



Cambridge SCA

**Annual Report and
Statement of Accounts
2014-2015**

Student Community Action

Volunteers in Cambridge

Our Purpose

Cambridge SCA exists to encourage the involvement of students in voluntary community work, providing essential services to disadvantaged groups within the community and giving students a valuable learning experience.

Our Values

- The equal rights of all individuals
- Practical activities that help to counter disadvantage within the community
- Cultural diversity
- The two-way exchange of ideas between individuals with different cultures

Our Organisational Objectives

- Provide equal opportunities for all students to become involved in the organisation's activities
- Provide a variety of volunteering opportunities to students by running a variety of projects
- Provide opportunities for students to become involved in the management of the organisation and its projects
- Allow client group opportunities to guide the organisation towards providing the services that they require
- Work in partnership with other organisations

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Management Structure

The Student Community Action Executive Committee consists of Steering Group members, elected annually from students at the University of Cambridge and Anglia Ruskin University, and Senior Members who are appointed for 3 years. Election to the Steering Group takes place at our Annual General Meeting in March each year. Steering Group members "shadow" current members from the election until the last day of the Cambridge University Easter Term, when they take over responsibility for SCA for the next academic year.

Executive Committee

Comprising senior members co-opted for 3 years and student trustees elected annually.

Paul Taylor	Senior Treasurer	
Joye Rosenstiel	Staff Line Manager	
Jo Haywood		
Benoit Guerin		
Penny Wilson		
Nicola Buckley		
Paul Dominiak		
Sam Bird	Chair	<i>Student Trustee</i>
Jessica Scott		<i>Student Trustee</i>
Sam Rowntree		<i>Junior Treasurer</i>

Steering Group

Sam Bird	President
Jessica Scott	Vice President
Sam Rowntree	Treasurer
Lawrence Cheung	Internal Projects
Chloe Bentley	Secretary
Ellen Hurley	College Reps
Helen Scott	Outreach

Office Staff

Caroline Ward	Manager	<i>Works 30 hours a week</i>
Ania Rygielska	Volunteer Administrator	<i>Average of 20 hours a week</i>

Steering Group Report

The following is written on behalf of our outgoing President, Sam Bird.

I would like to begin by thanking all of the Steering Group for their hard work over the last year. One of the benefits of writing this report on behalf of our President for the previous year, Sam Bird, is that it allows me a chance to begin by thanking him. I am sure the steering group will join with me in my praise of his hard work and commitment to Student Community Action. His challenge to us as a committee to think up new projects as well as push hard with continuing ones has made for a very successful year.

Within the committee we have been lucky enough to draw on a wide range of strengths. Chloe Bentley has contributed to a smooth running committee through her consistent care as secretary, as well as helping out with brilliant designs for publicity, and keeping up a strong online presence for Student Community Action.

As treasurer, Sam Rowntree has overseen contact made to the university's Deans and Bursars asking that they continue to support Student Community Action financially. His work in raising the profile of our projects through engaging with student media has also been well appreciated.

One of the specific successes of this outgoing committee is the work Ellen Hurley has been involved in, as College Reps officer, in updating the contact we have with colleges, liaising with them in regards to our projects, and contributing more widely to a sense of Student Community Action's presence across the university. Her persistence in establishing these links will prove vital in the work of the next committee.

Laurence Cheung, as internal projects coordinator has similarly left an important mark. His willingness to meet with affiliated groups and represent Student Community Action at connected events has been of great significance.

As outreach officer Helen Scott has helped oversee the year's great success in terms of matching clients and growing recruitment numbers. Her enthusiasm has been vital in continuing the committee's energy, and her encouragement of fellow students at Homerton, along with Ellen, to contribute to our Christmas 'give a gift' campaign was notably impressive. The campaign, as with last year, was a great success, and once again, it was a delight to see such generosity, interest, and support from those across the university who went out and bought presents for the children we work alongside.

