



Aim and Purposes

Frome Market Health Hub (FMHH) is partnered with Somerset NHS Foundation Trust (SFT) to facilitate the provision of health screening clinics for farmers, their families and agricultural workers who visit Frome Livestock Market, with the broad aim of improving patient's health. In addition to the services provided by NHS partnership, FMHH also provides regular podiatry care, free of charge to visitors to the Livestock Market and other health services when appropriate (e.g. as a pop-up COVID vaccinations centre and facilitating health related talks).

The Health Hub is located at the livestock market which is important both as a social and business centre for the farming community. Through FMHH, the NHS is able to reach a group of rural patients who find it most difficult to access traditional health services.

Objectives and Activities

The chief objective of health screening is to detect potential serious mental and physical illness, before it becomes burdensome for either patients or the NHS. While NHS nurses and mental health nurses are funded by Somerset NHS Foundation Trust (SFT), FMHH organisation provides two treatment rooms and a dedicated reception area at the market, has purchased special items of equipment, and organised all marketing and communications materials to promote the health hub to the public. Having received a grant from Somerset Community Foundation in 2019, and continuing ad hoc donations from other enterprises, FMHH has funded the services and equipment to run twice-monthly podiatry clinics, all free of charge to patients.

Achievements and Performance

Having run the Health Hub at the market for three years, it is very satisfying to see that the clinic has been accepted as a part of the many business and social facilities available to the farming community when they visit the livestock market. The type of health screening undertaken has continued as before with the addition of blood cholesterol testing and a

questionnaire designed for prostate pre-cancer awareness and there is a pilot scheme in progress for specific dermatological conditions caused by sun damage using camera technology. These tests together with practitioner vigilance have led to referrals to GP practices and other specialist services.

Our podiatrist has been kept very busy all year and we are now considering increasing her hours to meet demand. The podiatry clinic has done much to draw in farmers who can be reluctant to visit a nurse. Patients in the podiatry clinic are very often referred to the NHS clinic for blood tests when the podiatrist recognises from her patients' feet, symptoms of broader underlying health issues such as high blood pressure, diabetes, ulcers, rheumatoid arthritis, atrial fibrillation, plantar fasciitis – etc. The 'safe place' created by the podiatrist also encourages patients to confide in her and again, the podiatrist has been able to recommend to her patients the benefits of speaking to the wellbeing practitioner.

Patients wishing to see the podiatrist are advised to book an appointment – as opposed to the drop-in availability of the nursing clinics. This is because podiatry treatments usually take longer and many patients need repeat treatments, and there are only 5 treatment sessions in the time available each session.

Following on from successful and well attended talks on issues such as prostate cancer awareness, breast cancer and menopause – we are keen to continue introducing subjects of interest in further talks.

In late 2024, FMHH received an approach from The Richard Oatley Foundation Trust offering support to FMHH. The Trust was set up in the name of a wealthy local farmer who's wish was for FMHH to be one of several beneficiaries of his will. The approach was timely as the Health Hub was beginning to outgrow the facilities it has used free of charge since October 2019. Positive talks began in June 2024 and developed into plans to provide a purpose-built facility on the site of the livestock market. An agreement was made that the new building would remain in the ownership of the Richard Oatley Foundation, and that the primary usage would be as the home of FMHH, paying a peppercorn rent. Thus, FMHH has been relieved of financial or construction responsibility but has benefited from an extraordinary gift which will enable further growth going forwards.

By the end of this financial period, building plans have been drawn up, tenders invited and approved and groundworks begun.

It has always been the intention of FMHH trustees to grow the partnership with the NHS and the new building will enable increased use by other health providing organisations in need of such a space – for example Farming Community Networks (FCN) a volunteer led charity offering help to farmers struggling with mental health, financial or succession worries. The building will comprise four treatment rooms for; a medical nurse; our resident podiatrist; a lounge area with comfortable furnishings for emotional wellbeing conversations and, a physiotherapy treatment room. The ability to have all our practitioners in clinics at the same time will be highly beneficial to patients and greatly aid cross-referrals. Having a permanent home at the market invites a new phase of growth for the charity.

During the year, FMHH hosted viewings of the current and future facilities. We welcomed two Lord Lieutenants, two High Sheriffs several prominent local farming families and local philanthropists. Having received the long-awaited permanent funding commitment from the NHS we are able to commit to the new building with confidence, and also, importantly, we are able to fund-raise for extending the hours of our paid podiatrist, physiotherapist (currently being recruited) and receptionist.

Financial Overview

Throughout the year the organisation made regular payments to our freelance podiatrist, Natasha Bevan, who charges a set fee for a morning's clinic. During the year, Natasha took maternity leave but found an equally well qualified professional who took on her existing patients and has gone on to job share as Natasha has gradually returned to work. The rate has remained the same from our inception and a review was undertaken which led to an increase of £5 per hour with a further review due in January 2026. The podiatrist invoices the organisation monthly and the total usually, but not always, covers two morning sessions each month. This year the organisation paid £4,000.00 in podiatry clinic fees.

