



# Annual Report 2021 - 2022



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# Chair's Report

During the past twelve months BAVS has been focused on enabling our own organisation, Berwickshire Communities and the wider third sector to recover from the COVID-19 pandemic. To achieve this, we are indebted to many organisations and individuals who have helped us.

We have strengthened our Board by adding four new members in the past 12 months. Delia Nimmo, Nancy Woodhead, Colin Easton and Rory Hamilton. During a full and varied year members have given freely of their time and this is very much appreciated.

Within our own organisation we have been helped enormously by Pilotlight. Pilotlight has been holding meetings with our Chief Officer, Vice Chair and myself in a mentoring programme designed to develop business strategy for organisations.

On behalf of Bavs I would also like to thank the following for their support during the year. David Hunter, Not for Profit Consulting; Anne McNeil, Berwickshire Alliance Coordinator; Kathleen Travers, Face PR; Elaine Alsop, EA Independent Ltd; David Green, Green Pepper Consulting; Jenny Smith, Borders Care Voice; Matthew Hilferty, The Alliance; Jason Railton, SCVO; Naomi Sweeney, Development Trust Association Scotland; Chris Myers, Chief Officer for Integration; Scottish Borders Council, South of Scotland Enterprise, and the National Lottery.

The collective help from these organisations has made possible improvements to the lives of individuals and communities across Berwickshire not only this year but in future years too.

During the past 12 months the Third Sector Interface (TSI) started a TSI reimagined project. This project is designed to develop the TSI into a more dynamic and effective intermediary. Bavs' Board would like to thank the following for their help with this work: Beverly Francis, Kirkmillan Consulting; Rachel Helms and Karen Moore, Kirkmillan Consultant Associates; Jo Kennedy, Animate Consulting, and the Third Sector Unit at the Scottish Government. We would like to thank Volunteer Centre Borders, The Bridge and Scottish Borders Social Enterprise Chamber for their support and input on this journey. A special mention to our Chief Officer, Juliana, and Vice Chair Robert who have put a lot of time and effort into this project on behalf of Bavs.

The Board acknowledges the hard work and amazing efforts of our staff and volunteers in rising to the challenges of post COVID-19 changes in the organisation and wider community. Finally, may I say a big thank you on behalf of the Board to all our funders and supporters. You have helped us to rebuild community life in the Berwickshire community.

*Marshall Wilson*

# COVID-19 Recovery

This year, we have focused on recovering from the impact that COVID-19 continues to have on our own operations and on the wider third sector and Berwickshire communities. We immediately recognised the support required to rebuild community life, as many activities in communities ceased because of the pandemic. Village halls continued to be the 'go to' place for communities

in Berwickshire. A plan to make sure they were included in the recovery process for the benefit of local people, and to guarantee their existence in a world post-pandemic, was fundamental. We focused on improving internal efficiency and effectiveness in order to be able to lead by example and offer better support to our members.



- Bavs About Berwickshire – re-starting community life.
- Berwickshire Alliance – strengthening collaboration and partnership work across the Third Sector, building resilience for recovery.
- Reviewed of our policies and procedures.
- Adopted policies on Menopause, Cyber Security, Financial Controls and worked towards creating environmental policies.
- Updated the Staff & Volunteers Handbook to reflect working from home and flexible working practices.
- Implemented the Epos system in our shops.
- Became an accredited Living Wage Employer.
- Replaced Sage with Xero accounting software.
- Created a new website with a restricted area for our member organisations.
- Took part in the Pilotlight mentoring programme for strategy development.

# Bavs About Berwickshire Project

Bavs About Berwickshire is a two-year project that offers a strategic opportunity to create a pragmatic, but people-centred, response to local need. In a rural area, the project has been focusing on recovery and rebuilding of community life. This has helped to reduce isolation, improve mental health and wellbeing, develop community connections, and expand services.