As well as continuing this successful project, on Sam Bird's impetus, we also initiated the 'Give up Your Time' campaign throughout Lent term, whereby we invited students to shadow projects with the hope that many might decide to commit to volunteering. Whilst the uptake was not quite as dramatic as we may have hoped, we certainly think there is something in the project that the future committee may well want to explore further.

Of course, underpinning all of our work has been the support and commitment of Ania and Caroline, who have been constantly supportive of us, checking in and leaving us to it at all the right moments, and whose dedicated work in the office is nothing short of inspiring. Thank you all for a brilliant year, and all the best to the incoming committee – whose work I am sure will go even further than our own.

Jessica Scott

Vice-President 2014/15

Trustees' Report

The SCA Senior Members have been delighted to work with the talented and effective student officers who were elected in March 2014. Much has been achieved in the last year and senior members have been pleased to have had the opportunity of meeting SCA volunteers in the course of the year.

The Senior Members have been delighted at the continuing commitment, hard work and skills that Caroline and Ania have brought to their posts, not least in continuing to ensure that SCA's grant applications have resulted in the organization continuing to offer a varied range of opportunities for clients and volunteers. SCA continues to be an effective and respected organization both within the student community and the wider community.

We are pleased that Ania has continued to develop the online access that is offered for prospective volunteers and that Caroline has been involved in the organization of the City Council's Volunteering Fair that was held on 28th February 2015. We are also delighted that employees from Boots were involved in the highly successful children's party that was held in December 2014 for children who have a big sibling or attend Bounce and hope that this partnership will continue.

The senior members have continued to play their part in the running of the organization regularly attending executive and sub-committee meetings. One new initiative is that from mid 2015 the organization will be contributing to a pension for our two employees, as the result of the government's new auto-enrolment pension scheme, which will be done through Cambridgeshire ACRE who are the groups payroll providers.

The Senior Membership of the SCA Executive has been stable in the last year though we are sorry that as of the end of this term Benoit Guerin will be stepping down on leaving Cambridge. We would like to record our thanks to Benoit for his years of service.

We would like to record our thanks to SCA Officers, steering group and volunteers for their hard work in the last year and wish them well for the future.

Joye Rosenstiel

Executive Committee Member

Manager's Report

Ania and I have been together as a team in the office for 4 years now and continue to streamline policies and procedures to ensure the best possible service to both volunteers and clients. As a result it has been another enjoyable, stress free year despite the number of our clients continuing to grow. I am, as always, very grateful for her dedication and support to both me personally and to SCA.

The success of this year has been in no small part down to our team of 13 strong Project Leaders (PLs). This is the biggest team of PLs we have ever had due to the fact we have more than one PL for some projects and have a PL for every school we work with. The project leaders have ably assisted us with home visits and monitoring of volunteers as well as ensuring all volunteers have a personal touch to being part of SCA and have more outlets for advice and assistance. We are very grateful to them all.

A highlight for me has been the production of a Student Community Action publicity video. One of our volunteers, Axel Bangert from Homerton College has produced an incredibly professional video without charging SCA a penny. He has managed to give potential volunteers and funders all the information they need and has captured the essence of SCA in just 4 minutes. This is a timeless video which I know is going to assist in the recruitment of volunteers and attract funders for many years to come. THANK YOU AXEL!!

Our Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) has, as expected, been busier as Young Lives closed their DBS service in December 2013 and we have been picking up their old service users ever since. We are pleased to report that despite the increase of clients (an additional 38 organisations since 2011), we have not needed any additional hours or staff to help with the processing. This has ensured that the profit we make from the service continues to be a significant proportion of our overall income (17%)

We have once again been blessed with a wonderful Steering Group with Sam Bird and Sam Rowntree being regular visitors to the office to discuss ideas to improve the projects and help keep the finances flowing in from the Colleges and fundraising events. They have been well supported by Jessica Scott, Chloe Bentley, Ellen Hurley, Helen Scott and Lawrence Cheung. Each member has performed their role in the Steering Group well and it is a shame we are losing so many of them through graduation this year.

