



Cheltenham and District
55th Annual Report

2018 – 2019

HOW TO CONTACT SAMARITANS

You can contact Samaritans by phone, email, text, 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) or
01242 515777 (local number, charges apply)

Email: jo@samaritans.org

SMS (text): 07725 909090

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

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

Cheltenham & District Branch is 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 2018-19

Veronica Ward, Director and Chair of Trustees

Clive Ridgwell, Treasurer

Diana Le Clair, Secretary

Karen Fill, Administration

Jacqueline Waine, Marketing (from February 2019)

Chair of the Friends 2018-19

Gary Newman

Health & Safety Officer

Paul Baxter

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 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.

Two Branch Meetings have been held. In November, the Functional Lead and Regional Fundraising Officer led the focus on fundraising. In March, the meeting focused on the mental health of young people and was addressed by a counsellor who works with teenagers. Branch and organisational updates and on-going training were included in both meetings.

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. The policies of safeguarding and on-going mentoring were established.

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 for decision making on expenditure for urgent repairs. This year we have introduced financial updates into our Branch bi-monthly newsletter.

At 31st March 2019, we have healthy cash reserves, however we cannot be complacent about the income the branch needs to generate annually.

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:

V. Ward

Veronica Ward, Branch Director and Chair of Trustees

Date: 14th May 2019

3. DIRECTOR'S REPORT

It is a sad fact that levels of unhappiness and despair in our society have risen to the extent that Samaritans receive a call every 6 seconds. Everyone has unhappy times in life. Sometimes a person feels that they just cannot cope or see a way through the worries that beset them. More people, including increasing numbers of young people, suffer from feelings of acute anxiety sometimes accompanied by scary thoughts of suicide.

Talking saves lives. When people feel that someone cares for them, gives them the time they need to talk and listens to them, it can help them feel calmer. The anonymity offered by Samaritans can help callers to talk about worries they feel unable to share with those closest to them.

During the year Samaritans has launched paper and on-line help for people in distress and for those who care for them to try to equip more people with coping strategies and knowing how to listen. Locally, we have given out cards with listening tips at the railway station and at events we have attended. I thank volunteers who have spent time talking to people and giving out information in Cheltenham town centre during Suicide Prevention Week and at station events.

It is so important that listening volunteers keep ourselves up to date, reflect on our responses to callers and refresh and strengthen our skills. This year we have improved our compulsory attendance at on-going training. I thank the organisers and deliverers of training and record keeping who have helped us improve our attendance. Our now annual shared shift requirement (OGM) helped us to learn together and gain reassurance. We have made good progress training almost all volunteers in mentoring skills so that everyone is able to support as well as be supported on a shared shift. I thank the caller support team who highlight areas we need to improve and advise us about how to manage especially difficult callers and signpost some callers to partner organisations, some new, that offer specialised support.

Across the 5 nations Samaritans branches need many more volunteers who will give their time to provide emotional support for callers. I am delighted to report that our Branch has been fortunate during this year in welcoming many New Samaritans to boost our membership. Attendance at our now monthly information sessions has been very encouraging and with follow up contact resulted in bigger groups starting Samaritans initial training. I celebrate their successes this year and thank the recruitment and selection team and the training team and mentors. New Samaritans all praise the initial welcome and training they received that prepares them to respond to callers. We have made helpful links with the training leaders in Gloucester and Worcester branches which we will build on in the near future as cluster working on recruitment and training is introduced.

The volunteering journey with Samaritans offers volunteers many and varied opportunities to increase their involvement in the branch and in the organisation; some tasks are exciting and some menial. Indeed the branch could not exist without the many volunteers who give additional time to help with managing the smooth running of our work and the care of the building. Thank you all for those many extras! This year I especially thank the rota team who alert us to duty gaps, find a duty for us when the rota is full and deal with emergency gaps or closures. I would also like to thank support volunteers and partners who help with administration, collections, recycling and our awareness raising events, you give us invaluable support.

