



Annual Report



1 April 2021 – 31 March 2022

Executive summary

Whilst in many ways 2021/22 has been a better year, Covid remained a part of our lives and things have not totally got back to 'how it was before'. Some of our plans have had to be curtailed, but this report outlines what we have been able to achieve in the past 12 months, and more importantly, what we plan to achieve in the next year. Solva Care continues to be a community project – we work together to support those in our community who would like support, by maintaining connections with our local GP surgery, local social workers and third sector organisations. We continue to learn, to record the lessons learned from our endeavours, and to apply the learning to improve what we do in the future to build and maintain resilience and sustainability.

We are in the third year of our Five-Year Strategic Plan, in which we set out six strategic objectives that we will continue to progress and review during the next two years. These include continuing to deliver and extend our volunteering service and providing ongoing and new activities for individuals and groups, to maintain and enhance health and well-being. During the year we have been able to extend our programme and continue to forge constructive working relationships with other organisations to benefit our community and share our learning. This report also 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 in the future.

This report continues to highlight the outcomes and learning from the *Together for Change Project* alongside an ongoing commitment to work towards a local care service. During the year a paper version of our Toolkit was distributed in hard copy to share and support other communities working to provide local services matched to the needs of their community. We also hosted a virtual discussion on the merits and uses of the Toolkit following circulation.

The report also outlines the activities we have provided and the benefits we think they bring. Our work is both rewarding and appreciated with some of the comments from our villagers included. In Spring 2022 we intend to survey people in Solva to ensure that we are continuing to provide what is needed and wanted to the best of our ability.

As stated earlier, we do not work alone and intend to continue to work with and learn from others, outlining in the final section some thoughts for our short, medium- and longer-term areas for development.

Connecting our Community

Foreword from the Chair

This is our sixth Annual Report. Many thanks to our volunteers who have, despite Covid, continued to work together in a mutually beneficial programme of social care, supporting those in need and doing what was needed to make life easier for us all. We have continued to work closely with domiciliary care workers, to create a more integrated care system, and to work towards a preventative care programme, to keep people healthier for longer. We have also begun to research the development of a Solva based, not for profit domiciliary care service, to run alongside the volunteer service, so that we can offer a truly integrated package for those in need. All this alongside our day-to-day work, responding to the needs of local people. Thanks again to everyone who has helped.

We have been able to be flexible in our approach in response to the Covid crisis and are now making plans for our post-Covid period, when people will be out and about more, but some may still be reluctant to put themselves at risk. We encourage people to wear masks if they wish to and continue to space people out at our events – everyone is welcome to attend any of our activities. It is really good to get out and meet people again!

We continue to work closely with Solva Community Council and with other community groups to spread our work to involve the whole community. This joint approach has worked well, we want to develop it and support Solva and other communities to define and meet their own needs for themselves. Our Research Group have made significant progress as has *Ready to Go* – our peer-to-peer mentorship project which is aimed at supporting other communities seeking to develop their own projects, by drawing on the learning from Solva Care. *Together for Change*, our strategic partnership programme, is succeeding to build the voice of communities into service planning and to make a real difference in the County and beyond. We still, however, need 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.

This is my last year as Chair of Solva Care. I will stay on as a Trustee and will continue to work in support of the charity. I say thank you every year, to everyone who has helped make Solva Care into the successful project it has become– our Co-ordinator, our volunteers, our Trustees, the Community Council, the Surgery, the Bayview Stores, and the whole community. Solva Care works because we all work together. We have been able to make a real difference to people's lives and wellbeing and we all feel better for it. I say it every year and mean it every year - thank you.

Mollie Roach,
Chair
Board of Trustees

The Search for Funding...



Introduction

This report provides an overview of Solva Care's achievements over the period from April 2021 to April 2022. Whilst we have included our plans for 2022/23, Covid-19 remains a concern. We accept that any plans can change and will be captured in our next annual report.

We start with a brief background to remind our readers who we are and why we exist, then the report focuses on what we have done over the past year and what we have been able to achieve.

