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SAMARITANS

Our vision



Every life lost to suicide is a tragedy, and our vision is that fewer people die by suicide.

Our mission



To be there for anyone who needs someone. To give people ways to cope and be there for others. And to campaign to make suicide prevention a priority.

Our values



Listening

Exploring feelings alleviates distress and helps people to reach a better understanding of their situation and the options open to them.

Confidentiality

If people feel safe, they are more likely to be open about their feelings.

Non-judgmental

We want people to be able to talk to us without fear of prejudice or rejection.

People making their own decisions

We believe that people have the right to find their own solution and that telling people what to do takes responsibility away from them.

Human contact

Giving people time, undivided attention and empathy meets a fundamental emotional need and reduces distress and despair.

A registered charity

Section 1

Section One:

Reference and Administration Details

Charity Name: **Samaritans of Scarborough**

Registered Charity Number: **1171040**

Charity's Principal Address: **40 Trafalgar Street West**
Scarborough
North Yorkshire
YO12 7AS

Names of the charity trustees who manage the charity

Trustee Name	Office (if any)	Dates acted if not for the whole year	Name of person or body entitled to appoint trustee (if any)
Gill Nichol	Branch Director & Chair of Trustees		Branch Volunteers
Elizabeth Lorton-Gilbert	Treasurer		Branch Volunteers
Heidi Walker	Secretary	Until 1 March '26	Branch Volunteers
Kim Bevan	Secretary	From 1 March '26	Co-opted
Richard Shore			Branch Volunteers
David Barry		From 23 October '25	Branch Volunteers
Peter Craggs		From 23 October '25	Branch Volunteers
Michael Stones		From 23 October '25	Branch Volunteers

The charity does not have any paid executive staff or professional advisers other than our accountants.

Section Two:

Structure, governance and management

Description of the charity's trusts

Type of governing document	Constitution
How the charity is constituted	Trustees
Trustee selection methods	Elected by the volunteers (although the trustees can co-opt up to two additional trustees if desired)

Additional governance information

Trustees are voted in at the AGM; all trustees are required to complete online training on our *Samaritans Home* website and have to complete all relevant associated forms.

This branch is an affiliate of the national organisation and must raise its own funds.

Although we have our own Branch Constitution and structure, we are also obliged to complete a *Quality Review*, which takes place with the appointment of a new Branch Director, which is usually every three years. This review process is managed and overseen by regional and central office staff. In addition, the central office sends us weekly information emails, which we action and share as necessary.

As an affiliate branch we work with local organisations to make them aware of our work, and to work with them where appropriate.

The trustees meet every six-eight weeks to discuss the running of the branch; these meetings include regular reviews of our Risk Register, which is a live document.

The trustees have given due regard to public benefit guidance published by the Charity Commission and consider that the activities described within this report demonstrate how the charity fulfils its responsibilities to provide benefit to the public.

Section Three:

Our Objectives and Activities

Summary of our objectives as set out in the constitution

1. To offer support to those in Scarborough, the surrounding areas, and elsewhere (calls and online chats can come in from anywhere) who are experiencing feelings of distress or despair, including those who may be at risk of suicide. Callers can expect to receive confidential emotional support at any time of the day or night. We believe that the emotional health of many callers improves after talking to us. Our overriding aim is to reduce the incidence of suicide and suicidal behaviour. Samaritans' vision is that fewer people die by suicide.

2. To promote a better understanding in society of suicide, suicidal behaviour and the value of expressing feelings that may otherwise lead to suicide or impaired emotional health.

3. To collaborate with and support Samaritans Central Charity and its branches in fulfilling these objects.

Summary of the main activities undertaken for the public benefit in relation to these objects

By listening to our callers we aim to help them find ways of coping with emotional distress and reduce the number of our callers who choose to die by suicide.

We also support those whose distress is less acute, in the hope that they will not reach the point of despair resulting in them wishing to end their lives.

Nationally, we make our support available in many ways, by telephone, email, letter, and face-to-face, in prisons, schools and other educational settings.

Locally, we support contacts via the telephone, online chat, and through outreach events at colleges and universities as well as other settings including the railway station and through our established connections with the police, the fire service and public events including Scarborough Armed Forces Day and Scarborough Pride.

Our provision of Online Chat (OC) has grown significantly. At the time of the 2025 AGM only three volunteers were OC-trained. In February 2026 we ran a training session for OC and now have eight OC-trained volunteers. The demand is growing and we plan to train more of our branch volunteers in OC in the coming months.

