



# **Cambridge SCA**

## **Annual Report and Statement of Accounts**

2013-2014

# 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.

<b>Paul Taylor</b>	Senior Treasurer	
<b>Joye Rosenstiel</b>	Staff Line Manager	
<b>Jo Haywood</b>		
<b>Benoit Guerin</b>		
<b>Penny Wilson</b>		
<b>Nicola Buckley</b>		
<b>Paul Dominiak</b>		
<b>Gloria Young</b>	Chair	<i>Student Trustee</i>
<b>Sam Bird</b>		<i>Student Trustee</i>
<b>Hayley Flood</b>		<i>Junior Treasurer</i>

## Steering Group

<b>Gloria Young</b>	President
<b>Sam Bird</b>	Vice President
<b>Hayley Flood</b>	Treasurer
<b>Hannah Tuck</b>	Internal Projects
<b>Isobel Edwards</b>	Secretary
<b>Linh Pham</b>	Publicity/Events
<b>Sophie Taylor</b>	College Reps
<b>Jenny Honeywood</b>	Outreach
<b>Oli Crawford</b>	General Member
<b>Jessica Scott</b>	General Member
<b>Sofi Shall</b>	General Member

## Office Staff

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

# Steering Group Report

I would like to start by thanking all of the Steering Group, especially Sam Bird for his help and support as Vice-President. This year's steering group had three continuing members and eight new faces – a good mixture of continuity and new ideas. Ania and Caroline have given us invaluable support in putting these into practice, and Oliver Crawford's experience and encouragement has been fantastic.

This year the roles within the Steering Group have been less fixed, and different people have contributed various skills. Isobel Edwards has been a faultless secretary and kept up the good work of last year's committee in terms of efficient administration and a newsletter for volunteers. Sophie Taylor collated a list of JCR charities reps, which can be used for publicity where we do not have representation in colleges.

One of the best things that we have done this year was Jessica Scott's idea of a Christmas present collection for the children we work with. We were amazed and delighted with the level of support the appeal received among volunteers and many people who had not heard of SCA previously. Some people coming into the office to drop off presents wanted to find out more about us and get involved!

Jessica has also been invaluable as a publicity designer, making eye-catching posters and flyers for all our events. She and others have helped keep SCA's social media profile lively and up-to-date.

All of the Steering Group put in significant effort, especially in Freshers' week, to recruit new volunteers and help match up almost all of the clients, as well as raising the profile of SCA. Jenny Honeywood and Hannah Tuck gave a great presentation to college Deans, everyone ran stalls at the main and college Freshers' fayres and we had a lively social evening a few weeks into the year for people who we about to start volunteering.

In terms of fundraising, the regular bonfire night collection took place as well as bucket-shaking in town, although we feel we could learn from RAG as to how to make these more successful. As Treasurer, Hayley Flood has written personally to college Deans and Bursars asking them to consider donations to SCA in the coming terms, with Steering Group members adding personal experiences with SCA in the letters for their own colleges. Her promotion of SCA has also lead to it being chosen as a charity for St John's May Ball, with guests adding a donation as part of their ticket price. Furthermore, she has arranged a second (sell out) SCA Smoker with the Footlights, which was a significant fundraiser for the Steering Group and a really enjoyable night.

Thank you all for a great year, and best of luck to the new committee who I'm sure will continue the good work and go on to even better.

**Gloria Young**  
**SCA President**  
**2013-14**

# Trustees' Report

The SCA Senior Members have been delighted to work with the talented and effective student officers who were elected in March 2013. Much has been achieved in the last year and senior members have been pleased to have 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 organisation continuing to offer a varied range of opportunities for clients and volunteers. SCA continues to be an effective and respected organisation 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 for Caroline's continuing involvement in the summer sports project. The senior members were also pleased that SCA was recognised by the University's Vice-Chancellor when he invited Caroline to an official reception held for voluntary groups within the university.

The senior members have continued to play their part in the running of the organisation regularly attending executive and sub-committee meetings. We were sorry to say goodbye to Philip Hobday, the Chaplain of Magdalene who stepped down from being a senior member in the course of the year and pleased to welcome Paul Dominiak, the Chaplain of Trinity in his place. Thank you to Philip for the contribution he made and we wish him well for the future.

