



Annual Report



1 January – 31 December 2018

Introduction and Executive Summary

In this report we have set out what we have achieved during our third full year of operation and what we hope to achieve in the next phase. Above all, Solva Care is a community project – we work together to care for those in our community who need help. We were fortunate to have our funding from the Sustainable Development Fund renewed for two years from 1 April 2017. (The fund is administered by Pembrokeshire Coast National Park Authority.)

Solva Care maintains its good connections with our local surgery, with social workers and the third sector. We continue to learn, to record the lessons learned and to apply the learning in order to improve our service. The Trustees would wish to put on record our appreciation of the work of our volunteers and of our Co-ordinator and her staff. They are the ones who deliver the person-centred care which is focussed on individual need and responds to circumstances.

Our joint research project on Direct Payments started in October this year, and we hope to use what we are learning to help develop a care system which will help those in need to secure care more suited to their circumstances. We also hope that it will support those seeking a greater degree of independence and responsibility for their own care.

Thanks to our Community Council for their support and to our Co-ordinator, our volunteers, our partners, the people we support and all those who have helped us. Together, we have been able to make a real difference to people's lives and wellbeing and the community has benefitted. We can all be proud of what we have achieved so far in Solva Care.

My thanks to our community - the people living in Solva who have given us wholehearted support. Thanks also to those people who have taken part and who will be working with us in the future, not just to carry on the good work, and to help other communities create their own systems of care, but to develop and extend our work so that our community is sustainable and able to respond positively to the challenges ahead.

Mollie Roach
Chair
Board of Trustees

Connecting our Community

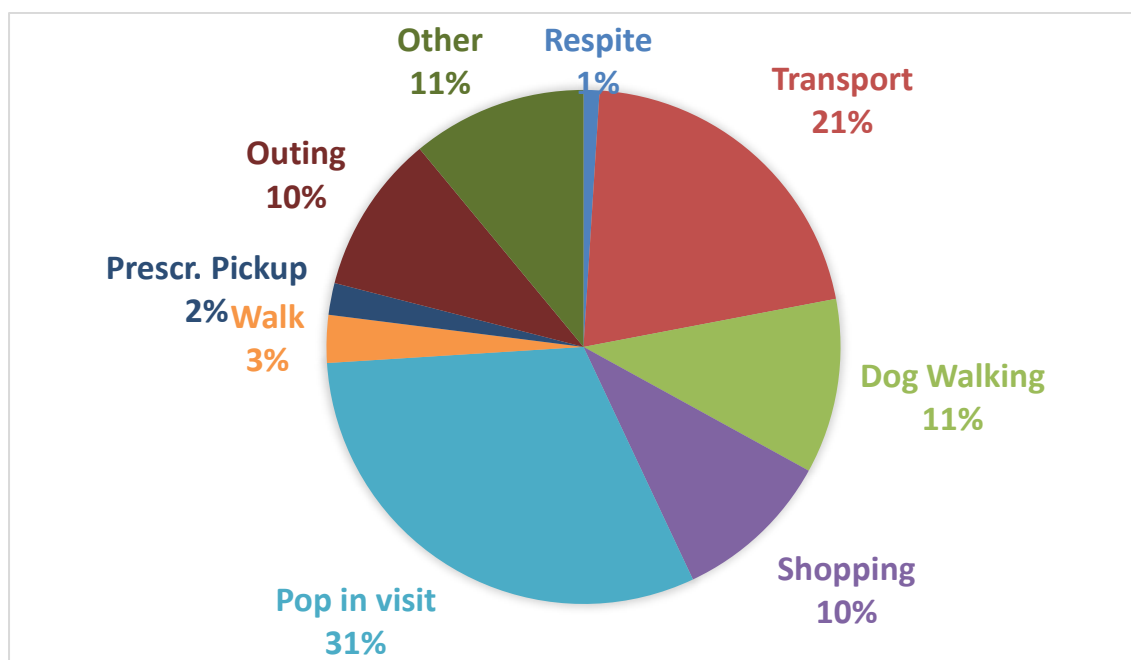
Objectives and Aims

Solva Care is a community initiative focusing on providing specially designed social care support. It was originally set up by Solva Community Council as a pilot project in June 2015 and is now a registered charity, offering friendly, local support and help to those who need it in the parish of Solva. It is a well-developed support system, which is run by a trustee board and a part-time co-ordinator with the help of local volunteers. We still maintain close links with Solva Community Council, which is represented on our Board of Trustees.

