



Growth in volunteer base

Throughout the period 2008/09, a base of eight extremely committed volunteers delivered CarePlus' services to 21 regular clients and some 'one off' clients. The volunteers were ably co-ordinated by Jane Farrer who had stepped into the breach when CarePlus' paid staff left after funding was withdrawn.

The level of service activity averaged out at a monthly rate of around 90 shopping trips, nine escorted trips to clinics, GP surgeries and hospital appointments, five home and hospital visits and three or four trips to enable an elderly person to visit a relative in a hospital or care home.

The core geographical area covered by the charity was Bromley town centre and the surrounding areas: towards the borough border in Downham and out towards Beckenham and Petts Wood.

Our new Co-ordinator of Volunteers' skills and energy have enabled us to grow rapidly since she started work at the beginning of 2009. Jayne Gorey began building the volunteer base straight away, with a recruitment drive at St Joseph's Catholic Church. Armed with a clipboard and supported by two trustees, she spoke at five masses in one weekend, signing up 20 interested individuals. This set a precedent for

similar talks at other local churches, supported by regular information in church publications.

Within two weeks of the promotion at St Joseph's, Jayne held the first Volunteers' Teambuilding meeting, which have subsequently run every six to eight weeks to give an opportunity for induction, support, practical administration and addressing training needs. Picking up on the new volunteers' interests, Jayne has extended the range of CarePlus services to include gardening.

During the period, the Trustees agreed that our services should continue to take a non-specialist, 'good neighbourly approach' to helping older people stay independent and healthy. Although the charity does not provide specialist or personal care, (e.g. dementia care, bathing or housework), the 'Plus' part of our care is the quality of time and attention we aim to provide, and our long-term commitment to our regular clients.

Resourcing our work

During 2008/09, we began to refresh all our literature and review our policies, in order to be properly resourced for our work with older people. We invited an expert on charity governance to review our governing document, which showed that there was no urgent need for changes to our constitution. We did not manage to fill the vacancy for Chair of the Executive Committee during the year, but nominated a chair for each meeting. The trustees showed their commitment to turning the charity round by meeting almost monthly and working in subgroups on staff recruitment, revising the Volunteer Handbook (which Jayne has seen to completion), fundraising and policies. To promote the organisation, we produced a new-style briefing sheet, leaflet and display material and started building a library of photographs.



Partnership working

CarePlus had a stand at the *Senior Information Day* organised by London Borough of Bromley (see photo to left) and began discussions with relevant local agencies to explore opportunities for partnership and position itself appropriately in the local network of support services.



Reference and administration details

Charity name: CarePlus

Registered charity number: 1061356

Charity's principal address: 34 Park Avenue, Bromley, Kent BR1 4EE

Names of Trustees who managed the charity in 2008/09

Elizabeth Davis	
Jane Farrer	Secretary
John Ilson	
Mary Key	
John Kingsmill	Treasurer
Elizabeth Meynell	
David Smith	
John Warren	
Cecilia Yardley	Acting Chair

CarePlus has no custodian trustees or advisors.

Structure, governance and management

The charity's governing document is a constitution adopted on 14 October 1996 and revised at the AGM on 6 July 2004.

CarePlus is an Association whose trustees are selected by nomination and election.

During the period 2008/09, CarePlus employed one part time staff member, Jayne Gorey, Co-ordinator of Volunteers.

Objectives and activities

CarePlus exists to provide a service to support the community and health needs of the inhabitants of the London Borough of Bromley, in particular the North Bromley area and to provide a local source of information and advocacy.

CarePlus provides volunteers to help with everyday tasks like shopping, gardening, transport and personal administration, as well as volunteer befrienders who pop round for a chat with an older client on a regular basis. The charity holds regular gentle exercise classes to enable older people to maintain mobility and social contact. During the period 2008/09 it also funded a craft group.

Achievements and performance - see pages 1 and 2 of this Annual Report

Financial review

Reserves policy: To keep 12 months' projected expenditure and to permit development of the charity over the next 12 months.

CarePlus does not have any funds in deficit.

Declaration

The trustees declare that they have approved the trustees' report above.

Signed on behalf of the charity's trustees

Signature(s) _____
 Full name(s) _____
 Position _____
 Date _____

Matching supply and demand: The success of Jayne Gorey in recruiting volunteers has left the charity with a 'nice problem to solve' – the need for more clients to match to our pool of volunteers. Our target is to support 200 clients through 100 volunteers by the end of 2011, which means that Jayne is working to recruit three new volunteers each month (to allow for people to move on over time). She has kept on track with that target and we are now putting out a call for clients through Carers Bromley, LB Bromley Adult and Community Services Hospital Team and other voluntary and community agencies. We are particularly pleased that CarePlus has forged a link with the sixth form at Bishop Justus school so that young volunteers are joining us. The customary delay on criminal records bureau checks means that we need to be working even harder to retain our

Snapshot of level of services, November 2009

- ✓ **45 regular clients** (plus another five that occasionally need transport and four on the waiting list)
- ✓ **30 volunteers**, including 4 young volunteers
- ✓ Total of **235-255 hours of volunteer support** per month:

Shopping (taking client to shops or shopping for client)	153 hours per month (60%)
Transport to and from appointments	51 hours per month (20%)
Befriending	38 hours per month (15%)
Gardening	13 hours per month (5%)

volunteers until they can be matched with a client. In 2010 we will be increasing the training opportunities available to volunteers and keeping as good a balance as possible between demand for support and supply.

