



SEACHANGE

HEALTH & HAPPINESS FOR ALL



Annual Review 2023-2024

A charity
at the heart of
the Community



Welcome

From our Chair

I am delighted to present the second annual report for Seachange since its transition from being a part of Westbank to becoming an independent charity in 2021.

The second year of any new charity brings its own set of new challenges, and ours was no different. Despite this Seachange has continued its impressive start. My heartfelt thanks go to Marc and his team for their tireless work and their dedication in supporting the WEB community with an increasing range of initiatives while steering Seachange towards long-term sustainable growth. I would also like to express my deepest gratitude to The League of Friends of Budleigh Salterton Hospital for continuing their unwavering support of Seachange has been invaluable.

This past year, we have been fortunate to receive invaluable insights and guidance from our advisory board, for which we are extremely grateful. Additionally, the support and collaboration from our partners have been instrumental in our progress. We remain deeply indebted to our generous donors, fundraisers, and committed volunteers who selflessly contribute their time.

As we look forward to our third year, we have exciting plans to build on our current success and continue to tackle the challenges faced by the third sector. We are confident that our funders, partners, and community members will continue to value and support Seachange as we move forward.

Thank you all for your continued support and belief in our mission.

Sarah Hicks chair

Board members and Management Team

Trustees:

Sarah Hicks (Chair)
Ian Christie
Dr Rick Mejnzer
Prof Louise Allan
Andy Hood
Stephen Thomas

Advisory Group:

Richard Bowes (Chair)
representatives from
NHS, Devon ICB,
EDDC, DCC, WEB
Health and Wellbeing
Board, Woodbury
Parish Council,
Westbank

Leadership Team:

Marc Jobson Head of
Seachange,
Sarah Forde
Volunteering and
Wellbeing Lead

With special thanks to
our amazing team
who keep the wheels
turning.



From the Head of Seachange

Whilst we have been operating for the last six years this is our second year as a charity. We have learnt a great deal in the last twelve months about ourselves and our community which has enabled us to grow and help more people. We are here to help those who are lonely and isolated in our community of East Devon to live longer and healthier lives. We saved health and social care even more money through our work.



The cost per fall now averages at £2000. The cost of loneliness per person per year is now £9,900 a year. This means, considering the number of people we helped, we saved the wider health and social care sector £500,000. This shows the great value Seachange provides.

Together with our volunteers' invaluable help, we provide services, social and wellbeing activities and guidance to our community and their carers. It may be as simple as a phone call and some signposting. It may be more complex involving a GP referral, our wellbeing coordinators, finding support for the carer to enable the cared for person to join a singing group. After a little handholding we get them engaged and mixing with a new group of friends. Before you know it tea and cake follows with group members. The person begins to feel healthier and happier with increased social connections. They call on the services of their GP and acute medical setting less often. May be they fall over less often too. Not only is this win for the person and their carer but it also saves the NHS and Social Care services a great deal money.

Our continued growth and success would not have been possible without the support and guidance of The Budleigh League of Friends, Westbank and NHS Devon ICB.

Marc Jobson

Head of Seachange



Transport

Our community transport service, which helps clients access our services and medical appointments continues to grow. We now have 1079 registered users, an increase of 23% from last year. We have 30 regular drivers who give their time to support the service. 60% of our users live in Exmouth. Our volunteer drivers completed 3500 journeys covering 16000 miles.

Our new transport coordinator continues to build good relationships with our users and drivers ensuring as few drives as possible are unfulfilled. We are part of the Devon Transport Consortium of which we are the largest provider. We are supporting drives to far flung places such as London cardiac hospitals reflecting the NHS offering my choice for patients.



Community transport trips
16000 miles travelled



Number of clients registered
1079



Volunteer drivers
42 and 1482 health appointments

Subsidised transport is offered to encourage the hard to reach including clients experiencing stress and anxiety to access our warm and wellbeing space at Seachange. Using our Seachange minibus one particular driver has helped to build momentum of the café. Initially very few conversations took place on the bus. However after three months, what a change. New friendships had been built and lots of ongoing chit chat. One of the clients sons had seen firsthand how the group had helped his mum and other clients. He subsequently donated to Seachange to fund the continuation of the warm space for the following twelve months.



Social Activities

Clients highlighted that they were particularly lonely in the cold winter months at the weekend. With generous donations from DCC and the Fryer Trust, we put on a heavily subsidised coach trip to **Longleat Festival of Light**. Those aged 9 to 90 came together, it was an inclusive trip with a wide reach, children from low-income families, joined those with mobility issues, learning difficulties, dementia and their carers, and new friendships were made. An added and unexpected outcome was that some members of the community who had no idea who we were or what we do, now visit us regularly!

Wellbeing warm space

Our space is a welcoming environment where people of all ages and socio-economic groups come together all with the same goal of combatting having a free warm meal and a drink in good company.

“This has really helped me with my anxiety it has been great to rebuild my confidence in talking to people. Also, it is an added bonus that I have a nice meal that I don't have to prepare myself.”