Who we are and why we are here

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 became a registered charity on 4 May 2017, offering friendly, local support to meet the expressed needs of local 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, and an Activities assistant, with the help of local volunteers. In addition, we employ researchers specifically to deliver on our funded research projects.

Our aims are to maintain and improve the health and wellbeing of older people and others in the village who need it. 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 all¹. We try not to label or segregate people and we encourage the generations to come together and mix.

The Co-ordinator currently works with over 50 local volunteers, who are all DBS checked, and have signed a confidentiality agreement. They are insured and provided with 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. 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 service 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 still maintain close links with Solva Community Council, with a representative on our Board of Trustees.



¹ As stated earlier, activities have been limited or adapted depending upon the varying levels of COVID – 19 restrictions during the year.

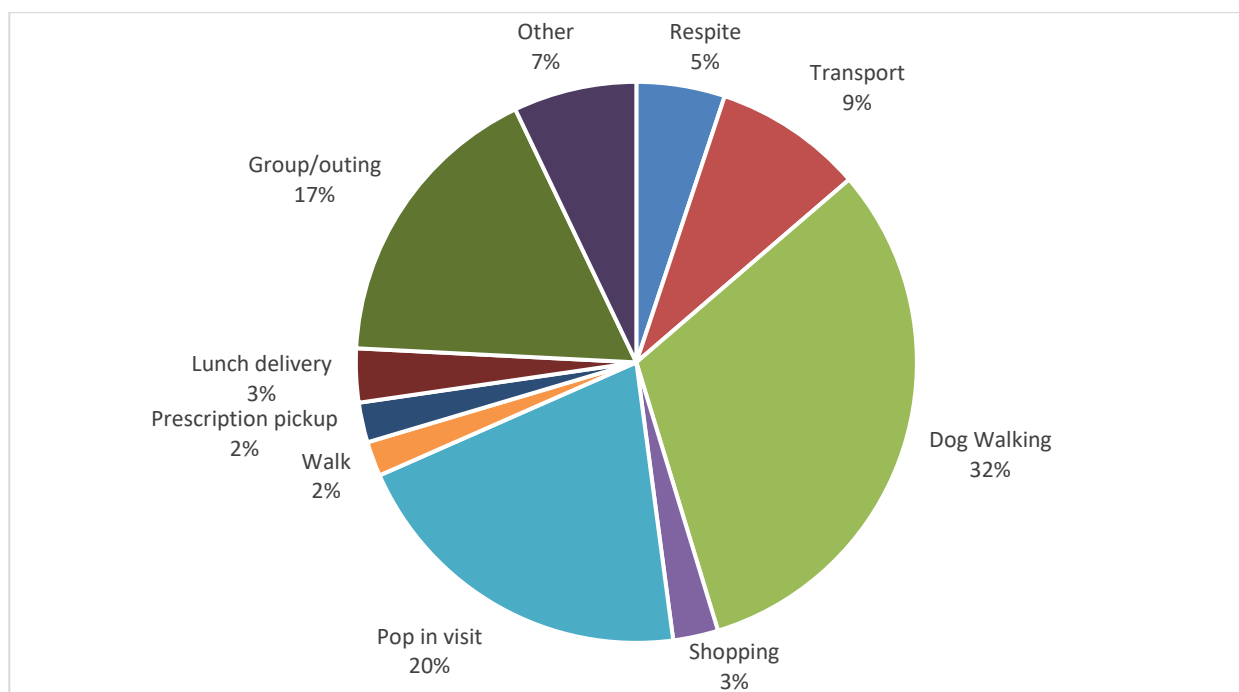
To meet the specific needs and coordinate our response to support of the community throughout the pandemic, a new task and finish group was established at the start of the first lock-down 23 March 2020, bringing together key voluntary groups, including Solva Care, with Solva Community Council. The group was called SNAKE (Solva Neighbourhood Action and Knowledge for Emergencies).

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.

In the period 1 April 2021 to 31 March 2022, 53 volunteers gave just over 2000 hours of support to more than 50 People in Solva. Included in this figure is 335.5 hours spent helping at events organised by us. In addition, trustees (collectively) spent over 90 hours per month on admin, meetings, and training.

