

SAMARITANS

Cheltenham and District

56th Annual Report

2019 – 2020

HOW TO CONTACT SAMARITANS

You can contact Samaritans by phone, email, letter, or by visiting a Branch.

Samaritans helplines are open 24/7 every day of the year.

Telephone: 116 123 (national number, free to call)

Email: jo@samaritans.org

Letter: P.O. Box 90 90, Stirling, FK8 2SA

Visit: Find your local Branch at www.samaritans.org

Cheltenham & District Branch is usually open during the day until 10 pm.

No appointments are necessary.

LEGAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

Registered charity number: 1170900

Name: Samaritans Cheltenham and District

Address: Victoria House, Back Albert Place,
Cheltenham, GL52 2HN

Website: www.cheltenhamsamaritans.org

Trustees 2019-20

Veronica Ward, Director and Chair of Trustees

Clive Ridgwell, Treasurer

Diana Le Clair, Secretary

Karen Fill, Administration

Jacqueline Waine, Marketing

Chair of the Friends 2019-20

Gary Newman

Health & Safety Officer

Heather Danson

Independent Examiner

Robin Welton

Bankers

Lloyds Bank plc, Cheltenham

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1. OUR OBJECTIVES

To enable persons in Cheltenham, the surrounding area, and elsewhere, who are experiencing feelings of distress or despair, including those who may be at risk of suicide, to receive emotional support at any time of the day or night in order to improve their emotional health and to reduce the incidence of suicide;

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

To collaborate with and support Samaritans Central Charity and all affiliated Branches in fulfilling the same objectives.

2. TRUSTEES REPORT

The Branch Director was appointed to the joint roles of Director and Chair of Trustees from 1st April 2017. The Treasurer, Secretary and Branch Administrator were elected as Trustees at the AGM of 2018. A Trustee for Marketing was co-opted from February 2019. The new branch director and administrator took up post on 31st March 2020.

The Trustees have worked with the Deputy Directors, appointed by the Branch Director, as one Branch Leadership Team. The team has met every six to eight weeks to review activities, finances and risks.

Following the AGM in May 2019, branch meetings were held in September, December and February 2020. The areas of focus were: organizational and branch updates; selection of a new branch director; a Christmas social with a talk by a volunteer from Doncaster about his fundraising walk to every branch; the prison service.

The Trustees have paid due regard to guidance issued by the Charity Commission and Samaritans Central Office and provided the new format information required to Samaritans Central Office on statistics, governance, risk and finance and health and safety. The safeguarding and on-going mentoring policies were updated in line with Samaritans requirements for change.

The trustees have fulfilled their responsibility for ensuring that accounting records comply with the Charities Act 2011. The financial subcommittee of Treasurer, Branch Administrator and Branch Director met before each Branch Leadership Team meeting to review finances and matters for discussion.

Trustees held, and minuted, email discussions additional to branch leadership team meetings for decision making on expenditure for urgent repairs. Financial updates are displayed in the Frances Twyford Room and a report published in our regular newsletter.

At 31st March 2020, we have healthy cash reserves, however the branch needs to generate a significant amount of income annually and we recognise that the cancellation of many events will adversely affect future income.

The sections that follow outline the performance and achievements of the charity in the reported year and present the financial statements.

Signed on behalf of the Trustees:

Veronica Ward, Branch Director and Chair of Trustees 1.4.2017 – 30.3.2020

3. DIRECTORS REPORT

In March 2020 Samaritans' dedication to supporting people in distress was wonderfully exemplified by those volunteers not in isolation keeping the branch responsive to callers as the Coronavirus pandemic began to worsen and the country went into lockdown.

Volunteers at home continued to advise and debrief, support each other or help with phone support for NHS staff.

During the year, we opened each day and part of each night although with some shifts occasionally closed due to illness, holiday periods and floods. A mild winter and our increased membership helped us to reduce ad hoc closures significantly after January.

I am enormously grateful to the rota team. They fulfil a vital role. Their rota shift week is busy, asking volunteers to fill an empty shift and managing last minute problem gaps.

Thanks to our highly successful recruitment and selection team, the branch exceeded its recruitment target and we have been delighted to welcome and admit many more New Samaritans. The training team has worked extra hard too, delivering initial training to an additional fourth cohort. In January the training team introduced the new "core" initial training which was well received by all. New team leaders updated our guidance for mentors and mentees over the summer. I am grateful to them and to our growing band of mentors who supported more New Samaritans through their induction.