We worked with partners to establish the Berwickshire Alliance. This was innovative pilot approach to building collaboration and partnership working to help sustain the third sector in Berwickshire, and to strengthen its capacity and capability. Clear aims and objectives were defined for the Alliance, which included the ability to build on existing resources, share intelligence and foster the culture of collaboration.

# Berwickshire Wheels

Our Berwickshire Wheels service continued to be affected by COVID-19, with journeys reduced. Group bookings slowly started again in September. Despite losing some volunteers, we continued to work hard to provide door to door transport in Berwickshire.

Our Wheels services played a fundamental role in supporting the COVID-19 vaccination programme.

We also ran a series of community conversations through the What Wheely Matters project, looking at creative community solution to local rural transport issues.

We began our journey to Net Zero with the ambition to run a fully electric community transport service by 2025.

## Key Achievements

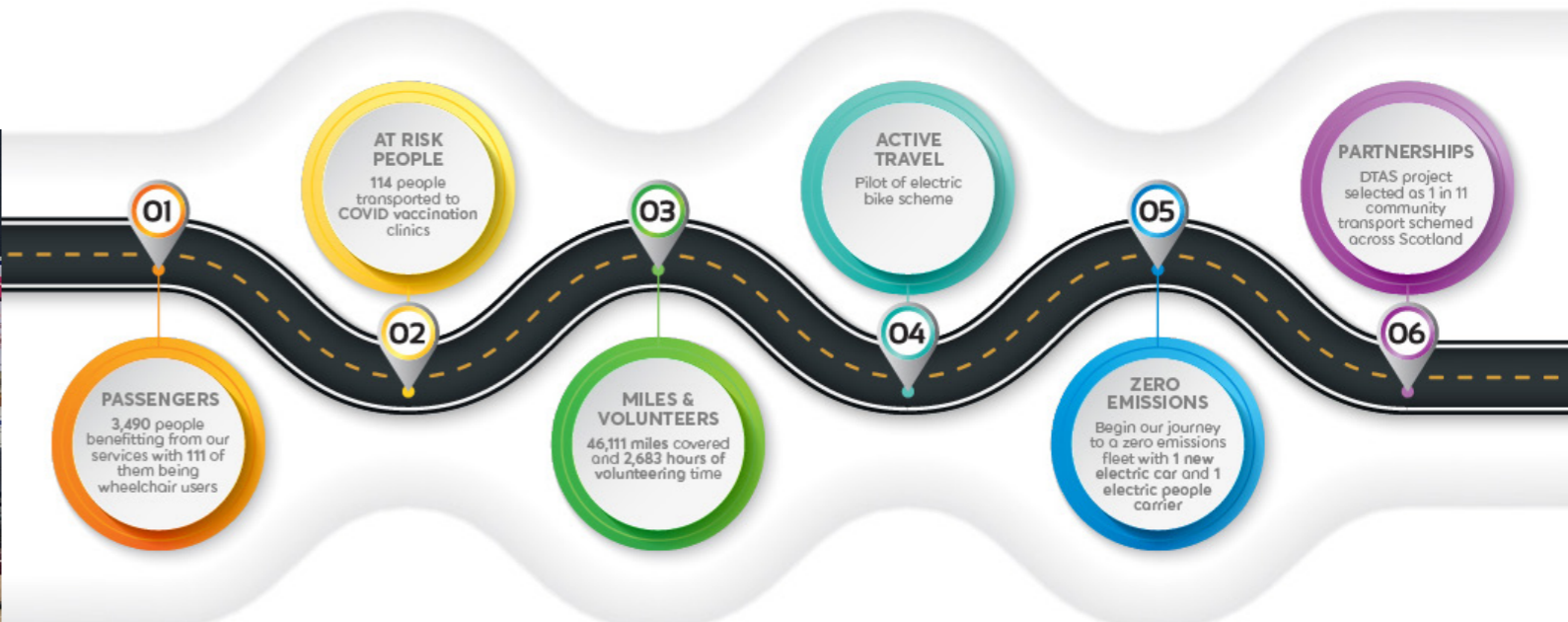


*I cannot praise the service high enough. It far exceeds expectation. My client has a diagnosis of dementia and needed an urgent CT scan which had already been cancelled. I approached yourself as my client is very nervous and this is not something she could do alone as she would be unable to negotiate the hospital once she arrived. The Berwickshire Wheels driver collected her from her home address and transported her to hospital, offering reassurance throughout. Once she arrived at the hospital, he took her to the correct department, sat with her whilst she awaited her appointment, and was waiting for her when she came out.*

*(Social Worker on behalf of service user)*



## Key Achievements



*I wanted to thank you for your support over the past few months. You really stepped in and took the ball for Scottish Borders, and your commitment, local knowledge and expertise has helped immensely. I personally wanted to thank you for being supportive of me too. I am hugely grateful for that.*

*I am always very impressed by the programmes and outcomes I see from Bavs work. What an amazing resource for your community.*

# Shops



"One of my favourite charity shops"

"I thought I would just let you know I was in Baus Duns yesterday and WOW! what a difference! The new lady is a breath of fresh air. She was so helpful and very pleasant great asset to the shop"