(Note. 'Other' includes phone calls, baking for events, IT support, projects – e.g., Mouse trail, advent widows and pop-up shop).



Due to the intermittent restrictions associated with the pandemic face-to-face support was curtailed for some periods and outings cancelled. We were however able to hold a Volunteer social evening in March 2022 to say thank you to all our volunteers for their ongoing and tireless support especially over the past 2 years. We also send birthday cards to our volunteers, to wish them a happy birthday and thank them for being Solva Care volunteers.

What we planned to do during 2021/22 to meet our strategic objectives

Our plans for 2021/22

Our plans included a continuation of work not progressed as quickly during the pandemic and acknowledged that future restrictions may still affect plans.

We intended to continue to move 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 would continue to pursue our aim of the development of a domiciliary care service to run alongside the volunteer service.

Our joint project with Rural Health & Care Wales "CardiCare" was just starting at the beginning of 2020, when Covid-19 halted it. It is a proposed pilot project that will investigate whether our tool kit could be used by other rural communities as a basis of emulating and duplicating our community care model. This will be continued as soon as restrictions are lifted.

In 2020 we had received top up funding from the Lottery to share learning with other communities. Work had started with two major online events planned for the summer 2020 to co-produce the next stages. (See **What we have achieved this year – Together for Change**)

The work to support people of all ages to engage in activities, cultural and physical would continue, with the intent to design and conduct a village wide survey when possible.

Taken from Annual Report 2020/21

Our plans also included:

- Continuing to offer and provide timely, high-quality, person-centred support, to enable people to feel well and remain in their own home. We also planned to offer respite for carers to relieve stress and isolation and continue to develop Solva as a dementia friendly village.
- We had progressed our intent to start a Men's Sheds type of project that could involve men and women. Having made links with St David's People's Shed, virtual meetings have continued with a view to acquiring a meeting place.
- We would continue to encourage and support the uptake of Direct Payments and create a cooperative, or cooperative style organisation, if appropriate, for those wishing to pool and purchase their own wellbeing and care services. We also wanted to build on our register of local people who work as carers and will be looking at ways of supporting those carers.
- Continue to maintain our local Trade Services register, so that the people we support could quickly find reliable local trades people – gardeners, cleaners, maintenance workers etc. and to involve our young people in the Project.

Above all, we wanted to concentrate on responding to individual need, to stay local and focus on keeping our whole community safe, viable and sustainable. Our short term aims included looking at whether we can do more and do it better. Covid-19 had meant that we were supporting more people and more people were willing to help. We had started to contact people we were already supporting asking what more we could do and whether there were things they may need to make the present situation easier. We were also resuming some indoor activities and planned more as restrictions eased.

We acknowledged that in the medium term as lock-down relaxed, people would be out and about more. However, many of those we support may still be reluctant to put themselves at risk. We were therefore devising ways of assisting them to meet up and join in with others whilst still staying safe. We were looking at whether we could work more closely with our local surgery again, as well as Social Services and Withybush Hospital, to make things easier for Solva people.

We noted last year that our current funding would end 2024 and therefore we would need to continue to apply for ongoing funding to ensure that Solva Care can continue. We also stated that we wanted to do more to influence planning at county, regional and national levels to make community projects such as Solva Care sustainable long term.

What we have achieved this year

On 1 April we delivered *Easter cards* made by children in years 3,4 and 5 from Ysgol Penrhyn Dewi along with *Easter muffins* (baked by a Solva Care volunteer) to 29 people we support and most of whom live by themselves. We also organised an *Easter Trail*, asking people to decorate their window or gardens and gave Easter chocolates as prizes. We set up a *Solva Community Seed Share Scheme* located in the Milking Parlour at Bay View Stores courtesy of Mount Farm, where people could donate /or take seeds, which was well used.

With the effects of the pandemic easing up we were able to resume our weekly *Friday Club* activities in the Community Clubhouse from May 2021. We continued to have smaller numbers attending - with face masks, open windows, and social distancing. We generally started with an hour of gentle exercise to help maintain and improve people's balance, strength, and movement. This was followed by refreshments and then a second half of craft, quizzes, poetry, talks and other activities by local people who mostly gave their time for free. We also arranged an *afternoon tea* for one of our regular's birthdays, along with a visit to a volunteer's garden. We were able to start having live music again from September 2020, an activity much loved by all.

