

## **BRIERLEY HILL SAMARITANS TRUSTEE REPORT 2024**

### **Introduction**

Brierley Hill Samaritans has had a presence in Brierley Hill since 1973. We are an affiliated branch to the main Samaritans Charity which is located at The Upper Mill, Kingston Road, Elwell, Surrey, KT17 2AF. Brierley Hill Samaritans is a CIO (Charitable Incorporated Organisation) which adheres to its Constitutional Rules.

The Branch Leadership Team are responsible for managing the Branch. Within the Branch Leadership Team are four Trustees who fulfil their obligations within the Charity Commission regulations and make decisions regarding expenditure, strategy etc. We have 15 DD's (Deputy Directors) who help to spread the work load. They will manage the operational side of the branch, for example, the quality and consistency of our service, Recruitment & Selection, Training of new volunteers and ongoing training for existing volunteers, our work outside the branch and raising money for the branch (Outreach) and support for our volunteers in carrying out their duties (Volunteer Support).

### **STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT OF THE BRANCH**

#### **Branch Leadership Team**

Co-Directors and also Trustees – Graham Bristow Appointed 29<sup>th</sup> August 2022 and Joanne Petter (Emily) appointed 29<sup>th</sup> August 2022

Trustee and Secretary – Jennifer-Ann Portman co-opted 4<sup>th</sup> May 2021

Trustee and Treasurer – Alicia Pawlowski co-opted 19th January 2020

The Branch also has 15 Deputy Directors who are responsible for the following areas: New Volunteers, Mentors, Duty Support, Support Volunteers, EDI, Recruitment and Selection, IT, Volunteers Support, Training, Recruitment and Selection, Health and Safety and Premises, Branch Hub, Outreach, Admin, Rota.

#### **Trustees' Report**

The AGM was held on 26<sup>th</sup> June 2024.

Our Listening Volunteers continue our core business which is to respond to contact from people who are in emotional despair or distress. This can be due to relationship breakdown, debt, addiction, loneliness, self-harm, mental health issues and the added pressures of cost of living crisis. Callers may also be experiencing suicidal thoughts.

The objective of the Charity is that fewer people die by suicide. Samaritans believe that giving emotional support to our callers by listening and empathising with them can reduce feelings of emotional distress and suicide. Callers contact us by phone or/and email. We have in the past offered Face to Face support but this is under review because of safety issues for our volunteers.

Our volunteers work in a shift pattern and will attend shifts throughout the night. Most of our volunteers have full time jobs and carry out their duties in their free time.

Our volunteers are supported by Duty Support who they debrief to at the end of a shift. The Volunteer Support DD also supports Volunteers by ensuring that they remain safe and happy while volunteering with us.

Our Safeguarding Policy is continually reviewed and updated and all our volunteers are aware of their responsibilities when dealing with vulnerable people. The main Samaritan Charity has developed a Phone Call monitoring team to ensure that our Callers receive the best response possible when they contact us in emotional distress.

The Branch no longer responds to emails but this is also under review as of November 2024.

### **Number of Calls**

In September 2024, 49 Brierley Hill Listening Volunteers spent 187 hours on the phones taking 556 calls.

### **Training**

New volunteers attend face to face training for sessions which includes skills practice, they are then allocated to a mentor to start shifts and once they are competent they start taking calls by themselves.

For all volunteers there is a range of on-line training modules which they can access as they seek to develop their own volunteer pathway. Any modules which they successfully complete are recorded on their own personal training log.

In addition, there is an expectation that they will also undertake, within each 12 month period, 5 hours of On-Going Training. This particular programme may be driven by volunteer in branch suggestions, which may be based on their feedback about an increase in the types of contacts being experienced / upskilling to provide volunteers with enhanced confidence in dealing with a particular contact, or range of, difficult contacts as highlighted by fellow volunteers. There may be occasions when On-Going Training modules may be driven by the main Samaritans Charity (Central Office).

### **Premises**

At Brierley Hill Samaritans we are very fortunate to own purpose-built premises, which we moved to in November 1993 having been the beneficiary of the will of a founder member.

Trustees recognise that they are the current custodians of the building and have a responsibility and obligation to maintain and refurbish appropriately to ensure that it remains fit for purpose for years/decades to come. There is in place a rolling 12 month property schedule to ensure that we especially meet all necessary service dates. In doing so it ensures that our most valuable resource, our fellow volunteers, are provided with the best possible environment in which to support some of the most vulnerable individuals in society with the gift of being listened to.

