

Annual report & accounts



The Board of Trustees present their annual report and
accounts for the year
01/03/2022 to 28/02/2023

info@fromebirthtalk.org.uk
07399 356863
www.fromebirthtalk.org.uk

Welcome!

Welcome to our annual report and accounts for the year 2022-23. We are Frome Birth Talk: supporting, connecting, listening.

We have had another busy year! We continue to expand, with ever-increasing demand for our services, another new staff member and three new trustees. We have also been refining our internal systems whilst continuing to build on the support we have from our community.

As ever, there is a lot more we would like to achieve, but our focus for the coming year will be fundraising. Our five-year (2020-2025) National Lottery grant has given Frome Birth Talk vital breathing space to establish itself more securely, but we are now beginning to outgrow the grant.

We are confident, however, that there are many untapped sources of funding out there and that we will secure everything we need to maintain our current level of service and more.



Karen Patrick
Chair of Trustees



Table of contents

Aims, objective and activities	3	Providing opportunities to trainee counsellors	11
What our service users say	4	Safeguarding	12
Our impact	5	Our finances	12-13
Groups and activities	6-8	Community fundraising	13-14
Our people:		Our governance and organisational management	15
Staff	9	Public benefit	15
Trustees	9-10	Our future	16
Counsellors	11		
Volunteers	11		

Aims, objective and activities

Frome Birth Talk exists to support birthing parents of all ages and circumstances to make the transition to parenthood confidently and positively, raising awareness of and combating the stigma associated with anxiety, low mood and mental ill health in the perinatal period.

The objective of the charity is for the public benefit by the relief of sickness and the preservation of health of pregnant women and new parents in Frome and the surrounding area by the provision of a free counselling service and wellbeing events and activities.

What our service users say

We invite everyone who use our services to give qualitative feedback. Please see below for just some of the responses:

“It was extremely beneficial to talk not only without judgement but **feeling like someone was completely on my side.** It helped me to be kinder to myself.”

”

“

“It was a really **positive experience.** I would not have been able to access counselling otherwise and am incredibly grateful for it.”

“It helped me to get through my second daughter’s delivery after having **PTSD** from my first daughter’s delivery.”

“It has helped me on my journey since losing my baby, and I can’t **thank you all** enough for this amazing service.”

“I am extremely grateful to have benefitted from this exceptional service. I was lucky enough to have Lisa as my counsellor, and she immediately made me feel **completely comfortable.** I very much looked forward to seeing her each week and was a little tearful when our sessions came to an end.”

Our impact: Counselling

This year we received 134 referrals. We continued with a mixture of face-to-face and remote counselling, with a rough percentage split of 60% in-person to 40% remote.

Throughout the year, we were in a financial position to add extra sessions in order to keep up with demand. Certain regular slots alternated between remote and in-person, usually based on client needs.



134
Referrals

We constantly monitor the effectiveness of all our services, requesting feedback from counselling clients via an online questionnaire. The responses we get provide us with vital information about the aspects of our services that work and any gaps in provision, as well as serving to raise awareness and uptake.

In order to further measure the impact of our counselling service, we use a clinically validated evaluation tool, **Clinical Outcomes in Routine Evaluation (CORE)**. Not only does this provide us with useful data about percentage improvements in client wellbeing, it also helps us practise safely and can help our counsellors recognise where there is a risk of harm and the need to involve other health professionals.

All our evaluations show some improvement following the last session, some by a very significant amount. Making improvements in the way we collect and analyse such data is one of our aims for the coming year.

Groups and activities

Bump to Baby Group:

Our group for pregnant women and new parents continued to run on Wednesday mornings at Frome Community Hospital for most of 2022-23, with 5-10 parents attending each time.

Having visitors from local organisations really helped attract new people. For example, we held a baby-wearing workshop, singing session and a Sing and Sign session.

We also trialled a “Let’s Talk About Birth” sharing circle led by an experienced midwife who runs the Birth Reflections service at Bath RUH. Participants told us this felt like a safe and helpful way of talking about their birthing experiences, so we plan to organise further sessions in 2023.



WhatsApp Groups:

Our ‘FBT Mamas’ group on WhatsApp has naturally evolved to become two new groups: **FBT Toddlers** and **FBT Mamas 2022**.

Although not as busy as 2021-22, when COVID restrictions were still in place, these continued to be used throughout 2022-23 with members adding new people all the time. They are still warm, respectful, and supportive spaces with approximately 75 members, who also help signpost to the counselling service.

Groups and activities contd.

Toddler Group:

Our families have been asking us for a group that is suitable for toddlers (as well as new-borns) for a long time, so we were delighted to launch Frome Toddler Talk in February 2022. Since then, the group has run every Friday at Trinity Church Hall in central Frome.



