

Organisation Name	Reference
Sefton Young Carers	

Visit Date	Visited By
21 <sup>st</sup> May	Clio

**Grant Summary**

SCC received **£55,192** over 2 years to employ a Young Adult Carer Transitions Support Worker (0.8 FTE).

**£28,088 in year 1** - £24,916 (salary), £1,500 (activities and overheads), £1,372 (supplies and services), and £300 (travel).

**£27,104 in year 2** - £24,916 (salary), £1,500 (activities and overheads), £388 (supplies and services), and £300 (travel).

The role of the Transitions Support Worker is to deliver a range of activities such as 1-2-1 sessions, group workshops, social and respite opportunities, education liaison, and partnership work. These activities directly focus on education challenges linked to the caring role and enhance the work taking place with schools.

**Visit Details (People met, premises visited etc.)**

I attended Sefton Young Carer's office base in Sefton and met with Andrew and the Transitions Support Worker.

They share their office with the adult carers service. When I arrived there was an adults carers group taking place in the reception area. An unattended outcome of the funding has been the strong relationship the transition worker has built with the adult carers team which has allowed for cases to transition into this service when they reach 25.

Andrew and I spoke for some time about the project, the young carers and the challenges they've faced. He explained the referral route, and the challenges with engaging certain young carers. He explained that some young carers will engage well and attend weekly sessions. They value having an open, safe space discussing their caring role and challenges they face. Whilst some stay in contact with the service sporadically and might only contact the team with a direct need. The programme tries to stay flexible and appreciates the different needs.

Andrew explained that The Transitions Worker has made a lot of effort to engage schools in the local area, to raise awareness around young carers that are often 'hidden'. Some schools engage well with the programme, whilst others deny having young carers enrolled, despite Sefton knowing this not to be true. The service continues to attempt to inform and educate these schools, which seems to be a key aim of the service, whilst recognises their restricted capacity.

The team host residentials for young carers, either local trips/activities, or weekend trips to a residential centre. This offers respite and a holiday to young carers, which often they wouldn't have the opportunity to do. The interest on these trips is often much

greater than what they can accommodate so they have to have strong processes in place to ensure allocations are fair and they rotate those that attend.

I then met with the Transitions Support Worker, who had just come back from a visit. This was the first engagement with this young person, so they went for food to get to know each other. It became clear to the worker that the young person had never had a space to openly speak about their caring responsibilities before.

They showed me books that they had had published, which were written by young carers themselves. These were stories of their experiences and were used in schools to raise awareness, and help other students self-identify as being a young carer.

The team were all extremely friendly and warm and it was evident how their characters can engage with young people well.

### **Information about the Organisation**

Sefton Carers Centre (SCC) is a registered charity that was established in 1994. It is a Carers Trust Network Partner. SHCC employs 41 members of staff and has 60 volunteers. A board of 6 Trustees meet every two months and have a range of skills that include children and young people, education, law, finance, social work and local authority commissioning. 50% of Trustees have personal experience of caring. A Finance sub group made up of the Treasurer, Head of Finance and CEO meet before each Trustee meeting to review finances and report to the board. There is also a Special Projects Committee that is convened when needed.

A Strategic Plan is in place for 2021-23 and outlines five strategic objectives; Increase the influence that carers have over the services that affect their lives and those they care for, Identify and support the most vulnerable hidden carers, Diversify income sources and seek additional funding, Carers in Sefton are better able to manage the impact of caring and Continuously improve the Centre's management and service performance. The previous plan had been for five years but due to Covid it was agreed to develop a two year plan. Work will start on a new five-year strategy towards the end of the year and this will be developed and consulted on during 2023 and implemented in 2024.

### **Issues and Comments**

Sefton faced some staffing challenges and they initially struggled to recruit, so therefore the grant spend is two months behind what was originally set out. However, there was no delay with delivering the service.

Andrew's main concern is staff retention due to staff salaries. Andrew now has a strong team delivering the service but feels concerned that they will look elsewhere due to them being unable to increase salaries.

### **Other Feedback**

Andrew took part in the Spark Programme and attended a training event which he found extremely beneficial. He especially enjoyed networking with other similar organisations and has remained in contact with some that he met on the day.