



Charitable Incorporated Organisation No. 1155175

## **CHAIR'S REPORT TO THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF DREAM-A-WAY CIO FOR THE YEAR ENDING 31<sup>ST</sup> DECEMBER 2024**

**(PRESENTED BY JEFF MERRETT MBE AT THE AGM ON MONDAY 28th JULY 2025)**

### **1. WELCOME**

I would like to formally welcome the Trustees to the Annual General Meeting of Dream-A-Way CIO for the year end 31<sup>st</sup> December 2024

The trustees have agreed to again hold the AGM at their quarterly meeting

The Management Committee have been contacted for their input or comments regarding this AGM

### **2. 2023 SUMMARY**

2024 was Dream-A-Way's 31st year

Yet again it was another tough financial year but through the hard work and dedication of the "Dream Team" we continued to make great progress with our fundraising and income, which has reached another staggering total to be announced by our treasurer of

**£85,710** for 2024 – this brings our total to a staggering £2,968,394

Dream-A-Way continue to raise huge amounts of money as we race towards our third million pounds of fundraising - we will hit our £3million during 2025

In 1994, our first year, we raised £10,063.18 which just shows how incredibly we have progressed each year

This achievement is even more amazing when you stop to consider that everyone involved with Dream-A-Way remain happy to be

**true, unpaid volunteers, in every sense of the word ...no honorarium ...no wages ... no expenses but still very professional**

Everyone's hard work has ensured our continued success and this has meant we have been able to support more deserving local people to take an outing, caravan holiday or a grant towards their dream trip.

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Patron: Sir John S Evans OstJ QPM DL LL.B | President: Nigel Mansell CBE | Chair / Trustee: Jeff Merrett MBE  
Trustees: Gill Freeman | Darren Galliford | Tony Johnson | Paula Stacey

Charitable Incorporated Organisation. Registered Charity No.1155175  
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Our holiday grants have again increased and caravan guests continue to increase and ensure many local people receive the benefit of some quality holiday time

In 1999 we purchased our first caravan at Sandy Bay

By 2021 we owned 9 caravans and made the difficult decision to reduce our fleet to a more manageable number over future years

In 2024 we operated 7 luxury holiday homes at Sandy Bay – valued at over £247,000

During the 2024 season our caravan fleet was kept in immaculate condition thanks to our stalwart team of volunteers:

Paula, Shelley, Tina, Anne, Claire and Deano, Donna, Nikki, Rachel and Elisha

On behalf of Dream-A-Way, I would like to formally record our grateful thanks to them all for their hard work, loyalty and continued dedication

The statistics undoubtedly prove that our caravans are greatly needed and appreciated by our many clients

There were 39 guests in our one caravan during 1999

During 2024 another 543 guests had a week's break in one of our caravan fleet which brings the total number of guests to **17,417** in the first 27 years ... now that really is quite amazing

xxxxThe statistics for our holiday grants show another increase over last year with a spend on holiday grants during 2024 of **£37190** which is an average of £xxx per grant

.....that is a lot of money, a lot of grants, a lot of caravan holidays and a lot of very happy, local people

### **3. ONGOING STRATEGIC PLANNING**

It is a major role of the trustees and management committee of Dream-A-Way to ensure that we continue to maintain a strategic overview of both our fundraising and spending activities.

It is imperative that we regularly look at ourselves and undertake periodic skills audits of our team to ensure that we maintain an efficient and fit for purpose group ...

From our President and Patron through to our Vice Presidents, Trustees and Management Committee

To progress this we have again undertaken some role changes within the management committee, in an effort to match individual volunteers to roles that fit best with their experiences and abilities

The outcome, I believe, is a stronger and more transparent group fit to continue to manage Dream-A-Way for both the present and the future

The workloads remain high, yet all of the Trustees, the management committee, volunteers and supporters continue to work tirelessly as a united team, on all aspects of Dream-A-Way as we continue to develop and consolidate

#### **4. 2024 HIGHLIGHTS**

There were once again, many exciting highlights during 2024 to list them all here, but I would just like to mention a few

Dream-A-Way has been so proud to remain as charity partner to the fantastic HMS DEFENDER one of Britain's top warships.

Special mention again for Shelley Potter who has not only continued increasing the revenue from collection pots but she has also been very successful with chasing grants from both local and national companies

Shelley has continued liaising with many local businesses - The Coop and Tescos amongst many and continues planning and arranging bingo evenings, discos and bucket collections – keep up the good work Shelley

I am also delighted that Dream-A-Way was again been chosen as one of the designated charities supported by the Exeter Chiefs Foundation which has helped increase our profile and allow us to share in the terrific success of the Exeter Chiefs

With special mention of our Mike Rock who has taken on a massive role on match days and has delivered over and above – thanks Mike

#### **5. THE DREAM-A-WAY FUTURE**

The future is definitely bright as we enter 2025 .... our 32nd year and lots of exciting plans ahead

The Chairman's report to the Annual General Meeting usually includes thanks to many volunteers and supporters for their dedication throughout the year but once again I am going to break slightly with this tradition

As the chair of Dream-A-Way CIO for well over 30 years, I continue to be amazed at our tremendous success throughout the years

I would like to formally record my sincerest praise to the wonderful Trustees Team that have been the heart of Dream-A-Way for over 75 years combined service

There is a huge amount of unseen work and decisions made by the Trustees that ensure Dream-A-Way continues to remain a highly respected and supported local charity throughout the whole of Devon and beyond

Thank you to my Dearest Friends and amazing Trustees - Gill, Darren, Tony and Paula - here's to the next 75 years together

Supported by a dedicated Management Committee I ask each and every one of you to look at what WE have ALL achieved during the years of Dream-A-Way

ALL of you have helped to make Dream-A-Way the success it is today

Together we will continue to improve and strengthen to ensure that we help even more local people to enjoy holiday experiences they could not afford without our help

Dream-A-Way “Dream” Team of volunteers continue to secure their rewards from the miles of smiles of those we help

It has been an honour to be the Chair of Dream-A-Way over the first 31 years and to be in the position to try to make a difference and believe me, what we all do, is appreciated by a large number of people throughout our community.

We really do make a huge difference

....and finally

I will be honoured to continue as the Chair of Dream-A-Way CIO ...not only officially the Best Loved Charity in Exeter but probably the Best Loved Charity in the World!

Into our 32nd year -

I will again ensure that we maintain our high standards and build on our already established strong position throughout Devon, as we continue the progress of Dream-A-Way - Charitable Incorporated Organisation 1155175.

I will continue to lead from the front, as we take Dream-A-Way forward together for another year, with imagination, vision and ambition, whilst maintaining a smile and a sense of humour I will endeavour to help more families and individuals to enjoy that special outing, caravan holiday at the Devon seaside or offer grants towards their dream holiday throughout the World, above all I will continue to do this and .....

Keep smiling

**Jeff MERRETT MBE Chair**

**28th July 2025**

