



**HARROGATE & AREA COUNCIL FOR VOLUNTARY SERVICE LIMITED  
ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**

**Wednesday 11 October 2023, 1pm  
Christ Church, Church Square, Harrogate HG1 4SW**

**1. WELCOME**

Helen Bourner, HADCA Chair, welcomed all present to the AGM. Helen gave a special welcome to Civic Guests Cllr Chris Aldred, Deputy Charter Mayor of Harrogate; Cllr Eamon Parkin, Deputy Mayor of Ripon and Mayor's consort Lucy Proud; Cllr Chris Thompson, Mayor of Pateley Bridge.

**Also Present**

Paul Ashley, Ripon Community Link & Walled Garden; Ian Bergel, HADCA Trustee (Washburn Heritage Centre); Helen Bourner, HADCA Trustee; David Braithwaite, Strategy Enabled; Cllr Philip Broadbank, North Yorkshire Council; Cllr Barbara Brodigan, North Yorkshire Council; Sam Corderoy, Netmakers; Nanci Downey, North Yorkshire Citizens Advice and Law Centre; Ann Duncan, North Yorkshire Council; Frances Elliot, HADCA; John Fox, Friends of Harrogate Hospital; Revd Alan Garrow, St Peters Church Harrogate; Cllr Sam Gibbs, HADCA trustee; Anna Glazier, HADCA; Tom Gordon, Liberal Democrats; Sarah Hatton, The Tidy Tribe; Gary Hoare, Methodist Church; Isobel Holmes, Carers' Resource; Lizzie Hughes, HADCA; Dean John, Ripon Cathedral; Angela Jones, HADCA; Stan Lumley, HADCA; Martin Mann, Harrogate District Chamber of Commerce; Mary Mann, Pumping Marvellous; Liz Meade, North Yorkshire Council; Andrew Moss, National Trust; Ceri Naylor, HADCA; Phil Newby, HADCA; Jackie Norton, Dancing for Wellbeing; Shelagh Outhwaite, Methodist Church; Victoria Pilkington, HADCA trustee; Tracey Purcell, The Tidy Tribe; Carole Ramsden, HADCA; Anne Richards, Bilton & Woodfield Community Library; Kate Rogata, Supporting Older People; Carolyn Sands, Ripon Community Link; Ruth Skaife-Clarke, Harrogate Lifeline; Jackie Snape, Disability Action Yorkshire; Jen Sonley, HADCA; Les Sudron, Happy Wanderers; Jackie Terry-Schuhmann, Dancing for Wellbeing; Jo Thackwray, HADCA; Cllr Matt Walker, North Yorkshire Council; Thomas Waring, Two Riding Community Foundation; Karen Weaver, HADCA; Andrea Whitton, North Yorkshire Horizons.

Also thank you to Bart, Louise and Nikolas from Crowne Plaza, Harrogate who were present, volunteering to serve refreshments.

**2. APOLOGIES**

Ann Allen, HADCA Trustee; Jean Burton, Bilton & Woodfield Community Library; Sue Cawthray, Harrogate Neighbours Housing Association; Cllr Hannah Gostlow, Mayor of

Knarborough; Clare Granger, High Sheriff of North Yorkshire; Cllr Michael Harrison, Charter Mayor of Harrogate; Lisa Hart, Henshaws; Peter Holmes; Phyl Hughes; HADCA trustee (Ripon Cathedral); Cllr Sean Hynes, Mayor of Boroughbridge; Andrew Jones, MP for Harrogate & Knarborough; Sue Kramer, Harrogate District Chamber of Commerce; Cllr Peter Lacey, North Yorkshire Council; Sian Lockwood, St Peters Church Harrogate; Zoe Metcalfe, Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner for North Yorkshire; Liz Milner, Nidderdale AONB; Cllr Andrew Murday, North Yorkshire Council; Katherine Odom, Two Ridings Community Foundation; Lindsay Oliver, New Beginnings Peer Support; James Plummer, HADCA trustee (The Avalon Group); Alistair Ratcliffe, HADCA trustee (Rotary Club of Harrogate); Frankie Romer, Harrogate Homeless Project; Cllr Michael Schofield, North Yorkshire Council; Sarah Sharp, Ripon Community Toy Library; Caroline Shead, HADCA trustee (Macmillan Support); Theva Thevarokiam, Dignity Through Education; Bruce Warnes, The Shears Foundation; Richard Watson, Whixley Community; Richard Webb, North Yorkshire Council; Cllr Andrew Williams, North Yorkshire Council; Lee Wright, Essential Needs.

