



Samaritans of Grantham - Directors Report – AGM – 13th July 2024

Firstly, I'd like to thank you all for the support you give to me as your Director. This is my final AGM and we'll be commencing the selection of our new Branch Director in the next few months. It's absolutely flown past and the commitment and passion you all show for Samaritans and our branch in particular is truly amazing and it's a privilege to have held this role.

The updates I'll share with you today will cover the period since our last AGM. Whilst you may have heard some of this information previously, it's always good to pause and reflect on just how much we have achieved as a branch in the past 12 months.

Starting with Recruitment, Jane⁴ became our Deputy Director for Recruitment & Selection around this time last year. In Jane's own words, she's worked with a great group of Samaritans who are excellent at the job of interviewing - thoughtful and enthusiastic - and also make the process really fun. Several more volunteers have joined the pool of interviewers and have brought fresh perspectives and skills.

The team have experimented with holding interviews on weekday evenings as well as at weekends. This has proved successful with the slots being fully booked and all candidates turning up for their interview. All this has resulted in 24 people being interviewed as potential listening volunteers and 22 being deemed suitable to go forward for training. There continues to be a steady stream of applicants and we will be interviewing again over the summer ready for the next training session which starts in September.

We would like to see more diversity in the people applying to become Listeners and hope that the work of the Outreach team will be influential in encouraging applications from a wider section of the population.

If you'd like to help with Selection, please get in touch with Jane. Interview days are also an opportunity for a social get together of fellow Sams and are always an enjoyable event.

Turning to Training and since Jess's departure at the end of 2023 to become Mum to Eira, we've split the training responsibilities. I've taken the lead on CORE, Richard⁵ on Embedding and Ros with Ongoing Mentoring. This split has worked well and since our last AGM there have been three more rounds of CORE training. As a result of that training, we have welcomed into the Branch the following listening volunteers; Lorraine, Phoebe, Heather³, Claire, Jude, Cath⁷, Rachel⁵, Rebecca, Lauren,

Brendan, Em, Howard², Paul, Rachel⁶, Shirley, Gemma, Deborah, Darren, Frankie and Juliet.

Richard⁵ has taken two groups through Embedding and kicked off a further course at the start of July. Huge thanks go out to him and everyone involved in training new volunteers. That's trainers, skills practitioners, mentors and everyone in the branch who helps new volunteers to find their feet which can be a daunting experience.

Ros took over our ongoing mentoring programme last summer, and with everyone (that has been in the Branch for a certain length of time) experiencing the benefits of a mentored shift. Thank you to Ros for taking this on and for the mentors for their time in supporting this important programme.

We've also run some ongoing training. In April, 15 volunteers went through Outreach training in preparation for a busy calendar of events. A further 4 volunteers have completed the digital topic and there will be a follow up face to face session as soon as diaries permit.

Mentor training was held with Jane⁵, Michael, Mick and Pauline all joining the team of mentors and currently each supporting a volunteer through their probation.

Coming up next will be Online Chat training. We support Online Chat on Mondays and Thursdays currently (the red shifts on Three Rings). It's open to callers from 6pm to 10pm Monday to Thursday and has now been extended to Fridays. Also on a Sunday from 6pm – 8pm. If you'd like to support callers who contact us via Online Chat, please let me know directly. There's a digital topic to complete and also a couple of skills practice sessions.

Anyone interested in helping with any elements of training should get in touch with me directly and thanks to those of you who have already registered their interest.

Whilst we're here to support our callers, we're also here to support each other. Lynn¹ holds the important role as DD for Volunteer Care. In terms of the team, Alan and Pauline both stepped back during the year and my thanks to them for their contributions. Rebecca³, Mick and Steve have kindly joined Fran, Ellyn and Mavis who, along with Lynn, are there to keep in touch and support all our volunteers. The team endeavour to contact all our Volunteers periodically for a chat when we hope that you will feel free to raise any concerns good or bad you may have. We would also welcome any suggestions you may have on how we can build a stronger camaraderie within the Branch. Thank you to everyone for putting your trust in the Volunteer Support Team.

As a branch, I know we can't function and be there for our callers without the consistent support of all our volunteers. I mention this regularly, but it is really important that we understand when life gets in the way of your volunteering. Everyone has periods when other matters have to take priority. All I ask is that you talk to someone – either me or the Volunteer Support Team – so we understand what's going on and can make whatever adjustments are needed.

The Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Strategy continues to be a priority for Samaritans. The role of EDI Lead for our branch has been vacant for a little while

now since Tam was posted to High Wycombe. However, I'm delighted to announce that Jo had kindly come forward to take on this role and help to bring EDI to life in our branch. Good luck to Jo and please share any ideas or thoughts on EDI with Jo directly.

Looking outside the branch now and our work with Prisons continues to be busy. We're lucky to have such an experienced and enthusiastic Branch Prison Support Officer (BPSO) in Gordon¹ and grateful thanks to Gordon for everything he and the team have achieved this year. The prison team, which consists of Lynn, Carol¹6 Ken 1 Alan 2 and Paula 1, as well as Gordon, have supported the Listener schemes at HMP Stocken and HMP Morton Hall.

Team members have attended (in pairs or more), the regular, fortnightly Listeners meeting at the prisons. These meetings are when the Listeners debrief to us about the calls they have had. The meetings give the Listeners a chance to meet with the rest of their team and with us, to talk confidentially about the calls and any issues with the scheme or any other matters requiring our support.

We began the year with the scheme at Morton Hall technically shared between Grantham and Lincoln Branches. However, the Lincoln Branch has had to withdraw from the arrangement, so it is now the responsibility of the Grantham branch. HMP Morton Hall has presented particular challenges for the team as it deals with foreign nationals who may be deported. For example, we trained 5 Listeners at the beginning of the year and 4 the previous year, however only one remains in the prison, the others having been moved on.

The scheme at HMP Stocken has been more stable with between 9 and 11 Listeners throughout the year. Listener debrief /support meetings are very positive and the Listener team is strong. The men have good relationships with the Safer Custody Governor, staff, each other and with us. Visits are a very positive experience.

During the year, there was a self-inflicted death in custody at each of the prisons we work with. In each case, we gave the prison the appropriate support according to recently devised Postvention practices agreed between Samaritans and the Prison Service. We were able to support the Listeners who in turn were deployed to the wings and places of work associated with the person who took their own life. We also offered support to staff, including those first on the scene of the suicide. Samaritan support was well received.

Underpinning this work is the very committed group of volunteers from our branch who make up the Prison Team. Gordon and I would like to thank you for the work you do, the time you give up to ensure the schemes function and the support you give to Gordon as our BPSO.

Fundraising is a vital function for our branch and we've continued to run without a DD for Fundraising since Andy⁴ stepped down from that role at the start of the year. My thanks to Andy for all his efforts and hard work during his time in post. That said, we continue to be fortunate in having two large donors whose support make a huge difference to our finances. We have also had fantastic volunteer support from members of the branch, in particular Fi and Deborah with their singing group, and

many others. Whilst we must always be conscious that we rely on funding our branch ourselves, we remain in a healthy financial position, as detailed in Andy3's report.

Outreach is an important priority for our branch, raising awareness of Samaritans in our communities. Joyce became DD for Outreach in April and has been busy with an exciting calendar of events underway. During the last year we have supported Grantham, Newark and Sleaford railway stations with campaigns including Brew Monday & Small Talk Saves Lives. We are mindful of an increase of incidents in the Newark area and, with support from our central team, we are looking for ways to increase our visibility in this area. We will be attending the Heckington show later this month where we hope to engage with the farming community, another area of concern for Samaritans.

Many of the events we attend also provide an opportunity for fundraising which is vital for our branch. Swimathon continues to be a great success, with Lynn 1 at the helm, and £1,000 raised following this year's event. We were delighted to collect donations following the Sarah Millican concert. The smaller events always continue to amaze with contributions from the general public despite the restraints on finances.

In December we put Christmas Trees in the Festivals at both St Wulfrums Church in Grantham and St Marys in Newark. This is an easy way of raising awareness of Samaritans at a time of year when people are often at their most vulnerable. We also went Carol Singing at Belton Garden Centre where we were made very welcome (including Monty) and it proved to be a real fun afternoon. We're planning a repeat this year – more details to follow after the summer holidays.

Outreach events also lead to additional openings to promote Samaritans. I gave an interview to Grantham Journal about our 50th anniversary, as did Mavis celebrating her own anniversary with Sams. I also featured in the June edition of Lincolnshire Life. I did an interview with local radio station 103 The Eye on their Community feature after our visit to the recruitment fair in Melton Mowbray. And I recorded a discussion with Sharon Wyatt at Grantham station which was included in a podcast to all LNER staff on mental health and wellbeing.

On Filestore you will find a list of events to which we have committed to for the remainder of the year however, we can always fit in a few more for a worthy cause.

