



Thame Senior Friendship Centre

(Registered Charity No. 1039978)

Thame Senior Friendship Centre Trustees Report for the year ended 31st March 2021

Thame Senior Friendship Centre was formerly known as Thame & District Day Centre and was founded in 1986, originally sited within the Community Hub (Thame Cottage Hospital) in East Street Thame. Due to the changes in healthcare and the need to treat patients closer to home, Buckinghamshire Healthcare NHS Trust were under significant pressure to release extra clinic capacity. Therefore, the Board of Trustees took the decision to move to a new build, Thame Town Cricket Club in March 2019 with a license to occupy for the next 25 years. Thame Senior Friendship Centre, Town Council and Thame Town Cricket Club have collaborated to ensure the elderly community of Thame and surrounding villages have a service which suits the needs of its members in the 21st Century.

Aims of the Thame Senior Friendship Centre

The main aims of the Charity are:

- To provide a caring, sociable and flexible environment to meet the needs of the individual.
- Liaise and support the carers of members.
- Promote choice, dignity and independence, respecting the rights of our members and their carers.
- Work with Care Managers, health professionals, statutory and voluntary organisations to provide support for our members.

Trustees and officers

The following served as Trustees during the year:

Alison Champken-Woods (Chair)	Valerie Symonds
Nigel Champken-Woods	Janice Ingram
Nichola Dixon	Katherine Purbrick-Thompson
Ann Midwinter	Laura Fellowes
Keith Tattersfield	Leslie Vasquez
Claudia Baker	

Ensuring our work delivers our aims

We review our aims, objectives and activities each year and this has been particularly difficult due to the Covid-19 pandemic. Since our move to new premises in 2019 followed by the pandemic, outcomes for our members has meant that we have had to work very differently to support our members going forward which we have accomplished successfully. During the pandemic we have had to adapt to a changing environment, and we

have had to review the success of key activities for our vulnerable elderly community and adapt the service we provide. The focus of our work and our main objectives for the year continued to be supporting the elderly community of Thame and surrounding villages.

In order to continue supporting our members remotely, the Board of Trustees agreed not to furlough any staff during the pandemic.

The focus of our work

Our main objectives for the year continued to be supporting the elderly community of Thame and surrounding villages. However, our strategies had to change due to the pandemic and 'lockdowns' which saw us supporting our members remotely until such time as we were able to open again. Due to this we were awarded government coronavirus funding which was used to help change strategy and to meet our objectives which included:

- Purchase insulated bags for delivering hot food
- Supply fish and chips once a week to our members from November 2020 until 14th May 2021
- Provide a Christmas hamper to our members
- A voucher to our volunteers who would not claim for travel/deliveries
- A cream tea and Easter Egg to members at Easter
- Activity packs to our members weekly
- A schoolboy from Abingdon provided a weekly fact sheet for his Duke of Edinburgh Award.
- Work with other local agencies including, Oxfordshire County Council, Thame Town Council, Thame Town Cricket Club, Oxford Association of Care Providers, Oxford Community Foundation, Public Health England, Local businesses.

How our activities deliver public benefit

All our charitable activities focus on supporting the elderly community of Thame and surrounding villages and to identify the most effective way to support and further the charitable purposes for public benefit.

Who used and benefited from our services

Prior to closure on 17th March 2020, we had 63 members attending per week on a Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday. Of those 63, 3 members had transferred from the dementia friendly centre at Holton nr. Wheatly which closed in September 2019.

Thame is in the most rural part of South Oxfordshire, on the border with Buckinghamshire and accommodates members from both counties. It had become apparent that our waiting list had started to grow and the percentage of those on the waiting list had a confirmed diagnosis of dementia. Data for 2020/21 indicates an increase in referrals and in February 2021, Dementia Oxfordshire were supporting 1,977 individuals with dementia.

In normal circumstances the centre provides the following:

- A friendly volunteer will collect/take members home
- New friendships are made, and old ones renewed
- A variety of fun activities/relaxing hour
- A glass of sherry followed by a hot two-course lunch, catering for dietary needs
- After lunch a combination of entertainment and speakers after lunch

However, during the pandemic this changed and whilst most of the year saw us closed, we did manage to open for one month in October/November when South Oxfordshire was in tier 2, and we worked closely with a number of organisations to do this. Public Health England were pivotal in the Centre re-opening as were Oxfordshire County Council in providing PPE free of charge.

When the pandemic started Thame Senior Friendship joined regular webinars with Oxfordshire Association of Care Providers who provided regular updates and support.

The Centre fully re-opened again on 18th May 2021.

