

***Reading Hospital Broadcasting Service
operating as Hospital Radio Reading (HRR)
Trustees' Annual Report & Accounts for the year ended 31st December 2022***

REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES

For the year ended 31st December 2022

The Trustees have pleasure in presenting their Annual Report and Accounts, for the year ended 31st December 2022

LEGAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

Registered Charity number : 1196377 (England and Wales)

Working Name: Hospital Radio Reading (HRR)

Original date of registration : 1964 (as charity no. 244974)

Converted to a Charitable Incorporated Organisation on 3rd November 2021

Principal Office:

Hospital Radio Reading
East Drive,
Royal Berkshire Hospital,
London Road,
READING
Berkshire
RG1 5AN

Main contact address

c/o Mr G Rocks (Chairman)
6 Maldon Close
READING
Berkshire
RG30 2DH

Trustees:

A Beasley (Treasurer)
J M Burton Stewart (Secretary)
S Ham
F M McKechnie
C L Mills
* C Monahan (Station Manager : from 23rd February 2022)
M E O'Czaja (Vice-Chairman and Senior Engineer)
J Patey
G B K Rocks (Chairman)

- All the above Trustees were in place throughout the reporting year, being outgoing Trustees of the previous charity 244974 and approved to continue by voting members in the first Annual General Meeting of the Charitable Incorporated Organisation, with the exception of C Monahan, whose appointment as Trustee was approved by the same meeting on February 23rd 2022.

Bankers:

Lloyds Bank Ltd
24 Broad St,
Reading
Berkshire
RG1 2BT

STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE and MANAGEMENT :

Governing Document :

Reading Hospital Broadcasting Service is a Charitable Incorporated Organisation, governed by its constitution.

Governance and Organisational Structure:

The organisation is governed by a Board of Trustees, who are responsible for overseeing strategy, direction and ensuring that the charity's finances are spent in accordance with its charitable objects.

The Constitution allows for the Board of Trustees to consist of no fewer than three and no more than nine Elected Trustees, elected by full members of the organisation for a two-year term of office. At the Annual General Meeting on February 23rd 2022 the unopposed nominations of nine Trustees were thus approved by the membership. The Constitution requires that half of the Elected Trustees should retire each year : in order to ensure some degree of continuity moving forward it was therefore agreed that, following the first AGM of the new CIO, four of those Trustees would serve initially for a single year but with the option of standing again for a full two-year term in 2023.

The Constitution also allows for up to three Appointed Trustees, appointed by the other Trustees on account of their skills, knowledge and experience, for a term of one year. However, no such Trustees were Appointed during the reporting year.

The operational functions of the charity, namely the provision of a local broadcasting service for hospitals, residential homes and similar (essentially to the Royal Berkshire Hospital), are overseen by a Committee, composed of the same Trustees with responsibility for technical maintenance and scheduling & programme content being vested respectively in those holding the positions of Senior Engineer and Station Manager.

In addition to the Annual General Meeting, five Trustees' Meetings were held during the year (in January, April, May, September and November) and the Trustees maintained regular contact through a dedicated WhatsApp group.

Membership:

Of the 42 volunteers registered with HRR at the end of 2021, 37 renewed their membership for the following year and were subsequently joined by 3 more on completion of their training and probation. Five members were awarded long-service certificates from the Hospital Broadcasting Association during the course of the reporting year: two for 15 years, one for 30 years and one for 40 years, although it was not possible to officially present their certificates, given the virtual nature of the AGM which was held via Microsoft Teams on February 24th. This, inaugural, meeting of charity number 1196377 was held immediately after the final meeting of the old charity, 244974, which was wound up with the unanimous agreement of all members following the approval of the Charity Commission for The Reading Hospital Broadcasting Service to be registered as a Charitable Incorporated Organisation.

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With many teams either having lost ward visitors or retained members who for various reasons were unable or unwilling to make a swift return to the wards, recruitment of additional volunteers was a priority but suitable applicants were few and far between. Four more did embark upon the Trust checking process towards the end of the year but a combination of circumstances meant that, in their cases at least, this was a more protracted process than ever and a source of great frustration to all concerned.

