

Bassetlaw



Centre



**The Queen's Award
for Voluntary Service**

"Making a difference throughout Bassetlaw"

Annual Report 2019 - 2020

**Bassetlaw Action Centre
Canal Street,
RETFORD,
Nottinghamshire.
DN22 6EZ**

**Registered Charity Number 1106908
Registered Company Number 5177066**



CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S REPORT

2019/2020 has proven to be a year of two halves. We started the year in negotiations with our landlord to purchase our building on Canal Street. This was a fairly lengthy process which was brought to a successful conclusion in December 2019 when we became owners of our building.

We also spent quite some time during the year on pulling together a bid to the Activity Alliance with match funding from the Active Partners Trust to become the preferred delivery partner for Bassetlaw GOGA (Get Out Get Active). We received confirmation of our successful application towards the end of 2019 and spent the first couple of months of 2020 in setting up the office, recruiting the staff, forming the steering group etc. ready for the project launch on 1st April 2020.

The Strategic Subgroup of our board was formed to develop and agree a five year business plan (2019-2024) for Bassetlaw Action Centre. Within this document, 6 key objectives were identified for the organisation to enable us to steer the strategic direction for the organisation and measure the progress on an annual basis. A summary of the year 1 progress can be found overleaf.

It is no surprise that one priority is still to reduce our reliance on short term funding and to strengthen our financial future by generating more earned income. The income generated by the Home Support Service has seen a further 61% increase on the previous year. We also introduced a 5p per mile increase in the charges for our transport services on 1st January 2020 which means we no longer subsidise journeys and going forward will make a full cost recovery on each journey.

In addition to making successful appointments to our GOGA posts we also successfully recruited 2 new staff members to join our transport department. Our new transport coordinator will be tasked with growing our volunteer base and to grow and expand our transport services which in turn will generate more earned income for the organisation. As I write this entry to the annual report we have not been able to agree start dates for these staff due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Had I been writing this entry at the end of February, I would have been reporting a completely different picture than the one I now report on. Due

to the COVID-19 pandemic, business as usual completely stopped at Bassetlaw Action Centre in March. We ceased all face to face activity with clients, closed our office base, asked around half of the staff to work from home and furloughed 16 members of staff (the majority of which are the Home Support staff). We suspended the delivery of Staying Well Courses, IT classes, minibus trips and made the remaining services into telephone based services.

We also introduced 2 completely new areas of work to respond to local demand. One of these was the safe and well check telephone calls, not only to establish that older and vulnerable clients were accessing all the help they need, but also to reduce social isolation amongst this vulnerable group. The second was an essential shopping service for anyone in the at risk group that is unable to access their weekly supplies. Initially we set these services up for our own client base, but were soon able to roll this out throughout Bassetlaw.

I must acknowledge with grateful thanks the support given by our existing funders to enable us to use the funding they provide in more innovative ways than was originally intended to provide support to the local community at this unprecedented time. I must also acknowledge the support offered by local individuals and businesses that have either offered their time or a donation to enable us to meet the increased demands on our organisation to provide these essential services.

We are continuing to work closely with key partners throughout the district to continue rising to the challenge of meeting emerging demands as a result of the pandemic, including the BCVS, Social Prescribing, Link Workers, Bassetlaw District Council and colleagues in Health and Social Care.

Looking ahead to 2020/2021 there will undoubtedly be more challenges to overcome as life begins to return to normal. These will only be achieved with the dedication and support of our board, staff team and the volunteers that give their time so freely. I am immensely grateful to them for their ongoing support and commitment.

Lynn Tupling
Chief Executive



In 2019 the new Strategic Subgroup of the board met initially to develop Bassetlaw Action Centre's five-year business plan (2019-2024). Within this process, six strategic objectives were set and agreed. The group agreed to monitor progress against these objectives on an annual basis and include the findings in the annual report.

