



Annual Report 2019 to 2020

SCRATCH
33 Mount Pleasant Industrial Estate
Southampton
SO14 0SP

Registered Charity No. 1078344

OUR MISSION STATEMENT IS: -

To relieve the effects of poverty for families and individuals with needs recognised by approved referral agencies in Southampton and the surrounding area and to support likeminded organisations.

At SCRATCH we work to fight local hardship.

We aim to help vulnerable residents, support third sector / community organisations and reduce waste.

Most of us face major challenges at some time in our life resulting from such things as physical impairment, mental health condition or ill health. Difficulties are compounded by economic disadvantage. Our key projects are in place to meet poverty and deprivation needs and are therefore 'needs driven', which adds additional complexities to strategic planning.

However, SCRATCH now has over 20 years' experience of operating a range of social action projects through partnerships with Southampton City Council, Winchester City Council, the Anti-Poverty Network and other organisations. We are therefore aware of current unmet needs and well placed to act upon new poverty / deprivation issues that may arise in the future.

We want to have a positive impact on environmental sustainability by seeking to increase reuse and repair of material, to realise its social value and to future-proof the provision of affordable furniture to vulnerable groups and low-income residents across the county.

LAST YEAR AT A GLANCE

DORCAS PROJECT Made 1342 deliveries of furniture and household items A 26% increase on the previous year	CHRISTMAS COMPLETE 2047 children and young people received a parcel of toys and other gifts A 10% increase on the previous year
COMMUNITY RE-PAINT Redistributed over 2300 litres of paint to referred clients and community groups	VOLUNTEERING OPPORTUNITIES Enabling volunteers to overcome social isolation and learn new skills, helping them to secure work
WELFARE PROVISION Provided White Goods and Utility top-up vouchers to Southampton residents who met the priority need	SCRATCH Shops at New Milton and Southampton Created an income and provided volunteering opportunities

CHAIR'S REPORT FOR 2019 / 2020

When I took over as chair of SCRATCH in November 2019, I was prepared for tackling the kinds of challenges that face every small charity in our current times. What I could never have envisaged was coronavirus and how a small, infectious agent could have such a dramatic effect on our lives, on our work and on the way we serve local people in hardship.

Before Covid-19 came on the horizon, SCRATCH had another year that was both busy and challenging, one which saw an increased demand for our services, with more clients than previous years needing and receiving our help. However, we got to the end of the financial year in better shape than forecast, due to the hard work and dedication of our staff, volunteers and supporters. In a financial year of uncertainties surrounding Brexit, the political landscape and – more recently – coronavirus, funds have been tight for many people and organisations. It shows the worth of SCRATCH that individuals and companies have continued to support us.

2019 was a special year for the charity, being the twentieth year of operation: a successful showcase event celebrated this achievement. Subsequent to that, we had been refocussing our activities. Our involvement in the HCC Reuse scheme came to an end in August 2019 so we made the decision to focus on our core projects, in particular DORCAS, with our various retail projects being used primarily to subsidise these other activities. Our staff and volunteers are committed to ensuring these core projects continue to make a real difference to people's lives.

As the 2019/20 financial year ended, we were preparing to put some of our staff on furlough while maintaining our welfare line, at a time it would be needed the most. As 2020/21 begins we are planning the steps we will need to take to restart other parts of our operation in a way that is safe for our staff, volunteers and clients. There will be new challenges ahead, not least making up the income we have lost due to the DORCAS Project being suspended and our shops being closed until June 2020, but we're still here and willing to tackle the next test.

After all, service is not about doing the easy thing: it's about doing the right thing at the right time and in the right manner. SCRATCH is ready.

Ann Laird, Chair of the Board of Directors

OUR ACTIVITIES AND EXISTING PROJECTS SEEK TO ADDRESS THE EFFECTS OF POVERTY CAUED BY, BUT NOT LIMITED TO: -

- | | | |
|--------------------|-----------------------------|------------------------------|
| ◆ Unemployment | ◆ Domestic Violence | ◆ Lack of skills / education |
| ◆ Debt | ◆ Exclusion | ◆ Benefit issues / delays |
| ◆ Family Breakdown | ◆ Physical & Mental Illness | ◆ Homelessness |

