



Annual Report



1 April 2025 – 31 March 2026

Executive summary

This report summarises our activities and achievements for 2025/6 and celebrates the fact that we have continued as a successful charity for the past 11 years. It looks at our ongoing attempts to secure funding to enable us to continue to meet the needs of our community.

Over those years the needs of the people we support have changed, with sadly many no longer with us or needing care beyond what we offer. Falling numbers at what were popular activities have led us to a point of reflection and change to what we currently provide. We plan to adapt what we offer to meet the needs of people in the community who may have traditionally not engaged with our activities, whilst ensuring that our core provision and support is still available. We also hope to be able to engage more with younger people and carers to maintain and enhance their wellbeing.

This report highlights our work in delivering our volunteering support and providing ongoing and new activities for individuals and groups, to maintain and enhance health and well-being. During the year we have continued to maintain constructive working relationships with other organisations and communities to benefit our own community and share our learning. The report outlines our continued commitment to research and evaluation and our approach to seeking ways of ensuring our financial security and sustainability as a small charity.

We finish by looking to the future for 2026/27, whilst acknowledging the uncertainty faced by all charities. Our 2024/29 strategic plan may be reviewed depending upon our funding situation and assessment of the future needs of the community not only to continuously improve on what we do but to be innovative in our approach and help others to create valuable support systems in their own communities.

The Search for Funding...



Foreword from the Chair

Twenty twenty-five/six was a challenging year for the Charity, but due to the generosity and kindness of our community we have continued to provide a valuable service and have focussed on more fund-raising activities at which we have been very successful with the help of other groups in the community. It continues to be a privilege to be part of such a committed community.

Our support continued to be needed and valued by many, although we are aware of declining numbers attending some events and we constantly need to review what we offer to meet the changing needs and wants of our community as the demographics change, whilst retaining our core purpose of helping and befriending the most in need. Throughout the year we have retained our dedicated team of volunteers, staff and trustees and continue to work with others to share our experiences.

We reported in our last annual report that our application to the National Lottery for funding had not been allowed to progress to the next stage. We did however receive a much-welcomed grant from Hywel Dda University Health Board in April 2025 which enabled us to continue to progress our plans for joint working across St Davids and Llanrhian at the same time as maintaining Solva Care. As a result, in January 2026, we re-submitted to the National Lottery and have now been invited to the next stage by June 2026.

From January 2026 funding was reliant on donations, so our co-coordinator's hours were more limited. Fortunately, however, in April 2026 we were successfully awarded a much-needed grant from the Waterloo Foundation which will enable us to continue until 2027, for which we are extremely grateful.

We will continue to keep the community updated via the Newsletter as we move into a more stable and successful year. As always our thanks go to our volunteers, staff, and trustees for all their work throughout the year, and to all the community who attend our events or support or donate to our charity.

Best wishes to all,

Barbara

Barbara Bale
Chair Solva Care
Board of Trustees



Connecting our Community

Introduction

This report provides an overview of Solva Care's work over the period April 2025 to March 2026. This was the second year of our 2024/29 Strategic plan, in which we set ourselves four key priorities, i.e.

- To continue to provide our core activity
- To urgently secure ongoing funding
- To extend our reach to adjacent communities, and
- To continue to evolve, working with other organisations as necessary

To achieve our priorities, we set out 6 strategic objectives.

1. To maintain and continuously improve delivery of a high quality and effective voluntary service.
2. To ensure continuation of Solva Care for the next five years and beyond, by securing ongoing funding by collaborating with other communities.
3. In addition to our existing activities focusing on individuals, we will introduce new ones to ensure a comprehensive coverage of health and wellbeing issues and concerns, including group activities that maintain and enhance health.
4. We will maintain our constructive and enduring working relationships with other organisations to benefit our community and other communities in Wales and beyond.
5. We will continue our commitment to Research Monitoring and Evaluation (RME) and pursue the following priorities (ref. Strategic Plan 2024-29, page 10) working with 'Together for change' (TfC).
6. Ensure effective and efficient management of the Charity.

