Chorlton High School listening to new ideas
- A couple of members from the BAME community agreed to be interviewed by a researcher looking into isolation in those particular communities
- CGN drama group performed at HOME in front of an audience and as part of a celebration of the work of community groups
- Members offering to take part in *emerging projects* such as the '**End of Life ' Planning group** , and the '**Stories of our Lives**' workshops.

Emerging projects

The End of Life planning Group consists of about 10 people, some CGN volunteers and other community colleagues, who have been meeting for around 6 months to have interesting and open discussions around issues such as death cafes, who is next of kin, funeral planning and advanced directives. As a result, a 'funeral planning' workshop has been arranged for October, so that CGN can gauge interest and get a feel for whether this is an area we should explore and develop further. A visit to the local Co op funeral parlour for 10 members was also undertaken and again members found it helpful to ask any questions they liked.

The Stories of our Lives project which is just getting underway has been designed to bring community writers together with local older members of CGN so that they can share memories of topics such as growing up , travel and working life. We are hoping a booklet of all these fascinating recollections will be produced.

Challenges and Opportunities

- CGN receives *all sorts of calls asking for information*; reliable tradesmen, how to fill in a blue badge form, borrowing a wheelchair, how to set up various activities etc so keeping our knowledge up to date is key. Even more so is maintaining that desire to go out and find the answer if we don't know, so that we can remain an effective information hub.
- *Better local partnership working* .What does this mean ? For CGN this probably centres around a couple of issues; retaining our autonomy and our own objectives, and not being viewed as some sort of subsidiary of the larger bureaucracies; challenging the concept that we are not solely a 'service delivery agency' but actually a partner that can offer valuable insights - grass roots intelligence- into local people's needs and frustrations. Work to build trust and develop protocols is needed here. We are noticing some progress on that front, but this is often the result of the development of key individual relationships, which of course takes time to build.
- If *social prescribing* is to become more of a reality then that undoubtedly leads to increased referrals . Currently there doesn't seem to be any funding that follows a patient to support this. Expansion and broadening the range of activities and services at CGN needs proper resourcing but where will that come from ?
- The *age friendly agenda* : CGN will continue to promote the city wide agenda which aims to support older people to age well, have a good quality of life in their neighbourhood and access opportunities to socialise, be creative and feel valued. We already have representation on the AF Whalley Range and Chorlton steering committee and hope to cement this further with more joint working over the coming year.

My Special Thanks:

To Wilbraham St Ninians Church for housing us and supporting our ventures

To Peter, Joan, Janice , and Ann for their invaluable support in the office, and especially to Cathy for her support with the council monitoring and to Hamish for his regular work with the banking .

To our community workers Moira, Diane and Phil for their kindness and commitment

To volunteer Diana Cullen for her time in going through hundreds of files to check we are following our GDPR commitments, and to Chair, Ken for his invaluable insights and support with planning.

To Michael, Sheree and friends for re decorating the office

To all the volunteers, including trustees, who continue to to be the friendly, warm and kind face of CGN that makes the Group so successful.



Volunteers

- 118 registered
- 25 % male
- Up to 54 involved in 1-1 befriending
- 81% live in Manchester Wards
- Access to 40 drivers
- 31 % are 65years +
- 10% under 30 years
- 11% classed as service users / volunteers

All DBS checked

Induction and refresher training offered and ongoing support from group Co ordinator

Group and individual volunteering opportunities

Mileage allowance: 40 p per mile for drivers

Chorlton Good Neighbours would not be the success it is without a huge pool of committed volunteers, willing to share their skills, energy and a listening ear. Chorlton and Whalley Range is very fortunate that so many local people wish to give their time and have a genuine desire to support older people. This past year we have received 56 inquiries from people wishing to volunteer with the charity, which of course presents its own challenges. Most are referred to other organisations, like Together Dementia Support or other care groups out of area, but 22 new volunteers



have been taken on. These have been mainly young people willing to visit and befriend an older person, and a couple of regular drivers. One younger volunteer Danielle tells us “she has found her soulmate”. For older member Jean who benefits from Dani’s support to go shopping, she says” Danielle is so helpful and makes me laugh all the time, and she helps me remember things I have told her about”.

