

# Fledge Youth Support



**Annual Review, Trustees' Report and Accounts  
for the year ended 31<sup>st</sup> March 2021**

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## Stakeholders

Churches Together in Chandler's Ford

Churches Together in Eastleigh

Eastleigh Borough Council



Eastleigh C of E Deanery

Hampshire and Isle of Wight Community Foundation



## Partners

St Thomas's Church, Fair Oak



## Awards



High Sheriff of Hampshire's Award for Great  
and Valuable Services to the Community 2020

# Welcome

## Welcome to Fledge's Annual Report for 2020-21.

When something as significant as a global pandemic commences just before the start of a reporting year, there is always a danger that it will overshadow and diminish the achievements made by an organisation on a day-to-day basis, particularly when it involves a major lockdown of all civil activity and has major impacts well beyond our own shores.

While the pandemic has brought out the best in people, it has also highlighted the inequalities and injustices which so many in our society face. Housing and homelessness, and the plight of those with mental health issues and learning needs, have been brought into sharp focus.

Covid has emphasised the fragility of many of the public services intended to provide support and relief in these areas, and has highlighted the importance of Fledge's role in supporting those of our service users who are especially vulnerable.

However, despite the pandemic, through the determination, good humour and commitment of our staff team, ably supported by our Board of Trustees, and with the loyalty and generosity of our supporters, we were able to make positive progress in many aspects of our business during 2020-21. As a result the year contained a number of notable achievements which are highlighted in this Review.

**Nerissa Dean**

*Business Operations Manager*



***"Covid has emphasised the fragility of many public services ... and has highlighted the importance of Fledge's role in supporting those of our service-users who are especially vulnerable."***

# From our chair



***“The High Sheriff of Hampshire’s Award for Great and Valuable Services to the Community in 2020 is a well-deserved tribute to our incredible staff team and I thank and congratulate them all.”***

As I share in introducing this Annual Report, and look back over 2020-21, for so many in society, both here and across the globe, it has been one of the most life-changing periods in our memory. The Covid pandemic has brought nations to a standstill, has brought us a new vocabulary, and given new meaning, to words familiar in other contexts.

Coronavirus has also brought immense new challenges to all those who provide services and support to the disadvantaged and the vulnerable in our communities. It has made the work of Charities and benevolent organisations like Fledge even more vital.

So I am immensely proud that throughout the year, and as this Annual Report describes, we have not only sustained the provision of safe, secure homes, holistic support and hope for the future for some of the most vulnerable and needy young people in the Borough of Eastleigh, but we have actually expanded our accommodation and services.

I am even more proud of the immense dedication, effort and perseverance of our wonderful staff, who have overcome huge obstacles to sustain our offer to our Service Users and to grow the business in these most unprecedented of times.

The High Sheriff of Hampshire’s 2020 Award for Great and Valuable Services to the Community is a well-deserved tribute to our incredible staff team and I thank and congratulate them all.

I must also express appreciation and thanks to my fellow Trustees for their continued wisdom, good humour and commitment to governing Fledge during the year, and to our loyal and generous supporters, whose financial contributions and prayers have sustained us, and enabled us to grow, despite the challenges of the pandemic.

**Phil Watts OBE**  
*Chair of Trustees*

# Who we are, what we do and where we do it!

Fledge Youth Support (Fledge), is an unashamedly Christian charity, which exists to provide accommodation and support to otherwise homeless young people in the Borough of Eastleigh.

Fledge was conceived in 2012 by two local young Christians, Lauren and Mark, who identified a surprising number of young people in the area who were homeless and “sofa surfing” with friends and distant relatives. They formulated a vision of providing homely and supportive accommodation for these vulnerable young adults.

In 2014 Fledge was formally established as a Charitable Incorporated Organisation, and in 2016 opened its first house, providing supported accommodation to five, otherwise homeless young people.

In the five years since 2016, Fledge has opened three more shared houses, some with en-suite rooms, providing accommodation for up to twenty-one individual young people, together with a fifth property providing self-contained accommodation for a further five individuals.

These housing provisions are supplemented by a range of holistic support services including one-to-one support, mentoring and advice, group support sessions offering life-skills development and training, and advocacy support towards assisting service users to access statutory, welfare and benefits provisions, and particularly mental health services.

Fledge operates within the Borough of Eastleigh in Hampshire, with all of its residential and office premises located close to Eastleigh town centre.



*Property landlord John welcomes Fledge Trustees and staff at the opening of Fledge's first residential house in 2016.*





# The challenges we face ...

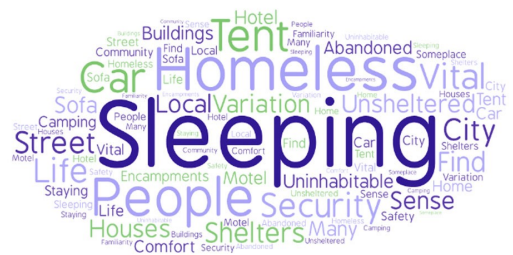
## Homelessness – providing a local response to a national issue

In December 2020, respected homelessness charity *Shelter*, published the results of their latest investigation into homelessness in Britain: the *Homeless and Forgotten* report . They reported that over a quarter of a million people—**half of them children** were homeless and living in temporary accommodation during the pandemic—the highest homeless figure for 14 years. Fledge’s own experience of meeting and seeking to aid homeless young people in the Eastleigh area well reflects these statistics. In our own case, even though we increased our provision of housing units by almost 25% during the year, demand for our accommodation still exceeded our capacity. Fledge, which was founded as a charity for housing homeless young adults, remains committed to sustainably alleviating homelessness, and particularly the trend for “sofa surfing” among young adults, so far as our capabilities and capacity allow. We continue to be grateful to our supportive landlords who assist us by leasing their properties for our use.

