

# The Alexa Trust

Registered Charity Number 1168705

Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) whose only voting members are its charity trustees.

[www.thealexatrust.org](http://www.thealexatrust.org)

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40 Eastern Esplanade

Southend on Sea

Essex

SS1 2ES

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## Main Objectives

- a) To relieve the needs of parents who are in need having a child in a neonatal unit through, in particular, the provision of grants and such other support and assistance as shall be thought fit: and
- b) To promote and protect the good health of women and their babies through education and raising awareness of pregnancy related issues, particularly pre-eclampsia, premature babies and neonatal death including the education of those working in neonatal units to enable them to better care for such women and their babies.

## Annual Return 2020 - 2021

### Summary

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The year ending 30<sup>st</sup> June 2021 saw the Trust continue to grow in financial stability. As in the previous year this was largely due to enforced reduced activity caused by the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. Swimmers however were encouraged to continue fundraising through Cross Channel Relay Teams but the ability to identify, communicate and deliver to those that might benefit most from the charity was limited. In addition, NHS in general restricted visitors and changed procedures to accommodate the issues of the pandemic. Many hospitals, in the short term, adopted more favourable parking arrangements reducing the need for financial assistance with costs from the Trust. Included in the accounts for the year include paid deposits for 2021/2 and subsequent English Channel swim attempts.

## **1. Donations**

The JustGiving platform was responsible for the for the largest volume of donations which ranged from a few to several hundreds of pounds. The second largest source of funding continued to be from the enthusiastic swimmers that wished to be part of the English Channel Swimming Relay Teams.

The Trust was also fortunate to receive a sizeable donation from Orange County Community Foundation, an American organisation. Feel Good Fashion based in Deal, Kent, also made a welcome donation.

## **2. Support Grants**

The Fuel Fund, which encapsulates accommodation, travel and ancillary items was able to support parents in both the Croydon (Surrey) and Ashford (Kent) areas. Request for assistance were not as high as expected with Covid 19 thought to be one factor as hospitals changed their parking and visiting arrangements due to the pandemic. One positive aspect of this period was that a number of neonatal units were able to have virtual meetings between nurses and parents which provide updates of babies' condition along with photographs and videos.

## **3. Trust Events**

The popular Cross Channel Relay swims provides a substantial source of income. Swimmers commit to raising money in a similar way to marathon runners raising money through running their own fund-raising events, personal and corporate sponsorship. The cost of a relay team attempting to cross the Channel is expensive. Fees for Cross Channel Swimming Association registration, boat charter and observers need to be covered before the Trust can benefit. It is regrettable that during 2020/21 some

swimmers were forced to give up their place on a relay team due to ill health, lack of training or travel restrictions. Unfortunately, these swimmers lose their deposit, but refunds are made to those that cannot swim but have donated more than their deposit. The amount of work necessary to establish relay teams and liaise between swimmers and organisations has noticeably increased this year. With more swimmers keen to take on the challenge and increased boat charges in the future this workload is likely to increase substantially.

### **English Channel Relays Fundraiser.**

The Coronavirus Pandemic caused the Trust major concerns in 2020. It proved necessary to plan, contemplate and adapt to different scenarios:

- Would Covid rules allow cross channel swims?
- Would amenities be open supporting the necessary training?
- Would travel restrictions allow individuals to reach coastal areas?
- Would international travel be possible in 2020/21?

The Alexa Trust strived to adapt and be flexible to accommodate a myriad of concerns and issues. If team members needed reassurance, we would aim to speak one on one and try to reassure or ask if they as an individual would like the opportunity to postpone a planned swim if a position became available in a team later. Accommodating individuals who decided that it was not the right time for training along with fundraising did have an impact on administration time and cost. The Trust did not want to cancel any teams thus losing fundraising. As a result, more advertising was therefore needed to fill teams that were reducing in numbers along with sourcing additional boats for later years. A number of individual swimmers due to try the crossing in 2022 were therefore asked to roll over to the following year. The knock-on effect was then to gain more interest to fill the added teams. We would need to

source more pilot vessels and work a little faster than usual to reassure other team members, if nothing else, that their team was complete. We have managed to accommodate individuals' requests and through Zoom meetings we reassured the swimmers. We have also been able to fill all positions available, not leaving a financial deficit. Overall, the Channel Swimming Teams have all been successful raising well over the minimum amount asked. Teams have been restructured to suit weather and pilot boat resources. 2020/21 was supposed to see seven boats used for the relay teams and despite 2020 being a pandemic nightmare we still saw four boats leave for France. Currently we are planning for 2021/22 when we will see teams in seven boats that will fundraise by swimming The English Channel.

#### **4. Supporters and Swimmers**

Due to the Covid pandemic loyal supporters who offer various degrees of help and support has been limited out of necessity. Activities like attending or organising local fund-raising events, visiting hospitals or making calls to neonatal units to offer support and help to staff, new parents and their babies has all been limited. We are pleased that supporters continue to urge the use of fund-raising platforms such as JustGiving which enables us to build our financial resources to help with potentially bigger projects when circumstances allow.