It is essential to care for carers and I am pleased to inform you that retention rates in the branch compare favourably to organisational averages. I thank all volunteers for your long term commitment to furthering Samaritans' mission to save lives. Sometimes life changes and volunteers need to retire or move on. We are always sad to say goodbye and this year some very long serving volunteers have stood down but what an example they have set us of dedication to volunteering with Samaritans. I

thank the volunteer team for their care and concern for us, keeping in contact with volunteers when we are ill or need to take a break from duties and helping us ease back into duties.

In 2019 the Friends of Cheltenham Samaritans celebrate 40 years of raising funds for the branch. They really are very good friends of the branch. 40 years of financial support is an amazing gift to enable branch members to deliver our volunteering support.

While income generation remains a priority, this year has been the first for a couple of years when we did not have to draw heavily on reserves. We have been most fortunate this year to receive several very generous donations, some from highly valued and long term supporters and some unexpected. Our financial balance was due to those donations alongside sponsorship funds raised by a couple of our wonderful volunteers undertaking daring activities, a long haul cycle ride and a zip wire jump - thank you!

Fund-raising is an enormous annual challenge for every branch. Without funds we could not have a centre and without a centre we could not be here to support people in need. To meet this challenge we set up 2 new, closely linked teams, one for marketing and one for fund-raising. We have hosted and attended a couple of training sessions on how to raise funds. Now we will need to increase our efforts to extend ways to bring in funds.

It has been a year when our plans have consolidated and borne fruit. 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 management, thank you all. I thank Barry who stood down at the year-end having built up our successful provision for New Samaritans and fostered a strong, new team of trainers and mentors. I thank our new BLT members who have picked up their roles with enthusiasm and energy! I thank all team leaders who inspire and manage so much of our provision. I especially thank Jenny for her outstanding contribution as leader of the prison team, a role which she has relinquished after many years as a dedicated and enthusiastic promoter of our support for the prison Listeners Service. I thank our new team leader for enabling this important work to continue and develop.

2019-2020 will bring some big changes for all branches as Samaritans introduces a range of carefully researched, planned and piloted changes to better equip the organisation to enact the 5 year strategy of *There for Everyone* so that we are better equipped to meet the high demands and changing needs of our callers now and in the future. Thank you all for the part you play that will enable us to meet the challenges ahead.

Vicky 975, Director

4. PUBLICITY

Over the last year we have continued to work with our Partner Organisations and Cheltenham Town Football Club. As part of our drive to reduce expenditure, our only paid advertising was at the football club. Information sessions and a contact email address for potential volunteers were promoted through our website and free media and, despite the reduction in paid advertising, we were pleased to note a rise in numbers of potential volunteers from whom increased numbers trained. We also continued to receive callers who came to the centre for support.

We formed a fund-raising team and a marketing team during the year. Our new Trustee has researched venues and organisations across the district. Our next aims are to increase our contact and presence with companies and organisations in order to increase awareness of the emotional support offered by Samaritans, to encourage volunteering and to seek funding support.

Recently, we have been asked talk to Cheltenham St John's Ambulance, who help support vulnerable adults and children, and to the staff at UCAS. Looking forward, we also hope to work closely with more institutions, both in Cheltenham and beyond to the towns in the north of the County.

Finally, the Brand Centre at Central Office has now completed the re-branding of publicity materials and has made new digital materials available, including leaflets or posters which we can customise for the Branch and to publicise events.

Jacquie 508, Trustee Marketing & Vicky 975, Director

5. VOLUNTEER RECRUITMENT

In the period under review, we received 189 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 34 new recruits to the training team over the 12 months under review. These new recruits now represent just over 25% of our listening volunteers, which is fantastic. We have just handed another 12 over to training at the end of April and already have 5 lined up to train in September 2019.

Last year the team decided 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 have seen a higher conversion rate of 'enquirer to volunteer' – up to 18% from 11%.

We have continued to try to add flexibility to the training schedules by working with our local branches. Worcester, in particular, have been able to accept our trainees for occasional modules, and have confirmed dates during the selection process. This has meant that we have had to defer fewer accepted recruits to later training sessions.