WE DO THIS BY SUPPLYING BASIC NEEDS INCLUDING: -

- | | |
|--|--|
| ◆ Furniture | ◆ Domestic Appliances - currently limited to particular client groups living in Southampton (other areas at a non subsidised price) |
| ◆ Household items | ◆ Utility top ups - currently limited to particular client groups living in Southampton and also for Portsmouth City Council and Hampshire County Council through the Environment Centre |
| ◆ Work experience / volunteering opportunities | |
| ◆ Training | |
| ◆ Advice and guidance as appropriate | |
| ◆ Gifts at Christmas | |
| ◆ Paint | |
| ◆ Small electrical items | |

Fighting poverty is just as relevant today as it has ever been and it's happening on our own doorsteps. SCRATCH Charity - through its projects - offers practical help to the local families referred to it by trusted referral agencies.

These are our projects and how they help. Further details can be found on the following pages.

- ♦ **If children have no bed to sleep on ...** The Dorcas Project (page 4)
- ♦ **If clients have no fridge** The Discretionary Fund (page 5)
- ♦ **If clients can't pay the electric ...** Welfare Line (page 5)
- ♦ **If clients can't improve the peeling walls ...** Community Re-Paint (page 6)
- ♦ **If clients can't give their child a present at Christmas ...** Christmas Complete (page 7)
- ♦ **If clients' mental health stops them getting a job ...** Empowering Volunteers (page 8)

DORCAS PROJECT

Providing a furniture package is more than simply giving people items: as SCRATCH staff tell from their own experience.

"One of the first deliveries I helped with was for a single bed to a girl who had only ever slept on a mattress on the floor. She was 7 years old!"

A furniture package makes sure that children don't have to spend the night sleeping on the floor and that a family can sit down to dinner together.



In the year ending March 2020, we carried out deliveries that helped 1342 households, benefitting 1679 adults and 1272 children.

An increase of 26% on the previous year

Dorcas Project is the longest running SCRATCH project, in fact it started before SCRATCH was formed. The aim is simple - to provide furniture and household items to individuals and families in need. Everyone we helped is referred by a trusted referral agency (health visitors, local authorities, housing associations, schools etc.) so that we know there is a genuine need.

We can provide a furniture package to furnish an empty property, in situations where people have been homeless and are then allocated accommodation but don't have the goods or finance to furnish it themselves. Or we can provide single items to, for example, replace broken furniture or provide a bed for a child that has outgrown a cot.

We rely on donations from the general public and local businesses which we then redistribute - over 5,880 items were reused in this way. In addition, we are so thankful to funding which allows us to purchase supplies of new kettles, toasters, saucepan sets and occasionally beds to supplement donations.

"I would like to thank the whole SCRATCH team for being there when I have needed you to support my families, without you I would not know where to turn to." Health Visitor



“Thank you for the support given to my late brother. I know he was very grateful for the help he was given when he needed practical assistance. John did not have a lot and I know the support from SCRATCH would have made such a difference to him.”

“I want to donate to you as I work for a local school and we are very impressed with your charity”.

“SCRATCH team, I just want to say how impressed I am with your organisation – I was with a family when furniture was being delivered. Your delivery man was so kind and helpful. Also, the amount and condition of the items given was impressive. The bedding items were so lovely, the children just loved their beds.”

“Thank you so much to the delivery driver Paul. The client is deaf and he made sure to face her and speak clearly so she could understand what he was saying. He made the client feel really comfortable in his presence.”

THE WELFARE LINE AND DISCRETIONARY FUND

The Welfare Line and Discretionary Fund are funded by Southampton City Council to support their residents in crisis situations who meet the strict criteria.

“A washing machine isn’t just another appliance - it means people have clean clothes to go to school or a work interview in”

On behalf of Southampton City Council, SCRATCH runs a Welfare Information Line which is open for direct access for Southampton residents who need help or signposting to other organisations who are able to offer specialised advice. This includes referrals through to the local food banks operated by Southampton City Mission.

Through the Welfare Line and through referral from our normal referral agencies, we can offer Paypoint Utility Top-Up Vouchers so that clients who are in crisis situations, meet the criteria of the scheme and are on a key meter, can top-up their gas / electric.