Our thanks go to Terry Lees for the support of swimmers on swim and training days; to Julie Lees for supporting swimmers and being available to help parents in need and generally supporting the Trust with day-to-day organisation. Thanks to Darren Parfitt who does a good deal behind the scenes in Dover and has been a great supporter of the Trust since its inception. The success of helping the neonatal unit at Croydon hospital is squarely down to Annie Mulroy, thank you.

The White Horse Public House in Dover and Ovenden Ltd have continued their support of the Trust also deserve special acknowledgement and thanks.

Louise Jane Boat Charters in the form of Andy King and his family continue to help, advise and support the Trust and the swimmers as do officials of the Cross Channel Swimming Association.

Many thanks must go to Howard James for undertaking the huge volume of additional work that Covid caused, liaising, for example, with swimmers from Australia, Japan, USA, South Africa and Malta and consulting with boat pilots coping with different time zones during day and night. This was particularly impressive because Howard was trying to establish a fledgling business of his own at this challenging time.

Many thanks to Grace Bates and Esmari Janes for the vital support and guidance required to keep the Trust focused.

## **5. Looking Forward**

The Alexa Trust is proud to be able to organise English Channel Relay events and the recruitment for teams for next year is largely completed and it is hoped that UK based swimmers will continue to be joined by others from across the globe. The training event facilitated by the Kings Swimmers, based in Walmer, was held in May 2021 and it is hoped a similar event can be held in 2022.

The potential for a sponsored abseil from the top of Table Mountain in Cape Town is still planned for the Chairperson, Dennis Whitmore. It did not happen this year due to travel restrictions but will be progressed when international travel safely permits.

Lack of local events has not seen a decline in donations. The intention is to continue supporting parents in Croydon and Ashford together with offering help to a hospital in

Dartford (Kent) and in Southend on Sea (Essex). However, the Trust is mindful of the need to put resources to good effect and as the pandemic situation unfolds it may be necessary to help parents, their families and new-born baby unit staff in different ways due to the changes Covid has brought on society. As such the North London Neonatal Consortium (a group of 25 Hospitals) has been contacted with a view to offer help.

The Trust continues to welcome approaches from hospitals for help in supporting parents with babies in neonatal units or help in providing staff training particularly around preeclampsia.

The Alex Trust

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# ALEXA TRUST ACCOUNTS 2020-2021

| 2019/20<br>£     | INCOME                          | 2020/21<br>£     |
|------------------|---------------------------------|------------------|
| 10,874.10        | JustGiving/Giving.com           | 21,548.26        |
| 429.70           | Paypal/Amazon                   | 17.49            |
| 768.44           | Facebook                        | 760.11           |
| 340.00           | Deal Event                      | 0.00             |
| 8,282.91         | Swimmers                        | 19,677.95        |
| 361.75           | Other Events                    | 0.00             |
| 5.00             | Misc                            | 25.00            |
|                  | CSA refund (cancelled swim)     | 630.00           |
|                  | International grant             | 3,198.42         |
|                  | Feelgood donation               | 388.00           |
| <b>21,061.90</b> | <b>Sub Total</b>                | <b>46,245.23</b> |
|                  | <b>EXPENDITURE</b>              |                  |
| 238.30           | Support Grant Ashford           | 100.00           |
| 450.00           | Support Grant Croydon           | 0.00             |
| 530.00           | Equipment                       | 0.00             |
| 427.27           | Promotional                     | 210.00           |
| 390.00           | Advertising - Outdoor Swimmer   | 210.00           |
| 216.00           | Fees                            | 233.39           |
| 175.00           | CSA                             | 1,975.00         |
| 14.60            | Domain Renewal                  | 20.15            |
|                  | <u>Events</u>                   |                  |
|                  | Training Day Kings Swimmers     | 450.00           |
| 4,150.00         | Cross channel swim boat charges | 13,800.00        |
|                  | Swim admin                      | 1,892.50         |
|                  | Swimmer hoodies                 | 1,907.52         |
| 1,136.00         | Event Swimmer Refunds           | 1,499.00         |
| <b>7,727.17</b>  | <b>Sub Total</b>                | <b>22,297.56</b> |
| 12,948.27        | Opening Balance                 | 26,283.00        |
| 21,061.90        | Income                          | 46,245.23        |
| 7,727.17         | Expenditure                     | 22,297.56        |
| <b>26,283.00</b> | <b>Closing Balance</b>          | <b>50,230.67</b> |
|                  | <b>Bank Statement Balance</b>   | <b>50230.67</b>  |

The accounts for the year year end 30th June 2021 have been scrutinised and in my opinion are in accordance with the records produced.

Signed:

J. M. Tavener



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