



FRIENDS OF ST MONICA'S HOSPITAL

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Welcome from David Kenworthy, Chair of FOSMH

In January last year, we held a briefing for members in the Galtres Centre. Members were actually there and not appearing on a screen. What a difference a year makes! Many of us are 'zoomed' out but just think how we would have coped if this pandemic had happened 20 years ago. Skype was in its infancy, and many of us were still on dial up connections spending many minutes looking at spinning stars on a screen waiting for downloads. Now, I can speak instantly to many of you at no cost. However, I am conscious that not all our members have access to a computer which means they will be excluded from this newsletter.

If you know of a member who cannot receive or read this newsletter, please help them access it.

The trustees have been busy during the various lockdowns making sure that we will be in good shape when we are able to resume some kind of social or work life.

News

New trustees

Towards the end of last year we advertised on the website, in the Easingwold Advertiser and village newsletters to see if we could attract new trustees. The response far exceeded expectation and produced a list of talent from which to choose. After all applicants were interviewed by the chairman and vice-chairman, five new trustees were appointed, bringing with them additional expertise in

marketing and communications, legal matters, general practice, the NHS and sales management. The Executive Committee is now stronger and the two sub-committees, covering grant making and fund raising, are better equipped to meet the coming tasks.

Details of the new trustees; Peter Berry, Lorraine Boyd, Ian Jackson, Graham Pratt and Terry Saeedi have been added to the website.

Grant Making Report from Graham Pratt, Chair of Grant-making Committee

Sadly, Steve Dann has stood down as a trustee. Steve was the first chair of the committee and under his guidance the committee produced excellent guidelines and processes to ensure that the trust's money was used wisely and properly accounted for. Our sincere thanks to Steve for his work.

Helping the Covid Vaccination Effort

Many of you will have had your first Covid vaccination at either the health centre or the Galtres Centre. I'm pleased to say that Friends of St Monica's has been playing a role in the vaccination programme. We bought equipment for the volunteers who have been working outside in some pretty grim weather and, probably of more concern to the volunteers and staff, we have paid for their meals and refreshments. EDCCA staff then organised the delivery of these from the local cafes that produced them.

Two of our new trustees have played a very important role in the centre. Lorraine Boyd has led the setting up of the vaccination centres across the Primary Care Network area and deserves our congratulations and thanks for a very well executed plan. Ian Jackson, a retired anaesthetist, has been giving the injections. Because we had to conduct trustee recruitment via Zoom, David Kenworthy had never met Ian in person. He met him for the first time at the Galtres Centre and Ian stabbed him! Fortunately, only with a syringe.

GP Surgeries Support

We have already contributed to the purchase of a bladder scanning machine, defibrillators and are also purchasing ear suction machines that will be available for use at the surgeries. Now we will consider requests from the GP surgeries for support where they could demonstrate an improvement or increase of Health and Well Being services to their registered patients. Due to current Covid pressures, this process will begin as soon as time and resource allows later this year.

IT Knowledge Equipment This project plan enhances the IT skills of those residents across our area who are particularly isolated and in need of support. It has emerged from the Easingwold Surgery. It involves a partnership of volunteers, businesses and health organisations. Through the use of donated, used IT equipment, and training, we will support this.

Working with EDCCA

-Meals on wheels

As many of you know, EDCCA organises the meals on wheels service around the district. At the beginning of the pandemic, FOSMH agreed to fund additional meals so that the service could be extended over more days.

- Transport for cancer patients

We have also worked with EDCCA to provide services such as transporting cancer patients to St James's Hospital in Leeds.

- Future Working Together

EDCCA employs staff and has a large number of volunteers. FOSMH, whilst having wonderful volunteers who give their time to make life in the hospital more comfortable, has no capacity to deliver services in the community. We have been working closely with the trustees of EDCCA to plan what services we can offer together with our funds and their expertise. This is a result of FOSMH changing the constitution to allow us to fund projects to improve the health and well-being of our communities.

Changing the status of FOSMH

At the moment the trust is an unincorporated association. This means that the trust cannot enter into contracts as an entity in its own right and it leaves the individual trustees potentially liable for actions of the trust and its funds. When the trust's remit was limited to St Monica's Hospital, this was of little concern. You will see in other stories that we are working closely with EDCCA as part of our goal to improve the health and wellbeing of our communities. We hope to work with other organisations in the future. Some of that work will require us to enter into contracts and other arrangements of a legal nature. Having taken legal advice the trustees propose to incorporate the trust as a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (Association Model). This is a model recognised and promoted by the Charity Commission. The change will require the consent of Friends, which will be sought later in the year, when more information will be provided. Depending on the state of Covid-19 restrictions, this could take place at the AGM in June or July. In the meantime if you have any comments or queries on this proposed change please contact the secretary.

Fundraising report – from Terry Saeedi, Chair of the Fundraising committee

I am delighted to have been appointed a trustee of this wonderful organisation. The funding position of the trust is very healthy; however we know that we will be funding some significant projects in the near future and have established a fundraising committee. This will make sure that we can continue to support the hospital and the wider community in the longer term. The members of this new committee are Lorraine Boyd, Jenny Rhodes and me, with David Kenworthy in attendance. We will be putting together a fundraising strategy and will share this with you in due course. Of course, there is no monopoly on good ideas, so please do share with us any that you have.

Gardens and grounds report - Jenny Rhodes, trustee overseeing gardens and grounds

The garden and grounds are well looked after by Rob and Christine Burns, who work once a week throughout the year to keep them looking tidy. They keep the tubs well stocked with bedding plants, pansies and violas at the moment, and there is a good array of bulbs in the borders at the moment which will bring some much needed colour over the next few weeks.

The furniture on the patio at the rear of the hospital will soon have a spring make over ready for any visitors who may need to be with their relative until they are able to see them inside the hospital and to be ready for residents to sit out and enjoy the sunshine and warmer weather. There are two bird tables in this area and are now being looked after by a Trustee who will put food out to encourage the wildlife. There is also a hedgehog house in a secluded corner of the front garden which has recently been inhabited by at least one hedgehog.

The Summer House, which was built in memory of Barry Sanderson, a well-respected Trustee and Chairman, who sadly died a few years ago, is a lovely refuge for those residents who can walk in the grounds in warmer weather. This last year it hasn't been used due to social distancing but we are looking forward to opening it up later in the year.

Last Word

I am conscious that we have been very quiet over the last few months but I hope you will now realise that we have been very active on your behalf. The Pandemic will leave our communities with many challenges, including continuing loneliness and mental and physical health problems. Friends of St Monica's Hospital, through your generosity, can help alleviate these challenges in partnership with health professionals and other local charities. If you see an opportunity for us to get involved, please get in touch. Our contact details are on our website at www.fosmh.org.uk.