One of the key successes of the group is its ability to ‘blur the lines’ between volunteering and benefitting from activities and services. This is especially true for 13 of our older volunteers where they not only



contribute to running an activity, helping in the office or serving as a trustee, but also benefit from going on trips or joining an exercise class, the gardening club or drama session. 80-year-old volunteer Pauline reflects ‘I joined as a volunteer for the drama group and coffee morning in August 2018 after 23 years for Bolton council as a befriender which I loved. My role in the drama group is to prepare drinks and clear up but I immediately got involved in the drama itself, although I was and still am out of my comfort zone, but hey

here I am still trying. I enjoy the company and the laughs we share. “

Sometimes it is possible to support local residents needing to do some short term volunteering, for example we helped a 14 year old last summer complete a 12 hour placement by encouraging her to help out at the coffee mornings ,and latterly a request for 18 hours’ worth of a 1-1 placement has seen one volunteer visit an older CGN member to listen to and capture his life story. This will then be compiled into a small booklet, with photos, for him and his family.

It goes without saying that the volunteer drivers are essential to the delivery of an inclusive service and we



give many thanks for their regular commitment to transporting in some of our less mobile members. Here are drivers, Gerry and Trefor in action.



Training and information: Volunteers have been offered several opportunities to enhance their volunteering skills through information sessions, led by trainer Debra McCallion.

- 6 new volunteers attended an autumn session looking at boundaries, confidentiality and safeguarding. All those volunteers are involved with 1-1 befriending
- In February we ran a session for 25 volunteers and staff covering good practice in volunteering, problem solving and positive volunteering.
- 10 volunteers attended a July session on their motivations for volunteering with older people, what preconceptions they had and how this compared to the realities. Here's a small selection of some of their reflections



The realities when you started volunteering: The Positives

- I feel I made a difference
- I am verbally told that my visits are appreciated
- forming and developing the relationship
- the connection has formed into a friendship
- The befriending makes me think - by anticipating the person's needs and how to make the situation better
- I like that who I visit is a storyteller and swears! She is reversing the stereotypes
- It's a two-way experience, my older person has taken me under her wing, and she looks out for things for me to do



Some of the challenges,

- me being too accommodating
- there are things that can be improved regarding the home, but how do I make the suggestions, how far does my help go?
- communication
- learning what really is 'help' e.g. I took a paper, but my older person's family doesn't want them to see how negative things are
- not being there to fix them, wanting to make everything better
- learning to 'read' the person, i.e. older person says don't worry about coming and it seems kind, but I push through and she always seems happy to see me
- worried about it becoming too demanding or that the person becomes too dependent on me

What have we learnt about ourselves?

- I am a better listener than I thought I was
- I like the flexibility, don't have to be committed to the same night every week
- it has to work for me



Weekly Exercise sessions

Mondays: with Karen Tynan	1.30-2.30pm
Wednesdays: with Karen Oakes	1.30-2.30pm
Fridays: with Don O'Connor	10-11.am

65 older people registered across the three classes. Volunteer transport provision for 14 attendees to Friday class

Graded classes each with music, go at your own pace, hand weights and stretch bands used. Tea and Coffee provided afterwards. Small charge.

Funded through a grant from GMMHT, which is much appreciated, the three weekly classes have now been running for 15 years and are one of the most successful activities of the charity.

Focussing on improving muscle strength, mobility and balance, as well as offering a chance to



socialise and meet others, the classes are the

perfect introduction for anyone wishing to get a bit fitter as well as join a group activity.

Recruitment tends to be through word of mouth, and of course local GP's refer people as they know the health benefits, particularly in the context of falls prevention.

All 3 Instructors are highly trained, and bring their own unique style, music and methods. Potential participants are always asked to fill in a health questionnaire to assess suitability for any class.



Future funding of the classes is likely to be a mixture of small charges and hopefully some grant money. We have been in talks with various colleagues this past year as they seek to help us with the latter, and the current funders have also carried out some quality assurance checks and get feedback from participants.

Thanks of course go to the regular drivers, this past year: Bob, Gerry, Trefor, Ann, and Cathy as their time and commitment has ensured those with less mobility can be included in a class. Thanks also to Lorraine, Joyce and the ladies who help with taking the register and washing up afterwards on a Friday, and to Sheila, Kath and Brenda for their support to Mondays.



