



**Friends of
Sawbridgeworth Neuro Centres**
Registered Charity number 1167409

**Trustees' Annual Report
for the year April 1st 2022 to 31st March, 2023.**

The following report adheres to the guidance given by the Charity Commission. Where a topic was not applicable, the heading is omitted.

I. Background and Summary of The Purposes of The Charity as Set Out in its Governing Document.

Registered as a CIO in 2016, the Friends of Sawbridgeworth Neuro Centres (FSN) is a small charity dedicated to improving the lives of adults and young persons with severe and complex neurological conditions. Our client group resides in the neuro centres because they are unable to function independently at home. In most cases, brain/spinal injury arose either as a result of a traumatic event, such as a stroke, or a car accident, or resulted from the onset of a degenerative neurological condition, such as Parkinson's Disease. In all cases, the injury has resulted in significant physical, cognitive, and/or communicative disability; some residents are also in states of low awareness. The centres provide rehabilitation, complex disability management and/or end of life care as appropriate. We supplement what is provided by the professionals involved.

As formulated in our constitution, the specific, but not exclusive, objectives of the Charity are:

- a) To organize and provide activities for the residents in the form of therapy and entertainment
- b) To improve the physical environment, both inside and outside of the centres
- c) To help any resident who lacks funding for whatever reason, by providing clothing, toiletries or other personal items as shall be deemed appropriate
- d) To support the recruitment and organization of volunteers who will help to further our objectives
- e) To co-operate with other associations, charities, voluntary bodies and statutory authorities who can help us to further our objectives in ways that would otherwise not be possible.

II. Summary of The Main Activities in Relation to Those Purposes.

Objective (a): The effect of COVID on care homes has been profound and continues to this day. The residents we help to care for are particularly vulnerable which means that visits by volunteers to undertake any of the regular or one-off activities we organize or participate in, can be cancelled at any time. However, in the year in question, our regular contributions to classical music and craft groups has stabilized somewhat.

We recently set up a scheme whereby one volunteer could be nominated as a primary visitor for any resident who had no family or friends to take on this role. This works well and is something that we wish to expand when time and resources permits.

Objective (b): Improvement of the physical environment in which our residents live is an important feature of our work. To date, it has ranged from the provision of art on the walls, through physiotherapy equipment to the donation of small sensory items for individual rooms. Indoors during 2022/2023, we were unable to do anything directly inside the buildings. However, we were able to donate a large amount of sensory equipment of various sorts to each centre.

Outdoors, our woodland project continues to be the “jewel in the crown” of our larger scale projects. We continued to work outside and have developed a maintenance plan involving coppicing where appropriate, clearing new land for replanting, replacing old trees with new native trees and planting ferns and bulbs to create color throughout the year. The developed area now extends to half an acre and we have created “visual pathways” to another half-acre. We continue to contribute to the development and maintenance of the gardens surrounding each centre, providing garden furniture as well as plants and assistance with maintenance.

Objective (c): For those residents without funds, we supply clothing and toiletries. We also pay for hairdressing and chiropody as appropriate and fund trips out of the centres. This scheme is now running well again.

Objectives (d and e): Recruitment of new volunteers and collaboration with other charities has largely been on hold. However, our recently appointed patron has become an active member of our group and has facilitated interactions with other voluntary groups as well as with the local community.

III. Statement Confirming Whether the Trustees Have Had Regard to The Guidance Issued by The Charity Commission on Public Benefit.

The trustees confirm that they have referred to the Charity Commission’s guidance on public benefit when reviewing their aims and objectives, in planning future activities, and in developing their policy for the year.

IV. Policy on grant making and social investment.

Not applicable.

V. Contribution made by volunteers.

The charity’s volunteers divide into two groups: (i) those who work directly with our client group and are DBS checked and (ii) those who help with occasional fund-raising activities such as running raffles off-site. All volunteers are crucial to the functioning of the charity and do a wonderful job. However, like most other small charities, we are always in need of new volunteers.

VI. Summary of the main achievements of the charity, identifying the difference the charity’s work has made to the circumstances of its beneficiaries and any wider benefits to society as a whole.