We have continued to develop effective links with other organisations including within the university and in city schools.

Most importantly has been SCA's continuing success in recruiting volunteers and our growing links with city families and schools through Bounce and the Homework Help clubs. 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

Yet again it has been a very enjoyable and rewarding year in the SCA office. It has been a steady year as we continue to be cautious of the financial climate but we have still managed to develop our services into some new schools which has been exciting.

The demise of one of the largest children's charities in the County, Young Lives, has been a stark reminder of how vital forward financial planning and strict financial controls are. I continue to be confident that SCA are resilient in this area due to a very able financial committee who meet twice a term to examine cash flow, forecast budgets and discuss potential spending plans. Added to this, SCA are in the fortunate position of having four main streams of funding – Colleges and Chapels; City Council; Trusts and Foundations and generated income through our DBS service. It is the generated stream of funding which continues to increase year on year as we continue to attract more customers. With Young Lives no longer running their DBS service, it is this area which needs to be monitored very closely this year. We have been inundated with requests to join our DBS service since Young Lives went into receivership in December and whilst this is a good thing in terms of increasing our revenue, we need to be mindful that this is not at the expense of the projects and services we provide. The Finance Committee are aware of this and will be monitoring the numbers of DBS forms we process carefully and possibly increase staff hours accordingly during the very busy Michaelmas term this year.

Ania and I have been working together in the office for three years now and I believe we continue to make a very good team. Ania's technology expertise has once again been vital as we had to upgrade our computers and she oversaw this whole process ensuring we got value for money by using donated computers which came via one of our Trustees – thank you Benoît! We now have reliable and efficient equipment with up to date programmes and everything is running smoothly.

Our Steering Group have again been wonderful and with Gloria at the helm they have worked incredibly hard fundraising, raising awareness and recruiting new volunteers – especially males which has been wonderful as we always have a shortage of male volunteers to match with our male clients. A special mention here must go to Jack Pullman-Slater and Sam Bird who have both been instrumental in trying to readdress the balance between male and female volunteers.

As always I am incredibly grateful to the Executive Committee who give up their valuable family time to attend meetings to ensure SCA achieves its goals. Finally the biggest thanks of all must go to our hundreds of volunteers who remain committed to helping and inspiring others. Their generosity in giving their time to help never ceases to make me very proud to be part of SCA.

**Caroline Ward**  
**SCA Manager**

# Volunteer Administrator's Report

## IT and equipment situation

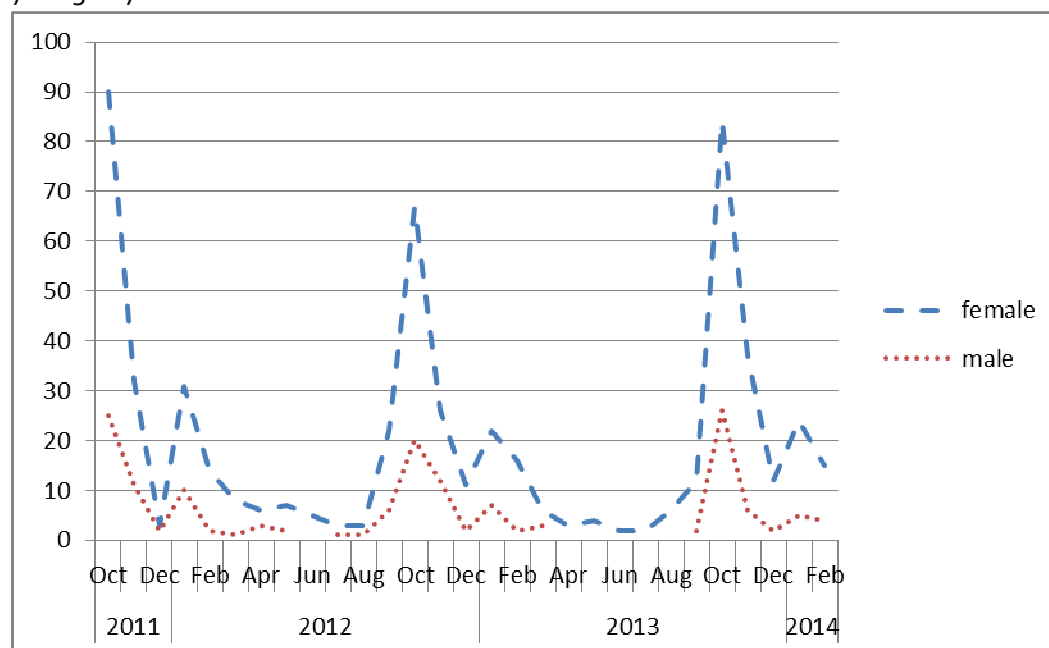
In September I learned that Windows XP (the system that both office computers were running) was approaching its end-of-life. This posed a problem as continuing to use it would mean risking security of our data. We looked into purchasing new equipment and Caroline managed to obtain a grant to enable us to do that. One of our Trustees, Benoît's knew about our issues and as luck would have it, his work-place were updating their equipment. Their old machines were still much better than our current ones so Benoît obtained two desktop computers for us. I have been able to tweak these and use the grant on vital software updates.

