

Minutes of the Annual **General Meeting** on 28th August 2024 held at :  
*Piazzo Lounge, The Square, Wimborne*

Present:

Simon Miller  
Patsy Hallmey  
Jamie Burr  
Louise Northbrooke



Apologies:

Steve Butterworth  
Rob Scott

### **Welcome and Apologies:**

The meeting commenced at 19.10. Everyone was welcomed and thanked for attending. Simon announced that Rob and Steve could not attend due to personal commitments. We were kindly offered free tapas and drinks by the Piazzo Lounge in Wimborne and use of a secluded area for our meeting.

### **Minutes of the Last Meeting:**

Taken as a true record of events at the meeting, proposed by Patsy and seconded by Louise.

### **Chairman's Report:**

The past year has seen major changes to our website and the way our listings are presented. Simon and Jamie attended World Travel Market in London in November and spread the word about accessible travel. We have had several fundraising events , the most successful in financial terms being the Charity Ball in November, jointly held with Dorset Children's Foundation (DCF).

Our Tombola type stalls have in the been gratefully funded by Tesco Riverside who have been happy to donate excess stock, and much of this stock is shared with DCF. These stalls could not have been possible without the unwavering help and commitment of the Chairman's wife , Avril. Following our free inclusion as a member of LATA (Latin American Travel Association) Simon has attended as part of a panel on inclusive travel, at the LATA Exposition in Windsor and followed this up with a Webinar in conjunction with Sage travelling and Sage Inclusion in the USA, and Amazonian Accessible Lodges from Ecuador.

Asked by Travel Weekly to judge a short list of three companies offering the most accessible holidays, Simon attended the prestigious Globe Awards in London in January. Following a day by day blog about the family's road trip in Australia, in a wheelchair accessible van, these social media posts help boost our visibility by around 20%.

Our Google Ads Grant is underused as Simon has little time to exploit this to the full. It is obvious that what little keywords we have used (namely around accessible vehicle rentals) have produced a good level of related enquiries as we appear his up in Google rankings when people search for wheelchair accessible vehicle rentals. The skills gaps in developing this resource are recognised and we will need help to make good use of our Google Ads Grant.

Volunteers through Bournemouth University's Student Union Hub were disappointing and did not produce the commitment we were hoping for. Future marketing ideas include the composing of an EMT song and jingle to go with videos, and some kind of animation either cartoon or (more ambitiously) our own 'Wallace & Gromit' type characters. Simon has approached On-Line Travel Training (OTT) about compiling an accessible travel training package - they have this covered, but not comprehensively. A future plan to include training packages for the travel and hospitality industry whereby participants get a 'Certificate of Competence' or similar, is a future proposal.

### **Treasurer's Report:**

All trustees present declared no pecuniary advantage or conflict of interest in their work with the charity. As Steve could not attend the meeting he presented a written report of the year end accounts which is summarised: With a carry forward £9,161, Enable MY Trip is on a secure

financial footing. The charity's annual fixed costs (third-party liability insurance and website maintenance fees, including associated currency transaction fees) amount to a modest £1,200.

The majority of expenditure was affordable, targeted, discretionary spend (£4,430). EMT has continued to enjoy healthy donations and successful fundraising activities, however, maintaining relatively modest fixed costs, will allow EMT to remain a viable concern, should income drop in future years.

The Charity Commission takes a dim view of charities maintaining excessive carry forwards. Whilst I believe £9,161 is a comfortable, rather than excessive, carry forward, I recommend that the Trustees look to identify possible additional one-off expenditure that will drive the charity forward in the coming year, whilst maintaining a minimum bank balance of circa £5,000. However, to be clear, I'm not advocating spending for spending's sake, and especially if we have another successful year with regard to fundraising, I'll have no problem reporting another surplus in a year's time.

### **Individual Trustee Reports:**

Louise reported that the formation of an accessible travel working group at her company , Audley Travel , has been delayed. Apparently changes to the organisation which is funding the company means that the directors are concentrating more of core business for now. Jamie has started his own tourism marketing company and will be leaving for Portugal in September for a few months. He assured the meeting that he will still be contactable via his camper van's wifi. Jamie suggested we contact Samatha Smith, a sustainable tourism consultant in Holland about future collaboration. Jamie said that he had completed the Google Ads training course. Simon replied to this asking for help in promoting EMT using this medium as we have a \$10,000 monthly ads grant from Google which we are not using wisely. Patsy recently help out at our fundraiser at Canford School and was pleased at the result of our Charity Ball in September, which may be repeated in 2025.

### **Website Status:**

We are now in a position financially to enhance and sharpen up our website. Improvements to SEO rankings will take our software engineer 3-4 days to complete. This is a one-off cost of \$1695. Additionally we need to trial a plan whereby we ensure optimisation of Google interfaces, JAVA script fixes, resource optimisations, and database management. This carries a monthly fee of \$295 to Simon suggested that we employ the SEO optimisation at \$1695 now, and trial the \$295 a month for a year maximum, and then review. Total Cost \$5235 equivalent to about £4326. Visitors over the past 28 days to our website have been 1.7k up from 1.2k. The one-off expenditure of \$1695 and monthly partnership fee of \$295 was proposed by Patsy and seconded by Louise.

### **Social Media:**

Simon is considering signing up to Buffer, a piece of software that allows scheduled postings across multiple social media sites. There is a lot of material gleaned through Google Alerts so that many articles can be written. Simon tried out a re-write using AI of a piece on accessible trains to Luton Airport which turned out ok.

### **Volunteers:**

Apart from two Bournemouth University students who did database entries and article writing, we have had no more successes. The time and effort invested in the processes has not been time well spent.

### **Fundraising and Financial**

We received a donation of £640 from the St James's Place Foundation following Steve's successful application. We have yet to exploit applications to National Lottery etc. We continue to sell items on Ebay, and Facebook Marketplace, and have our quiz nights and Tombolas. The long-term aim is to get our website visitor numbers up to 10,000 per month, and facebook followers and 'likes' to 3,000+. Only then can we approach organisations for sponsorship.

**Marketing and Exposure:**

We have worked on 'Press Releases' with Lewis, one of our student volunteers. We have three articles ready to go. EMT are attending World travel Market in London in November. We featured 'Rose Marie Lodge' in Clacton as part of an FB competition - we only had 10 entries but 236 visits to their entry on our website. We are shortly to publicise the winner.

**Any Other Business:** None. Meeting closed at 20.50

**Date of Next Meeting:** proposed as Thursday 19th December at 19.00, but this will be moved probably to early January.

**Enable My Trip**  
**Accounts - Year End 11th July 2024**

**Income**

Donations - GoodHub	221.24
Donations - Other	3,006.21
Fundraising and raffle	1,059.00
Charity Ball proceeds	3,254.02

**Expenditure**

Website Development & Maintenance Fees	3,734.26
Software	265.51
Data Entry Costs	277.00
Postage, Printing and Stationery	153.05
Village Hall Hire	346.00
Ebay, SumUp & PayPal Fees	68.00
Third Party Liability Insurance	131.17
Travel Costs and Subsistance	314.93
Travel Show Costs and Accomodation	308.09
Currency Transaction Fees	31.05

<b>Total Income</b>	<b>£7,540.47</b>
Less Expenditure	5,629.06
<b>Surplus for the year</b>	<b>£1,911.41</b>

<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>£5,629.06</b>
Balance in Lloyds Current Account	£9,160.93

Balance B/Forward                      **£7,249.52**

**Balance Carried Forward                      £9,160.93**

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Signed - S Butterworth (Treasurer & Trustee)



Date signed: 20th August 2024