In spite of the intermittent limitations on our activities imposed by COVID, our charity has continued to make some differences to the lives of our beneficiaries. In particular, the woodland area has provided an area of peacefulness that cannot be achieved elsewhere. Many of our residents and their families have suffered considerable traumas – visiting the woodland can help recovery in a small way. For the staff, this area has also been a sanctuary during the stressful times of the COVID restrictions. At other times, therapy staff and the activities team make use of the area as a sensory garden, with the attendant improvements in perceptual and

cognitive skills this can bring. The area also allows families to socialise away from the main buildings.

In our last report we mentioned the beginning of new project involving the development of a system whereby residents can observe wildlife activity in the woodland remotely in their rooms or on communal TVs. This has involved the purchase of bird feeders, nesting boxes, nesting box cameras, a trail camera and a solar panel to power the cameras. Unfortunately, progress on this project has only just begun again and is slow.

This year, we received funding for 2 music therapy projects. Plans for these are now in place, a music therapist with experience of neurological patients has been appointed, and support staff recruited. The first project will involve one-to-one session with residents who cannot leave their rooms for various reasons. This includes some in low awareness states as well as others whose physical disabilities restrict the time they can spend in a wheelchair. The second project involves a small group of younger individuals who we felt our charity had not offered anything specific in the past. Being together might not only help their movement skills but might also help them cognitively, socially and emotionally.

Since our residents fall into the very vulnerable category, most of our projects the Friends undertake are specific to that population and cannot be classified as bringing benefits to society at large. However, in a small way our woodland development can be viewed in this way. Having been completely neglected, we have now restored an area which contains many new trees and plants, which contains bird feeders and nesting boxes to attract wildlife and which might make a very, very small contribution to climate change and the lives of others. This is an ongoing project which we hope will attract funding for new developments such as additional pathways and a summer house.

VI. Summary of fundraising activities

Grants: During the financial year in question, we submitted 2 applications for funding for music therapy for selected residents. These were both successful (£2000 in total).

Fundraising campaigns: A fund raising campaign on our behalf, using Just Giving as our platform, raised a total of £1000 towards our woodland project. We are currently planning to undertake some major repairs to the wheelchair accessible paths through the woodland. This money will go towards this project.

Donations: During the financial year, we obtained 10 individual donations ranging from £50 to £1000. Some of these specified particular projects or items to be purchased and are listed under restricted funds. Others were open ended (unrestricted).

STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

(a) **Type of governing document:** Constitution

(b) **How the charity is constituted:** CIO.

(c) **Method of selecting Trustees:** New Trustees are proposed and appointed by the existing Trustees, following a written protocol based on the Charity Commission guidance and clauses 9 and 10 of our constitution. In particular, the “Fit and Proper persons help sheet and declaration” were incorporated into our own guiding document. All actions are recorded in writing (see below). We have appointed one new trustee during the year under review, bringing the total to 8.

(d) **Policies and procedures adopted for the induction and training of trustees:** Being a small charity our Trustees generally come from a pool of individuals who have worked with us as volunteers and know how the charity works. In addition, however, new trustees are provided with copies of all relevant information on the responsibilities of a Trustee provided by the Charity Commission. They also receive a copy of our charity’s constitution, along with all other policy documents and guidance. An experienced Trustee is assigned the role of mentor when necessary.

(e) **Organisational structure:** The Trustees normally meet a minimum of 3 times per year. Extraordinary meetings may be called when required. All minutes are meticulously prepared, approved at the next meeting, signed and filed. Our constitution provides for votes to be taken by email or phone where decisions on minor issues are required between meetings. During the period under review, we were able to meet only twice a whole committee, a few times in smaller groups, then communicated by email or phone when necessary.

As noted above, we have a written policy for the appointment and induction of Trustees. We have developed a Privacy Policy in accordance with GDPR regulations. Permission forms for use of data on social media are in place. We have taken out the appropriate insurance cover and registered with HMRC to recoup Gift Aid.

We have a formal procedure for seeking funding suggestions from residents, staff and other interested parties. Any proposal, with its justification, is considered at a Trustees meeting and a response sent to the applicant. We have a formal procedure for acknowledging donations and seeking Gift Aid Information.