### **3. MINUTES OF 2022 AGM**

The Minutes of the 2022 AGM held on 13 October 2022 were accepted as a true record, proposed by John Fox and seconded by Ruth Skaife-Clarke.

### **4. MATTERS ARISING**

There were no matters arising.

### **5. TRUSTEES' ANNUAL REPORT & FINANCIAL STATEMENTS 2022/23**

HADCA Chief Executive, Frances Elliot and Chair of Finance Committee, Ian Bergel, presented the Report & Statements on behalf of the Board.

The Impact Report, available at the meeting and shared electronically before the meeting, summarised the charity's work and was available on the HADCA website along with the Trustees' Report and Financial Statements.

#### **Overall Purpose**

The HADCA service framework reflected how HADCA provided both community action services and support for individuals. Everything the charity did was underpinned by a commitment to connecting and collaborating to support people to live active and fulfilling lives, whatever challenges they face. HADCA's work enabled vital and vibrant voluntary and local community sector organisations and volunteers to get on and do what they do best – running activities and services that help to make everyone's lives better.

#### **Local voluntary & community sector information services**

Supported by a strategic grant from North Yorkshire Council in 2022/23 the trusted local information service was very much the engine room of HADCA, with the website, regular e bulletins, newsletters, networks, promotion and social media work extending the charity's reach and impact way beyond what might be expected from such a small team of staff.

The Where to Turn and Volunteering Directories were kept up to date and the information held, and the way it was made available, regularly reviewed.

The team worked really hard to get positive and accurate messages out about the vital role of the voluntary and community sector, both formally and informally. HADCA's network mailing lists gave a depth and breadth of reach, and the aim was to be the go to organisation for sharing information from charity, public and even private sector partners delivering services and support which benefit local people.

### **Support for local community & social action**

HADCA continued to host a number of very well supported networks bringing together people from a wide range of local VCS organisations. These had mostly remained online and were very effective in sharing news, issues and good practice and sometimes led to new projects and funding. Two current examples were the NHS funded Community Fit project, in partnership with North Yorkshire Sport, and the Heritage Lottery funded City of Ripon Volunteering Project, partnering with the National Trust and Nidderdale AONB.

### **Harrogate Community House**

Community House formed a vital base for the community action work HADCA undertook, as well as for 15 charity tenants. In the past year, an outside broadcast by Your Harrogate Radio had been hosted and a visit received from the High Sheriff of North Yorkshire who met several tenants.

The vintage fluorescent tube lighting had been replaced with energy saving LED lighting with movement detectors, thanks in part to generous support from several North Yorkshire Councillors' locality budgets.

Tenants, community groups, public and private sector partners hired the meeting rooms and HADCA's friendly and knowledgeable reception team welcomed a wide range of visitors and responded to email, telephone and in person enquiries on many and varied topics. If they didn't know the answer, they would find someone who did!

### **THE LOCAL FUND for the Harrogate District**

HADCA worked to keep the pipeline of cash flowing into the local voluntary sector, together with Ann Duncan, now at North Yorkshire Council, and Two Ridings Community Foundation to grow THE LOCAL FUND, supported by THE LOCAL LOTTO.

