

Chairman`s Annual Report for 2021

Deputy Lord Lieutenant of East Sussex, Your Worshipful the Mayor, Right Reverend Will Hazlewood, Bishop of Lewes, distinguished guests, Ladies and Gentlemen. It is with great pleasure that I give my annual report on the activities of the Friends of Eastbourne Hospital. As many of you know the Friends financial year runs from September 1st 2020 until 31st August 2021 but I will, as I have done in previous years, talk about our fundraising events up until this AGM from January this year, as the last AGM had been delayed from November 2020 until February this year due to the Covid pandemic. All financial details, however, will relate to our Financial Year, September 2020 to August 2021.

As I announced at the last AGM the Bishop of Lewes, the Right Reverend Will Hazlewood has agreed to take on the role as our patron to replace the previous Bishop in that role, and I am delighted to say that he has been able to find time in his busy schedule to be here today. Welcome and thank you.

As has been customary I will mention some of the formalities before talking about the specific events of the year which have once again been overshadowed by the Covid pandemic. The aims and objectives of the Friends of Eastbourne Hospital have remained much the same in the 73 years since it was formed. I realise that these have been mentioned in previous Chair`s reports but I think they are worth repeating. They can be summarised as follows:

- 1) To provide funds for extra services, equipment and amenities for patients and staff at Eastbourne DGH and the related community services, and to make donations where the expenditure has been recommended by the NHS Trust, and has been approved by the Committee.
- 2) To encourage voluntary work in the hospital.
- 3) To provide a link between the hospital and community.

The Charity is managed by a Board of Trustees who are elected and, thereafter, re-elected at three year intervals at the Annual General Meeting. We have recently said goodbye to one of our trustees, Andy Holter, who due to pressure of work has asked to stand down. We thank Andy for his years of hard work for the Friends. However Andy says he is still happy to offer help to the Friends as required.

We have also said good bye to Roger and Sue Smalley who, although not trustees, supported our treasurer with the book keeping for many years, which was a huge amount of work. We are of course hugely grateful for what they did for the Friends and wish them a happy retirement.

And on leavers, lastly I have to say a huge huge thank you to Debbie Wicks who, as I am sure most of you know worked tirelessly in the Friends office for 16 years. Her contributions to the Charity over this time have been priceless and she will be greatly missed. However Debbie will continue as a volunteer at our various fundraising events in the future so we will be glad to see her there.

But however sad it is to see people go, we have the joy of welcoming a new arrival. I am delighted to say that we have appointed Amy Williams as a successor to Debbie and she has hit the ground running. She has a background in graphics amongst other things and has already got some new ideas to take the Friends forward. We welcome Amy to the Charity.

I don't think it will be a surprise to any of you that this past year has been very similar to last year in the impact Covid has had on the Friends fundraising and on all our lives. We are all getting more used to the new normal – social distancing, wearing masks where appropriate, and getting our vaccines. Hopefully the latter will bring back a bit of the old normal in the not too distant future. However it has not all been doom and gloom for the Friends and I will discuss this later in my report.

INCOME:- Where do the Friends get their income from? I know most of you will have heard this before but I do think it is worth repeating to put things into context. Funds are raised for the Friends in a number of ways:

- 1) Shops and Trolley Services**
- 2) Legacies and in Lieu Donations for Flowers**
- 3) Donations and Fundraising from the Eastbourne Population**
- 4) Friends own Fundraising Activities**

I will go through each of these one by one, starting with the shops.

1) Shops

The shops are once again doing a grand job despite the restrictions on visitors reducing the customer base, and the lockdown that continued into the summer. And as mentioned before many of our volunteers are of a certain age and having to stay away, quite rightly, from the hospital. Our shop incomes have fallen and some had to close temporarily, but sadly the Flower Shop in the car park remains closed.

