



Trustees' Annual Report for the period

From 31/3/22 Period start date
To 31/3/23 Period end date

Charity name: Romsey Arthritis Hydrotherapy Group trading as Regional Arthritis Hydrotherapy Group

Charity registration number: 1171462

Objectives and Activities

Summary of the purposes of the Charity

The objectives of Romsey Arthritis Hydrotherapy (RAHG) are to protect and promote good health among people of all ages living with arthritis in Romsey, Andover and the surrounding areas by providing hydrotherapy sessions to optimise physical potential by assisting movement in non-weight bearing exercise in warm water designed to reduce arthritic pain, strengthen muscles and improve fitness.

Ensuring our work delivers our aims

We review our aims, objectives and activities monthly at our Trustees meetings. This review looks at what we achieved and the outcomes of our work in the previous month. The review looks at the success of each key activity and the benefits they have brought to those groups of people we are set up to help. The review also helps us ensure our aim, objectives and activities remained focused on our stated purposes. We have referred to the guidance contained in the Charity Commission's general guidance on public benefit when reviewing our aim and objectives and in planning our future activities. In particular, the trustees consider how planned activities will contribute to the aims and objectives they have set.

How our activities deliver public benefit for those with arthritis in Romsey and the surrounding area

Figures produced by Arthritis UK identified that 8,919 people in the Southampton area suffer from arthritis of the hip and 15,056 of the knee. This is up to 18% of the total population of this area and above the national averages. Arthritis can affect any joint in the body so many

more are living with the pain and disability this disease causes. Approximately 68% of rheumatoid arthritis patients in the UK are physically inactive. Low physical activity in patients with rheumatoid arthritis becomes a vicious cycle of disease progression and increased pain, thus affecting both physical and mental health. Treatment and support for people with chronic arthritic pain in primary care in the UK has been estimated to account for 4.6 million appointments per year, comparable to 793 whole time GPs. Only 12% of people with musculoskeletal conditions say they have been given a care plan compared to 13.8% of people with long term conditions. Only 18% of people with osteoarthritis have a care plan.

Versus Arthritis state:

‘Regular physical activity can reduce the risk of developing many long-term conditions including musculoskeletal conditions, stroke, coronary heart disease, type 2 diabetes and mental health problems. Even a small increase in physical activity can help minimise the risk of developing a long-term condition and improve quality of life. For people who already have a musculoskeletal condition, physical activity can be beneficial in helping to reduce the impact of the condition. The wider societal benefits of physical activity are also substantial by ensuring that people maintain their independence for longer and remain in the workplace.’

Arthritis Research UK have endorsed the use of hydrotherapy as an effective and safe form of exercise and self-management for all forms of arthritis. Evidence based guidelines produced by the Chartered Society of Physiotherapy have recommended the use of hydrotherapy for the long-term treatment of arthritis.

Achievements and Performance

To address the overwhelming need to for an affordable, effective and achievable treatment and self-management for people suffering with arthritis RAHG has been successfully offering hydrotherapy classes at Red Lodge Community Pool in Southampton. Many of our members have improved their mobility and reduced their pain levels significantly. Members who were due to undergo joint replacements or surgery have found that their recovery post-surgery has been quicker due to their improved fitness and strength pre-operatively having attended the hydrotherapy classes. Many members have found that being able to exercise without pain in water, in a safe environment and monitored by a Physiotherapist has enabled them to lose weight. This has in turn had a positive effect on their arthritis symptoms by reducing the weight bearing on the effected joints thus slowing down the progression of the condition and delaying surgery.

In February 2023 RAHG started another hydrotherapy session at Farleigh School Pool in Andover, Hampshire. This was largely due to Katie Thorman identifying a need for this service amongst her patients she sees as a Domiciliary Physiotherapist. Farleigh School have supported the start-up of this service financially for the first three months. Labelcraft UK Printers have also provided RAHG with free printing to market both hydrotherapy sessions, which was hugely appreciated. This session at Andover has been very successful and is now operating at full capacity highlighting the demand for this service.