It is important that listening volunteers keep ourselves up to date, reflect on our responses to callers and annually refresh and strengthen our skills. I thank the organisers and deliverers of on-going and additional training. Our annual shared shift requirement (On Going Mentoring) helps us to reflect on our responses to callers; we learn so much from each other. We have now trained almost all volunteers in mentoring skills so that everyone is able to support fellow volunteers and New Samaritans. Mentor training has now become an obligatory part of the second "embedding" stage of training.

I thank the caller support team who highlight areas we need to improve, advise us about how to manage especially difficult callers and signpost some callers to partner organisations, some new, that offer specialised support.

I thank the prison team and their leader. They are few in number but wonderfully dedicated to training and supporting a team of Listeners in prison. Liaison is difficult and I thank them for their perseverance. I am pleased that they have recruited much needed new team members in branch and from Gloucester, we await official approval.

Supporting each other is a vital and admired element in Samaritans' structure. No one is ever alone on shift but is supported by their shift partner, their shift leader and the director on call. Indeed, we can expect empathy and advice from any other volunteer. I thank leaders who offer experienced support and advice.

Our volunteer care team is the group who keeps an eye on us. They stay in touch when we are absent, help us ease back into shifts after a break and are always there when we need to talk about a worry. I am enormously grateful to them and recognise how much they do to reassure us that we are all part of the branch family.

Samaritans 2016-2022 strategy, There for Everyone, aims to increase the number of volunteers and update branch technology so that we can better respond to the rapidly growing number of callers. Roll out of changes moved faster during the year. I am grateful to the technology team who updated

our computers to be ready for changes to the organisation-wide technology. The introduction of a Dashboard on our computers enables volunteers on shift anywhere in the five nations to see how many volunteers are available, how many callers are waiting and the caller waiting time so that we can prioritise which medium to work on.

Our outreach activities have been growing. The schools team is finding new ways to raise awareness of Samaritans to students, teachers and parents. Companies and organisations have become more alert to the importance of staff well-being. This increased awareness has enabled us to talk to more people about Samaritans and about Samaritans' online support for people at work. We also distributed tips on how to listen and support people who appear unhappy. Our links with Great Western Rail continued to offer opportunities to give out information and talk to passengers and staff. We were present in Cheltenham Spa and Kemble stations. We noticed greater awareness of key dates amongst travellers, gained from organisational publicity and our Tweets. We expanded our Brew Monday awareness raising campaign with a station event, a presence at lunch for disadvantaged people and tea or coffee mornings. The campaign encourages people to tackle loneliness by chatting with someone over a cup of tea. We held street collections in major towns which also helped us to raise awareness and provided opportunities for us to listen to people. Three branches of Coffee1# and Cheltenham's Leeds Building Society raised funds for central Samaritans but helped us by displaying awareness raising posters and distributing pocket cards.

The branch needs to raise significant funds annually to maintain and manage the centre. We are most grateful to all in our community, long term and new supporters, who donated towards our income. We were delighted to join the Friends of Cheltenham Samaritans at their 40th anniversary celebration. They again raised a very generous amount of funds for the branch. We are grateful to the Yoga and Pilates Studio and Chapel Arts for events that provided generous donations. We received a final and significant donation from the Charles Irving Trust and, in recognition of many years of grants, were pleased to rename our caller interview room, The Irving Room. Additionally, we received a number of bequests and collections from funerals. Three volunteers bravely undertook sponsored events to boost funds for which we thank and admire them.

Our treasurer published frequent and helpfully clear reports so that the branch could track and understand our finances. His careful husbandry of funds, vision for the building and charm with workmen also enabled a welcome update to our kitchen.

Many volunteers undertook extra tasks to help run the centre and our service, some jobs more visible or attractive than others and I thank you all. I thank the maintenance team leader and his fellow handymen after a year when so many minor repairs were needed.

I am enormously grateful to the members of the branch leadership team (BLT) who have led the development of the different strands of the branch's work and to all team leaders, team members and individuals who have worked hard to make the branch run smoothly.

The listening and support volunteers are the heart of our amazing service. We work well together to nurture a special welcoming and collaborative ethos in the branch. I thank you all.