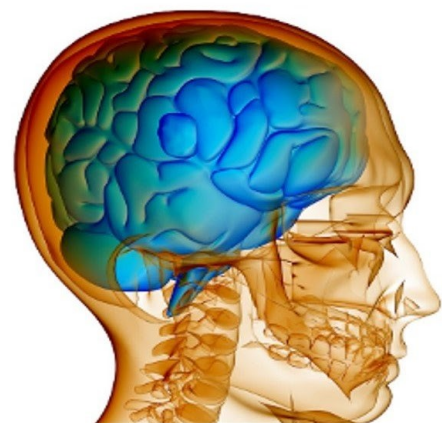
## Mental health and learning needs:

Mental health problems have long been identified by a range of housing and homelessness studies as a major contributor to homelessness. Fledge’s own experience is that those seeking accommodation and help from us are frequently young adults with legacies of social, intellectual or mental health needs. They also often bring past experiences of personal or substance abuse/dependency. Frequently, through their mental health and welfare situation, they have insufficient social, interpersonal or essential life skills to sustain independent living, and they may also have an inability, to engage with or a distrust of public welfare provisions. These may well result from previous bad experiences where their mental health or intellectual needs have not been acknowledged or accommodated by those in these services.

The situation is compounded by the continued inadequacy of public mental health services. . Despite the growing awareness of mental health issues, highlighted by members of the Royal Family and various other public figures and



***Mental health problems have long been identified by a range of housing and homelessness studies as a major contributor to homelessness.***



# ... and our response



***Safe outdoor exercise—promoting physical wellbeing as well as good mental health. This equipment were some of the resources funded by a 'wellbeing' grant from Hampshire and Isle of Wight Community Foundation: part of their response to concerns about the impacts on mental health of the Covid lockdown.***



***Art and craft sessions provide relaxation, and an opportunity for collaborative activity while helping to develop concentration and a sense of personal achievement.***

organisations, the provision of front-line mental health care remains inadequate to meet the demands of those in need.

In addition, these statutory provisions, which largely depend on face to face meetings for diagnosis and treatment were among the first to contract as the impact of Covid lockdowns and related restrictions took hold.

Fledge's ethos is to respond to the needs of each service user in an holistic way, seeking to address both their accommodation, and their wider health, welfare and 'life-skills' needs. The level of support we offer deliberately goes well beyond that funded by a Local Authority, whose statutory benefits support is only intended to assist residents in retaining their tenancy. We are clear that addressing these wider needs in an holistic manner is a key to providing residents with the platform for a stable future. Nevertheless, the additional burden of having to try to fill the gap left by the retraction of statutory provisions has added to the challenges faced by the Fledge staff team.

## **Life skills, social interaction and role models.**

Many service users arrive at Fledge houses with few if any possessions of their own, and Fledge has continued to provide each new resident with a "starter-pack" containing new bed linen, basic crockery and cutlery, and a range of hygiene items, which become their personal property. We remain indebted to those supporters who regularly donate funds or gifts in kind to enable this work to continue.

Their lack of personal belongings can be an indication of the home and family environment from which service users have come. There may be a lack of social dialogue within the family: food preparation, mealtimes and other opportunities for conversation etc. may not have been shared occasions, and there may well have been a lack of sound parental role models from which these young people might draw experience. As a result, a considerable amount of the support Fledge offers involves helping in the development of basic life skills and in learning interpersonal skills, self-control and behavioural management.

# Managing through Covid-19

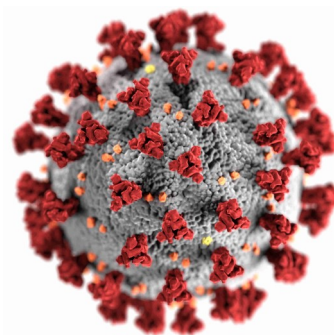
The Coronavirus pandemic was a serious cloud on the horizon well before April 2020 – the start of the year covered by this report. Hence for Fledge, the full impacts of early Covid-aware precautions, and the introduction of a full lockdown came near the end of the previous financial year.

A combined task force of Trustees and key senior staff ensured that adequate financial were in place so that adequate material resources could be acquired swiftly, and this enabled early planning for sustaining the business and supporting service-users in lockdown and in providing adequate office space, social distancing and additional hygiene provisions for both staff and residents. As a result Fledge had already made significant progress in responding to the challenges, across many areas of activity, by the start of 2020-21. A detailed risk assessment and response processes was kept under constant review, particularly as Government guidance for the health and care sector were revised from time to time. These responses and safe-working practices were deployed, assessed and revised as the pandemic progressed.

Due to the nature of our work it was not possible to furlough staff and the Charity places on record its deep appreciation to all those staff who sustained their commitment to supporting our service users during the year and especially during the various periods of lockdown or restrictions on movement.

Of particular concern during the year was the impact of lockdown and restrictions on movement and contact on the mental health of those service users house in our residential properties. Early in the pandemic it became clear that the vast majority of official mental health support services involving patient—professional contact had been suspended , with mental health professionals working in 'isolation' or from home. Hence the burden of support for Fledge service-users quickly fell on our staff. So, while residents were able to form house-based “bubbles”, the impact of being 'housebound' for extended periods caused significant added stress particularly to those on the autistic spectrum or with severe mental health issues. Particular care was taken to engage with these individuals and to seek to provide as much support as the restrictions allowed. Group dialogues, quizzes, and social contacts via Zoom, Facetime and other forms of visual social media interaction were trialled, but particularly during the warmer months of 2020, socially distanced one-to-one meetings held 'in person' in the gardens of the residential properties, with the use of mobile phones to aid conversational privacy proved most effective.

The brief respite in restrictions at Christmas 2020 was taken advantage of by a number of our Service users who were able to visit family or relations according to the provisions in place, and despite the gradual easing of restrictions in spring 2021, this has been a very difficult time for both staff and service users. Fledge has to be grateful for the thoroughness of the provisions developed and implemented by our management team, and for the forbearance shown by all, that we experienced a very small number of Covid infections during 2020-21.