The aim is to maintain and improve health and wellbeing of older people and others who are in need by: supporting them to lead independent, fulfilled lives, staying in their own homes and remain part of the community; providing extra support to those who are caring for relatives; and organising physical, cultural and other activities, which are open to all.

Achievements

During the period 1 January to 31 December 2018, 35 volunteers gave 1492 hours of support to over 40 Solva residents. In addition to this, 567 hours were spent helping at events organised by us in Solva Hall and trustees spent many more hours on admin and meetings. (See Appendix 1 – Who can use the service and how we can help).



Solva Care is filling the gaps in the provision of services from local authorities, paid care services, family and friends. The Co-ordinator provides the link between the volunteers, people we support and a variety of support organisations. (See *Organisations we have worked with or learned from*, listed in Appendix 2.)

We arrange a weekly 'Friday Club' in the village hall – two hours of music, light exercise, craft, games, reminiscing and other activities - as well as outings several times a year: e.g. a visit to a garden, a tea party, the cinema etc. These are open to all and are regularly attended by several people living with dementia as well as their carers.



The VC Gallery in Haverfordwest arranged several excursions to beaches in Pembrokeshire, where participants could create their own art under the guidance of the experienced VC volunteers. The members also attended a six-week course resulting in each person producing three masterpieces on canvas. The main aim was to encourage and extend social cohesion through art. This proved to be very successful attracting people who had not previously attended any of our other events.

We have shared our experiences by attending several conferences during the year, locally and further afield. We did a presentation for the Welsh Government on 12th January. One of our trustees presented at the WSSCR Conference on 14 February at the Wales School of Social Care Conference in City Hall in Cardiff on 'Embedding Research in Practice - The Experience of Solva Care.' The co-ordinator did a presentation at the Ageing Well in Wales event 'Celebrating Communities' in Aberystwyth in March. We also attended the Bevan Commission's conference at the Celtic Manor in Gwent on 4 July and contributed to the presentations on community involvement, as well as an event in Crundale, Haverfordwest organised by Pembrokeshire County Council 'Opportunities in Communities for Older People'. The Co-ordinator did a talk at the chapel in St Davids on 13 July, music evening with fundraising to be shared between us and the Memory Café. On 13 Nov the Co-ordinator was invited to speak to the Ladies' Circle at Ebenezer Chapel, Haverfordwest.

Solva Care arranged a Community Event in Solva Memorial Hall on 27 November. Thirteen organisations set up stalls to present their product or service, e.g. the Fire Brigade, Police, Citizens Advice, Power up, Dot.e.van, Red Cross and others. Refreshments and entertainment by the Solva Ukulele band were provided. Over lunch time talks were given by representatives from Paul Sartori, National Parks, Solva Community Council and Solva Care (Direct payments for Social care). Despite very adverse weather conditions, thirty-four people attended the event and it was generally agreed that it was a good idea and a successful day, informing on help available locally. People were pleased to have information and contacts for use in the future.

Impact and Value

Together, as a community, we have set up an operational co-ordinated volunteer service that underpins the work of statutory health and social care services in our area.

Outcomes of what we do:

- improvement in health and wellbeing of many people in the village
- higher attendance at village activities such as coffee mornings and luncheon club
- reduction of stress for carers and older people
- a quicker solution to problems such as transport, picking up prescriptions, assist with pets.

Thanks to our volunteers and the support we get from the community, we can help each

other live more fulfilled, happier lives and this in turn contributes to our wellbeing and to the sustainability of the whole community. We are moving towards working more closely with domiciliary care workers, trying to create a more integrated care system, and towards a preventative care programme which will keep people healthier for longer! We are also still pursuing our aim of the development of a domiciliary care service to run alongside the volunteer service. This is much more difficult to set up, but we will continue to work towards this end.