“If it hadn't been for the help assistance that I didn't realise I needed, without it my life would have considerably less value. I've always done caring for others and coming here made me aware I needed some of the same. All my life I worked with and cared for people, and when it came to an end when my wife passed, I didn't realise how badly it affected me. 52 years married and 22 years as a policeman and then I was diagnosed with Parkinson's, then other health issues then this arrived. I am delighted.”

Singing for Wellbeing

This group brings a wide section of the community together with a “Singing for the Brain” type singing group, led by trained community musician Naomi Blundell supported by volunteers.



Social Activities

Sew and Save

This multigenerational community-initiated group is facilitated by a local volunteer. It connects our community, therefore reducing loneliness and isolation which can affect people of all ages and all walks of life. We have young mums, people who recently moved into the area along octogenarians benefitting from the group.

'Sew and Save' is not a predetermined activity. Participants bring projects they want to work on and draw on the expertise of the volunteers as well as the experiences and skills of the older generation who can begin to feel, 'out of touch'. The wider impact the sewing group has on our local community is it addresses the cost-of-living crisis by facilitating sustainable fashion, fixing and reusing items. Unused material can also be used to make items for our Parkinsons' group and Memory Café ie dementia cushions/lap quilts.

Activity Club

The Club is aimed at anyone in the community who maybe suffering from loneliness or just keen to meet new people. The Club continues to flourish and bring people together. It is very much led by the group, sometimes they chat the day away, putting the world to rights, sometimes they get crafty!



Fitness

Our Seachange gym space has been updated to reflect our Seachange branding yet remains clean, functional and inviting and remains non-threatening:

- 136 members – increasing year on year
- Rebranding of Gym Marketing
- An exercise programme of over 30 different exercise classes from high energy Kettlercise and studio spinning to the more holistic “relaxation class”
- React to need and offer a range of tuition from external and inhouse instructors/host regular member drop in sessions to encourage ongoing monitoring
- Encouraging our Youth gym offer and working flexibly to offer gym / health opportunities to our teens
- Developing our Exmouth site (library) as a provider of weekly Seachange fitness classes
- Falls prevention – received as a provider of excellent falls prevention work from the RDUHT and who have funded several more courses / resulting in the impact to a service user and their carer being shown at a RDUHT board meeting – ensuring that the message of how the community can help strategic services is continually highlighted and recognized by strategic partners [Patient Story: Working with Voluntary and Community partners, March 2024 on Vimeo](#)



Support

During late 2023 we set up a Home Support Service called Sea Support. This paid for, but low cost service provide help with cooking, cleaning and/or companionship. This was initiated as a result of responding to clients need and often being asked if we offer this service for the WEB area. The idea is to start small and grow (initially being managed with existing staff resources) with a view to recruiting a specific coordinator in the future to further develop and manage the project. We now have regular clients, and the word is getting out there and enquiries are growing.

Our wellbeing coordinators continue to field many enquiries every day from people requesting help and advice about their care or the care of a relative. Sometimes these are short signposting conversations and other times one to one depth meetings for those with complex needs.



Client story:

SC was a carer for her husband who attended our Memory Café. SC was struggling with the 24hr care she needed to provide. A said, “Having a day of caring meant I could live again and even just sleep.” A joined fellow care setting up our Dementia Carers Group. A’s husband has now moved into a care home; however, A continues to attend the group because the relationships she has made are wonderful and fulfilling. “Without the support of the group, I would have broken down a long time ago forcing my husband into care long before he needed it.”



Volunteering

We could not do what we do without the kindness and care of our volunteers.

We have 120 active volunteers providing their time to go that extra mile and help support our community by offering: volunteer driving; time for you befriending – allowing an unpaid carer time to enjoy some time out of their caring responsibilities whilst the cared for is kept company; selling cakes at our fundraising events; supporting our Memory Café users on a 1-1 walk around the gardens; walk leading and enjoying the fabulous local countryside with a group who are walking to build friendships; help recovery and prevention as well as a new initiative, a volunteer fundraising team

Communication is key with our volunteers and we host a couple of social opportunities twice a year at summer and Christmas time. This provides a great way of socializing and getting to know our volunteers.

Our volunteers all receive specific training to their role as well as general across the board training on safeguarding and boundary setting.

Volunteer Story:

Tracey started her volunteer journey to help with her poor mental health and wellbeing. She committing to supporting a weekly activity where she helps others to engage in group activities. This in turn has helped to enable her to achieve her goals including: improving her mental health weight loss; building friendships and restarting kickboxing!!



Fundraising

We rely on funding to support our many non-commissioned projects.

This year we sincerely thank those individuals and organisations that have been kind enough to support us through donations:

Clare Milne, Edgar Lawley Foundation, COOP Communities, Devon County Council, Sir John Heathcote Trust, Norman Family Charitable Trust, The Fryer Recreational Trust, Exeter Chiefs Foundation, Budleigh Lions and the National Grid.

Thank you

Head count

16 staff (7 FTE)

- 5 male
- 12 female
- x1 apprentice
- X1 bank

“When you are here at Seachange, people care about your wellbeing and they want to help you. That includes the reception staff, the café, and the managers. It does make a difference.”



“Seachange is a refuge in a sea, a calm safe place with a lovely aura. The help is better than the doctors and has a ripple effect through the connections that are made”.