# Housing



***Safe, secure, stable and welcoming homes provide the building-blocks for hope for the future. Here, one of our service users enjoys one of the 'wellbeing' resources funded by a grant from HiWCF.***



***A view of the well-appointed kitchen in one of the self-contained flats in the property which Fledge added to its portfolio during 2020.***

## **Residential property:**

The provision of safe, 'family' accommodation for otherwise homeless and vulnerable young adults remains Fledge's core business, and the operation of four houses offering shared accommodation for between three and eight people remained central to our activities throughout the year.

In the summer of 2020, in the midst of the pandemic we were surprised and pleased to be offered a fifth property to lease, when one of our existing landlords approached Fledge with the offer to rent to us a large property containing five self-contained flats.

Fledge took up the lease of these in September 2020 and residents moved in from October. These flats are ideal for the growing number of service users referred to Fledge whose mental health or other circumstances make it challenging for them to live in accommodation with shared facilities, but who are otherwise able to sustain semi-independent living with the wider support we provide. This property increased our residential capacity to 26, though part of our Covid response has meant that up to four residential units across our five houses have been kept free for self-isolation for any resident who succumbed to Coronavirus.

Nevertheless, it has been sobering to find that even in Eastleigh, which is not particularly known as a place of homelessness, the demand for our accommodation continues to exceed our capacity, even when we add further residential properties to our portfolio.

As in previous years, we have continued to work closely with Eastleigh Borough Council in managing service use referrals, which we then assess as to the individual's needs and fit with the support provisions we are able to provide.

During 2020-21, Fledge housed a total of 44 young adults. In that time, we welcomed 16 new residents into our houses, while 13 moved on to other locations. Many of our service users remained with us throughout the year and in some cases their circumstances mean that they are likely to be with us for an extended period of time.

## **Supported Lodgings:**

While Fledge continues to focus and resource its efforts on managing residential accommodation and providing support services to its service users and residents, the wider vision of Fledge's founders: providing Supported Lodgings using suitably recruited and trained volunteer hosts offering lodgings accommodation within a home context: has not been forgotten and this option will be pursued if and when it seems the most appropriate approach to meet the needs of a particular service user.

# Support services

Fledge remains fully committed to its vision of providing its service users with a safe, supportive environment that enables each one to develop towards their full potential, and equips and empowers them with the skills to achieve this. This vision and commitment is embodied in the support services which are offered to each service user.

As indicated elsewhere in this report, many of our service users come to use with social, intellectual or health needs, or issues with substance abuse, and frequently lacking sufficient life skills to sustain independent living or engage with statutory welfare provisions. As a result we aim to tailor our support provisions to the needs of the individual, though often the shared experience of group sessions is an aid to the development of their social interaction and interpersonal skills.

Despite the restrictions resulting from the Covid pandemic, Fledge staff have continued to focus on supporting, nurturing and championing the wider development of service users, throughout the year. This has included providing basic life-skills such as cooking, personal hygiene, managing money, or making safe choices, and more complex issues such as engaging with mental and clinical health services, or addressing substance abuse and behavioural issues. Our staff team has been hugely innovative in finding ways to overcome social distancing and lockdown restrictions and the early reduction in available statutory mental health and welfare provisions as the pandemic disrupted normal operation of these public services.

Face to face and group support sessions have proved very challenging during the Covid lockdowns and social distancing, with Fledge's offices having to be re-arranged for safe use by staff, leaving insufficient spare accommodation for visitors. Hence on-line provisions such as Zoom, Facetime etc. have been used, supported by socially distanced one-to-one outdoor meetings when the weather has allowed. We have been very conscious that this has been a challenging time for both service users and staff in this regard.

## Mentoring:

Fledge remains committed to offering each resident who so wishes, a personal mentor to aid in their development as individuals and to help them better face the challenges of daily life. While some residents who have been accommodated with Fledge for a longer period have mentors, and they have found ways to engage with each other, the Covid restrictions have hindered matching newer service users with appropriate mentors, particularly as face-to-face meetings have not happened. Not all individual service users wish to have a mentor or yet see the benefit to themselves, we will continue to develop this aspect of our support as pandemic restrictions permit, and Fledge remains indebted to those volunteers who generously offer to become mentors.



***Giving service users opportunities to express themselves through media such as art, is an important aspect of helping them address their personal issues.***

# Our staff



***Willow, our “Head of Canine Support”, joined the team early in 2020. Willow is a Shih-Poo, whose previous owner had to rehome her due to poor health. Fledge was delighted to welcome her as a valuable addition to our support team. She acts as a surrogate pet for our residents and provides a focus for calmness and interaction with service users who may struggle to engage with other people.***



***Rev'd. Sue Colman  
High Sheriff of Hampshire 2020-21***

None of Fledge's work, support services or other achievements would be possible without our amazing staff team who have continued to go well 'above and beyond' during the year, despite the unprecedented challenges they have faced.

Inevitably it has been a gruelling year for our staff. Our brilliant team has had to learn new, Covid-safe ways to provide essential close support to our service users, most of whom have struggled to deal with the stress caused by the threat from the virus and the restrictions on our lives

We began the year with a team of six, one of whom had only joined Fledge a month previously. During September one of our team left on Adoption leave but in October we welcomed an additional support worker. Then in January, one of our experienced staff members returned from Maternity leave bringing our staff team to eight in total.

During lockdowns the team often worked from home and on-line, though the nature of our support work meant that the physical presence of team members in the office as well as in our residential houses, enabled them to provide a listening ear, a sounding board, and mutual support, to both residents and staff alike.

This has been invaluable, particularly for less experienced staff who have been able to share their concerns and the sometimes challenging events of the day.

Fledge recognises the additional pressures that Covid risks and restrictions have brought for our staff in these circumstances. The Trustees are particularly glad that, with the precautions that were put in place, and thanks to their own diligence, no-one among our staff actually succumbed from Coronavirus during the year.

The granting of a High Sheriff's Award for Great and Valuable Services to the Community following a visit made by the High Sheriff of Hampshire in the autumn of 2020 was a well-deserved recognition of all that our staff do and achieve.