OBJECTIVES AND AIMS :

Reading Hospital Broadcasting Service is a Charitable Incorporated Organisation whose charitable objects are :-

- (1) The relief of sickness, poor health and old age amongst people living in Reading and the surrounding area by providing a local broadcasting service for hospitals, residential homes and similar institutions, and for patients receiving community care.
- (2) The advancement of health and prevention or relief of sickness for the public benefit through the promotion of the benefits of living a healthy lifestyle, and the importance of maintaining good personal mental and physical health by (mainly, but not exclusively) the means of broadcasting health education messages to people living in Reading and the surrounding area.

CHARITABLE ACTIVITIES :

Patient interaction and Request programmes

The cornerstone of our activities and fundamental to the achievement of our first charitable objective are the minimum of 25 hours of live programming each week devoted, entirely or in part, to playing music requested by or for hospital patients. The new year began on a positive note with an additional live broadcast, direct from Sidmouth Ward and featuring patient & staff interviews as well as requests. This was not only heard in the Royal Berkshire Hospital but also networked across the country via around 40 other hospital stations as part of a nationwide event, the "New Year Big Broadcast." However, the arrival of a new Coronavirus variant was already on the horizon : the other stations lined up to take part in that event had been denied permission to go onto their wards and just two days later we too found ourselves once again asked by our Trust to refrain from ward-visiting – as it transpired, until June.

This, inevitably, resulted in a drop in patient involvement. In the first five months of the year, although there were no days without any live programming, only **183** requests were received from patients & staff (via telephone, email, social media and occasional face to face encounters in safe outdoor communal areas). Fortunately, though, we were allowed to return to the wards in early June and when, soon after, the earlier limit of one ward visited per person per day (designed to minimise the risk of cross-infection) was removed, provided other precautions were taken on the wards, Requests teams had the potential to return to levels of activity not possible since before the onset of the pandemic in March 2020. This boosted the total number of requests played in the entire year to **2,432** (more than double that of the previous year but nowhere near the 8,066 played in 2019, our last Covid-free year).

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The availability of volunteers for Requests and other live programmes will always be affected by work and family commitments, health issues etc. and, in the specific circumstances post-lockdown, a perceived ongoing risk of infection and the domestic circumstances of individual volunteers understandably resulted in the return to the wards being embraced more positively and more rapidly by some teams than by others. A total of 54 scheduled live editions of "Good Afternoon Royal Berks" or "HRR Requests" therefore did not take place (including seven evening shows which were replaced by live football coverage). The death of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II inevitably affected programming with the station entering "obituary mode" for around 48 hours in September (relaying Sky News and playing suitably subdued music, thanks to the prompt response in such sad circumstances of the Senior Engineer and Station Manager. Despite all the above, the number of days without any live programming at all, in either afternoon or evening, fell again to a very respectable **7** compared to 11 the previous year, meaning that **358 days** had some form of live programming as against 354 in 2021.

The number of phoned-in requests almost doubled to **372** (on a par with the best in the past ten years) many of them from a regular long-term or returning patients with whom initial contact had been made pre-lockdown. This illustrates once again the importance of ward visiting in publicising our service, building an audience, successfully engaging with patients who can be bored and lonely and making a real difference to their hospital stay. Conversely, requests received by email dropped to **29**, due in part to us losing the support of two staff members on Emmer Green and Sidmouth wards who had left the Trust.

Analysis of requests received, albeit significantly fewer than before the pandemic, enabled us to produce as usual charts of most requested artistes and titles. The Top 5 performers hardly changed at all - Queen, Abba, Ed Sheeran (replacing Elton John who dropped to no 9), Elvis and Frank Sinatra with the Beatles just missing out at number 6. And the increased number of requests received compared to in 2021, including more for specific tracks rather than "anything by X ...", led to a return to a more typical titles chart, led by Bohemian Rhapsody, Amazing Grace, Sweet Caroline and What a Wonderful World but with a newcomer, Abba's new release Don't Shut Me Down, propelled single-handedly to the number 2 position by one long-term patient who appeared to fall in love with it!

