



## MINUTES

**For the Annual General Meeting of Sanctuary in Chichester, held on 31st October 2022 at St Paul's Community Hall, Northside, Chichester PO19 6FT, at 6pm.**

### **1. Welcome and apologies**

### **Chair of Trustees**

Tony Toynton welcomed attendees and introduced the trustees and paid staff:

A huge debt of thanks to Mary Downy, who is standing down, for all her work setting up and running the drop-in for five years.<sup>1</sup>

Mary's successor as Trustee and Drop-In Lead is Jude Clouston.

Philippa Gogarty - Trustee and Befriending & Ukraine Response Lead

Mark Stables - Trustee and Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

Lois Smith - Trustee and English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) & Adult Education Lead

Susan Hilgers - Trustee and Treasurer

Fred Hilgers - apologies - Trustee and Data Protection Officer (DPO)

Clare Walls - apologies - Trustee and Secretary

Gemma Driver - Development & Communications Manager (taking minutes in Clare's absence)

Fern Daniel - Volunteer Coordinator

Steve Lebbon - Operations & Volunteer Coordinator

TT ran through the format and agenda of the AGM, as well as guidance and rules on speaking and voting during the meeting.

### **2. Minutes of the last AGM**

### **Chair of Trustees**

TT explained that the previous AGM in October 2019 combined a party and official AGM business. We had our 2022 annual celebration in July following a large gap due to Covid lockdowns, when there wasn't enough time allocated to us at the venue to do the formal AGM business, so this separate meeting will be a straightforward AGM. TT presented the minutes of the previous AGM.

MS moved the minutes; the minutes were adopted.

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<sup>1</sup> Following the AGM, MD wanted to pay tribute to Roger Pask as her inspiration and for pushing her onto what was then the Executive Committee - she said, "*Like so many people who were there last night, I shall be forever grateful to him for encouraging us to take part in SiC*".

### **3. Presentation of accounts for 2021/2022**

### **Chair of Trustees**

TT highlighted the summary of accounts in the annual report and told members that the full accounts are available to download on the Charity Commission website. If any member would like to ask questions or view a specific element of the accounts please email [tonytoynton@sanctuaryinchichester.org](mailto:tonytoynton@sanctuaryinchichester.org). TT described how we went from being in the precarious situation of having only £17,000 in May 2021, to £131,000 a year later, due to the hard work of TT and experienced volunteer grants fundraiser Rosemary Harrison (and supported by GD) putting the organisation on a stable footing.

TT expressed thanks and gratitude to outgoing treasurer Maggie Medhurst.

### **4. Annual report for 2021/2022**

### **Chair of Trustees**

TT gave an overview of the Annual Report:

- Demand for our services more than doubled in a year => needed a lot more volunteers.
- Thanks given to PG, SL and FD for recruiting a large number of volunteers.
- Tribute to volunteers for their continued support during lockdown and pivoting to virtual support, in particular Ellen Thompson who was awarded a British Empire Medal for services to refugees during the pandemic.
- Schools told us the children we had supported (some of whom had arrived just before lockdown, not speaking any English) returned to school better prepared after lockdown than other children.
- Thanks and respect to the trustees who have risen to every considerable challenge over the last year.
- Thanks and gratitude to the grant-giving organisations, family trusts and local donors
- Thanks to St Paul's Church for the ongoing generosity in giving us the use of their premises.
- Recognition of the support from the Resettlement Team at WSCC.

### **5. Election of trustees**

TT gave thanks and recognition to all the trustees who have stood down since the previous meeting:

Matthew Leeming  
Sue Leeming  
Asina Walls  
Duncan Barratt

And Founder, Roger Pask, who stood down in January this year.

TT explained that our constitution states the three longest serving members of the board need to step down at the AGM but it also allows for any of them to stand again should they so choose and subject to a vote of the members.

TT proposed that all trustees not standing down be re-elected together. Show of hands all in favour; none against.

Thus, Mary Downy, Clare Walls and Tony Toynton stepped down.

MD and CW have both stated that they do not want to stand for re-election. TT is willing to stand again as Trustee and Chair.

As TT had stepped down, Mark Stables ran the election.