We still lack security regarding long term funding. We are doubly grateful to local people for their fundraising efforts –the money is put to effective use and the community support is very encouraging. But our work needs a more permanent funding basis and we continue to negotiate with the County Council, the Local University Health Board and at Regional and National level.

Case Studies

1. Mrs A, who has dementia, lives by herself in an apartment in upper Solva. She has family in the village, carers visit twice a day and her daughter is also very supportive. She still gets a bit lonely and Solva volunteers bring her to luncheon club, coffee morning and Friday Club. Being a small village, most people know her and will help if she is found walking around the village a bit confused.

2. In Solva there is a regular luncheon club once a week. This is held in the Memorial Hall which is in the upper village. Although this is only about a mile from the lower village, it is uphill and beyond walking distance for residents who do not walk well and can no longer drive. A rota of volunteers regularly picks up people from the lower village and then take them home again. There is one lady whose husband passed away recently and a man who lives by himself. They are brought up together and the return journey is usually via the village shop where they can stock up on food.

3. Mrs B lives with her son and has other family in the village. She lost her confidence in going out a while ago, as she felt unsteady on her feet, and it took her daughter months to get her to agree to come to coffee morning. Now she is picked up by volunteers every week to go to the coffee morning and to our Friday Club. She regularly says that Solva Care saved her!

Endorsements from residents we have supported:

'Solva Care rescued me from Isolation. Gets you out to meet others.'

:'I think it's a wonderful thing...it's like an umbrella, Solva Care is. You know, it's something to shelter you under'

I needed somebody to take me...I was not really fit to drive ...And I just rang up Solva Care and I got help every time, and there was no question. They just helped me...I'm being taken to the hospital with [husband] and that's the best thing... "

"For Mum the contact with someone who would sit and read or chat with her was invaluable especially in the last few months when she was bed bound. For me, it gave me time to take myself away for a few hours and to relax in the knowledge that Mum was safe and looked after"

"this scheme is a lifeline for me. I am able to get out of the house and do essential tasks and get respite from caring for my mother"

"I strongly believe this service to be invaluable to my mother and me. Life would certainly be more difficult without it! I am also of the opinion that the service is invaluable to Solva. It helps foster community spirit, makes those in need feel cared about and less alone"

" Within this small close-knit village environment, we are very fortunate to have this facility which benefits individuals and families to cope on a daily basis. As a Surgery we are able to signpost patients.... they can provide and tailor the necessary support and services required in any individual case."



Volunteers

There are 35 local volunteers, who have all been DBS checked, signed a confidentiality agreement, are insured and all had induction training. Most volunteers are retired people who are still active in the community but have got some time to spare to assist their fellow villagers. We also have some young volunteers.

The volunteers have attended a variety of training courses over the years apart from Induction Training: Safeguarding of vulnerable adults provided by Volunteering Matters. Other training has been provided by The Alzheimer's Society – Dementia awareness, SCWDP, the Red Cross – First Aid and the Reach project among other organisations (see Appendix 3).

We regularly ask for feedback from the volunteers and below are some of the replies when, in the summer of 2018, the volunteers were asked why they had decided to volunteer for Solva Care:

'I joined Solva Care to make my life more meaningful and to give something back. To make people's lives more bearable, enjoyable and social.'

'I decided to get involved with Solva Care as a result of experience with a friend who needed care and had very poor service. When asked if interested, I decide I would do anything to try to improve the situation regarding care and carers.'

'Initial reason for offering to be a volunteer - In my job pre-retirement I was made aware of the huge difference a bit of practical help can make to those in need both physically and emotionally, so I wanted to contribute in some small way. After a couple of years of volunteering I am now more aware of the 'feel good' factor which benefits those who volunteer and the advantages of coming together for the benefit of the community. It's a 'win/win' situation.'