Vicky 975, Director

4. MARKETING

We started a campaign to raise our profile with businesses within our catchment area, the response was positive to the suggestion about presentations to staff regarding the ethos of the Samaritans organisation, there was also greater awareness of the issue of Mental Health and how the Samaritans can be a positive engagement with the companies for their staff.

We had an excellent response from supermarkets within the district, linking into the opportunity to be available for collections and profile raising; we also attended the Charities day in Bishops Cleeve, which was an excellent opportunity to talk to the local community.

We continue our relationship with Cheltenham Town Football Club, we are extremely grateful for their support in providing space in their match day programmes and the electronic scoreboard for key messaging at various times of the season.

The club also allowed their players to wear Samaritans tops for their training sessions.

The club also provided two free of charge Season Tickets for us to use as a branch. We hope that when the new season starts that we can continue with this positive relationship.

Unfortunately, the lockdown stopped a number of activities; however, these will be commenced when timing is more favourable.

Clive623

5. VOLUNTEER RECRUITMENT

The last year has again been stunning in terms of new volunteer numbers.

In conjunction with a fantastic effort from the training team, the branch has increased our volunteer numbers substantially and around 45% of our current active volunteers have been recruited and trained within the last two years.

In the period under review, we received 173 enquiries about volunteering at the Cheltenham Branch. The majority of the enquiries were passed to us via Central Office, who allocate enquiries to their nearest centre. However, we also received a small number of enquiries from Volunteering Gloucestershire, from our Branch website, local advertising and referrals from existing volunteers.

As a result of the selection procedure we have handed 51 new recruits to the training team over the 12 months under review. The vast majority of these are now doing shifts at the branch.

We have continued to hold information sessions on the last Wednesday of each month in order to engage potential volunteers quickly after their initial enquiry. This seems to have worked very well and we currently have a conversion rate of 'enquirer to volunteer' of nearly 30%.

We have continued to try to add flexibility to the training schedules by working with our local branches. Worcester have again helped us out by completely training 3 of our potential volunteers – one of them liked it there so much she decided to stay, but the other two have returned to Cheltenham to do duties. This has meant that we have had to defer fewer accepted recruits to later training sessions.

Selection is about to undergo a massive change with much of the information and activities which were previously delivered face-to-face being replaced by online content. This will be an exciting development for my successor to navigate. The South West is targeting November 2020 as the changeover date.

It has been a wonderful three years as deputy for Recruitment & Selection. It would not have been possible without the help of whole team. The feedback from the information sessions and selection mornings has been that they have been delivered in a professional, friendly, informative and enjoyable manner. I am sure that this has played a huge part in the growth of volunteer numbers at Cheltenham. Thank you everyone.

Helen 568, Deputy Director, Recruitment & Selection

6. NEW VOLUNTEER DEVELOPMENT

From 1st April 2019 the training team for Cheltenham branch of Samaritans has remained the same with Robin 207 and Milly 998 sharing the responsibility of Deputy Director for New Samaritans, Sandy 999, Dan 314 and Allyson 1090 are regular trainers and then finally Barbara 236 co-ordinates our skills practice during initial training.

Introduced last year, implementing remote skills practice into our training sessions has proven to be very successful. It has enabled our team to have a wider variety of volunteers able to deliver practice calls to our new Samaritans as well as being able to provide a more authentic experience in comparison to when they start taking their first real calls.

We have run through 4 complete Samaritans Initial Training programmes during this period ending in: August 2019, December 2019 and 2 in April 2020. This has accumulated in 49 volunteers completing their training and becoming full members of Cheltenham Samaritans, 3 volunteers who remain outstanding New Samaritans and then 4 potential volunteers who didn't complete our training programme for various reasons. Compared to last year, where 25 volunteers completed their training to become full members with 7 volunteers either not completing the training or moving to another branch.

In October 2019, the training team completed the CORE Dissemination to facilitate the transition to the new model of initial training in the form of CORE and Embedding Development. Broadly speaking, this has changed the training we deliver from being exclusively in-branch to a more blended learning experience. As opposed to receiving 30 hours of taught content in branch in SIT1, new volunteers now complete roughly 15 hours of independent e-learning which is then supplemented by 18 hours of content delivered in-branch. We completed CORE for our first group of 11 potential volunteers in Jan-Feb 2020 and they are currently finishing their volunteer journey

through mentoring and Embedding Development, we will be in a better position to give feedback on this change once our first group become full members.