We help promote and refer people to the *West Wales Walking for Wellbeing* weekly walks in Solva, organised by Pembrokeshire Coast National Park and supported by Solva Care volunteers.





We ran another set of *IT Support sessions* in June - August for people who needed help with their iPad, smart phones and computers. In July we participated in and assisted with celebrations for *the NHS Day*. One Saturday in August we organised a *Family Dance Workshop* in Solva Memorial Hall in a collaboration with Joon Dance.

Due to continuing restrictions, we were not able to arrange outings as before, but we did make a visit to *Eco Dewi's garden* in St Davids in September 2021. In the summer, we again organised a *Mouse Trail* around the village, where 34 households or businesses painted a mouse on a slab or stone and displayed it by their house or in their window. We made maps, which were free of charge, available to be downloaded from our website or picked up in local shops. The map also included a quiz for children.

The Solva Pop-up shop was started by one of the trustees in May 2021. The aims were to prevent useful items going to landfill, make items available at reasonable prices and to raise funds for Solva Care. This was the start of a drive to make the charity less reliant on grants and to assist in making Solva an eco-village. The six-month test phase proved positive, and a storage shed was acquired and sited near the Community Clubhouse where the shop is held once a month. There is also a stall in the Solva Memorial Hall once a month during the coffee morning. The shed is well stocked with goods donated by people from Solva and surrounding areas.

Items that cannot be sold at these events, such as electrical goods, are donated to other charity shops. Stored goods can be used for bric-a-brac and book stalls at village fetes or other fund-raising events. In the period up to 31 March 2022, the shop raised over £1000 for Solva Care through sales to customers at the shop, directly between people, who then donated to the shop, and web sales. In addition, funds have been raised for the Memorial Hall, the Skateboard Park and Parc y Capel.

We facilitated a Parent and Carer Group for young parents or carers and their children to meet up in the Community Clubhouse for a morning a week starting in June 2021. We held our Annual Meeting in September 2021 – two years after the last one (due to the pandemic).

In December 2021 we again organised '*Sparkling Solva*' - our Living Advent Calendar event, with 35 households in the village having decorated a festive window on a specific date. We were not able to hold our planned outdoor event on the village green, due to bad weather. As usual we delivered *Christmas cards* to all the people we support and to all our volunteers.

What we have achieved this year - Projects

The Covid 19 pandemic was and remains a major challenge. Our services evolved to meet the needs and Solva Care remained operational and responsive throughout, supporting, mostly, the elderly in our community.

The extension to our *Leader project* until September 2021 enabled us to continue to look for different ways of supporting care needs in our community. For example, we worked with a PCC Direct Payments assistant at Pembrokeshire County Council to try to find a personal assistant for a couple of people who wished to use direct payments for some of their care needs.

The pandemic could have blighted the project, however despite Covid 19 and increased operational workload, the project was completed on time. It provides information for the next steps in the future. Had the pandemic not taken place, the process would have been easier, but the team achieved completion due to their resilience and determination. The Final Leader report was submitted at the end of January 2022.

Care companies are still reporting an increased demand for care and are not always able to meet the level of demand required. This is a national ongoing problem. We continue to maintain a register of private care providers, which can be used to help people find carers to meet their care needs. We also 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.

The Toolkit Dissemination Project was developed by Solva Care and partner organisation PAVS and PLANED into a wider strategic initiative to build on the positive effects of the pandemic. Called *Together for Change*, a programme of work has been agreed with community groups, and third and public sector organisations that will centre on supporting and sustaining local community groups and organisations. Three workstreams were coproduced: a shared vision for a social model of well-being in place-based communities; building and using research evidence; and providing support for community groups and organisations through shared learning and partnerships working.

