

## Chairman`s Annual Report for 2024

Deputy Lieutenant, Your Worshipful the Mayor, Right Reverend Will Hazlewood, Bishop of Lewes, distinguished guests, Ladies and Gentlemen. This is the 9<sup>th</sup> annual report that I have given on the activities of the Friends of Eastbourne Hospital. As many of you know the Friends of Eastbourne Hospital`s financial year runs from September 1<sup>st</sup> until 31<sup>st</sup> August, and our Treasurer will quite rightly talk to that timetable, but I will, as I have done in previous years, talk about our fundraising events up until this AGM as it seems inappropriate to me to leave the last nearly 3 months of activities until next year`s report.

I know I have every year mentioned the aims and objectives of the Friends but I think it appropriate that I mention them again for those who may not know them. And then I will talk about the specific activities of the year.

The aims and objectives have remained much the same over the 76 years since the Friends was formed. 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 our 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. I am delighted to say that those due for re-election this year have agreed to do so. And thankfully none of the other current trustees have decided to retire from the Friends.

However with every bit of good news there is always some extremely sad news. Recently we have lost four great supporters of the Friends, one an ex trustee, and three of our wonderful volunteers.

Andy Holter, who had been a trustee with the Friends for several years, sadly died suddenly and unexpectedly at the young age of 48. Andy had left the Friends as a trustee a few years ago due to pressure of work. He spent so much of his life volunteering in and around Eastbourne for St John`s Ambulance, sea cadets, police cadets, Eastbourne Pride and many more causes. In his own words he found it difficult to say "No". He will be sorely missed by many.

We have also sadly lost 3 of our very longstanding volunteers in the last few months. Jeanette Evans died at home aged 97. She started her involvement with the Friends well over 20 years ago raising funds through her stalls at the Open Gardens and various

coffee mornings selling china and glass initially, then second hand bags and jewellery. She, and her friend June Biscoe would take the donated items of jewellery to Eastbourne Auctions who would sell selected items commission free and return the less valuable items to Jeanette to sell on their stall. Over the years astonishing amounts of money were raised. Jeanette was at her happiest when serving others.

The second of our great volunteers who has died this year was June Tickner at the age of 99. For over 30 years June raised a tremendous amount of money setting up her stall at many Friends events selling stamps. June`s dedication to sorting and preparing hundreds of stamps would often start at 6am. She told me once that her dining room could never be used for dining as it was permanently full of stamps. Many stamp collections went to the auction house after sorting. During this time June raised over £46,000 for the Friends from stamp sales. She kept a meticulous record of her sales, which I found to my cost a few years ago, when she approached me after the AGM to say I had missed off the amount from her latest sale, so the amount I quoted in my report was a few hundred pounds short. I had to apologise, privately of course.

And the third of our wonderful volunteers to have died this year is Joan Radcliffe. Joan joined the Flower Shop way back in 1997 with her friend Pauline. They worked Thursday evenings in the days when the shop ran 3 shifts a day, and they did that for several years, also doing extra shifts to cover holidays. Unfortunately due to ill health Joan had to give up regular volunteering and became a reserve but still continued to attend and support many Friends events.

Our heartfelt condolences go to the families and friends of these 4 great supporters of our charity.

So let us now look at the activities that have brought income for the Friends, and then how that money has been spent. So firstly let us look at income.

**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 the best way of showing it. 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 by the Eastbourne Population**
- 4) The Friends own Fundraising Activities**

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

### 1) **Shops**

After last year`s incredible year, where the shop had a turnover of over £500K for the first time, there was only one way to go. Yes this year the turnover passed £600K with a 33% profit margin. This was down to the incredible hard work of Rai Hitchen, the shop

manager, and her wonderful team of volunteers. As I said last year Rai was finally persuaded that she needed a second part time deputy manager so that she could at least get some time off. So in the spring we interviewed and appointed Fiona Hancock to this post. Fiona has a lot of experience in the charity retail sector and has over 20 years` experience working with volunteers so she is perfect for the role. She has settled in really well, and for anyone who knows Rai, you will see that she looks so much more relaxed now with this extra help.