We outline below the activities and support we have provided over the past year to continue to meet these objectives and to help achieve our overall purpose of building a strong and resilient community where older people enjoy good health, security and dignity; and where they are informed and supported in their choices and respected for their wisdom and experience. As we have had a presence in Solva for many years we hope that people know who we are and why we exist. However, we have included a summary in Appendix 1 for information. Our over-arching goal for every year has been to be flexible and change according to the needs of our community and to continue to maintain and improve our core activities.



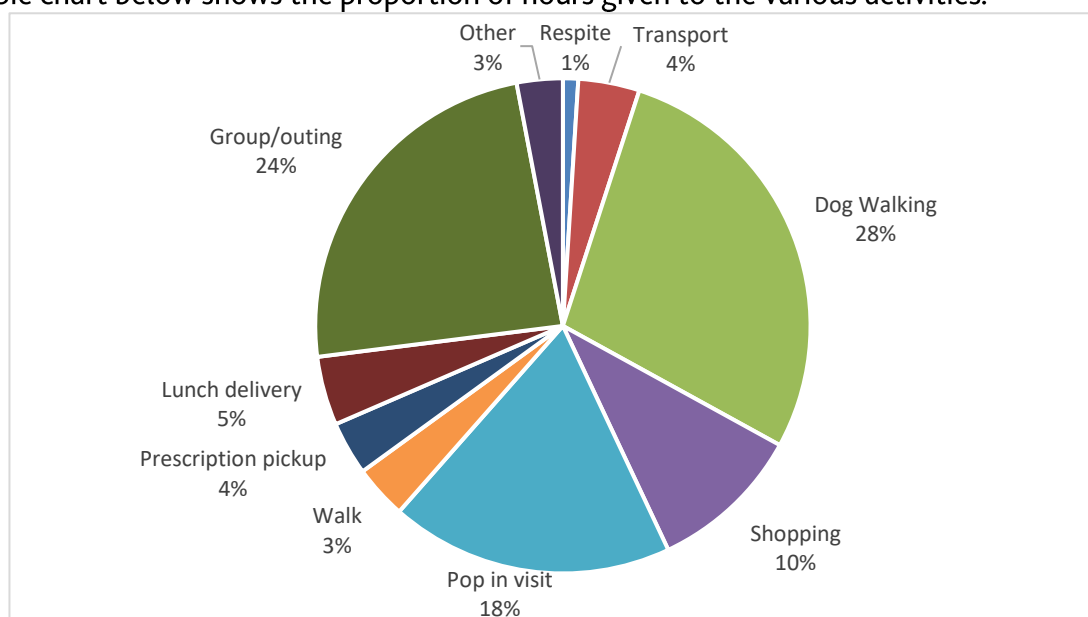
Our achievements and activities 2024/25 (to meet Priorities 1, 3 & 4 above)

Solva Care have continued to support people in the Parish of Solva and Whitchurch with a variety of things, enabling them to continue living in their own homes and stay part of the community, particularly those who do not have family nearby. Examples of support included befriending, picking up prescriptions, dog walking, shopping, short respite for those caring for a family member, support to access statutory & other services, signposting and transport to local events, the surgery, optician etc. We make it possible for people to take part in community life and attend events they would not be able to get to without the help of transport.

The number of volunteers continues to stay stable, and we currently have 40 volunteers giving around 170 hours/month. In the period 1 April 2025 to 31 March 2026, volunteers gave 2040 hours of support to about 45 People in and around Solva. Included in this figure is 350 hours spent helping at events organised by us. In addition, trustees spent on average 50 hours/per month to attend and prepare meetings plus administrative duties. Most of the volunteers are retired but there are some who are still working and who help when they can.

We regularly receive enquiries about finding carers or respite care and give advice about what to consider when applying for support from Social Services. We pass on information about local trades people, gardeners, solicitors, electricians, plumbers as well as CAB, Age Cymru and other organisations. On several occasions we have also lent out wheelchairs and walkers which are kept in the Memorial Hall & Community Hub. When we are offered equipment, we pass them on to anyone in need.

The pie chart below shows the proportion of hours given to the various activities.



