

**Ferring Retirement Club (Registered Charity No. 1040624)**  
**Trustees' Annual Report: 1 October 2023 – 30 September 2024**

**Charity address:**

201 Greystoke Road, Ferring, West Sussex BN12 5JL

**Trustees**

A number of changes have taken place in the Trustee body over recent years, as members resign and new ones take their place, but these have been welcomed, for they ensure that our board of Trustees remains vibrant.

Trustees who served in the financial year 2023/24

Valerie Simpson (Chair) (retired 20/11/24)

Bernadette Griffin (Secretary)

Betty McCann (Treasurer)

Roger Abbott

Lynda Gould

Robert Linzey (retired 31/12/23)

Yvonne Linzey (retired 20/11/24)

Jeannette O'Sullivan

Susan Pratt (appointed Chair 20/11/24)

Ann Smith (retired 20/11/24)

Lindsay Taylor (retired 16/01/24)

Trustees appointed since the year end

Jan Garland (appointed 20/11/24)

Heather Hones (appointed 20/11/24)

Annie Lambert (appointed 20/11/24)

**Structure and management**

The Charity is an unincorporated association.

With a structure of sub-committees, Trustees have been able to work both as individuals and collaboratively in teams, with every Trustee participating fully in decision-making. Trustees' meetings have been held every three months and sub-committee meetings have also been held on the same scheduling. New Trustees have been appointed from the membership and all applicants for a trustee role are asked to complete a questionnaire setting out their particular skills and experience.

**Membership**

The Charity's closing membership at the end of September 2023 was the highest ever at 261. This was exceeded at the end of the financial year 2023/24, with the membership standing at 266. Unfortunately, since the year end, this has reduced to 226 members. The reasons for this reduction included members moving away from the area or into care homes. Also, a number of members died in the year.

**Activities, objectives and performance**

The Charity continues to offer a range of activities to its members, including social coffee mornings, art, bridge, dance fit, seated exercises, poetry, rummikub, table tennis, choir and short mat bowls. Most activities have full attendance and some have waiting lists. The Trustees actively consider ways in which the Charity can improve on and add to the services it offers.

In 2024, the Charity updated its website and created a Facebook page, both of which have helped to increase the Charity's profile. The website now contains links to policies, accounts and members' documents, including AGM documentation.

### **Public benefit**

The Objects of the Charity are *"the relief of the elderly in any manner now or hereafter deemed Charitable within Ferring and the surrounding area"*.

During the year, the Charity continued to provide activities for its members, as described above, and kept activity charges and the annual membership fee at the same level as in previous years. Some activities were subsidised, where the costs of running the activity exceeded the fee receipts. This included the Christmas lunch in December 2023.

In the year 2023/24, in line with its Objects and also taking into account Charity Commission guidance, the Trustees reviewed the scope of its public benefit requirement and the application thereof to the wider Ferring community. This is explained in more detail in the Finance section below.

### **Finance**

The accounts were prepared by the Charity's Treasurer and checked by an Independent Examiner. The financial health of the Charity remains good, as can be seen from the accounts filed for the year ended 30 September 2024, with income exceeding expenditure in terms of regular items. There were some exceptional items of expenditure in the year, including legal fees, a settlement payment to Friends of Ferring (paid upon a mutually agreed separation from the Charity) and a donation to another Ferring charity.

Expenditure has increased over recent years due to the increased costs of running activities, hall hire and overhead utility costs. However, the Charity was able use its financial reserves in the year to support and subsidise activities provided for members. Reserves also provided a safety net to cover the cost of maintaining the Charity's continued occupation of its premises.

Some four years ago, the Charity was the beneficiary of a significant legacy, which has largely remained unspent. At the end of the 2023/24 financial year, the Charity's total reserve stood at £359,000. Of this sum, £310,000 was held in four deposits with different UK financial institutions, so that all funds are protected by the FSCS compensation scheme. These reserves have been held at this level (or slightly above) for the past three financial years, the Trustees having made the decision to maintain this reserve and use the interest generated to support the activities run by the Charity. The rationale for retaining such a large sum, rather than designating it for a specific purpose or purposes, centred on concerns about the Charity's ability to continue to occupy its premises when the original lease expired in 2023. Those concerns have now been largely allayed, as a new lease is at an advanced stage in negotiations with the landlord.

The Trustees started the process, in the year, of looking at ways in which it could use its significant reserves. This was reviewed with consideration of the appropriate level of reserves to be retained for forward financial planning and weighed against the key charitable principles to spend income within a reasonable period in furtherance of the Charity's Objects. The Trustees recognised that the Charity's financial needs were modest, relative to its reserves and, therefore, approved a change to its reserves policy whereby the Trustees could consider making donations to one or more other Ferring charities whose objects aligned closely with its own. Four organisations were identified and

considered as potential donees, as all four charities provide relief, benefits or services to the elderly of Ferring.

In the financial year 2023/24, an unrestricted donation of £30,000 was approved and made to one of the four identified Ferring charities. This charity was selected on the grounds that it is a central hub of Ferring village and is in the process of renovating and upgrading its facilities. It is a valuable village asset from which the elderly of Ferring benefit, including many of the Charity's own members.

Going forward, the Trustees resolved to undertake regular reviews of its financial position in terms of considering potential donations to other Ferring charities, including those already identified as possible future donees.

The Charity does not hold any funds as a custodian trustee.

November 2024