### **Fundraising and Outreach**

The Fundraising Team continue to place Collecting Tins in pubs and shops. A Retro Night was held at Stourbridge Town Hall which was totally sponsored by Chapmans Electrical, Cradley Heath, with no cost to the Branch. Fundraising also attend events with the Outreach Team where donations are made. The main Outreach events have been - an organised Fun Run at the Dell Stadium, to coincide with the London Marathon. A visit to the Chatty Café at Merry Hill Shopping Centre, Armed Forces Day at Himley Hall, Brierley Hill Fun Day in the summer and also the Christmas Lights switch on.

### **Finance Report 1<sup>st</sup> April 2023 - 31<sup>st</sup> March 2024**

As an affiliated Branch to the main Samaritans Charity we are responsible for our own finances and are responsible for raising funds to cover the costs of running the Branch. This money is raised by the fundraising team, grant applications and the receipt of receiving regular donations. As a registered charity we follow Charity Commission rules.

This financial year shows a steady flow of income and expenditure with a small deficit for the year of £222. Total income decreased by £2,874.874. The main donations received were from Enterprise Car Rentals £2,500, McDermott Buildings £7,060, Rotary Club of Kinver £1,000, Wilkes Tranter Accountants £1,000. Main Fundraising income was from collection tins £590 and the bucket collection after Sarah Millican Concert of £643. A Retro Night (as mentioned above) raised £1,355. A £1,000 Grant was received from the Anthony and Gwendoline Memorial Fund. £1,351 Gift Aid from HMRC was claimed and received.

Expenditure was £24,995 a small increase of £320 on previous year. This was mainly due to the increase in fuel costs after coming off a fixed contract and an increase in Outreach costs of £726. Postage and telephone costs decreased as Samaritan branches, as a whole, transferred over to the VOIP system of telephone call with Central Office picking up the Broadband costs. £4,233 was spent on Branch Maintenance £3,397 on Centre Cleaning and Refreshments, Heat light and water £3,502. The deficit of £222 includes a depreciation figure of £6,125.

Despite the small deficit in the financial year, we continue to have a strong balance sheet with Total Net Assets of £155,226. Although we have a strong Balance Sheet, it must be appreciated that we need to continue to work hard applying for Grants, Fundraising and raising our profile in the Black Country Community to encourage support and ensuring we cover our outgoing costs.

Future planned expenditure is the replacement of fencing on the perimeter of the building to help keep it secure and possibly replacing single glazed windows with double glazed units.

Our Auditors are French Ludlam and Co. Ltd., Kingswinford and a copy of the Statement of Accounts is available on this Site. French Ludlam provide their services free of charge.

### **Future Objectives for the Branch:**

The main objectives over the next 12 months is to continue to:

- Develop an inclusive culture and community feel within the branch
- Increase and retain volunteer numbers
- Recruit more volunteers to roles of responsibility
- Focus on supporting vulnerable groups within our community

Alicia Pawlowski  
Treasurer and Trustee  
November 2024

**THE SAMARITANS**  
**BRIERLEY HILL BRANCH**  
**STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS**  
**YEAR ENDED 31ST MARCH 2024**

**THE SAMARITANS**  
**BRIERLEY HILL BRANCH**  
**ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST MARCH 2024**

**Independent Examiner's Report to the Trustees of The Samaritans of Brierley Hill**

We report on the accounts of The Samaritans of Brierley Hill for the year ended 31st March 2024, which are set out on Pages 2 - 4.

**Respective responsibilities of trustees and examiner**

As the charity's trustees you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts; you consider that the audit requirement of section 144(2) of the Charities Act 2011 (the 2011 Act) does not apply. It is our responsibility to state, on the basis of procedures specified in the General Directions given by the Charity Commissioners under section 145(5)(b) of the Act, whether particular matters have come to my attention.

**Basis of independent examiner's report**

Our examination was carried out in accordance with the General Directions given by the Charity Commissioners. An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the charity and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts, and seeking explanations from you as trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit, and consequently we do not express an audit opinion on the view given by the accounts.

**Independent examiner's statement**

In connection with our examination, no matter has come to our attention:

- (1) which gives us reasonable cause to believe that in any material respect the requirements
- to keep accounting records in accordance with section 130 of the 2011 Act; and
  - to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and to comply with the accounting requirements of the 2011 Act
- have not been met; or
- (2) to which, in our opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