(Note: 'Other' includes giving technical support with phones and computers, help with utility companies, baking & preparing for events. Dog walking also includes dog sitting and usually involves the volunteer staying for a cup of tea and a chat.)

As well as the regular support detailed above, we also helped a person with Universal Credit issues and dealing with utility companies. Other support included sorting out problems with a newly installed heat pump and chasing the installation of solar panels, helping a person access the new NHS Wales app, with the help of the local surgery. We have also assisted a recently bereaved person with a variety of things and passed on equipment we had been offered to a person with mobility issues.

Activities & Outings

We run our **Friday Club every Friday afternoon** for two hours in the Solva Community Hub, which is open to all. The sessions usually consist of seated exercise followed by a quiz, bingo, craft, poetry, music, a talk etc. mostly provided by local people. Talks by e.g. the park ranger from the Pembrokeshire Coast National Park or the assistant warden on Ramsey Island attract up to 30 people. The attendance dropped halfway through 2025 when some of our regular attendees moved into residential care. We are looking at what we need to change to attract more people.

Following a Fall Prevention session at Friday Club, the feedback was that people wanted more of these types of exercises. We therefore teamed up with **Pembrokeshire Leisure**, who offered 8 weeks free exercises for over-60s in the **Solva Community Hub** from September 2025, which proved to be very popular. The idea was that people would then join one of the leisure centres in the area. People were reluctant to do that, for several reasons e.g. travel and booking via an app. After discussions, it was agreed to continue with the class at a cost per session as long as it covered expenses. Since then, around 15 people attend the one-hour session held in the Solva Community Clubhouse each week, improving their strength and balance and allowing their needs to be met closer to home and in a place of their choice.

We held our **Solva Care AGM on 15 October 2025 in the Solva Memorial Hall**, the theme was *A Celebration of Life in Solva – Now and through the years*. There was a display of old and recent photos of Solva, music, poetry, a film etc. and 36 people attended.

Projects

We organised **Sparkling Solva** in December 2025 for the 7th time. There was an Advent Window for each day in December until Christmas apart from 1 December, when one road - Brodawel – as usual put on a great display of festive windows. Printed maps were available in Bayview Stores, Window on Wales, the Memorial Hall and the Community Hub and could also be downloaded online.

In the spring of 2025, we launched a new scheme *Friends of Solva Care*, to enable people to donate monthly to our charity if they should wish to do so. We produced a leaflet, put links on our website, and advertised it through the village newsletter.



Satisfaction - how we demonstrate our impact

People tell us that they feel less isolated, lonely, able to keep living in their own homes and attend events, make new friends, and socialise, all of which supports a feeling of belonging and enhances their wellbeing.

As important is the impact we have had on hospital admissions. The Local Health Board has evidence that since Solva Care started admissions of Solva residents have decreased. In addition, whenever possible, we support people coming out of hospital which can enable earlier discharges.

Since Solva Care was set up we have conducted regular village-wide surveys to ensure we are meeting the needs of our community. The last survey was completed in 2022 and indicated very positively that Solva Care is both needed and appreciated. In the meantime, we ask the people we support to suggest new ideas regularly and to evaluate the activities they attend. Another village survey is being considered for 2027.

We hold an Annual General Meeting for all residents to report back on our activities over the year and engage them in what they would like to see in the following year. It is an opportunity to launch our Annual Report and share our tool kit and strategy.

Feedback from people we support

We ask people to complete evaluation forms for Friday Club and any events or activities we organise, which help us to plan future activities. **In June 2025 we asked "What do you enjoy about, and what makes you come to Friday Club?"**

"Doing activities, meeting people, friendly atmosphere."

"Meeting with people and enjoying what is on."

"Your team are lovely and Friday Club have helped me feel at home here." (from a person who had recently moved to the area).

From another attendee at Friday Club after his father, who had dementia, passed away (April 2025):

"Thank you for bringing us fun and laughter through the Friday Club. Much appreciated during challenging times."

From a person we supported with visits to her father living with dementia (May 2025):

"Thank you.... We really appreciate your help and support." It has helped hugely this week."

