

READING SAMARITANS TRUSTEES' ANNUAL REPORT AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

1 APRIL 2020 TO 31 MARCH 2021

Charity Registration Number: 1170632

Contents

INTRODUCTION.....	3
SAMARITANS VISION, MISSION AND VALUES.....	3
CHARITY OBJECTIVES.....	3
CHARITY ACTIVITIES.....	3
STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT.....	4
ACTIVITIES AND ACHIEVEMENTS.....	5
FUTURE PLANS.....	6
FINANCIAL REVIEW.....	7
RESPONSIBILITIES OF TRUSTEES.....	9
REFERENCE AND ADMINISTRATIVE DETAILS.....	9
INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT.....	10
RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS ACCOUNTS.....	11
NOTES TO THE RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS ACCOUNTS.....	12

INTRODUCTION

Reading Samaritans is a charity based in Reading serving both the local area and wider community. It is a recognised branch of the national Samaritans Charity and, as one of over 200 branches, provides emotional support across the country.

The Reading Samaritans' trustees present their annual report and financial statements of the charity for the year ended 31 March 2021.

SAMARITANS VISION, MISSION AND VALUES

Samaritan's vision is that fewer people die by suicide. We work to achieve this vision by making it our mission to alleviate emotional distress and reduce the incidence of suicidal feelings and suicidal behaviour.

We are committed to the following values:

- Listening;
- Confidentiality;
- People making their own decision;
- Being non-judgemental; and
- Human contact.

CHARITY OBJECTIVES

The objectives of Reading Samaritans are:

- I) To enable persons in Reading and the surrounding area as well as elsewhere who are experiencing feelings of distress or despair, including those who may be at risk of suicide, to receive confidential emotional support at any time of the day or night in order to improve their emotional health and to reduce the incidence of suicide;
- II) To promote a better understanding in society of suicide, suicidal behaviour and the value of expressing feelings which may otherwise lead to suicide or impaired emotional health; and
- III) To collaborate with and support Samaritans Central Charity and its affiliated branches in fulfilling these objectives.

CHARITY ACTIVITIES

The charity offers support to those who are experiencing feelings of distress or despair, including those who may be at risk of suicide by being there to listen and encourage the recognition and exploration of their options. By doing so we aim to help people find ways of coping with their current feelings.

Reading Samaritans Outreach provides services to schools, higher education institutions, companies and at local events. We also work locally providing

regular support in Huntercombe Prison and at local railway stations. We aim to increase awareness of our services in all sectors of the community by giving awareness talks, attending local public events and working with other organisations.

These activities are carried out by Reading Samaritans for the benefit of the local and wider community and with due regard of the guidance on public benefit published by the Charity Commission.

STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

While Reading Samaritans is a longstanding organisation in Reading, it was incorporated as a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) on 8 December 2016.

Reading Samaritans is a recognised branch of Samaritans, with the national Samaritans Charity providing support services such as training materials and guidance. This relationship is governed by an Operating Agreement which ensures that all branches adhere to the same required standards, while recognising that branches have their own leadership team and are responsible for fundraising.

Reading Samaritans activities are wholly performed by our committed group of around 140 volunteers and we have no employees. The charity is managed by the leadership team, comprised of trustees and deputy directors. The branch Director, also a trustee, is responsible for the day to day management of the charity's activities including matters arising relating to callers and volunteers. The Director is supported in their role by a team of deputy directors who have specific roles and responsibilities. The Trustee Board oversee the charity and have collective and ultimate responsibility for governing the charity and directing how it is managed and run.

Trustees place a high priority on ensuring high standards of governance including management of risk assessment processes. Full leadership team meetings are held at least every 3 months, with separate Trustee Board and deputy director meetings held in the intervening months. Decisions are taken at meetings where trustees are present, with a simple majority of trustees required for decisions to be passed. Additional meetings are held when required and decisions can be made outside of these meetings if needed.

Trustees are recruited from both within the charity and externally to ensure Reading Samaritans has a balanced and appropriately skilled Trustee Board. The trustee hiring process involves interviews and background checks. Following this, the Trustee Board must vote on the admission of new trustees. Members of Reading Samaritans also vote whether to re-elect each trustee at the Annual General Meeting. New trustees are provided with an initial information pack and are required to complete online training designed by the national Samaritans Charity.

