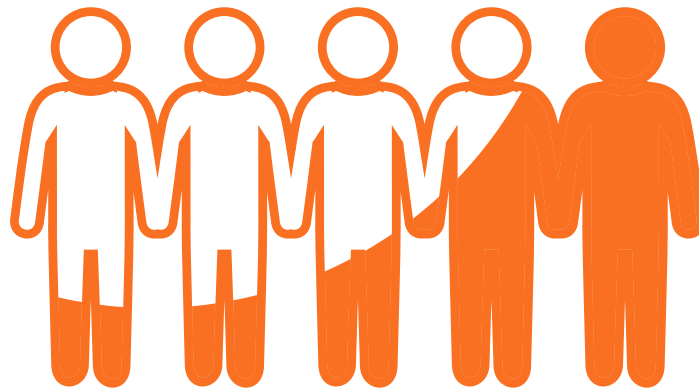


YORK Neighbours

ANNUAL IMPACT REPORT 2022 - 2023



David Casswell, Chair of Trustees

I hope you enjoy reading this report. The work of York Neighbours continues to make a real impact. Indeed in these straightened times, with pressure on all sorts of Care provision, York Neighbours has a significant role to play. We are glad to contribute our unique services within this sector in York.

We have some new Staff who have not only fitted in very well and are, with the the rest of the team, working through all of our processes to see how we can make our work smoother and more efficient. They often have to multi-task as we fulfil our purposes. I want to honour all of their commitment and dedication.

Our Volunteers also have to adapt to the different requests from our Neighbours. This often makes volunteering with York Neighbours particularly fulfilling. Our Volunteers are the engine room of the charity - and we are so grateful to them.

I want to thank the trustees who offer their support, experience and skills to guide and direct the work of the charity. Their wisdom enables us to maintain an equilibrium - and steady governance.

We have various groups, institutions, organisations and individuals who support us financially. We are so grateful for this support. Whilst every request from a Neighbour is like a little 'project', we are not really a project based charity. This means most of our needs fall into "core" costs. We are grateful that more and more grant making groups recognise this reality and are willing to contribute.

In this report you will see messages of thanks from our Neighbours. We know that what we do can be so helpful - but we need to thank them too for the opportunities they give volunteers, who enjoy being offered ways to help.

If you are inspired by what you read in this report, please help us spread the word to encourage new Neighbours to register, Volunteers to apply, and donors to support. We know that the gap we operate within is only growing, and we want to be able to help as much as we can, long into the future.

Thank you.



What we do for our Neighbours

York Neighbours is a volunteer-led charity that provides a helping hand to reduce loneliness, tackle isolation, and support independence for people in York aged over 65.

York Neighbours aim to focus on where the gaps exist between services and residents, taking care to avoid duplication by working well with others, and signposting or referring people onto other services when it is more appropriate.

We provide our core services in three direct and distinct ways:



Help with one-off tasks and errands

like changing lightbulbs, taking down curtains, picking up prescriptions, shopping, basic gardening, and pretty much anything else suitable for volunteers.



Group and individual outings for social trips and personal moments

from afternoon tea, to bowling, Christmas dinners, and visits to places of meaning and remembrance.



Wellbeing phone calls

providing regular opportunities to chat with someone who cares.



Reflections from our Neighbours...

“ I was really pleased with Alex’s help. He bled the radiators and repressurised the boiler. The radiators are already feeling warmer. ”

He was really friendly and helpful. He even helped change the lightbulb in the bathroom while he was here.

My husband used to do all these jobs around the house but now it is up to me to do these, and I really don't know what I'm doing. It's so nice to know that you are there to help whenever I need it.

Kathleen, from Heworth



What else we do for our Neighbours

On top of our three main offers of help, we also do lots of other things to support our Neighbours, such as:



Signposting and referrals

to other services who offer different or more appropriate support outside of our remit.

Assisting with general queries

on things like bus schedules, road closures, and opening hours for shops and services.