Feedback from a person we supported when looking for a care home for her mother (July 2025):

"Thank you for all your support over the last few years, it has been so immensely helpful not feeling completely alone in the mess that is care provision."

Working with others

We interact with other community groups and local events. We bring people to the weekly Luncheon club and Coffee morning, as well as help with volunteers for those events when needed.

We involve local people in our events, such as Friday Club, to do talks, provide light exercise, craft. Music etc. The local Ukulele band comes to play, and the Pembrokeshire Coast National Park ranger usually comes to do a talk and a quiz. When we have a special guest speaker we have started to spread the word wider, via posters, emails and social media.

We were asked to run the refreshments stall at the Village Fête on 13 April, which raised some funds for Solva Care.

In July 2025 Solva Care had a table at the Edge festival to sell pre-loved good quality clothes to raise money and to spread the word about what we do. Any clothes left over at the end were given to Paul Sartori to sell in their shops.

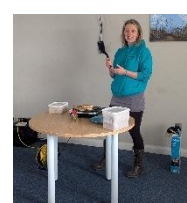
A representative from Paul Sartori also visited Friday Club to talk about *Advance Care Planning* and we arranged for an Energy Advisor to come to coffee morning to let people know what she could help with.

We have close contact with Solva Surgery, and the Co-ordinator has a room there every Friday morning for people to drop in. We continue to assist in dealing with statutory services, utility companies and applying online for blue badges, passports, bus passes etc. Help with IT and completing online forms and signposting to entitlements is increasing. We also refer to the PAVS Community Connector with whom we have a good working relationship.

In August 2025 we assisted a primary school teacher with printing of materials for the children, as we had spare capacity within our printing scheme.

Solva Care representatives attended a number of meetings with the Council representatives from St Davids and Llanrhian and Racheal Gibby from PCC in the autumn of 2025. A strategy for Making Wales a nation of *Age Friendly Communities* had been developed by PCC. As part of the work St Davids hosted an afternoon tea 3rd November attended by the Older Peoples Commissioner.

One of our volunteers who was involved with **People Speak Up**, suggested that some of the people we support could benefit from their activities. They are a charity with the aim of *Connecting people and creating healthy, resilient communities through storytelling, spoken word, creative writing, and participatory arts*. We referred three people, of which one was in a care home, who had four weekly visits each by two volunteers from the charity in April-May 2025. We were contacted again in the autumn as there was some funding remaining and we referred another two people.



We referred last year to the establishment of the Peninsula Stakeholder Board, led by Hywel Dda Health Board. This had followed the departure of the resident GP in Solva and the eventual decision to retain a health service managed practice in Solva. The group had initially been set up to examine long term options for the wider communities in relation to provision of clinical services.

In July 2024, the imminent closure of St Davids GP surgery, impacted the development work of this group whose focus became the management of all patients registered with the practice which also impacted on Solva residents. The final decision to re-allocate 90% of the patients from St Davids to the Solva surgery had obvious consequences which needed to be worked through. Changeover occurred in October 2024 then enabling the Stakeholder group to again focus on future models of care in rural areas.

As a result, a Peninsula Working Group was set up with a representative from Solva Care. Their work has since been divided into three sub-groups to focus on clinical services, community and wellbeing and communication. Solva Care has membership of all groups and are recognised as a key part of any future developments. In June 2025 presentations were made to the CEO and Chair of HDUHB at a Stakeholder Board meeting, following which the Peninsula Group were invited to present ideas to the full HDUHB Board meeting in March 2026.

Solva Care has been represented and has led many of the discussions and collected valuable evidence, alongside colleagues for Llanrhian and St Davids who are involved in our plans to adapt and implement the Solva Care initiative. Following the meeting general support was given for the ideas of creating a local hub encompassing all health and well-being services and further work may be commissioned.