There is a big cupboard full of toys and plenty of space, so we set up the room to allow toddlers and pre-schoolers the chance to play freely while their parents can chat and enjoy a cup of (proper!) coffee.

During 2022-23 the group was attended by over 100 different adults and 150 children. Of the adults who attended, 14 attended five times or more (including two who attended over 20 times) and a majority came more than once.

We have received very positive feedback about the group:

“We love the toddler group. It’s great for the little ones to have the social time and for parents to have the opportunity to spend time chatting with other parents, knowing the children are safe. Please keep this group going. Thank you so much!”

Groups and activities contd.

Time For You:

This year our trustee Jess Taylor organised two “Time for You” pamper days, the first in April and the second in December.

"Lovely morning, great length and a good variety of activities to keep us entertained but also very relaxed."



Attendees enjoyed a massage, yoga, foot soak, snacks, and goody bags. Raffle prizes were also donated by local Frome companies. We charged £20 per ticket but provided some free tickets for those on a low income. We aim to organise more days next year, using the lessons we've learned to increase their fundraising potential.

"Wonderful day and I enjoyed every second. Jess was welcoming and lovely. Thank you!"



Childrens' Festival and Cheese Show:

The NCT is no longer active in Frome, so this year we stepped in to host parent and baby spaces at Frome's annual Children's Festival and Cheese Show. These were safe spaces where parents could feed their children, enjoy a snack themselves or allow overwhelmed toddlers to meltdown in peace.

Our people: Staff

This year Suzy Cristinacce continued to work as our director, working 10 hours per week. Our counselling co-ordinator Lucy Hill also continued with us, increasing her hours from 4.5 to 5 hours per week from June 2022. In November 2022, they were joined by Alice Caudle, who works 7 hours per week as volunteer co-ordinator.

Our people: Trustees

The voting members of the charity are the board of trustees, and their number must be not fewer than three and not more than twelve.

The board seeks to meet the needs of Frome Birth Talk by recruiting and retaining trustees with relevant skills and expertise. The trustees who served from 01/03/2022 to 28/02/2023 were:

- **Karen Patrick:** an experienced midwife, who brings clinical knowledge to the team and recently completed a Masters by Research at the University of Southampton on the Continuity of Carer model being implemented across the UK following the government's 'Better Births' report in 2016. Karen is our safeguarding lead.
- **Fiona Willis:** a local mother, doula and birth worker, shiatsu practitioner and facilitator of groups for pregnant and postnatal women over many years. Fiona manages our website and social media

Our people: Trustees contd.

- **Jessica Taylor:** a local mother who is an experienced events co-ordinator and workplace mental health champion. Jess leads on our fundraising events
- **Kathryn Riddick:** a local mother who works as a nurse. She was one of the first parents to attend our Bump to Baby group and leads on community liaison
- **Jaime Swift:** a local mother who is currently training to become midwife. Jaime was one of the first parents to attend our Bump to Baby group and assists with community liaison alongside Kat
- **Hayley Clement:** a local mother and midwife, who works at Frome Birth Centre. Hayley is our treasurer

We have also welcomed three new trustees during the year:

- **Annabel Litchfield:** a local mother who specialises in supporting charities of all sizes with their impact monitoring and evaluation. Annabel is leading on developing our monitoring and evaluation systems
- **Hanna Fisher:** a local mother and experienced psychotherapist. Hanna is assisting us with clinical advice and expertise
- **Jessica Cornwell:** a local mother, novelist and screenwriter, Jessica, published her book “Birth Notes: A Memoir of Trauma, Motherhood and Recovery” in 2022. Jessica is helping Frome Birth Talk to record and retell its story.

Our people: Volunteers

We also enjoy the support of regular volunteers. Our Bump to Baby group is hosted by Sarah Hartley, a retired midwife, and Margaret Graham, a retired counsellor.

Our toddler group, Frome Toddler Talk, is hosted on a regular basis by Leah Jones, Helen Curry and Amanda Fisher.

Our people: Counsellors

We now have four full-qualified counsellors working with us on a self-employment basis: Helen Enright, Jane Henderson, Tracy Creed and Amanda Falconer.

Providing opportunities to trainee counsellors

We have four counsellors in training working for FBT: Melina Robinson, Kat Cross, Lisa Beattie and Lucy Edwards.

Counselling students must complete initial training before seeing clients, then accrue clinical hours for full professional registration. By using trainee counsellors, we can significantly increase the number of sessions we can offer to parents, for the cost of professional supervision (provided in-house by our qualified counsellors) and mileage/travel costs.

Safeguarding

All staff, counsellors, trainee counsellors and volunteers have DBS checks, renewable every three years and organised and paid for by the charity. Safeguarding training has been provided for staff, counsellors and trustees and will be repeated at least every three years.