- a) **Two shops** – these are a main shop in the entrance to the Hospital, which continues to be busy, and a small outlet by the staff side entrance at the back of the hospital. With building work continuing on the Sussex Surgical Centre at the back of the hospital, and the closure of the rear entrance to the hospital, there was concern that the sales may well reduce at the staff shop. However this has not had a major impact on sales partly, it would appear, as a result of a lot of the workmen are using it.
- b) **The cafe outside the Radiotherapy Unit** – A lack of volunteers had stopped the café being open 5 days a week but this year 5 day opening has been possible most weeks. Although takings are not huge the shop continues to make a regular income and provides a valuable service to patients, visitors and staff.
- c) **The Trolley Services** around the wards are for the convenience of hard working staff, and for patients who are unable to visit the other shops. The problems with the hospital wifi on many of the wards has improved significantly this year so card sales are much improved especially as people do not carry cash these days. More volunteers are still needed to make sure the service can continue on a daily basis.

Again I cannot thank Rai Hitchen enough, Fiona and Tracie, and all the volunteers, for all the hard work they have put in to all these ventures. And a bumper year financially as I mentioned earlier. Without Rai and her team none of this success would be possible.

#### 1) **Legacies:-**

These remain an unpredictable but very important source of income. This financial year there has been over £975K left to the Friends which I think is the largest annual amount ever. As always we are incredibly grateful and as a result the Friends have not only been able to fulfil all reasonable requests from the hospital this year, but has also allowed a sizeable sum to be put aside for next year. This I will talk about later. Some of these legacies have been left to specific departments and we are working with these departments to purchase the equipment they need. For example the Friends have had legacies totalling approximately £78K left specifically for the Ophthalmology Department. We are currently in discussion with the staff as to what they need and a new microscope is top of the list. We are as always extremely grateful to those who choose to leave such sums to the Friends in their wills. Without these legacies we would only be able to do a fraction of what we do.

Many donations have also been received **in lieu of flowers**. We are once again 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. I will mention some of them here as there are far too many to list them all.

a) Tuesday Craft Club – donation pot for craft supplies in year	£550
- goods donated to shop	£1907
b) Two pieces of jewellery sold at Eastbourne Auctions	£1480
c) Eastbourne Historic Vehicles Club from Festival of Transport	£1250
d) Donations in lieu of sending Christmas Cards	several
e) Sale of 2.5 tons of bottle tops	£250
f) Ecumenical services at Bernard Baron Care Home	£153
g) Heaths Butchers donation box	£1200
h) Kath Boak – Beach day for Friends and family (donations)	£200
i) Hailsham Artists Network (Alfriston weekend event)	£40
j) East Dean and Friston Lunch Club	£100
k) Amelia Harrison (charitable bonus from her US employers)	£1000
l) Regular standing order for annual donation	£500
m) Online / contactless donations	£415
n) Anonymous donation for care received –for staff in ED	£125
o) Anonymous donation for Radiotherapy staff	£125
p) Terry Henson (Friends trustee) Donated fees from local talks	

I will just mention a few of these in a little more detail. Eastbourne Auctions do not charge commission on anything they auction on behalf of the Friends which increases the amount the Friends receive from jewellery sales. And this year's donation from the Historic Vehicle Club was the largest ever received from them. Amelia Harrison's donation was a bonus from her American employers who pay to the employee's nominated charity. There was a slight shortfall on the £1000 due to the exchange rate but this was made up to the £1000 by Amelia's mother, Lisa, a long time supporter of the Friends. And lastly special thanks to Mary Carden and her late husband for their years of collecting tons of bottle tops. And I mean tons. Mary has decided that it is time to stop now after 17 years and on behalf of the Friends I thank her very much for the years of bottle top collecting. If anyone is interested in taking on this role then please let the Friends office know!