Our actions and achievements to meet objectives 2, 5 & 6

- 2. *To ensure continuation of Solva Care for the next five years and beyond, by securing ongoing funding by collaborating with other communities*
- 5: *We will continue our commitment to Research Monitoring and Evaluation (RME) and pursue the following priorities (ref. Strategic Plan 2024-29, page 10) working with 'Together for change' (TfC).*
- 6: *Ensure effective and efficient management of the Charity.*

Seeking funding

We continue to gratefully receive donations from the community and since the introduction of the 'Friends of Solva Care' scheme¹ to generate regular funds, it has been invaluable in sustaining our charity. Alongside our ongoing pop-up shop and kind gifts left in wills and donations we have continued to receive the necessary funds to enable us to continue our applications for external grants.

¹ People can make regular donations to Solva Care by standing order.



As reported last year we were extremely grateful to Hywel Dda Health Board for a grant in April 2025 which enabled us to continue our full support service for a further 6 months. Thereafter we were reliant upon reserve funding and donations alone. As a result, in January 2026 the decision was taken to ask our two part-time staff to reduce their hours to enable us to offer a continued but reduced provision, which is continuing to date.

In April 2025, our Stage 1 application to the National Lottery was rejected. Over the following months we met with advisors and decided to resubmit. We therefore continued to meet with St Davids and Llanrhian City/Community Councils to further explore how we could help them to adapt the Solva Care initiative across the Peninsula. As this is a lengthy process we also made an application to the WCVA for funding to enable us to continue after the end of the Health Board monies. We were not however successful.

A reworded Stage 1 application was submitted to the National Lottery in January 2026, and we were pleased to be invited to progress to Stage 2 by June 2026. Work is ongoing. Alongside this an application was made to the Waterloo Foundation in March 2026, and we were pleased to announce that we were successful in April 2026. This has enabled our continuation for the next 9 months, albeit with less co-ordinator hours. Volunteer hours remain unchanged hence our support is not adversely affected. We will continue to pursue opportunities to sustain continuation of Solva Care long term.

Our commitment to Research, Monitoring and Evaluation

We reported last year that our hosting of 'Together for Change' had ceased as they become a separate Community Interest Company, but we have continued to work closely with them especially in matters related to research. Our survey work has been focused on gauging our success locally in meeting our residents' needs and gathering evidence to support our applications for grants to support our expansion. Given the changes determined by our external environment we are reviewing our research plans to make them broader and more relevant. At the same time, we will continue to meet the monitoring and evaluation requirements of any organisation that funds us, whilst at the same time implementing more comprehensive plans to gauge our success in meeting objectives .

Management of the Charity

Our Trustee Board has reduced in number as one term of office ended and sadly the loss of our founding member. We continued our meetings every 3 months until January 2026 as staff were moved onto zero-hour contracts therefore necessitating monthly meetings. Previous advertisements were unsuccessful, however following recent attempts we hope to be able to recruit two new members to our Trustee Board.

Trustee Board meetings aim to focus on strategic issues; however, this has been limited due to uncertainty of funds. Our other responsibility is to ensure all our policies and standards are updated and adhered to. We regularly discuss communications and have recently updated our website. Our Management Group meet regularly to manage and monitor the day-to-day activities and propose new ways of engaging the community. The finance group oversee all the accounting and ensure that all accounts are externally audited, and requirements of the Charity Commission are adhered to.

Our original research and evaluation group has not met as survey work and development of grant applications have involved a wider group of people. Regular evaluation of events has continued. In October 2025 we held our AGM to highlight our work in the last year. We continue to keep all residents updated via the Solva and St Davids newsletter.

Looking to the future and Conclusion

Solva Care was set up with and for the people of Solva parish. The demographics of the village are continuing to change overtime, but we remain exceedingly fortunate to have a wealth of willing and able volunteers to continue our mission to meet the expressed needs of our residents. This year we hope to use information from our adjoining communities as well as our own to agree what we can do more of to promote the health and wellbeing of residents across the peninsula. There is much happening on the Peninsula which has positive implications for our future.