We have a safeguarding children and vulnerable adults policy which will be reviewed and ratified annually, along with a named safeguarding officer, Karen Patrick. Our safeguarding procedure is backed up by a 'due diligence' process where any concerns not necessitating a full escalation are discussed with the safeguarding lead, recorded and stored in a password-protected folder.

Our finances

Financial sustainability

FBT has been sustained largely by grant funding from the National Lottery Communities Fund and other organisations during this financial period. This grant covers our core costs and will last for another two years.

Our income during this financial period was £36,254 and our expenditure was £36,646. We currently have £9,877 in unrestricted reserves. We aim to hold sufficient unrestricted reserves for three months' expenditure. We consider that we are a going concern for the next twelve months because we will continue to receive core funding from the National Lottery Community Fund and will fundraise before undertaking any additional activities that are not covered by this grant.

Our finances contd.

Grants

In 2022-23, we secured the following grants in addition to our National Lottery grant of £20,000:

- £1,875 from the South West Community Benefit Fund, to cover hall hire for the toddler group and extra counselling sessions.
- £3,000 from Frome Town Council towards the cost of a volunteer co-ordinator.
- £3,000 from Somerset Community Foundation towards the cost of a volunteer co-ordinator.

Community fundraising

Jazz and cream tea event

In May a local supporter who used our services organised a jazz and cream tea fundraiser. She donated £600 from the event, and we made a further small profit selling Prosecco.

Band in a Barn

Band in a Barn is an annual event in Norton St Philip that raises money for local charities. A woman who uses our services nominated Frome Birth Talk to be one of their three major beneficiaries and we came top of the public vote on Facebook.

The event raised £3,000 for us.



Community fundraising contd.



Adam's Snowden challenge

Local dad Adam Way, whose partner used our services following the birth of their first child, undertook a sponsored challenge that involved climbing Snowden as many times as possible in 24 hours. Incredibly, he managed four ascents and raised over £500 for us.

Jess's frostbite challenge

Our trustee Jess Taylor completed 12 cold-water swims between 1st November and 28th February. In total she raised £500 for Frome Birth Talk.

Beard-shaving

At the end of November we were delighted to receive a £500 donation in our LocalGiving from the husband of someone who used our services. This dad had shaved off his beard to raise money for us.



Our governance and organisational management

Frome Birth Talk (FBT) is a charitable incorporated organisation (CIO) established on 8th November 2017. The charity is governed by its CIO constitution.

The board of trustees met seven times during the year ending 28th February 2023.

FBT is not currently an organisational member of the British Association of Counselling and Psychotherapy (BACP) but chooses to follow its Ethical Framework for Counselling and Psychotherapy guidelines, in line with our self-employed counsellors' practice and that of the Bath College of Psychotherapy and Counselling (BCPC), for whom we are an agency for trainee counsellors on placement.

Public benefit

The board of trustees confirm they have had regard to the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit and have complied with their duty under section 4 of the Charities Act 2011 when reviewing the charity's aims and objectives; and in implementing current and planning future activities. The Charities Act 2011 sets out 13 different aims which are recognised as charitable purposes, and Frome Birth Talk fits within the aim of **the relief of sickness and preservation of health**.

We have referred to the guidance contained in the Charity Commission's general guidance on public benefit when reviewing our aims and objectives and continue to be committed to providing all our services free of charge, although donations are welcomed.

Our future

At the beginning of November, we celebrated our fifth birthday with our second Community Workshop. As before, this was a gathering of everyone involved in Frome Birth Talk: people who have used our services, local women, trustees, staff, and volunteers.

A creche was provided as well as a celebration lunch. Two local women helped us plan and facilitate the event, providing their knowledge and expertise for free.

We built on what was discussed last year, refining our conversations to start development of our vision, mission and goals. Reassuringly, the message we took from the day was that we need to develop and improve our activities but essentially, we are doing almost everything that people would like us to. The only major changes suggested were similar to those that were suggested last year: a group for people who have experienced baby loss; actively working to reach all parts of our community, including young people, people of colour and people from the LGBTQI+ community and opening up our services to people who are experiencing fertility issues.



It has been a busy year for everyone at Frome Birth Talk, but we are looking forward to growing our community, ready for challenges ahead!

