



Dundee Carers Centre

Because We Care



www.dundecarerscentre.org.uk

Annual Report 2019-20

Supporting carers
and disabled people
for over 30 years



Our Values

We believe that everyone deserves to be treated with fairness and dignity and is supported to make a positive difference in his/her life.

As an organisation that embraces challenge, we need to demonstrate a culture of kindness, compassion and creativity.

Working together, we keep the needs of carers and disabled people at the centre of every thing we do...

because we care.



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Dundee Carers Centre

Because We Care

Convenor's report

This annual report for 2019-2020 includes a period of time that has seen our world change in a way that none could have imagined or experienced before. What was initially unfamiliar and strange is sadly becoming our reality. Being apart from loved ones, missing our usual face to face contacts and communicating at a distance have been part of our lives since March 2020.

Anxieties and uncertainties about physical and mental health, employment, finances and the caring role have created and are still creating stress and unprecedented challenges for everyone. Initial evidence is indicating that the lives of carers and disabled people more than anyone are being significantly impacted by the pandemic. How have we as an organisation responded?

The months before the virus appeared were full of exciting initiatives and activities. The Localities work was progressing, culminating in a successful launch in November 2019. Equally successful was the well-attended and inspiring Young Carers Ambassador Event at the Centre and the Young Carers Rights Roadshows were moving round the schools. The Carers Decide Groupwork Programme was in place and positive feedback and outcomes were reported from all areas of work. None of this could have been achieved without the skills, commitment and hard work of the staff and volunteers and the invaluable input and participation of carers and disabled people. The continued cooperation and support of our partners in Health and Social Care, other voluntary organisations and our many funders was as ever an important factor too and is appreciated and valued. Likewise the work of the volunteers who serve as Trustees. Two Trustees have stepped down from the Board but we were delighted to welcome a new member. All have been unstinting in giving their time and expertise to ensure we are well managed, adequately financed and focused on how we will move forward with resilience and confidence. Our Trustee recruitment drive continues, and we are looking at different ways to reach those who may want to join our Board.

March 2020 and the pandemic brought with it a whole new set of challenges and priorities. These have been met with the usual positive approach from everyone in the organisation when faced with change, good or bad. They have been dealt with through hard work, creative thinking, flexibility, enthusiasm and a desire to provide the best support possible. Adapting to home working, finding new ways to communicate and engage, protecting the wellbeing of each other and the people requiring support and keeping financial systems running have all been met with positivity and dedication to the task in hand and has to be commended.

Much has been achieved since March with better understanding of what the impacts of the pandemic are and are likely to be in the future and what we need to do in response. New ideas, new technologies and new learning have been to the fore and have been used to great effect and with the same caring approach as before. There was no better example of this than in Carers Week, when an imaginative online showcase of our achievements as an organisation and the promotion of the Carers of Dundee network was a great success with many people keen to get involved. In normal times we would have been presenting a new three-year Strategic Plan this October. but current circumstances dictate that it is prudent to concentrate specifically on the next 12-18 months. We are framing this in three stages to ensure an effective and sustainable approach now and in the future. This will evolve and change and be reviewed as the impact and unknown progress of the pandemic dictates.

The first stage has been the response to the immediate challenges that have impacted on people's lives and the new working and governance arrangements required. The second stage considers how we remobilise, what will be possible as and when some areas of work can reopen safely and lastly reimagining how our organisation will look in the future. That will involve consideration of how and where we do things, what we have learned, and how to keep moving forward in a strong, resilient and sustainable way. Where we go from here has to be safe, flexible, forward thinking and able to meet needs in a range of different ways. That will involve everyone as we plan our future together.

The challenges and pace of change may seem overwhelming at times, but we are still here, in good heart, sound financially and functioning well. There have been successful applications to funds to ensure our Centre keeps going and that staff have adequate equipment to do their job. We will continue to learn from this experience and have the capacity and positive approach to provide the support that people feel is important to them and will help them find a route out to a more familiar way of life. It has never been more important to care for each other and to work together and we will continue to do that,

Isabel Shearer
Convenor



Our Strategic Plan is not only owned by the Centre but by all of those who have contributed to it and who continue to collaborate with us to create a better future for carers and disabled people. Our vision, aims and objectives continue to be achieved by:

Affirm the centrality of carers and disabled people

Hospital Discharge Quality Improvement Project

We were commissioned by Dundee Health & Social Care Partnership to lead the delivery of a quality improvement project carried out with the Integrated Discharge Team (the Discharge Hub) in Dundee.