Strategic Objective	Outcome at 31 st March 2020	Red/Amber/ Green (RAG rating)
1. To ensure that the organisation adopts a balanced budget and maintains necessary levels of turnover.	Achieved.	
2. To increase income through paid for services.	Achieved. Income from Home Support Service saw a 61% increase in the year. (Although all Home Support Staff were furloughed and the service suspended due to COVID-19). However, income from transport fell by 16% in the same period. Despite this we still had an overall 15% increase in income through paid for services in the year.	
3. To increase the volunteer base.	During the year we attracted 19 new volunteers to the organisation. However, in the same period we lost 19 volunteers, 4 of which went into full time employment. But at least we maintained 76 volunteers overall. We had attracted 5 new volunteers to support with our COVID-19 response which are not included in this total.	
4. To seek and pursue new opportunities to develop complementary services within the aims and objectives of the organisation.	Achieved. Secured funding to launch GOGA – Get Out, Get Active to support clients with long term conditions to increase activity level. Project will launch on 1 April 2020 and will complement the Staying Well Programme.	
5. To strengthen and extend our existing offer.	Our ability to strengthen and extend our offer has been really tested in the final weeks of this year. We have extended our offer to include a new telephone safe and well check and essential shopping service to respond to local need as a result of the COVID-19 outbreak. We have ceased face to face contact with clients replacing the majority of services with a telephone based service and have suspended other services where this is not an option.	
6. To ensure that we identify and proactively manage risks and emerging threats.	If we had completed this measure on 1 st March rather than 31 st March this would have been a clear success with a green rating. However, none of us identified that by 31 st March we would be forced into shut down as a result of the global COVID-19 virus. We hadn't identified this in our risk assessments. We have proactively managed the impact on the organisation through a range of measures including home working, furloughing staff and seeking additional funding.	

OUR CORE SERVICES

Our services are used by both individuals and organisations. In 2019/2020 there were **13,669** callers either in person or by telephone. There were a further **77** learners coming into our premises for training with the WEA - Workers Educational Association.

Additionally thousands of emails, web hits and mail enquiries were dealt with during the year.

We continued to develop networking, partnerships and contract arrangements with other organisations to meet the needs of the local community in the most efficient and cost effective way.

VOLUNTEERING



We are committed to offering volunteering opportunities throughout our organisation. Our volunteering opportunities include volunteer car driving, minibus driving, befriending, staying well tutors, board membership and administrative positions. We are a volunteer led organisation with **82** volunteers and **26** paid members of staff.

BASSETLAW SENIORS DIRECTORY



Bassetlaw is fortunate that it has many active groups and clubs to support and improve lifestyle.

Access to information about how and where services are provided is very important. As a result Bassetlaw Action Centre produced this Directory to inform Older People about the services, groups and clubs available.

A copy of the directory can be found on our website.

www.bassetlawactioncentre.org.uk

OFFICE SPACE / MEETING ROOM / TRAINING ROOM HIRE



We have fully accessible and serviced office space, meeting rooms and a training suite for hire. Each area is available by the hour, day or longer term to meet individual requirements. These rooms have been used by a range of different organisations throughout the year. **10** different organisations have used the rooms on **118** separate occasions including:

- Working Win
- National Family Mediation
- Inspire Culture Learning and Libraries
- B & L Audiology
- Bassetlaw Mind
- NCC—Polling Station

TRAINING SUITE

Our fully accessible room enables training to be delivered in small friendly groups. The courses held are mainly at introductory level, covering several aspects of information technology.

Tutoring is provided by the Worker's Educational Association - (WEA) who also use the room to deliver Basic Skills.

The room has 13 fully internet ready laptop computers with printing facilities.



BASSETLAW COMMUNITY CAR SCHEME

The schemes help clients across the rural Bassetlaw area who cannot access public transport or where none is available to suit their needs.

Over the past year, our Community Car Scheme has travelled 129, 637 miles provided by 49 different volunteers.



Our drivers are all volunteers and are based in several locations around the area including many rural villages as well as the two towns of Retford and Worksop.

The Community Car Scheme can be used to attend appointments, go shopping, visit family and friends and attend local groups and clubs.

We also work in partnership with Social Prescribing to provide transport to those who are socially isolated to attend groups and clubs to make them feel part of the community again.

We regularly ask for feedback from clients and recent comments received include:

“It all started a couple of years ago when I broke an arm and registered as a client to get out and about whilst I was unable to drive. I realised then what a great service it is and as soon as I was mobile again, I decided to apply to be a volunteer driver”

“I heard about the car scheme from my GP surgery and I am extremely satisfied with the service”

“A really wonderful service - I tell everyone about it. The volunteers are very kind.”

Our volunteer drivers are all DBS checked, MiDAS and First Aid trained and attend regular driver meetings alongside additional training sessions.

BASSETLAW COMMUNITY CAR SCHEME PLUS

Our wheelchair accessible Car Scheme Plus vehicle has covered 24,279 miles in the past year taking clients to appointments, groups, clubs and social events.

Client feedback from Car Scheme Plus users include :

“Thank you for all your help with our father and arranging his transport, ”



BASSETLAW COMMUNITY MINIBUS

The minibus is fully wheelchair accessible and provides a door to door service collecting clients from their homes across Bassetlaw.