# Our supporters

As with any charity, Fledge owes a tremendous debt of gratitude to our supporters who include those who give financially and in kind and those who support us with their prayers. During the year we received generous donations from some twenty-four individual donors who regularly gift to our work.

We also received financial gifts from Chandler's *Ford Methodist Church*, *Eastleigh Borough Council* (towards the costs of food for residents during the Covid crisis) and a generous donation of £2,000 from an individual 'private' donor.

Financial grants were also received from *Awards for All* (to meet the costs of setting up and furnishing the "new" flats ), and a "Wellbeing" grant from Hampshire and Isle of Wight Community Foundation to enable recreational and mental health resources to be purchased for Fledge service users.

We publicly thank all our financial supporters and grant donors for their support during 2020-21.

In addition, Fledge, and our staff in particular were touched by several other gestures of kindness during the year. In June, members of the *Anglican Parish of Chandler's Ford* generously donated a selection of toiletries as a gift to each of our staff members in acknowledgement of their hard work and efforts, particularly during the Covid restrictions. Then in October, a local lad, *George*, raised £17 from friends and relatives in order to become the "tooth fairy" and gift toothbrushes and toothpaste to Fledge for homeless people in Eastleigh. George was sad that "*homeless people may not have any*"! The local *ASDA Superstore* were so touched by George's kindness that they added a further £20 to his collection.

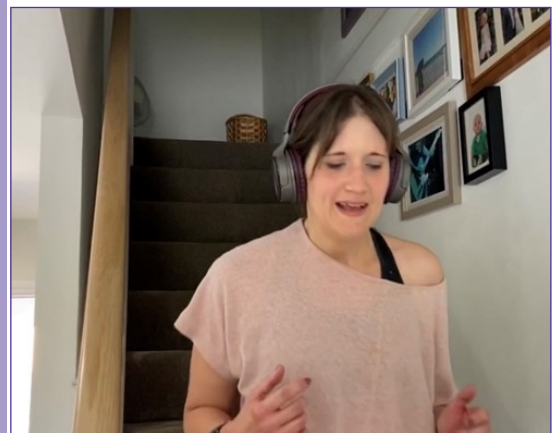
In the approach to Christmas Chandler's Ford-based *Primer Design*, part of the *Novacyt Group*, took on the role of Father Christmas, bringing some Christmas cheer to hardworking Fledge staff. Novacyt Group companies have been at the forefront of developing and supplying testing and diagnosis equipment being used in the battle against Coronavirus. Recognising the front-line care role which Fledge staff play in supporting otherwise homeless and vulnerable young people, the Primer Design team generously delivered flowers, two food hampers and a £100 in West Quay vouchers for use by Fledge staff in the lead up to Christmas.

Not to be outdone, our Trustees and Volunteers also used the lockdowns to put their "permitted exercise" to good use, by participating in the #staircaseSnowdon challenge during May 2020.

Fledge Trustee and founder Lauren, and volunteer Sue both faced up to ascending and descending their home staircases sufficient times to climb and descend the equivalent of the height of Snowdon. Each effort was sponsored to raise funds for Fledge. Sue was also joined by husband Paul for the 'climb'.



***Local lad George became the "tooth fairy" with his dental gifts to our residents.***



***Lauren descending her home staircase ready to climb another 13 steps towards "the summit"!***



***Sue and Paul celebrate finishing their climb with a picture of the real Snowdon.***



# Charity and Governance Information

## Fledge Youth Support Charitable Incorporated Organisation

Co-founders: Mark and Lauren Cheshire

Registered as a Charitable Incorporated Organisation in England and Wales; Charity Number: 1157207

<b>Head Office:</b>	91 Leigh Road, EASTLEIGH, Hants, SO50 9DQ. Tel.: 023; E-mail: <a href="mailto:info@fledge.org.uk">info@fledge.org.uk</a> ; Website: <a href="http://www.fledge.org.uk">www.fledge.org.uk</a> Facebook: <a href="https://www.facebook.com/fledge.eastleigh">fledge.eastleigh</a> ; Twitter: <a href="https://twitter.com/_fledge">_fledge</a>
<b>Bank:</b>	The Co-operative Bank.
<b>Independent Examiner:</b>	Mr. Chris. Goodhead FCA, Knight Goodhead Ltd. Chartered Accountants, 7 Bournemouth Road, Chandler's Ford, Eastleigh. Hants. SO53 3DA.

### Aims and purposes:

Fledge Youth Support (Fledge), exists to provide support and accommodation to homeless young people and to offer hospitality to vulnerable young people through meals and support within a 'family' environment. To achieve this, Fledge runs housing provision through managing shared houses, providing accommodation for up to fourteen homeless young people, and in the future potentially through supported lodgings model. These accommodation provisions are supplemented by a range of support services including one to one and group mentoring and advice and support for access to statutory, welfare and benefits provisions.

Through these services Fledge strives to fulfil its vision:

**"That [all local] young people live and develop in a safe and supported environment with the skills to achieve their potential."**

In support of its Vision, Fledge's Mission Statement is:

**"Fledge Youth Support provides accommodation, mentoring and support to equip and empower young people to reach their potential."**

Fledge also actively raises awareness of the housing and other needs of vulnerable young people to the local community.

During the period covered by this report, Fledge continued to operate only within the Borough of Eastleigh, Hampshire. The Charity's principal focus during the year was on younger adults in the 18 – 35 age range.

### Strategic direction:

Delayed by the pandemic, and in order to take account of its impacts, a new five-year Business Strategy and Strategic Plan intended to sustain Fledge's aims and purpose, was near completion at the year-end, for publication in early 2021-22. This will guide Fledge's direction and planning in the coming years.