'After suffering PTSD after a traumatic stay in hospital I needed things to occupy me. Hence choir, badminton, Thai Chi. This helped but volunteering filled a gap. It made me concentrate on other people's problems rather than dwelling on any of mine! Friendships also made with service users and other volunteers and a feeling of making a difference all be it by doing very small things.'

'I volunteered for Solva Care because, as well as doing something for others, it makes me feel better myself.'

'The things I do are small, not arduous and not particularly time consuming. There is no pressure and it certainly appears to make a difference to lots of people. From a purely selfish point of view, if it becomes firmly established and ongoing - I may need a little help myself in years to come!'

'Would like to say as a new volunteer my reason for joining is simply that I have personally experienced serious health problems for many years and because of the help and support I have had here in Solva it made me realise now I should do something to give back while I can. Solva Care is such a wonderful charity in which I hope I can contribute to in order to see it grow even more.'

We organise away days for the volunteers every other year and another, smaller get-together in between. In September 2018 we arranged a breakfast in a local restaurant as a thank you and to give the volunteers a chance to meet each other. Unless they are helping at one of our events, they usually 'work' individually, so it is important that they get to meet up sometimes. As one volunteer said: *'I find, when you're actually doing things, you're sort of isolated with your client, you're helping, but then we have a meeting like this, and exchange views and it makes you feel more part of it, not just an isolated person.'*



The Great Solva Steps Project

Solva Care – with the assistance of the Allen Lane Foundation – set up a community-mosaic arts project that involved members of the community learning how to create mosaics, and putting the skills learnt to use by producing mosaics to decorate a set of unattractive village steps. The project aimed to demonstrate wellbeing outcomes amongst participants from the community who were involved in producing the mosaics. We evaluated the project in early 2018.

The project commenced in October 2017, and first stage – completion of the mosaic panels by the community – ended in December 2017. The installation of the panels on the steps,

along with the fitting of new handrails and step re-surfacing was completed in May 2018.

Marketing and Publicity

Solva Care appointed a part-time Web Administrator in October 2017 to develop and maintain the website and update its search engine optimisation (SEO). A 'Friends of Solva Care' scheme – for both businesses and individuals – was introduced and five Solva businesses have signed up to the scheme.

We were also active on Facebook – increasing our page 'Likes' to 91 – and Twitter, which along with our blog page on our website, publicised regular news stories. We had the largest ever number of views on a FB post – 983 – for the 'We're Hiring' post.

Various press releases publicised events such as the Bluetits swim in Solva Harbour, which had 565 views and raised money for the 'Great Solva Mosaics Steps' project, and job opportunities. Our mosaic research project was opened by Councillor Phil Baker, Cabinet member for Infrastructure, and featured in the press.

We were interviewed by BBC Wales in June 2018 and published three press releases resulting in two articles in the Western Telegraph and one in the County Echo. We were also included in Ageing Well in Wales' 'Rethinking Respite for People Affected by Dementia', published in April 2018.

Research, Monitoring and Evaluation

We produced – as part of a Knowledge Mobilisation Project, supported by the Public Health Department of Hywel Dda University Health Board – an online Toolkit. Its aim is to share the experience of setting up Solva Care by synthesising the knowledge gained from the success of Solva Care, with other communities wishing to set up and run similar initiatives. The Toolkit was created by members of our community during 2018 and will be published in hard copy in 2020.

In October, we became one of the seven organisations chosen to participate in the second phase of Innovate to Save; Welsh Government's £5M research and development fund to help support public and third sector organisations to deliver services in Wales differently. Their programme was supported by Y Lab (a partnership of Nesta – the global innovation foundation – and Cardiff University) and the Wales Council for Voluntary Action. With our project partners Hywel Dda University Health Board, Pembrokeshire County Council, Rural Health and Care Wales, and Pembrokeshire Association of Voluntary Services (PAVS), the project investigated how Direct Payments could be organised in a way to provide people with greater choice, and more personally-appropriate care and support to maintain and improve their well-being. It also investigated how Solva Care, a community-led charity, can support the creation of a Care Cooperative to achieve this aim.