I remain incredibly grateful to the Executive Committee who give up their valuable family time to attend meetings to ensure SCA achieves its goals, and in particular Joye Rosenstiel who continues to support me over regular cups of coffee, generously divulging all her local knowledge and contacts.

As always, the biggest thanks of all must go to our 300 strong army of volunteers who remain committed to helping and inspiring others. Come rain or shine they take to their bikes to go and assist total strangers with no benefit to themselves apart from feeling good about their actions. They remain the true heroes of Student Community Action.

Caroline Ward
SCA Manager

Volunteer Administrator's Report

After nearly 4 years at SCA, I'm tentatively prepared to say that this has been the best year so far. Partly this is due to the fact that many procedures have been set up in the past and executing them is very simple – like dealing with sign-ups, contacting many volunteers at a time. However, things wouldn't have been this streamlined, if it wasn't for our wonderful Steering Group and Project Leaders who have worked hard to help out where necessary.

SCA prides itself in having projects designed with students in mind. Bounce and Homework Help clubs are perennial favourites, although the Homework Help volunteer numbers often depend on proximity to the city centre. All the other group projects also benefit from a small but committed cohort of volunteers.

The project leaders have outdone themselves this year; being very on-the-ball, solving many issues on their own, and reporting regularly to the office to keep us up-to-date.

Our one-to-one projects (Big Sibs, TESL, Homework Help, and Taskforce) proved to be very popular this year. At the moment we have fewer than 10 unmatched clients, this number being the lowest it has ever been. At the time of writing, we have 142 individuals who receive support through our one-to-one project, and over a hundred volunteers who give up their time weekly to brighten people's lives.

We have a number of group projects: Bounce!, Homework Help Clubs at 4 different primary schools, Parklife, Craft Room and Creative Cooking Club, as well as Betty's Musical Entertainment Group (a bit of a mouthful when it comes to booking the performances!). All of these have been running for at least several years now, and continue to grow in popularity.

We also have several partnership projects. These do not have a student Project Leader. I put the volunteers in touch with the liaisons, and the liaison acts as a Project Leader. Girton Glebe Learning Buddies and Parkside Revision Buddies work this way. The former has been very popular, with several regulars, the latter less so – many volunteers are put off by Science aspect of these projects. Our partnership with Stanton House where we send volunteers to chat with residents during coffee mornings hasn't been as popular as hoped. Although flexible, it offers very little structure and many volunteers so far have only done a few sessions before moving on. We have now offered to help residents on a one-to-one basis through Taskforce.

This is not the first year we run into problems with making a group projects with the elderly work. It requires the fine balance of flexibility, structure, and being interesting for the volunteers. Come September, it may be worth contacting other local care homes to see if they have activities that they would love volunteers to help out at.

Our events have brought together many children and volunteers. Our Easter Party saw good weather, bouncy castle, arts and crafts tent, magician and the Easter Egg Hunt. Our Christmas Party was better than ever with more activity stations thanks to volunteers from Boots. As Boots is one of the main supporters of Children in Need, which we receive funding from, Boots employees wanted to see what we do in person. They initially came to Bounce and loved it so much that they are keen to help out at any of the one-off events we will run in the future! Massive thanks to Brett who, together with Caroline, organises the venues, the food, and many of the visiting entertainers.

Ania Rygielska

Volunteers' and Projects' Administrator

SCA Project Reports

Big Sibs

Big Sibs is one of our internal one-to-one projects that aims to provide a volunteer befriender to a disadvantaged child, between the age of five and eleven, in the local community. This disadvantage may be that the child has difficult family circumstances, a disability, be socially excluded or have family members who have disabilities, learning difficulties or behavioural problems. Our volunteers act as an 'adopted' older brother or sister to the child, visiting about once a week to create a safe space for that child and offer them a break from what may be a difficult home setting.