As part of an ongoing improvement programme, the key focus of the project was to better understand patients and carers experiences of involvement during the hospital discharge journey, and to identify what currently works well and what could be improved upon in line with requirements set out in the Carers (Scotland) Act 2016.

Over the course of the year, our staff consulted and engaged with patients, carers and health and social care professionals in Dundee, to better understand the experience of the discharge process.

The findings from this work were presented in a report to help inform and make recommendations towards future improvements in relation to patient and carer involvement in discharge planning.



Breaks from Caring

Providing opportunities for carers to get a break from their caring role is an ongoing part of our support work at the Centre. Breaks are vital to a carer's wellbeing and quality of life, whilst also allowing them to gain confidence, learn a range of skills, relax, share experiences and make friends.

In 2019-20, these opportunities included residential where:

- 12 young carers went to Outward Bound in Loch Eil for five days, funded by the Northwood Charitable Trust.
- 10 young carers attended the Scottish Young Carers Festival (SYCF) in Fife.
- 8 young carers went to Loch Tay in partnership with Camp & Trek.
- 6 adult ethnic minority carers visited Carronvale House in Larbert for two nights and participated in Seasons for Growth training (understanding change, loss and grief issues) which was delivered in Urdu.



A 'short break' does not necessarily have to be a break away from the home. Carers can choose the break which suits them best. Some examples of short breaks carers have accessed include sporting equipment, treatments and vouchers to enjoy hobbies. 365 carers of all ages accessed a short break in 2019-20.

We continue to add value to the Short Breaks funding we receive, through Respite. The aim of Respite is to provide a short break by connecting carers organisations with hospitality, tourism and leisure businesses who are willing to donate a break free of charge. We have a dedicated lead within the Short Breaks Team who has not only continued to source new Respite providers but has worked hard to maintain relationships with our existing 57 service providers, particularly during lockdown.

"My husband and I are not long back from 4 days away. It was sunny, relaxing and the batteries were well and truly recharged. Thank you to the Carers Centre, for giving us this opportunity as we couldn't have done it without the (short breaks) grant."

Support & Involvement Groups

We provide valuable support to a wide variety of carers through developing and supporting groups, which are based on the identified need of carers. 246 carers accessed these groups during 2019/20 and these include:

- Care & Share is a monthly support group for carers and the person they care for and Happy Feet is a monthly walking group for carers.
- Stressbusters is a referral only group for carers affected by the ongoing stress of their caring role and supports them to develop coping strategies.
- Lifeline Group is a monthly support group for carers of people affected by dependency issues.
- Arts & Crafts is a weekly group which gives carers the opportunity to gain new skills and access peer support at the same time.
- Other groups include lunch clubs for carers from ethnic minority communities, as well as a Former Carers support group which is run primarily by our volunteers who were previously carers themselves.
- Carers Voice and Young Carers Voice (for young carers age between 14-18 years old) are involvement groups that aim to raise awareness of carers, support available and influence the implementation of policy including the Carers (Scotland) Act 2016.



98% of carers reviewed felt informed and had been able to access a range of information and advice

"So many people have told me about the Carers Centre, friends and family have said everyone is so helpful and caring. After your first visit the other day I felt like exploding with happiness. It was so good to know what I can get for help and support."

Young Carer Roadshows

In early 2020, Young Carers Voice helped organise Roadshows promoting young carers rights in secondary schools in Dundee. We worked in partnership with Young Scot and reached over 1000 young people.

Young Carer Ambassadors are young carers who volunteer within their secondary school to support staff to raise awareness of young carers. They become involved in planning and delivering information, training and support groups, enabling them to be a peer point of contact for other young carers. During 2019-20, we recruited over 20 young carer ambassadors and a presentation took place in November to recognise their commitment and formally present them with their badges.

