

## South Cheshire Crossroads Caring for Carers

“We help people to have a better life”  
(Carer Support Worker)



### Our Organisation



Crossroads Caring for Carers is a specialist voluntary organisation providing practical and emotional support to carers and people with care needs in their own homes and in the community. The organisation currently delivers short breaks to over 250 families across central Cheshire including 25 young carers. Crossroads South Cheshire is a registered

charitable company limited by guarantee operating as a social enterprise.

The whole purpose of a Crossroads scheme is to provide practical and emotional support to Carers responsible for the care of children, adults or older people at home, who have a physical/sensory disability, learning disability, mental health issue or who are chronically ill.

A carer may be a friend, neighbour or relative who is providing support to someone else, either within the same household or living elsewhere, who would otherwise not be able to manage without that help.

South Cheshire Crossroads operates as a social enterprise. Its mission is primarily to deliver social benefit (enhance carers lives) and any surpluses are reinvested for that purpose, as opposed to being distributed to shareholders and owners.

### Our Team

South Cheshire Crossroads employs 35 paid staff, the majority of whom are employed as part time Carer Support Workers. There are three volunteers who support the work of the organisation. Governance is provided by a Board of Directors, who have a range of skills and experience and who assume overall responsibility for the service.

### **Social Enterprise**

The social care marketplace is increasingly competitive in terms of securing contracts for service delivery. Historically, South Cheshire Crossroads relied heavily on grants and donations to sustain service delivery, however over the last five years; there has been a shift towards the delivery of public sector contracts on behalf of government bodies. South Cheshire Crossroads has moved from being a grant dependent organisation, to operating as a social enterprise and generating income through trade. The drivers for this shift are numerous, but primarily the change has occurred because of a reduction in the availability of grants to the organisation and an increased pressure from service commissioners for South Cheshire Crossroads to deliver contracts.

### **Why do social accounting?**

Social accounting is a process that enables an organisation to assess and demonstrate its social, economic, and environmental benefits and limitations. It is intended that the data gathered via the social accounting process will inform the South Cheshire Crossroads Strategic Social Enterprise Plan (formerly referred to as the business plan) that the South Cheshire Crossroads reviews and produces annually. The social accounting process will also enable South Cheshire Crossroads to form closer relationships with its stakeholders in order to enhance their involvement with the organisation.

As well as providing the chance to engage in meaningful dialogue with stakeholders, social accounting presents an opportunity for comprehensive analysis of the results gathered, and a way of embedding this two way dialogue in the systems that exist within the organisation.

One of the barriers that arose during the getting ready stage of the accounting process was that no-one within the organisation had social accounting within their existing job descriptions. It was therefore 'bolted on' to existing staff member's duties. Whilst this is not ideal, the enthusiasm and energy of individuals meant that the process was successful. Additional support was provided by Chester University, who placed two second year degree students from their work based learning scheme to assist with the data analysis and transcription of the accounts.

### **Our Results**

The majority of our clients believe that South Cheshire Crossroads provides a good service which they are satisfied with and that the staff are the best thing about the service as they are friendly, reliable and caring.

## **Our Mission, Values, Objectives & Activities**

**Mission** - "South Cheshire Crossroads exists to enhance Carers lives"

### **Values**

We asked our stakeholders how well they thought we lived up to each of these values.

#### **Inclusive - the service aims to be accessible to carers and their families**

Overall the results for this value are very positive with most respondents choosing 'very well'. To improve on this South Cheshire Crossroads could introduce a newsletter to ensure the organisation becomes more accessible.

#### **Professional - our service aims to exceed national guidelines relating to good practice**

Overall the results are very good with a high majority of stakeholders choosing 'very well' in relation to the value questioned. From these results it seems that South Cheshire Crossroads is abiding by this value at a high and efficient standard which is acceptable to all sectors of public and work force.

#### **Passionate: about carer's needs and their right to a break.**

The results from this value are very positive with the majority of respondents selecting 'very well'. The results from question demonstrate that staff at South Cheshire Crossroads are very passionate about the work they do, and that carers can see this. Overall South Cheshire Crossroads is maintaining this value well.

#### **Adaptable, progressive and enterprising**

Overall the results from this value are positive, with the majority of respondents choosing 'very well' or 'quite well'. Several respondents chose 'don't know'. This implies that either they do not know about this value in relation to their personal needs or do not understand the value, and therefore cannot comment on it. In future, South Cheshire Crossroads would need to either change this value or improve awareness about it to achieve a more positive response rate.

#### **Caring and friendly**

Overall the response to this value was very positive with the majority of respondents choosing a positive answer. From these results it is possible to conclude that South Cheshire Crossroads is achieving this value and staff, carers and other stakeholders feel that the service is delivered in a caring and friendly way.

### **To be a good employer**

The overall results for this value are average. Although the majority of stakeholders responded positively, a small number of stakeholders replied that they did not know whether this value statement was true or not so commented 'don't know'. These were mainly carers themselves. Work is underway to improve this area.

### **What Stakeholders like best about South Cheshire Crossroads?**

Stakeholders were asked what they like best about South Cheshire Crossroads. The general themes were that Crossroads employs friendly, reliable staff and the break that carers get from Crossroads makes a difference to carer's lives. Further comments made were that the service is free of charge and that there is continuity of staffing. The reliability and quality of the service was also felt to be important.

### **The Future**

South Cheshire Crossroads has recently merged with another Crossroads organisation to form Crossroads Cheshire West and Wirral. At the current time, social accounting will not be carried forwards into the new organisation, but will be considered in the future.

### **Lucy Whiting**

**Director of Business & Finance**

**Crossroads Care Cheshire West and Wirral**

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