## Sign up statistics

The webform proves to be an excellent way to collect sign-ups. As it has been in place for nearly three years now, it also allows us to be able to produce some interesting statistics.

### 1. Gender Ratio

Our perennial problem is the shortage of male volunteers. This year it seemed like we have had many more male volunteers come forward as we have more males matched with one to one clients. In reality the total numbers of males has actually decreased -between the months of October and December, we had 33 males matched with a project in 2011; 29 in 2012; and 24 in 2013. However, we are pleased that our targeted recruitment drive to get male volunteers to be a Big Sib (which is where they are most needed) has been successful. We hope this will continue, as we are continuing to receive requests for male role models for young boys.



**Figure 1: number of on-line sign-ups per month**

- Comparing the three years, it is apparent that 2012 was somewhat less popular when it comes to people signing up on-line, but that year more volunteers actually came to get DBS checked and placed into a project. In 2012 90% of those who signed up online between October and December came to do the DBS, but only 67% did so in the relevant period in 2013. Overall, 73% of those who fill in the membership form get checked and placed in a project.
- Another interesting data is the breakdown of time-of-day that the membership form gets filled in. Although

the majority of the sign-ups happen during daytime hours, nearly 20% are between the hours of 8pm and 8am. This shows the importance of having a good website as it enables people to do the first few steps (check out the opportunities and sign-up) from the comfort of their own home and whenever they please.

### Projects and Events

All of our projects have continued on from last year and we have also tried running a few new ones! You can read about them in more detail on other pages of this Annual Report.

Regular projects that we have run this year include Big Sibs, TESL, Homework Help (individuals), Taskforce, Bounce!, Parklife, Craft Room, Homework Help Club at 5 primary schools, Children's University and Betty's Musical Entertainment Group. These have all been running well and each have a project leader and a committed cohort of volunteers. We have been running at capacity for almost all of our projects and constantly try to keep the balance between the number of volunteers and clients. This is often difficult due to the many commitments of volunteers and the chaotic lifestyles of many of our clients due to the disadvantages and problems their families face.

After a year's break, we have managed to re-establish a link with St Luke's Primary School and are currently supporting their Homework Help and football Clubs. A relatively new addition to our projects' list is our partnership with Girton Glebe Primary where we send volunteers to aid with assisted reading activities and basic maths.

We have also been running a new Homework Club in Chesterton at Shirley Primary School. This was incredibly successful in Michaelmas Term and we had clubs running two days a week.

After several years of partnership, we have come up against a bit of a wall at St George's Care Home. In Michaelmas we learned that they are imposing extremely strict rules on their new volunteers – including a 16 page application form and an additional DBS check! This means it has been taking the better part of two months before a volunteer can actually start attending the sessions, which is too long for most volunteers and they lose interest or find other volunteering opportunities. We have been in touch with Stanton House and they are happy to welcome volunteers for their daily coffee mornings; a more flexible option for busy students, and one that takes less time to get started.

We have, yet again, run a number of successful events – Brett has helped massively with organising our Easter and Christmas parties. Gates Scholars, despite their busy schedules, were able to support us by manning a number of one-off events such as the Bounce party on Parker's Piece, climbing and archery at Kelsey Kerridge, and pop-cake making at our Christmas party.