Our work goes beyond providing the hydrotherapy sessions. We also provide social events such as skittles evenings, coffee mornings and tea parties. Peggy Gow has been instrumental in organising coffee mornings and afternoon at Haskins in Southampton which have been very well attended and our members have given fantastic feedback. A study published by UK data source in 2016 highlighted that 12% of people aged 65 and over are chronically lonely because of inactivity due to musculoskeletal disability. Many of our members can relate to this data and have found that the hydrotherapy sessions and social events has more than a physical benefit but a valuable improvement in their mental health too. Since August 2016 RAHG has organised many social events which were well attended by our members.

Peggy Gow has become our new Safeguarding Lead and has been doing an excellent job in liaising with the pool and the members to ensure our safeguarding policy is up to date and being implemented.

Financial Review

Katie Thorman's creativity in producing and distributing the weekly exercise videos was well received by our members and helped to ensure the regular monthly income continued during the Covid 19 lockdowns. This helped RAHG survive during a very difficult and challenging time.

The Red Lodge Pool was closed as a result of the Covid lockdown. Hydrotherapy recommenced on Thursday 20th May 2021.

Membership numbers gradually increased during the year from 34 in April 2021 to 47 in March 2022.

Monthly income, therefore, increased from a total of £1151 in April 2021 to £1708 in March 2022.

Covid restrictions initially limited the numbers per class to 12, then 15. Pre Covid, we had up to 20 per class.

In October the Directors of Red Lodge Pool agreed we could increase the numbers per class back to 20 and agreed to reduce our pool hire fees by 25% until we started to break even. However, there became less available parking at Red Lodge Pool due to increased capacity at the neighbouring school plus Southampton Scouting Association and Southampton City Council denying our members access to the parking area previously used by our elderly and disabled members. As a result, we were unable to increase our membership to resume its pre Covid capacity. Despite campaigning to Southampton City Council there has been no resolution to this problem and it is ongoing.

Membership numbers continued to increase towards pre Covid levels at Red Lodge Pool but parking restrictions continue to have an impact.

RAHG also started another hydrotherapy session at Farleigh school pool in Andover and this has been very successful and now operating at full capacity.

All our costs have been kept to the minimum and the set up costs for Farleigh were helped by generous support from Labelcraft UK for printing and the school reducing their pool fees for the first three months.

RAHG made a modest surplus for the year of £582 compared to a loss in the previous year of £591 caused by Covid restrictions.

The Bank balance in reserve at 31/3/2023 was £4217 compared to £3635 21/22, £4226 20/21, £3806 19/20, £2108 18/19 and £1263 17/18

Principal Funding Sources

The principal funding sources of the Charity is the sessional fees and fund raising. We have also been supported in the past with donations and grants, but these have been more difficult to obtain because of Covid 19, the Ukraine/Russian war resulting in a lot of the funding sources have changed their criteria for donations to accommodate these areas. The current cost of living crisis has also made donations rare.

Reserves Policy

The Trustees agreed a policy in March 2017 of having a reserve Bank balance of between £5000 and £10000, enough to cover three to six months planned expenditure. This has not yet been achieved but is moving each year in the right direction.

The reserves only stand at £4217, representing 2.5 months of planned expenditure.

Plans for future periods

The charity plans continuing the activities outlined above in the forthcoming years subject to satisfactory funding arrangements. The Charity is also considering new sources of funding from different organisations and finding different ways to fund raise within the group.

The charity will also continue to work towards the Chartered Society of Physiotherapy (CSP) and the Aquatic Therapy Association of Chartered Physiotherapists (ATACP) Standards for hydrotherapy services. These provide a set of quality standards for hydrotherapy services. Widely used by physiotherapists, they are endorsed by the National Institute of Clinical Excellence (NICE).

Structure, Governance and Management

Governing Document

The organisation is a Charitable Incorporated Organisation with Voting Members. Registered as a charity on 3rd February 2017. The company was established with a constitution as its governing document. In the event of the company being wound up members have no liability to contribute to its assets and no personal responsibility for settling its debts and liabilities. Prior to registering as a charity, RAHG was operating as a small unregistered charity with a gross annual income of under £5,000.