*French Ludlam & Co. Limited*

**FRENCH LUDLAM & CO LIMITED**  
**Statutory Auditors and Accountants**

Kingswinford  
31 May 2024

**THE SAMARITANS**  
**BRIERLEY HILL BRANCH**

**STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES**

**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST MARCH 2024**

**2023**

£	£		£	£
		<b><u>INCOME</u></b>		
	3,085	Fundraising	4,055	
2,643	<u>(442)</u>	Less fundraising expenses	<u>(297)</u>	3,758
21,649		Donations and grants		18,095
2,000		Rental income		500
1,149		Gift Aid received		1,550
<u>206</u>		Interest received		<u>869</u>
27,647				24,772
		<b><u>EXPENDITURE</u></b>		
	-	Donation to Matala Branch	-	
4,485		Maintenance of centre	4,233	
1,735		Insurance	1,961	
2,552		Heat, light and water	3,502	
189		Printing and stationery	411	
1,831		Postage and telephone	1,042	
719		Travelling	485	
791		Outreach	1,517	
2,599		Centre cleaning and refreshments	3,397	
-		Training	-	
2,336		Branch contribution	1,932	
394		Sundry expenses	389	
<u>24,675</u>	<u>7,043</u>	Depreciation	<u>6,125</u>	<u>24,995</u>
<u>2,972</u>		<b><u>(DEFICIT)/SURPLUS FOR THE YEAR</u></b>		<u><u>(222)</u></u>

**ACCOUNTANTS REPORT**

We certify the annexed summary accounts are in accordance with the full accounts of the branch.

A copy of the full accounts are available on request.

*French Ludlam & Co. Limited*

**FRENCH LUDLAM AND CO LIMITED**

**Registered Auditors and Accountants**

**Kingswinford**

**31 May 2024**

**THE SAMARITANS**  
**BRIERLEY HILL BRANCH**

**BALANCE SHEET**

31st March 2023

31ST MARCH 2024

£

£

£

£

**FIXED ASSETS**

Freehold land and buildings at cost

as at 31st March 2023

93,143

Less depreciation

3,210

89,933

Fixtures and equipment

as at 31st March 2023

9,371

Additions less disposals during the year

3,487

12,858

Less depreciation

2,915

9,943

**CURRENT ASSETS**

716

Debtors and prepayments

2,041

Cash at bank

30,584

Current account

25,171

25,205

United Trust Bank 100 day notice account

31,074

56,505

58,286

**CURRENT LIABILITIES**

3,571

Creditors

2,936

**NET CURRENT ASSETS**

55,350

**TOTAL NET ASSETS**

155,226

Represented by:

Balance as at 31st March 2023

155,448

(Deficit)/Surplus For The Year

(222)

155,226

**ACCOUNTANTS REPORT**

We certify the annexed summary accounts are in accordance with the full accounts of the branch.

A copy of the full accounts are available on request.

*French Ludlam & Co. Limited*

**FRENCH LUDLAM AND CO LIMITED**

**Registered Auditors and Accountants**

**Kingswinford**

**31 May 2024**

**THE SAMARITANS**  
**BRIERLEY HILL BRANCH**  
**NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS**

1) **Accounting Policies**

- a) Basis of accounting. These accounts have been prepared under the historical cost convention and in accordance with applicable accounting standards and the Statement of Recommended Practice on Accounting by Charities ("the Charities SORP FRS 102"), and with the Charities Act 2011.
- b) Voluntary income received by way of donations and gifts is included in the Statement of Financial Activities (the "SOFA") when received. Gifts in kind are valued and brought in as income and the appropriate expenditure.
- c) Gross fundraising income from events organised by the charity itself is included in the SOFA when received. Where deemed material, fundraising proceeds not yet received by the charity at the year end have also been taken to income at the Trustees' estimate of likely receivable amount.
- d) Covenant, Gift Aid and other income received by the charity in respect of which a claim for repayment of tax has or will be made is grossed up for the tax recoverable and this gross amount recognised in the SOFA.
- e) Income from legacies is included in the SOFA when received or when the Trustees are satisfied the charity has a legally enforceable right of receipt of a conservatively measurable sum.
- f) Revenue grants for immediate financial support and assistance are recognised in the SOFA on receipt and on satisfaction of any preconditions.
- g) Depreciation is provided on all tangible fixed assets of material value held by the charity for its own use on a straight line basis so as to write off their cost over their estimated useful lives as follows:

Freehold buildings	2% - straight line basis
Fixtures and equipment	15% - straight line basis

2) **Staff Costs and Numbers**

No members of staff were employed by the charity during the year.

3) **Reconciliation of Funds**

All funds held are available for the ordinary purposes of the charity.

- 4) As part of a restructuring of the national Samaritans organisation, on 1 October 2016, the assets, liabilities and activities of The Samaritans Brierley Hill Branch ("the Charity") were transferred to a new Charitable Incorporation Organisation (CIO). The transfer to the new CIO had no effect on the operations of the branch.