There have been so many other donations, many given anonymously. 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 also thank those who have used Gift Aid for their donations as once they are registered, the Friends get an additional 25% back from HMRC.

Simon and Carolyn Farrar have continued to do great things raising money in online sales of stamps all over the world, this last twelve months raising over £1500. A special thank you to those who donate their stamps and to Simon and Carolyn for all their hard work sorting bags and bags of stamps and selling them.

A big thank you also to those who have made generous donations of wool, for the army of volunteer knitters to make goods to sell in the shop. These make a lot of money over the year. Please continue to donate stamps, jewellery, silver, bags, and used printer cartridges. They all bring in valuable funds for the Friends. Sadly we can't take Christmas cards or bottle tops any more. Unwanted gifts, unopened bathroom products, bottles of wines and spirits, and chocolates, within their use by date, are also all gratefully received either to sell or use as raffle prizes at our events.

The Friends have so many generous benefactors. If you have not been mentioned my apologies but be assured your donation is equally as important as those mentioned.

## 2) **Friends Fundraising Activities** –

Many of these have been running for several years but there have been a few new fundraising events I will talk about in a minute. Sadly the extremely popular Fashion Show has not happened this year as the company supplying the clothes is no longer doing so. And similarly the Sugar Ray Golf Tournament has had a year off but we hope it will be back next year.

- A) **Open Gardens** – Once again we can look back on a very successful open garden season which has raised over £20,000. This was despite only having 6 gardens this year and bad weather on two of them. All the gardens had their own unique charms and I, on behalf of the Friends, thank the owners for allowing us to use their gardens. I would like to thank the individual event coordinators, the car parkers, the cake makers, the invaluable volunteers, our visitors and of course all the garden owners. At the gardens I personally attended I could see what a happy team they were and new volunteers were recruited as a result of this. You should all be as proud of yourselves as the trustees are of you. I would also like to make a specific mention of Sue Duffell who led and directed this great team. Planning for next year is already underway with 6 gardens already booked.
- B) **Art Exhibition** – the 19<sup>th</sup> annual Art Exhibition last month was once again a great success. Yet again the number of paintings submitted, nearly 400 from many different artists, broke previous records. So much so that the paintings barely fitted in the hall. Extra hanging areas had to be made. 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 a magnificent £4223 through picture sales, the raffle of a painting by Ray Phillips, the silent auction of a painting by the late John Powley, and donations over the two day exhibition.

- C) **Dine around the World** – there have so far been 2 dinners this year with a third next week at the Thai Marina. For the first time the first of these was held at Langney Sports, home of Eastbourne Borough Football Club, and the theme was English Food. Despite lots of people asking for an English menu it was not as well attended as we had hoped. However the Friends renewed community partnership with Eastbourne Borough FC did reap much reward at this dinner with many raffle prizes donated by the club, mostly, not surprisingly, football related. We very much thank the Football Club for making the clubhouse and their chefs available to us for this event.

The second dinner was also at a new venue, the Ganges Indian Restaurant, at the marina. It was a wonderful setting with superb food and service whilst watching the sun set and making nearly £1000. We will definitely be back next year.

These dinners are so popular now that we have waiting lists for most. Our thanks as usual to the owners of the restaurants who always look after us so well and often donate raffle prizes too. Our thanks also to the various other raffle contributors from restaurants, hotels, and individuals. The Thai Marina doesn't always get much of a mention at the AGM as the meal happens just after the AGM. This meal is, I would say, the most popular of them all and is nearly always sold out within days of it being advertised. We could probably run two dates at the restaurant to satisfy the demand.