This project allows our volunteers and clients to be flexible and mould the visits into what works best for them. As such big and little sibs take part in a wide range of activities, from small homework tasks, games, arts and crafts, bike rides or trips out. We provide a budget of £10 per term for each pairing so that the little sibs have a chance to do activities they would not normally be able to. This flexibility works very well for some volunteers and clients, but some do require more structure. In an effort to provide more structure to our volunteers' visits, we are in the process of setting up a Big Sibs Rewards Scheme. This scheme would see clients working towards achieving a sticker in recognition of learning a new life skill, such as swimming or cycling, or through activities the volunteer and little sib do together. This scheme is still in the planning stages and we are currently in the process of acquiring funding, but current big sibs think this is a very exciting new scheme.

A recurring problem within this project is a lack of male volunteers. This can prove slightly problematic as a number of our clients do request that their volunteer be male. This year we have trialled several initiatives in an effort to recruit more males alongside our normal recruitment drives, including a direct appeal to college male welfare officers to promote our work and working with the steering group. Generally our recruitment drives for Big Sibs have proved successful and at this current moment in time, the longest a little sib has been on our waiting list is since December, which is very positive.

I am very proud to be part of this project and as project leader I am able to see the wide range of work that the Big Sib volunteers do and just how needed, valued and appreciated their work is. This project really makes a difference to a child's life and none of this would be possible without the hard work of our Big Sib volunteers.

Anthony Wheeler
Project Leader 2014/15

Bounce!

Bounce has had another very successful year and is now firmly established at the Squeaky Gate on Norfolk Street, the venue which we moved to in 2013. The purpose of Bounce is to give children from disadvantaged backgrounds the chance to play games and make friends in a warm and open environment that can cope with their sometimes challenging behaviour.

Each week the session has a theme (examples from the last term are 'animals' and 'my favourite book') and we plan a range of activities around the theme, including group games and arts and crafts. Children are also invited to bring in objects that fit the week's theme (e.g. their favourite animal toy or book), and they have the opportunity to show these to the group at 'show and tell', which happens at the end of each session. This means that the kids can get to know one another and come out of their shell, as well as having fun playing the games and making something new each week. The volunteers are also able to bond with the children by helping them in arts and crafts and playing games in pairs.

Attendance has been solid over the last year, with an average of around ten children and five volunteers for each session. Many of the children from last year continue to come each week and have built up very strong relationships with our regular volunteers. We've also welcomed new kids and volunteers over the last two terms, some of whom have become regulars themselves. None of the work Bounce does would be possible without the commitment and energy of our volunteers, who have been consistently attentive and enthusiastic. As in previous years, we have done a session in collaboration with the Gates Scholars, which was a great success and led to some scholars returning each week as volunteers. We have also hosted visitors from Boots, one of the largest partners of one of our funders, Children in Need, who enjoyed themselves a lot during our Christmas session, where we gave gifts donated by Cambridge students to the kids.

Both children and volunteers gain from the opportunity Bounce provides for them to socialize, be creative and let off steam together. Parents also really value the work the project does and we have had much positive feedback. The current project leaders will continue to run Bounce next year and plan to extend the provision of equipment for the children over the coming months. We look forward to the year ahead

Oliver Crawford & Helen Lundebye
Project Leaders 2014/15

Children's University

Due to popular demand from the school and our volunteers we decided to continue our Creative Cooking sessions at Waterbeach Community Primary School as part of their Children's University. On Thursday afternoons the whole school stops normal activities and the children get to attend a course of their choice offering them exciting and innovative learning activities and experiences. SCA run a "Creative Cooking Course".

Despite being a short train ride away, Children's University remains a popular volunteering opportunity, not least because the volunteers get to try out all the results of our creative cooking sessions along with the children!