"I am loving my role as YC Ambassador. It a great honour to be in a position where my voice is heard and I feel like I can actually make changes for carers in my school."

86% of carers reviewed felt they have a good balance between caring and other things in their life

Develop the centre's positive, collaborative culture

LGBT Charter

In early 2019, we achieved the Bronze LGBT Charter in recognition of our commitment to ensuring the charity is LGBT (lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender) inclusive for staff, volunteers and the people who use our services.

Activities undertaken to achieve the Charter included participating in 2018's Pride event in the city, engaging with promotional campaigns such as Purple Friday, organising staff training sessions with LGBT Youth Scotland and reviewing and updating our organisational policies to ensure that they reflect current LGBT best practice.



Staff & Volunteer Wellbeing

The Centre recognises its role and responsibility in supporting the physical and mental wellbeing of staff and volunteers in the workplace. To achieve positive outcomes for individuals and the organisation, it was agreed that the creation of a Wellbeing Plan would be crucial in achieving this. A working group has been established to drive this work forward in 2020-21 and will include engagement with staff and volunteers.

Our Volunteers

Approximately 94% of our volunteers are carers or former carers. They provide invaluable support and commitment to the Centre which enables us to deliver more activity including support to carers and disabled people. During 2019-20 over 45 volunteers supported our work. This includes assisting with and running support groups for carers of all ages, providing our counselling services for carers driving the minibus for the walking group or helping in the office and fundraising.



Explore the promotion of locality based developments

Informal Locality Supports

Following our highly successful 'Caring Places' project in Strathmartine & Coldsides we formally rolled out our Localities support model on Carers Rights Day in November 2019. Staff and volunteers from Dundee Carers Centre jumped on a bus and headed out into communities to create a bit of a buzz and raise awareness of the support and information that is available to unpaid carers and disabled people. We met with partner organisations such as local schools and community centres and showcased this over social media as each meet took place.

The team work alongside local carers and community members, schools, churches, community centres, Health and Social Care Teams and other Third Sector agencies to plan and develop approaches and develop new opportunities for carers in our communities.

Drop in cafes continue to prove popular as a means of people accessing informal support. In 2019-20, 493 carers of all ages attended our drop-in sessions both at the Centre and in communities, accessing a range of information and advice about services available. Each cafe has a theme and we also include other community supports/opportunities, which have included Keep Well checks, library services, adult learning tasters, Power of Attorney workshops and therapy tasters. Staff and volunteers are also on hand to provide information and support about services available or provide a listening ear.

100% of carers felt supported to continue caring as a result of accessing services

Young Carer Identification

The Young Carers Subgroup (set up to support the implementation of the Carers (Scotland) Act 2016), made recommendations about the recording and storing of young carer information in Dundee. As a result, local recording systems (SEEMIS and Mosaic) were revised, to accurately identify and record young carers in schools and the local authority.

The impact of awareness raising and multi-agency training already undertaken by our carers support team resulted in an increase of young carers recorded on SEEMIS rising from 45 in September 2018 to 363 in October 2019. The four schools with the highest number of carers recorded are the two schools from the localities pilot in 2018 (Baldrigon Academy and St Johns High School) and two further schools who have had the highest levels of engagement/joint work with the Centre.

Dundee & Angus College Carers Group

We continue to work in partnership with Dundee and Angus College to develop support to students with caring responsibilities. The Carers Group is run at the Gardyne Campus, however students from the other campuses are fully supported to attend. In 2019-20, over 20 carers accessed support from the group.

Since 2018, carers have also been given the opportunity to get involved with a summer transition programme. The Summer transition programme supports carers leaving high school or of any age thinking about going into further education, by giving an opportunity to meet up with other carers beforehand, meet some of the College staff and have a tour of their chosen campus. This aims to help overcome any fears or anxieties they may have and to provide any additional information required e.g. relating to finances or support plans.

The Transition Days have proved invaluable for some carers in being able to sustain their college place alongside their caring role. Participants increased from 5 carers in 2018 to 19 carers benefiting from the programme in 2019 and feedback from those involved, has informed the ongoing development of the days.

