

Style Acre

Supporting people with learning disabilities



Annual Review 2021



270 people are supported by Style Acre across Oxfordshire. We offer supported living, community hubs, employment support, wellbeing activities and gardening sessions.



About Style Acre

Style Acre empowers adults with learning disabilities and autism to live life to the full.

We do this through supported living care teams and outreach services in homes across Oxfordshire. At our day opportunities, which comprise of community hubs in Wallingford, Didcot and Banbury people can participate in sports, arts, social and leisure activities. People can also access gardening sessions at the market garden in Wantage, at our hubs or participate at home.

We also offer a Work Programme which supports voluntary and work placements in our own social enterprises or at local companies. Wellbeing activities were also expanded this year to combat the effects of the pandemic, providing information and opportunities so people could improve their health and wellbeing.



A word from Chris Ingram, CEO



2021 has unfortunately been another year blighted by Covid, but at least there have been some signs of normal life resuming. It has also been a year of change for Style Acre, with us welcoming several new faces to the team, bringing fresh energy and ideas.

I am immensely proud of the amazing dedication and resilience of the whole team and the fantastic job they have done through such challenging times. My personal highlight has been the success of our Ways to Wellness project and running the London Marathon with our ambassador, Grace.

We are in a great place to flourish, and I am full of optimism and excitement for the plans we have for 2022.

About Day Opportunities

People we support can access community hubs in Wallingford, Didcot and Banbury. Hub sessions are chosen and shaped by the people we support, there is something for everyone, satisfying interests such as arts, cookery, IT and yoga.

Hubs are also a great place to drop in and meet friends, use the computers or ask support teams for advice or information. The hubs act as a base for people to participate in community activities such as dance, sports, walking, bowling and swimming.

As well as offering the chance to have fun, socialise and learn new skills, people can access the support they need, when they need it. This could be through 1-2-1 or group support, or people can drop in.

We maintain a fleet of vehicles that provide reliable transport for those who need it, and travel training for those who want to use public transport. Our hubs are welcoming and are safe spaces that are central to the lives of people we support.

2021 presented many challenges due to the ongoing pandemic. Our support teams continued to adapt services as restrictions and circumstances changed so that people could safely resume the activities of their choice. People were able to enjoy a relatively normal summer and autumn, but winter presented further challenges, limiting Christmas celebrations once again.

Supported Living

Adults with learning disabilities and autism live with their peers in Style Acre's supported living households in towns and villages throughout Oxfordshire. Most of our households have 24-hour care. We also have community support teams who provide outreach services that help people to live more independently in their homes.

Our supported living teams have continued to provide outstanding care to people we support throughout the pandemic, adapting to all the changes throughout the year to keep people safe and happy.

Spotlight - Oxford

Housemates at one of our Oxford households enjoy socialising together and they are pictured here enjoying a fireworks display. 2021 also saw them visit Warner Bros, Studio Tour, see Mamma Mia and visit an aquarium and several museums together.

The housemates also enjoy cooking and baking at home together, and they all have their own interests. They get on well and have supported each other through the difficult times of the pandemic since moving in together in the summer of 2020.

The housemates tell us they like the location of their house, that it is near shops, cafes and the bus stop. They trust their support team who are always there and happy to help if they need them and they feel safe.

The housemates have kept busy in 2021 - Jamie enjoyed his job and travelling to work

by himself, Jake created his own YouTube gaming channel and Chris has been determined to keep fit by swimming and walking with his mum. Gabrielle told her support team that she loves the house, and it feels like a family.



Ways to Wellness

Style Acre exists to help people we support live happy lives and wellbeing activities have always been important. Our Ways to Wellness programme became more structured in 2019, starting with the provision of vegetable trugs so that people could grow and eat their own vegetables.

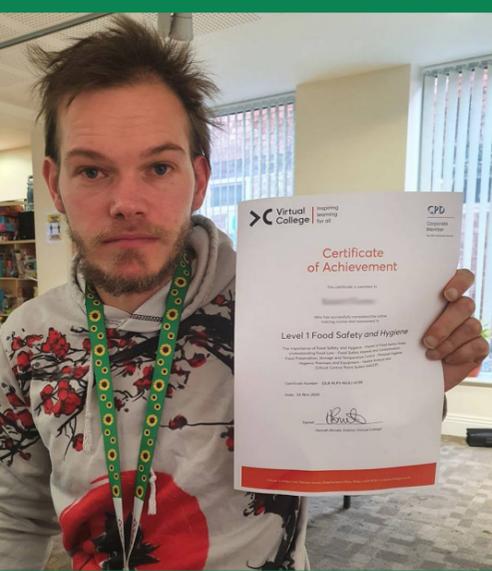
The pandemic led to some serious challenges to people's health and wellbeing and our Ways to Wellness project was expanded to address this. In 2021, thanks to a grant from OCC Public Health we were able to employ a coordinator to increase the information and opportunities available to people we support so they could improve their mental wellbeing and health.