As of March 2020 we have undergone a structural change of our training team, instead of having one team overseeing all of training we now have 2 teams: firstly, Robin 207 and Milly 998 oversee the delivery of CORE Initial Training and then Allyson 1090 and Paul 194 oversee Embedding Development and In-Branch Training. This will enable us to provide better focus into each individual component of the Samaritan training experience and give the feeling to our trainees of being more included in the branch as a whole when they arrive at Embedding Development.

Due to the difficult circumstances as a consequence of COVID-19, we have been starting to adapt our delivery of training to be done in a virtual space rather than in-branch. We are intending to use Zoom to firstly complete outstanding modules of SIT2 to complete the training of existing New Samaritans. After this we are planning to carry out CORE training for potential volunteers via Zoom which we are aiming to deliver 3 courses for a total of 38 people before the end of the calendar year.

Robin 207

7. VOLUNTEER SUPPORT AND ONGOING TRAINING

The various teams under the umbrella of Volunteer Support/Services have continued to work tirelessly to keep running smoothly all the support areas designed for volunteers once fully trained.

This year has seen a lot of activity, from larger than usual numbers of volunteers on sabbatical, to more recently, enforced absences due to coronavirus protections. As well as providing support in these circumstances, there are inevitable knock-on effects for the Rota Team and the Leader team. Similarly, Ongoing Training has been particularly busy this year.

Volunteer Support encompasses Volunteer Care and Retention, Leaders, Rota Management and Ongoing Training. At the time of writing, there are 170 volunteers in the Branch, including 41 New Samaritans, 11 Support Volunteers and 12 volunteers who are currently on Sabbatical. In addition to those on 'full' sabbatical, an additional 18 volunteers are on sabbatical with 3 Rings access, many of whom have this status due to self-isolation measures.

Volunteer Care and Retention

Throughout 2019/20 and for the last 3 years, this team has often been the first port of call for any volunteer who is suffering from distress, illness or other issues that might affect their ability to be active volunteers. When the team hears about any issues, the volunteer is allocated a link team member who stays in contact throughout the difficult period (with permission) usually, but not exclusively, when a volunteer goes on sabbatical. Support is normally in the form of a phone call or email now and then and a helping hand when the volunteer is ready to return to the branch. If a volunteer resigns, the team offers an exit interview, which helps the branch to understand the various reasons why someone might leave. Volunteer Care is a confidential service where a volunteer's circumstances are treated with care. The team meets regularly (sometimes electronically) to review progress and discuss optimum ways to support the volunteers in the branch. Branch statistics on the

rota are also discussed so that volunteers who seem to be struggling with the expected number of shifts can be identified and monitored.

Leaders

The Leaders team continues to provide a vital contribution to the support of volunteers within the branch, with Andrew 651 chairing Leader meetings and organising Leader training. Currently, there are 30 leaders, an increase on last year. Leaders support every duty and are available to volunteers whilst on duty as well as for undertaking the vital task of receiving volunteers' offloads at the end of each shift. Leaders ensure that any relevant information is passed on regarding the daily running of the branch as well as ensuring that any follow up calls are completed at the right time. Leaders' meetings are now held quarterly and email updates are sent out between meetings regarding any new relevant information.

Ongoing Training

In recent years, it has been mandatory for all listening volunteers to undertake 5 hours of OGT per year to ensure that volunteers are updated on any changes within the organisation, as well as for consistency of service. We have also provided training in specialist areas of our work. In 2019, we continued to ask volunteers about the areas where they wished for more training or guidance. This was done via feed-back forms at the end of each OGT session as well as on the Competency Form used during shadowing (Ongoing Mentoring) shifts. As a result of this feed-back we offered at least one OGT session for most months during 2019. These were held on weekends during the day and on as many different weekday evenings as possible, with the aim of making it possible for volunteers to attend a session. The result was an improvement on the previous year with the vast majority of volunteers undertaking some OGT and more completing 5 or more hours. Towards the end of the year, some online OGT became available, which helped those volunteers unable to come into the Centre to be credited with hours.