Raising our profile: During the period 2009/10, using the Grassroots Grant, we engaged Carol Walters, a PR specialist, to act as our Development Worker on promoting the charity and raising funds. Working closely with Jayne, Carol is helping to raise the profile of CarePlus and to position us in our unique 'niche' in the local network of support. She is currently setting up a website for us (www.careplusbromley.org.uk) that should be live at the start of 2010.

Strengthening our base: We were delighted to welcome Margaret Whittington back to the Executive Committee. Margaret used to be the LB Bromley Social Services representative on the board. Since leaving her role at the council, she has once again committed her skills and energies to CarePlus, contributing extremely valuable intelligence to the newly formed Strategy Development Group. Other Trustees are involved in the Fundraising and Infrastructure subgroups, working alongside the staff, to ensure the strength and sustainability of the charity as it moves forward. The charity needs to find a Chairperson and will continue publicising the vacancy through personal contact, local information services and relevant recruitment channels.

Raising funds: Like all charities, we are looking at strengthening and diversifying our funding base. The relaunch of the charity has relied on historical funds. To refresh these, we are putting in bids to grant-making trusts, have a service level agreement with LB Bromley for the exercise class and will be looking for other income-generating possibilities that open up as the 'Personalisation Agenda' for older people's care rolls out in Bromley. We will be looking closely at our policy on charging for services. Other agencies ask for a contribution towards transport costs, for example, and whereas in the past transport has been free to clients, we will review that policy, whilst holding our commitment to supporting the most vulnerable at the forefront of our minds.

Valuing our supporters: The Trustees would like to thank everybody who has helped to turn CarePlus around in the past year and has pledged their support in the coming months, especially the volunteers, Jayne Gorey, Carol Walters, our funders – supporting local churches, LB Bromley and Capital Community Foundation who administer the government's Grassroots Grant – and all the individuals who have shared our vision of providing a little extra help to older people in Bromley to enable them to remain active at home and in the community for as long as possible.

If you would like to offer help or find out more about our work, please contact Jayne Gorey on:

Tel: **020 8290 4992** Mobile: **07918 142 792**

Email: info@careplusbromley.org.uk Website (from Jan 2010): www.careplusbromley.org.uk



Mission and services

CarePlus exists to provide a service to support the community and health needs of the inhabitants of the London Borough of Bromley, in particular the North Bromley area and to provide a local source of information and advocacy.

Since its early days, the charity has focused on supporting older members of the community. In the period April 2008-March 2009 the range of services provided directly by the charity was befriending, shopping and transport (trips to medical appointments); the charity also funded two group activities to enable older people to stay active and meet others – a gentle exercise class and a craft club.

Main achievements

Turnaround from decline to growth

2008/09 has seen the start of the re-energising and rebuilding of CarePlus. In the preceding period, a combination of factors common to small voluntary and community organisations – sudden withdrawal of funding and a reduction in the staff, volunteer and trustee base -- had led the Executive Committee to seriously consider winding up the charity.

Yet, as the need to help isolated older people was still there, and, if anything, increasing – as the population ages and statutory support is subject to greater restrictions – the trustees committed to 'one last push'.

This concerted effort paid off, as in 2008/09 the charity's infrastructure was considerably strengthened. In the period, the Executive Committee achieved its full complement of representatives from CarePlus' six supporting churches, attracted a further trustee with considerable statutory management experience of work with older people, employed a part-time Co-ordinator of Volunteers, Jayne Gorey, and started the recruitment for a Development Worker, who has subsequently joined the team. The Development Worker's post was funded by a Grassroots Grant successfully applied for during the period.

The decision to move forward was celebrated at CarePlus' 21st Birthday Party in October 2008, held at St Mary's Church – where CarePlus was born in 1987. Guests included clients, past and current volunteers and staff, the Mayor of Bromley, the local MP and ward councillors. The very jolly event galvanised CarePlus' wider supporter base, building for expansion once more in the future. It was good to be reminded of the energy and vision of the early days and the high points in the charity's past.



Below L to R: Mary Mills (Founder), Cllr Denise Reddin (Mayor), Jane Farrer (Volunteer), Bob Neill (MP) cut the CarePlus 21st Birthday Cake. Bottom right: Guests listening to presentations.