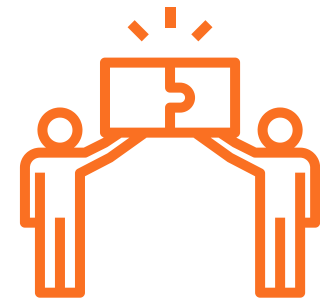


Birthday and Christmas cards

to let them know that somebody is thinking of them.

Team up to work with other initiatives

whenever opportunities arise; such as with the resident-led "Xmas Presence" project which gives meals and hampers to those spending the Festive Season alone.



Reflections from our Neighbours...

“ I was very pleased that Christine was able to help me with a bit of shopping. I was worried about how I would manage over the Bank Holiday weekend. ”

Gillian, from Fulford

“ I was thrilled with Christine's help. She went above and beyond. I am so grateful to know that you are just a phone call away. ”

Betty, from Acomb



Our Neighbours



Registering with York Neighbours is a comprehensive and holistic process. This can either be done over the telephone or we can visit the person in their home.

Before registering someone, we need them to be referred into our service. This happens in two main ways; either a referral to us from another organisation, or self-referral. Ideally this is done through the “make a referral” page on our website but, for those without internet access, we will happily take referrals over the phone too.

This year we registered 54 new Neighbours. This is fewer than previous years and is mostly down to us pausing new referrals between April and September. We did this to manage the dual pressure of increased workloads and a shortage of staff, and thereby still maintain a good service for those already registered with us. Our referrals are again open and our numbers are, again, climbing.

Number of New Neighbours



Total Number of Neighbours



Reflections from our Neighbours...

“

Your volunteer was absolutely wonderful - really kind, friendly, and they did a clean and tidy job, with great attention to detail.

”

Thank you all for organising this. I will be sending in a small donation.

David, from Rawcliffe



Our Volunteers



Be it with tasks and errands, phone calls, outings, driving, or serving as trustees, our Volunteers contribute their time, energy and skills to help make a real difference to some of the most vulnerable older people in York, as well as gain a sense of purpose and fulfillment.

They come from all walks of life; some working, some retired, and some students - all of them sharing a desire to contribute to their community.

There is no minimum time commitment for our Volunteers - they just help whenever they can.

This year we recruited more Volunteers than the previous year. Our overall numbers reduced which reflects how, post-pandemic, some volunteers who joined during the unique conditions of lockdown are no longer able to do so. We are hugely thankful for their service during that time and would be delighted to have them volunteering again with us in the future.

Number of New Volunteers

2021-2022



5

2022-2023



14

Total Number
of Volunteers

100

2021-2022

76

2022-2023



Reflections from our Neighbours...

“

I am grateful for Trevor's help. He is very nice and sorted out the towel hook in no time.

”

Joan, from Poppleton

“

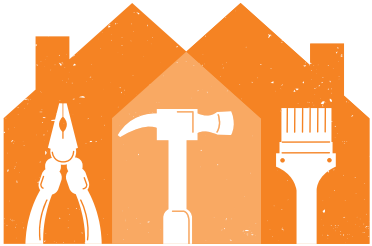
I was very pleased with Janet's help. She did a great job moving the bottles for recycling and helping to sweep up the leaves which are a menace at this time of year.

”