Between July and December 2024, payments amounting to £10,807.50 were made to the building Project Manager, Dolman, for their fees with a further £2,726 paid through Dolman's for various permissions and ecology surveys – amounting to a total of £13,533.50. These sums were reimbursed by The Richard Oatley Foundation. From January 2025 onwards, the Foundation took over the running of the project and paid all costs associated with the construction, directly.

In September 2025 FMHH took a stand at the Frome Agricultural Show at a cost of £268.00 (booked and paid for in May 2025). This is a very useful annual marketing event for the Health Hub and despite heavy rain, our nurses had a steady stream of requests for the health screening tests they were able to take to the show.

In an effort to raise high level awareness, the charity hosted two events for local dignitaries and prominent farming families which were sponsored by one of the organisation's trustees and by Frome Livestock Auctioneers, jointly. Donations were received totalling £4,085.00 during the year with a further £37.37 in bank interest. The cash balance at 01/04/2025 was £5,974.26. Our thanks to the NFU, Lions Club, Fatsock Association and to the local farming community efforts for their generosity and support.

Reserve Policy

FMHH has not needed to apply for further grant donations this year. The pattern of payments is set and there are sufficient funds in the bank to cover our needs for now. FMHH has recovered outgoing costs to suppliers from the Richard Oatley Foundation Trust.

Volunteers

Throughout the, year the organisation has again been supported by NHS Mendips Health Connectors who have sent representatives to the livestock market, regularly, to help build awareness of the health hub clinics and encourage potential patients to visit. The Health Hub is also greatly assisted by the very welcome presence at the market of the Market

Chaplain and Farming Community Network (FCN) volunteers, all of whom are known by our target audience.

The organisation is extremely grateful to all our trustees who have been generous with their time and skills. In particular, the organisation has benefited greatly from the advice of Frome Livestock Auctioneers which has organised our sub-letting lease arrangements for the new building. The organisation could not have functioned these last three years without the livestock market's space set aside to facilitate the Health Hub within their own office suite and the weekly advertisements for the Health Hub on their own website. Financial accounts and advice are given freely by Old Mill Accountancy Limited, for which the organisation is most grateful.

Structure Governance and Management

The partnership of NHS with FMHH is a fine example of a public body working alongside the voluntary sector for public benefit. The founding trustees were approached on the basis of individual skill sets. Our Chairman is a retired farmer with extensive farming knowledge and excellent soft skills relating well to farmers' lifestyles and stresses. A Deputy Lieutenant of Somerset with extensive experience in mental health in the county, accepted the invitation to become a trustee and has been a driving force in outlining the key areas where the organisation can have most impact. The chairman of Frome Livestock Auctioneers is a vital link with the heart of the Health Hub core patient base. We asked the partner who heads the rural side of a large accountancy firm to be our finance advisor; a senior member of Mole Valley Farmers Ltd who understands the needs of farmers and is able to communicate through the MVF newsletters – all founding trustees. FLA's finance director is now into her second year as trustee but sadly we have lost one other who has moved to Scotland. The organisation will attempt to recruit another trustee in due course. All trustees provide invaluable advice and the organisation is grateful for their input.

Finally, the writer is Trustee Administrator for the organisation. The board works extremely well together and has been supportive and constructive throughout the process of bringing the Health Hub to life. The governing document outlines a rotational arrangement at 2-, 3- and 5-year intervals. Having lost one trustee this year there is no need to rotate those remaining.

Administrative Information

Frome Market Health Hub is situated at Frome Livestock Market, Standerwick, BA11 2QB. The administrative contact for all correspondence is: Mrs Diana Bourne, of Yarnfield Cottage, Maiden Bradley, Warminster, BA12 7HY.

Finance Officer: Mr Andrew Vickery, Head of Rural, Old Mill Accountants, Maltravers House, Petters Way, Yeovil, BA20 1SH

Frome Market Health Hub

Financial Statements for the year ended 31 March 2025

	Total 2025 £	Total 2024 £
RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS ACCOUNT		
Receipts		
Receipts from donors	14,532.50	9,351.50
Bank interest received	37.37	29.01
Total receipts	<u>14,569.87</u>	<u>9,380.51</u>
Payments		
Podiatry chair	-	-
Podiatrist	4,000.00	3,740.00
Hospitality	152.00	809.50
Project management	13,533.50	-
Bank charges	4.90	2.90
Total payments	<u>17,690.40</u>	<u>4,552.40</u>
Net surplus/(deficit) for year	(3,120.53)	4,828.11
Bank current and deposit accounts at 1 April 2024	9,992.41	5,164.30
Bank current and deposit accounts at 31 March 2025	5,971.88	9,992.41
STATEMENT OF ASSETS AND LIABILITIES		
Assets		
Cash Funds		
Bank current account	5,971.88	9,992.41
Liabilities		
Old Mill	-	900.00
Bank charges	0.50	0.40
Net Assets at 31 March 2025	<u>5,971.38</u>	<u>9,092.01</u>

The financial statements for the year were approved by the trustees on 29/01/2026 and signed on their behalf by:


Martin Brown
Chairman and Trustee


Andrew Vickery
Finance Officer and Trustee