The fund also enables the supply of new white goods to Southampton residents who are referred by a trusted referral agency and meet the priority need. This is often families who have been homeless and are moving into permanent accommodation and don’t have finances to purchase the items themselves, or where an appliance (such as a washing machine) has broken and they cannot afford to repair or replace it.



“Great service, lovely delivery men, arrived on time even fitted my oven and took my rubbish out. Thank you so much really appreciate it”.

'My client is going to be so grateful for your help, thank you so much'

"I thought I'd update you about the family who received a washing machine back in the summer. Just to say that as I had hoped, this has really opened the door for the family to access more help. The mother and the grandmother have been to see me for support in filling out benefit application forms and are very open to any other advice or sign posting that I have been able to offer so far. Thanks so much for helping us to re-engage a family who had felt let down by professionals."

"Thank you so much this is really helpful for the family during such difficult times."

PAYPOINT ENERGY CREDIT VOUCHER



ID CHECK REQUIRED

Please find your voucher below, this can be redeemed for an energy top-up at any PayPoint store.

In the year ending March 2020, we have: -

- ◆ Issued 1073 Utility Top Ups
- ◆ Helped 1590 Adults and 1546 Children
- ◆ Helped 440 households with White Goods
- ◆ Answered 1636 calls to the Welfare Line

COMMUNITY RE-PAINT

This longstanding project continued to brighten homes across Southampton and the surrounding area, by providing paint for 114 households and 7 community groups. We are grateful to the end of line / dented tins of paint donated by local retailers, with brands including Dulux, Crown, Farrow & Ball, B&Q and Brewers. Access to the project for local families is by our normal referral system and is provided free of charge to enable people to decorate their properties. Community groups are asked to make a small donation towards the operating costs. Over 2,300 litres of paint was redistributed during the year.



REMOVALS PROJECT

This project is able to help people move in emergency situations such as domestic violence, ill health, overcrowding and illegal evictions. Currently we have a scheme, funded by Winchester City Council for their residents, which allows us to carry out 2 such removals each week.

In the year ending March 2020, SCRATCH carried out 19 removals for Winchester City Council, 5 for VIVID Housing Association and 2 for other organisations.

CHRISTMAS COMPLETE

“Opening presents on Christmas morning is something our children take for granted, but for some families, a Christmas Complete parcel is the difference between having presents and having nothing.”

This project, which has been operating for over 25 years, is designed to ensure that no child or young person goes without presents to open on Christmas Day. There are many reasons that people find themselves in need of help and this is one comment from an agency making a referral in 2019 –

“You kindly helped our client last year. She and her partner are both in work at present but neither job is well paid or particularly secure. There remain three dependent children at home. The family is heavily dependent on Tax Credits, but these are reduced substantially because of overpayments in previous years. We hope you can help this lady who faces a continual struggle to manage a quite large household on limited income that constantly fluctuates, while also maintaining regular payments to creditors”.



In 2019, 2047 children and young people from over 880 families received a parcel containing 7 or 8 gifts. The parcels include books, games, puzzles, age relevant toys, arts and craft materials and sweets (adjusted accordingly to suit babies and teenagers). Where possible we also include Christmas wrapping paper and tape so that the parent(s) / guardians have the privilege of wrapping the presents themselves which we hope gives them a sense of ownership. As far as the children are concerned the gifts are from their parent(s) / guardians not from a charity.



“I’ve just had a parcel delivered – and I want to say thanks very much. They are beautiful gifts. My children will love them.”

“Thank you for putting smiles on the faces of this most needy family. More than the gifts, the family will feel that people care and we perhaps restore their trust in people.”

“A big thank you to all involved with presents for our families and young people in Temporary Accommodation. I have spoken to a few of them today and they have said how lovely all the gifts are and how generous SCRATCH is. Very much appreciated by all.”

“It made our kids Christmas very special as it was the only presents they received and the gifts were awesome and exactly what wanted. Thank you very much once again “

“Having referred many times I know what a worthwhile project SCRATCH is and what a difference the parcels can make to families at Christmas time.”



EMPOWERING VOLUNTEERS

Our volunteers are vital to the operation of the various SCRATCH projects and they bring a range of skills and abilities to support the SCRATCH staff. Many who join us are unemployed and are

seeking work experience as a step towards finding employment. They are supported in their roles by our Employment Support Officer, a key role within the organisation, who is able to help to prepare them for work or further training. One to one support is offered with basic literacy and IT skills, producing CV's, helping with the completion of job applications and interview techniques.