ACTIVITIES AND ACHIEVEMENTS

Support Provided

Reading Samaritans volunteers continue to provide vital support to callers and the last year has been particularly successful in the number of calls and emails:

- 18,009 telephone calls (up from 15,772; +14%)
- 5,319 emails (up from 4,613; +15%)
- 0 text messages (service no longer offered)
- 0 face to face visits (service suspended under COVID 19 working practices)

Key Developments

Our year has been dominated by the COVID 19 pandemic and the impact this has had on volunteer availability, number of calls and callers themselves. In April 2020, Samaritans were given 'Key worker' status, which enabled volunteers to legitimately contravene lockdown restrictions to travel for listening and support volunteer shifts.

Whilst several of our volunteers needed to self-isolate, many volunteers increased their number of shifts. This helped provide a consistent service across Samaritans and ensure the greater number of incoming calls and emails were answered. As a branch, we updated our processes and safety procedures to comply with social distancing requirements and increased cleaning frequency to reduce risks for volunteers.

From April 2020, the Reading Samaritans training team embraced the twin challenge of delivering new training materials for Samaritans Initial Training and delivering training online. The training team successfully trained 23 volunteers through Samaritans Initial Training during the year. Of these volunteers, 13 have now completed the mentoring phase of their training.

We held our first ever online Annual General Meeting in November 2020. Whilst the experience didn't allow for the usual face-to-face catch ups, it was well attended by members and a massive success.

As a result of COVID 19, our dedicated team of prison volunteers had to temporarily cease their amazing listening training work with prisoners at Huntercombe Prison. This is a vital service in reducing suicide in prison and we have now been given the green light to return to Huntercombe Prison to recommence this training.

In addition, the pandemic and cessation of rugby matches meant our partnership with three rugby clubs in Reading was put on hold. Once restrictions are lifted, we'll be able to install post protectors and highlight the support Samaritans can offer to a vulnerable demographic.

Many traditional fundraising activities were not possible this year due to the COVID 19 pandemic. We therefore applied for and were successful in grant applications from the People's Postcode Lottery, Pears Foundation and Berkshire

Community Foundation. These allowed us to continue the much-needed redecoration of the branch whilst maintaining an acceptable level of reserves.

Community Outreach Programme

The last year required a shift in how Outreach activities were delivered, with a move to engagement through video conferencing to maintain links within the community. Throughout the year we worked with organisations to help support those they care for, such as local NHS groups including Royal Berkshire Hospital, and companies who are looking to better support their employees.

We also provided support to local charities dealing with the homeless during the year, as well as support to a charity supporting veterans. We continue to work with these groups and local schools, Reading University and youth groups such as Guides and Scouts.

Branch Improvements

The successful grant applications during the year allowed us to continue with the branch redecoration. Many areas had not been decorated in over 25 years, so we focused our efforts to redecorate, recarpet, improve lighting and replace worn furniture in much of the branch.

The most sizeable improvement made during the year was the replacement of the old and draughty aluminium windows. We installed modern uPVC windows which greatly enhanced the building's security and energy efficiency properties.

We replaced all internal phone wiring, telephones and wireless headsets which resulted in noticeably better audio quality for callers and volunteers. A further IT improvement was a broadband upgrade, which increased internet speeds by ten times.

FUTURE PLANS

At the time of writing, COVID 19 restrictions are starting to lift across the UK, however it has been difficult to plan events and outreach awareness work early in the year due to the uncertainty. We hope that by summer 2021, we can start face-to-face Outreach awareness activities and fundraising in a COVID 19 safe manner.

May 2021 sees a new Recruitment and Selection 'Branch Management Tool' rolled out across Samaritans. This tool will automate the process of a potential volunteer applying, having an interview, being selected for training and being assigned a place on an upcoming course. We are expecting that the introduction of the new tool will create a smoother experience for potential volunteers and be much less labour intensive for the branches.

We will also soon be training our Listening Volunteers in a new service of 'Online Chat', a new model for Samaritans, but a communication tool which is popular

particularly with younger callers and will further increase Samaritans reach to anyone who may need to talk.

We have agreed advertising on petrol pumps at three local supermarkets for a month in August, to raise awareness of Samaritans. These typically reach 48,000 people per station a month, so a great way of getting our name out there.

FINANCIAL REVIEW

Results for the period

Income from all sources amounted to £59,417 while total expenditure was £45,902, which resulted in a surplus for the year of £13,515.

Financial Highlights

Reading Samaritans received generous support from local businesses, groups and individuals in the year, who have gone to great lengths in supporting the charity. These include the Witt Morgan Choir, R Bion Ltd, the Catenians, Millgate Homes, the Gilbert and Eileen Edgar Foundation, and a legacy in memory of Roderick Standing.