Special programming:

Although Covid-related restrictions or fears resulted in the disappearance from the calendar for a third successive year of some of the special events that had previously featured in our programming for the patients (such as the League of Friends' Christmas Concert and the Trust's Open Day), another outside broadcast from the Maidenhead Lions' Duck Derby did take place and at Christmas we were not only able to record the Trust Carol Service in the hospital chapel but also feature a special fundraising service/concert for the Royal Berks Charity from Reading Minster. That said, our Christmas 2022 schedule again focused more on selected repeats from the archives and less on new programming. But renewed cooperation with the Trust's Chaplaincy enabled us to mark the turn of the year with some special studio recordings including Communion Services for the Sundays of Advent.

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In other respects it was business as usual, with the Saturday Sport team (Graeme Collyer, Andy Cook and David Downs) continuing to provide an entire afternoon of Reading FC commentary and music from the SCL Stadium for home games and developing a promising relationship with the town's other club, Reading City, and the Reading Today newspaper during the break in Championship fixtures due to the World Cup.

Matthew Rolland continued to supply interviews with celebrities via Zoom for his Wednesday evening show, many focusing on how the pandemic & lockdown had affected them (at the same time often praising / supporting the work of the NHS) and Maurice Moore succeeded Matthew as host of occasional new recordings for the "Take Five" interview series as well as bringing a variety of guests to the studio for live sport-and-fitness-related interviews on Saturday afternoons. Nuri Khan extended his specialist music repertoire beyond the blues in two specials over the Jubilee Bank Holiday weekend, a farewell gift from departing member Gloria Wright was a series of "Music from the Musicals" for the daytime automated schedules and thanks to resting member Greg Mitchell we added the final recordings (to date) to our library of "Bedtime Stories" by local authors in the Thames Valley Writers' Circle, which continued to be aired daily.

All of the above illustrates our efforts to fulfil the first objective of our charity, "the relief of sickness, poor health and old age by providing a local broadcasting service ... to patients" - by implication, entertaining them. Progress towards our second objective "the promotion of the benefits of living a healthy lifestyle ... by (mainly, but not exclusively) the means of broadcasting health education messages to people living in Reading and the surrounding area" was achieved by public service announcements obtained from government websites were refreshed and "Good Afternoon Royal Berks" featured interviews with a junior doctor from the surgical unit, a Trust representative during Health Awareness Week, a leading pharmacist encouraging care with medication and Sharon Herring (lead nurse) promoting the Trust's new "snooze bags" initiative. It is perhaps harder to achieve that educational objective whilst being entertaining (!) but Maurice Moore's sport and fitness interviews came closest, many focusing on ways of keeping fit once discharged from hospital - and with the additional bonus of boosting our publicity in wider circles and not necessarily sporting ones. An excellent example of that was the story of Andy Alleyne - the first black player to play for Reading FC. It was Maurice on Saturday Sport who broke the story of the 50th anniversary of that debut by interviewing his widow. Not only was the story picked up by BBC Radio Berkshire but our coverage led to Andy Alleyne's parish council commissioning a memorial bench in his honour.

Future Strategy :

During the reporting year the Trustees continued to address, with varying degrees of success, four areas presenting challenges or potential difficulties for the future, particularly concerning reception :-

- Whilst relations with *Hospedia*, providers of the bedside entertainment system in the Royal Berkshire Hospital, remained excellent and they continued to renew our stock of headphones for patients' bedside consoles on the internal cable system whenever required, we were made aware of a change in ownership and rebranding of the company (to *Wifi Spark*). This appeared to add weight to speculation about a future move by the company away from hardwired consoles (on which our core audience on

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the wards is largely dependent) to other means of internet-enabled reception (and potentially reduced in number) whenever its existing contract with each hospital trust ends. However, initial enquiries via a lengthy email chain around the hospital management, failed to identify anyone able to confirm when the company's contract with RBH is expected to expire