MS thanked Tony for overseeing such rapid growth and bringing everyone together so effectively.

TT was proposed by Narmada de Silva and seconded by Pam Dignum, and then voted in by members in a show of hands. All in favour; none against.

## **6. Membership; a paper seeking clarification of the status of 'members' of the charity has been circulated along with the notice of AGM.**

### **Chair of Trustees**

TT clarified that all our supporters can be our members, but there needs to be a formal process. Attendees were invited to speak to SL at the end of the meeting if they would like to apply for membership. Volunteers are members by default (but can ask not to be). Regular donors, supporting organisations and others can apply too. We won't charge a fee for membership like other organisations do, because that would be contrary to our reasons for having members.

TT asked for a show of hands to adopt the resolution.

Narmada de Silva asked whether this was changing the constitution. TT said that it was not - it was just adding detail.

The resolution was adopted by members in a show of hands. All in favour; none against.

## **7. A brief summary of work and plans for the forthcoming year**

### **Drop-In**

### **Jude Clouston**

Tribute to all the drop-in volunteers, who work so hard to make it happen, with children's activities, crafts, lifts and refreshments all provided (for an average of 60 attendees). JC thanked the volunteers for giving so much of their time and enthusiasm.

Thank you to the organisations that donate items like food and clothes - the Food Bank and Rotary Club Clothes Bank among others - and organisations who help run activities, including Article 12 Arts and Chichester Festival Theatre.

Thank you to St Paul's Church for providing the drop-in venue every week.

Plans:

The drop-in team is going to ask beneficiaries and volunteers for ways to improve the sessions.

We are exploring a potential satellite drop-in in Bognor, as we have a cluster of families in that area that struggle to get to the Chichester drop-in due to the time and distance to travel after school. JC appealed for attendees (or people they know) to volunteer for setting up and running it.

## **Befriending & Ukrainian Response**

**Philippa Gogarty**

Tony had said we had seen huge growth, but "*what has this growth meant?*". PG went on to outline some statistics:

- Over 800 Ukrainian refugees have arrived in the Chichester area
- 28 families we support directly - the number more than doubled in a year.
- Around 70 of our volunteers are working directly with families, which is a huge and complex task.

Apologies from the trustees to volunteers who were not previously supported properly due to influxes of new refugees and lack of resources.

What have we done to fix this?

- Worked hard to define our and WSCC's roles in supporting refugees on Government resettlement schemes.
- Run sessions with befrienders and tutors to define roles and offer support and guidance.
- Have been tightening up our systems

Our support for refugees has included:

- Providing orientation sessions and get-togethers for Ukrainians and their hosts - over 200 turned up on one occasion. Ukrainians then asked to use the same premises for their own event that they arranged themselves.
- Directly supporting those being housed in the Travelodge
- A lot of asylum seeking families have arrived and need extensive support, including basics like food and clothes as well as help accessing legal representation and transport.

Befrienders are the glue that holds our work and organisation together, and they become invested in those they support, showing endless patience, dedication and kindness. The Trustees are deeply grateful to them.

## **ESOL & Adult Education**

**Lois Smith**

- All our tutors are qualified English language teachers, many with lots of experience
- 22 active tutors
- 15 joined since January this year

Thank you to all our tutors, who are all volunteers.

We provide:

- One-to-one tuition
- Most of those we support are learning English at local institutions, and we support that learning.
- Tutors worked so hard over the summer to help people enrol for free places - thank you. 11 of our beneficiaries are studying at Aspire or Chichester College and four of these are taking GCSE English.
- Language support and conversation at drop-in
- Weekly Women's Group - tribute to Bec Hopkins, long-standing volunteer who set up the women's group with focus on arts and crafts to provide a safe space for women to meet who may not otherwise leave their homes. They have had hand massage sessions and may do yoga in future. More recently this has been developed to include ESOL lessons, and provision of a creche. Thank you to WSCC for funding the creche and to St Paul's for arranging for the building to be women-only during the Women's Group. We have on average 16 women attending regularly and 6 children in the creche. Thanks also to those who provide lifts for women.

In terms of adult education, we are collaborating with the University of Chichester on developing their 'From Adversity to University' access course. We have already sponsored three of our beneficiaries to take the course, which they completed successfully, and we are sponsoring four more who are currently on the course.