The minibus has travelled 5,329 miles in the past year on day trips ranging from Skegness, Yorkshire Wildlife Park, Dobbies Garden Centre, Bakewell Market, Springfield and Newark Castle .

Local community groups such as Friends of Charter Court and North Notts CAMRA have also hired the minibus for days out.

Comments received include:



“Without the day trips I would not get out and about as much as I do”

“The new minibus seats are lovely and comfortable - there is lots of space and I had a lovely panoramic view out the window.”

HOME SUPPORT SERVICE

Our Home Support Service continues to grow, providing an holistic and person centred support service. The service offers clients support, such as domestic cleaning, shopping, a sitting service, medical prompts, light meal preparation, laundry / ironing, help with correspondence and also provides companionship to clients in their own homes.



Additionally, the service can also be implemented on a short term basis, for example; to cover family holidays or to aid recovery following a stay in hospital.

In 2019/20 we received **160** new referrals and supported **244** clients. We are continually recruiting for new workers for both the Retford and Worksop area to manage the growth.

Our workers are very dedicated and when asked what the role means to them; this is what they had to say:



"During my years as a worker I've always felt that I have taken away as much as I've given. This has been through a sense of pride, a feeling of appreciation and knowing that I really have made a difference to our clients (and often their families) lives"

"Being a HS worker is a rewarding and very varied job where you can try



and help to make people's lives a little easier. You need to be understanding, patient, supportive and have a good sense of humour! There are a lot of good times. It is a great feeling when you know you have been able to help somebody and they really appreciate what you have done"

"I really find being a home support worker very rewarding. It's always lovely when a client thanks you for the help you have given and says they look forward to seeing you again. I always look forward to visiting my clients, they all have different personalities and also have some amazing stories of times gone by to tell and I find these so interesting, it is also lovely for them to relive their memories with you"

BEFRIENDING

Our Befriending Scheme continues to be a vital service to its clients. Befrienders spend an hour each week with their clients for 12 weeks. Referrals to the service are via Social Prescribing only. Currently we have 20 befriending volunteers.

BEFRIENDING PLUS

Our Befriending Plus Scheme (which was introduced for clients who wished to continue having befriending visits after their 12 weeks of Social Prescribing) continues to be a much needed and requested service. We are continually recruiting befriending volunteers in order to meet the need for this service.



From early March 2020 the Befriending Service became a telephone Befriending service as all home visits were suspended due to the Coronavirus outbreak. Our Befrienders continue to support their existing clients and have also taken on additional clients who feel they need weekly safe and well calls.

When asked what Befriending means to a volunteer; he said:

"I've been a volunteer since I was 17 in many areas of my life. I've found this very rewarding personally and have met some lovely people who've added to my life".

By visiting clients in their own homes our volunteers across both of the schemes help to reduce loneliness and social isolation.

HOUSING CHOICES

LLOYDS BANK FOUNDATION

England & Wales



This is our second year the Housing Choice Project has continued to receive funding from Lloyds Bank Foundation. This has enabled us to continue our services helping more clients across Bassetlaw with housing issues including support to find and move into new properties, benefits advice and energy advice to enable people to stay living independently in their own homes for as long as possible.

This year we have assisted **284** new clients with a further **94** being carried forward from the previous year. We have also provided a one off advice service for a further **219** clients.

During this financial year we have placed 220 bids on social housing properties on behalf of client's which has resulted in us assisting 14 clients to move into more appropriate accommodation. 3 of these have been from



shared accommodation to their own property, a further 3 clients have moved to assisted living, 1 owner occupier has moved into independent living and 1 private rental has moved to social housing. We have also supported an owner occupier to sell a property and purchase a new home and 5 more clients moved to more appropriate accommodation.

All clients are given a benefit check and are assisted to apply for the benefits they are entitled to. This means that clients are able to pay for services such as domestic help or a lifeline service to enable them to stay living independently. Following our help **£376,781.14** is now being received in extra benefit.

CASE STUDIES:

Mrs. S came to the Action Centre for advice on housing. She lived in a large property on her own which was very isolated and often lost utility

connections, especially during the winter months. Our housing case worker bidded on properties which were much more suitable for her. Her benefits were also checked and applications were made for both Attendance Allowance and Pension Credit, both applications were successful. Mrs S has now moved into sheltered accommodation.