## Ethos and values:

Fledge was founded as a charitable organisation by Christians, and its operations reflect Christian principles:

*“The ethos and values of Fledge build on the vision of our founders and are underpinned by Christian values of love and care for everyone, and actively responding to their needs. Fledge respects and seeks to work with young adults who are vulnerable and in need of accommodation, regardless of background, gender, race, sexual orientation or creed.”*

## Public benefit:

Fledge provides public benefit through delivering its objectives, and by engaging in a range of activities to advance in life, and relieve the needs of, vulnerable and homeless young people, including, but not restricted to:

- The provision of support, including housing, mentoring, befriending and hospitality - in the interests of social welfare, and designed to improve the conditions of life of the beneficiaries;
- Providing support and activities which develop the skills, capacities and capabilities of vulnerable and homeless young people, to enable them to participate in society as mature and responsible individuals.

To this end, Fledge provides:

- Buildings and facilities;
- Mentoring and befriending services;
- Advocacy, advice and information.

Fledge may also provide supported lodgings in the future.

## Structure and governance:

**Legal form:** Fledge Youth Support is a Charitable Incorporated Organisation, registered in England and Wales: CIO Number 1157207. The organisation is governed by a Board of up to nine Trustees, appointed by vote of the Board, on a renewable three-year term of office

**Governance:** During 2020-21 Fledge had a Board of six Trustees, two of whom were re-appointed in September 2020 on the expiry of their three-year term of office. Fledge also has a Company Secretary, a volunteer, who is a former Founding Trustee.

In March 2021, one Trustee, (also the Board HR lead), stood down due to pressure of other commitments. This prompted a renewed campaign to recruit additional Trustees during 2021.

The Board of Trustees met six times in full session, during 2020-21, at roughly bi-monthly intervals. These meetings were all held using the Zoom on-line conferencing platform due to Covid-19 restrictions.

Trustees also met in ‘working-group’ mode on various occasions, again via Zoom, to focus on the development of specific aspects of the business, its policies, and practices. Within the Board, Trustees are variously allocated responsibility to lead on specific aspects, such as Finance, Personnel, Safeguarding etc.

Formal Board meetings dealt with strategic and tactical management of the organisation, pursuit of business opportunities, reviews of finance and business performance, issues and risks, consideration of business cases and proposals and providing management direction to senior staff. The most senior

member of the paid staff team: the Business Operations Manager, attends Board meetings, reports to the Chair of Trustees, and is accountable to the Board for the day to day conduct of the Charity.

## Board of Trustees: 2020-2021.

		Expiry of Term of Office
<b>Mrs. Lauren Cheshire</b>	Founding Trustee	2022
<b>Mrs Jo. Cole</b>		2023
<b>Mrs. Margaret Doores</b>	Re-appointed 7 September 2020	2023
<b>Mrs. Penny Thatcher</b>	Re-appointed 7 September 2020 Resigned 21 March 2021	2023
<b>Mrs. Elizabeth Watts</b>	Founding Trustee	Re-appointed 7 September 2020 2023
<b>Mr. Philip Watts OBE</b>		2022
<b>Ms. Susan Mansbridge</b>	Secretary to the Board of Trustees	

### Trustees Appointed after 31 March 2021

<b>Ms. Sarah Mullins</b>	Appointed 17 May 2021; Resigned 29 October 2021	
<b>Mr. Gavin Scott</b>	Appointed 17 May 2021	2024
<b>Ms. Hannah Cheek</b>	Appointed 20 September 2021	2024

## Office holders appointed by the Trustees:

			Re- appointed
<b>Mr Philip Watts OBE</b>	Chair of Trustees	Appointed: 23 May 2017	25-11-19
<b>Ms. Nerissa Dean</b>	Data Controller.	Appointed: 17 January 2017.	
<b>Ms. Nerissa Dean</b>	Staff Safeguarding Officer	Appointed: 23 May 2017	
<b>Mrs. Margaret Doores</b>	Trustee Safeguarding Advisor	Appointed: 24 June 2018	07-09-20
<b>Mrs. Penny Thatcher</b>	H.R. Advisor	Until 21 March 2021	07-09-20
<b>Mrs. Elizabeth Watts</b>	Treasurer	Appointed: 28 May 2014.	07-09-20
<b>Mr. Mark Cheshire</b>	Company Secretary	Re-appointed: 16 April 2018.	
<b>Mr. Chris Goodhead FCA</b>	Independent Examiner.	From 1 January 2017.	

## Staff:

The average number of employees calculated on a full-time equivalent basis was 4.67 (2019-20 = 4.67). They were deployed to :

Role	2020-21	(2019-20)
Management & administration of the charity:	0.80	0.56
Support to service users:	4.68	3.76
Business development:	0.25	0.35

The average staff headcount during the year was 6.22 (2019-20 = 5.71).

## Volunteers:

Fledge relies on the support of volunteers to assist in its work. At the end of 2020-21, in addition to our six volunteer Trustees, Fledge had six other active volunteers assisting its work – the majority of whom acted as Mentors.



# Trustees' Annual Report and Accounts

As the pages of this document seek to demonstrate, despite the challenges posed by the Coronavirus pandemic, Fledge Trustees have maintained the Charities principal role and focus: the provision of accommodation and support to otherwise homeless and vulnerable young adults in the 18—34 age range. This work has been complemented by opportunities to raise awareness of the issues, causes and human impact of homelessness among those who experience it first-hand. This commitment has been delivered through a number of areas of activity, including:

## **Residential Property:**

At the start of 2020-21, Fledge leased and operated four residential properties. These are all “shared living” houses, comprising (a) six residential units (self-contained bedrooms), five with a shared kitchen and bathroom facilities, one with en-suite facilities; (b) eight residential units, two with en-suite and small self-contained catering facilities; one accommodating three residents with shared catering and facilities—designated for longer term residency, and one accommodating up to four residents, which is intended as a quiet house” for students, to facilitate their studies.

In September 2020, a fifth property comprising five self-contained bed-sit style flats was leased from one of our existing landlords,. This has proved ideal for housing those residents whose mental health or emotional situation makes shared living a particular challenge.

Under the terms of the lease agreements Fledge pays the relevant Landlord a monthly rent for each residential unit in each residential property, and either refunds the landlord for utility services used, by arrangement, or else covers these costs directly with the Utility.