Trials are underway, in a couple of areas, to enhance the selection procedure and to make it more accessible. I understand the information session content, and selection morning activities would be available on-line. Of course, more information and feedback from the trials will emerge in due course.

The current selection team comprises 14 volunteers, and we are always keen to boost our numbers. You know who you are, and I would like to thank you all for your help over the year.

You are all fantastic!

Helen 568, Deputy Director, Recruitment & Selection

6. NEW VOLUNTEER DEVELOPMENT

Under the leadership of Barry 183 the training team expanded during 2018/19 and we now have six full time members of the team, plus Penny 1186 who continues to be a stalwart for face to face role plays and insights from a long period of service as a volunteer. Our thanks to Barry for leaving training in good order and ready to meet new challenges.

The six full time members are:

- Milly 998, Deputy Director with responsibility for SIT1¹
- Robin 207, Deputy Director with responsibility for SIT2

¹ SIT = Samaritans Initial Training

- Sandy 999, Trainer and Prison Team
- Barbara 236 Trainer, Remote Role Play co-ordinator and DBS checks
- Allyson 1090 and Dan 314, Trainers.

Mentor Allocation at the end of SIT1 is coordinated by Robin and Sandy.

The roll out of peer to peer mentor training across the branch has ensured that there are lots of volunteers who are also equipped to provide role play experience and feedback to our SIT1 trainees. Barbara has brilliantly taken on the task of encouraging volunteers to assist the training team with this vital part of the SIT1 experience, overseeing the shift from face to face to remote role playing. This has taken some complex organisation but has been running smoothly. It seems to be preferred and appreciated by both the trainees, as they find it realistic, and the role players who have enjoyed being able to stay comfortably at home. It would not work so smoothly without Barbara's impressive scheduling skills!

We will continue to actively recruit willing and suitable new talent into the team.

In January, thanks to the selection team, we welcomed an unusually large group of prospective volunteers to SIT1 and are delighted that all 14 made it safely through to the end of the course. This was helped by their being an enthusiastic and insightful group and we are confident that they will be a welcome addition to our branch. Rooms at Pate's Grammar School were unavailable forcing us to conduct all the training in the Centre. The team concluded that 12 is the ideal maximum group size, in order to optimise the learning experience, and that the available teaching space in the Centre is more suitable for our purposes.

The next SIT1 course starts on April 29th with 12 trainees, subject to references. Where a trainee has difficulty committing to the dates for the whole of SIT1, we encourage them to defer to a later course or to attend a catch-up session at another branch. To that end, we work with the Gloucester and Worcester branches to "mix and match" where clashes occur.

We will also be running three SIT2 courses throughout the year headed up by Robin, supported by Milly and all other trainers depending upon availability.

There are a considerable number of proposed changes to the way that SIT1 is delivered due to be phased in towards the end of 2019. These may include an increased amount of online learning via the Samaritans intranet and intensive SIT1 done over a weekend. We are ready to react to these new demands as they arrive.

Enormous thanks to the whole training team, the mentors and all those who give our prospective volunteers an invaluable learning experience by assisting us with the role plays.

Milly 998, Deputy Director with responsibility for SIT1

7. VOLUNTEER SUPPORT AND ONGOING TRAINING

Volunteer Support comprises a number of teams, all focused on supporting volunteers after they have finished SIT training. The teams within Volunteer Support comprise Volunteer Care and Retention, Leaders, Rota Management and Ongoing Training. At the time of writing, there are 145 volunteers in the Branch, including 31 New Samaritans, 12 Support Volunteers and 13 volunteers who are on Sabbatical.