- D) **Christmas Fair** – After the return of the Christmas Fair/coffee morning two years ago, this year's one took place 10 days ago at another new venue, at St Johns Church Hall off Staveley Road. With many stalls as before it was a great success. Our thanks go to Bo Phillips and her team for organising what I hope will continue to be an annual event. All those who donated unwanted gifts, toys, toiletries, etc were much appreciated, as are those who made and donated cakes and savouries for the cake stall. It raised approximately £1900.
- E) **Quizzes** – It was nice once again for Sue Hitchen to run three quizzes this year at the Fishermens` Club. The last of these three being next week. The first two have made £1005. Having written quizzes myself I know how much work goes in to writing them so thank you Sue for all your hard work. We hope you will continue to organise them.
- F) A separate quiz held at Langney Sports, at which we were the charity of the month for October, raised £700 for the Friends.
- G) We ran our second **Race Night** in March at a new venue, the Fishermens Club, which, once again had all the energy and excitement we could have hoped for.

Local companies got behind the race sponsorship, between them bringing eight horse races and one pig race to the event. Our thanks to the Friends of the Conquest Hospital once again who travelled to Eastbourne to run the tote, and to Ben Colley for talking through the action as it happened. Our Raffle prizes were group tickets to the world famous Cheltenham Festival ,with runner up tickets for a race event at Brighton racecourse. And there was plenty of Prosecco for the winning owners of runners in each race. The event raised £1250. We hope we will run another event next year.

- H) **Eastbourne Borough Football Club** – As I mentioned earlier, our community partnership with the Football Club has been renewed this last year after a quiet one the previous year. The junior U13 team are wearing the shirts with the large Friends logo on them for the third year running. The Club has also donated a framed club shirt signed by all the club`s first team which is now hanging up in the hospital in recognition of our renewed community partnership with EBFC.

Again the Friends were the official sponsors of the Good Friday match and we once again combined it with a Family Fun Day organised by Amy and Sue from the Friends office. Our team of six volunteers set up a temporary tattoo station, and a wheel of fortune for the children to spin. Courtesy of the arcades on Eastbourne pier, and their generous donation of toys, the children were able to win a prize with each spin. But there eyes were on the star prizes donated by the club. The first star prize to go was a football signed by the whole first team, followed quickly by a second ball signed by Fletcher Holman, one time EBFC player before being signed by Wolves. The club also invited children of staff and volunteers to act as flag wavers at the start of the game, and at half time these same children were welcomed on to the pitch for their own mini game in front of 2000 spectators!

The DGH football team, shirts sponsored by the Friends, goes from strength to strength, but not necessarily always with results. The team has created good links with many public services and local friendly teams and has enjoyed mixed success winning four and losing three. We are hoping to build more ties with the community through the DGH football team. The team also played the 4<sup>th</sup> annual DGH v Conquest charity match but sadly lost 8-3 so the 4 match series is currently 3-1 in the Conquest`s favour. So far the team has raised over £1000 for the Friends of the DGH and the Friends of the Conquest in alternate years. Thank you very much to Paul Gosling for all he does in organising the DGH team and for keeping us updated about the success, or not, of the team and the charity opportunities he is making.

We have this year held two other smaller events. In March we held a Members Lunch for all members and supporters of the Friends. This was held at the Kings Restaurant at East Sussex College. The food was delicious, raffle popular, and Terry Henson, one of our trustees, gave an excellent after lunch talk on Forgotten Women Artists. The event raised £300.

And in April the Friends indulged in afternoon tea very generously hosted and provided by the exceptional team at Mortain Place Care Home. A relaxing and leisurely afternoon with delicious food, drinks and good company raised almost £500 for the Friends. Not only did they provide all the food and drinks but also provided the majority of the raffle prizes.

So what did the Friends spend the funds raised on?