Robert, from Guildhall

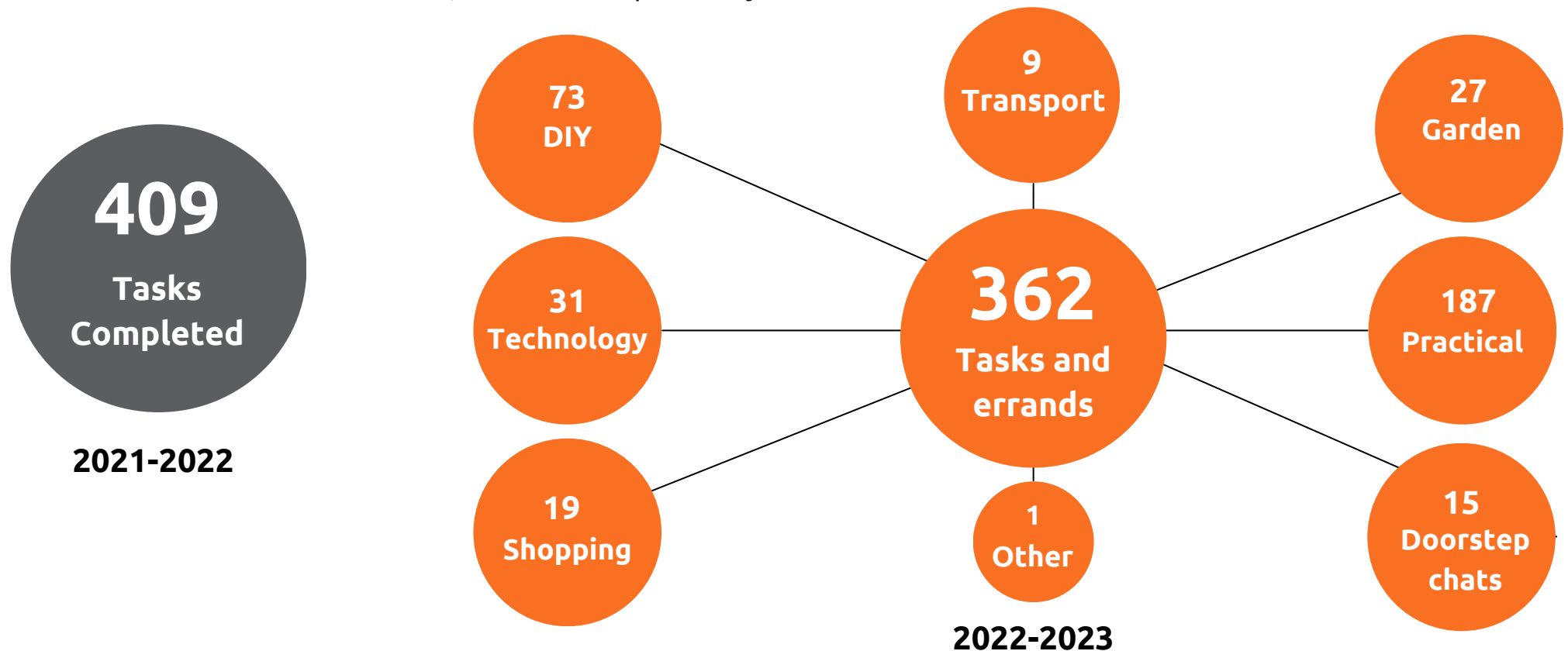


Tasks and errands



Our one-off tasks and errands service covers all sorts of jobs; from changing lightbulbs, taking down curtains, picking up prescriptions, shopping, basic gardening, to helping make marmalade, and getting people to the hairdressers! If we have the volunteers available, and it is appropriate for a volunteer to help with it, we will always try to make it happen.

This year we completed 362 tasks and errands. This is a significant number even with the slight decrease from last year. Reasons for this could be due to some of our Neighbours feeling more confident to do things themselves following the pandemic, or perhaps our temporary pause on new referrals, as mentioned previously.



Reflections from our Neighbours...

“

Matt is a 'magical' young man, and worked wonders with my laptop. I am delighted with his help, including the follow up phone call to help me get back into my Amazon account.

Maureen, from Clifton

”

“

Katherine was lovely and did a really good job. I had been so cold at night so changing my duvet to a winter one had helped a lot.

June, from Dringhouses

”



Wellbeing phone calls



Some people can go for days, or even weeks, without speaking with someone. Our regular wellbeing phone calls make a lasting difference, helping our Neighbours to feel less isolated and lonely, and more part of the local community.