"Thank you for everything you are doing for me , I do appreciate all your help"

Mr P, came to Bassetlaw Action Centre for help with his benefits as they had been stopped. He had previously been claiming PIP and ESA. Due to Mr Ps health issues he was extremely frustrated and found it hard to remain calm.

We worked with Mr P and built up a relationship where he became to trust us. We referred him to get some additional support to assist him with his mental health. We also successfully helped him to appeal his benefit decisions and both his PIP and ESA were reinstated. Mr P came back to Bassetlaw Action Centre in person to thank us for our help, we wish him all the very best for the future.

"Just wanted to say Thank You!

So many thanks for understanding and for not running away like everyone else when I got anxious, you are the only one who's helped and listened. "

A selection of some of our many client's comments:

"We want to thank you for all your help and advice you have given us it has been fully appreciated "

"I feel like your my angel right now. I'm overwhelmed with all your care"

"We wanted to thank you for all your help you gave us. If it wasn't for you I think we'd still be banging our heads trying to get anyone to take a proper look. With your help we've finally gotten somewhere"

"I wouldn't of had a clue what to do if it wasn't for you. You've been a great help I cant believe the things you have done for us you are just wonderful"

"I am always happy to hear your voice, it reminds me that people do care"

"Now we are very busy with our moving out :-))) but very happy:-))
THANK YOU VERY MUCH AGAIN, YOU ARE NICE, KIND FOR US AND VERY HELPFUL PERSON "

NORTH NOTTINGHAMSHIRE SUPPORT PARTNERSHIP

NNSP is a collaboration between Bassetlaw Action Centre and the BCVS supported by Bassetlaw District Council, who are responsible for implementing the new North Nottinghamshire Support Partnership model.

The main aims and objectives of the service are:

- **Ease of Access** – to provide a single gateway through which people can access a wide variety of services.
- **Prevention and Intervention** – to support ever decreasing public spending budgets.
- **Partnership Working** – to bring together local public and voluntary services and prevent duplication.
- **Voluntary Sector** – to grow the capacity and sustainability of the sector.



BASSETLAW SELF HELP LINK

Self-Help Link provides a support service for groups within Bassetlaw. We currently have **108** Self-Help Groups in the directory and on the wall chart.

Self-Help groups enable people concerned with their own health, disability and social issues to develop support systems through self-help and mutual aid.

Significant support can be offered, when required, to groups throughout the year in a range of ways:

- Promoting their services
- Help to secure funding
- Acting as a mail box/postal address
- Providing meeting rooms
- Helping set up a committee
- Hosting meetings/AGMs
- Providing display stands and promotional material

STROKE/NEURO INFORMATION SERVICE

This year we have supported **109** clients, Our service is open to both stroke and neurological clients as well as their families and carers. The service helps clients to access services, apply for benefits, assist with housing needs and adaptations, gives practical assistance, help to return to work, putting people in contact with other stroke survivors or just being a listening ear! All clients receive telephone support, which varies between weekly, fortnightly or monthly depending on the clients' needs.

We have referred to **121** services and signposted onto a further **115** services during the year on behalf of clients to help them with their day to day living.

Our clients find that their condition can have a huge impact on the financial situation in the household; we check benefits for all of our clients and **£192,993.32** is now being received in extra benefit following our help. This money helps clients buy in the extra services and equipment that they need to live their day to day lives.

CASE STUDY

Mr M is 39 and living with a hereditary muscle wasting condition. The diagnosis had come as a shock 2 years previously and the decline in Mr M's health had been rapid. During the initial visit it was clear to see there were many issues even though the referral was to check benefit entitlement. Mr M was very angry, frustrated and low in mood.

Mr M was assured we would do our best to help him and referrals were placed for:

- Help with his personal care as his mum was currently doing it
- A Personal Budget to pay for the care as he had no savings left due to being unable to work for some time
- A Health Budget to pay for a personal assistant to take him out, he was climbing the walls being stuck in the same room all of the time
- Bereavement counselling as he had lost close family and was struggling to cope with the loss
- PIP (Personal Independence Payment) for him at a higher rate
- A Blue Badge

Mr M received all of the above as well as a place at a rehab centre with the Health Budget which was more than we could have wished for.

STAYING WELL PROGRAMME

11 Staying Well Programmes have been delivered across the Bassetlaw area during the past year.

Currently we have 5 trained tutors all of which have maintained their observations / supervisions in line with the Stanford Licence requirements.

The skills and techniques learned on the course have shown to reduce the number of GP visits made by the patients and give them a better quality of everyday life.

