



TALK Surrey CIO

Supporting people with aphasia after stroke & brain injury

ANNUAL REVIEW 2021-22





MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR – CAROL SACCHETT

Despite the challenges of the past year, I am very pleased to report that we are now back to “business as usual”. From April to October 2021, our weekly group meetings remained closed in line with government guidelines. Our staff continued to support group members and volunteers through weekly activity packs, regular phone calls and updates, maintaining a sense of community and connection.

In October 2021, we were delighted to re-open our groups at all four of our venues (Walton-on-Thames, Ashford, Guildford and Knaphill). Huge thanks to Sharon (Operations Manager), Alison (Groups Coordinator) and Gill (Trustee, Health and Safety Lead) for all their hard work to make sure we could open safely. They carried out thorough risk assessments and liaised with all our venues to make sure we adhered to government guidelines. We started off with a few restrictions in place, clearly communicated to all our members. We had a slightly longer break over the Christmas/New Year period, coinciding with the Omicron wave, but re-started in mid-January. Since then, we have adapted as government advice changed and the groups are now fully operational with no restrictions. We can confidently say that TALK has continued to provide regular support for its members throughout the pandemic.

It’s wonderful to see so many group members and volunteers back. It makes such a difference being able to meet up in person again - to renew old friendships and make new friends. So, a big THANKYOU to all volunteers, group leaders and group members for sticking with us through the ups and downs of the past two years. We were sorry to say goodbye to some volunteers and members who decided not to return. We will miss them and thank them for their support in the past. Our numbers are now increasing again. We’ve been able to welcome several new members to our groups, thanks to Sharon’s hard work in prioritising this. Some people had been waiting for over a year to

come to TALK, so we’re pleased we can now offer them the important face-to-face support that helps reduce social isolation. Thank you again to our volunteers who were willing to work flexibly to accommodate new members and offer support to as many people with aphasia as possible. This sometimes meant moving away from our one-to-one model to a slightly different approach where one volunteer supported two or three group members. This is usual practice in most other similar services, so we’re happy to feel that TALK can move with the times.

We continue to work closely with other organisations that provide support for people with aphasia across the UK. All our new volunteers receive initial training from our Aphasia Alliance partner organisation, Dyscover. We also arranged for all volunteers to complete online Safeguarding training, which is a mandatory requirement from many of our funders. Sharon keeps in regular contact with local speech and language therapy (SLT) services, both NHS and independent, and we plan to reinstate our regular volunteer training programme and SLT annual appraisals soon.

I would also like to thank the Board of Trustees for their contribution over the past year. We were very sorry to say goodbye to Hazel Steel, one of the founder members of TALK, who stepped down from the Board of Trustees in July 2021. We owe a huge debt of gratitude to Hazel, who contributed so much time and energy to TALK for over 20 years. Her quiet wisdom and total commitment to TALK guided us in our work. We miss her very much and wish her well in the future. We also thank Gudrun Evans and Valerie Blake, two of our more recent Trustees, who also stepped down due to relocations.

Thanks also go to Alison Wainwright, who retired from her role as Groups Coordinator in April 2022. Alison was an invaluable staff member, providing weekly support to group leaders, volunteers and members. We haven’t lost Alison completely, as she is still working with

us for a few hours a week on developing our new website, alongside Martyn Batten, website designer. Thanks also to Martyn for all his work and for giving us his time for free.

We extend a very warm welcome to Judith Hider, who joined us as Groups Coordinator at the end of June 2022.

Finally, a big thank you to Jo Matthews, our Fundraising Manager, for her continued promotion of the work of TALK among potential

and existing funders. We started and ended the 2021-22 financial year on a strong footing and are confident that TALK remains in a good position to continue its work and meet its objectives. We are grateful to all our funders and donors, large and small for their continued support for our work.