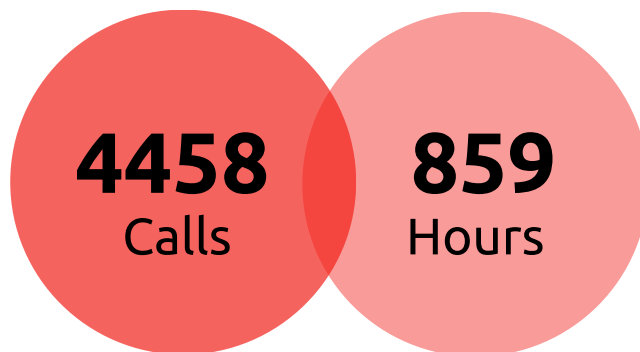
We take care to work with our Neighbours, their needs, and preferences. Most of them receive calls from our Volunteers every four weeks, some have them every fortnight, a small number have them every six or eight weeks, and others vary depending on their situation.

Since the pandemic, some of our Neighbours have been happy to receive less frequent calls as they are now able to get out and/or see more people again.

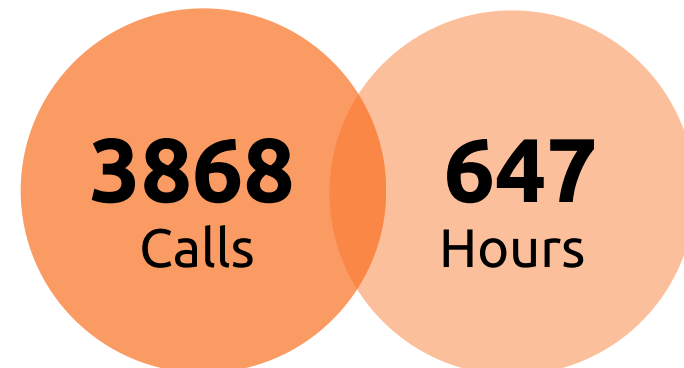
The calls are a lifeline for some of our Neighbours - especially those who struggle to reach out. They trust us to follow up if we are unable to make contact with them, or if they tell us about any problems they have.

Our phone calls can also be crucial support for those who are going through transitions in their life; such as a change in health, discharge from hospital, bereavement, or changes in caring commitments.

2021-2022



2022-2023



By 27 Call Volunteers for 237 Neighbours



Outings



Following the restrictions of the pandemic, we are delighted to have been able to resume our group outings, with four this year.

To many Neighbours, our outings are their only chance to get out, meet new people, and do something different. We organise them with their needs at the forefront of our minds. Be it mobility, wheelchair dependency, continence issues, dementia, mental health or confidence issues, we do our best to ensure that they can still take part.

Our Volunteers are critical to these trips; helping drive Neighbours to and from each event, and supporting them while there; with ordering food, assisting with shopping, or supporting them in any potentially stressful situations.

While we always need more Volunteers for all of our roles, if we had more drivers, we would be able to take more Neighbours on outings - as demand to go on these trips far outstrips what we can currently provide.



Bootham School Christmas - December 2022 - 12 Neighbours, 10 volunteers, and 2 staff attended.

Bootham School Coronation Celebration - May 2023 - 11 Neighbours, 6 volunteers, and 1 staff attended.

New Earswick Bowls Club - June 2023 - 13 Neighbours, 6 volunteers, and 2 staff attended.

Balloon Tree farm shop and café - September 2023 - 7 Neighbours, 5 volunteers, and 3 staff attended.



What our volunteers say - Leah

“ Some Neighbours' lived experience is based around a lot of isolation and loneliness - so these calls can make such a difference to their day. I really feel how grateful every Neighbour is for the service. ”



I started at York Neighbours around a year ago at the start of my second year of university. I was introduced to it by one of my university lecturers and it felt like something I was really going to enjoy. I have always loved speaking to people so York Neighbours felt like a perfect fit for me.

My role within York Neighbours is as a Call Volunteer. I absolutely love my role as it is the most interesting and rewarding thing to do. I get to listen to Neighbours' great stories and also provide them with company and support when they need it. It's something I look forward to every week and knowing that I get to provide company to individuals really makes it all worth it.