In April 2021, our shops reopened, and our managers and volunteers returned to work. Limits on the number of people in each shop, as well as contingencies for safety such as masks, distancing, and donations quarantine, were still in force. We implemented a new EPOS system. Like many organisations, COVID-19 had an impact on the number of volunteers.

# Strategic Work

- **Third Sector Interface** – The main piece of work as part of the Borders Third Sector Interface (TSI) was the Borders TSI Re-imagined programme. The outcome of this work is the setting up of a new entity, which is currently under way.
- **South of Scotland Enterprise (SOSE)** – regular bi-monthly meetings with SOSE to share information and knowledge, as well as ad-hoc based on the needs of supported projects.
- **Health and Social Care Partnership** – we were appointed as the Borders TSI representative on the Integration Joint Board and worked with Borders Care Voice and the Alliance to deliver three Health and Social Care Forums, a report has been produced as a result. [View report here.](#)
- **Digital Inclusion** – we worked with SCVO Digital Inclusion Team as a pilot area to identify local provision and solutions in Berwickshire. [View report here.](#)
- **NHS Community Benefits Gateway** – partnership with NHS Borders to develop communications and assess submissions.
- **Place Making** – we are part of the subgroup reviewing place making plans with Scottish Borders Council.
- **Berwickshire Area Partnership** – we worked with key stakeholders to review the Berwickshire Area Partnership and the Community Fund.

# Key Achievements



## ITEMS SAVED FROM LANDFILL

A high record of donations has been processed in our shops, resulting in 36,884kg of items.



## SYSTEMS IMPROVEMENT

EPOS system implementation, training to staff and volunteers, internal.



## VOLUNTEERS

A total of 6,900 hours of volunteering time dedicated to our shops.



## SHOPS RE-OPENING 2021

Limits on the number of people in each shop, as well as contingencies for safety such as masks, distancing, and donations quarantine.



## SUPPORTING COMMUNITIES

Income generated from our shops helps Berwickshire Wheels to continue running and aspects of community development work such as training delivered to the voluntary sector.



# 302 members

Our membership and engagement is managed via Salesforce (EPI)

## Benefits of Membership

- Monthly newsletters
- Ongoing communication emails
- Early access training and events
- Discounts on services
- The right to vote at our AGM
- Restricted area in our website full of template and resources