Turning to X, formerly Twitter, Joyce reports that our account @GranthamSams continues to grow and we now have 408 followers, an increase of 57 from last year. The largest number of impressions on our account continues to be our partnership with the railway network. Each impression gives us the opportunity to share the work of Samaritans. Locally, we share our involvement in the community with posts including Swimathon, Christmas carols at the garden centre and the Christmas tree festival events. On a lighter note however, your pet pictures, proved popular during National Pet Month, resulting in an offer of courtship for Anne17's tortoise Oscar who was feeling lonely! Suggestions for features on X are always welcome.

One of my priorities when I took over as Director was to see how we could increase our contribution to the Samaritans service. The move to the new Op's Room was a big help. However, there's still more we can do. Carole4, in her role of Branch

Capacity Improvement Officer reports that since our last AGM, the number of volunteers who have actively engaged in shifts has risen during the period from 55 volunteers to 63 volunteers per month, and the number of hours spent on the phone has matched this improvement, from 257 hours to 301 hours per month.

It is very satisfactory to note that in this same period, Grantham branch has almost doubled the number of hours spent on twilight shifts from 34 hours per month to 61 hours per month. This demonstrates a more engaged effort on a month-by-month basis from our volunteers to respond and to be there for our callers at the times when they need us most.

Building on the work of the shift survey team, which provided some interesting insight into the needs of our volunteers regarding twilight and night shifts, we've now created four teams of listening volunteers within the branch who will undertake to fill night shifts on a rolling four-month basis. Structured on a loosely geographical basis, each of these night owls will undertake a night shift three times per year, working within their team on Thursday mornings from Wednesday midnight to 5am. There is a lot of flexibility within this structure, and it represents a real opportunity for us all to make a significant contribution at the times of most need. We've started this from 8 July and please let myself or Carole know any thoughts or suggestions. Those volunteers who have already undertaken a night owl shift have found it to be an extremely rewarding experience, with the chance to make a real difference to our callers.

What else? Well, we've celebrated our 50th anniversary and a massive thank you to Lynn and the team for all the work that went into the event. Also an extra thank you to Tom who very quietly behind the scenes helped with the labelling on all the display boards that were created for the Event. We've got the boards here today so do take time to have a look.

Please speak to any of the team if you've ideas on get togethers. We are endeavouring to arrange a Samaritan Autumn Walk when dogs will be welcome. This would give us an opportunity to meet and chat in a way that isn't possible when we are in the Ops Room. We envisage beginning the walk with a Breakfast/Coffee when those not wanting to walk can join us and then the walkers can move on leaving more time for chat for the others.

Mavis continues to organise lunches for past and present volunteers, please look out for her emails. This is a good opportunity to hear about the old days and plan for the new. If you would like come along but due to work commitments are unable to meet on Friday lunch times, please speak to Mavis and maybe we could plan either an evening drink or weekend brunch – over to you.

We also enjoyed a lovely 'cruise' along the Grantham Canal last Summer, it was a beautiful day and a very leisurely afternoon. All the better for having our past Director John 22 at the helm of the boat.

We are planning a 'Picnic in the Garden' on September 21st at 74, Barrowby Road, Grantham NG31 8AF. Bring your picnic and any alcoholic drink you would like and

we will provide the chairs, glasses, soft drinks, tea and coffee plus live music by 'Ain't What You Do' – whom some of you will have heard at Saltby earlier in the Year. We also have some games available so we can keep children of all ages happy. This is a family event, not just for Branch members.

Then looking into 2025, please pop 1st March into your diaries. My spell of being your Director comes to an end around about the same time as a milestone birthday for me so I'd like to invite you and your partner to come along to a "Combination Celebration" so I can say thank you for all your support and good humour whilst I've been Director. Invites will follow nearer the time.

I'm proud of what we've achieved in the past 12 months and since becoming Director in January 2022. My aspirations to increase our capacity, refocus our efforts in Outreach and working with our community and, most importantly, ensuring our branch provides a positive and rewarding volunteering experience are unchanged.

Thank you for your support, willingness to get involved, enthusiasm and just your passion for being a Samaritan. Please know that I'm always here if there's anything you want to suggest, comment on or raise a concern. We've plenty to look forward to in the next 12 months and I suspect my successor's update at this time in 2025 will be just as full and busy with our achievements.

Fiona Bonser
Director

THE SAMARITANS - GRANTHAM BRANCH

**INDEPENDENT EXAMINERS REPORT TO THE TRUSTEES OF
THE SAMARITANS - GRANTHAM BRANCH**

I report on the accounts of the Charity for the year ended 31 March 2024 which are set out on page 2.

