

FRIENDS FOR LIFE BEDFORD

Chairman's Report

2019 / 2020

The past 12 months have brought highs and lows, challenges and opportunities for Friends For Life (FFL). The pandemic, which arrived swiftly in March, interrupted our work and, at a stroke, removed our ability to carry on in any normal manner. The care homes which we support closed immediately it became clear that the virus was widespread in the community and this initially cut off our ability to provide the friendship and support to our residents which is our core activity.

The befriending team, led by Pauline Carter, immediately began to work on ways to reach our residents and maintain contact despite our inability to visit them. Our 80-strong volunteer team began re-establishing regular contact with the residents we look after by writing letters (known as "lockdown letters"), making phone calls and dropping off 'goodies'. We also reached out to care home residents previously unknown to us in the hope that these contacts might give encouragement to those residents who had previously not heard of FFL and the services that we provide. We continue to provide befriending and support to residents of 32 care homes in North Bedfordshire.

Since the arrival of the pandemic, we have seen a major impact on the care homes we are associated with - staff, family and friends of the residents, the residents themselves and our befriending volunteers have all been affected by the misery the pandemic was brought. Some of the care homes themselves have also struggled with illness among their staff, consequent staff shortages, the need to source sufficient quantities of the right protective equipment and financial challenges brought on by the pandemic.

Today, with much learned over the past six months, a blend of normality is beginning to return to some of the care homes in our area. A few have allowed visitors and we have been able to begin again regular visits to our residents through weekly garden meetings with appropriate social distancing. Others remain closed.

The arrival of the pandemic hit our sources and flow of funding almost immediately. In April, we cut our spending and reduced other costs. The financial outlook at that point was unclear and concerning. The rapidly evolving situation quickly brought to light the weakness in our funding base.

So, inspired by the work of Kathryn Hughes, our Fundraising manager, we established a focus group in the Summer whose mandate was to discover and confirm alternative sources of funding, understand what capabilities FFL needed to develop to better attract these alternative sources and recommend to the Trustees a suitable course of action. That set of recommendations will go before the Board of Trustees shortly and, with their support, we hope to then begin building a diversified funding base which will, in time, allow our income to become stable and predictable. This will allow us to plan and invest with confidence. In turn, the charity will grow and

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so be better able to address the social isolation most often seen among our elderly in the care homes and the wider community. Today, our financial position is stronger than it was at the start of the pandemic as we have received a number of emergency grants from government and non-governmental organisations as well as from some of our long standing supporters. The threat of financial collapse has passed and we have funds in the bank sufficient to manage our activities at the level forced on us by the pandemic for the next 12 months, time for us, we hope, to build the stronger funding base mentioned earlier.

In recent years, we have worked hard to ensure people and organisations in North Bedfordshire know about FFL and the work we do. Led by Jenny Moore, we were able to establish strong links with several schools in Bedford, develop our website and expand our presence on social media platforms. Jenny left us in March and Charlie Fay has taken over the responsibilities for the charity's marketing, media and communications. The pandemic has here as elsewhere curtailed our ability and plans to expand these activities. Nevertheless, Charlie has been able to grow the number of our followers, keep our charity in the public eye, get more people to subscribe to us and to engage with volunteers and care homes. We have added new features to our website which will help us to be recognised quickly when people do online searches. We are now working on making our website more personal and providing more fresh information about volunteering, ways to support us and increasing the ease of donating. We have had good support from local papers helping us to appear in these newspapers. My thanks to Jenny for all her hard work.

Ken Barber, who has been our Chairman for the last five years, indicated his wish to step down from that role. Ken has been one of our strongest supporters and in his role as Chairman, has represented and advocated for FFL throughout the community of North Bedfordshire and guided the FFL team through 'sun and rain' with a steady hand. We wish Ken well and are delighted that he has agreed to stay on as a Trustee for a little longer.

Today, your charity has a strong body of Trustees with experience of the care home sector, staff management and funding. With the Trustees and our staff also having wide contacts throughout the community in North Bedfordshire, FFL is well placed to thrive and grow as we emerge from the pandemic.