KEY ACHIEVEMENTS 2021-22

- **New website** now live. Any feedback gratefully received.
- **Re-opening of the groups** – providing a safe and supportive environment for people with aphasia to meet and practise their communication through social interaction.
- **Promotion of our services** to local Speech and Language therapy services and funders.
- **Review and update of policies** including: Health and Safety, Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Opportunities.
- **Partnership working** with other aphasia support organisations through the Aphasia Alliance

- An anonymous **Satisfaction Survey** for all service users was completed in August 2021.

Key results include:

- **81%** of respondents said that being involved with TALK made them feel a lot **more confident**.
- **62%** of respondents said that support from TALK had **helped their recovery** a lot.
- In January 2022 the total number of **supported members was 61**. They were supported by 58 volunteers, of whom 7 were stroke recoverers themselves.



WHY TALK?

Aphasia (also referred to as dysphasia) is a communication disability caused by damage to the language centre of the brain, often as a result of a stroke.

People with aphasia may have difficulty speaking, reading, writing and understanding what is being said to them.

The resulting frustration and isolation can impact not only on their quality of life but also that of family and friends.

People with aphasia often experience anxiety, depression and low self-esteem.

WHO WE HELP

- Anyone who has had a stroke or brain injury and developed aphasia.
- Anyone who has been referred by a Speech and Language Therapist or other health or social care professional, including the voluntary sector (e.g. Stroke Association). We also accept self-referrals.
- Our service provides long term support & social inclusion for people with aphasia who are adjusting to life after stroke in the local community.



MAKING A DIFFERENCE

Our Aims: We aim to support people with aphasia by enabling them to practise all aspects of communication and promote confidence in a supportive environment, leading to increased participation and independence within the community.

We fulfil our aims by providing long term communication and social support to people with aphasia after stroke by:

- **Enabling them to practise all aspects of communication**
- **Familiarising them with strategies to aid conversation**
- **Helping them to rebuild confidence and self esteem**
- **Encouraging them to become socially independent**
- **Providing them and their families with information, advice and ongoing support. (This includes peer support and an opportunity for carers to support each other).**
- **Helping them to live positively with aphasia following stroke**

WHAT WE DO – OUR SERVICES

There are five accessible TALK Groups in Surrey, located in:

- Walton on Thames (*The Walton Centre, Walton on Thames, KT12 2PB*) on **Monday pm**
- Guildford (*St. Catherine's Hall, Chestnut Avenue, Guildford, GU2 4HF*) - on **Tuesday am**
- Guildford (*St. Catherine's Hall, Chestnut Avenue, Guildford, GU2 4HF*) - **Tuesday pm**
- Ashford (*Salvation Army, Woodthorpe Road, Ashford, TW15 3JY*) - **Wednesday am**
- Knaphill (*The Vyne Community Centre, Knaphill, Woking GU21 2SP*) – **Thursday am**

Trained volunteers work with stroke recoverers with aphasia on a one to one basis within a group setting providing a friendly, understanding environment for supported conversations.

Stroke recoverers have the opportunity to engage with other people with aphasia and **take part in well organised, stimulating and varied group** sessions with excellent communication support.

Activities may include: discussions, aphasia friendly picture, word and number worksheets, quizzes, music, horticulture, and art therapy.

A home visiting service in areas adjacent to the TALK groups is also available.

Advice and support regarding communication, health and social care needs are also available to stroke recoverers and their families via contact (phone or email) with the TALK Coordinator.

TALK works closely with local speech and language therapists, the Stroke Association, hospital and community based health and social care teams, and other relevant organisations supporting people with aphasia.

Goodbye Alison!



TALK Group Activities in 2021/22

Guildford Cathedral Visit



Ashford Group Thrive Session



Walton Pottery Painting



Knaphill Thrive Session



Knaphill Queens Jubilee



ENSURING A QUALITY SERVICE

We have evaluated our services in the following ways:

SALT Assessments

A rolling programme of speech and language therapy (SALT) assessments is provided for each group. These are independent reviews carried out by local NHS Community Speech and Language Therapy Teams.