The branch offers both national and local services. National via the 24/7 service to callers (both via phone calls and OC) and local via our outreach and associated activities.

Further information on the contribution made by our volunteers

Our volunteers are the backbone of all that we do and are our most valuable asset, giving up their time to offer help and support to some of the most vulnerable and distressed people in our community.

Our listening volunteers are asked to complete 144 hours of listening over a calendar year (including evening and night hours), which averages out to a three-hour listening shift each week. We are a small branch, but we like to think we punch above our weight in terms of activity and output! In addition to the core listening role, many volunteers are also volunteer shift leaders and/or play an active role in another part of the life of the branch – for example training, outreach, and fundraising. Two of our volunteers have regional roles.

Our support volunteers fulfil a variety of functions, including fundraising and outreach – see Section 4, starting on page 8, for more information on their activities.

Section Four:

The highlights of our year – reports from the Branch and Deputy Directors

The Leadership Team

Gill Nichol	Branch Director
Libby Lorton-Gilbert	Vice-Director and Deputy Director (Outreach & Fundraising)
Rik Shore	Vice-Director and Deputy Director (Training)
Bridget Robinson-Clark	Deputy Director (Volunteer Support) *until December 2025*
Paula Craggs	Deputy Director (Volunteer Support) *from December 2025*
Heidi Walker	Deputy Director (Leaders) *until February 2026*
Steve Witty	Deputy Director (Leaders) *from March 2026*
Lindsey Redford	Deputy Director (Rota)
Ruth Harper	Deputy Director (Recruitment)

Branch Director

This report covers my second year as Branch Director and was written in September 2026. If I had to sum it up in three key phrases, they would be ‘Quality Review’; ‘Future-proofing ’, and ‘Redecoration of the Centre’!

The Quality Review

A good amount of time was spent on the *Quality Review*, which concluded in May 2025. The process was simple yet substantial and rigorous. We worked with two ‘Quality Mentors’ – Helen Bridger and Bill Donnelly – who looked at all aspects of the workings of the branch, the volunteers and the leadership team. The review consisted of three online meetings, a branch meeting open to all volunteers and two meetings with the BLT, all of which took place in May 2025. With all these things, there is much work that goes on in the background – but it was all worth it as the process was helpful and outcomes positive. The Leadership team and I were delighted with the final report.

The full report was made available to all branch volunteers, and a hard copy is on the kitchen noticeboard. Here are a couple of highlights:

“It was made very clear from the outset that Scarborough has adopted a can-do attitude in all branch activities, ensuring the well-being of volunteers and callers is paramount in all that they do. There is a programme of monthly volunteer social activities, a programme of external talks and outreach activities and a commitment to develop ongoing training over the next 12 months. We were impressed by the high percentage of volunteers who attended the branch meeting and spoke freely about personal experiences and involvement in branch activities.”

“Despite having a relatively small branch, Scarborough’s rota contribution per active listening volunteer is exceptional. They particularly excel in opening twilight shifts and are presently targeting increasing their rota coverage overnight during the times of greatest demand. They already rank very highly compared to many bigger branches.”

The key development areas highlighted by our Quality Mentors were to increase the size of the branch by planning and implementing a recruitment, training and retention strategy; focus on rota expectations including increasing cover for high-need shifts (to help reduce caller wait time) and deliver additional volunteer training. As demonstrated by the reports from the Deputy Directors included in this report, we have made progress in all three areas.

Future-proofing

The news about Samaritans’ Future-proofing strategy broke on 25 July 2025. The central Charity is committed to delivering its strategy and building a sustainable future for Samaritans – and, among other things, this means the branch network will reduce; with some branches closing, some merging, and some continuing as they are now. Scarborough

branch took the news on the chin and, after the initial shock, we took a 'business as usual' approach that has stood us in good stead over the past months. We're still living with this uncertainty, although we know the initial branch closures/mergers will be announced in Autumn 2026. In common with every other Samaritan branch in the UK, we do not yet know our fate however, I am proud of the way we have handled this uncertainty. We continue to be forward-facing – recruiting and training volunteers; developing our existing volunteers and focussing on delivering the very best service we can to our callers.

The redecoration of the Branch

Almost from the first moment I set foot in the kitchen as a mentee (just after the first lockdown ended in July 2020) I wondered why the noticeboards were so resistant to drawing pins … I know I wasn't the only one to experience frustrating episodes with bent drawing pins! When I became Branch Director, I was super keen to install cork boards and, when we decided to re-paint the centre at the end of 2025, I was thrilled we were able to add the cork notice boards to the kitchen and ops room. Sometimes it really is the little things! (It was great to have the paint refresh too – I am particularly fond of the teal walls in the downstairs loo!)