In 2021 we introduced new wellbeing activity sessions, delivered mental health first aid training, distributed wellbeing journals, recruited buddying volunteers, organised a walking challenge, purchased equipment to support individual goals, created monthly themed activity packs and ran themed wellbeing events.

Our Ways to Wellness Manager says "wellbeing means different things to different people, we have seen people choose a broad range of activities that make them feel healthy and happy. It has been lovely to see people take part in our wellbeing sessions and have fun whilst doing things that make them feel good".

We are also working with other local organisations such as Blewbury Tennis Club who are delivering new accessible tennis sessions for people we support.





**LEARNING
DISABILITY
INCLUSIVE
EMPLOYER**

Work Programme and Social Enterprises

People have accessed free employment support through our Work Programme since 2009. Our Work team assist people we support to find paid or voluntary work placements that will help them achieve their own individual goals.

People work at local organisations throughout the county and at our own social enterprises which comprise a Tea Room in Blewbury, Charity Shop in Wallingford and a gardening maintenance enterprise, Green Acre.

The team provide ongoing support to people we support and employers, reviewing placements and supporting skills development. Some people will need help to find a placement and to settle in and learn their role, some people will need ongoing direct support and this is provided by specialist support workers, for instance at our Tea Room and Charity Shop.

Our Work Programme was disrupted by the pandemic as many placements were paused during lockdowns. The Work team supported people to undertake online training during lockdowns, here you can see Rob pictured with his Food Safety certificate. As restrictions and risk assessments allowed, the team have supported people to safely return to placements.

Our own social enterprises, the Tea Room at Blewbury, Charity Shop in Wallingford and our gardening maintenance business, Green Acre were affected by lockdowns but were able to re-open as restrictions eased. People we support can participate in safe, supported work placements at our social enterprises, ranging from short term work experience to long term voluntary and paid work placements.

Garden Project

Our gardening sessions take place at Wantage Market Garden and at our community hubs. People are also supported to tend gardens and trugs at home. Our Gardening Coordinator and people we support work closely with Sustainable Wantage volunteers at the market garden and grow fruit, vegetables and flowers together.

Gardening sessions can be very therapeutic for people we support and are a great way to get outside, get active and develop skills. The team at the garden are also very creative and lots of arts and crafts activities and projects to help wildlife took place in 2021. They are pictured here with some of the produce grown taking part in the Oxfordshire Pumpkin Festival.





Message from Ambassador – Lisa

I go to SABRe (our Banbury community hub) most days in the week. I like the arts and crafts we do and sewing group, we go bowling and I go to farm club. I like helping out at SABRe too. I sort books that were donated to us for our charity shop and help the team with other jobs. I also help with interviewing new staff and am going to be a Style Acre Quality Checker soon.

The activities at SABRe are great and the staff help me find other things to do if some things can't go ahead. They always let me know what is happening. When we were in lockdown, the Zoom activities were really good, as part of this I arranged scavenger hunts for us all to do at home which I really enjoyed!

Style Acre also arranged for me to go for walks with a support worker in lockdown and delivered activity packs to me. This really helped me with my mental wellbeing, it was good to keep in touch with people and have things to do. It felt really good to be able to go back to SABRe after lockdown.

I love being an Ambassador and telling people about Style Acre and how they help me. I am looking forward to doing more Ambassador work when we can do more events.



Fundraising, Volunteering, Community

We were pleased to able to organise some fantastic face to face fundraising events in 2021. We were delighted to welcome people to a dog show, outdoor cinema and our Santa Dash in Wallingford.

We are very grateful to those who raised funds for us through cycling and running challenges at Bike Oxford, the London Marathon and the Oxford Half Marathon. We also held some online fundraising events such as a balloon race, art auctions and a walking challenge.

Everyone at Style Acre is hugely appreciative of the support we received from individuals, community groups, local companies, charitable trusts and South Oxfordshire District Council and OCC Public Health in 2021.

Our 40 volunteers continued to give their time and skills to Style Acre during 2021.

Volunteers help us at our social enterprises, our hubs, with gardening sessions, through our buddying scheme and at our fundraising and community events. This help is really important to people we support, it makes a huge difference to what we can do, and we want to say a big thank you to all of our volunteers.

Thank you to everyone who has supported us this year.



Message from the Chair of Trustees – Ian Boulton

Again 2021 has been challenging for everyone, but it has shown what a wonderful group of people there are in the Style Acre Family. The Trustees understand how hard it has been for everyone and I want to express our thanks to all the people we support, people we employ, families, and volunteers for responding so well.