## **Office Accommodation:**

Fledge occupied most of an office premises in Leigh Road, Eastleigh during the year. The lease sub-lease on the previous office in Pirelli Way, Eastleigh, which Fledge vacated during early 2020, expired in May that year, as the superior lease with Fledge’s landlord expired. Fledge chose not to pursue acquiring a further lease on this property.

The Leigh Road office was initially equipped to provide desk space for up to six staff, with additional space for storage and business meetings etc. However, the furnishing and use of these premises were adapted at the beginning of April 2020, to provide for socially distanced occupation by Fledge staff. These arrangements have proved of significant benefit to staff, enabling them to continue to collaborate as a team and support one another, in what can be a stressful environment supporting individuals with significant and complex mental health needs and social welfare issues even without the added pressures of a pandemic.

Fledge will continue to review the suitability of these offices as the business and staff team grow further.

## **Financial model:**

Fledge has continued to operate a mixed income model, in which revenue from statutory housing and support benefits, paid by the local authority (Eastleigh Borough Council) for each qualifying resident accommodated, is supplemented by charitable donations from organisations and individuals, grant aid from benefactors and charitable funders, and income from fundraising activities.



Accommodation costs include rent payable to Fledge's landlord, and property management-related costs, such as furnishings, linen, kitchen equipment, janitorial supplies, security and out of hours cover.

The additional staff costs for the holistic care and nurturing support, and the advocacy and life-skills development provided by Fledge, together contributions towards office premises and equipment, and other business overheads, are funded largely through charitable donations, grant aid and fundraising activities. These latter sources are also key in providing a cushion of modest reserves to sustain cashflow, particularly when statutory benefits are delayed or interrupted for whatever reason.

### **Assets:**

In addition to its administrative office equipment, furniture and resources, Fledge provides furnished accommodation for the residents of its houses. Much of the furnishing is acquired through the generous donations of individual supporters and benevolent donor organisations, including local Churches., though inevitably some must be purchased. Fledge maintains an Asset Register of all items with an acquisition cost of £ 1,000 or more.

### **Safeguarding:**

Mindful of the focus of its work with young and vulnerable people Fledge maintained, reviews and pursues policies which reflect relevant safeguarding legislation. This includes appropriate regular background and DBS checks on all Trustees, Staff, and relevant Volunteers. Fledge is committed to the safeguarding of all who may be vulnerable in any way.

### **Insurance:**

Fledge holds appropriate comprehensive insurance cover including public liability, employers' liability, and professional indemnity cover for all its Trustees, Staff and Volunteers involved in providing support and/or mentoring to service users, as well as covering the properties which the CIO leases. This insurance is increased whenever a significant new asset or liability is acquired.

### **Management and staffing:**

At the beginning of 2020-21 Fledge had a headcount of six staff of whom four were employed on a full-time basis, the others being part-time. By the end of the reporting year, staff numbers had grown to eight, with five full-time staff, comprising a Business Operations Manager, Senior Support Worker and six staff in support worker roles. One of these staff members was on Adoption leave. This increase reflected the additional workload associated with opening the additional residential property and the increase in resident service users.

The organisation has continued to benefit from the dedicated support of a volunteer Secretary to the Board of Trustees, who also has also contributed as a part-time administrator, as home-working under Covid has allowed. The Charity has also benefited from continued "quasi-Executive" input from members of the Board of Trustees.

### **Volunteers:**

As a small, but growing Charity, Fledge is heavily reliant on the contribution made by volunteers, among whom, who, in addition to the Trustees, include those contributing to administrative work and in mentoring roles. Fledge's Board of Trustees wishes to place on record its grateful thanks and appreciation for the continuing contributions made by its volunteers in all areas of Fledge's business.

# Financial Statements and Accounts for the year ending 31<sup>st</sup> March 2021

## Financial Overview:

### General financial situation:

#### Income:

Operational income, that is the revenue generated from accommodating Fledge's service users rose to £ 318,904 at the end of the year, an increase of 28.2% over 2019-20. This resulted from a further increase in residential properties to five during the year. These properties collectively provided up to twenty-six residential units at the end of 2020-21. This increase in accommodation capacity (of an additional five units) resulted in higher levels of statutory housing benefit payments and support grants, and larger residents' contributions than previously.

Fundraising income as £ 25,622 was 17.3% lower than in the previous year (£ 30,997), due to the impact of the pandemic halting all external pro-active fundraising events. Fortunately gifts from individual donors and from local churches, societies, and organisations held up despite the impacts of Coronavirus on wider society. Within this sum, Tax reclaimed under Gift Aid at £ 2,036, was inevitably also lower (33.1%) than in 2019-20 reflecting reduced one-off gifts from fundraising activities.

Fledge continues to highly appreciate the support of its benefactors – both organisations and individuals, who continue to support the charity, and particularly those who give regularly and generously to aid our work, and particularly so given the pressure on domestic finances from furlough and other pandemic factors.

Grant income during the year (including into restricted funds), at £ 15,395 was £ 14,645 higher than in 2019-20 thanks to three significant Covid-related alleviation and recovery grants.

Overall, Income in 2020-21 was £ 359,921, representing an increase of 28.3% on the previous year.

#### Expenditure:

Total operational people-related costs amounted to £ 132,644 in 2020-21, an increase of 15.4% on 2019-20, and was consequent upon further increases in staff numbers and related costs.

Central administrative costs, at £ 22,846 showed a similar increase (15.3%) on the previous year with increased rental costs on larger office premises and the acquisition of additional key support technology as the major contributors to the increase.

Residential property-related costs also increased (by 23.5%) on 2019-20. At £ 119,835 this increase was principally due to the acquisition of a lease on a fifth residential property mid-way through the year.

Including restricted funds described below, the total of grant income £ 15,395 received during the year was spent on relevant projects within 2020-21.

Overall, total expenditure from the General Fund during 2020-21 stood at £ 275,345 which was an increase of 18.8% on 2019-20, reflecting continued, progressive, but managed growth of the organisation and its business, despite the pandemic.