Each half term we get a new class of children and teach them for the following 6 weeks so we really get to know them and the volunteers get an opportunity to talk to them about life at University. Since we started running the sessions, we have taught over 175 children how to enjoy experimenting with recipes and try new, healthy foods.



As well as teaching the children how to cook, our student volunteers have been telling the children about their experiences at school and life at University. This has been particularly interesting since we were joined by two Chinese students who have also been teaching the children how to write their names in Chinese.

One of the highlights of last term was baking and decorating Valentines biscuits which the children then sold to friends after school raising £60 for their school computer appeal.

Caroline Ward

Project Leader 2013-2015

Craft Room

Craft Room is a project for vulnerable children in Cambridge. The project is run once a week, and activities range from doing various arts and crafts, to playing with toys and games both inside and outside. Volunteers are asked to commit to going at least once a fortnight, and we currently have six volunteers.

The number of children ranges from two to nine, with ages ranging from six months to early teens. Because the number and age range of children changes from week to week, Craft Room is quite flexible and follows a loose structure. We try to take a child-directed approach, encouraging the children to choose an activity that they enjoy. However, we have also done group sessions in which everyone joins in an activity, such as building and decorating foam rockets in teams, and making snowman pictures with cotton wool. The children really engage with the activities we do in the sessions, and are proud of the work they produce (sometimes so much so that they are reluctant for us to leave!).

Because Craft Room is quite a small project, children and volunteers are able to build strong relationships in a supportive environment. The enthusiasm at both ends is clear, and it is very rewarding to see the children grow in confidence from week to week. Craft Room gives volunteers the chance to interact with a wider Cambridge community and develop good interpersonal skills. More importantly though, the project offers an opportunity for the children to spend time with people, express themselves, and try new things.

Katy Lewis-Hood & Nekane Tanaka-Galdos
Project Leaders 2014/15

Parklife

Parklife volunteers take a vulnerable group of children to the park every weekend, giving parents some time to relax whilst their children have a chance to play. Usually, we first head to the playground, then when everyone's tired and the session's nearly over, we head home via the river, where we feed the ducks (and seagulls and pigeons!).

Parklife has had quite a difficult time this year, after a couple of changes in project leaders in quick succession and subsequent difficulties recruiting and holding on to volunteers. These issues meant that a group of families that regularly wanted to come out wasn't built up until the end of Michaelmas term, following a number of cancelled sessions. The long winter break meant that the groove we were getting into was lost again at the beginning of Lent term, as the regular group had all moved on from Cambridge, and there were difficulties finding new families who wanted to come out in the winter weather. However, things are picking up again, and we should be good to continue in spite of the cold! Reassuringly, all the kids that have come out have said they've had a great time, with lots begging not to go home at the end of the session and talking about coming back the next week.

Parklife has worked well when a regular group of volunteers and families have been established, but there have been difficulties doing this, and the gaps in running sessions that the holidays have created have contributed significantly to this. Ideally, we would be able to run sessions through these times. However, in spite of difficulties, the sessions that have run have been great fun for everyone involved!

Chloe Bentley

Project Leader 2014 /15

TESL (Teaching English as a Second Language) and Homework Help for Individuals

At the time of writing there are only a handful of unmatched clients in the TESL & Homework Help scheme, which is a testament to this rewarding and worthwhile project. Volunteers are asked to commit to spending an hour a week with the client at their home, working on whatever they might need help with while also making learning fun! The clients are predominantly school-aged children but there are some adult clients too.

A social was arranged at the start of Michaelmas term to provide an opportunity for volunteers, both experienced and new, to meet and share their experiences. I have been in fairly good contact with the volunteers throughout the past two terms, sending out regular emails to check up on everyone's progress and several have got in touch with me to ask questions, but it is difficult to arrange a time when everyone can meet so I have found individual email contact the most practical. At the social it was great to hear volunteers speaking about going into their second year of working with the same clients as they had a wealth of knowledge to share and told inspiring stories about the positive impact they had had on their clients' lives.