### Volunteers

The Steering Group has done an excellent job of raising awareness about SCA's presence and aims – many of those who sign up do so because they were encouraged by a friend. The successful Christmas gift appeal brought people through our doors who have never heard about SCA before, showing how important it is to use social media to spread the word. Joining forces with organisations such as the HUB and Anglia Ruskin is also very effective – widely publicised taster sessions as part of the National Student Volunteering Week proved very popular.

All in all, in 2013 we have made volunteering possible for over 300 young people – 170 new volunteers signed up in 2013 alone, over 70 continued volunteering from previous years and several dozen helped out at one-off events such as the parties and local events. We continue to advertise and find volunteers for opportunities external to SCA, eg stewarding festivals and sports events. Although it is often hard to fully monitor as we put the volunteers in touch with the organisers directly, in 2013 we found at least 65 volunteers for over 30 events / external organisations.

*Ania Rygielska*



# SCA Project Reports

## Big Sibs

Big Sibs is a one-to-one project that matches student volunteers with children between the ages of five and eleven. The 'little sibs' are children who are disadvantaged in some way either through disability, family circumstance or lack of peer group friends. The Big Sib effectively becomes an older brother or sister to their little sib, creating a safe space for the child to take a break from, what may be, a difficult home setting.

Beginning with a home visit from an SCA representative and the volunteer, the project is run smoothly to ensure that all parties are comfortable with the arrangements and that a good relationship is built between the big sib and family from the beginning. This also allows the representative and volunteer to ensure that all the paperwork is filled out correctly and that Health and Safety information is recorded. The big sib then organises a weekly two hour meet up with their sib. Activities they might partake of include games, baking, chatting, bike rides or trips out. This allow the little sib a chance of to spend time with a role model figure outside of their family which helps them grow in confidence and try new activities.

Each volunteer has a termly budget of £15 to spend with their sib. This has been very successful, allowing volunteers to take their sib for trips out to places such as the cinema, museum or pool.

We currently have slightly more clients than we did last year, with 28 girls and 35 boys bringing us to a total of 63 clients altogether. The age range spans from five to twelve with a pretty even spread across the ages. In 2012 we capped the age of intake to eleven, but we still have a few clients who are twelve or over who were already matched with a Big Sib and have had the same one for years.

The number of male volunteers has remained consistent from last year, with a ratio of almost three female volunteers to every male. We are still in need of new male volunteers as there are currently eight unmatched male little sibs on our waiting list. We have found that males are often drawn to group projects centred about sport and teaching, and it is possible that the big sib role does not appeal to them in the same way as it does to the female volunteers. One way we have found effective in drawing in male volunteers is to target advertisements at more specific activities (e.g. 5 year old boy, likes sport and computer games).

This year one of the biggest issues with the project has been maintaining contact between the volunteer and client. The clients often have chaotic, busy lives and the volunteers workload at University changes weekly so organising visits at a suitable time can often be problematic and communication can break down. We are tackling this by increasing our monitoring in the office and encouraging volunteers and clients to contact an SCA representative if they experience any trouble. Additionally, something we have seen from student feedback is that volunteers feel there was a lack of training prior to starting the project. Therefore, we have organised numerous induction sessions; training in child protection and interaction methods to prepare volunteers for their role.

Again, this year, as project leader I have aimed to contact each new volunteer once prior to their first meeting with their little sib. This ensures that new volunteers are clear on the nature of the role they are taking on and also gives them the opportunity to ask questions about their time as a big sib.

**Jenny Honeywood**  
**Project Leader 2013- 2014**

## The Sunday Social Club (Bounce)

Bounce has continued to thrive this year as a project which provides a variety of ways for disadvantaged children to let off steam, whether through group activities, sports, quiet games or arts and crafts.

Over the past year we have made a successful move from the City Life Centre on Sturton Street (which has sadly closed) to the Squeaky Gate on Norfolk Street. The new venue has tables and chairs which allow for more arts and crafts activities, as well as providing a surface for things like cake decoration. There is also a piano which the kids enjoy playing as a treat. We have retained a high level of attendance, with ten to fifteen children coming to each session. The turnout of volunteers has also been solidly high, averaging at around five a week. This allows the project to function as both a provider of one-to-one attention for children with special needs and as a means for kids to participate in group games under the supervision of adults.