We also wish to extend our gratitude to other local businesses and groups who continue to support us. These funds are crucial in enabling us to continue with the day to day running of the charity.

Our volunteers support us not just with their time but by their amazing fundraising efforts. These include sponsored sporting events and making jams in aid of Reading Samaritans. The making of jam this year raised over £1,100. Our current volunteers, previous volunteers and other members of the community participate in our monthly lottery called the 100 Club, which raised £3,562 in subscriptions in the period. Many volunteers also donated back monies due to them by way of travel expenses which allowed Reading Samaritans to claim a further £1,218 in Gift Aid.

We are fortunate to be supported by Reading Borough Council, who provided £4,050 to assist us with the recruitment and training of new volunteers. Furthermore, support from the national Samaritans Charity allows us to continue our work with Huntercombe Prison.

At the start of the year, income sources were uncertain and we have been fortunate in securing grants of £3,000 each from the Postcode Lottery and the Berkshire Community Foundation as well as a grant of £12,835 from the Pears Foundation through the national Samaritans charity.

Most of the expenditure in the period was incurred on centre running costs, IT facilities and ensuring we are properly insured for our activities. We incurred additional expenses providing the deeper cleaning, cleaning materials and sanitiser required to ensure our volunteers remained safe while at the Centre. The additional grants received enabled us to further refurbish the centre, replacing the windows, replacing furniture in the reception area and our face-to-face meeting rooms and undertaking necessary electrical improvements and redecoration.

Reserves Policy

Reading Samaritans maintains unrestricted reserves:

- To provide a level of working capital that protects the continuity of our work;
- To provide a level of funding for unexpected opportunities; and
- To provide cover for risks such as unforeseen expenditure or unanticipated loss of income.

Reading Samaritans' Trustees are responsible for determining the appropriate level of reserves for the branch to hold. The current policy is to hold reserves equivalent to 18 months expenditure which is both the reserves level the Trustee Board determine appropriate and also the expectation of the national Samaritans Charity.

Unrestricted reserves held at 31st March 2021 were less than 18 months, at £62,862. However, the Trustee Board considers that the current level of unrestricted reserves is deemed appropriate. We did not realise the predicted budget deficit as we were able to gain additional funding by way of several grants and additional support from individuals, groups and businesses in the community during the pandemic. Further, reserves are calculated on the latest annual expenditure. Current year expenditure is higher than normal resulting in the months in reserve being lower.

Restricted Funds are designated separately and are used in accordance with agreements between Reading Samaritans and the fund providers such as the National Offender Management Service (NOMS) and Reading Borough Council. At 31 March 2021, there were £3,489 of restricted funds. £2,025 of this is the payment received on 31 March 2021 in accordance with the Service Level Agreement held with Reading Borough Council to support training and recruitment for the period from 1 April 2021 to 31 March 2022.

Reserves are held in current or accessible savings accounts to ensure the branch activities can operate smoothly.

Financial Policies and Control

Reading Samaritans has a detailed financial policy framework, reviewed and approved by the external charity oversight organisation Reading Voluntary Action.

The Branch Accounts comply with statutory requirements and with the branch constitution.

The Trustees believe the existing controls are adequate to safeguard the assets of the charity.

Payments to Trustees

No remuneration was paid to any of the Trustees. Where appropriate, Trustees have been reimbursed for expenses incurred in performing their duties as a Listening Volunteer, in their Management/Support Volunteer roles or as a Trustee. As with all expenses, these are reviewed and approved by at least 2 signatories.

Under no circumstances does the Trustee claiming expenses approve their own expenses.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF TRUSTEES

The trustees are responsible for preparing the annual report and financial statements in accordance with Charity Commission guidelines.

The annual report and financial statements have been prepared in accordance with Charity Commission guidelines. These financial statements have been reviewed and approved by an independent examiner.

The trustees are responsible for keeping sufficient accounting records that disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time, the financial position of the charity. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charity and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

By order of the Trustees

Alison Chapman Director and Chair of the Trustee Board

REFERENCE AND ADMINISTRATIVE DETAILS

Registered Name

Reading Samaritans is a registered charity, with charity registration number 1170632.

Registered and Operational Address

59a Cholmeley Road
Reading, Berkshire
RG1 3NB

The Trustees

Alison Chapman *Director and Chair*

Kathryn Wilkinson *Treasurer*

Lisa Davies *Secretary*

Stephen Sheath

Dave Calver

Ben Ralston

Darren Jones

Joanna Hayes

Angelina Lewis

Justin Bedingfeld

Martin Richmond

Ester May

Chris Uden

appointed November 2020

appointed November 2020

appointed February 2021

resigned November 2020

resigned November 2020

resigned November 2020

INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT

Independent Examiner's Report to the Trustees of the Reading Samaritans on the accounts for the year ending 31 March 2021

Responsibilities and basis of report

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the charity ("the Trust") on pages 12 to 18 for the year ended 31 March 2021.