Monday class participant Sheila says: "I think the classes are very good. Even though I can't use my legs much I join in with the others. The exercises keep me mobile and there is nice company. Our Instructor Karen is very good because she explains what the exercises are for, and it all fits with the music. I have been coming since they started, and I wouldn't miss it ...and my legs need it! "

A snapshot film of the Monday class, made by volunteer and trustee Marc Grundy can be viewed at: <https://vimeo.com/323823537/a7dfb09b90>

Anyone tempted to have a go is always welcome to come and watch a class first to see if it is what they are looking for ...just give us a ring or turn up.

Volunteer **Angela Downing says**” The Thursday coffee morning is so much more than simply some older residents and volunteers coming together for a hot drink and a chat. It is an invitation to be part of a larger network, and to get information on a range of issues, as well as to be entertained.

There are usually about 60 or 70 attendees and perhaps a dozen volunteers plus the volunteer drivers, who



look forward to seeing each other. The coffee morning is only closed over Christmas, so it is there for 50 weeks of the year.

It is hard to describe a typical coffee morning as so much happens over a year. It maybe that on any one week, there is a birthday or two, or even a



special 90th or 100th Birthday. There may be sad news of the passing of much-loved members and there is then an opportunity to remember them and share memories and photographs on a memory board.

Irene the nurse is a regular visitor, calm and professional she quietly works her way round the hall seeking out anyone who needs help. Joan is always on hand to collect money for forthcoming trips and parties.

Arthur brings a pile of local newspapers and puts them on the tables. Then he goes and collects his group of regulars. Later, everyone listens eagerly to hear what announcements he has to make, from the latest scams and how to avoid getting harmed

by them, to information on what is available for the coming week. He captures the mood of the hall and enjoys some lively banter.

Dennis brings us a regular supply of bus timetables and copies of “Open Up Chorlton” and other local literature. Helen has a regular flow of visitors who all want to come and talk of their particular concerns. This can vary from “the falls service,” a study of “voting patterns in older age” to a study on “how older people change their abilities to make decisions”.

In addition, there are entertainers for example, the Good Neighbours own choir “Melodics”, or Jenny a member with a wonderful voice or the Good Neighbours own drama group or local school choirs. All get an enthusiastic audience.



All “the tables” are different and regulars have a preferred chair and table because the coffee morning is the “tip of the iceberg”. Some members contact each other by phone between sessions and/or may meet up at a Good Neighbours exercise class or elsewhere.

The Art group and their dynamic tutor, Susan Parry continue to make amazing pictures and the chat at the Art table, like all the tables, is lively and humorous. New members are always welcome and though it is daunting to come into such a busy hall for the first time, volunteers are alert to the need to welcome and reassure new members. It does not take long for he or she to become part of the Thursday morning community. Why not come and join us ...?

Weekly Coffee Morning and art session

Every Thursday morning

10-11.30am

Average Attendance:

60-70 people

Weekly Volunteer transport through 16 drivers for up to 50 service users

15 volunteers registered to help; thanks to everyone who contributes

- Weekly Art session led by tutor Susan Parry Thanks to artist Simon Ark for his past support
- Fortnightly nurse clinic with Eileen or Sonia
- Monthly Hear to Help service to check and clean hearing aids and moulds, give advice and batteries (1st Thursday in the month)
- Various speakers giving a range of information



Volunteer **Ray Wood** writes: Another year gone by and it has again been my great pleasure to introduce our History Talks. We have again hopefully organised an eclectic mix of entertaining and informative ones. I am listing here just a few of them: -

- George Maclean gave a polished and informative talk on the Trade Union USDAW.
- Michael Thompson gave a nostalgic talk on War Memories which included an audience discussion and was very much enjoyed by everyone.
- Dolores Long came with her personal memories of Manchester people who had fought in the Spanish Civil War as her father had been one of the volunteers.

Monthly History Talks	
First Thursday in the month	1.30-3pm
Average attendance: 35-40	Led by volunteer, Ray Wood. With thanks also to volunteers Mary, Pauline, Angela, Jenny & Peter
Suited to any participant with an interest in a wide range of topics. Tea/coffee served	



These and a great many more would not have been possible without the continued efforts of our co-ordinator, Helen Hibberd, who has spent many hours searching for suitable guest speakers. May I also thank both Angela and Mary who have greeted people on the door, Bernard who has been invaluable as our IT expert, Peter, Jenny and Pauline have helped to provide refreshments. I do hope I have not

missed anyone out from this list. Finally, may I thank you the audience (we have between 30 and 50 each month). You have given such sustained support to all our endeavours. My thanks go to everyone concerned and I look forward to another successful year of History Talks.