Training courses are provided which enables volunteers to learn new skills, update their CV and obtain a certificate (for accredited courses) which for many is something they have not achieved for a long time.

Volunteering can help to improve health as people start to be more active and reduce social isolation as volunteers work as part of a team and eat lunch together.



“A client I directly work with enjoys the social aspect, working alongside and eating lunch with other volunteers. He also gains a sense of pride and satisfaction seeing a project through from start to finish”

“I was referred by Homegroup because I was using a lot of drink and drugs due to a bereavement. I got myself into a lot of financial difficulties. I hadn't worked for a while because of mental health issues. I was suicidal and felt that I had lost everything. I was isolated from my mum, lost my dad and didn't see family. I heard about SCRATCH and because of your help, knowing I could come here and start... this place has helped me do wonders for me; I don't know how to say just how much. It has got my confidence back. Meeting new people helped. It's helped to get me straight. There have been difficulties, I have felt like going back on them (the drugs) but I have come here. I was told by (member of staff), if I feel like that just to come here. It has changed my life. It stopped me having suicidal thoughts, given me skills and confidence. If it wasn't for this place, I wouldn't be here now. I want to say thanks to ... I am now having contact with my kids. (Ben)



*In the year ending March 2020, 10 volunteers found employment
23 received a certificate following completion of accredited training
26 took part in unaccredited training*

Over 20 received help with CV writing, completing application forms, basic English etc.

As well as helping out on various projects, some volunteers were creative in our workshop (creating items from pallets - planters, mud kitchens and garden furniture - and upcycling donated items) and in the textile room (cushions, bags, table runners etc). These items were sold in our shops creating additional income for SCRATCH.



SHOWCASE EVENT

In June 2019 we held an open day to showcase our work. We were pleased to welcome local councillors, council officials, referral agencies and other supporters who enjoyed looking round the site and finding out more about our work. Several musicians entertained us and a BBQ and other refreshments were appreciated by all.



SHOPS

During the year we operated two shops. The first in East Street, Southampton, which we have been running for a number of years, was operated by a trusted volunteer for part of the year. Following his 'retirement', a volunteer team have been manning the shop on a daily basis with staff oversight. This shop deals primarily with smaller furniture items, bric-a-brac, small electrical items, toys and books.

Our second shop in Station Road, New Milton, is a new venture and has been managed by a new staff member - Kelly. This much bigger outlet enables us to sell larger furniture items that are surplus to the requirements of Dorcas Project.

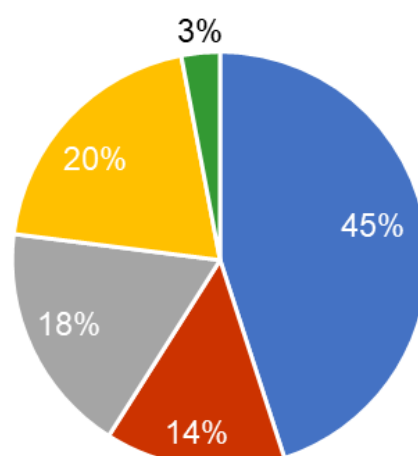
Income from the two shops grossed £124,923 (20% of our income for the year).

FINANCE

Donations for the year totalled £84,363 (14% of income) including £18,965 from fundraising activities. We are grateful to the many people who support our work on a monthly basis and those that give one off sums (particularly around Christmas time). Thanks to those who gift aid their donations we were able to reclaim £2,838.

Grants during the year amounted to £276,675 (45% of income). The largest being the discretionary fund from Southampton City Council which provides utility top up vouchers and domestic appliances, accounting for 54% of grant funding, £148,733 in total.

Income for
2019 / 2020
£612,058



- Grants
- Dorcas Project Income
- Other Income
- Donations
- Shop Sales

Earned income comes from the charges for Dorcas Project (18%) - realising £112,796 - and from our two shops which grossed £124,923 (20% of income). The pallet wood furniture project added an additional £7,936 to sales income.

