

## **CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S REPORT TO AGM 2021**

### **(incorporating the activities of the Board of Trustees and National Council)**

**This report covers activities from 1 April 2020 - 31 March 2021**

The Members of the Board of Trustees for year ending 31 March 2021 were:-

Margaret Moffat	Chairman
George Kempton	Vice Chairman
Paul Farenden	Honorary Treasurer
Audrey Harris	Danny Mortimer
Chris Kitchen	Clare Panniker
Wendy Lindley	David Paterson
Cynthia Matthews	

Members of the National Council for the year ending 31 March 2021 were:-

Margaret Moffat - Chairman	
George Kempton - Vice Chairman	
Michael Bennett - North East Thames	Helen Dempster - South Wales
Barbara Ham - West of England	Jenny King – East Anglia
Roslyn Lobo - South West Thames	Judith McMurray – Scotland
Pat Oliver - Oxford	Sharon Slack – North West
Barbara Smart - North West resigned	Loreen Smith – Scotland
Lorraine Taylor - North West Thames	Rosemary White – Wessex
Sue Williams – Midlands	Jack Yan - South East Thames

### **Board of Trustees**

Trustees have control of the charity and its funds and are responsible for the management of the charity. The Trustee Board comprises up to six elected trustees who must be members and who are nominated by the National Council and appointed as Trustees by the current Trustees. At least one of the elected trustees will be able to advise on issues relating to the charity in Scotland and at least one other of the elected Trustees will be able to advise on issues relating to the charity in Wales. In addition the Board includes up to five co-opted Trustees with particular skills of value to the charity who are appointed by the Trustees. The co-opted Trustees need not be members and some or all of them may be ex officio Trustees.

Trustees' responsibilities include:-

- to delegate appropriate functions to committees consisting of two or more individuals appointed by them
- to make rules, bylaws or standing orders consistent with the Constitution to govern proceedings at meetings of the Trustees, at general meetings or at committee meetings
- to make rules or regulations consistent with the Constitution to govern the administration of the charity including the bank accounts and commitment of funds
- to make codes to govern the conduct of Trustees and the members of the charity in relation to one another, and to the charity's employees and volunteers
- to resolve, or establish procedures to assist the resolution of disputes within the charity
- to exercise any powers of the charity which are not reserved to a general meeting

### **National Council**

The roles and responsibilities of the National Council include:-

- supporting the activities of the charity
- nominating Trustees for the charity
- communicating the policies of the charity to branches and members
- representing the view of branches and members and communicating these to Trustees
- acting as an advisory body to the charity and the Trustees

National Council members are the prime conduit for information to and from members and Trustees. Trustees receive National Council meeting papers and draft minutes for information and discussion and to give any necessary approvals to recommendations.

### **2020-21**

'Let's Build a Future' was my rallying call at the last AGM and Conference, held in Coventry in November 2019. We were optimistically looking forward with no suspicion that things would change so dramatically at the beginning of 2020. The first UK cases of Covid-19 were in January 2020 in Yorkshire and they then spread rapidly, necessitating decisions to suspend branch meetings and close Central Office.

- For the year 2020-21, the Board of Trustees met three times, once by means of a conference call and twice using Zoom.
- National Council in effect did not meet during the year, but had communications with the Chair and Vice Chair, namely Margaret Moffat and George Kempton

The main decisions of the Trustees were to:

- reduce the capitation fee for 2020-21 from £20 to £10
- postpone the major recruitment campaign utilising the P60 until 2022
- cancel the AGM scheduled for October 2020 as a result of which the existing Chair and Vice Chair agreed to continue in post for a further year, both having completed the normal 3 year term of office.

During the year however, activities did not cease. We encouraged members to join the Facebook page, introduced regional newsletters in the South East, South West, North West and Scotland, initiated monthly letters to members from the Chief Executive, introduced online talks from May 19<sup>th</sup> 2020 and started a Book Club in November 2020.

The Mirthy talks were held on a fortnightly basis and were free of charge to members and the Fellowship until the end of 2020. There was then a charge of £150 per talk. 17 talks were provided at no cost to the Fellowship. Followers of the Fellowship Facebook page had increased to over 1600 by the end of March 2021. The Book Club started with one of the recommendations being The Thursday Murder Club by Richard Osman, a bestseller in both hardback and paperback during 2020-21.

During the year, it was also possible to persuade a number of our members to allow us to send correspondence by email rather than post and this made the delivery of the Chief Executive's letter so much more timely.

Thanks to the sterling efforts of Fellowship Project Officer Bob Middleton, a £75,000 grant was secured from the National Lottery. A small part of this was then utilised to establish our first virtual branch - Central Manchester.

The introduction of the vaccine in late 2020 led to a planned reduction of restrictions leading into 2021-22. Many members will have seen Vice President Vic Griffiths and his wife Penny receiving their jabs in pictures on television and national newspapers.

Winchester Cathedral hosted a virtual Carol Service as a thank you to the NHS in December 2020, and, thanks to our patron Ken Jarrold CBE, Fellowship members were invited to take part.

It was with great sadness that we learned that our Patron Ethel Armstrong had passed away in August 2020. Her funeral, held in Lanchester, County Durham, was attended by several members of the NHS Retirement Fellowship and the eulogy was delivered by Ken Jarrold.

In these unprecedented times it was gratifying to know that the Fellowship could arrange for Joan Dew to receive more than 100 cards from members and branches on the occasion of her 100<sup>th</sup> birthday. This typifies the spirit of the NHS Retirement Fellowship and I am grateful to everyone who has played a part in enabling the Fellowship to remain sustainable during these very difficult times.

The Future Group met several times during the lockdown and considered proposals for the Future of the Fellowship. These will be presented by the Chief Executive to Conference during the afternoon session

**John Rostill OBE**

Chief Executive

October 2021