Plans:

- Develop our online resources a lot more
- Develop stronger links with other ESOL providers to get a better idea of what level individuals are at and what support is needed.
- Continue to work closely with WSCC Resettlement Team's ESOL lead.
- Encouraging and facilitating tutors meeting together more regularly
- We already do a lot to support children's education but we want to develop this.

## **Data Protection**

**Tony Toynton (in absence of Fred Hilgers)**

As a small local charity we are not required to have Data Protection measures in place [*this was corrected by Narmada de Silva during questions at the end*], but we wanted reassurance that we are looking after data properly, as we hold data on highly vulnerable people as well as on volunteers and supporters, so we recruited Fred Hilgers who is a DPI in his professional life.

## **Nations United**

### **Tony Toynton**

Nations United (NU) Football provides training to young men from age 14. Most or all of the players arrived as Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children (UASC), so are under the care of the local authority. The University of Chichester provides student coaches, we provide funds for equipment, participating in competitive matches and other expenses. The benefits of NU goes way beyond scoring goals - they include learning about fitness, players going on coaching courses, health and safety, events organising, increased confidence, learning about teamwork, and a community and sanctuary for the players. NU is fully funded by Sussex Community Foundation, so thank you to them and their donors.

Duncan Barratt brought the team on enormously, but he is stepping away from NU, so TT appealed to the attendees to think about whether they or someone they know might be suited to taking over from Duncan.

## **Fundraising**

### **Tony Toynton**

A few months ago, TT and Rosemary Harisson called the National Lottery Community Fund, prospecting for funding. They said "*you're already on our radar*"! They thought we needed support to grow, and that we needed to take the next step. They said we were overly dependent on freelance 'staff' and on trustees being de facto managers, and that if we applied to them for a specific amount for staff costs we would likely be successful.

TT and RH worked on the application for six weeks. Last Monday, we were notified that we were being awarded a grant of £241,393 from the National Lottery Community Fund. This is a game-changer and really will help us take the organisation to the next level, ensuring we can continue to serve our beneficiaries effectively and professionalising our operations.

## **Paid staff**

### **Tony Toynton**

We are currently recruiting for a Pathways to Independence Manager. This is just the first step in a number of big steps for the coming year.

TT appealed to attendees for advice and ideas for taking the organisation forward, and for expertise if anyone has experience working at a charity (or knows someone who might).

We have been describing Sanctuary in Chichester as a 'small, local charity'. However, we need to accept that we are no longer small!

## **9. Proposal from Roger Pask on alternative management structure.**

The proposal was included with the other AGM papers, together with a written response from the current trustees, who do not support the proposal.

RP was absent; TT asked attendees whether any of them had been asked by RP to present his proposal. There was no response. TT concluded it would be wrong to discuss this matter in RP's absence so suggested deferring it, and asked whether anyone disagreed with this course of action - nobody did.

## **10. Attendee questions**

### **Chair of Trustees**

Malcolm Shepherd asked whether the Lottery grant will be in one lump sum. TT explained that we are still working out the details with the Fund, but we are expecting it in three annual tranches.

Mike Mansergh asked whether the Lottery grant would mean we need to be more involved with City of Sanctuary (CoS). TT explained that CoS is similar to an accreditation that offers other resources. We are simply a member organisation (as we are to other organisations offering resources, such as Voluntary Action Arun and Chichester), so the Lottery funding is entirely for Sanctuary in Chichester.

Steven Bullas said he was so impressed with what has been done but has one criticism: there was nothing on agenda about improving communications. He described his experience of poor communication, despite his many efforts to communicate with us as a prospective volunteer. He gets occasional emails but felt he was being left out of others. TT thanked him for his feedback, apologised and explained that this is why we have taken on more paid staff recently, and now have systems and standards in place that will ensure his experience is not repeated.

John Newman commented (to counter Steven's experience) that he felt well-communicated with via weekly emails about the drop-in from JC and previously from MD.

Narmada de Silva gave an action point to look at data protection regulations, as they apply to every organisation in the UK. TT agreed and explained that is why we need FH's support with data protection.

## **11. TT closed the AGM**