Following are the churches, organisations and grant funders who have supported us over the year (for amounts over £500)

CHURCHES	OTHER DONATIONS	GRANTS
St James by the Park, Shirley, £2,750	Deloitte £10,251	Lloyds Bank Foundation £24,800
Thornhill Baptist £800	Atlantic Refrigeration £2, 632	Albert Hunt Foundation £5,000
St James Road Methodist, Shirley £610	Freemasons Bikers £2,457	James Wise Trust £5,000
Emmanuel Christian Centre, Shirley £600	Rotary Club of Southampton, £1,160	Jurgens Charitable Trust £3,000
Colne Avenue Baptist £600	Mizon Meridian £1,120	29th May 1961 Foundation £2,500
Above Bar Church £500	Turbocam Ltd. £600	W.O Street Charity £2,400
	SCC Christmas Jumpers £560	Jerusalem Trust £2,000
In addition, money has been received from: - ♦ Just Giving £6,806 ♦ Virgin Money £3,703 ♦ Stripe Payments £1,114		Pat Newman Memorial Trust £2,000
		Secretarial Law £2,000
		Charities Trust £1,800
		Leeds Building Society £900
		Brunswick Trust £800

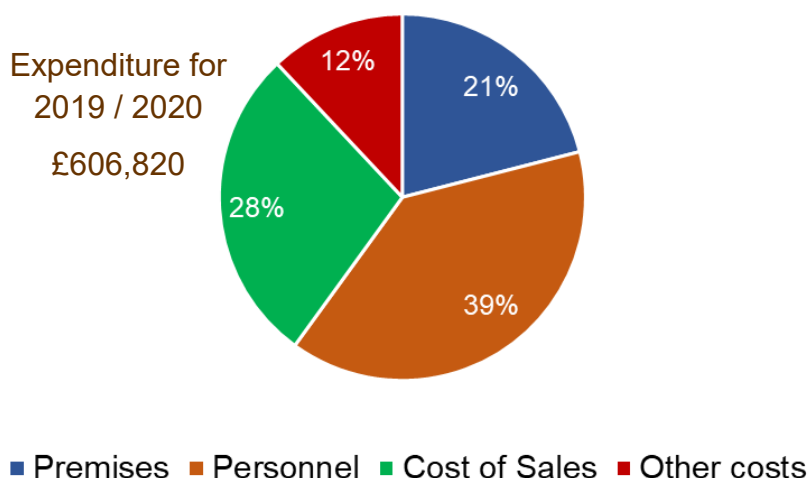
Our expenditure of £606,820 can be categorised into three main sections - premises, personnel and cost of sales.

Our total premises costs were £129,839 and can be split down as follows: -

- ♦ Our main operating centre at Mount Pleasant accounted for £93,330 of this including rent, rates, maintenance etc.

- ♦ Our East Street shop has an annual rent of £24,000 and overall running costs came to £32,736

- ♦ We are very grateful to Bradbeers who provide the New Milton shop free of charge meaning our



Personnel costs totalled £238,260, made up of: -

- ◆ Salaries of £216,169
- ◆ Volunteer expenses £16,845
- ◆ Training and travel costs £5,346

Cost of purchases amounting to £168,317 including: -

- ◆ Domestic Appliances, mainly, but not exclusively, for the discretionary fund, which totalled £106,828.
- ◆ Spending £7,262 on basic pack items such as kettles, toasters, pots and pans
- ◆ £54,227 on utility top-up vouchers

These costs are covered by grants / service level agreements / Dorcas Project income.

Other significant costs include: -

- ◆ Motor expenses £34,415
- ◆ Office costs £14,601
- ◆ Insurance costs £5,590
- ◆ Loan repayments £4,800
- ◆ The cost of the Christmas complete project £7,648

Board of Directors: -

Mrs Ann Laird (Chair)

Ms Su Mihelic

Mr David Bartlett

Mr Nicholas Warn

Mrs Jane Smith (resigned March 2020)



Staff team as at end March 2020

Mike Smith - Senior Manager (Operations)

Annette Davis - Senior Manager (Resources)

Ian Dowdell - Furniture Manager

Paul Williams - Driver

Polly Burton - Employment Support Officer

Kathryn Baker - Receptionist (part time)

Emma Mason - Welfare Information Officer*

Lucy Taylor - Welfare Information Officer*

Kelly Beck - Shop Manager (New Milton)

**job share*



Further photos from our showcase event

LLOYDS BANK FOUNDATION

England & Wales



Supported by



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