Together for Change facilitated the agreement on the Ten Point Plan *Together-for-Change-10-Point-Plan-ENGLISH.pdf* (tfcpcbrokehire.org) and hosted a number of events, including three popular 'master-classes' for community groups on making podcasts, using social media and film making. In addition, a hard copy of the Solva Care Toolkit was sent to all Community and Town Councils in Pembrokeshire and is currently being evaluated. See website for details of the considerable achievements *Together for Change* www.tfcpcbrokehire.org

The Cardi Care Pilot Project, a cooperation with Rural Health and Care Wales was disrupted by the pandemic. The Project is intended to share and adapt the learning in the Solva Care Toolkit in Ceredigion using a structured approach by a local coordinator. It is hoped that, following reprofiling, the Project will be able to commence soon.

How we attempt to demonstrate our impact

Solva Care firmly believe that evaluation is essential to ensure that we are meeting the needs of our people and can change/adapt accordingly. We therefore invite feedback from activities and projects organised or facilitated by Solva Care.

Below is feedback from some of our events and activities.



Solva Care, Registered Charity No: 1172878



Friday Club

We asked participants to rate the activities and to answer the following question: 'What do you enjoy about, and what makes you come to, Friday Club?' Here are some of the comments:

'I like the exercises and the social side.'

'Making friends and enjoying myself.'

'Very interesting'.

'Meeting people'.

'Chocolate cake. All sessions, nice to come out for a change.'

Easter delivery of cards and cupcakes

Have a lovely Easter, thank you for all you do for us, love...

Parent and carer Group

"Another lovely meet at the clubhouse- it really is lovely here and we cannot extend our thanks enough. Thank you again for all your help with this group, it is such a lovely thing to look forward to! it has been lovely after a year of lockdowns to socialise in the sunshine and provide opportunities for the children to meet others. "

General comments

'Many many thanks for all you have done for me, (my husband) and (dog),

'So many thanks for all you did for,,,,. Your companionship in particular was so very important to her.'

In addition, there have been two questionnaires to the community to find out what people think about Solva Care, the first one in 2013 and the second one in 2016. Our revised third survey will be distributed in May 2022.

The research project, funded by *Innovate to Save UK* concerning Direct Payments was used as an exemplar of research, conducted within a third sector organisation. It was held up as an example of how research could inform the way health and social care services could be delivered 'or not' in the context of a working setting. The example has helped shape why it could be necessary for NHS research and development to potentially engage in research outside of the health sector. Engaging in collaborative research could help understand the impact and influence of national policy and strategy on health service use and delivery, in bringing health and social care closer to the community.

What we have learned this year and how we are changing to meet future needs

We are confident that Solva Care's structure with a Co-ordinator and volunteers enables us to initiate different things that may then take on a life of their own. The activities bring people together and increase a sense of community, involvement, and confidence.

The importance of working with others

Throughout the Covid 19 pandemic and lock-down we worked closely with Solva Community Council to co-ordinate information and support in the village. We have also been working on a Path Project in Solva together with Solva Community Council – to make parts of the village more accessible for everyone. This project is still ongoing but was disrupted due to Covid-19.

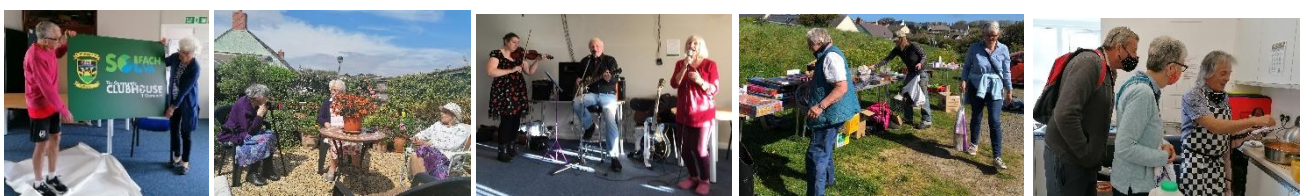
We continue to stay in close contact with the local surgery and used to hold a drop-in session there for two hours every Friday morning. This service was suspended during Covid, but we look forward to starting up again as soon as possible. We are part of the Solva Community Land Trust to ensure that the new £3 million housing development meets the needs of older people and to help keep our younger people in the village.