Following the retirement of former CEO Jan Garrill, who had been instrumental in getting the fund off the ground, HADCA was delighted to retain the relationship with Two Ridings Community Foundation via new Chief Executive, Celia McKeon and her team. Getting funds in and giving them out to grass roots community organisations easily and quickly could give a real boost to dedicated community activists quietly making a positive difference in their

communities. At the most recent panel meeting in September 2023, charitable community organisations had received grants to enable them to continue to support local people across the Harrogate district, with over £55,000 distributed.

Focusing on small organisations made a big difference, with the grants helping older people have activities they enjoy, providing support and care for people in rural locations, addressing loneliness and isolation and improving the mental health and wellbeing of people living in poverty. There was always room for new donors to get involved in THE LOCAL FUND, with the opportunity to match fund. If local people and businesses wanted their charitable giving to benefit the communities they live in, investing in THE LOCAL FUND was a great option.

THE LOCAL LOTTO continued to be an easy fundraising tool for grass roots groups, with 50p from every ticket sale going to support them, and at least 10p to THE LOCAL FUND.

### **Supporting people to live safe and well-supported in their communities**

This work would not be possible without HADCA's amazing volunteers.

The Craft Group made an entry for Knaresborough Christmas Tree Festival again, on the theme of 'Monarchtree'. There weren't 'volunteers' and 'clients' at craft group, just keen crafters who shared their skills.

Friendship Club extended its hours during winter and a small amount of funding meant a warm lunch could be provided so that people were out of the house longer during the difficult and expensive winter months. Seated exercise and companionship were the other aims of this group.

Fundraising was a huge challenge and HADCA was delighted to be chosen by the Round Table as a charity partner at the annual Beer Festival, alongside Samaritans and Martin House. The team were delighted with the response from volunteers, all keen to pull a pint, and when thanking Round Table, asked that they do continue to consider smaller local charities as well as the bigger household names.

### **Practical Support**

Whilst not quite as high as pre-pandemic levels of demand, the driving service saw an increase in journey requests. There were also people with more complex information and signposting needs, as well as needing a chat to ease their minds about appointments that were worrying them, or cost of living concerns.

In addition to answering phone and email enquiries and supporting people who walked into Community House asking for help, the team shared signposting knowledge out into the community and went to libraries, Resurrected Bites and various support groups to reach more people who didn't know what was out there for them.

HADCA's role as a place to go for information (physically or virtually) had long been established and the team continued to work as a Community Support Organisation,

appointed by North Yorkshire Stronger Communities, to support people needing guidance at a time of winter pressures and cost of living worries. Team members listened to each person and worked out the most appropriate referrals or emergency support for them.

HADCA continued to work with Stronger Communities and the new council to develop a shared understanding of what Community Anchor Organisations of different shapes and sizes might look like in Harrogate Town, using contacts and local knowledge to connect.

Frances shared the story of Morris who had been diagnosed with Alzheimer's in 2019. He had accessed HADCA's support during the pandemic lockdown, as he had struggled getting food and prescriptions. During Spring 2022, Morris had been introduced to Friendship Club. It had taken many weeks of persuasion and support to get him along and then extra support during the session to encourage him to join in with the exercise and lunch. This had been a huge challenge for him as he hadn't been confident to sit with others. Morris had made friends, enjoyed the exercise and had a role within the group to set up and pack away the tables and chairs. He had taken time to visit another group member when they were in hospital and had recently attended a Club outing for the first time.

Frances explained how the Help at Home service had an impact beyond the obvious: the job that the person asked for had a much wider ripple effect. The importance of these tasks was that they prevented people's needs from escalating, prevented a fall by removing trip hazards, but also enabled people to retain their mobility, their social connections, feel better about getting through the week. People often downplayed the situation or the state of things when they called the team. but trusting relationships built up and people knew they could call when things were getting too much.