Volunteer Care and Retention exists to keep a 'watchful eye' on the welfare of our dedicated band of fellow volunteers. The 6-strong team works to support volunteers in times of difficulty, enabling them to take a break from duties and helping them to come back in a phased way if and when they are able. A volunteer who goes on sabbatical is allocated a link person from the team to act as a liaison and support while they are off duties. This is a confidential service where only team members and the

Branch Director will have details of volunteers' circumstances. Returning volunteers are offered support tailored to their specific needs and we hope that this approach contributes to volunteers being retained after a period of sabbatical. The team also examines the rota statistics for each volunteer so that those who look like they might be struggling to undertake duties can be offered appropriate support. Again, we think this has helped to retain volunteers who may have considered resigning during periods of personal challenge. In the event of a volunteer resigning, the team offers an exit interview. Volunteer Care meets regularly to review progress and discuss optimum ways to support the volunteers in the branch.

The Leaders team continues to provide a vital contribution to the support of the volunteers within the branch, with Andrew 651 now at the helm. At the moment we have 24 leaders who support every duty, being available to volunteers whilst on duty as well as at offloading at the end of each shift. Leaders ensure that any relevant, up to date information is passed on regarding the daily running of the branch as well as ensuring that any follow up calls are completed in a timely fashion. Leaders' meetings are now held quarterly and email updates are sent out between meetings regarding any new relevant information. 5 new leaders have recently been identified and are awaiting training.

Ongoing Training

5 hours of OGT per year is mandatory for all established listening volunteers. This is to ensure that volunteers can be updated on any changes within the organisation, for consistency of service and to provide training in specialist areas of our work. In 2018, we canvassed the branch to establish which topics were most needed and requested by volunteers. This resulted in a published programme of events throughout the year tailored as far as possible to the majority of requests. Our aim was for all volunteers to fulfil the annual requirement. Once volunteers on sabbatical or otherwise excused were taken out, figures showed that

- 48 (59%) did 5 or more hours OGT (a few volunteers did substantially more)
- 18 (22%) did between 3 and 4.5 hours
- 15 (19%) did less than 3 hours

This was lower than we had hoped, although feedback from those who were able to attend sessions was overwhelmingly positive, which was encouraging. We are aware that some volunteers find it difficult to commit to additional hours and we are looking for ways to vary times and days when OGT is scheduled in order to allow maximum opportunity. A new programme for 2019 is in place.

Rota Management

During this year the Rota Team of 5 volunteers has remained stable and has continued to take responsibility for all things rota related, taking turns on a weekly basis. Their task mainly involves taking action when gaps in the rota arise, sometimes at very short notice, communicating gaps to other volunteers and stakeholders and arranging closure of the centre where gaps cannot be filled. The rota team also updates the rota to record new Samaritans' training shifts and make other amendments where system constraints prohibit volunteers from doing this themselves.

The revised rota introduced in January 2018 proved effective, with far fewer gaps and closures and the Rota Team keep the rota schedule under review. A survey of volunteers was undertaken in Spring 2018 as a result of which an early shift on Saturday morning was re-introduced and Friday mornings were closed as we did not then have sufficient volunteers to cover additional shifts. With new recruits now, we have recently been able to re-schedule Friday morning opening. We are lucky to have some

volunteers who are able to do multiple duties in a week and appreciate the dedication of our volunteers many of whom turn out at short notice to avoid us putting lines down.

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.

Berni 1129, Deputy Director, Volunteer Support and Ongoing Training

8. CALLER SUPPORT

Our Caller Support Team has 5 strong Team members, with additional reliable support for IT when needed. We report to Wales and the Marches Region (WAM) where we attend quarterly Regional Meetings and have access to Caller Support Forums, which are a helpful benefit for insightful and up-to-date Samaritan information.

We have a Caller Support Team member responsible for setting up the arrangements to ring and support Cruse callers until Cruse are in a position to start the counselling sessions. Two members of the Team also carry out monthly audits of SMS and email in line with Regional Caller Support practice. We are often impressed with the quality given and can also help give guidance on the written word where needed.

We had one email Assigned Caller for the Branch in 2018 and the caller was then transferred to another Branch in line with the 6 month policy. Samaritan responses given were often of high quality.

Statistics from the E-Log for 2018/19 show a decrease of 12% logged contacts, as compared to 2017/18.