- Independent of the above concerns, an additional aim was to broaden the range of options by which listeners around the hospital – outpatients as well as inpatients – might hear and participate in our programmes. Efforts were made to negotiate permission (and sponsorship of the necessary licence fees) to enable Hospital Radio Reading's broadcasts to be relayed to speakers in cafés and outpatient waiting areas but, sadly, these hopes took a step back during the reporting year. After an initially positive response from the League of Friends with regard to relaying a signal into their Coffee House they then backtracked and, having closed their shop on the hospital site, the League appeared to be refocusing its activities and adopting a lower profile within the hospital.
- The long-term charitable objects of the organisation include broadcasting “to hospitals, residential homes and similar institutions, and ... patients receiving community care” and “to people living in Reading and the surrounding area”. It has been established that many regular listeners, when discharged, move into local community hospitals or care homes (as has at least one very supportive health care assistant upon changing jobs). With reception beyond the hospital restricted to broadcasts via the internet, hopes for future expansion were pinned on a promised partnership with a local community station, B-Radio, and on Ofcom's eventual awarding of a Small Scale Digital Audio Broadcasting licence for Reading. B-Radio have promised to “always give local operators in our area access first to our Small Scale DAB Multiplex before offering space to other broadcasters” envisaging “a 'local first' approach, giving Reading an amazing choice of locally programmed radio services” – one of which, among “confirmed radio stations” on their website is Hospital Radio Reading. Hopes were therefore high but, by the end of 2022, OFCOM had still not advertised any new licences.
- Prior to the reporting period, the Trustees had been informed by the Hospital Trust of the likelihood of having to relocate our studio premises to elsewhere on the hospital site – possibly, initially, to a temporary location - in order to enable construction of a new medical assessment block. Timescales were vague (dependent on available finance and the slender possibility of an entire new hospital being built instead - in the longer term on an out of town site) and, in fact, no further information had been received by the end of the year. However, a clear-out of unwanted equipment was begun and many items sent for auction at the end of the year, via an intermediary company, Omega Auctions, including the now largely unused vinyl and CD library (music played now being primarily sourced digitally). This had the twin benefits of reducing the amount of material requiring storage in the event of a protracted two-stage move, or one to smaller premises, and also raising additional funding for the installation or replacement of equipment in a new studio at our eventual location.

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FINANCIAL REVIEW :

The organisation has a long-established policy of holding a reserve of cash, equating to at least one year's running costs, in an interest-bearing account as a contingency fund, as well as operating a current account for its everyday activities. In fact, two current accounts were operational during the reporting year : it took until late summer for a new account to be opened, as required by charity's conversion to a Charitable Incorporated Organisation, and the Trustees agreed that the old account should remain open alongside it for a sufficient amount of time for direct debit arrangements (both outgoing and incoming e.g. for members' annual subscriptions) to be updated. Hence the limited amount of activity on the new account is included as an appendix to the financial statements which follow on pages 8 and 9.

From those statements it can be seen that, in activity across during the reporting year (and on the "old" account) : Expenditure (£ 4,183) exceeded
Income (£2,915) by £1,268 (i.e an operational deficit on the year)
However, taking into consideration income received in the "new" account (£1,150) reduces that deficit to £118 and means the organisation ended the year with assets totalling £10,038.

Expenditure was kept to a minimum thanks to the ongoing support of the Royal Berkshire NHS Foundation Trust which continued to provide free accommodation and power at our location on the main hospital site. The largest area of expenditure was the accumulation of various annual charges and subscriptions required for us to broadcast :- insurance, PPL & PRS fees (to performers & copyright holders), payments for Sky News, broadband & internet streaming, membership of the Hospital Broadcasting Association etc. The principal items of expenditure on studio maintenance were the repair of the air-conditioning unit in the engineering room housing the distribution rack, the purchase of replacement microphone arms and spare parts (including fans) for power units in studio and new headphone / microphone sets for football commentaries. In addition new wide-screen computer monitors for the studios were generously donated by a Trustee.