Respective responsibilities of trustees and examiner

The charity's trustees are responsible for the preparation of the accounts. The charity's trustees consider that an audit is not required for this year under section 144(2) of the Charities Act 2011 (the 2011 Act) and that an independent examination is needed:

It is my responsibility to:

- examine the accounts under section 145 of the 2011 Act;
- follow the procedures laid down in the general Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the 2011 Act; and
- state whether particular matters have come to my attention.

Basis of independent examiner's statement

My examination was carried out in accordance with the general Directions given by the Charity Commission. An examination included 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 no opinion is given as to whether the accounts present a "true and fair view" and the report is limited to those matters set out in the statement below.

Independent examiner's statement

In the course of my examination, no matter has come to my attention:

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




RACHEL RUDKIN FCCA
Duncan & Toplis Limited
Chartered Accountants
14 London Road
Newark
Nottinghamshire
NG24 1TW

Dated: 25/09/2024

Grantham Samaritans IEA

	YEAR ENDED 2024			YEAR ENDED 2023		
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Income		Restricted	Unrestricted		Restricted	Unrestricted
Donations, Covenants and Tax Recovery	5,617.88	-	5,617.88	33,870.39	10,000.00	23,870.39
Sundries	1,218.25	-	1,218.25	917.66	-	917.66
Efforts	1,227.28	-	1,227.28	551.35	-	551.35
Grants	11,477.61	3,100.00	8,377.61	504.22	452.97	51.25
Bank Interest	393.18	-	393.18	124.34	-	124.34
	<u>19,934.20</u>	<u>3,100.00</u>	<u>16,834.20</u>	<u>35,967.96</u>	<u>10,452.97</u>	<u>25,514.99</u>
Expenditure						
Office Equipment	1,694.03	-	1,694.03	4,061.48	1,296.00	2,765.48
Telephone	-	-	-	985.81	-	985.81
Volunteers' Expenses	4,910.11	-	4,910.11	2,776.91	625.74	2,151.17
Training Expenses	373.66	-	373.66	32.20	-	32.20
Outreach Expenses	3,278.11	3,100.00	178.11	-	-	-
Printing, Stationery and Postage	906.06	-	906.06	478.13	478.13	-
Rent, Rates, Light & Heat	12,280.00	-	12,280.00	11,047.89	2,765.47	8,282.42
Insurance	1,609.68	-	1,609.68	766.80	-	766.80
HQ Levy	5,745.00	-	5,745.00	2,516.00	-	2,516.00
Centre Sundry	841.07	-	841.07	204.27	204.27	-
Independent examiners fees	540.00	-	540.00	420.00	-	420.00
Sundries	879.27	-	879.27	6,091.13	5,083.36	1,007.77
	<u>33,056.99</u>	<u>3,100.00</u>	<u>29,956.99</u>	<u>29,380.62</u>	<u>10,452.97</u>	<u>18,927.65</u>
Net Income for the year	<u>- 13,122.79</u>	<u>- -</u>	<u>13,122.79</u>	<u>6,587.34</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>6,587.34</u>
Reconciliation of funds:						
Balance brought forward 1st April 2023	66,089.50	-	66,089.50	59,502.16	5,594.31	53,907.85
Transfer unrestricted funds	-	-	-	-	5,594.31	5,594.31
Net Income for the year	- 13,122.79	- -	13,122.79	6,587.34	-	6,587.34
Balance carried forward 31st March 2024	<u>52,967.71</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>52,967.71</u>	<u>66,089.50</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>66,089.50</u>
Split of Funds:						
General Fund	52,967.71	-	52,967.71	66,089.50	-	66,089.50
Restricted Fund	-	-	-	-	-	-
	<u>52,967.71</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>52,967.71</u>	<u>66,089.50</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>66,089.50</u>
Represented by:						
Lloyds TSB Bank : Samaritans of Grantham	12,784.96			15,090.50		
Lloyds TSB Bank : Samaritans of Grantham Savings account	40,182.75			-		
Melton Mowbray Building Society Account	-			51,000.00		
	<u>52,967.71</u>			<u>66,089.50</u>		

The Trustees confirm, in accordance with the Charitable Incorporated Organisations (General) Regulations 2012, that at the year end the CIO did not have any outstanding guarantees to thirds parties nor any debts secured on assets of the CIO.


 Signed by: **A.I. Beddows**
 Dated: 25/09/2024

On behalf of Trustees