Caller Support Statistics 2018-2019

Total logged contacts	28,780
Total 'Snap' Calls	5,724
COMPLETED CONTACTS	
Inbound Telephone Calls (including SNAPS)	21,441
Outbound Telephone Calls	694
Face to Face	103
Email	2,752
SMS Text	2,790
Letter	0
Total (including SNAPS)	28,780
Total (excluding SNAPS)	23,056
GENDER BREAKDOWN OF COMPLETED CONTACTS	
Male	7,094
Female	11,070
Transgender	121
Recorded as Unknown	1,525
Not captured	8,970

In 2018/19, compared to 2017/18, for Cheltenham Branch:

- 'Snaps' decreased by 23%
- Emails sent increased by 20%
- SMS messages sent decreased by 43%
- Face-to-face callers decreased by 21%.

Carol 974, Deputy Director, Caller Support

9. OUTREACH

Outreach Activity in Schools 2018-2019

Our Branch has been continuously engaged with local secondary schools since 2010, and worked with some for longer than that. Over the course of the last two school years, with a team of 5 volunteers, we delivered a total of seventy "emotional health sessions" in ten different schools. These sessions are typically aimed at classes of about twenty-five Year 10 pupils, but the material is quite frequently adapted for older, and occasionally younger, students. The visits are well received and we are frequently asked to return and repeat the programme in a following year. However, the pace has slowed somewhat dramatically during the current school year (2018-2019), with only nine classes given so far. This may be due to an increased concern in schools that teachers themselves should tackle emotional and mental health issues as an integral part of mainstream teaching, but it may also be a result of our earlier decision not to actively seek invitations. Potentially, therefore, we will have the option next year to begin advertising our capabilities to a wider range of schools without the risk that demand could outstrip our capacity.

One of the team is coming to the end of her three years as a Postvention Advisor in the national Step by Step service, supporting staff in schools and colleges after a suicide. In the last year she led the response in six cases and supported a colleague in a further four. She also spoke about the service at the Survivors of Bereavement by Suicide (SOBS) conference held in Cheltenham in July 2018.

Chris 1071, Branch Education Officer

Chris will be stepping down from the Schools team in July 2019. The Branch Leadership team would like to record its thanks and appreciation for all that Chris has done in communicating with local schools over many years, as well as leading and encouraging the volunteers in the team.

Our links with the community

Without the support of our community we would be unable to operate a Samaritans branch here. We are enormously grateful for their donations, help and encouragement. The Friends of Cheltenham Samaritans are true friends; they do an amazing job raising funds and their local events draw attention to Samaritans. Trinity Church has continued to encourage our work and signpost us to people in distress. The Skittles League are long term friends who raise funds for us annually. We are deeply grateful for the interest and donations from a number of church groups and trust funds and individuals.

We have given talks in several venues to: GCHQ staff, Ashley House Wives, Hardwicke Parochial School parents, Witness Support volunteers, Hartpury University staff and to DWP staff on five occasions.

We distributed information and talked to visitors at the Three Counties Show and Moreton Show, to students at Hartpury University Wellfest, to passers-by in Cheltenham Town Centre on World Suicide Prevention Day, to customers at Sainsbury's and to passengers at Cheltenham Spa railway station for three events.

We held a training day on providing emotional support outside the centre in January which provided advice and practice for volunteers.

Vicky 975, Director

10. PRISON SUPPORT

H.M.P Long Lartin is a high security men's prison in Worcestershire, about 22 miles away from the Cheltenham Samaritans Centre. It has recently slightly changed its prison population to include prisoners who are serving four years or more, although many of them are serving very long sentences. Nearly six hundred men are currently in Long Lartin.

The Listener scheme is well established in the prison and we have nine Listeners who are all committed and experienced in their roles. They, not the Samaritans team, are the volunteers who offer emotional support to other prisoners. Like us, they work on a rota basis answering face-to-face calls from prisoners who need support for many different kinds of reasons. They may suffer from depression, isolation, concerns about their families; they may be experiencing problems with other prisoners or with staff or they may be young prisoners facing sentences which will last for much of their adult lives. They may be troubled by suicidal thoughts. Their problems are as many and as various as those of callers to Samaritans. Listeners can be called at any time of day and night; most wings in the prison have a special Listener suite where the prisoners can talk confidentially to two Listeners. Like Samaritans, Listeners always work in pairs. For this valuable service, they receive no reward but are motivated by a wish to help others.