We could not provide the range of activities we do without the commitment of our volunteers, who make sure that every child is being supervised and is doing something they enjoy. This means that both volunteers and children get something out of every session and have good reason to come back, enabling longer-term relationships to be built up. Some of the children have been coming for four years now, as have some of the volunteers.

In the future, I hope to integrate Bounce more closely with TESL and Big Sibs, since children on those projects could benefit from the opportunities to have fun and socialise, which Bounce offers. We collaborated with the Gates Scholars this year on a number of events, which were all hugely successful and can hopefully be repeated in the future.

*Oli Crawford*  
**Project Leader 2011 – 2013**

## Children's University

Thanks to a grant from The Newton Trust, we have been able 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 6-8 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 115 children how to enjoy experimenting with recipes and try new, healthy foods. As one of our regular volunteers Olivia Peel explains 'Volunteering for the Children's University has been such a fun and rewarding experience. It's great to see the children discover new ingredients and get stuck in!'

I have been informed by the school that our sessions continue to be the children's most requested course. Last week, one of the children handed me a letter she had written for me at lunchtime. It said " ... I am starting to like cooking and I can now make food I did not know how to make. Emilija and Olivia (*our current regular volunteers*) have been a great help during this University class." The fact that she had been enjoying our session so much that she had decided to write to me really brought a tear to my eye and makes all the washing up worthwhile!

It is apparently very popular with the parents too. One parent informed me "..... he has never been keen on fruit and vegetables and has refused to try any new ones for the past two years. I couldn't believe it when he told me how nice the Turkey & Apricot Burgers were that he made with you last week, I am not sure he even realised apricot was a fruit! Thank you for opening his eyes to the delightful world of fruit and veg."

*Caroline Ward*  
**Project Leader 2013-2014**

## Craft Room

Craft Room is a small project run weekly for vulnerable children in the Cambridge area. It generally involves arts and crafts such as painting, drawing and card making. However, it also expands to playing with toys (e.g., bowling, Lego), puppets, and the sand pit. The number of children changes from week to week and varies roughly between two and ten. At the moment we have about eight children attending and their ages range from about 2 to about 12 years-old. This means that the volunteers are able to help different children at different times, giving them a varied volunteering experience.

Volunteers are asked to commit to the program for at least a term and attend the sessions at least once every two weeks. We currently have five volunteers in the project which means that children often receive one-to-one attention. This term we made a slight change to the organisation of the project. Instead of children and volunteers freely choosing their activities at the session, now each week one volunteer is responsible for planning an activity and bringing the respective materials (e.g., planning to make Halloween decoration and bringing pumpkins). Although children are still given the option of doing other art projects or playing with other toys, this new structure gives children a sense of novelty and motivates them to engage with the activities. This year we have also done a couple of trips to the Funky Fun House in collaboration with the Park Life project. Children really value those trips, and I hope that this can be continued in the future.

Volunteering with Craft Room is a very rewarding experience for both children and volunteers. Because we have a consistent group of enthusiastic volunteers, children usually establish a close relationship with the volunteers and become comfortable with them. The sessions give them a chance to express their creativity in a safe and fun environment, and tell their stories through their artworks. Volunteers are grateful for the opportunity to connect with the community in such meaningful way and hopefully make a difference in these children's lives.

***Gabi Pavarini***  
***Project Leader 2014***

## Parklife

Parklife involves SCA volunteers taking a group of vulnerable children to the park every weekend. All the children are from single-parent families in the Cambridge area and many are going through extremely difficult periods in their lives. The time that we spend with the children every weekend gives their parents a chance to relax as well as giving the children a chance to run, climb, jump, slide, swing, blow bubbles, throw frisbees and generally have fun.

We tend to be in the park for about an hour and then, after children and volunteers are suitably tired, we go to feed old bread to the ducks, working very hard not to let the smaller children eat it themselves. After that we take the children back home, although they are often very reluctant to let us leave them!