York Neighbours has also helped me improve many skills, especially my communication and confidence. These skills are something that I can take with me throughout my future job endeavours and I believe they will help me immensely.

Some Neighbours' lived experience is based around a lot of isolation and loneliness - so these calls can make such a difference to their day. I really feel how grateful every Neighbour is for the service.

York Neighbours is an indispensable charity that helps many people and I feel very lucky to be volunteering for them.



What our volunteers say - Trevor

“ I can honestly say that this volunteering role has met all my expectations and I have now completed my 220th task! The skills and experience gained during my working life, plus a keen interest in home DIY, have stood me in good stead to help our Neighbours. ”



In 2018, I retired from my Electronics Technician role at the University of York. I faced two lifestyle choices, slump on the sofa and vegetate or find something interesting and stimulating to keep my brain and body active. A quick search on a volunteering website took me to York Neighbours.

I can honestly say that this volunteering role has met all my expectations and I have now completed my 220th task! The skills and experience gained during my working life, plus a keen interest in home DIY, have stood me in good stead to help our Neighbours.

Being of a practical nature, I tend to volunteer for these types of tasks. They have ranged from setting up smart TVs, to fixing broken toilet seats and, on one occasion, removing the body of a dead blackbird from a lawn! Our Neighbours find that using York Neighbours to carry out this type of task avoids the difficulty of finding a suitable tradesperson and the not inconsiderable cost that would otherwise be incurred.

Many Neighbours enjoy a visit and the chance to chat to a volunteer. I never rush away if someone wants to talk, as often the opportunity for a good natter is limited because they live on their own or by other home circumstances. Other volunteers are specifically able to do this with a home social visit or over the phone. I get great satisfaction from supporting the older members of our community.

I really appreciate the work carried out by the office admin staff, who initially speak to our Neighbours, filter their requirements and publish them on the group emails. This allows volunteers to offer their services when they feel that they may have the exact skills needed to meet a particular task, without feeling any particular commitment.



What our volunteers say - Heather

“ I love being part of York Neighbours. The staff support and respond to volunteers brilliantly. I’m lucky having other interests, around which “ad hoc” volunteering fits in well. ”



An invitation for people to get support from York Neighbours attracted my eye. How life-changing such a scheme would have been for my late mother and me, when we lived 150 miles apart! When I visited, her first words would always be *“Heather, will you just do...”* and I’d hardly sit down the whole weekend. Quality time together didn’t happen, and between my trips she worried about small things she needed support with, and was very lonely.

So I asked whether York Neighbours needed volunteers, and trained just before the pandemic. Then, I mainly did “garden chats” with isolated Neighbours - all sorts of people, who have often had really interesting lives. I am amazed and humbled by the stories some Neighbours choose to share, and how some are coping daily with great physical challenges or problems such as depression, anxiety and loneliness.