Principal sources of income were members' own subscriptions (totalling £1,030) the fund-raising efforts of a former volunteer, who raised over £900 through a number of sponsored runs, and smaller amounts via other members, one organising Christmas carols - and a collection – in the Hospital Reception. Donations included £600 from a longstanding supporter of the organisation, £400 in advertising proceeds from the publishers of the HRR magazine (a valuable publicity tool), £250 from the Windsor & Maidenhead Lions in return for a public address service provided at their Family Fun Day & Duck Derby (!) and £150 from a volunteer's employer via the Charities Aid Foundation.

In addition, a small but growing number of supporters nominated HRR as their sponsored charity in the Easy Fundraising scheme, thus enabling us to receive a small percentage of their spending on retail websites. But the Trustees are aware of the need to galvanise the membership as a whole into undertaking more (and more profitable) fund-raising activities in future to respond to the increased financial demands that equipping a new studio and embracing DAB broadcasting will inevitably place upon the organisation.

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It should be noted that expenditure listed below as "Members Meetings / Events" refers to that which benefits only our volunteers and not the patients (e.g. catering at members' meetings). The organisation's policy is that monies received from the public must never be used for such expenditure, which must be capped at the amount already paid by volunteers in their membership subscriptions. In the reporting year this related mostly to the purchase of customised polo shirts & fleeces to be worn when on the wards or at outside events, expenditure which was covered by additional payment received with orders (and accounted for under Income as "Members' funds").

READING HOSPITAL RADIO BROADCASTING SERVICE
INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT FOR THE YEAR TO 31 DEC 2022

OLD current account	2022	2021
INCOME	£	£
FUNDRAISING	1335	0
DONATIONS	296	843
SUBSCRIPTIONS	1030	1020
MEMBERS' FUNDS	255	0
GOODIES/SUNDRY SALES	0	10
TRANSFER/INTEREST	0	0
	<u>2915</u>	<u>1863</u>
EXPENDITURE		
STUDIO MAINTENANCE	1745	1598
TELECOM/BROADBAND/STREAMING	683	600
PPL/INSURANCE/RADIO AUTHORITY/HBA	1412	957
PA	0	0
MEMBERS' MEETINGS/EVENTS	342	0
	<u>4183</u>	<u>3155</u>
SURPLUS / (DEFECIT)	<u>-1268</u>	<u>-1292</u>
RESERVES B/FWD	10155	11390
SURPLUS / (DEFECIT) FOR YEAR	<u>-1268</u>	<u>-1234</u>
RESERVES C/FWD	<u>8888</u>	<u>10155</u>
REPRESENTED BY		
INVESTMENT ACCOUNT	8070	8070
CURRENT ACCOUNT	818	2085
ROUNDING	0	-1
TOTAL ASSETS	<u>8888</u>	<u>10155</u>

For appendix (new current account) see following page.

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READING HOSPITAL RADIO BROADCASTING SERVICE
INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT FOR THE YEAR TO 31 DEC 2022

APPENDIX :

NEW current account 2022

INCOME	£
FUNDRAISING	550
DONATIONS	600
SUBSCRIPTIONS	0
MEMBERS FUNDS	0
GOODIES/SUNDRY SALES	0
TRANSFER/INTEREST	0
	<u>1150</u>
EXPENDITURE	
STUDIO MAINTENANCE	0
TELECOM/BROADBAND/STREAMING	0
PPL/INSURANCE/RADIO AUTHORITY/HBA	0
PA	0
MEMBERS MEETINGS/EVENTS	0
	<u>0</u>
SURPLUS / (DEFECIT)	1150
RESERVES B/FWD	0
SURPLUS / (DEFECIT) FOR YEAR	0
RESERVES C/FWD	<u>1150</u>
REPRESENTED BY	
INVESTMENT	0
CURRENT ACCOUNT	1150
ROUNDING	0
TOTAL ASSETS	<u>1150</u>

Approved by the Board of Trustees and signed on their behalf by



25/10/2023
Gerard Rocks
Chairman

Signature:



Date:

25/10/2023
Ann Beasley
Treasurer