In 2013, we were able to keep the project running over the Easter and summer holidays; it was easy to see that the extra stability made a real difference to many of the children we work with. We've even been told that when the children are going out somewhere during the week, they often ask if the volunteers are coming!

***Mohan Ganesalingam***  
***Project Leader 2009 – 2014***

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

This year nearly 70 children have been paired up with volunteers. Advertising SCA's TESL scheme through College bulletins and by posting information to the Modern and Medieval Languages Faculty (both languages and Linguistics Students) bulletin has proved successful. The scheme was also advertised on the bulletin sent out to Psychology students at the University. Targeting students who might have an academic interest in teaching languages seems to have been a good idea and proved effective. It's definitely worth sending out emails to these lists again (Contacting department/faculty secretaries is the best way to go about this).

A few children are still to be paired up, though these are not in central Cambridge, but on the outskirts. Targeting students at Colleges like Homerton and Girton (and the other 'Hill Colleges', Churchill, Fitzwilliam and Murray Edwards) might prove a good way of pairing those kids on the outskirts of Cambridge. Sending leaflets and information to Colleges for their individual College Freshers' Fairs in October is also an effective way of recruiting people to SCA and worked well at the Girton Freshers' Fair at the start of this academic year.

A coffee and biscuits meeting was held at the SCA Office on a Saturday for TESL volunteers during Michaelmas. This was a good opportunity for those current volunteers to talk about resources, swap teaching ideas and discuss any problems they might have been experiencing. It was also an opportunity for new or perspective volunteers to find out more and decide if it was something they wanted to get involved in. More communication between TESL volunteers is definitely needed. The creation of a TESL volunteers Facebook group or a TESL volunteers' email list would be a good idea and is something the current Project Leaders are looking into.

The TESL project Leaders are currently working on redrafting the introductory pack which will be given to new volunteers. The new pack contains information about ascertaining a child's level of English during the first home visit and recommends a series of good online resources, in addition to giving some general advice about teaching approaches and what the aim of the TESL scheme is. A list of useful resources at the SCA Office will also be included. The Leaders' aim is to have this pack finished by the end of Full Lent Term. The project leaders are also working on the creation of small packs of themed worksheets for kids.

I'd just like to say that it's been fantastic to have been a TESL volunteer and to have been one of the Project Leaders this term. I can't believe it took me until my second year of University to find SCA! I think that SCA's TESL scheme is doing brilliant things for children and their families in Cambridge. TESL volunteers have been able to help not just the kids, but also their parents, for example doing things like explaining complicated letters from the local authority or notes from school or Doctors. Volunteers seem generally happy and feel like they're doing something really worthwhile and kids and parents are also pleased.

***Jack Pulman-Slater***  
***Project Leader 2013-2014***

## Homework Help (St Matthews)

Homework help club at St. Matthew's has grown significantly in the past few months, most notably since Christmas, with numbers going up to around 20-25 children each week. The same children come most weeks, meaning names can be learnt and links established. Volunteer numbers were adequate at the beginning of Michaelmas, but became somewhat short towards the end of the term and at the beginning of Lent. Fortunately, numbers have since picked up, with 4-6 volunteers coming each week. However, despite a long list of volunteers, those who come regularly are few, causing significant variation week to week. About 10 regular volunteers would ensure that all children got as much help as needed.

Each week most children leave with most of their homework completed, and seem to appreciate the group, particularly once they have finished their work and can play on the computers! The only group of children who could perhaps benefit from more intervention are the oldest, who are most reticent to ask for help, but often need it the most – this will be something to focus on as the club continues. Their maths homework particularly can be difficult to help with given the multiplicity of different methods children and volunteers have been taught, so some guidance from the school may be sought on this. Connections with the school have become slightly more difficult, as teachers now vary week to week, so the school's thoughts on the group are harder to establish. Overall, expectations regarding when sessions are run remain clearly articulated and the group has remained strong, being both educational and enjoyable for children and volunteers.

**Chloe Bentley**

*Project Leader 2012 - 2014*

## Homework Help (St Philip's)

During the past year the role of SCA within the St Philip's school Homework Club has developed considerably. There are now regularly between two and five volunteers who work alongside two members of the school's staff every Wednesday for an hour after school. We work with around twenty children, ranging from Year One to Year Five, but most commonly in Years Three and Four. The pupils usually have a homework sheet with them which describes the work they have been set and when it has to be done by. Volunteers can use these in order to suggest which bits of work should be concentrated on in each session.