FROM BIRTH TALK						1175641	
Receipts and payments accounts							
For the period from	01/03/2022				To	28/02/2023	CC16a

Section A Receipts and payments

	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Restricted funds	Restricted funds	Restricted funds	Restricted funds	Restricted funds	Restricted funds	Endowment funds	Total funds	Last year
	Unrestricted	National Lottery Community Fund - RC South West Region	FROME TOWN COUNCIL	FRIENDS OF FROME COMMUNITY HOSPITAL	SOMERSET COMMUNITY FOUNDATION	MAGIC LITTLE GRANT	AWARDS FOR ALL GRANT	LHC SOUTH WEST COMMUNITY BENEFIT FUND			
	to the nearest £	to the nearest £	to the nearest £	to the nearest £	to the nearest £	to the nearest £	to the nearest £	to the nearest £	to the nearest £	to the nearest £	to the nearest £
A1 Receipts											
GRANTS		20,000	3,000		3,000			1,875		27,875	24,000
DONATIONS	7,812									7,812	3,031
FUND RAISING EVENTS	567									567	0
										-	0
										-	0
Sub total (Gross income for AR)	8,379	20,000	3,000	-	3,000	-	-	1,875	-	36,254	27,031
A2 Asset and investment sales, (see table).											
		-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Sub total	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total receipts	8,379	20,000	3,000	-	3,000	-	-	1,875	-	36,254	27,031
A3 Payments											
COUNSELLOR FEES		8,019		3,298	19	83	426	868	-	12,713	10,423
COST OF FUNDRAISING	315	180							-	495	53
COST OF BREATHING & RELAXATION CLASSES	798								-	798	423
SALARIES	1,113	9,293			1,295					11,701	4,865
ROOM RENTAL	1,806		1,530					407	-	3,743	2,874
STUDENT SUPERVISION		2,240							-	2,240	1,260
STUDENT TRAVEL COSTS		599								599	336
PRINTING & MARKETING		472							-	472	297
COMPUTER PURCHASE	25				189				-	214	307
SUBSCRIPTIONS	158								-	158	349
GENERAL ADMIN	237			2					-	239	-
TRAINING & DEVELOPMENT	71	1,643			383				-	2,097	1,585
DBS CHECKS	322				122					444	112
STORAGE		260								260	520
INSURANCE		351							-	351	308
FBT MOBILE PHONE COST	98	24								122	66
	4,943	23,081	1,530	3,300	2,008	83	426	1,275	-	36,646	23,778

A4 Asset and investment purchases, (see table)												
	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Sub total	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total payments	4,943	23,081	1,530	3,300	2,008	83	426	1,275	-	Add Error	23,778	
Net of receipts/(payments)	3,436	- 3,081	1,470	- 3,300	992	- 83	- 426	600	-	- 392	3,253	
A5 Transfers between funds	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	
A6 Cash funds last year end	6,441	9,652	1,740	3,300	19	83	426		-	21,661	18408	
Cash funds this year end	9,877	6,571	3,210	-	1,011	-	-	600	-	21,269	21,661	

Section B Statement of assets and liabilities at the end of the period

Categories	Details	Unrestricted funds to nearest £	Restricted funds to nearest £	Endowment funds to nearest £
B1 Cash funds	Unrestricted	9,877		-
	National Lottery	6,571		-
	Frome Town Council	3,210		
	Friends of Frome Community Hospital			
	Somerset Community Foundation	1,011		
	Magic Little Grant			
	Awards for All			
	LHC SW Community Benefit Fund	600		
		-	-	-
	Total cash funds	21,269	-	-
	(agree balances with receipts and payments account(s))	Agreement Error	Agreement Error	OK
		Unrestricted funds to nearest £	Restricted funds to nearest £	Endowment funds to nearest £
B2 Other monetary assets		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
B3 Investment assets		Fund to which asset belongs	Cost (optional)	Current value (optional)
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
B4 Assets retained for the charity's own use		Fund to which asset belongs	Cost (optional)	Current value (optional)
	NETITUDE HP PRO BOOK	NATIONAL LOTTERY	743	-

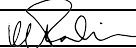
		-	-
		-	-
		-	-
		-	-
		-	-
		-	-
		-	-
		-	-

B5 Liabilities

Details	Fund to which liability relates	Amount due (optional)	When due (optional)
		-	
		-	
		-	
		-	

Signed by one or two trustees on behalf of all the trustees

Signature



Print Name

Karen Patrick

Date of approval

04/12/2023

Independent examiner's report to the trustees of Frome Birth Talk

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of Frome Birth Talk (the Trust) for the year ended 28 February 2023.

Responsibilities and basis of report

As the charity trustees of the Trust 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 all the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the Act.

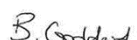
Independent examiner's statement

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

1. accounting records were not kept in respect of the Charity as required by section 130 of the Act; or
2. the accounts do not accord with those records.

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in this report in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Signed:



Name: Beverley Goddard

Relevant professional qualification or membership of professional bodies (if any):
Fellow of the Association of Chartered Certified Accountants

Address: 25 Leaze Road, Frome, BA11 3EY

Date: 05 December 2023