Financial Review

It has continued to be difficult to plan or develop services and income has dropped significantly due to the reduction in subscriptions. However, our administration/staffing costs have been reduced due to the retirement of the Centre Manager and the deputy post is currently vacant.

Principal Funding Sources

Over the years principal funding has been from Oxfordshire County Council but this has been reduced significantly over the last 5 years and Thame Town Council has over the last 3 years agreed to meet some of the shortfall. Oxfordshire County Council wish to see Thame Senior Friendship Centre become self-funding which has been difficult and the need for a Trustee with fundraising and sustainability experience is essential.

The Board of Trustees continue to identify funding streams for both capital and revenue and are aware of the significant publicised grant opportunities.

New Services

Kickstart scheme

During the pandemic, The Board of Trustees explored the possibility of Thame Senior Friendship Centre applying to be part of the Government 'Kickstart' scheme via Oxford City Council. We were successful in joining cohort 3 of the scheme via Oxford City Council with funding from the Department for Work and Pensions. This scheme supported an individual to work with TSFC as a support worker for a period of 6 months with training being provided by the Oxford Hub and the Centre. This scheme was a great success for TSFC with an individual working with us from July 2021 to December 2021 and this has culminated in the individual gaining permanent work at the John Radcliffe in Oxford.

Dementia Cafe

During the pandemic, TSFC waiting list increased to a total of 23 individuals wanting to attend but 50% had a confirmed diagnosis of dementia. Services unfortunately have been centred around Banbury leaving the communities within the South of the County at a significant disadvantage. Therefore, the Board of Trustees agreed to the formation of a dementia café for those individuals living with the disease and their family members/carers. The cafe opened in September 2021 at Thame Barns and Katie Smok, dementia adviser for Oxfordshire, attends the café every second Monday to answer questions and provide help.

Minibus

On Fridays, Thame Senior Friendship Centre has previously relied on the use of Meadowcroft minibus which has become unreliable, so the Board of Trustees agreed to apply for a grant from South Oxfordshire District Council for £15,000 towards the purchase of the minibus. The grant application was successful and TSFC now have their own minibus which you will see around Thame. We also received a donation of £8,000 from the Ludlow Trust which made up the shortfall.

Plans for the Future

Going forward Thame Senior Friendship Centre needs to recruit and appoint a Deputy Manager which may be difficult due to the employment market.

Structure

The Board of Trustees has 11 members who meet quarterly and are responsible for the strategic direction and policy of the charity. The 11 members are from a variety of professional backgrounds which are relevant to the work of the charity.

The day-to-day responsibility for the provision of the service lies with the Chair/Board of Trustees and the Manager has overall operational management of the Centre, the supervision of staff/volunteers ensuring good practice and the opportunity to develop new skills.

Governance

Thame Senior Friendship Centre is a small charity and the key function is one of governance rather than management

The constitution is the overarching document for the charity and since the appointment of some new Trustees all information and documentation has been reviewed.

Recruitment & Appointment of Trustees

All members of the Board of Trustees are involved in the planning, decision making and monitoring work with some Trustees taking an active role in the day-to-day work of the Centre. They give their time voluntarily and receive no benefits from the charity. There is good representation of the traditional business skills and healthcare skills in an effort to maintain a broad mix. In order to ensure this, applications can be made online via the website to become a trustee, applicants come via the Young Trustee Programme at the Oxford, or the local community puts forward a potential Trustee.

Trustee Induction and Training

Trustees initially have 1:1's with the chair of Trustees and can shadow them/any other Trustee if required. Information on becoming a Trustee is provided along with the constitution, strategic and sustainability plan and accounts.

Risk Management

Risk Assessments were reviewed and updated because of Covid-19 and all policies were changed to reflect the necessary requirements in view of the pandemic. This facilitated the opening of the Centre in October/November 2020 for a period of a month before restrictions were in place again late 2020. The opening was supported by Public Health England, Oxfordshire Association of Care Providers.

Volunteers/Staff/Community

The last 2 years have been a difficult for our members and we have seen the elderly community of Thame and District being adversely affected by the pandemic in relation to their mobility and well-being. Volunteers and staff have all had to adapt to a different time and ways of working. I would like to thank our members of staff, volunteers, the Board of Trustees, Thame Town Cricket Club, Oxfordshire Association of Care Providers, Oxford Community Foundation, Public Health England/Thames Valley, local businesses for all their

support during the pandemic. This combined with the financial support from the Government Coronavirus Community Fund facilitated regular visits to our members and the delivery of hampers and weekly fish and chips.

TSFC have been extremely well supported during the pandemic which is evident in that we have started the dementia café a new service and we now have our own minibus. When many centres have been closed for most of the pandemic or closed permanently, we have fared extremely well.