Two training sessions relevant to TESL and HH were offered by the SCA this year. The first was for TESL and was run by a SENCO (Special Education Needs Coordinator). It was aimed at raising awareness of the difficulties children face when learning English as their second language and gave many good ideas for activities to help them with this. The second session was run by a TeachFirst representative and consisted of a workshop in which we learnt various methods of effective teaching. Challenges such as motivation and different learning styles were tackled through a model of good practice that was both fun and informative. I had positive feedback from volunteers attending both these sessions, and found them useful myself.

The introductory information pack created by the last project leader is a great starting point for new volunteers. The teaching materials available at the SCA office have also improved since the beginning of the year, thanks to an influx of new resources. This provided another opportunity to meet with the other volunteers and sort through the new materials together. Accompanying several home visits has been insightful and another good way of establishing contact with the volunteers.

Overall, the experience of both volunteers and clients seems to be positive, productive and enjoyable, with very few problems being raised.

Georgia Butterworth
Project Leader 2014/15

Homework Help (St Matthews)

Homework help runs at St. Matthew's once a week, with a group of around 20 children, picked out by teachers as being able to benefit from the club, bringing their homework books along for help from student volunteers and a school staff member.

The club has done really well this year, after lots of new volunteers signed up at the beginning of the year, creating a strong group of regulars. Most weeks, the number coming and helping at sessions has been sufficient to give most children who need it assistance, and the regularity we've established means that most of the children and volunteers have come to know each other quite well. The group has particularly benefitted from a couple of male volunteers, who the boys are always quick to snap up!

There have been a couple of weeks where numbers have fallen below optimum, but this is a rare exception, and volunteers have become quite adept at spreading their attention and grouping children by the work they need to do. This approach has also meant that the older children, who could sometimes be a little neglected last year, normally get the attention and help they need. Moving forward, new volunteers could perhaps benefit from a little guidance before they start, particularly regarding maths techniques used by the children, and new ways to get through to more quiet children (who are often unwilling to speak to volunteers) might be sought.

Overall, St. Matthew's Homework Help club seems to have run really well this year, with only a few minor blips. The children seem to enjoy it (as much as children can enjoy their homework), the school staff seem grateful for volunteer help, and volunteers themselves seem to have an enjoyable experience.

Chloe Bentley

Project Leader 2012-2015

Homework Help (St Philip's)

Homework Help at St Philip's has continued to be a success over the past year. We are still attracting between two and five volunteers every week, and working with other volunteers from Stimulus. There are still around twenty children, usually between years three and six, and at least one teacher, and while more volunteers would always be good we are not currently overwhelmed.

We help pupils complete homework tasks from their termly sheet usually on the computers. Some children are more motivated than others but all seem to appreciate having the volunteers around. We tend to move around the classroom helping those who appear to need it most. As with last year the remedial nature of Homework Help has diminished and there are now a variety of abilities. Pupils seem to really enjoy the hour sessions and have really bonded with the regular volunteers.

I am slightly concerned about next year as the majority of current volunteers will be graduating this summer, but hope that this can be addressed over the next term and that Homework Help at St Philip's will continue to be a success.

Ellen Hurley & Helen Scott
Project Leaders 2014/15

Homework Help (St Luke's)

The St. Luke's Primary Homework Help club aims to create a productive environment for children aged 5-11 to have access to individual help with their homework as well as other resources, such as books or educational IT programmes. The children come to the club for a variety of reasons: a few of them are very capable and their parents wish them to have every opportunity to progress; others struggle in class and are recommended to attend by their teachers as they often dislike schoolwork; many find it difficult to work at home, either because their parents cannot help them with their homework or life at home is hectic due to many younger siblings or other reasons.