### Designated and Restricted Funds:

**Designated Funds** are those which the Trustees have determined shall be set aside with the aim of using them for particular purposes, either now or in the future. At present Fledge has no designated funds.

**Restricted Funds** are those whose application and use had been determined by the source or donor. Fledge received grants totalling £ 15,020 into restricted funds during the period covered by this report, all of which was disbursed within the year on activities specified by the donors. The balance of restricted funds therefore stood at zero at the year-end.

## Reserves policy:

It is the aim of the trustees to accumulate sufficient reserves to cover the costs of at least six month's operations, together with capacity to invest in equipping and resourcing new properties at such times as the Trustees feel it appropriate to expand residential accommodation provisions.

For the fifth year running, a surplus of income over expenditure in the General Fund at the year-end has resulted in an increase in the overall balance of unrestricted funds (of £ 69,556 in 2020-21). This has enabled the carried forward balance in the general fund to rise to £ 170,194, representing 58.6% of annual expenditure, and a further step towards the wider aim of maintaining sustainable reserves in line with the Policy and with recommended best practice. The trustees will determine the appropriate point at which accumulated funds should be transferred to designated reserves.

## Staff salaries and national insurance:

Eight separate staff members (both part-time and full time) received salaries and allowances during 2020-2021, the same as the previous year. Overall expenditure on salaries, allowances, employers pension contributions and Employers' National Insurance Contributions, (including staff costs on project work funded from Restricted Funds and payroll administration costs) amounted to £ 140,916 in total for the year. This compared to £ 114,931 in 2019-20 when eight staff were also employed. The increase is due to a combination of routine increases in pay rates and related pension costs, and an increase in staff-related resource costs reflecting the additional challenges of operating in a Covid-safe environment.

All staff are paid at rates are above the National Living Wage. Fledge uses the pay scales of the National Joint Council (NJC) for Local Government Services as the basis for remunerating staff, and as at 31st March 2021, all staff were paid in accordance with designated points on these pay scales.

No member of staff received more than £ 40,000 in total during the year.

## Trustees' Remuneration:

No Trustee received or waived any emoluments during the year. Out of pocket expenses incurred by Trustees on behalf of Fledge Youth Support were reimbursed as follows:

Expense:	Number of Trustees Reimbursed (£)		Total Value of Reimbursements (£)	
	2020-21	(2019-20)	2020-21	(2019-20)
Travel:	0	0	0.00	0.00
Accommodation:	0	0	0.00	0.00
Other (including goods, materials and equipment purchases):	1	1	187.00	720.16

## Financial commitments:

At the balance sheet date, the charity had financial commitments of £ 319,027 in respect of remaining property lease rents.

**This Annual Report was approved by the Board of Trustees of Fledge Youth Support on 22<sup>nd</sup> November 2021 and signed on their behalf by:**

  
Philip A G Watts OBE MRICS - Chair of Trustees

## Statement of Financial Activities (including summary Income & Expenditure Account) for the year ended 31<sup>st</sup> March 2021.

	General Fund £	Restricted Fund £	Total Funds 2021 £	Total Funds 2020 £ Restated
<b><u>Income</u></b>				
<b><u>Operational Income:</u></b>				
<b>Property-related Statutory Benefits/Grants</b>				
EBC Housing Benefit	303,818	-	303,818	229,585
Resident's contribution	13,725	-	13,725	19,133
Council Tax refund from Landlord	1,361	-	1,361	-
<b>Total Operational Income</b>	<b>318,904</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>318,904</b>	<b>248,718</b>
<b><u>Fundraising Income:</u></b>				
<b>Donations</b>				
General donations	21,817	-	21,817	26,826
Gift Aid Tax reclaimed	2,036	-	2,036	3,042
Other fundraising	1,769	-	1,769	1,129
<b>Total Fundraising</b>	<b>25,622</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>25,622</b>	<b>30,997</b>
<b><u>Grant Income:</u></b>				
Local Authority	375	-	375	750
Awards for All/Covid response	-	9,400	9,400	-
HCC/Communities First Eastleigh	-	1,040	1,040	-
HIWCF	-	4,580	4,580	-
<b>Total Grant Income</b>	<b>375</b>	<b>15,020</b>	<b>15,395</b>	<b>750</b>
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>	<b>344,901</b>	<b>15,020</b>	<b>359,921</b>	<b>280,465</b>
<b><u>Expenditure</u></b>				
<b><u>Operational Costs:</u></b>				
<b>Staff costs</b>				
Salaries inc NI & Pensions	130,496	-	130,496	114,212
Admin costs	533	-	533	474
<b>People-related costs: travel and expenses</b>				
Staff	221	-	221	42
Staff resources	1,252	-	1,252	-
Trustees and Governance	-	-	-	-
<b>People-related costs: training</b>				
Staff	153	-	153	168
Mentoring costs	9	-	9	35
Trustees and Governance	-	-	-	-
<b>TOTAL PEOPLE-RELATED COSTS</b>	<b>132,664</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>132,664</b>	<b>114,931</b>
<b>Central Administrative costs</b>				
Office Rental/utilities	14,329	-	14,329	10,644
Office costs	5,277	-	5,277	6,498
Insurances/Legal Fees	1,593	-	1,593	1,467
Independent Examination Costs	1,000	-	1,000	540
Fundraising Costs	359	-	359	408
Publicity inc. printing	288	-	288	263
<b>TOTAL CORE COSTS</b>	<b>22,846</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>22,846</b>	<b>19,820</b>
<b>Property-related costs</b>				
Property Rental	85,740	-	85,740	68,300
Residential House Operating Costs	5,531	-	5,531	8,065
House Utilities	4,192	-	4,192	1,675
Depreciation	1,592	-	1,592	2,098
Out of hours security	17,912	-	17,912	14,109
Council Tax	2,818	-	2,818	1,144
Residents Support	2,050	-	2,050	1,676
<b>TOTAL PROPERTY RELATED COSTS</b>	<b>119,835</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>119,835</b>	<b>97,067</b>
<b>Project costs (Incl salaries)</b>				
Awards for All/Covid response	-	9,400	9,400	-
HCC/Communities First	-	1,040	1,040	-
HIWCF	-	4,580	4,580	-
<b>TOTAL GRANT COSTS</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>15,020</b>	<b>15,020</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>TOTAL EXPENDITURE</b>	<b>275,345</b>	<b>15,020</b>	<b>290,365</b>	<b>231,818</b>
<b>SURPLUS / DEFICIT</b>	<b>69,556</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>69,556</b>	<b>48,647</b>
<b>BALANCE b/f at 1 APRIL 2020 (2019)</b>	<b>£100,638</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>100,638</b>	<b>51,991</b>
<b>BALANCE c/f at 31 MARCH 2021 (2020)</b>	<b>£170,194</b>	<b>£0</b>	<b>£170,194</b>	<b>£100,638</b>