### **EXPENDITURE:-**

It is very difficult for me to reconcile equipment we have agreed to buy in year and arrived in year, equipment that has arrived and been paid for in year but was agreed the previous year, and equipment we have agreed this year but has not arrived yet. Therefore I won't try and say exactly the amount we have spent in year. I will leave that to our treasurer. Although I will hopefully give you a good idea of purchases. The whole process has been complicated by the Trust processes being slow but there is a realisation of this within the Trust so we hope that we and they will finally get on top of this to speed up the times from the Friends approving a bid, the purchase going ahead, and the Friends being billed.

So how did the Friends spend the funds received? At the last AGM I announced that the Friends' major project for the year just finished was to raise £500,000 for the purchase of a gamma camera for the nuclear medicine department as the old one was obsolete, slow, and beyond its serviceable age. This £500K target has been achieved and will help the department investigate more cancer patients with the latest faster scanner. An amazing achievement and our thanks go to all who helped in this fundraising.

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, or agreed to pay for, within the last year, for the benefit of patient treatment or for the benefit of staff:-

• Respiratory medicine – bronchoscope	£75,000
• Operating Theatres – Resuscitation chest compressor	£12,500
• Dermatology – 4 dermatomes for skin grafts	£ 20,500
• Coronary Care – CPAP machine	£17,800
• Urology – bladder catheter training mannikins	£2,550
• Urology – Sara Steady	£775
• Porter service – wheelchairs	£10,000
• Cardiology – 24 hour BP monitor (private donor)	£1,500
• Stroke Unit – 6 fans	£270
• Staff courtyard garden – table and benches	£3,800
• Friends Shop – purchase new freezer (Geoff Duffell's memory)	£1,800
• Ms McNally – books x 60 "Power of Preparation for Surgery"	£600



And the Friends were finally able to pay off the £148,000 outstanding for our 2020 major project for X-ray machines as the purchase was finally completed.

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 at a cost of about £1,400 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 either for gifts for patients, or Christmas food for the ward. The library also gets a donation for books and other learning materials, and the Hospital Radio to help it keep running. All these Christmas donations amount to about £6,900. The Friends also donated £1000 towards the Trust Awards ceremony in July.

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" who cannot get funding from the usual sources. This year the Friends had one application from a Urology nurse for a total of £565 for a training course which we were pleased to support. We hope that we have more applications to choose from in the coming year and we will push hard to get staff to apply.

I am delighted to say that the Friends were able to hold two Educational talks for the public this year. The first of these was given by Emma Owens, consultant in nuclear medicine, and Chris Salt, about the Gamma Camera which as you know was our major project for the year. Professor Nik Patel from cardiology gave the second of these talks in October. He spoke to us all about modern cardiology and what difference our purchases for the major project for cardiology in 2023 has made to their service. I'm pleased to say that these have further enhanced Eastbourne as one of the country's leading cardiology departments. Both talks attracted good numbers with lots of questions for the speakers.

Although not a fundraiser Amy and Sue in the Friends office launched a childrens` art competition for the second year running. Bourne School and Bedes were the only ones that entered with once again an enormous number of pictures to go through! The topic was "Hospital Superheroes" and there were once again some very imaginative but wonderful pieces of art work. To find the winners was extremely difficult but our trustees Ann Caffyn and Terry Henson finally agreed the winners. And the overall winner was 11 year old artist McKenna from Bourne School whose painting appeared on the front cover of the autumn edition of our Hospitality magazine. Ann and Terry went to the school to present prizes to the winners. I hope they will repeat the competition next year and we hope other schools will join in too.

Lastly in this section of my report, which is nearing its end, I want to mention a new category of membership for businesses that the Friends have started - Corporate membership. So far we have six companies signed up – Mango Insurance, The Dental

Barn, Lightning Fibre, Travelosophers, Gaby Hardwicke, and Archer and Partners. If any of you are here today then I thank you for your support. We are hoping and expecting more. In exchange for £250 annual membership the companies get one half page advertisement in one Hospitality magazine per year and regular mentions on the supporters page of each magazine and the website, as well as features on the Friends social media. Great value for money we think.