After taking out New Samaritans and those volunteers who had a period of sabbatical

- 58 (81%) did 5 or more hours OGT (12 of these volunteers did 10 or more hours!)
- 11 (15%) did between 3 and 4.75 hours
- 3 (4%) did less than 3 hours

This improvement was very pleasing and was made more so by the feedback that was received on the topics provided as well as their delivery.

Rota Management

The main role of the Rota Management Team is to keep a close eye on gaps in the rota, to take calls from volunteers who need to pull out of a shift within the 14 day period and to do everything that is required in the eventuality of a shift needing to be closed. This involves a high degree of organisation and attention to detail. The Rota Team take turns in being the Rota Manager each week.

During this year, the Rota Team has been delighted to welcome Maureen 313 and more recently Alex 243 and Ben 804 to the DRM team. David 822 stepped down in September 2019 and we have

all missed his poetic requests to fill rota gaps. Otherwise the rota team has fulfilled a hugely useful role, keeping the rota free from closures at almost all times.

It has not been necessary to further revise the rota overall this year.

I would like to thank all volunteers who contribute to the many and varied roles within the Volunteer Support teams for their dedicated efforts going above and beyond their core duties in order to look after volunteers in the branch. It is my pleasure to have been Deputy for this area and I happily hand over to Andrew 651 who will take over the new teams.

Berni 1129,

Outgoing Deputy Director, Volunteer Support and Ongoing Training

8. CALLER SUPPORT AND ONGOING TRAINING

Caller support provides ongoing support to the Cheltenham branch. Currently the team has 4 members, Carol 974, Andrew 651, Andrew 168 and Karen 406. Thank you to Jinny 978, Roz 1066, and Sue 1167 who have all contributed to Caller support. We would welcome any new members interested in being part of the team.

Within the current team Andrew 186, professionally handles all work connected with Cruse, having recently taken over from Roz 1066. Both Andrew and Karen carry out the monthly audit of e-mails compliant with required practice from the Caller Support Operations Manual. Andrew 651 is also a recent welcome member of the team, having run Caller Support at his previous branch and brings a lot of added experience.

Up until 31st March 2020, we have been part of the Wales & the Marches region, attending quarterly regional meetings, which are both informative and interesting. An added benefit is meeting the other volunteers from within the region.

Caller Support provides up to date information within the booth files, guidance on handling callers of concern, updating signposting lists, no call back numbers, misuse of service list etc and promulgation of best practice for the written word.

Statistics for 2019 / 2020 are shown below

Total logged contacts	27,802
Total 'snap, calls	4,593
Inbound telephone calls including 'snaps'	14,942
Outbound telephone calls	622
Face to face	108
SMS text	4,286
E mail	3,251
Letter	0

Total	27,802
Gender breakdown	
Male	7,031
Female	11,576
Transgender	158
Gender unknown	1555

Compared to 2018 / 19

Total contacts decreased by 978

Snap calls decreased by 1,131

E-mails increased by 499

SMS messages increased by 1,496 although this service was discontinued in February 2020

Carol 974 & Andrew 651

9. OUTREACH

Outreach is a balance of supporting the local community by getting the Samaritans message out there in a bid to raise our profile and reduce suicide levels, whilst also raising funds.

In terms of supporting the local community, over the last year we have provided speakers for various church groups, Residents Associations, Probus and Fellowship Groups. Frequently they have generously made a donation to us in return.

We have given talks to staff and volunteers from many organisations including those at: GCHQ, UCAS, St Johns Ambulance, Capita, Gloucestershire Fire and Rescue and Scottish Widows.

We distributed information and talked to visitors at the Three Counties Show, Bishops Cleeve Open Village day, and to customers at Sainsbury's. We visited Cheltenham Spa railway station for three events last year - Brew Monday, World Suicide Prevention Day and World Mental Health Day. For the first time last year we also visited Kemble railway station on World Mental Health Day. We have made new arrangements to signpost our face-to-face callers to appropriate local organisations when necessary. Amongst these new connections are Cheltenham Borough Homes, CCP, P3, Trinity Church and Cheltenham Open Door.

Whilst the decision has been made at national level to not produce any new Samaritans material to support schools and universities, we have used the latest information and produced a lesson to be delivered in a classroom setting to secondary school pupils. We were invited to Balcarras School in February and delivered the new lesson to 8 different year 9 groups. The feedback was excellent and the intention is to offer the new lesson to other secondary schools too. In addition to the visit to Balcarras, we also visited Pates Grammar School and Bishop's Cleeve School during 2019.

