



**Café Neuro York**  
A Charity Incorporated Organisation (CIO)

**Trustees' Annual Report**

1 April 2020 - 31 March 2021

Charity number: 1188805

The Trustees are pleased to present their annual report along with financial statements of the charity for the year ending 31 March 2021.

**Chair's report**

Our first year as a charity has been a very different and challenging one. Our confirmation of charitable status came through, on 30<sup>th</sup> March 2020, as the country locked down for the first time as the result of the Covid 19 pandemic. Our plans to launch our charity and develop our work have been paused, but still remain and we hope will come to fruition in the next year as restrictions ease.

Café Neuro York started in May 2018 to offer psychological and social support to people with and affected by a long-term neurological condition.

We developed to fill a gap to provide opportunities for peer support recognising that many people with a long-term neurological condition have to cope with significant changes to their lives. They have not only the physical and sometimes cognitive changes to deal with but also social, vocational and psychological changes that have a profound impact on wellbeing. The cognitive changes may also alter their ability to solve problems and manage seemingly routine daily activities, and their coping has, in effect, been 'top sliced'. Additionally, they may have to approach the state for financial help and repeated assessments and changes to the welfare system also mean they have to "justify" their need for support, including financial support through the benefits system. This can be very demoralising with an impact of mental wellbeing and feelings of self-worth.

Café Neuro York offers support central to the wellbeing of people with neurological conditions, supporting the person rather than focusing on the condition or disability. We previously met once a month at St Leonard's Hopsice on a Thursday evening and on the second Monday of the month at the Folk Hall in New Earswick.

During the period covered by this annual report, all our face to face activities had to cease to ensure the safety and wellbeing of our participants. Instead, we set up

weekly Zoom cafés on a Monday lunchtime. While these were not the same as our face to face meetings, they gave people an opportunity to keep in touch and retain some of the peer support the face to face cafés offered.

While we haven't been able to extend participation, a number of 'regulars' call in every week and thanks to our volunteer, Amelie, we have started a monthly quiz night which have proved very popular.

It is not the first year we had envisaged, but I am delighted that we have been able to respond flexibly and still provide opportunities for peer support for people with and affected by neurological conditions in York and the surrounding areas.

We hope that external circumstances allow us to restart and develop our face to face activities in the next year. However, we have learned about the opportunities, and challenges, technology offers and are planning to continue online sessions in some form.

Diana Toseland  
Café Neuro York Chair

## **Objectives and activities**

The object of Café Neuro York is:

The relief of people in need by reason of long term neurological condition or related disadvantage in York and surrounding areas by providing and assisting in the provision of facilities for social inclusion, engagement, wellbeing, learning, peer support and creativity.

The vision that shapes our work is to provide opportunities for peer support for people with and affected by neurological conditions in York and the surrounding area to get peer support through organising safe social spaces (cafes) where people can meet, socialise and gain information about services and support available to them. We aim to develop further opportunities, including providing further activities and opportunities for peer support as the charity develops.

Our activities in the period can be divided into two categories: setting up our charity and providing peer support. The latter were limited by the national lockdowns which prevented all face-to-face activities for the duration of this annual report, but we were flexible and utilised technology to allow some peer support to continue.

### **Setting up the charity**

We spent April – August developing and agreeing a set of policies to support the effective running of the charity. These include:

- Safeguarding
- Financial management
- Data protection
- Health and safety
- Comments, compliments, complaints
- Volunteer involvement
- Conflict of interest
- Equality and diversity

- Code of conduct
- Confidentiality
- Trustee information
- Risk management

We set up a risk register which was updated to reflect risks associated with the online café sessions.

In addition, we started to investigate funding opportunities to help us develop the charity. These plans were put on hold as the lockdowns continued and the opportunities to develop further activities were prevented. Seeking additional funding will be a priority for 2021 – 2022.

With support from Sinton's we have set up a website: [www.cafeneuroyork.org.uk](http://www.cafeneuroyork.org.uk) and continued to post regularly on our Facebook page and Twitter.

We recruited a volunteer to support with our online cafés. Amelie joined us in October to support the online cafés and developed our Café Neuro York quiz nights (more below).

### **Peer support**

We have not been able to hold any face-to-face cafés during the year due to Covid restrictions and our risk assessment that determined holding any face-to-face events with people who are potentially clinically extremely vulnerable or clinically vulnerable was not appropriate.

Our first Zoom café was on Monday 25 May 2020 (initially at 11.00am and then moved to midday and ran for an hour. The Zoom cafés have continued on a weekly basis throughout the rest of the year apart from the Christmas period and when cafés fell on the same day as a Bank Holiday.

There is a regular group of five or six people who join the online cafés and all have found them very useful. It is a good way for the group to catch up with their Café Neuro York friends and to share thoughts and experiences, including a difficult benefits application, that they know others will understand.

The online cafés are facilitated by Diana and Amelie.

In addition, with the support of our volunteer, Amelie, we developed a Quiz Night with the first one on 14 January and further quiz nights in February and March. There are plans to continue the online quiz nights even when face to face cafés are possible again.

The quizzes are set and facilitated by Amelie and attended by Diana and other trustees where possible.

## Financial Review

<b>Income</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Total</b>
	<b>2020 – 2021</b>	<b>2019 – 2020</b>
Donations	£1,019.42	£0
<b>Expenditure</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Total</b>
	<b>2020 – 2021</b>	<b>2019 - 2020</b>
	£0	£0
<b>Total assets</b>	<b>£1,019.42</b>	<b>£0</b>

**Note:** due to the restrictions resulting from the pandemic, we were unable to carry out both planned fundraising activity and all activity was online, which did not incur any costs.

The organisation does not currently employ anyone or have other assets, so trustees do not see a need to hold any reserves currently. This is reviewed on a regular basis and may change in line with development plans which we hope to start implementing later in 2021.

## Structure, Governance and Management

Café Neuro York is a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) established on 30 March 2020 and governed by a constitution of a CIO (Foundation Model).

Charity number: 1188805

Charity address: C/O Sintons LLP, 14 Tower House Business Centre, Fishergate, York, YO10 4UA.

Charity website: [www.cafeneuroyork.org.uk](http://www.cafeneuroyork.org.uk)

### Trustees

Trustees are appointed in line with our constitution and we have a minimum of three trustees (four at 31 March 2021) and a maximum of eight. Trustees would normally serve a term of three years, but at establishment, different terms were agreed for the founding trustees, with two trustees appointed for one year.

Trustees are:

Diana Toseland	Chair
Ruth Stockdale	Treasurer
Charlotte Foxton	
Tracy Westgarth	
Pam Warn	Stepped down 19 November 2020

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

Signed on behalf of Café Neuro York's trustees

Signature(s)		
Full name(s)	Diana Toseland	
Position (eg Secretary, Chair, etc)	Chair	
Date	27 <sup>th</sup> May 2021	