Monthly Sunday Teas	
First Sunday in the month. 4-6pm	Hot meal, bingo, raffle and entertainment for up to 40 people
With thanks to the regular helpers Arthur, Joan, Janice, Diane, Marianne, Christine, Bernie, and all the drivers. Special thanks to Celia Donnelly for doing all the catering.	

Regular **volunteer and bingo caller supreme Arthur** writes:

“These teas have been going for 30 years. They started in St Clements’ Church Scout Hut and we had between 20/24 people each month.

It remains a very popular afternoon. The format has never changed and includes entertainment, two course meal, raffle and of course eyes down, look in its BINGO time.

The reason it was started was to help people feel less isolated and lonely at weekends. Thirty years later, isolation and loneliness are still huge issues and people say, “why don’t people do something about it” and the answer is ‘we did’.

As I write this report, we had 41 people for the Sunday tea in July, they enjoyed some singing and dancing. 6pm comes around so quickly, even after all these years we would not be able to do this without the help of many volunteers which I send a HUGE thank you to.



This is a most enjoyable way to spend Sunday afternoons, whatever the weather, so try it out sometime, especially if you fancy some company on a weekend.



Funded by a combination of money from the Allen Lane Foundation and remaining monies from the previous Positivity programme, this monthly group continues to be very successful; supporting the emotional resilience and improving the coping strategies of a regular group of up to 20 participants.

An analysis carried out by volunteer Louise Kennedy in September 2018 showed how much group attendees were benefitting from sharing and discussing issues in a group setting. A Copy of the report is available on request from the office. Here are a couple of the personal reflections

Monthly Positive Living Group	
1 st or 2 nd Monday in month	10-12 midday
Av Attendance: 15	Led by life coach and trainer Debra McCallion
Suitable for anyone wishing to learn and share strategies for keeping positive and finding solutions to everyday issues.	

"I was challenged to get back in touch with relatives who I hadn't seen for a while, and it went really well "

"I am much better at being able to see other people's point of view and look at different aspects of my life more clearly "

"I am listening to different attitudes that people have about things"



Each month the group, led by life coach, Debra McCallion, decide for themselves what topics they would like to explore, including some very challenging areas, and is always ready to welcome new attendees. They also set themselves new small challenges each month which has led to attendees really getting out of their comfort zones, including going on the metro, going swimming, being braver about telephoning insurance and pension companies, and joining in with opportunities for dancing and table tennis when they arise. Some subjects explored this past year include *decluttering our minds, dealing with guilt, being open to change, how to say no, tapping into kindness, and improving relationships.*

Partnership working with Assist Care Group in Withington means the group is now funded for the whole of 2019.

Day Trips and Parties

7 coach trips this past year

Swans Coach with tail lift to take up to 51 people

Christmas Party, Christmas Meal at Houghend social club, New Year's Lunch and invites to local schools

Volunteer support throughout, including help for those who need a wheelchair

The coach trips out continue to be occasions that many people look forward to throughout the year. They offer not only an opportunity to get out and about and visit new places but also a chance to revisit favorite places that we have all enjoyed in the past. We usually have a reserve list running for the coach, and that is understandable given that many of our older members no longer have holidays away from the local area. One such place was our trip to Rivington Barn in



September, always a popular trip, offering an excellent meal, music, dancing and



entertainment. We followed this in October with a Halloween trip to the Hanging Gate Pub in Chapel en le Frith, which never disappoints when it comes to the quantity and quality of the spooky decorations, food and entertainment.

In the springtime we tried some new places to visit, the first of these being a shopping trip to Bents Garden Centre. This was followed by a visit to Ena Mill and Olympus Fish and Chip shop in



March, where we were serenaded by a pianist whilst enjoying our meal. The May trip to World of

Wedgewood was historically and visually interesting, the meal was excellent, and we were very well looked after by the staff. We tried a couple of other new places for our summer trips when we visited a new pub to have our meal in Rhos on Sea. Our most recent trip to Trentham Gardens went down very well and was very much enjoyed by all. It is definitely a place to revisit in the future, but

hopefully on a much cooler day!



The trips always give people a boost and are a chance to relax, spend time with friends and have some fun. We have seen new friendships develop and old friendships deepen. Nobody need ever be alone on the coach trips, we always have volunteer helpers to accompany people, including those who need to use a wheelchair, and make sure that everyone is supported and enjoying themselves. Without the support of the volunteers the trips would not be able to go ahead, so a really BIG thank you to those people as they make the whole experience possible for all of us.