The Prison Support team act as shift leaders do in Samaritans. Contrary to what some people assume, Samaritans do not encounter the prison population at large. We are escorted to our meeting with the Listeners and we discuss the calls that they have received, ensuring that they are not carrying burdens which are too onerous. One of the aims of Listeners, as for Samaritans, is to reduce the number of deaths by suicide. A suicide in prison has a powerful effect on other residents and staff, reflecting as it does the grim reality of a life without freedom or hope. Over the past year in Long Lartin the number of deaths in custody has risen to an unprecedented level.

In January 2019, a new Governor, Dr Jamie Bennett, was appointed and his arrival has heralded a number of initiatives to address this situation. Samaritans have been pleased to be invited to share in this approach. We took part in a day when prisoners were able to find out about support services available to them. Served with coffee and biscuits, we were all able to chat together in a relaxed atmosphere. We have been invited to a strategy meeting and to workshops on suicide prevention. The Listeners have been made to feel valued and their importance has been appreciated. A small but highly significant move has been the restoration of meetings in the library as opposed to in unsuitable classrooms.

The second half of 2018 was a frustrating time for both Listeners and Samaritans with cancelled meetings and an apparently diminishing number of calls to Listeners. It says something about the calibre of our Listeners that they have remained steadfast through a difficult time. We all look forward to a productive and supportive relationship between Samaritans, Listeners and prison staff.

We have not yet organised our annual visit for Samaritans who may be interested in the prison but we shall be doing so in October when we hope that those who wish to will come to find out more. Our team consists of eight members and we send two Samaritans out to the Listeners' meetings each week or, once a month, to Safer Custody meetings which give us many insights into the ways in which prison staff care for the men in the particular environment of a prison.

This year we were able to show our gratitude to Jenny 1023 who had been the Branch Prison Support Officer for more than seven years. She did a remarkable job and great thanks go to her and the wonderful team.

Debbie 227, Branch Prison Support Officer

Jenny 1023 stepped down from the lead role this year but is still an active member of the team. The Branch Leadership team would like to record its thanks and appreciation for all that she has done, and continues to do, to support the team and the Listeners at Long Lartin.

11. FRIENDS REPORT

I welcome the opportunity to give an update on the “Friends” activities and to flag up some exciting events ahead.

Our Committee is growing and we have been joined by new members and new generations! Welcome Arlene, Jill, JoJo, Emma, Lucy, Kate and Ross. We now have a wealth of expertise with social media, artwork, musical agents and organisational skills, which we really appreciate, but have to be selective in where we hold meetings as there are so many of us! We need to nurture this into productive contributions.

Every three years we struggle a little to raise funds as one of our events has a “rest” year. Glastonbury was “resting” last year, but I am pleased to say we have been asked back to do the important job of “Control” on the radios, sitting next to all the emergency services. Over the years, our team has refined and modernised the system and we are now fully computerised. Everyone is so keen that we have been oversubscribed this year, a great place to be.

That said, we are proud that the “Friends” were able to contribute £10,500 to Cheltenham Samaritans this year.

One of our biggest earners is the Beer Festival, now in its 14th year and taking place on Saturday 8th June 2019. Every year we try to add value and last year, thanks to Kate and Ross, we introduced an outside musical stage which worked well. This year we are adding value by bringing the bars outside to compliment the music. If you know of anyone, or business, that would like to sponsor a Barrel or Beer please make contact. If you would like to come and enjoy the friendly atmosphere, tickets are available online from Eventbrite²; advert over!

Sadly, earlier this year we lost one of the original founder members of our group, Nicky Norwood. Nicky and Leigh were engaged when the committee formed in 1979 and we had the first inter-committee wedding in 1981. Nicky was a driving force through the formative years and even after she stepped down from the committee to concentrate on raising her family, she continued to organise regular craft meetings, attend many events and of course provide massive support to Leigh who is still a serving member. Nicky will be greatly missed.