There are usually around twelve children although there can be as many as eighteen. Each week one would expect between one to five volunteers, numbers have been more regular since Christmas, and there is often a parent or two who works with their own child. The club is run by Mrs. Zolman who greatly appreciates that there are other adults in the room as there are often many children who ask for help at once. The volunteers not only have a positive impact upon the children's academic work, but also help by developing social skills and instilling positive attitudes towards schoolwork. The Homework Help club is a valuable resource for the children and has been a fun and constructive experience for the volunteers, some of whom plan to become teachers after graduation.

Zoe Ogahara
Project Leader 2014/15

Homework Help (Shirley)

Volunteer involvement at Shirley Primary is often a struggle; however, since the start of the school year, progress is noticeable. In October, there was only one volunteer but in the consecutive weeks, two others joined. Now there are three consistent and hardworking volunteers each week. These volunteers, along with two teachers, work closely with students to engage them in critical thinking and understanding. The amount of students has stayed consistent in that there are about 10-15 students on each day, Wednesday and Thursday, of each week. In the Wednesday group, most of the students range from year 4 to year 6 while in the Thursday group, students range from year 1 to year 3.

The homework that students most often bring to Homework Club is mathematics. Fortunately, the volunteers are willing and ready with patience to guide students through their mathematics homework. The students have also bonded with the volunteers, which allows for greater communication and trust. The students are very enthusiastic about Homework Club and now will often ask for help when they need it, rather than waiting for a volunteer to approach them. It is wonderful to watch the students gain confidence in their abilities all while enjoying themselves after school. It will be a delight to continue observing this growth.

Rachel McCallister
Project Leader 2014/15

Taskforce

Taskforce is a project which offers one-to-one services to clients that would benefit from assistance, but do not qualify under any other projects. There are three major groups that can be distinguished: **teenagers with learning difficulties**; **elderly** people living at home who ask for company or practical help such as gardening, and “**other**”. The “other” group this includes helping a lady who recently had triplets, helping a woman with ME, or assisting someone who has had a stroke.

This year we received a handful of new cases including requests to help adults with literacy and IT. Social services have also been in touch a number of times to request buddies for teenagers with mental health problems or those who are getting involved “with a bad crowd” and would benefit from a positive role model.

Ania Rygielska
Project Leader 2011-2015

Betty Stubbens' Musical Entertainment Group

Betty Stubbens Musical Entertainment Group is an amateur singing group set up in 1970 by Jean Stubbens (aka Betty!), an amazing singer who dedicated her life to spreading joy through music. The group provides entertainment to residents of nursing homes for the elderly in the Cambridge area in the form of sing-along, solo performances and poetry reading.

The sessions happen on Monday evenings, and each week we visit a different nursing home. We currently have a core group of around five in attendance every week, and often a few more. Gabi was project leader in Michaelmas and Ellie took over the leadership in the beginning of Lent. We have been helped by Ania at SCA, who has liaised with the homes to arrange where we go to each week.

Going to Betty's every Monday is an absolute pleasure! Ross provides the vital accompaniment on the keyboard, and volunteers and residents sing their hearts out. Favourites from the songbook this year have been "Wouldn't it be Lovely?" and "The Sound of Music". "The Hippopotamus song" also brightens up our evenings. Many volunteers have also ventured into solo performances, including Phil and Alison's rendition of "The Yellow Handkerchief" and Sarah's "Jackson Street Blues" on the piano, all very well enjoyed.

Between a song and another, volunteers also read poetry. Erin's reading of "Casey at the Bat", for example, is always well appreciated. Since mid-Michaelmas we have also been inviting the residents to read poems for the group. Residents welcomed the initiative and we had beautiful readings of traditional British poems by residents of Royal Albert Holmes and Brandon Court.

The sessions normally include a break when volunteers and residents can have a chat over tea (and sometimes muffins, cakes, sausage rolls...!). The break gives volunteers a chance to meet residents better and hear some great stories, and the residents really appreciate it!