As the charity trustees, 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 Trust's accounts carried out under section 145 of the 2011 Act and in carrying out my examination, I have followed the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5) (b) of the Act.

Independent examiner's statement

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

- accounting records were not kept in accordance with section 130 of the Act or
- the accounts do not accord with the accounting records
- the accounts do not comply with the applicable requirements concerning the 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 order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

----- Date

Christine Holland CPFA
9 Ellerton Close
Theale
Reading RG7 5QN

RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS ACCOUNTS**Receipts and payments**

	<i>Not e</i>	Unrestric ted Funds £	Restrict ed Funds £	Total Funds Year Ended 31 March 2021 £	Last Year £
Receipts					
Donations	2	9,375	-	9,375	9,748
Revenue Grants	3	1,569	24,948	26,517	4,572
Fundraising	4	23,294	-	23,294	17,242
Bank and Building Society Interest	5	231	-	231	331
Total receipts		34,469	24,948	59,417	31,893
Payments					
Direct and Charitable Expenditure	6	20,048	23,276	43,324	29,459
Fundraising Costs	7	2,426	-	2,426	2,451
Management and Administration	8	142	10	152	581
Contribution to Central Charity	9	-	-	-	619
Total payments		22,616	23,286	45,902	33,110
Net of receipts / (payments)		11,853	1,662	13,515	(1,217)
Cash funds last year		51,009	1,827	52,836	54,053
Cash funds this year		62,862	3,489	66,351	52,836

Statement of assets and liabilities as at 31 March 2021

	<i>Not e</i>	Unrestric ted Funds £	Restrict ed Funds £	Total Funds Year Ended 31 March 2021 £	Last Year £
Cash funds					
Coop Current Account		4,583	3,489	8,072	2,262
HSBC Deposit Account		7,013	-	7,013	1,539

Virgin Money Deposit Account	51,266	-	51,266	49,035
Total cash funds	62,862	3,489	66,351	52,836

NOTES TO THE RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS ACCOUNTS

(1) Accounting Policies

Basis for accounts preparation

The accounts have been prepared on a receipts and payments basis in accordance with Charity Commission guidance.

Income

All income is accounted for when received. Income is allocated by category to enable analysis of income sources at any time.

Expenditure

Expenditure is accounted for when it is paid and is classified under headings that aggregate costs to a category. Expenditure includes VAT which cannot be recovered.

Expenditure is broken down into four categories:

- Direct and Charitable Expenditure;
- Fundraising Costs;
- Management and Administration; and
- Contribution to Central Charity.

There are notes to the accounts showing what is included in each of these categories.

Tangible Fixed Assets

All tangible fixed assets have been expensed. However, all items that cost more than £1,000 are listed on an asset register.

Funds

Unrestricted funds can be used in accordance with the charitable objects at the discretion of the Trustees.

Restricted funds can only be used for certain activities as specified by the donor or the fundraising process. Relevant expenditure is categorised against each fund.

Details of Receipts**(2) Donations**

Donations	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Total Funds Year Ended 31 March 2021	Last Year
	£	£	£	£
Individuals	2,399	-	2,399	2,106
Churches	100	-	100	1,100
Groups in the Community	3,552	-	3,552	3,730
Gift Aid	1,219	-	1,219	2,763
Bequests	2,105	-	2,105	-
Street Collections	-	-	-	49
Total	9,375	-	9,375	9,748

(3) Revenue Grants

Revenue Grants	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Total Funds Year Ended 31 March 2021	Last Year
	£	£	£	£
National Offender Management Service	1,314	788	2,102	1,547
Reading Borough Council	-	4,050	4,050	2,025
The Field Seymour Parkes Foundation	-	-	-	1,000
Berkshire HealthCare NHS Foundation Trust	255	1,275	1,530	-
Postcode Lottery	-	3,000	3,000	-
Berkshire Community Foundation	-	3,000	3,000	-
Pears Grant	-	12,835	12,835	-
Total	1,569	24,948	26,517	4,572