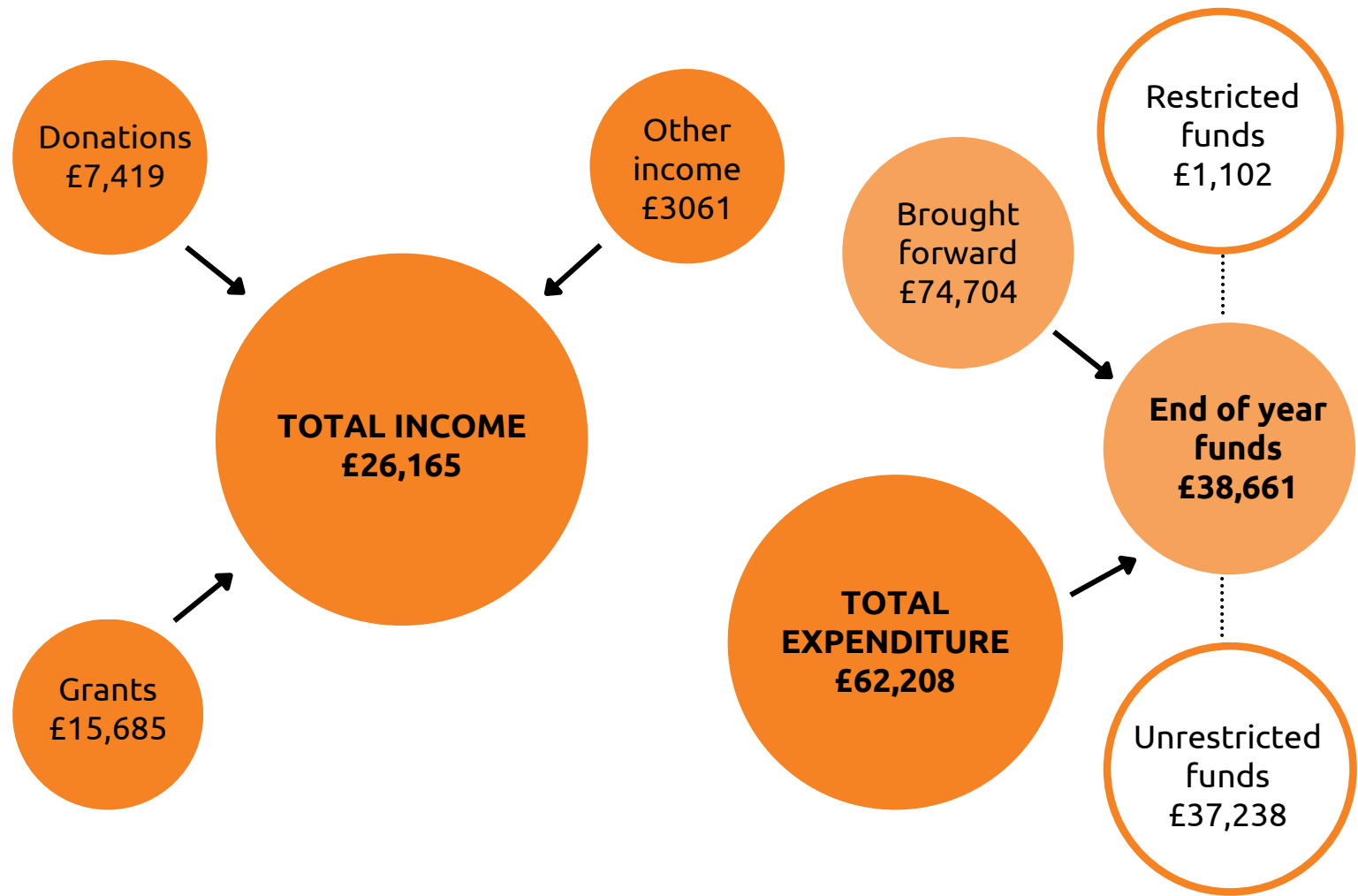
I still enjoy the “in person” chats but also do some practical tasks now. However small, they sometimes make a big difference to Neighbours’ quality of life. Doing some of these tasks and being invited into Neighbours’ homes has given me new confidence. I like getting out of my comfort zone and learning new skills, such as making a replacement garden bench from a Neighbour’s flatpack. Once I was putting up a lady’s curtains, but we ended up playing music together!

I love being part of York Neighbours. The staff support and respond to volunteers brilliantly. I’m lucky having other interests, around which “ad hoc” volunteering fits in well.



We are grateful and proud to have been supported by, and to have collaborated with, the following partners over the course of this year. **We are stronger together than we are alone.**





We are hugely appreciative to the following grant providers, trusts and organisations, in addition to our many individual donors, supporting us over the 2022/23 year:

Clifton Parochial Church Council

Merchant Adventurers Hall

Nether Poppleton Parochial Church Council

Norman Collinson Charitable Trust

Persula Foundation

Queens Hotel, York

St Barnabas Parochial Church Council

York CVS Small Grants



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