- a) **Two shops** – these are a main shop in the entrance to the Hospital, and a small outlet by the staff side entrance to the Hospital. The main shop stayed open throughout the pandemic and provided an unbelievable service. My thanks once again must go to Sue Hitchen, the shop manager, and all her team of staff and volunteers who have worked tirelessly throughout the pandemic. Although the profits obviously have fallen this year Sue and her team continue to make a good income through their hard work.

b) **A Flower Shop** – Sadly this has stayed closed since March last year. With no or limited visitors to the hospital there was little need for flowers, especially as at the height of the pandemic flowers were not allowed on the wards. Purchasing just a few flowers for the shop for the occasional sale was not financially viable. Plans for opening a small flower shop outlet in the foyer have continued to be put on hold but I did, with Sue Hitchen, have a further meeting with Chris Hodgson, Facilities Director for the Trust, in September to discuss this further. We have a date in our diaries for a further meeting in March next year to see if we will all be in a position to progress this further. Fingers crossed. I am sure this would improve flower sales.

c) **A cafe outside the Radiotherapy Unit** – Sadly the cafe closed in March last year due to the pandemic but has recently reopened 4 days a week. Sales are improving but it is taking time for staff to realise it is now open again. Fewer people accompanying their relatives to radiotherapy has also reduced sales. But it is good to see it open once more.

d) **The Trolley Services** around the wards for the convenience of staff and patients who are unable to visit the other shops were also stopped in March last year but were able to restart in a reduced capacity in the autumn in “green” areas, places where Covid patients are not present. However since then the trolley rounds have returned, with full Covid safety precautions, back to a level approaching normal which is great for both patients and staff.

Again I cannot thank Sue Hitchen enough for all the hard work she puts in to all these ventures, much of it in her own time. Without her and her other staff members and the volunteers none of this success would be possible.

2) **Legacies:-** These remain an unpredictable but very important source of income particularly this year with our own fundraising so reduced. This financial year there has been £324,284 left to the Friends for which as always we are incredibly grateful. Some of this has been left to specific departments such as ophthalmology and we are working with these departments to purchase the equipment they need. Many donations are also received **in lieu of flowers**, contributing £1000s throughout the year. We are very grateful to relatives who, in their time of bereavement, still think of us and we can assure them that all donations are gratefully received and make a significant contribution to our activities.

3) Donations:-

Can I take this opportunity to thank all the individuals and organisations who have donated money to the Friends over the last year. I am overwhelmed by the many and varied ways people fundraise on our behalf. Due to less events people looked for more imaginative ways to fundraise and donate. I will mention some of them here.

a) Don McPhee -	£3,385 (various events)
b) Cheryl Dufton (ex cruise ship singer month)	£1,435 (sang daily for a month)
c) West Rise School "100" challenge (care given to a member of their staff)	£2,800
d) WI's (Eastbourne Townies, Micheldene, Westham)	£600
e) 6 year old Annabelle (24hr Swoove-a-thon) ("help doctors make people better")	£267
f) Eastbourne Auctions (sale of a late patient`s effects)	£2,174
g) Enterprise Rent a Car	£1,500
h) Waitrose Community Matters	£333
i) South Downs Singers & Warbleton Brass Band	£420
j) Eastbourne Soroptomists	£1,095
k) Aqua Bar music festival	£264
l) John and Jean Taylor & Malcolm Webster (gala lunch)	£135
m) Birthday Fundraiser by Trish Hamblin	£300

There have been so many other donations, many given anonymously. Many people gave donations in lieu of sending Christmas Cards and presents, and there were many from grateful patients. There are far too many to mention once again. But all, however big or small, have been gratefully received and are hugely important to the work the Friends are able to do for the Hospital. I thank you all on behalf of the Friends for your donations whether you are mentioned in this report or not. Can I thank those who have used Gift Aid for their donations as once they are registered, the Friends get an additional 25% back from HMRC.

There are also other people who raise money in the community for the Friends. Collecting pots in the Community, for example Heaths Butchers in Old Town, raised about £3,500 in year.

Regular sums from Recycle4Charity have been received from used cartridges, milk bottle tops, Amazon Smile, and the Eastbourne Borough Council lottery.

Simon and Carolyn Farrar, since taking over the stamp sales, have continued to do great things raising money in online sales.

I have to end this part of my report by again mentioning Rosemary Cameron`s marmalade, the best marmalade ever. She sold 108 jars at £3 each.