For 2026/27 we have set ourselves the following priority areas:

- To continue to help people to stay living in their own home and out of hospital or to support early transfer from hospital when possible. This includes taking steps to understand the needs of the community in order to respond, through communication and research.
- To focus on activities that promote prevention of ill health and promote healthy living and wellbeing.
- To invite local people to suggest new activities that can be included in addition to the current provision and adapt our programme as appropriate.
- To increase marketing of all events and encourage new attendees.
- To continue to work with St Davids and Llanrhian to secure funding to expand and share our model of support and to implement new organisational and governance arrangements and recruit new volunteers if successful.
- To review the RME plan to ensure effective use of data and design evaluation methods to meet any requirements for external funding.
- Monitor management arrangements and review all policies and procedures to ensure fit with those of the statutory and third sectors.
- To continue to support our volunteers and to meet their needs as an integral and valued part of Solva Care.
- To continue to work towards a sense of readiness to respond to key strategic objectives set out by the Local Health Board, local and national government and explore ways of generating income to facilitate sustainability.
- We will continue to play a key part in the Pembrokeshire Peninsula Project as it seeks to integrate public and voluntary sector work to enhance the health and wellbeing of the population.

The RME group will review each of these areas and develop specific objectives to enable us to collect evidence of our achievements or progress.

Conclusion

At the time of compiling this report, there have been major changes in the political landscape of Wales that could influence the work of Solva Care, e.g. there are manifesto commitments to rural-proof policies and to support a community driven approach to wellbeing. We are watching carefully to how these developments offer opportunities for us to strengthen the financial base of our work, whilst staying connected to our core values of promoting independence, dignity and respect, and inclusion as a driving force for all we do.

Finally, we continue to be grateful to local people for their fundraising efforts – the money is put to effective use, and the community support is very encouraging. However, our work will always be seeking 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. We continue to have a strong media presence which helps our informal methods to ensure a wider audience as well as local people know what we do.



Appendix 1

Who we are and why we are here

Solva Care is a community initiative focusing on providing specially designed social care support. The Pilot Project was originally set up by Solva Community Council in June 2015 and became a registered charity on 4 May 2017, offering friendly, local support to meet the expressed needs of residents in the parish of Solva. It is now a well-developed support system, which is run by a Trustee Board, a part-time Co-ordinator, a Clerk, and an Activities assistant, with the help of local volunteers.

Our aims are to maintain and improve the health and wellbeing of older people and others who need it in the village. We want them to have choices, be independent, feel well and play a part in village life. We connect people to add to neighbourliness and encourage friendships so that no one falls through the net. We also organise physical, cultural, and other activities, which are open to all. We try not to label or segregate people, and we encourage the generations to come together and mix.

The Co-ordinator currently works with more than forty local volunteers, who are all DBS checked and have signed a confidentiality agreement. They are insured and provided with induction training. The majority are retired people who are still active in the community but have time to spare to assist their fellow villagers. Our volunteer numbers have gradually increased over the years and most remain involved in the charity. Continuity has been maintained, and relationships are strong.

Together, as a community, we have set up an operational co-ordinated volunteer support that underpins the work of statutory health and social care services in our area. Solva Care aim to fill gaps between services from local authorities, paid care services, family, and friends. We maintain close links with Solva Community Council, with a representative on our Board of Trustees.

The work of our volunteers and what we do

Through our volunteers we support people with a variety of things such as collecting prescriptions, pop in visits, short respite for family carers, dog walking, shopping, signposting and transport to the surgery, bank/post office, shops, village events etc. The Co-ordinator provides the link between the volunteers, people we support and a variety of other organisations.

Appendix 2 - The Solva Care Team



Barbara Bale
Chair of Solva Care



John Holland
Vice Chair



Mollie Roach*
Trustee & Founder



Sue Denman
Trustee



Jonathan Higgins
Trustee & Finance



Maggie McKenzie
Trustee



Susan Chichlowska
Trustee



Joe Griffin
Trustee & SCC
Representative



Fran Barker
Associate
Member



Carol-Ann Jones
Associate
Member



Bruce Payne
Treasurer



Lena Dixon
Co-ordinator



Lesley Robertson-Steel
Activity Assistant
(until 30 Sep 2025)

* Mollie Roach, Founder & previous Chairman sadly passed away after a short illness on 25 February 2026.