There are close contacts with other community groups, such as the St Davids Befrienders, Llanrhian Connected Communities and Eco Dewi. We were also contacted by the Red Cross in New Brunswick, Canada to share our experiences with them as they were starting to set up their own similar project.

The Leader Project identified constraints in developing services for a small charity with limited funds, however, significant progress has been made in liaison between services and good networking links. The project has improved access to other care providers, third sector organisations and statutory bodies. All these links have broadened the understanding by other services of the role of Solva Care and Solva Care has become aware of other services and their capabilities. In conclusion, the Project was valuable and informative. A great deal of knowledge, networking and skills have been achieved.

We continue to work with the Hywel Dda University Health board, Community of practice group and they provided the opportunity for one of our employees to enrol for a Social Prescribing Course, which commenced in March 2021. This could be beneficial as Solva Surgery does not yet have Social Prescribers. In February 2021 our employee also commenced training in Mental Health First Aid, a course commissioned and paid for by Hywel Dda University Health Board.

We joined the PCSN (Pembrokeshire Community Support Network) in 2020, to link and network with other communities in the county. Through *Together for Change*, we are working closely with PLANED and PAVS. We remain members of the Small is Beautiful Network and retain close links with Swansea University. We regularly share the learning from our work at local and national events and cooperate with external research projects.



Looking to the future – Our plans for 2022 - 2023

Short term:

Following our village survey some time will be dedicated to the analysis and sharing of results to inform what is required from Solva Care in the future. Results will be presented and discussed with residents at a village event in the autumn. We will also share the results with Solva Community Council and consider areas where we could work together if required.

Satisfaction with our services will help to determine what needs to change or additional services that would be welcomed. Where funds allow, we will try to respond as far as possible.

As our joint project with Rural Health & Care Wales 'Cardi Care' has been recommenced we will continue to investigate the transferability of our Tool kit to other communities with support. We will also be able to share our learning from the *Ready to Go Project* which completed earlier in 2022, supporting two other local communities in their endeavours to improve wellbeing.

'*Together for Change*', which has been our flagship programme of research and evaluation, will require continued access to grant funding if the next stages are to be implemented. Focus will therefore be on grant applications with our partners. Responding to other wider opportunities to research and evaluate community development will continue.

Medium term:

Informed by the village survey, we intend to continue to move 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 will actively pursue our aim of the development of a domiciliary care service to run alongside the volunteer service. The feasibility, achievability and desirability will need to be tested as a pilot project. Funding to undertake such a pilot will need to be sought via grant schemes. It is inevitable that we will need to learn from others and collaborate to ensure success.

This year we are acutely aware that our lottery funding will be ending in 2024. In the absence of new funding, it will be essential to consider exactly what Solva Care can and can't deliver on donations alone. We will be working with the community and our partners as the year progresses to fully inform longer term plans and co-produce future strategies.

Longer Term:

What we do know is that Covid-19 has affected our whole community, and we will continue to work with Solva Community Council to maintain our support to the whole community. Obviously, we should not let local initiatives and our successes to date slip away in the absence of addition grants.

We will work to find ways to build on it and to support Solva and other communities in defining and meeting their own needs at a local level. We wish to do more to influence planning at county, regional and national level to make community projects such as Solva Care sustainable long term.

The Solva Care Team



Mollie Roach
Chair of Solva Care
Joe Griffin



John Holland
Vice Chair
Sue Denman



Barbara Bale
Trustee
Fran Barker



Jonathan Higgins
Trustee
Carol-Ann Jones



Sandra Young
Trustee
Susan



Enid Morgan
Trustee
Maggie McKenzie



Trustee & SCC
Representative



Associate
Trustee



Associate
Member



Associate
Member



Chichlowska
Trustee
(Nov 2021)



Trustee
(Nov 2021)



Bruce Payne
Treasurer



Lena Dixon
Co-ordinator



Lesley Robertson-Steel
Activity Assistant



Jessie Buchanan
TfC Co-ordinator

Conclusion

Solva Care was set up with and for the people of Solva parish. The demographics of the village will inevitably 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 will have up to date information from our survey about what we should continue to do and what we can do more of to promote the health and wellbeing of our residents.

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 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.

Solva Care, Registered Charity No: 1172878