Equally enjoyable and valuable for bringing everyone together are the big parties and celebrations. The Xmas Meal at Houghend Police club saw 100 older members and volunteers enjoy a meal together with entertainment and Christmas

carols from Chorlton High school students and DJ David Balderstone; the Staff at the Police club are brilliant, and we are very grateful to them as nothing is too much trouble for them. The Xmas party saw 65 people enjoy the Chorlton Ukele band as well as take part in quizzes, pass



the parcel and the obligatory bingo! It's

the time of year we cannot wait to see how the hall will be decorated by willing volunteers, this year by Susan, Sue and Marianne, and also check out Dennis' next fancy-dress outfit to suit the occasion!

The New Year's lunch was attended by 60 people and is always a great way to get the year off to a positive start. Members and volunteers were entertained by the children from Oswald Rd School, and singer Dave Taylor.



Invitations to Christmas parties were also accepted to Brookburn Primary School, which included being in teams with the children making gingerbread houses, and Chorlton High to see the Wizard of Oz. None of these trips and parties would be possible without the input of volunteers who support in any way they can; driving, bringing people to the venues, and taking them home afterwards, doing bingo and raffles, preparing and serving food, and clearing away. Such a great team effort. Thank you all.

Volunteer David writes “We meet every Tuesday afternoon, at the SWMCC in Chorlton. An average of 6 to 8 men turn up to play snooker or to have a chat. Our



conversations take us all over the world and some other interesting topics are covered as well, including my travels to 1940’s events in the north west.

Snooker, Bowls & darts	
Every Tuesday afternoon	1-3 pm
Av attendance: 6-8	Activity for older men
Held at SW Manchester Cricket Club Overseen by paid worker, Phil, gratefully supported by volunteers David & Francis	

The world's problems are sorted out over the snooker table. It is great hearing from people who have lived their lives and to hear how they got to this day; the things they have done in the past and what they are currently up to. Sometimes a couple of us meet later in the week at the club, so we are continuing our friendship outside of ‘office hours’

So, if you turn up on a Tuesday between 1pm to 3pm, you don't have to play snooker, just come and watch and have a chat. You may be able to add information, or you may gain knowledge.

There is tea / coffee available plus a full bar. Our afternoons are open to anybody to attend. Please come and join us. If you need some transport, then ring the office as there could be a space in a car”

Melodics Singing Group	
Every Thursday	11.45-1pm
12 registered Av attendance: 10-12	Led by volunteer Leah Cavanagh
Group for those who just love singing	

Volunteer Mary writes: CGN Melodics singing group was started by our musical director, Leah Cavanagh, 10 years ago, and has been meeting weekly ever since. We meet every Thursday morning after Coffee Morning and sing from 11.45 – 1.00p.m. There are usually about 12 of us there, and we sometimes go for lunch afterwards together.

We start with an amusing warm up to relax us, which is always a bit of fun, and then sing a wide variety of

songs accompanied by Leah on the piano. We perform occasionally at CGN Coffee Morning or at local retirement homes, which gives us a great buzz when we see the residents tapping their toes and joining in.

There has been a lot in the press recently about the therapeutic effects of singing. I always feel happier after a good sing.

Everyone can sing so do come down and join us.





Volunteer Verna Hoyle says"
We are a small but very lively Art & Craft group who meet on Wednesday afternoons at St Ninians.

We have been meeting up for a few years now to socialise and at



the same time enjoy a bit of art therapy whilst making something creative. We

have made big cards to celebrate special birthdays, Christmas decorations, collages and pictures and we try to do something different each week. Sometimes we get asked to make something specific for an event or production like the drama group's 'Snowed in 'board and recently a bus stop sign for the latest production

Whilst making things and enjoying some refreshments, we find ourselves chatting, laughing and sharing thoughts and ideas. We end the session with a quiz, a game or bingo and anyone is welcome to come and see what we do and maybe join in!

Art & craft session



Every Wednesday

1-3pm

Av Attendance:
4-5

Led by volunteer
Verna Hoyle

For those who enjoy a chat, whilst making simple craft work. Materials provided.