(vi) **Relationship with any related parties:** Since the charity operates within the buildings and on land owned by Ramsay Healthcare and managed by Elysium Healthcare, where appropriate we adhere to the relevant policies and procedures set by the company. In turn, these regulations adhere to CQC requirements and any other legal bodies relevant to employer and service provider. We have a good working relationship with the management of the company, a representative (without voting rights) attends relevant Trustees meetings and our activities are generally viewed as being beneficial to both residents and staff. When we organise an activity, inside or outside of the buildings, proper risk assessments are undertaken and approved by the management. With regard to volunteers, the charity does not approve these without collaboration with the appropriate centre staff. All volunteers are interviewed, formally approved by the company with requisite DBS checks in place.

REFERENCE AND ADMINISTRATIVE DETAILS

Charity name	Friends of Sawbridgeworth Neuro Centres
Other name the charity uses	FSN
Registered charity number	1167409
Charity's principal address	Gardens and Jacobs Neuro Centres, High Wych Road, Sawbridgeworth, Hertfordshire, CM21 0HH.

Trustee name	Office (if any)
Sheila Henderson	Chair
Celine Austin	Vice Chair
Sue Gleeson	Treasurer
Nicholas Jardine	Minutes Secretary.
Paul Benjafield	
Jeremiah O'Mahony	
Marian O'Mahony	
Dee Chaplin	
Pat Tiney	Co-opted non-voting member.

Financial Review

Review of the charity's financial position at the end of the end of March 2022: In spite of the lack of opportunity to raise funds during the year in question, our financial position was healthy. We ended the year with a balance of £23,216.

Policy for holding reserves: Not applicable

Reasons for holding zero reserves: Being a small charity with no property or regular staff, there is no need to place substantial sums in reserve. As prudent forward planning, however, our committee never commits sums of money to projects which are not already fully funded.

Any uncertainties about the charity continuing as a going concern: Financially, we have no uncertainty about the charity as a going concern. Our group has continued to gain recognition and finds it easier each year to raise funds (apart from during COVID 19).

Charity Number
1167409

Friends of Sawbridgeworth Neuro Centres

Financial Statements

For the Year Ended 31 March 2023

Gardens and Jacobs Neuro Centres
High Wych Road
Sawbridgeworth
Hertfordshire
CM21 0HH

Friends of Sawbridgeworth Neuro Centres
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Friends of Sawbridgeworth Neuro Centres
Contents of the Financial Statements
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	2022/2023 Unrestricted Funds £	2022/2023 Restricted Funds £	2022/2023 Total Funds £
Receipts			
Donations & grants	3436	4106	7542
Fundraising Events	916	-	916
Gift Aid	421	-	421
Total Receipts	<u>4773</u>	<u>4106</u>	<u>8879</u>
Payments			
Cost of fundraising	70	-	70
Entertainment	13	-	13
Gardener	4350	-	4350
Governance costs	288	-	288
Wildlife	315	-	315
Woodland	108	-	108
Residents personal care	402	542	945
Total Payments	<u>5547</u>	<u>542</u>	<u>6089</u>
Opening balance			20419
Receipts			8879
Payments			6089
Balance			<u>23209</u>

Friends of Sawbridgeworth Neuro Centres
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For the Year Ended 31 March 2023

	2022/2023	2022/2023	2022/2023
	Unrestricted	Restricted	Total
	Funds	Funds	Funds
	£	£	£
Monetary Assets			
Bank and Cash Balances			
Bank Current Account	6653	16556	23209
Cash in Hand	8	-	8
Total Assets	<u>6661</u>	<u>16556</u>	<u>23217</u>

Approval Statement

The charity's trustees are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 ("the Act").

The charity's trustees consider that an audit is not required for this year under section 144 of the Act and that no independent examination is needed as the gross income for the financial year is less than £25,000.

Approved by the Trustees on 22nd January 2024 and signed on their behalf by:

Sheila E. Henderson
Trustee

SHEILA E. HENDERSON
Print name

Susan H. Gleeson
Trustee

SUSAN H. GLEESON
Print name