Recruitment and Appointment of Trustees and Management Committee

The Trustees of the charity are also the Management Committee in accordance with the General Regulations. Under the requirements of the Constitution one third of the Trustees shall retire from office at every Annual General Meeting. are elected to serve for a period of three years after which they must be re-elected at the next Annual General Meeting (AGM). Vacancies arising from this can be filled by the decision of its members at the AGM. Under the constitution any Trustee who retires from office is eligible for reappointment. The members or the Trustees may appoint a new Trustee as an additional Trustee at any time providing the number of Trustees does not exceed 12.

Katrina Thorman and Graham Milner stand for re-election at the next AGM.

Christine Stiling resigned as a Trustee on 17/7/23 as she was moving to another area.

All the Trustees give their time voluntarily and received no benefits from the charity. Any expenses reclaimed from the charity are recorded in the accounts.

Trustees retire by rotation and, being eligible, offer themselves for re-election.

Due to the nature of arthritis the majority of the charities work focuses upon older people. The Trustees seek to ensure that the needs of this group are appropriately reflected through the diversity of the trustee body. To enhance the potential pool of trustees, the charity has, through selective advertising within the organisation and networking with local medical practitioners, sought to identify carers and those suffering from arthritis who would be willing to become members of the group and use their own experience to assist the charity.

The more traditional business and medical skills are well represented on the Board of Trustees. To maintain this broad skill mix, members of the board of Trustees are requested to provide a list of their skills on application.

Trustee Induction and Training

Most of our Trustees are either directly or by association involved in the charity so are fully aware of the practical work of the charity. New Trustees are encouraged to read the Charities Commissions guidance document 'The Essential Trustee' to understand their duties as a Trustee. They are also given the charities constitution.

Reference and Administrative details

Charity name	Romsey Arthritis Hydrotherapy Group / Regional Arthritis Hydrotherapy Group
Other name the charity uses	RAHG
Registered charity number	1171462

Charity's principal address	1 Ranulph Road, Winchester, SO22 6GH
-----------------------------	--------------------------------------

Names of the charity trustees who manage the charity

	Trustee name	Office (if any)	Dates acted if not for whole year	Name of person (or body) entitled to appoint trustee (if any)
1	Graham Milner	Chairperson / Treasurer		RAHG Trustees
2	Christine Stiling			RAHG Trustees
3	Peggy Gow			RAHG Trustees
4	Ruth Hodgson		From 16/5/2022	RAHG Trustees
5	Maureen Osmond		From 16/5/2022	RAHG Trustees
6	Katrina Thorman	Secretary		RAHG Trustees
7	Sue Brodrick		From 16/5/2022	RAHG Trustees

Corporate trustees – names of the directors at the date the report was approved

Director name		
N/A		

Name of trustees holding title to property belonging to the charity

Trustee name	Dates acted if not for whole year	
N/A		

Funds held as custodian trustees on behalf of others

Description of the assets held in this capacity	N/A
---	-----

RAHG 2022/23

INCOME	Apr-22	May-22	Jun-22	Jul-22	Aug-22	Sep-22	Oct-22	Nov-22	Dec-22	Jan-23	Feb-23	Mar-23	Totals
Monthly session fees	1,572	1,642	1,600	1,570	1,532	1,552	1,462	1,476	1,548	1,500	1,907	2,220	19,581
Lottery net of prizes	16	16	16	16	16	16	16	16	13	13	13	13	180
Fundraising							16						16
Donations													
Total income	1,588	1,658	1,616	1,586	1,548	1,568	1,494	1,492	1,561	1,513	1,920	2,233	19,777
EXPENDITURE													
Hydrotherapist	1,080	1,080	1,350	1,080	1,080	1,350	1,080	1,080	1,350	1,080	1,275	1,675	14,560
Red Lodge pool hire		1,080				720			930		1,170		3,900
Annual insurance		214											214
Farleigh pool hire												100	100
													-
Data protection ICO		35											35
Printing & stationary													-
Office expenditure		63		71		82	170						386
													-
Total expenditure	1,080	2,472	1,350	1,151	1,080	2,152	1,250	1,080	2,280	1,080	2,445	1,775	19,195
Income less expenditure	508	- 814	266	435	468	- 584	244	412	- 719	433	- 525	458	582
Bank Balance 31/3/22													
plus income less expenditure													582
Bank Balance 31/3/23		-	-	-	-	-	-		-	-		-	4,217