Frances shared the story of Naomi who had accessed HELP services for several years. Both Naomi and her mum, whom she supported, had experienced poor mental health and often found themselves in financial insecurity. The HELP team were often the first people Naomi called if she was upset and needed help. Naomi used the driving service and asked for information and signposting, for example when her boiler had broken down and she had experienced problems with her roof. HELP supported Naomi with foodbank vouchers when unexpected bills meant she couldn't afford the food shop. With the help of a group of volunteers, the HELP team cleared Naomi's large and overgrown garden, weeding, cutting back hedges and shrubs and uncovering some patio furniture to be able to make a nice outside space for her to enjoy. The volunteers painted the garden gate in her favourite bright colour. Naomi was delighted with the results and said she had been able to sit out in her garden for the first time ever.

Frances explained that some people supported by the charity's services called the office every week, some called every day, with queries that often had nothing at all to do with the service they were receiving but were nevertheless really important to that person. People called in a panic because something unexpected has happened, for example, a lady had had a chair delivered and the delivery person had dropped it outside her house in the rain, but

there was no way she could get it inside. “Angel Andy”, HELP’s Support Worker, had stopped by to help. A relative had called to ask that a message be given to their dad that he’d left his phone slightly off the hook so she couldn’t call him. A volunteer was asked to stop by and let him know and check it worked ok. Not everyone was lucky enough to have neighbours they knew, who were around in the day and fit and well enough to help.

The team had continued to encourage people to sign up for the Priority Services Register, so that if there was a problem with utilities in the local area, additional support would be available. Frances shared the story of Glenys who was in her 80’s and had called because she had had no hot water for weeks. Her boiler had needed replacing but the stop tap had been covered in concrete by a utilities company. Neither the water company nor the utilities company had accepted responsibility. HELP rang the water company to arrange a priority call to Glenys. Although they called within 24 hours, they had been unable to help. A team member referred Glenys to Citizens Advice to take the issue further and to Age UK for more immediate support. Glenys called 2 days later to say the stop tap was being dealt with and to say thank you for the help when she had felt she hadn’t been getting anywhere with anyone else.

Frances shared slides with statistics and quotes to help summarise how HADCA had helped and connected people during the year.

## **Finance**

Chair of Finance Committee, Ian Bergel, presented the accounts, which had been approved by the Board of Trustees at their meeting on 19 September 2023.

HADCA finished the year with an overall surplus of £36,199. This was more than the previous year when the surplus had been £10k. This year income was £506k, an increase from £434k last year and expenditure was up from £424k to £470k. The receipt of a legacy had been unexpected and very important in achieving a surplus this year. The trustees were pleased with the overall results.

## **Reserves policy**

The trustees agreed that it was necessary to hold reserves to cover the contingencies of costs in the event of the charity being wound up, working capital where contracts were paid in arrears and to finance new or existing activities until adequate external funding was obtained. An amount of 3 months running costs was considered sufficient and £110k to £150k was adequate to cover contingencies. As at 31 March 2023, reserves were £147k which would help HADCA face ongoing challenges in the next year and beyond.

## **Funding**

The main sources of funding for the principal activities of HADCA had been via the Wellbeing and Prevention contract with North Yorkshire Council and vital annual core funding support from Harrogate Borough Council. Income had also been received from NYC to support HADCA's work as a Community Support Organisation.

Thanks to the excellent efforts of fundraising members of the HADCA team additional funding support totalling £51,000 had been secured from several Trusts and Foundations, with a further £22,000 from individual donors and community events and activities.

Ian thanked HADCA's funders and supporters, including trusts and businesses, all of whom were acknowledged in the Impact Report.

## **Risk management**

HADCA maintained a risk register, with trustees ensuring that all major risks were reviewed on a regular basis and that systems and procedures are in place to manage these risks. Health and safety, data security and safeguarding were agenda items at every board meeting and there were lead trustees for safeguarding.

In answer to a question about the potential impact of local government reorganisation for the charity, Helen explained that HADCA was waiting to hear on some funding decisions, working on a strategic plan for the next few months adjusting to challenging times, and looking at fundraising and income generation options.