Thanks to the Dulux Decorator Centre in Scarborough, who provided all the paint for the Training Room.

Changes in the Leadership Team

And finally, to round off a year of many changes, the composition of the leadership team changed too. In December we waved goodbye to Bridget, our DD for Volunteer Support, when she moved away from the area and, at the end of February, we were sad to see Heidi step away from her leadership roles (although very happy she remained as a listener). In their places, we welcomed Kim Bevan as Branch Secretary; Steve Witty as DD (Leaders) and Paula Craggs as DD (Volunteer Support).

Thanks for all the help and support

I can only do this role because I am part of many teams and networks. I've been well supported by both the Regional team – thank you, Belinda Merrison and Liz Wilson – the Branch Leadership Team, the Trustees and the volunteers. I've been well supported by many, for which I am very grateful.

The branch and I are also indebted to Steve Witty, (aka Steve 2). He's DD for Leaders but is also the most efficient and competent Health and Safety Officer a branch could wish for. I don't have to consider any of the practicalities and legalities of H&S because I know Steve has it in hand. Thank you, Steve, from all of us

Overall, it's been a satisfying, if challenging, year. Being Branch Director of Scarborough Samaritans is a privilege and a significant commitment of time and energy. Like every

volunteer, I am wholly committed to reducing the number of UK deaths by suicide, and every time I am called upon to attend a meeting, write a report, prepare an agenda or send another email, I usually regain energy and perspective by remembering two or three of the most significant calls I have taken. You probably know the ones. When the call has ended, you feel drained yet strangely satisfied; particularly when the previously distressed caller says something like … “Thank you … you saved my life tonight.”

It encapsulates why I do it. Being a Samaritan and a Volunteer Leader is one of the most important things I do. For all Samaritan volunteers in Scarborough Branch, I am guessing something similar is true for you too. Thank you.

I am more than proud of the Scarborough branch and everyone who gives their time to support our work in whatever capacity; we are all volunteers, and I don’t underestimate the time, effort, energy and commitment we give to the branch and our callers. Thank you.
Gill 819
Branch Director

Leaders

I took over as the Deputy Director (Leaders) at the end of this reporting period, on 1 March 2026. Prior to this, Heidi 802 held this position.

Shift Leaders Cadre

As of April 2026, there were ten Shift Leaders at Scarborough. All the Shift Leaders have at least one other role within the Branch – some as Mentors or part of Outreach Team or the Branch Leadership Team (BLT). This reflects the experience level of most Leaders which helps to keep the process on an even keel.

Covering all shifts, and new candidates

There has been no incidence of a listening shift at Scarborough being cancelled due to the lack of a Shift Leader, although at times it has been close to the wire before someone stepped in at short notice, often for a second or even third shift that week. To ease this, the BLT is always looking for prospective candidates with the potential to become Shift Leaders. Within this, however, it is recognised that not every successful Listening Volunteer wishes to become a Shift Leader, for a wide range of reasons, and this is always respected.

As of April 2026, there were two Listening Volunteers identified as potential Shift Leaders. One had completed the training, and the other had yet to be approached.

Ongoing Leaders development

Safeguarding training for the Leaders' cadre was offered early in 2026, by the Samaritans Central Office Caller Support and Safeguarding Cell, for online presentation later in the year. The offer will be taken up. Additionally, at the last Shift Leaders meeting of the period, it was agreed that meetings will henceforth be held every two months and will include a refresher and discussion session looking at key areas of policy that periodically come up on shift.

Going into the 2026 reporting period

The cadre of Shift Leaders are an enthusiastic team who always cover shifts and co-operate to achieve this where availability is tight. This speaks volumes as to their commitment to our callers and to the service we proudly provide

Steve 2 833
DD (Leaders)

Outreach and Fundraising

Introduction

Overall, we have attended fewer events over the past year than we would have liked. We had several talks and engagements planned; however, some of these were either cancelled or postponed.

Our branch has around 30 volunteers, all of whom contribute as much as they can. Despite the challenges we faced, we continue to engage with our community and seek new opportunities to connect with other organisations. We remain committed to maintaining our presence, raising awareness of our work, and ensuring that our branch continues to be active and well known within the local community.