2021 TALK Satisfaction Survey

TALK regularly seeks feedback from our members and their carers. It is important we monitor our effectiveness to provide excellent quality support for people with aphasia. A survey was produced and sent out in July 2021 to review the support during the pandemic and also consult on our plans to reopen.

KEY RESULTS

Support During the Pandemic

66% of respondents said that the weekly activity packs had helped them a lot.

43% of respondents said that the weekly support made them feel a lot less isolated.

48% of respondents said that the support had helped their wellbeing.

General Feedback

81% of respondents said that being involved with TALK made them feel a lot more confident.

62% of respondents said that support from TALK had helped their recovery a lot.

100% of respondents said they would return to TALK when we reopen

Our Group want you to know how grateful we are that you have been providing weekly activities for our Recoverers, which I know they have appreciated. It's been a great way for them to feel connected.

I wanted to say how much I have enjoyed your quiz's. I had only one session at Walton before the lockdown and it has helped me to keep in touch. Well done. Mind you 'wordsearch' drives me nuts!

Many thanks for forwarding the exercises - they have certainly been useful during the summer period.

With regard to Alison's efforts on the worksheets, these are really appreciated. It takes some effort to get these together and it's reflective of the hard work and dedication shown by all of the Talk team. XX misses the sessions and is looking forward to returning when you're up and running again.

OUR VOLUNTEERS

As a small charity TALK relies on its team of dedicated volunteers. Their work is essential in providing a highly valued service to people with aphasia. We could not achieve what we do without them. We have over 60 volunteers (including trustees) who contribute hugely to the well-being of our members.

Qualities

Our volunteers have excellent listening skills, show patience, understanding and enthusiasm in their work. They are all committed to delivering a highly valued service to people in Surrey who have communication difficulties after a stroke or brain injury.

Training and Support

- Induction training
- Speech and language therapist led training programme
- A training day at Dyscover for new volunteers
- First aid training
- Safeguarding training – this is a mandatory requirement for TALK. We continually train new and existing volunteers.
- Regular Volunteer Group Leader meetings providing updates and peer support
- Volunteer Planning meetings
- Ongoing support from Groups Coordinator, Volunteer Liaison Trustee and Operations Manager

Volunteering Benefits

Volunteering brings many rewards which at TALK include:

- Making a difference for others
- Meeting new friends
- An increase in community participation
- Acquiring new skills
- Fun and laughter

Running and Raising Funds for TALK



FUNDRAISING & PUBLIC AWARENESS

Statutory Bodies, Grant making Trusts and Foundations

We are grateful to Ashford & St. Peter's NHS Foundation Trust for continuing to fund our services in order to support their patients during the pandemic.

We would also like to thank the ongoing support of the Community Foundation for Surrey.

Community Fundraising

The Co-op Local Community Fund have supported the Knaphill Group this year. This involves local Co-op members selecting support for TALK, with a % of their shopping spend coming to TALK.

Public Awareness

In addition to building key relationships with healthcare professionals, TALK also seeks to educate the wider community about aphasia and TALK. If you know a local group that would appreciate a short talk about what we do, please let us know.

TALK has been kindly supported by the following organisations in 2021-22

- Ann Ryland Small Grants
- Ashford & St. Peter's NHS Hospital's Foundation Trust
- Bramley Nursing Association
- Community Foundation for Surrey
- Co-op Local Community Fund
- Elmbridge Borough Council
- Guildford Borough Council
- Guildford Poyle Charities
- National Lottery Community Fund
- Spelthorne Borough Council
- St. Peters Relief in Sickness Fund
- TESCO Bags of Help
- Waitrose Community Matters
- Walsingham Care
- Woking Borough Council

In addition to the organisations listed above we wish to thank all individual TALK supporters and fundraisers for their generosity to TALK during the year.