The children's reasons for attending vary widely which can cause some difficulties regarding motivation. It occasionally becomes apparent that some parents view the club as a child-minding service, but the majority of children are enthusiastic about staying behind after school to get help with their homework. The perception of Homework Club as a 'remedial' source of help for children who have fallen behind seems to have dissipated in the past two terms and this has had a positive effect on the self-esteem of the children we have been working with. One of the biggest problems we face is that the Homework Club is conducted entirely in a computer room, with each child working at their own computer. While this is obviously necessary for research based homework it can prove distracting and does encourage some of the children to copy and paste their work from the internet. This means that as a volunteer quite a lot of time is spent encouraging pupils to use their computers more sensibly.

On the whole however the club is becoming increasingly successful. The pupils really appreciate seeing the same faces coming in to help every week and some really strong bonds between volunteers and pupils have been built. The wide range of subjects studied by volunteers means that we are almost always able to provide assistance, regardless of the topic being studied. Pupils are not afraid to ask for help and usually respond to encouragement enthusiastically. I hope that the club will continue to develop in this manner in future months.

**Ellen Hurley**

*Project Leader 2013 - 2014*

## Homework Help (St Luke's)

The sessions of Homework Help in St Lukes are highly variable depending on the number of children and volunteers who turn up each week but are nonetheless both entertaining and useful for those who attend. The number of children at a session can be as low as six or seven and as high as around twelve but it is great to see that there around six children who are present every week. The number of volunteers also varies, there's usually around three or four of us but occasionally even six or seven. When the children bring specific homework to the club, our job is fairly easy, however it is often the case that the child has no homework at all or has already completed it which is a little more challenging. In this case, it might take some time to find out what numeracy/literacy level the child is at and what he or she needs help with, but as soon as this question is resolved, the children are truly enthusiastic and even excited about working with us. It is a delight to see when parents come to Homework Club and their children are proudly showing them what we did for the last hour and ask us to come again the next week.

*Zsófi Szojka*

*Project Leader 2014*

## 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.

We currently have 28 clients matched with volunteers and a further 6 clients who were are in the process of finding a volunteer for.

*Ania Rygielska*

*Project Leader 2011-2014*

## **Befriending the Elderly (St Georges)**

Befriending the elderly in group setting is a popular activity. Our partnership with St Georges continued on from last year with two sessions available every weekday. This has generated a lot of interest with its flexibility. However, we have run into some difficulties in late October as St George's decided to change their procedures for recruiting volunteers. They now ask volunteers to fill in a 16 page long application form (which asks not only for references, but also for education and employment history) and do another DBS check. A volunteer can't start unless all the paperwork is sorted, which can take several weeks. Despite these obstacles, we have a few volunteers who have managed to get past the hurdles and are enjoying their volunteering, helping with activities such as Arts and Crafts.

As mentioned in the Administrator's Report, we have been in touch with Stanton House. They are happy to welcome volunteers for their coffee morning, and are happy to accept the volunteers if SCA has done all the checks, which will enable the students to start helping straight away.

*Ania Rygielska*

## **Betty Stubben's Musical Entertainment Group**

Betty Stubben's Music Group is going strong, carrying on the forty year tradition. Despite losing several members at the end of last academic year (including Katharine, last year's leader) there is a core group of around four or five in attendance every week, and often a couple more.

I took on leadership of the group in October and have been helped by Ania at SCA, who has liaised with the homes to arrange where we go to each week, taking on the role previously played by Steven. Unfortunately, I will be leaving Cambridge in March but have been able to pass on the baton to Isobel, who joined Betty's at the beginning of the year.

Going to Betty's each week continues to be an absolute pleasure. Ross provides the vital accompaniment on the keyboard. Jo and Matt kindly bring the keyboard and music stands whenever there is no piano at a home, as well as lugging along a cavernous green rucksack containing decades-worth of Betty's songbooks, poetry books, tambourines, etc.. Favourites from the songbook this year have been 'I'm getting married in the morning' and 'Que Sera Sera'. 'The Bricklayers Song' is the most divisive, prompting both hysterics and disapproval. Jo and Matt raise a giggle with their poetry readings, and Ross' rendition of 'Have Some Madeira My Dear' is always a hit.