Research social enterprise possibilities

Third Party Money Management

The Centre provides a payroll service to support people who receive funding to employ personal assistants, via Self-directed Support. For those who require additional support, our Third Party Money Management (TPMM) service can be purchased to operate the bank account for the employer and complete monitoring returns for the funder. There has been a continued interest in (TPMM) and the number of people supported through the service increased steadily in 2019-20.

"I feel like I need someone to speak to and who understands how difficult things can be. I've been going to the Carers Group on a Thursday and it's really helped because people there understand, and we can have fun but also talk about things that are difficult"



C Gate

The popularity of C Gate as a desirable, modern and affordable venue increased during 2019-20. C Gate offers meeting rooms for hire which are ideal for team and client meetings, interviews, training courses and small conferences. A diverse range of both local and national organisations/agencies choosing C Gate, meant that we had over 230 external bookings throughout the year, added to by over 1700 bookings from our own staff team, to deliver support to carers and disabled people, including 1:1 support, group support and training.

www.cgate.org.uk



Engage more strategically with partners

Work in Schools

Our work in schools strengthened in 2019-20 with the development of a Partnership Agreement. The Agreement is set against the Local Carers Strategy and How Good is Our School indicators, so we can better measure impact of early identification/prevention across the city

In late 2019, the Young Carer Subgroup also conducted a self-evaluation which evidenced and highlighted the huge impact of the work of the Centre, schools and partners in developing supports for young carers. The Subgroup are now developing a workplan over the coming year, to embed good practice across the wider workforce.

100% of carers have had a positive experience of the support and services received

Carers Act Information Toolkit Launch

The launch of the Carers Act Information Toolkit took place in 2019. The Toolkit contains Multi-Agency Guidance and information relating to implementing the Carers (Scotland) Act 2016 in Dundee.

This resource was developed through the Dundee Carers Partnership in response to requests from the workforce for easy to access information to allow them to support carers in Dundee. The toolkit contains information to help professionals better understand the rights of carers of all ages and legal duties contained within the Carers (Scotland) Act. It provides information on identifying, supporting and involving carers in the planning of services and supports as well as links to legislation, factsheets and other useful resources to signpost professionals to key information to support their work with carers. Although the toolkit is intended for the workforce and volunteers across the city it is also directly available to carers and the people they support through the website www.carersofdundee.org

"This toolkit makes information about supporting carers accessible to everyone who needs it. The style and format make it a "go-to" resource for a range of professionals working across Dundee city"

1067 referrals received across all services

To continue to develop services that are as accessible/available as possible

Service Development

The Centre received five years funding from The National Lottery Community Fund (previously known as the Big Lottery Fund) in 2014 to deliver welfare rights provision for carers and disabled people to help reduce the impact of Welfare Reform. Over that time, we were successful in supporting 2,301 people to be aware of and access their financial rights and entitlements and helped to secure financial gains totalling over £6.8m. This funding came to an end in July 2019.

We knew however, there was however a gap in the provision of advocacy which was a requirement of the Carers (Scotland) Act 2016 and locally it had already been identified that our preferred approach to this would be self-advocacy. In 2019 we were successful in obtaining 3-year funding, again from The National Lottery Community Fund and from the Health and Social Care Partnership to deliver a Groupwork Programme. This programme was created by carers who wanted a confidential and comfortable environment to share their knowledge, experiences and achieve their personal goals. Since the work began, carers have taken action and learned through each other's experience about carers rights, money advice and financial support, housing rights and aids, along with what groups are running in their communities.

We continue to ensure that carers and disabled people are able to access financial advice and support from other agencies in the City.

96% of carers reviewed reported increased health and wellbeing

Self-directed Support (SDS)

Self-directed Support allows people, their carers and their families to make informed choices on what their social care support looks like and how it is delivered. Support was delivered through casework to 440 individuals over the 12-month period in both Dundee and Angus. Awareness raising and training also allows us to provide information about SDS and in May 2019, training took place at the University of Dundee to 161 student nurses.

Feedback from students who attended the session included:

"Session was helpful and full of information. I'll be more aware of people who are in need of support and find approaches to speak to them and encourage them to seek support."