Gardening Club

Every Friday morning
Whatever the weather

10-1pm

Av 5-6 members

Led by gardening expert
Geraldine Wall

Come and share gardening tips and enjoy being outdoors. Plenty of tea and biscuits as we potter

The gardening Group meet every Friday and it is led by CGN worker **Geraldine Wall** who says "The garden is by the side of CGN office. We are a friendly open group

of men and women who enjoy many other interests as well as gardening,



including making balloon animals and Christmas table centrepieces which we did in December.

We have all got to know each other really and it's great to be part of something created together. We commit what skills and time we have and learn something new each season. The shelter, made by Michael and his friend, has made a huge difference as we can continue

to meet whatever the weather. Unfortunately, one of the raised beds has rotted but we have been able to bag up the soil and given it to anyone who needs it. In its place we have bought a couple of big green trolleys on wheels, and this is proving invaluable as they can be moved to get maximum sunshine or for us to have a space to work in. So, if you like being outside in the fresh air, like meeting interesting people, having a cuppa and sharing a joke or an anecdote, call in and you will be made very welcome."



The Tuesday Group

Every Tuesday morning during term time
10-11.30am

Referral is usually through the local health visiting team.

Av Attendance: 12-15 parents with their children.

The group has access and support from a pool of 13 volunteers

The Tuesday Group is a joint project with Wilbraham St Ninians Church.

Its aim is to offer support and space to a small group of parents/carers who may have specific needs eg multiple births, first time mothers, new to the area, postnatal depression, adoption, bereavement, same-sex parents (a place to feel safe) etc.

All volunteers are police checked and are very committed, offering a listening ear and looking after the children when the parents go for tea/coffee in an adjoining room

Many Thanks to our regular Volunteers this past year: Lesley, Kath, Sarah, Christine, Rachel, Maggie, Doreen, Pam, Trefor, Ayako, Ann, Sue, and Marianne

Longstanding Volunteer Sarah writes: The Tuesday group is run by a loyal group of volunteers who come together with a love for children, and a desire to support local mums, dads and grandparents with babies and young children who need some additional support.

Each family is referred to the Group and numbers are kept deliberately low, to aim for a calmer environment than some of the other local toddler groups, which can be busy and feel overwhelming, and so that volunteers can spend time with each child and parent.

This is what **one parent** tells us:

"I first started attending The Tuesday Group when our daughter was just over 3 months old. As a same-sex parent, it is important for me to be somewhere where I feel safe.



Not long after we started coming our daughter was diagnosed with West Syndrome, a potentially life-changing brain disorder. The Tuesday Group parents and volunteers are all concerned and supportive. This condition means that she can have "sensory overload" which the volunteers are aware of, and bear in mind in the activities. This level of awareness and understanding has enabled me to keep attending and has also meant that our daughter has been able to begin to get used to stimulus in a gentle and encouraging way.

A unique thing about the Group is the opportunity at snack time, when the parents can have some "time out" in an adjoining room whilst the volunteers entertain the children. Hot and cold drinks and high-quality biscuits are provided for the parents, while the children have a healthy snack too. This is a very welcome break and not available at any other toddler group that I know."

Drama Workshops

Drama member Julie writes: The drama workshops are so important as they bring people together. It shows having a disability does not hinder your chances of being part of the acting group. Some participants are hard of hearing, others use a wheeler, or a wheelchair. We are all part of the Chorlton Good Neighbours family.

The workshop facilitator Nakib brings a unique style and experience of the theatre. Role-playing, breathing correctly, in Nakib words "Speaking from the belly". He also invites different facilitators to run sessions, so we are learning different skills and techniques all the time. Yes, some of it is fun and we laugh many times but it's also making friendships and building confidence in those who don't have it.



Our November/December production called "Snowed In" was about a person who kidnapped cats in the middle of winter. It takes place in a pub. This was unusual...however that's show business. It had suspense, singing and dancing. We also performed it at HOME in the city centre to a packed audience with great reviews. Although we were nervous our support for each other helped us do the best we could. See small video at <https://vimeo.com/321761931/06b3203d09>

The Lady Mayor of Manchester also came to see our performance at one of the Thursday coffee mornings



and some members were interviewed by That's Manchester TV.

The Spring show "Death at the Seaside" took us back to our school days and was about developing our skills of improvisation. Nakib took the ideas from the group members and incorporated them into the story. He is not afraid to listen and direct the play to benefit everyone.