There is evidence that the residents of the homes enjoy it too! Last week's session in Stanton House proved so popular that a group of the residents from there came along to Brandon Court this week too and Jo's rendition of the chocolate cake poem brought the house down!

I will be very sad to be leaving Betty's but am proud to have been part of this great institution!

*Anna Duncan*  
*Project Leader 2013-2014*

# Junior Treasurer's Report

2013-14 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 and increase our overall reserves, 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. The overall amount raised through grants was up on last year, coming to just over £29,000. 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. However, we need to remain cautious as the BBC Children In Need money runs out at the end of this year and it is going to be hard to get another three-year grant from them.

The colleges are always an important source of donations for SCA. This year the letters to the colleges were sent out later than usual as we were pulling together an accurate database of past donations and current contacts. This has been helpful as college donations have been declining over the past few years and it had been hard to keep track of which colleges had already pledged money and which ones needed to be contacted. We now have a database with comments regarding the best time / person / committee to target in each college and chaplaincy. I am delighted that this has resulted in donations from a number of colleges who had not donated for a few years. Chaplains have also made valuable contributions, for which we are very grateful. Indeed, we seek to further enhance our links with the chaplaincy of the university in the future. The income generated through both College and Chapel donations so far has been £1,350.

Our Disclosure and Barring Service (new name for the old Criminal Record Bureau) income is still a significant source of funding, and we continue to have a reliable stream of forms to administer. No Government changes to the DBS system have yet been implemented, but we remain vigilant to the possibility of changes in the system and are prepared to adapt to any alterations as they are announced. Revenue raised through DBS was, like our other sources of income, higher 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 begun last year, and held a second Charity Smoker earlier this term which sold out once again. With a change in Footlights president next year, it is worth making the effort to continue this popular source of fundraising. SCA has also been chosen as one of the charities to be supported by the St. John's College May Ball 2014, which should both be a useful source of income and raise our profile. 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. While we continued the regular Bonfire night bucket shaking, street collections in general no longer seem a worthwhile source of income (they are not very productive, people do not enjoy them and it potentially annoys the public rather than raising our profile in a positive way).

All in all, SCA has had a very good year, with all our major sources of income being higher than last year. This has enabled us to spend more on activities, notably the Children's University and 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.

**Hayley Flood**  
Junior Treasurer 2013/2014



# 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

Bailey Thomas Trust  
Barclays Community Fund  
BBC Children in Need  
Cambridge City Council  
Cambridge Community Foundation  
Cambridge Council for Voluntary Services  
Cambridge University Societies Syndicate  
Cambridge RAG  
Clothworkers Foundation  
David Hardy Project  
Deans and Chaplains Association  
ESRI Charitable Fund  
Isaac Newton Trust  
Mathsworks  
Steven Glanville Trust  
True Colours Trust  
The University of Cambridge Colleges

## Our Partners

### **Other organisations**

Activities4Cambridge  
Cambridge Student Hub  
Cambridge Women's Aid  
Cambridge Wine Merchants, especially Brett Turner  
Nicky Buckley and her team at CU Community Affairs

## **Primary Schools**

St Matthews (Homework Help club)  
St Phillip's (Homework Help club)  
Queen Ediths (Homework Help club)  
St Luke's (Homework and Football club)  
Shirley (Homework Club)  
Girton Glebe (Homework Club)

## **Secondary Schools**

Parkside (TESL in school)  
Coleridge (TESL in school)

## **Care Homes / Independent Living Homes**

Barnabus Court  
Ditchburn Place  
Ellis House  
Royal Albert Homes  
Stanton House  
St George's  
Stories House  
Whitefryers

**The many individual friends of SCA**

**And of course –**

**Our AMAZING Volunteers**

Student Community Action

10 Pembroke Street

Cambridge

CB2 3QY

01223 350 365

[mail@cambridgesca.org.uk](mailto:mail@cambridgesca.org.uk)

[www.cambridgesca.org.uk](http://www.cambridgesca.org.uk)