On your behalf, I would like to thank our staff - Pauline, Kathryn, Charlie and Lynn - whose dedication and commitment are essential to the charity's health and well being. I would also like to thank our Trustees who oversee and guide the work of FFL throughout the year.




Brian Belcher
Chairman of the Trustees

30 August 2020.

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS – 2019/20

- 1) Friends for Life Bedfordshire is a Company Limited by Guarantee with a Board of Directors and a Management Committee and is also a Registered Charity.
- 2) March 31st is the agreed Year-End of this the seventh year of the Company's operation. Assets from the Company's forerunner (an Anglican/Methodist joint project) were transferred to the new Company in April 1st 2012
- 3) The Accounts have been drawn up on an Accruals basis. This is a requirement of Companies House and is applied regardless of turnover.
- 4) The accounts are examined at the end of each year by an Independent Examiner. Being classed as a 'Small Company' no audit is required (Section 477 of the Companies Act 2006) unless requested by the members. The accounts need to be filed with Companies House by 31st.Dec 2020. As our income exceeded £25,000 there is a requirement to also file the accounts with the Charity Commission by January 31st. 2021.
- 5) The Company is registered with HMRC as a charity for Gift-Aid purposes with the first claim being made in 2013/14. No claim was made in 2019/20.
- 6) We are currently exempt from filing accounts with HMRC. Our next submission must be for the FY 2020/21 and by March 31st.2022.
- 7) The Company's liquid assets are held in an HSBC Business style account which is free of charges. An additional savings account is linked to the current account to separately hold the Reserves Fund. A small amount of interest is paid on this latter account.
- 8) Major office equipment, furniture, software and computers are declared as assets on the balance sheet and depreciated linearly. Any smaller resource or training materials acquired during the year are written off in that year.
- 9) Friends for Life has an account with Virgin Money Giving which enables supporters to donate to sponsored events online.
- 10) The Company has no Employees though certain tasks are 'bought-in' by means of 'Contracts for Services' agreements. Invoices arising from these are settled monthly. Since 2019 an office has been rented in the CVS building at 43 Bromham Road, Bedford, MK40 2AA.
- 11) The Company Directors, Secretary and Treasurer receive no remuneration as result of their office.
- 12) All income was derived through Grants, Donations, Membership Fees and fund-raising events.



Michael Elliott

Hon. Treasurer – Friends for Life Bedfordshire.



Balance Sheet for the year ended 31st. March 2020

Note: Debit balances are shown in parenthesis.

	<u>2019/20</u>	<u>2018/19</u>
	£	£
Tangible Assets		
Office Equipment	772.65	
Non-Tangible Assets		
Cash in hand.	0.00	0.00
HSBC Business current a/c Mch. 31st.	10,354.24	9,969.65
HSBC Bus.Money Manager a/c Mch. 31st.	10,031.17	5,013.92
Other Assets	0.00	0.00
	<u>21,158.06</u>	<u>14,983.57</u>
Add debtors, loans and prepayments	0.00	0.00
Less: creditors and provisions	(1,661.74)	(1,357.30)
	<u><u>19,496.32</u></u>	<u><u>13,626.27</u></u>
Represented by:		
Brought forward from previous year.	13,626.27	19,152.58
Plus: excess of Income over Expenditure	5,870.05	(5,526.31)
	<u><u>19,496.32</u></u>	<u><u>13,626.27</u></u>

Audit Exemption Statement

For the year ending 31 March 2020 the company was entitled to exemption from audit under section 477 of the Companies Act 2006 relating to small companies

Directors Responsibilities

The members have not required the company to obtain an audit of its accounts for the year in question in accordance with section 476

The directors acknowledge their responsibilities for complying with the requirements of the act with respect to accounting records and the preparation of accounts

These accounts have been prepared in accordance with the special provision for small companies under part 15 of the Companies Act 2006 and with the Financial Reporting Standard for Smaller Entities (effective April 2008)

The accounts were approved by the directors and authorised for issue at the AGM on 23rd September 2020 and were signed on their behalf by : -

Signed

Date

30/9/20.