**BERWICKSHIRE WHEELS**  
COMMUNITY TRANSPORT  
0300 456 1985

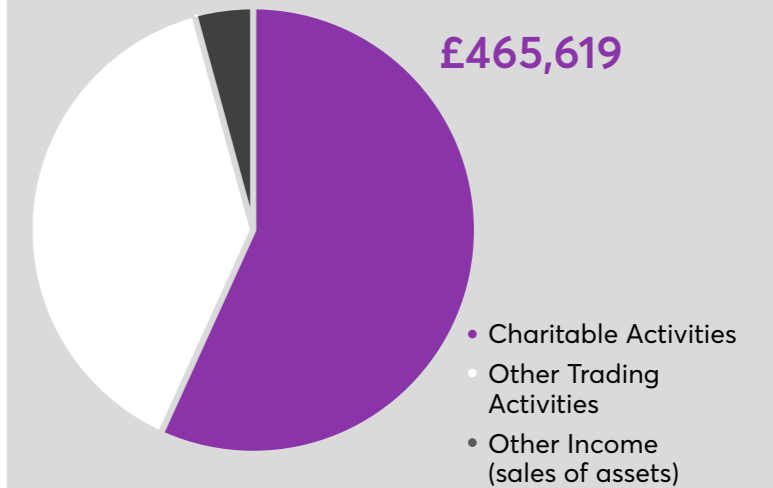
## Finances

Charitable funds have increased in the 21/22 year to £315,144 (from £241,055 on 31/03/21). There are three main factors which have led to the improvement in funds: (1) continued high success rate in grant applications leading to more available funds for projects which were still in progress at the FYE (2) Careful management of overheads including staffing levels (3) Improved financial performance of the shops and business recovery post covid.

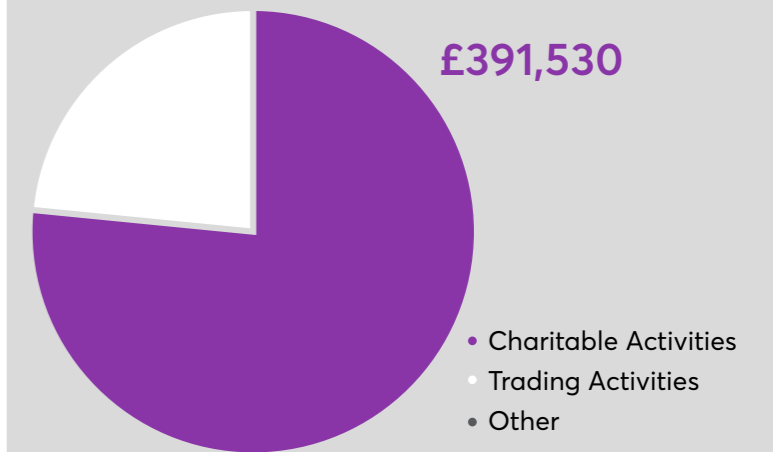
This was the 2nd year of increasing charitable funds following a sustained period of decline in funds over six years. The current charitable funds include £178,632 restricted (31/3/21 £127,880) and £136,512 unrestricted (31/3/21 £113,175) comprising both cash and fixed assets.

The unrestricted reserves at 31/3/22 were £82,674 (31/3/21, £72,795) including £33,506 in the unrestricted Adapt and Thrive Fund which has been designated for service adaptation and improvement in response to the Covid pandemic. The available reserves of £44,639 constitutes approximately 5 months of core overheads for the organisation, in line with our target reserve level of 3 - 6 months.

### TOTAL INCOME



### TOTAL EXPENDITURE



## Thanks to our Funders

We would like to acknowledge the work and financial support of organisations that have provided grants to Bavs during the year: Bank of Scotland Reach, The National Lottery Awards for All, Financial Inclusion Fund 2, Scottish Borders Council Community Fund, Blackhill Windfarm Community Fund, Community Based Adult

Learning Recovery Fund (CBAL), The Robertsons Trust – Community Vehicle Grant, Collaborative Mobility UK (CoMoUK), Scottish Borders Council Queen's Platinum Jubilee Fund, Data Lab - Employer Fund, Scotland Loves Local – Ebikes, and SSE Renewables.



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