Our theme has always been “If it is fun fundraising we will do it”; that is not to say that hard work at times is not a feature, but it is why we are successful. Over the last few years we have helped with stewarding events, such as the Round Table Fireworks at the racecourse. Lechlade Music Festival features prominently, with a full team going for several days. In return we get a donation to our funds, and we all have had a great time.

This year we are celebrating a major anniversary. The “Young friends” started 40 years ago. Eight of us met as strangers and all have been lifelong friends. It was the brainchild of former Friends’ Chairman

²<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/the-14th-cheltenham-craft-beer-and-cider-festival-2019-tickets-52229812776>

Dennis Newman, challenging siblings to find a new direction. We went for discos, pop quizzes and bicycle treasure hunts. We will be celebrating in October by inviting all 70+ committee members to a bit of a do. Having looked back and collated through every annual report the amount we have raised, I am really proud to report that we have jointly raised £300,000.00 for Cheltenham Samaritans. I think you will agree that is truly something to celebrate!

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

Gary Newman, Chairman, Friends of the Cheltenham and District Samaritans

12. TREASURER'S REPORT AND FINANCIAL STATEMENT

It was a pleasure to be elected as a Trustee and to take on the responsibilities of being the Treasurer to the Branch at last year's AGM. I would like to start by expressing my sincere thanks to Lloyd for the smooth hand over of the files. Lloyd has not been lost to the branch, he is still doing a wonderful job with our fund raising team with great dedication and commitment.

During the year we have given a great deal of attention to ensuring that we manage the cost base of our wonderful centre. We have secured better rates on all our utilities and have maximised the interest available on our cash reserves. We have recently instigated a new approach to fund raising as we try to build relationships/partnerships with businesses around our area that will hopefully develop a new flow of potential donors.

We are again really grateful to the Friends of the Samaritans who have provided us with another substantial donation during the year which went a long way in helping us to finish our year with a very small deficit on our accounts. This has ensured that we have maintained a healthy reserve of funds which reflects just under 3 years of expenditure.

During the Year, Cheltenham Town Football Club announced that we were chosen as one of their two preferred Charity partners for the season.

We have also joined Virgin Money Giving which has offered an additional route for people wishing to donate, it also manages the Gift Aid option, allowing us to receive those funds within a month with no administration work required on our part.

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

Andrew Fleming
Charles Irvine Trust
Cheltenham Skittles League
Evans Adlard
Friends of the Samaritans
Gordon Grey Trust
Highbury Congregational Church

Penny Kain
Sainsbury
Sunrise Rotary
The Owl Trust
Trinity Church
Tim Harrison
Tewkesbury Methodist Church

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

Clive 623, Treasurer

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES

	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	Total	Total 2018 £
Incoming resources				
Donations and legacies	18,815	1,332	20,147	18,665
Investment Income	614		614	34
Charitable Activities	24,944		24,944	15,833
Total	44,373	1,332	45,705	34,532
Resources expended				
Charitable activities	14,304	1,055	15,359	
Direct Charitable Expenditure	21,559		21,559	31,627
Management and Administrative Costs	6,378		6,378	9,196
Governance Costs	3,678		3,678	1,557
Total resources expended	45,919	1,055	46,974	42,380

BALANCE SHEET AS AT 31 MARCH 2019

	2019 £	2018 £
FIXED ASSETS		
	160812	162,180
CURRENT ASSETS		
Debtors	2438	4785
Creditors	0	-600
Cash at bank and in hand	93899	91,775
TOTAL ASSETS	257,149	258,140
FUNDS		
Unrestricted funds	250875	252,144
Restricted funds	6274	5,996
TOTAL FUNDS	257,149	258,140

The accounts were approved by the Trustees on 13th May 2019.

C Ridgwell, Hon 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: 7 May 2019

Name: ROBIN OWEN WELTON

Relevant professional qualification FCA

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