Monthly highlights

May

- Staintondale miniature railway hosted an afternoon of train rides, cake and tea sales and a tombola with all proceeds going to Samaritans of Scarborough, raising a total of **£630.00** Gill, Libby, Paula and Steve 2 enjoyed a lovely afternoon out.
- Participated in Mental Health Week at Scarborough TEC (12th–16th May).

June

- Participated in Armed Forces Day, which was another great success. We sold cakes and ran a tombola, raising £589.52

- Ali organised a weeklong stint at Scarborough Library, where she arranged some craft activities for attendees.

July

- Outreach at Sainsbury's, which resulted in several enquiries for volunteering.

August

August was a busy and productive month.

- Scarborough Fire Station Open Day
- Scarborough Railway Station, produced some welcome publicity
- Attended the Community Fair in Scarborough, raising £149.18
- Talk at Westborough church for "The Voice"

September

- Took part in Scarborough Pride, although we only managed to take part in part of the parade this year

November

- St Catherine's Hospice hosted a Christmas fair which we attended, raising **£160.50** with a tombola

December

- Paula beautifully decorated a Christmas tree at St Mary's Church, Whitby, in Samaritans colours and cards.

January, February & March

- Brew Monday was celebrated with Paula and Pete hosting a coffee and cake morning at their B&B in Whitby. This was well attended by both volunteers and friends of P&P we also gained a listening volunteer
- Scarborough TEC hosted another dartathon, which was bigger and better than last year; there were a few emotional support contacts
- Scarborough Train station for "County Lines Week"
- Talk at Scarborough hospital.

Ongoing Commitment

Despite being a small team, we continue to reach out to our community and raise vital funds for our branch. Our connections with Scarborough TEC, Coventry University and Scarborough 6th Form College are still strong; they invite us to many of their events and we will attend if we can.

Huge thanks to every volunteer and organisation who has supported us throughout the year.

The Newlands Pub, The Harbour Bar and attendees of Osgodby music group have been consistent contributors
Yorkshire Day celebrations raised £202.65
We raised money from selling Christmas cards; Paula made Marmalade, Paula and Pete's did their charity walk and a quiz night for volunteers.

Special Thanks To: Ali, Brenda, Carmen, Dawn, Gill, Kelly, Kim, Liz C, Lucas, Paula, Pete, Sally, Steve 2 – your time and effort are deeply appreciated.
Libby 732
Deputy Director (Outreach & Fundraising)

Recruitment

Over the past year we've seen an increase in applications from people wishing to train to become a Samaritan volunteer.

This has been helped by the hard work of the Outreach team and a Recruitment drive we had last summer, delivering posters to businesses, public places, Sports Centres etc.

Between April 2025 and March 2026 more than 30 applications were received; 24 people were interviewed and ten people joined the Branch as new listening or support volunteers.

The Branch Leadership Team's decision to use the Samaritan Online Training School (from January 2025) has proved to be very successful. We certainly have seen some great volunteers come through the training and play a big part in the Scarbrough Branch.

A big thank you to Grant, Libby, Heidi, Paula and Rik who have helped and supported me with the many interviews over the past year.

Thank you to all the Mentors for being there and supporting the newly trained volunteers when they come into Branch after their training. And a big thank you to Liz for all her help with the DBS's for the new trainees.

Next year is looking very positive, with several trainees coming through mentoring and should be in Branch soon.
Ruth 582
Deputy Director (Recruitment)

Rota

At the Scarborough branch, we have 30 volunteers who have given us another successful year on the rota. We have been particularly successful in our commitment to our twilight shifts (those that run between 22.00 and 02.00 hours); and I am also very pleased to report that we have seen an increase in the number of night shifts (covering the hours between

02.00 and 06.00) from 21 nights last year to 25 in this. The night hours are when callers are most likely to struggle to be connected to a listening volunteer; there is a significant increase in waiting times. As a branch, we're committed to increasing our night hours and decided to incentivise night hours by weighting them, so each night hour is 'worth' 1½ hours in terms of a volunteer's rota commitment. We have been encouraged by the increase in night hours, but there is scope for improvement, and we are hopeful that the branch's night hours will increase in the coming months.

The Future-proofing work and our region's status as a 'Pathfinder' region means we have been involved in the regional work towards developing a Regional Rota. This is designed to help ensure that, as a Region, we cover as many 'hours of need' as we can. It is yet to be implemented; we are looking at tweaking our branch rota from June 2026.