The turnout for the workshops has been excellent. Some people who had come in the beginning have since stopped as other commitments like doctors' appointments, family obligations and illness have taken priority. New people are coming along though, including members of the Royal Exchange Elders Drama group so we continue to learn together. There is a buzz around Chorlton, the theatre group is alive and kicking, new members are joining, and the community spirit continues so why not come and join us?

Community Worker Reports

Older men's Visiting and development worker Phil Barrett writes: Hi, my name is Phil. I have worked for Chorlton Good Neighbours for almost 3 years and I really enjoy working with the older people. This position entails visiting mostly elderly gentlemen in their homes or supported living accommodation. I call



to see them at an arranged time and we sit and chat about all sorts of subjects for example local news, sport, interests to the gentlemen I am visiting or maybe articles in the media at any given time.

I also offer to take the gentlemen out on short visits for example shopping to local supermarkets or a walk to the park. This is a way of reducing isolation and giving the gentlemen an opportunity to socialise meeting other people.

Some of the gentlemen I visit do not have friends or family to interact with, so I am often the only person they see all week. I also offer to do small tasks that help them around the home like putting out the recycling or sweeping leaves from the garden path. On occasion I may go and pick up supplies from the local shop.

As part of my role I have the pleasure of helping to run our Tuesday snooker sessions. Approximately 7/8 elderly gentlemen

and I meet at a local club and spend a couple of hours playing snooker or just chatting with each other. The gentlemen and myself really enjoy our time together and this gives them the opportunity to again meet other people and form friendships.

If you know anyone who you may feel would enjoy a few hours in great company then please contact Helen our co-ordinator thank you Phil

Visiting and Activity worker Diane Dixon reflects: My name is Diane Dixon and I have been the Visiting and Activity Worker here at Chorlton Good Neighbours for the last 5 years. I have a couple of aspects to my role, visiting people in the community and supporting the organisation of trips and Sunday teas. I very much enjoy my work for Good Neighbours and get to meet and spend time with lots of interesting and kind people from all walks of life.

I have been told by the people that I visit that our time together makes a big difference to them. Some are housebound and the chat and time we spend together can really cheer them up if they are feeling a bit down or isolated. The visit can involve chats over a cup of tea, sitting in the garden, looking through photographs and magazines, listening to their favourite music and watching video clips as well as assisting them with things like baking cakes and sorting through paperwork. They all have a story to tell, and as time has gone by, we have built trust in our relationship and they are able to feel more and more comfortable with our time together, opening up about their lives and experiences.



Often people enjoy going out shopping or to local cafes for tea and cake. Shopping with someone like me or a volunteer makes the whole shopping experience safer if people have mobility issues, it is also a lot more fun and an enjoyable to get out and about with some company.

On some occasions I take a couple of friends out together or to visit each other in their homes, this keeps friends connected as well as adding variety to the outings.

A few of the ladies that I visit have complex needs or are without any family support. Being able to visit them regularly is very important as it means that any problems that they may have with their health, wellbeing or of a practical nature can be identified early and the appropriate help and support can be found. I feel that the regular, dependable nature of these visits is one of the most important aspects of my job as it makes a big difference to people to know that they are supported, someone is there for them when they need help, advice, a listening ear or just a kind word.

Community worker Moira Bowater says: I am now in my fourth year working at Chorlton Good Neighbours as a community support worker.

I have around 20 clients whom I visit on a regular basis, either weekly or fortnightly and others where I pop in, as and when required. The ages of my clients range from 60 years old to 90 years old with various health or physical difficulties, and some who are socially isolated and have no immediate family members locally.

My main role is visiting them at home for a chat or taking them out and about in the community to get their shopping or going to a cafe for drink and chat.

Other roles I have are to accompany them to hospital or clinic appointments as required. I have also visited some when they have been admitted to hospital and they are always receptive of a visit from a friendly face.

Over the past year I have lost a couple of my clients and this is always the saddest part of the role as you establish good relationships and become attached. However, on reflection, I feel it has been a privilege to have known and spent time with them and they leave me with many great memories.

I believe that my clients look forward to my visits and express gratitude for the time I spend with them which makes me feel very humble. I love to hear all about their lives and family and all about their life experiences which are fascinating.

All of my clients express real gratitude for the organisation, Chorlton Good Neighbours. They say they would be lost without it as they enjoy the activities provided such as the day trips, Sunday teas and parties. Many of my clients have also made real strong relationships with others who attend, and they meet up outside the organisation.

I feel it is a real honour and privilege to work and be involved in this organisation and enjoy my role immensely.