Carers of Dundee Campaign & Event

The Centre manages the Carers of Dundee brand, which includes www.carersofdundee.org on behalf of the Dundee Health & Social Care Partnership. A hugely successful Carer Awareness marketing campaign ran for the four weeks prior to National Carers Week 2019, culminating in an event being held in July. New users of www.carersofdundee.org increased by 52% during campaign, compared to the 4 weeks prior to it starting and engagements across the Carers of Dundee social media channels increased by 111%.



The city-wide event was held in Slessor Gardens and was officially opened by Trudy McLeay, Chair of the Integrated Joint Board. The event brought together approximately 15 support organisations/agencies, celebrating the successes of the Dundee Carers Partnership, the organisations which make it up and showcasing the support that is available to carers and their families in the city. Over 600 people entered the marquee on the day to speak to exhibitors and access information and many more who watched performances, engaged in activities and spoke to staff and volunteers in the outside area.

"Thank you for inviting us to be part of this successful event. It was great to have so many people coming into the marquee. We were able to speak to and provide information to lots of people. It was well organised and definitely a useful event for us to go to and we'd be happy to attend again in the future."

- Karen Rankin, Scottish Health Council.

"I enjoyed the event. It was powerful and totally focussed on the wellbeing of carers and their cared for people. As a person who cared for my husband who had MND I understand the difficulties in care. Letting people know where they can get support is key to keeping carers healthy and able to live their own lives well."

- Trudy McLeay, Chair of the Integrated Joint Board.



Information & Advice

www.dundee-carerscentre.org.uk was given a new look and launched in March 2020. The site now has easier navigation, increased accessibility and a new area dedicated to how people can get more involved with the Centre and our work.

Traffic to our social media continues to increase at a significant rate. It continues to be the main source of updating people online about services and support, both from us as a Centre, but also from our partners via the Carers of Dundee Facebook and Twitter pages. In 2019-20, our social media followers increased 47% compared to the previous year.

Information in accessible formats is a key focus of the organisation. We now produce the Carers of Dundee newsletter in both a printed and e-version, along with large print, easy-read and audio versions being available to download online.

"You have no idea what your messages do for me"
- in relation to receiving texts with updates on events, information and advice available through social media.

459 carers of all ages accessed
1:1 support

Learning, Training & Accreditation

www.carersofdundee.org has a dedicated learning area which provides online learning opportunities for carers and workforce (e.g. support services, employers and schools.) We have developed our own learning modules, including "Everyone Cares", which has now been launched. Further modules were developed during 2020, including carer wellbeing and a module for school staff and social work teams about young carer support.

In addition to this, our regular training sessions are open to both carers and the workforce that supports them. This has enabled carers and workforce members to learn together, breaking down barriers and emphasising the 'equal partners in care' approach. In 2019-20, in 115 carers of ages participated in sessions on a variety of topics including Anxiety, Wellbeing, First Aid, Anger, Bereavement and Epilepsy.

We are also supporting carers and families to gain accredited awards, and this has proved particularly popular during lockdown. We can work with young people and adults on Hi5 Awards, Dynamic Youth and Adult Achievement Awards.

79% of carers reviewed reported
reduced isolation

Response to COVID-19 Pandemic

In March 2020 as we entered the national lockdown, our priority was to ensure that our staff team were able to continue supporting carers and disabled people, along with their families during this time. In addition, as our face to face activities ceased, the ability to engage people in innovative ways was vital. Our staff team also began working remotely and we adapted our services and support by:

- Continuing to take referrals as normal, but providing 1:1 support by telephone and via video call (using Attend Anywhere)
- Issuing young and adult carer e-cards for those who have to travel to carry out their caring role or have responsibilities for shopping or collecting medication. We have issued 57 young and 249 adult cards, up to October 2020.
- Creating weekly Facebook Live Virtual Hubs for carers which have proved to be extremely popular. Up to November 2020, 20 hubs have now taken place totalling over 13,000 views, with a reach of approx 38,000 people. Topics have including home-schooling, short breaks, young carers support and learning and development. More recently, we have hosted Hubs centred around remobilisation activities for Dundee Carers Centre, local community venues and the Dundee Health and Social Care Partnership.
- Continuing to provide group support and learning opportunities for carers of all ages online, via Google Meet and Google Classroom
- Developed a COVID-19 information page on www.carersofdundee.org to bring together key information about services and support available during the pandemic
- Launched the Personal Assistant Card which identifies them as an essential worker who has to travel to care for their employer, (who is recipient of a Direct Payment) and has responsibility for shopping or the collection of medication.
- Accessing funding to provide IT/digital equipment to support digital inclusion with 66 young and young adult carers.

"During COVID-19 I'd go as far to say you've been a lifeline, particularly when I hit 'rock bottom' and having no one else to talk to who fully understands our circumstances."

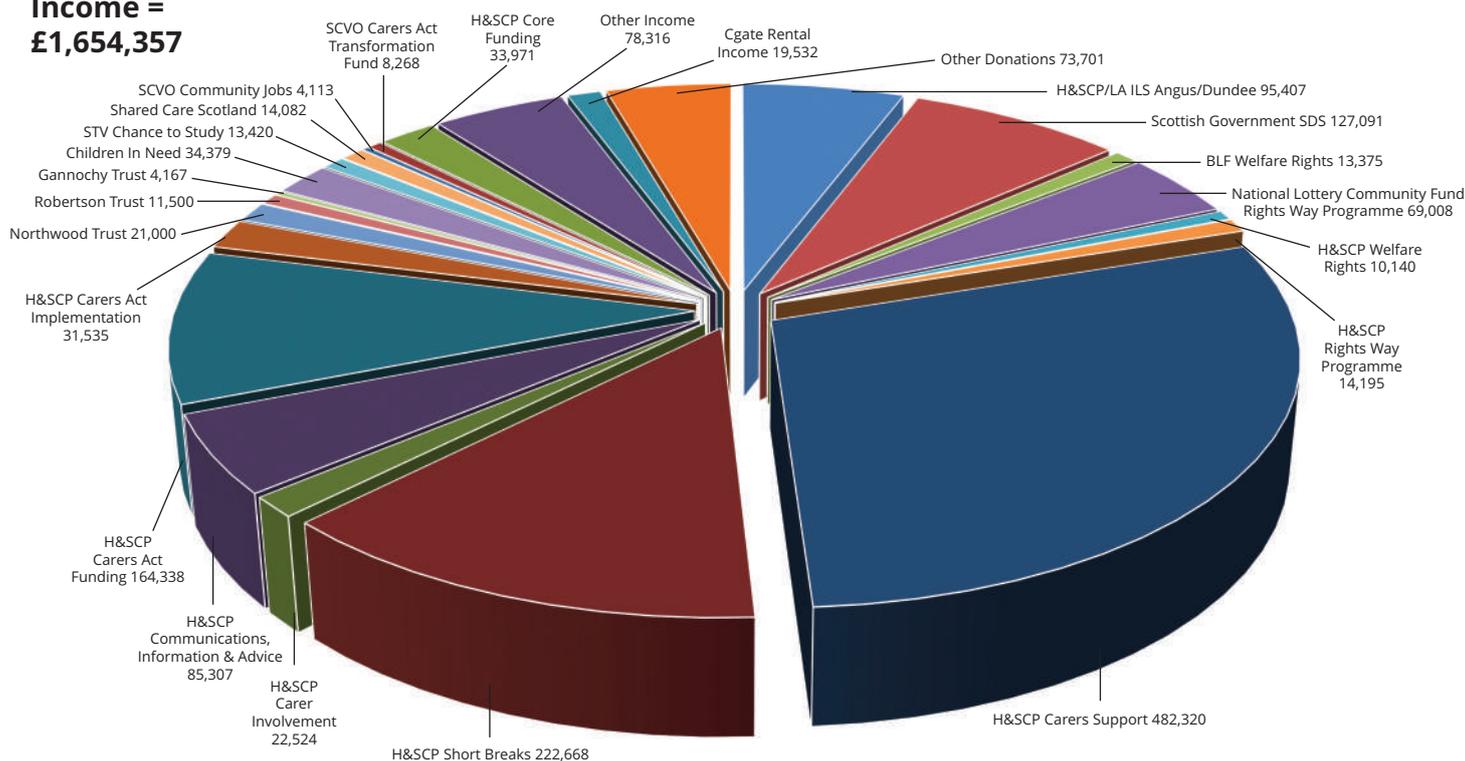
950 new carers identified during
2019-20

"Dundee Carers are an amazing service. I honestly don't know what I would have done without all the dedicated team you have in Dundee. There are no words to say how extremely thankful I am to you all."