### **The Future:-**

So what is the major project the Friends of Eastbourne Hospital are supporting this coming year? As I am sure most of you have noticed there is a brand new build going up at the side of the hospital behind the Radiotherapy Department. This is the Sussex Surgical Centre (SSC) which will be completed early next year. This will be a modern purpose built four operating theatre day case surgery unit which will be open initially, it is hoped, from 7am until 11pm and 5 days a week. Myself and 3 others from the Friends had a tour of the unit and we were all struck by the feel and flow of this new development, which will take patients smoothly from admission, to preoperative assessment, on to the operating theatre, and then round to recovery. This project represents a major investment by the NHS into services at Eastbourne DGH.

I think you may now know where I am heading with this. The Trust has asked if we would be willing to invest £500K in equipment for the Centre. The trustees have agreed and myself and Peter, our Treasurer, had a meeting with the Hospital leads for the Centre to discuss what equipment they would like. We have agreed to fund just over £500K worth all with the Friends of Eastbourne Hospital stickers on. Maybe the Centre should be called the Sussex (and Friends) Surgical Centre. Work in progress! However as I said earlier we have had some extremely generous legacies this year which has enabled the Friends to have current financial assets of approximately £750K. As I have said we have promised £500K for the SSC already, leaving us £250K available to spend. Working in partnership with the Hospital Trust we have agreed also now to support the development of an Endoscopy Unit on the upper floor of the Sussex Surgical Centre to a further total of £500K. This money will be used to purchase equipment such as colonoscopes and gastroscopes. This will make Eastbourne DGH the biggest provider of Endoscopy care in the Trust. However with our total commitment to this project of £1mill it means we are looking to fundraise a further £250K over and above the £750K the Friends have agreed to provide over the coming year. So in summary, the Friends will support the new build with a total of £1mill in 2025. I am sure you will all agree with me that being a major contributor to a new build at the Eastbourne site, incorporating new Day Surgery and Endoscopy Units, is extremely exciting for the Friends and the people of Eastbourne. But we will need your support in raising this extra money. As an acknowledgement of our contribution the Trust have already said that a plaque will be placed at the entrance of the Unit acknowledging our contribution. And I will personally make sure other notices will be placed around the building and on equipment that the Friends purchase.

It is nice to see the Chair of the Trust Board here at our AGM as it shows the trust's appreciation of our work. I am hoping there will be more attendance of Board Members at some of our fundraising functions in the future, attendance at which is currently still very sporadic. Seeing members of the Board face to face is great for our trustees and volunteers and shows that their efforts are appreciated.

I would like to thank all the trustees for their hard work and the support they have given me as Chair throughout the year. What can I say about Amy and Sue in the office that has not been said before. They are quite unbelievable. They work way beyond their hours and are the cogs that holds the Friends together. Without them I know the Friends would not be anywhere near as successful as it is. So without this support none of this could have been achieved. They also keep me guided in the right direction.

Once again records have been broken. Record turnover for the Friends shop of over £600K and record numbers of paintings submitted for the Art Exhibition last month. Let us see what records we can break this coming year.

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 the Friends as I enter my 10<sup>th</sup> year in that role. Please let me know if any of you think that I am time expired and should be put out to pasture!

However, please can I make a plea as I do every year for more volunteers to join us. Without volunteers we cannot do what we do. You can volunteer for the shops or the trolley rounds, or to help as part of a team at some of our events. I was delighted that we recruited more volunteers for the Open Garden team this year. Speak to your friends and relatives. However little time you and they can spare is very much appreciated. Some volunteers do their training just to be available on an ad hoc basis so Rai has a list of those she can call on if she finds herself short at any time. I am aware that many clubs and charities are struggling to survive, many due to lack of volunteers. None of us would want the Friends to be one of them.

It is impossible to pick out all individuals in this report or else I would be here forever, but I have already mentioned many. But can I apologise, as I do each year, 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.

Madam 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.