We presented at the Bevan Commission Conference in Newport and provided input on research and evaluation at the WSSCR/Welsh Government seminar in Holywell. This led to the creation of the Small is Beautiful Network to share best practice on how small, community-led organisations operate and become sustainable. Solva Care is now a part of that Network as well as the Coproduction Research Network of Wales. We met with key organisations to look at collaborating on R&D: NESTA which led to the grant on Direct

Payments; Audit Office; and by phone the Future Generation Commissioner's Office. We have also shared with other communities wanting to learn about aspects of our work, both in research and generally.

We participated in a trial with Care Messenger, a system that allows organisations and families to send messages and images from a management portal or a mobile app straight to a television screen. This was a research and development study that did not result in a published output, but useful learning came out of it on how universities, communities and businesses could better work together.

We contributed to the updated Solva Care Strategy by providing measurable objectives. Our research programme, in turn, was tailored to evaluating projects that demonstrated how we were fulfilling our objectives. We have continued to assess evidence and use it to influence our plans and actions.

We have continued to build in ongoing research and evaluation ('action research') wherever possible into the activities of Solva Care. We have used surveys and reflective exercises to shape our programmes and to see how well they have been received, for instance The Mosaics Project and we obtain feedback from the participants of our Friday Club at the end of every term.

Long term Strategies

We now plan to build on the first two and a half years. We plan to work at delaying, if not preventing, the slow decline into loneliness and dependency and are seeking to maintain contact with Health agencies towards a programme of preventative health care for the community.

We will work with those delivering hands-on domiciliary care in Solva, so that between us, we can deliver seamless, user focused continuity of care. We continue to maintain our local services register, so that the people we support can quickly find reliable local trades people – gardeners, cleaners, maintenance workers etc. and to involve our young people in the Project. We are putting together a register of local people who work as Carers and we will be looking at ways of supporting those carers – above all, we want to concentrate on responding to individual need, to stay local and focus on keeping our whole community viable and sustainable.

Appendix 1: Who can use the service and how we can help

The people we support are:

- people in ill health living alone and without family close by
- those with mobility problems and without their own transport
- older and/or frail people
- those who are housebound, isolated or lonely
- unpaid carers or helpers and their families
- those living with dementia and their families
- anyone else requesting help.

What we do:

- Shopping, collecting prescriptions
- Dog walking
- Transport to surgery, shops, restaurants, leisure activities
- Accompanying to village events: coffee mornings, luncheon club and village cinema
- Pop-in home visits for chatting or reading
- Phone calls
- Help with forms or correspondence
- Short periods of respite care
- Small one-off household or garden tasks
- Arrange regular events to prevent loneliness
- Help with finding reliable trades people, cleaners, gardeners (Co-ordinator)
- Sign posting to other available services and charities (Co-ordinator)

What we don't (can't) do:

- Domiciliary care which needs trained staff and regulation
- Medical treatment including small tasks such as supervising tablets, eye drops
- Tasks that would take work away from trades people
- Heavy or dangerous work (house removal/clearance, move furniture, tree cutting.)

Appendix 2: Organisations we have worked with or learned from

The Alzheimer's Society
Paul Sartori
Shalom
Crossroads
Good Neighbour Scheme
Somerset Community Catalyst Project
The Debenham Project, Suffolk
PIVOT
Solva Surgery (makes a room available to Solva Care once a week)
St Davids Surgery
District nurses
Withybush General Hospital
Pembrokeshire County Council
Social Services
Social Firms Wales
Trading Standards
Dyfed-Powys Police Commissioner
The Reach Project (Pembrokeshire College)
The Memory Café in St Davids
Ageing Well in Wales
The VC Gallery in Haverfordwest
The Older People's Commissioner for Wales
Rural Health and Care Wales
Swansea University
Cardiff University
Aberystwyth University
Wales Co-operative
Rural Health and Care, Wales
Community Choice

Appendix 3: Training Courses attended in 2018

The Co-ordinator has attended the following training courses:

Good Practice in Volunteer Management (PAVS)
Care Messenger training.

Training Courses attended by the Volunteers

First Aid Course (British Red Cross)
Nature Connections & Wellbeing Summer Course