What difference does Chorlton Good Neighbours make to me?

Volunteer Peter says “CGN helps me a lot, it stops me wasting my time wandering about. Doing voluntary work helps me meet people”

New Volunteer Ian adds “CGN is extremely welcoming- you feel like you fit in and make new friends very quickly. It is a great way to engage with the wider community in the Chorlton Area”



Regular member Sylvia says “It’s one of the best. Although it is difficult to get up and get dressed, I would not miss it for the world. It is like coming to a family to chat and laugh together. I Thank God “

For **Volunteer Ray** “CGN gives me the opportunity to hopefully make a small difference in other people’s lives, and gives me a positive purpose in my own “



Retired volunteer Hilda reflects “It makes all the difference -its everything- meet old friends as I have been coming for years. I find everyone looks after you so well “

Member Dennis says “It’s great coming here because it is very sociable. It’s a bit of fun, and it’s a happy’ get together’ with people. I bring the Chorlton Open up magazines and any information and timetables relating to the buses and the metro as I know people appreciate it”



For **Nada** “the difference CGN has made is huge. I look forward to going. Everyone is very good, and I get all sorts of help. I am very happy there and have made nice friends.”

Retired community worker, now volunteer, Arthur adds “it makes everyone smile and there is always something different to hear, see and do “

New volunteer Lianne says “I love coming to good neighbours - in just a short time I feel like I’ve made some lovely new friends in both the other volunteers and the coffee morning community. It warms my heart to see the ladies and gents looking forward to seeing you each week as much as I look forward to seeing them ♥️”



Longstanding member June says “it is happy company, an opportunity to learn more about painting and to join in activities that help others”

Chorlton Good Neighbours

Balance Sheet as at 31 March 2019

	2019		2018	
	£	£	£	£
Fixed assets				
Investments		328,310		271,077
		<hr/>		<hr/>
Total fixed assets		328,310		271,077
Current assets				
Debtors	1,424		2,011	
Cash at bank and in hand	70,392		89,001	
	<hr/>		<hr/>	
Total current assets	71,816		91,012	
Liabilities				
Creditors: amounts falling due in less than one year	(2,052)		(3,586)	
	<hr/>		<hr/>	
Net current assets		69,764		87,426
		<hr/>		<hr/>
Total assets less current liabilities		398,074		358,503
		<hr/>		<hr/>
Net assets		398,074		358,503
		<hr/> <hr/>		<hr/> <hr/>
Funds of the charity:				
Restricted income funds		1,970		2,972
Unrestricted income funds		396,104		355,531
		<hr/>		<hr/>
Total charity funds		398,074		358,503
		<hr/> <hr/>		<hr/> <hr/>

Approved by the trustees on ____/____/2019 and signed on their behalf by:

Michael Schaefer (Treasurer)

Chorlton Good Neighbours
Statement of Financial Activities
for the year ended 31 March 2019

	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	Total funds 2019 £	<i>Total funds 2018 £</i>
Income from:				
Donations and legacies	51,255	-	51,255	30,804
Charitable activities	65,053	9,050	74,103	67,050
Investments	10,992	-	10,992	9,500
Total income	127,300	9,050	136,350	107,354
Expenditure on:				
Charitable activities	93,857	10,155	104,012	107,163
Total expenditure	93,857	10,155	104,012	107,163
Net income/(expenditure) before net gains/(losses) on investments	33,443	(1,105)	32,338	191
Unrealised gains/(losses) on investments	7,233	-	7,233	(5,382)
Net income/(expenditure) for the year	40,676	(1,105)	39,571	(5,191)
Transfer between funds	(103)	103	-	-
Net movement in funds for the year	40,573	(1,002)	39,571	(5,191)
Reconciliation of funds				
Total funds brought forward	355,531	2,972	358,503	363,694
Total funds carried forward	396,104	1,970	398,074	358,503

The statement of financial activities includes all gains and losses recognised in the year.
All income and expenditure derive from continuing activities.



Chorlton Good Neighbours

Co-ordinator

Mrs Helen Hibberd MBE

Hours Open

Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday

9.30am – 12.30pm

Wednesday

12 Noon – 3pm

Wilbraham St Ninians Church

Egerton Road South

Chorlton M21 0XJ

Tel: 0161 881 2925 / Tel: 0161 881 6208

Email: helen@chorltongoodneighbours.org