(4) Fundraising

Fundraising	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Total Funds Year Ended 31 March 2021	Last Year
	£	£	£	£
Business and Corporate Fundraising	6,983	-	6,983	2,798
100 Club	3,562	-	3,562	3,666
Volunteer Initiated Fundraising	2,482	-	2,482	3,128
Marks & Spencer	-	-	-	2,625
Witt Morgan Concerts	5,288	-	5,288	1,801
Bequests and In Memory	-	-	-	422
Sam Jam Sales	1,131	-	1,131	948
FIT Payments	621	-	621	616
Festival Branch Store Rental	500	-	500	300
National raffle	190	-	190	645
Easy Fundraising, Amazon Smile etc	2,276	-	2,276	107
Other	261	-	261	186
Total	23,294	-	23,294	17,242

(5) Bank and Building Society Interest

Bank and Building Society Interest	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Total Funds Year Ended 31 March 2021	Last Year
	£	£	£	£
HSBC	1	-	1	10
Virgin	230	-	230	321
Total	231	-	231	331

Details of Expenditure**(6) Direct and Charitable Expenditure**

Direct and Charitable Expenditure	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total Funds Year Ended 31 March 2021 £	Last Year £
Fabric of the Centre	5,686	-	5,686	7,767
Maintenance Contracts	2,455	-	2,455	3,229
Utilities	3,728	-	3,728	6,136
Housekeeping	2,429	-	2,429	4,749
Equipping the Centre	2,045	-	2,045	2,547
Volunteer Expenses	442	-	442	1,393
Conference/Meeting Fees	-	-	-	40
Outreach	3,244	-	3,244	711
Committee Hospitality and Other Costs	20	-	20	17
Volunteer Recognition and Retention	-	-	-	1,105
Gift aiding of expenses	-	-	-	(1,561)
Reading Borough Council (see Restricted Expenditure Note)	-	1,895	1,895	2,025
NOMS (see Restricted Expenditure Note)	-	517	517	1,301
The Field Seymour Parkes Foundation	-	1,000	1,000	-
Berkshire Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust	-	1,291	1,291	-
Postcode Lottery	-	2,738	2,738	
Berkshire Community Foundation	-	3,000	3,000	
Pears Grant	-	12,835	12,835	
Total	20,048	23,276	43,324	29,459

(7) Fundraising Costs

Fundraising Costs	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Total Funds Year Ended 31 March 2021	Last Year
	£	£	£	£
Raising Branch Income	306	-	306	331
100 Club	2,120	-	2,120	2,120
Gift Aiding of Expenses (Timing Difference)	-	-	-	-
Total	2,426	-	2,426	2,451

(8) Management and Administration

Management and Administration	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Total Funds Year Ended 31 March 2021	Last Year
	£	£	£	£
Phone Calls	110	10	120	130
Travel Claims	-	-	-	118
Stationery and Postage	8	-	8	22
Hospitality	-	-	-	159
Committee Member Expenses	-	-	-	7
Professional Fees	24	-	24	41
AGM and Annual Review	-	-	-	104
Total	142	10	152	581

(9) Contribution to Central Charity

Contribution to Central Charity	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Total Funds Year Ended 31 March 2021	Last Year
	£	£	£	£
Branch Contribution	-	-	-	619
Total	-	-	-	619

Changes to the calculation of the contribution to the Central Charity as a result of COVID 19 have resulted in no payment being due for the current year.

(10) Restricted Funds

Restricted Funds	1st April 2020	Income	Expenditure	31st March 2021
Reading Borough Council	-	4,050	1,895	2,155
National Offender Management Scheme (NOMS)	136	788	517	407
Coop Donation	429	-	-	429
Reading CIC Grant	262	-	-	262
The Field Seymour Parkes Foundation	1,000	-	1,000	-
Berkshire Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust	-	1,275	1,291	-16
Postcode Lottery	-	3,000	2,748	252
Berkshire Community Foundation	-	3,000	3,000	-
Pears Grant	-	12,835	12,835	-
Total	1,827	24,948	23,286	3,489

Restricted funds include the following:

- Reading Borough Council Grant for recruitment and training costs including printing, some electricity and cost of training sessions;
- NOMS grant for our Huntercombe Prison support;
- Coop donation received for publicity and outreach materials and fees;
- Reading CIC grant for outreach through Town Centre Arts;
- The Field Seymour Parkes Foundation funding is to support activities in the local Reading area;
- Berkshire Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust to provide software development and materials to support referrals from the NHS;
- Postcode Lottery grant to cover operational costs;
- Berkshire Community Foundation grant to cover operational costs; and
- Pears Grant via Central Office to cover COVID 19 related costs/improvements as agreed with Central Office.