Helen acknowledged the excellent work of Ian on the HADCA Board, serving as Chair of the Finance Sub Committee for 5 years.

There were no further questions and The Report and Financial Statements were approved by members present.

## **6. ELECTION OF BOARD OF TRUSTEES**

The following trustees were nominated for election and were appointed:

Helen Bourner (individual member) (re-election)  
James Plummer (The Avalon Group) (re-election)  
Victoria Pilkington (individual member) (re-election)

Trustees at their first meeting after the AGM in November were able to elect Honorary Officers.

## **7. APPOINTMENT OF AUDITOR**

The existing Auditors J W P Creers were re-appointed, proposed by Sam Gibbs, and seconded by Victoria Pilkington.

## **8. CLOSE OF AGM**

### **The Year Ahead**

Frances looked to another challenging winter ahead with fuel bills not set to return to 2021 levels for some time, signposting to the Warm and Well service, the You are Not Alone leaflet circulated by Fiona Friday at the council and HADCA's Where To Turn directory. HADCA would include updates in weekly ebulletins and a search for 'Warm Spaces' was available in Where To Turn to identify places someone could go at particular times, as well as low cost activities that would get them out of the house.

HADCA was also facing a very challenging year, with uncertainty over funding that the charity had access to in the past. Like households and businesses across the country, some of HADCA's income was fixed and some decreasing, at the same time as expenditure was increasing hugely and fundraising was harder. Frances explained that if not for a very unusual legacy from a former client, HADCA would have ended the year with a deficit instead of a surplus. Consequently, HADCA chose only to pass on 50% of the increase in fuel bills to the 15 charity tenants at Community House last winter, understanding that everyone was in this together and needed to support each other.

Fundraising was tough with people having less disposable income and competition for trusts and foundations greater than in the past. HADCA was making planned use of reserves in 2023/24 to enable existing staffing to be kept in place, whilst exploring various approaches to the challenge of income generation. However, Frances explained that the charity was undertaking a staff restructure in order to rebalance income and expenditure in year. This meant necessarily having to do less of certain activities, including transferring the much-loved voluntary driver service to new providers. HADCA would provide updates as the year progressed.

HADCA would regroup and rebuild the capacity of the team based on new opportunities. For example, learning from new volunteering projects Community Fit and the Volunteering City of Ripon, a new pilot project was starting to capitalise on the legacy of HADCA's fantastic vaccination volunteers, who had still been in action at Mowbray Square the past 3 Saturdays marshalling flu clinics. The new scheme, 'Help out Harrogate', would offer one off volunteering roles to those volunteers, grow the pool of people willing to help on an ad hoc basis and support other local charities' events and community activities.

Frances concluded by confirming that the HADCA team was there to work alongside members and partners, to listen to people, to understand new or changing needs as they develop and to support people and communities however they could in the coming months.

Helen thanked the HADCA staff team, trustees and volunteers for their commitment to HADCA and the people the charity supported. Not everyone was able to be present but their contributions were all highly valued. Helen thanked the staff team for their work all year



round and particularly to Angela, Lizzie and Phil in preparing documents and presentations for the meeting.

**The AGM closed at 1.35pm**

After the conclusion of the formal business, there was an introduction to HADCA’s two development projects which had been running for the past 18 months. Karen Weaver (Strategic Lead, Community Action) spoke with Anna Glazier about the Community Fit project and with Jo Thackwray about the Volunteering City of Ripon project. Both projects were testing innovative ways of growing volunteering in Harrogate District. Karen then made a short presentation about the Community Anchor Organisation research project for the Harrogate Town locality and gave everyone present an opportunity to share their knowledge of local neighbourhoods.

Signed .....  
(Chair)

Harrogate & Area Council for Voluntary Service Limited  
Company limited by guarantee Registered in England and Wales  
Registered Charity No. 1144758 Company No.7760477