4)Friends Fundraising Activities –

Sadly, as last year, many of our fundraising events this year have been cancelled. This included the Tennis tournament, Cream Tea and Summer Fair, Summer raffle, Sugar Ray Charity Golf Day, Spring coffee morning, and the upcoming Christmas Fair and coffee morning.

However some events did return this year after being cancelled last year.

- a) **Open Gardens** – after cancelling all the gardens last year it was decided, with some trepidation, to open the season this year in June, with hand sanitizer, face masks and aprons available. But people poured in for the opening of the first one, and this was followed with all 7 gardens which made a staggering £20,006. I must thank all the owners and tireless volunteers for manning the gate, erecting signs, organising the car park, making cakes, and running the stalls. But most of all I must thank Gill Woolley who has led the team in organising the gardens for many years. Gill has decided to step down from this role and I am not sure whether her continual smile at the gardens was for this reason or the phenomenal amount of money being raised. I expect a bit of both. On behalf of the Friends I wish to thank Gill for all her hard work over the years. Another trustee, Margaret Lonsdale, and Ros Rolls-King, are taking on the role from Gill and I wish them well.
- b) **Art Exhibition** – after the success of last year`s virtual Art Exhibition it was nice last month to get back to St Andrews school for the usual face to face exhibition. Ann Caffyn seems to have never ending enthusiasm and energy in organising this event with her great team behind her in support. Once again the exhibition was a great success raising £4580 through picture sales, the raffle of a painting by Jackie Hurwood, the silent auction of a painting by Christopher Osborne, and donations over the two day exhibition.
- c) **Dine around the World** – it was with great delight that we have been able to restart these dinners with, as usual, Covid safety paramount. The first of these was held at the Thai Marina in October and raised about £800. We thank the owner and staff of the restaurant for giving us such a good and plentiful meal and wonderful service. A second dinner was run earlier this month at La Locanda del Duca and raised nearly £570. Our thanks go to Luca Albertoli and all his staff for yet another great meal. And Covid permitting the next dinner will be at the Spice Garden on 26th January.
- d) **Quiz** – Again it is nice to see the Friends quizzes coming back after 18 months off. As it was only last week I am not able to say what the amount raised was as yet.
- e) **Football Match** – A new fundraising event was staged in September, a football match between staff from Eastbourne DGH and the Conquest. Sadly the DGH lost 7-4 but hopefully there will be revenge next year as it is hoped that this will become an annual event with the venue alternating between Eastbourne and Hastings. The event raised £270 for the Friends. Next year the match will be played in Hastings and the Conquest Friends will benefit. My thanks go to Paul Gosling who organised the match and for thinking of the Friends, and to Sue

Hitchen, once again, for providing all the drinks and snacks from the Friends shop that were sold at the match.

EXPENDITURE:-

1) Covid Funds -

I am sure you remember that when the pandemic started in March last year the Friends started a fundraise specifically to support the staff of the hospital with things such as food, drinks, PPE, and electrical goods. The response was incredible with the staff incredible grateful to us and all the donors.

Amazingly there was still just over £30,000 left after this spend and the Friends have continued to support staff with things such as hand and lip cream. But the Trust asked us if we would be willing to support staff Wellbeing in Eastbourne DGH with a further £10,000 to purchase items for various departments in the hospital. This we did willingly. Departments were allowed to put in bids to the Trust, and most departments did, and items were selected and the list given to the Friends. The list is far too long to put into this report but most departments benefitted with items such as fridges, microwaves, coffee machines, and other electrical items. Plates, cutlery, radios and televisions were also purchased. And picnic tables and benches for the hospital gardens. A Trust manager said "I can't even begin to tell you what a difference this has made – Thank you"

2) What have the general funds been spent on?

As I mentioned earlier the Friends fundraising has been much reduced this year, as it was last year, so the funds available to spend on the usual equipment in the financial year ending 31st August 2021 has been reduced. The amount spent is approximately £225K, but this figure doesn't include other items we have agreed to buy but haven't as yet been billed for, and the major project.