As a team, Libby, Ruth and myself are so grateful for all you do to help fill the rota - from last minute changes and for putting shifts in ahead of time – we are so appreciative of all you all do. Thank you so much.
Lindsey
Lindsey 603
Deputy Director (Rota)

Training

Over the year we saw a steady flow of new volunteers coming into training – all of whom were trained by the Samaritans Online Training School (OTS). We started using the OTS in January 2025, and over the twelve months covered by this report we gained six new Samaritans: Mark and Mike (full volunteers); Paula 2, Phil and Trevor (PVs) and Jan (mentee); all of whom play an active part in the life of our branch. We have only heard good things about the quality of the training, and we are indebted to the school for all they do.

I have also facilitated two on-house training events: A full training day covering Safeguarding, Follow-up and Third Party Calls in September 2025 and an Online Chat workshop in February 2026. Both were well attended and well received. I plan to deliver more ongoing training for PVs and full volunteers in the coming year – all suggestions welcomed.
Rik 682
Deputy Director (Training)

Volunteer Support

I became DD for Volunteer Support (VS) in December 2025, taking over from Bridget when she moved up to Edinburgh.

The aim of the Branch's Volunteer Support (VS) team is to support the Branch Director in all areas of Volunteer care. This includes pastoral care, offering support and maintaining contact with volunteers who are 'off-rota' for any reason, as well as helping volunteers who might require additional support. There are three of us in the team – me, Michelle and Liz – we aim to be friendly and approachable and we are also responsible for organising the branch social activities. If what we do sounds like something you'd like to be involved in, please let me know.

We kicked off the year with an enjoyable Quiz Night with a pie and peas supper on 10 April – a fun night had by all! In May we held some craft social activities within the Branch – a couple of hours spent crafting over a cup of tea and a chat was very enjoyable. In July we had a summer walk social, a figure-of-8 loop centred around the Salmon Leap pub in Sleights. It was a wonderful summer's day where we also had the opportunity to meet members of the Teesside Branch of Samaritans who joined us on the walk. In August we held a traditional Yorkshire Day celebration at Scarborough Railway Club with a buffet, games, a choir and a quiz. September saw a few of the volunteers taking part in a Pilates taster session, where we discovered we had muscles we didn't know existed! During October we enjoyed a fish and chip supper in branch, and then in December we had a very special Christmas Social event where we were entertained by the Lockton & Levisham Handbell ringers.

2026 started off with the Brew Monday Coffee and cake day in January, which I hosted at my home.

One of the first things I did when I became DD for Volunteer Support was to talk to all volunteer and ask what type of social events they'd like, and how often to hold them. Here's to a social 2026/27!

Paula 851
Deputy Director (Volunteer Support)

Section Five:

Our Financial Overview

Incomings

Donations:	£7524
Fundraising:	£2235
Investment:	£2,492
Other - Refunds:	£ 290

Treasurer’s Report

Overview

As mentioned in the Outreach & Fundraising report, our fundraising activities have been somewhat limited over the past year, and this is reflected in this year's accounts. We

continue to maintain a healthy bank balance thanks to the generous legacy received in the previous year, which provides us with some financial stability and flexibility. However, the branch recognises the importance of re-focussing on our fundraising efforts to ensure the long-term sustainability of the branch.

Many charities have faced challenges in meeting their fundraising targets in recent years, as households continue to experience financial pressures and rising living costs.

We have allocated a portion of our funds to continue our "Back of the Buses" recruitment and awareness campaign, which costs approximately £8,000 per annum. This initiative remains an important part of our efforts to raise awareness and attract new volunteers.

The shop closure has had no significant impact on our income and I believe it was the right decision for the branch.

Financial Year-End Summary

Financial Year-End	Income	Spending
31 March 2024	£33,510	£40,650
31 March 2025	£227,899	£90,517
31 March 2026	£12,541	£49,721

Reserves Policy

Samaritans of Scarborough maintains a reserves policy to ensure financial stability and preparedness:

We hold designated funds equivalent to 18 months of running costs, currently calculated at £35,517.21.

An additional £60,000 is held in investments, earmarked for:

- Purchasing a new shop
- Building or relocating branch premises
- Emergency repairs

Reserve levels are reviewed every six months by the BLT and formally agreed at the Branch AGM.
Libby Lorton-Gilbert 732
Branch Treasurer

Section Six:

Declaration

The trustees declare that they have approved the trustees' report above.

Signed on behalf of the charity's trustees

Signature(s)		
Full name(s)	GILLIAN ISABELLA NICHOL	ELIZABETH LORTON-GILBERT
Position (e.g. Secretary etc)	CHAIR / BRANCH DIRECTOR	TREASURER
Date		