**Balance Sheet for the year ending 31<sup>st</sup> March 2021**  
**[CIO Number: 1157207]**

	<b>2021</b>		<b>2020</b> Restated	
	£	£	£	£
<b>Fixed Assets</b>				
Cost of purchase	6,492		3,228	
Additions	<u>1,512</u>		<u>3,264</u>	
		8,004		6,492
Depreciation				
31.3.2019	2,218		2,218	
31.3.2020	2,098		2,098	
31.3.2021	<u>1,592</u>		<u>0</u>	
Total		5,908		4,316
Net book value 31.3.2021		<u><b>2,096</b></u>		<u><b>2,176</b></u>
<b>Current Assets</b>				
Debtors	50,479		20,560	
Bank accounts	133,668		83,696	
Petty Cash	<u>170</u>		<u>193</u>	
	184,317		104,449	
<b>Creditors</b>				
	(16,219)		(5,987)	
<b>Net current assets</b>		<u><b>168,098</b></u>		<u><b>98,462</b></u>
<b>Total Assets less current liabilities</b>		<u><b>170,194</b></u>		<u><b>100,638</b></u>
<b>Represented by</b>				
Previous year balance b/f	100,638		51,991	
Surplus/deficit this year	<u>69,556</u>		<u>48,647</u>	
		170,194		100,638
<b>Total funds</b>		<u><b>170,194</b></u>		<u><b>100,638</b></u>
General Fund	170,194		100,638	
Restricted Fund	<u>0</u>		<u>0</u>	
	<u><b>170,194</b></u>		<u><b>100,638</b></u>	

At the balance sheet date, the charity had future financial commitments of £ 319,027 in respect of property lease rents.

These accounts were approved by the Board of Trustees on **22nd November 2021**, and signed on their behalf by:

  
 .....  
**Philip A G Watts OBE MRICS – Chair of Trustees.**

# Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2021

## Accounting Policies:

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with applicable accounting standards and the Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland—FRS 102 (effective 1 January 2019). The preparation of the Financial Statements has been on an Income and Expenditure (Pre-payments and Accruals) accounting basis.

## Funds

**The General Fund (Unrestricted):** represents the funds of the Trustees of Fledge Youth Support that are not subject to any restrictions regarding their use and are available for application on the general purposes of the Charity;

**Designated Funds:** The Trustees may designate funds for a particular purpose. Designated funds are also unrestricted. No funds are presently designated by the Trustees.

**Restricted Funds:** These are grants or donations that the donor requires to be used in a specific way or for a specific purpose. They can be considered a contract between the donating party and the receiving party.

The accounts include all transactions, assets and liabilities for which the Trustees are responsible in law.

## Income:

All income from statutory sources (Housing and Support Benefits) is recognised when it is due to be received into Fledge accounts;

Income tax recoverable on Gift Aid donations is recognised when the tax is due to be received;

Grants and legacies to the Trustees are accounted for when they are received;

Funds raised by social fundraising and similar events are accounted for gross, and recognised when received;

All other incoming resources are accounted for gross and recognised when received;

Income from investments is accounted for when due to be received.

## Expenditure:

Expenditure on all activities relating to the operation and administration of the Charity are accounted for when due to be paid.

## Fixed Assets:

*Furniture, fixtures and fittings provided into the Fledge Houses and purchased by Fledge:* are written off at the time of purchase, as in many cases these are not able to be used by future residents;

*Items of office and computer equipment:* Individual items of equipment with a purchase price of £ 1,000 or less are written off when the asset is acquired. Items costing more than £ 1,000 are depreciated on a straight-line basis over three years. There were none held in 2020-21;

*Current assets:* Amounts owing to the Trustees at 31<sup>st</sup> March are included within the income when received;

*Short term deposits:* include cash held on deposit with the bank.

## Independent Examiner's Report to the Trustees of Fledge Youth Support CIO

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of Fledge Youth Support CIO for the year ended 31 March 2021 which are set out on pages 20-22.

### Responsibilities and basis of report

As the trustees of the CIO you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 ('the Act').

I report in respect of my examination of the Trustee's accounts carried out under section 145 of the 2011 Act and in carrying out my examination I have followed all the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the 2011 Act.

### Independent examiner's statement

Since the charity's gross income exceeded £250,000 your examiner must be a member of a body listed in section 145 of the 2011 Act. I confirm I am qualified to undertake the examination because I am a member of the Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales, which is one of the listed bodies.

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no material matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination giving me cause to believe that in any material respect:


accounting records were not kept in respect of the CIO as required by section 130 of the Act; or

the accounts do not accord with those records; or

the accounts do not comply with the applicable requirements concerning form and content of accounts set out in the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 other than any requirement that the accounts give a 'true and fair view' which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination.

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in this report in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Signed:



Chris. Goodhead FCA

Knight Goodhead Limited Chartered Accountants.

7 Bournemouth Road, Chandlers Ford.

EASTLEIGH, Hampshire, SO53 3DA

Date:

21 January 2022

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