At the end of the session, residents often comment that it was fun and relaxing, and "so much better than watching tele!" We receive heartfelt thanks each and every time, and invitations to visit them more times a year. We hope the project continues going strong and making a difference, proving, as Ella Fitzgerald once said, that "the only thing better than singing... is more singing!"

Gabriela Pavarini & Ellie Price
Project Leaders 2014/15

Junior Treasurer's Report

2014-15 has been a successful year for SCA financially, thanks in large part to our staff's excellent work in seeking out new grants and making high-quality applications. We have managed to run a surplus yet again and are in a good position for next year, as well as providing higher levels of funding for an expanded range of activities. The majority of our funding is received through grants: Cambridge City Council and the Societies Syndicate of the University remain among our largest supporters, though we have also benefited from numerous smaller sources of funding. Our access to these grants is made possible by the diligent and thorough work of our staff, who assemble successful applications and so enable our volunteers to continue to make a much-valued contribution to our community. A breakdown of SCA's income clearly highlights how invaluable our staff are to continuation of SCA's activities:

Grants from Trusts - 49%

DBS - 17%

Colleges and chapels - 16%

City Council - 11%

Fundraising - 1% *

General donations - 1%

Investment income - 5%

The colleges are always an important source of donations for SCA. This year's college and chapel letter writing campaign built on the strong foundations of last year's campaign. The number of letters personalized by student college representatives has increased from 4 to 24 and hopefully this will be reflected in the final total donated. Donations are slowly making their way through and already there have been donations from colleges who haven't donated from a number of years, while others have increased the amount they have donated. Colleges have specifically said they have enjoyed the personalized elements of the letters, a credit to our college representatives.

Our Disclosure and Barring income is still a significant source of funding, and we continue to have a reliable stream of forms to administer. Revenue raised through DBS was a success this year - at times it looked like there were going to be too many clients, with 16 more clients than last year.

The Steering Group have, as usual, made a much-appreciated contribution to fundraising. We have continued the relationship with the Cambridge Footlights, and held a third Charity Smoker, which almost sold out, and are eagerly awaiting the money from the two most recent smokers. With a change in Footlights president next year, it is worth making the effort to continue this popular source of fundraising. Pursuing links with College JCRs and May Ball Committee is sometimes difficult, but should still be looked into in the future as it raises money directly from the student community. Other initiatives have included an SCA formal at Corpus and the annual bucket-shaking at Halloween. All in all, SCA has had a good year which has enabled us to spend more on activities, including the particularly exciting badges schemes for Big Sibs. We are in a good position for the coming year and can be very happy with our performance over the last twelve months.

Sam Rowntree

Junior Treasurer 2014/15

Thank you's....

Our thanks go to the many organisations and individuals who support us financially and in many other ways, making it possible for us to help others living in the Cambridge Community.

In particular we would like to thank the following for their generous help and support:

Our Funders

BBC Children in Need
Birketts Cambridge Fund
Clothworkers Foundation
Cambridge City Council
Cambridge Community Foundation
Cambridge University Societies Syndicate
Cambridge RAG
Comic Relief
Deans and Chaplains Association
ESRI Charitable Trust
The University of Cambridge Colleges
Woodroffe Benton Foundation

Our Partners

Other organisations

Cambridge Women's Aid
Cambridge Wine Merchants, especially Brett Turner
David Hardy Project
Nicky Buckley and her team at CU Community Affairs

Primary Schools

St Matthews (Homework Help club)
St Phillip's (Homework Help club)
St Luke's (Homework and Football club)
Shirley (Homework Club)
Girton Glebe (Homework Club)
Waterbeach Primary School

Secondary Schools

Parkside

Care Homes / Independent Living Homes

Elizabeth House
Stanton House
Epworth Court
Langdon House
Ditton Court
Royal Albert Homes
Brandon Court
Abbeyfield Society
Brook House
Fen Rd Nursing Home
Primrose Croft
Harry Scott Court
St George's Court

The many individual friends of SCA

And of course –

Our AMAZING Volunteers

Student Community Action

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