Hopefully there is now light at the end of the tunnel, and we can look forward to being able to get back to something like normal pre-Covid. We all need to be able to meet up and have some fun!





Get Involved!

Volunteer - volunteers have key roles helping at our community hubs, Tea Room, Charity Shop, as buddies, at gardening sessions and with fundraising and events. As a volunteer you can have fun while developing skills, meeting people and making a difference. We welcome individuals and groups who may wish to volunteer with their colleagues.

Donate - a one-off or regular donation to Style Acre helps sustain and create amazing opportunities for people with learning disabilities and autism. Visit www.styleacre.org.uk/fundraising to donate. We can also support you to raise funds with your own event (such as a cake sale) and we regularly have challenge events such as half marathons that you can enter to raise funds.

Local companies - we love to work with local companies as their charity of the year, event partner, through employee match funding or employee volunteering. We regularly arrange for teams of colleagues to come and volunteer with us. We can also support employers to participate in our Work Programme which arranges work or voluntary placements for adults with learning disabilities and autism.



Partnerships - our additional programmes depend on voluntary income and working in partnership to flourish. Our Work Programme, Garden Project and Ways to Wellness all work with local organisations and funders so people we support can access opportunities. We're always looking for new partners, get in touch with us at community@styleacre.org.uk if you have an idea about how we could work together.

Work with us - become a member of the Style Acre family and make a big difference to people we support and their families. We are rated outstanding by the Care Quality Commission (CQC) and were awarded the Care Employer of the Year award in 2020 by the Oxfordshire Association of Care Providers.

We value our employees and provide comprehensive training so that everyone can provide outstanding support to adults with learning disabilities and autism. Visit our website to see current vacancies.

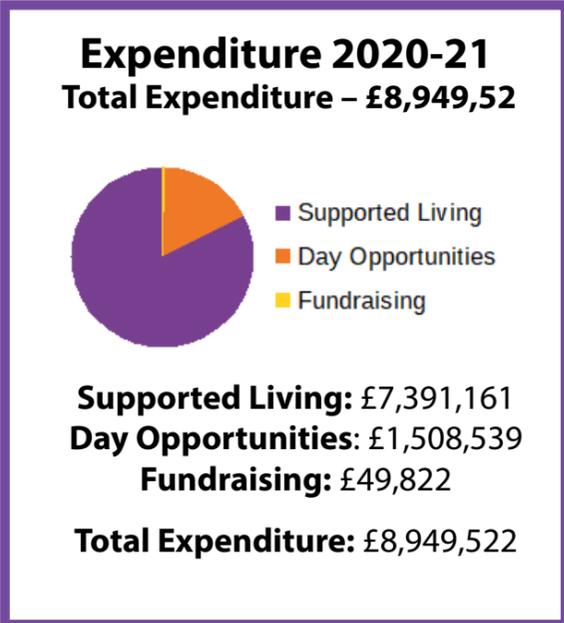
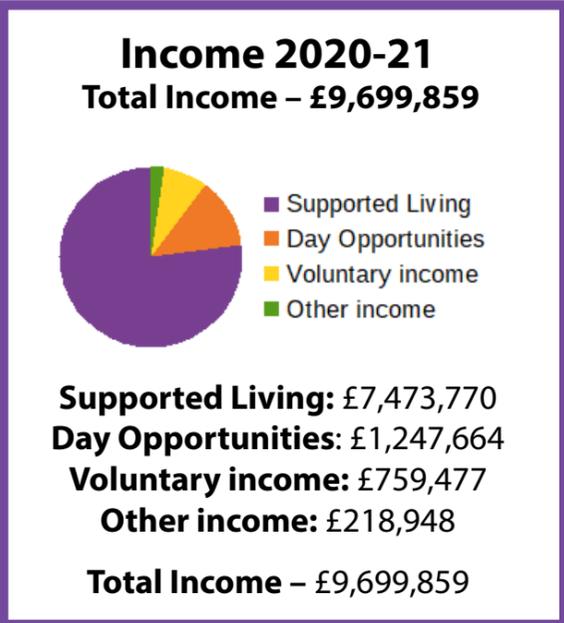
Financial Performance

In 2021, despite the challenges of COVID the charities financial performance was strong. This is a result of a reduced cost base due to the impact of COVID restrictions and the receipt of one-off income.

The surplus for the year provides opportunities for future developments and investments including a new building for

the main office and community hub in Wallingford in the coming years.

Available unrestricted funds of £2,193,305 are held in reserve at the end of the year to enable the charity to continue to operate for approximately two months and invest in future developments.



Style Acre

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Registered Charity No: 1101626