We have trained many more volunteers over the year to provide emotional support outside the branch and this will serve to increase the level of support we can offer in alternative settings.

The community is vital in keeping our Samaritans branch operational. We are so grateful for their donations, help and encouragement.

We have some long standing fund raisers. The Friends of Cheltenham Samaritans continue to do an amazing job organising events to generate funds for our branch and draw attention to Samaritans. Trinity Church has continued to encourage our work and signpost us to people in distress. The Skittles League raise funds for us annually.

We have associations with other groups and individuals who have been kind enough to fund raise for us in 2019. Some of our volunteers have done sponsored walks, held car boot sales, held garden parties and coffee mornings all of which have raised our profile and resulted in welcome donations. Chapel Arts and the Pilates & Yoga Centre have raised funds for us by way of concerts and donations in lieu of class fees. Again our thanks go to them all.

Helen568

10. PRISON SUPPORT

HMP Long Lartin is a high security men's prison in Worcestershire, about 22 miles away from the Cheltenham Samaritans Centre. Nearly six hundred men are currently in Long Lartin, almost all of whom are serving long sentences.

The Listener scheme is well established in the prison and we have been fortunate to have a stable team of experienced Listeners, although in the last few months of the year three of our nine Listeners have been transferred to other prisons. Our remaining team is stretched to cover the demands of the role but, as the year ends, we are training a new team of nine men and have been heartened by the keenness of a large number of prisoners to undertake the role. It is the Listeners, not Samaritans, who offer emotional support to other prisoners. Working on a rota basis, they always work in pairs and can be called at any time of day and night for face-to-face visits which take place in one of two special Listener suites where they can ensure confidentiality. The problems faced by prisoners are as many and as varied as the calls we take in Samaritans. Mental health problems are frequent but so too are concerns about family, relationships within the prison and isolation. Young men facing very long sentences are in particular need of support.

Reduction in the number of suicides is an aim for Listeners, as it is for Samaritans. Suicides in prison are deeply affecting for all residents, both for prisoners and prison officers, representing a loss of hope in a system where hope is an essential quality to enable men to face the grim realities of life without freedom. This year has seen a dramatic reduction of suicides at Long Lartin, partly thanks to the work of the previous Governor, Dr Jamie Bennett, who introduced a number of initiatives including a suicide prevention summit. Prison team members, prison officers, outside agencies and Listeners were all invited to a day of talks and discussions. Our Listeners were very pleased to be included and they made a valuable contribution to the day. Sadly, Dr Bennett moved on after only a few months. The new Governor is Steve Cross whom the Director and I met on our annual review of the agreement between Samaritans and the prison.

Like the Listeners' team, our prison team has been seriously depleted this year and enormous thanks go to each member of the team for helping to ensure that we are able to offer support so regularly to the Listeners. It has been wonderful to have a number of volunteers keen to join our team, including some from the Gloucester Branch. We are in the very long process of applying for clearance for them – it can take months! Recruitment was definitely aided by a Samaritans' visit to the prison in October. Twelve volunteers from Cheltenham and four from Gloucester were given an

excellent tour by two prison officers who answered all our questions. The same officers gave a presentation to our branch in February.

Inevitably, we experience a number of frustrations in working with the prison. Communication can be imperfect and circumstance can readily change in an environment where security is always the highest priority. It must be so, and we ourselves benefit from the prison's concern for security. Excellent care is always taken of us and our safety is always paramount, which enables us to feel comfortable and relaxed with our Listeners. There are highlights however: the Christmas buffet is much enjoyed by us all when we have an opportunity to chat on a more informal level (taking care never to self-disclose); one of our Listeners ran a marathon as part of a fund-raising initiative when prisoners raised over £2000 for Great Ormond Street. Perhaps the most memorable has been the way the Listeners have helped in the training of new recruits. Their wisdom, their desire to help others and to make a better life provide a real example of kindness in a harsh environment. It is a great disappointment that the training has had to be suspended during lockdown, as have our regular Listener meetings.

My heartfelt thanks go to the wonderful prison team for their commitment.