Each participant on the Staying Well Course is given access to information on services that may help them. A resource table is available at every course which holds information that participants can take away with them. Tutors also signpost and make referrals as required.

We have worked with the Social Prescribing link workers and other organisations to refer as many people as we can onto a course. This is working well and we are seeing more referrals than ever come through. This has been helped by our presence at the Primary Care Network meetings.

This is what one of our recent course participants had to say about the “Staying Well Programme”

“The Staying Well Course has been an informative and enjoyable experience. I haven’t wanted to miss a session!

We the participants have bonded well as a group along with our tutors. Paula and Anita have been kind, understanding, reassuring and maintained confidentiality as well as being positive and encouraging us to improve our lifestyles.

Making an action plan each week, with my tutors support and reviewing it the following week has been an important step in improving my motivation. This is something I am planning to continue each Monday following the end of the course. Having the course on a Monday was perfect for this!”

“The problem solving sessions were essential and enabled me to make decisions about different problems I have, others have suggested solutions to my problems and the tutors have helped me with practical solutions, such as recommending local practical help.”

“The chance to share experiences with others has made me realise I am not alone in the way my life is.”

“We have had a chance to discuss our personal experiences of meetings with doctors, family, friends and other professionals to make comparisons and look at ways to improve communication to make their interactions more positive. I would recommend this course to anyone with any difficulties with life and health (mental or physical)”

“I cannot believe how much you are helping me”

“A VERY BIG THANK YOU”

“Thank you so much to Paula and Anita and Bassetlaw Action Centre - you have made a difference in my life!”

BASSETLAW ACTION CENTRE STAYING WELL PROGRAMME



Bassetlaw ACTION Centre
01777 709650
stayingwell@bassetlawactioncentre.org.uk



ISSUE/SCENARIO	SOME OF THE TOPICS COVERED	HOW IT HAS HELPED PEOPLE	NEXT STEPS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Six week course for anyone living with a long term health condition. Aims are to help you take control of your health and manage your condition on a daily basis. Sessions are 2.5 hours, facilitated by trained tutors who are living with a LTC themselves. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dealing with pain and extreme tiredness. Coping with feelings of depression. Relaxation techniques and exercise. Action Planning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gained in confidence and felt more in control of their life. Manage their conditions and treatment together with healthcare professionals. Be realistic about the impact of their condition on themselves and their family. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Make a six month goal/action plan Signpost to other organisations that may help further. Refer to organisations or projects that can help further.



EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES STATEMENT

The Bassetlaw Action Centre is committed to a policy of equal opportunities:

- To its staff, through recruitment, training and progression within the organisation.
- To its clients to ensure that no-one suffers abuse, discrimination or harassment by staff or trustees or other organisations/members of the public using the centre.

DATA PROTECTION

Bassetlaw Action Centre agree that any information held on a computerised database is subject to the provisions of the Data Protection Act 1998. The organisation will comply with the provisions of the access to Personal Files Act 1987 by ensuring that any information held relating to a Service User is available for inspection by that Service User. All staff and volunteers have been trained in GDPR regulations.

INDEPENDENT EXAMINERS

Glover & Co.
Chartered Accountants
13/15 Netherhall Road
Doncaster
DN1 2PH

Our financial statements are available on request.

COMPLIMENTS / COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

We aim to provide an efficient, effective and courteous service. If you encounter any problems, or would like to compliment our service we do have a procedure: Firstly you should contact the member of staff. If the staff member is unable to deal with your compliment or complaint please contact the Chief Executive. Following this, in the event that you do not feel completely satisfied please write in detail to the Chair of the Trustees, c/o Bassetlaw Action Centre, Canal Street, Retford, Nottinghamshire, DN22 6EZ.

FUNDING

Funding received from;
Garfield Weston Anniversary Fund
Nottinghamshire County Council
Bassetlaw Clinical Commissioning Group
Bassetlaw District Council
Lloyds Bank Foundation
Big Energy Saving Network (DECC)
Cooperative Society
Tesco

PARTNERSHIPS

WEA (for training Space)
BCVS for NNSP

AFFILIATIONS

An associate member of Locality
An affiliate of BCVS

CONTACT DETAILS

We are open from 9am to 1pm Monday - Friday.

Bassetlaw Action Centre
Canal Street
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Tel: 01777 709650 (answerphone service is also available outside office hours or at busy times)

E-mail: enquiries@bassetlawactioncentre.org.uk



Web:
Bassetlaw Action Centre



www.bassetlawactioncentre.org.uk
[@BassetlawBAC](https://twitter.com/BassetlawBAC)