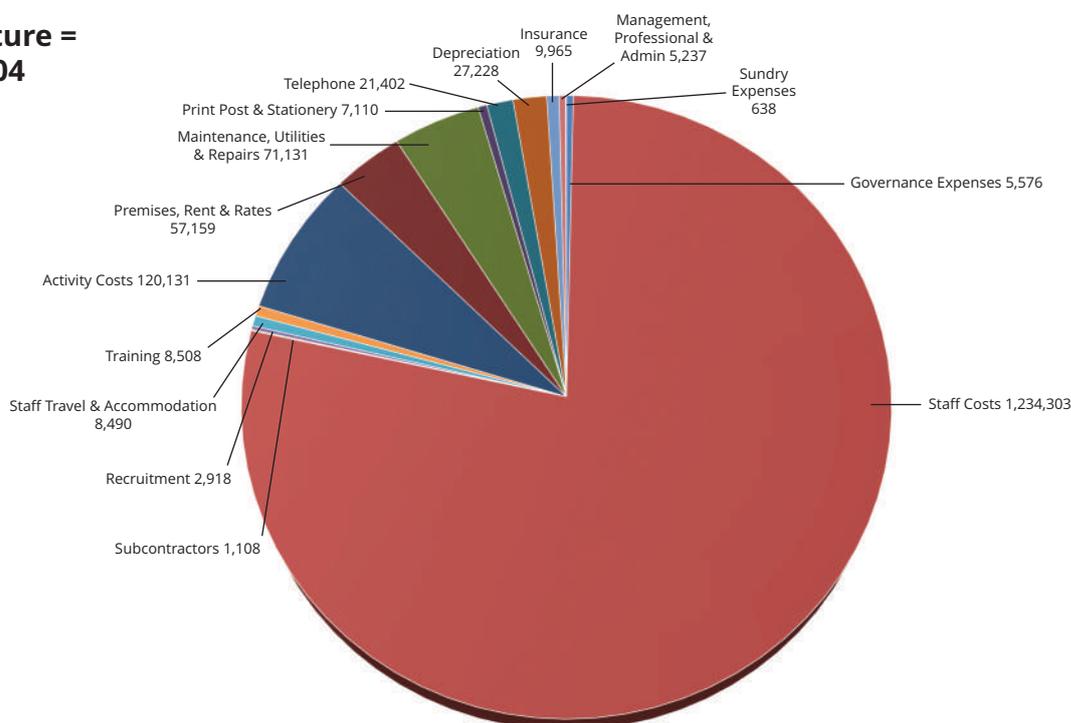
Dundee Carers Centre was established by carers for carers and is a vibrant, innovative and independent organisation with charitable status, working with carers, young carers and disabled people since 1989. Today, the Centre which is based in the Seagate, is governed by a Board of Trustees with services being delivered by a team of over 50 staff and over 40 volunteers.

Financial information

**Income =
£1,654,357**



**Expenditure =
£1,580,904**



About Dundee Carers Centre

The Dundee Carers Centre is an independent organisation with charitable status and has been working with carers, young carers and disabled people for over thirty years. The Centre is proud of its reputation for demonstrating innovation and in supporting people to achieve their aspirations for the future.

Today, the Centre which is based in the Seagate, is governed by a Board of Trustees with services being delivered by a team of over 50 staff and approximately 35 volunteers, all of whom bring extensive skills, experience and enthusiasm.

They have enabled us to be effective in our approach supported by a positive organisational culture that nurtures and gives the freedom that people need to be their best.



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