TREASURER'S REPORT 2021-2022

Result for the year

The result for the year to 31 March 2021 was a small deficit of £3,346 (2021 surplus £7,272). This is represented by a deficit of income over expenditure of £3,346 on unrestricted funds and break-even point on restricted funds.

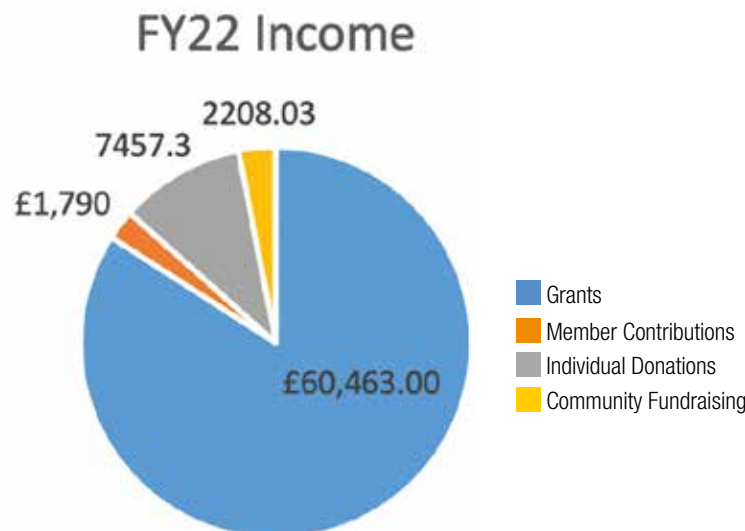
Income

Reported income for 2022 was £74,799 (2020: £75,975) reflecting a stable inflow.

Total income from grant-making trusts was £60,463 (£64,792).

In 2021, TALK has continued to secure additional funding from grant-making trusts to provide a range of fully-funded activities at our weekly groups such as art therapy, music therapy and table top gardening. Group activities have now resumed after the covid pandemic. The Charity will seek to obtain funding contributions from grant making trusts towards the operational staffing costs, so that more of our unrestricted funding can be used for the benefit of Group activities.

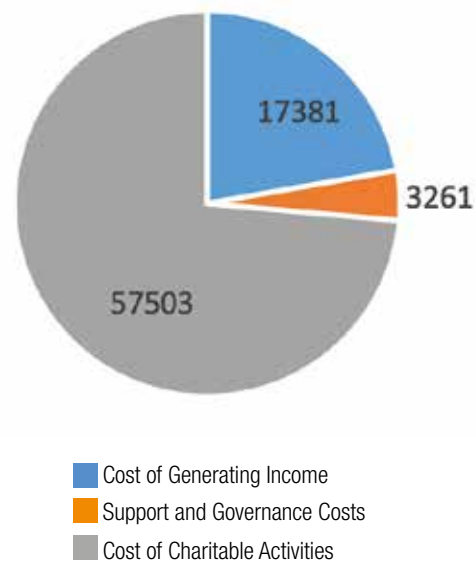
The Income profile in the below pie chart shows an increasing % of income generated from grants. Some of the major grants are awarded over a number of years which helps protect future funding.



Expenditure

The total costs for the year of £78,145 (£71,239). Meetings and workshops were affected by the pandemic. Trustees remain committed to carefully controlling expenditure and will continue to seek funding support for specific costs where appropriate.

FY22 Expenditure





TALK Surrey CIO CONTACT DETAILS

PATRONS

Anne Milton
Peter Walker

TRUSTEES

Dr. Carol Sacchett – Chair
David Gunn – Treasurer
Vacant – Secretary
Evelyne Collins (Volunteer Liaison)
Gill Simmons (Safeguarding Lead)
Pallu Modi (Fundraising & PR)
Clive Moon (Fundraising & PR)
Philippa Mitchell (Equality & Diversity Lead)

OPERATIONS MANAGER

Sharon Spurdle

GROUPS COORDINATOR

Judith Hider

FUNDRAISING MANAGER

Joanna Matthews

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