Debbie 227

11. FRIENDS REPORT

I would love to tell you about our 2019, 2020 year of raising funds on behalf of my amazing committee. The last few years we have had the good fortune of a strong, dedicated team, which has not always been the case over the years. The Friends committee has been continually active both in Cheltenham and going away to fundraise.

The Lechlade Festival welcomed us with open arms for our stewarding work, so much so some of the organisers joined our committee, and their contribution is really valued. We also work closely with the Cheltenham Round table and help steward their big event with the racecourse Fireworks, both of which bring in great financial rewards.

2019 saw an additional and unusual event for us, using our contacts at Cheltenham Motor club we were asked to manage carparking in Malvern for 3000 spectators, all good, until we discovered first car was at 06.30! Note to self, must check the smallprint next time. We rallied round and decided to camp on site complete with a hot meal. We were all on duty at the unearthly hour of 06.29. On the strength of this though we have been asked to repeat this in September 2021.

We have become part of the furniture at Glastonbury (although a fallow year in 2019 so no financial reward), but stewarding is a great way to raise money and make friends.

Our party celebration for 40 years fundraising for Cheltenham Samaritans was well received at the Charlton Kings Working Mens club and reuniting with so many ex committee members was great fun. It was wonderful to see so many familiar faces.

And so to the jewel in our crown the 14th Samaritan Beer festival, great fun and a pleasant way to raise money. A major organising effort. This has been developed over the years with our main beer drinking committee organisers Leigh and Nigel who have tirelessly researched the colour, strength and flavour

of beers for our festival, that's dedication for you. Again a major contribution to our finances which this year delivered to Cheltenham Branch, we are proud to say, £11,500.00

That was 2019 ~ 2020 but I would like to touch on present day.

What are we up to during lockdown? The committee are working overtime, the committee is working tirelessly to create and adjust to the new normal. A Virtual Beer festival! Who'd have thought. So successful, 200 home beer deliveries, 8 hours of live Youtube.

I do hope that you have seen our new healthy challenge. To find out more and sign-up, please visit the fantastic website, achieving Cheltenham (Uk) to Cheltenham (Australia) by following the link below ; (right click, open hyperlink)

<https://samsfriendscheltenham.com/join-cheltenham-world-relay>

Getting involved couldn't be easier, just pledge your goal distance as a team or individual for the World Relay and then start logging those miles! Funds via Just Giving are really positive.

Then hot off the press, our exciting "night at the Musical theatre" on Saturday October 17th. 2020. An evening Thai meal, wine or beers delivered to your door, and musical theatre talent on Youtube all evening in the comfort of your home. You may need a blacktie.

I wish to thank EVERY member of the committee and "friends of", and all those that help on the day of events without you we could not support as well as we do.

Stay safe

Gary Newman, Chairman & Founder member

12. TREASURER'S REPORT AND FINANCIAL STATEMENT

It is without doubt an interesting time for us, as the Covid-19 pandemic will challenge how we continue to fund our branch and the service we offer to people who are facing real difficulties in their lives.

I have great optimism that as a branch we will come through the difficulties because of the real progress we have made in developing a robust method of managing our costs and the continued support we receive from many donors who truly believe in our work.

We are extremely lucky that the volunteers at our branch are very committed and dedicated to the ethos of the Samaritan organisation.

Victoria House is a wonderful asset to our branch; it became our home in 1996 after a major fund raising effort with very generous donations from many sources.

In 2019, we experienced a number of issues with the building, including major roofing and loft problems, which unfortunately resulted in a considerable amount of work and expense.

We were however able to update our kitchen facilities after receiving funds against our building insurance claim.

Moving forward we intend to be more proactive in managing our home, you will see from our accounts that we have set aside a considerable amount of funds on a restricted basis.

These funds will be allocated to maintaining the fabric and future development of the building and enabling it to be an asset to our branch for many years to come.

The fund for Victoria House would not have been possible without the considerable support of our two major benefactors, The Charles Irving Trust and The Friends of the Samaritans; we are truly grateful for their support in 2019 and their support over many previous years.

I would also like to express my sincere thanks to volunteers Michael, Brian, Karen and Judy, who raised a considerable amount through their personal sponsored activities and to Lloyd for managing the many street collections and Karen who sold Christmas cards over a two-year period

All of your efforts made a real difference to our branch funds.

The new financial year brings together a new Leadership team for the branch; I look forward to being part of the new team to enhance the financial strength of our branch and to build on the legacy of the previous leadership team.