So how did the Friends spend the funds received? At the last AGM I announced that the Friends had finished raising funds for the Radiology equipment major project and were now going to raise £72K for lead lined screens and cupboards for each individual patient bay in the resuscitation area in the Emergency Room. This means that nurses and doctors will not have to leave their patient whilst Xrays are taken in a neighbouring bay or leave the patient to get equipment. This will increase staff and patient safety. This £72K target has now been achieved.

The Friends have been able to provide, or agreed to provide, equipment to other departments as well.

Here is some of the equipment the Friends have paid for within the financial year:-

• Podiatry	(wheelchair platform)	£29,700
• Critical Care	(Omnicell drug cupboard)	£31,130
• Moving and Handling	(One leg stools)	£8,441
• Crisis Response Team	(bladder scanner)	£6,575
• Aquatic Physiotherapy	(2x waterproof laptops, patient lockers)	£8,207
• Gynaecology clinic	(Ultrasound machine)	£75,000
• Cardiac Rehab	(warming cupboard)	£2,560
• Stroke Unit	(reclining chair)	£1,423
• Radio DGH	(air conditioning)	£4,670
• Occupational Therapy	(therapeutic garden)	£3,000
• Critical Care	(PPE hoods and hoses)	£1,518

Welcome packs for patients who come into hospital urgently are still being provided and contain a toothbrush, toothpaste, and a few other essential items for care. These are purchased by the Friends and are very much appreciated by patients and often result in donations to the Friends as a thank you.

And at Christmas the Friends were still able to give donations to wards and departments that are working on Christmas day and these are used for gifts for patients or Christmas food for the ward. The library also gets a donation for books, and the Hospital Radio to help it keep running. All these Christmas donations amount to about £6,500.

The Friends have continued this year to make available **Educational Bursaries** for up to £2000 per year from a legacy left a few years ago to the Friends, not for equipment, but "for the benefit of staff at Eastbourne DGH". This year the trustees have sadly not had any applications. We hope that we have more applications to choose from in the coming year.

Sadly the Friends were unable to hold its usual 3 educational talks for the public due to Covid but we hope to resume them next year.

The Future:-

So what is the major project the Friends of Eastbourne Hospital are supporting this coming year now that the fundraising for the Emergency Department has finished? After some discussion with the Trust we have agreed on a project which I know will be popular with the people of Eastbourne. As I am sure you remember some years ago the Friends had their biggest ever fundraiser for a Da Vinci robot for the Urology Department. The robot has revolutionised the treatment of so many patients. Sadly it has been breaking down more and more and has now finally reached the point where it cannot be repaired any more. The Department of Health has given the Trust some money towards a replacement but it has been agreed that the Friends will raise £500K

towards the purchase. That is brilliant news, as I am sure you will all agree, and I know will be a very popular with the town.

The Trust continues to be very grateful to the Friends for all that we do for the hospital. They have however revamped the Trust's own Charity this year, which covers Eastbourne, Bexhill and Conquest Hospitals, but after discussion with ourselves the Trust has reassured us that it will not compete with us in the areas where we fundraise. Long may that continue. We emphasised to the Trust that if our funds reduced then the EDGH would be the loser.

I would like to thank all the trustees, Debbie and Sue, and Amy recently, in the office, and the shop management for all the support and hard work that they continue to give me as Chair of the Friends which has made my role so much easier. It has been a tough year that no one could have predicted but without their support, none of this could have been achieved. However my biggest thanks must go to you, the members of the Friends, volunteers and helpers, and the population of Eastbourne who so generously support us in all our endeavours. You make all this possible and without you none of this is achievable. It is an honour to be chair of this great organisation.

However, please can I make a plea for more volunteers to join us when this pandemic ends. We do not know how many of our current ones may decide not to return, and many have decided that already, and without volunteers we cannot do what we do. Speak to your friends and relatives. However little time you and they can spare is very much appreciated.

It is impossible to pick out all individuals in this report or else I would be here forever, but I have already mentioned several. But can I apologise to anyone who has donated or raised money for the Friends, or given up their time to volunteer, who I have not personally mentioned. Please be assured your efforts are as much appreciated as those I have mentioned.

Mister President, that concludes my review of the year. I am happy to answer any questions members may have. But if there are no questions I would like to propose that the meeting adopts this report.