Friends for Life Bedfordshire



Income & Expenditure Account **for the year ended 31st March 2020**

	2019/20 £ Examined (Accruals Acct.)	2018/19 £ Examined (Accruals Acct.)
<u>Income</u>		
Membership Fees (1)	325.00	460.00
Grants (2)	23,298.99	9,400.00
Donations (3)	4,163.50	1,554.65
Fund Raising Events (4)	947.31	376.42
Interest on Reserve Account	17.25	7.00
Other Income (5)	159.22	175.30
Total Incoming Resources	<u>28,911.27</u>	<u>11,973.37</u>
<u>Expenditure</u>		
Fundraising Lead	3,287.50	4,925.00
Volunteers Trainer	900.00	1,200.00
Volunteers Coordinator	6,706.25	7,150.00
Media & Marketing Lead	3,887.50	500.00
Office Admin. Asst.	491.50	0.00
DBS & Misc training costs(6)	456.53	415.00
Website Support & Phone	136.88	117.47
Publicity & Events	1,410.80	1,318.15
Insurance & Legal	736.88	681.17
All Travel	352.20	371.10
Printing/Post/Staionery	413.48	247.92
Resources & Misc. Expenses (7)(8)	1,596.52	573.87
Office Rent	2,334.05	0.00
Depreciation of Assets	331.13	0.00
Total Resources Expended	<u>23,041.22</u>	<u>17,499.68</u>
Income less Expenditure	5,870.05	(5,526.31)
	<u>28,911.27</u>	<u>11,973.37</u>

Notes

- 1 Comprised 6 Individual, 12 Church and 1 Corporate Memberships.
- 2 i.e.Funds from a Grant making body following an application process
- 3 Usually from individual Groups/Churches etc.
- 4 Includes 'Give as You Live' receipts, Tshirt Sales, Sposored Events & Raffle.
- 5 Includes Collecting Boxes
- 6 Excludes the Vol. Coordinator & Trainer Fees.
- 7 Includes - Vol.'s expenses, Course Fees, Room hire, TShirts and Fee to Co. House.
- 8 Excludes Capitalised Items

Friends for Life Bedfordshire



Reserve Account - Balance & Transfers

for the year ended 31st March 2020

(This account is classed as Designated but Unrestricted)

	2019/20	2018/19
	£	£
	Examined	Examined
	(Accruals Acct.)	(Accruals Acct.)
<u>Income</u>		
Transfers from General Acct.	5,000.00	-
Interest Added (1)	17.25	7.00
	-	-
Total Incoming Resources	<u>5,017.25</u>	<u>7.00</u>
<u>Expenditure</u>		
Transfer to General Acct.	-	-
Total Resources Expended	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>
Income less Expenditure	5,017.25	7.00
Previous Balance Brought Forward	5,013.92	5,006.92
Total Reserves (2)	<u>10,031.17</u>	<u>5,013.92</u>

Notes

- 1 Currently 0.10%
- 2 Current Reserves Policy is to hold 6mths expenditure or at least £10k.
- 3
- 4
- 5
- 6

Friends for Life Bedfordshire



Friends for Life

Balance Sheet **for the year ended 31st. March 2020**

Note: Debit balances are shown in parenthesis.

	2019/20		2018/19	
	£	£	£	£
Tangible Assets				
Office Equipment, furniture & Computers	772.65		0.00	
Non-Tangible Assets				
Cash in hand.	0.00		0.00	
HSBC Business current a/c Mch. 31st.	10,354.24		9,969.65	
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Plus: excess of Income over Expenditure	5,870.05		(5,526.31)	
		<u><u>19,496.32</u></u>		<u><u>13,626.27</u></u>

Independent Examiner's Report

I have examined the books of the Company and agree that the Income and Expenditure Account for the year and the Balance Sheet presented above give a true and fair representation of the financial position.

Signed 

Mr. Ian Farthing

Dated 25/8/2020