Finally,

I have listed below some of our donors for the past year, we are very grateful to them all and to the many more who have given to our branch.

I would also like to give a special mention to those kind people who remember us at a sad time at the passing of loved ones and friends, all donations big or small really help us to maintain our service to the many people who need us at a difficult time in their lives.

Charles Irving Trust	Ecclesiastical Insurance
Friends of the Samaritans	Evans Arlard Trust
Cheltenham Skittles League	Chapel Arts
Cheltenham Town Football Club	Tewkesbury Methodist Church
Christ Church Cheltenham	Gordon Gray Trust
St James Place Financial Services	Gotherington Bonfire Committee
Andrew Fleming	Tim Harrison

Please find below the accounts shown in an approved format, detailed accounts are available on request.

Clive 623 Treasurer and Trustee

CHELTENHAM AND DISTRICT SAMARITANS								
STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES								
INCLUDING INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT								
for the Year ended 31 March 2020								
INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT								
		Unrestricted funds	Prison Service Fund (note 5)	Buildings Fund (note 5)	Total	Friends	Overall Total	Total 2019
	Notes	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
Incoming resources								
Donations and legacies		29,030	1,000	35,000	65,030	0	65,030	20,147
Investment Income		482	0	59	541	7	548	614
Charitable Activities					0	22,234	22,234	24,944
Total		29,512	1,000	35,059	65,571	22,241	87,812	45,705
Resources expended								
Charitable activities		1,051	1,172	0	2,222	10,215	12,437	15,359
Direct Charitable Expenditure		15,852	0	0	15,852	0	15,852	21,559
Management and Administrative Costs		6,197	0	0	6,197	747	6,944	6,378
Building repairs and Maintenance	6	13,376	0	0	13,376	0	13,376	note 5
Governance Costs		0	0	0	0	0	0	3,678
Total resources expended		36,476	1,172	0	37,647	10,962	48,609	46,974
Net movement in funds		-6,964	-172	35,059	27,924	11,279	39,203	-1,269

BALANCE SHEET							
AS AT 31 MARCH 2020							
		Unrestricted funds	Prison Service Fund (note 5)	Buildings Fund (note 5)	Total		Total 2019
		£	£	£	£	£	£
FIXED ASSETS							
Tangible assets (see note 1.2 for depreciation)	1,4	159650	0	0	159650		160,812
CURRENT ASSETS							
Debtors		600	0	0	600		2438
Creditors					0		0
Cash at bank and in hand		94941	6102	35059	136102		93,899
TOTAL ASSETS		255191	6102	35059	296352		257,149
FUNDS							
Balance at 1st April 2019		250875	6274	0	257149		252144
Surplus or deficit for year		4315	-172	35059	39203		5995
TOTAL FUNDS		255191	6102	35059	296352		258,139
Unrestricted Funds include the balances held by the Friends							

The Trustees approved the Accounts on the 1st June 2020

C V Ridgwell Treasurer

13. INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT

Respective responsibilities of the trustees and examiner

The Charity's trustees are responsible for the preparation of the accounts.

The charity's trustees consider that an audit is not required for this year under Section 144 of the Charities Act 2011(the Charities Act) and that an independent examination is needed.

It is my responsibility to

- Examine the accounts under Section 145 of the Companies act
- To follow the procedures laid down in the general Directions given by the Charity Commission (under Section 145 (5) (b) of the Charities Act), and
- To state whether particular matters have come to my attention.

Basis of Independent Examiner's statement

My examination was carried out under general Directions given by the Charity Commission. An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the charity and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts, and seeking explanations from the trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit, and consequently no opinion is given

As to whether the accounts give a "true and fair" view and the report is limited to those matters set out in the statement below.

Independent examiner's statement

In connection with my examination, no matter has come to my attention

- 1 which gives me reasonable cause to believe that, in any material respect, the requirements
 - to keep accounting records in accordance with Section 130 of the Charities Act, and
 - to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and comply with the accounting requirements of the Charities Act'

have not been met, or

- 2 to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Signed: R O WELTON

Date: 7th May 2020

Name: ROBIN OWEN WELTON

Relevant professional qualification FCA

Address: Wynch House, Elmley Road, Ashton-under-Hill, Worcestershire, WR11 7SW