



## Case study

# Queen's Award for Voluntary Service

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In 2021, Support Cambridge was asked by Lord Lieutenant to support the uptake of nominations to the Queen's Award for Voluntary Action. An MBA celebrated the volunteers who run grassroots community groups within the community. One of the groups awarded the mark was CARESCO, based in Sawtry, Huntingdonshire. Support Cambridgeshire spoke to Emma, General Manager, about the award and its impact on the volunteers, organisation and community.

## From what you know about the process of the QAVS (Queens Award for Voluntary Service), was there much work?

A lot of the work is done by the person who nominates the organisation. From CARESCO's point of view, the process involved sending over

paperwork, such as finances, to be checked to get through the first stage. The most work for them was organising everything for the interview stage – they arranged for volunteers to be there to talk about their services, and the interview lasted most of the day. The representative from the Lord Lieutenant's Office was shown around, asked lots of questions and then sat down with Emma Flanz, the General Manager, to discuss the information they had gathered in the previous stage – followed by the writing up of a 400-word summary of the visit.

## How has it impacted your volunteers since receiving the award?

Emma was keen to point out that the award is for the volunteers, and it recognises the hard work they put in. The award has helped to elevate the organisation and its status, which it hopes will help recruit new volunteers.

## How has the award impacted your organisation in your community more widely?

This has given CARESCO a chance to shout about its achievements, something which Emma admits they are not always very good at. It has also allowed them to demonstrate to District and County Councils that they are delivering great things for the local community and have been given the "royal seal of approval."

## Has anything else optimistic come out of receiving the award?

They feel it is an extraordinary achievement, especially given the Queen's death shortly afterwards, and recognises the volunteers' efforts to make the services possible. They also feel that CARESCO as an organisation is becoming more recognised as a voice of experience since gaining the award.