

# **Friends of Victoria Hospital Wimborne**

Registered Charity Number:299230

## **Annual General Meeting Allendale House 6.30pm 18th September 2025**

### AGENDA

1. Minutes of 2024 Annual General Meeting (**Proposer/Seconder**)
2. Apologies for absence
3. Election of Officers
4. Annual Report of the Trustees
5. Talk by Mr Charles Baker, Surgeon – Less is more
6. Hospital Management Report (BR)
7. Treasurer's Report
8. Appointment of Auditor
9. Any other business

Present:- Dr D Pope (President) Mrs A Salter (Chair)  
Mrs J Leeder (Treasurer) Mrs S Saddler (Secretary)  
Mr B Rootes (Locality Manager DHC) Plus 25 other attendees

1. The move of our **Charity Shop** to 69 High Street. Sharon Powell (Trustee) praised the shop managers and volunteers for the smooth transition and confirmed the shop was attracting high quality donations.
2. Development of the **X-ray Department** and purchase of state-of-the-art X-ray equipment (£307k) contribution.
3. **Cardiac Ultrasound machine** (£96k). This was selected by BBC South as a project worth of sharing across the region and many of you saw Ed Salt and the TV coverage.
4. The Friends continue to fund Therapy Sessions provided by “Elevate” for inpatients undergoing rehabilitation. (156 sessions – gardening, nature, art, music and conversation). Here is one quote from Valentine’s Day **“We talked of Valentine’s Day and the flowers associated**. Everyone chose a rose from my postcard collection, and we talked about their rose choices. We listened to various songs with roses in and everyone swayed and bobbed in time. **A** made a card for her grandson who visits regularly, and **P** made hers in memory of Ed “I haven’t thought of Valentines for years but now it’s like Ed is here in the room with me. **Y** thought she might sell hers and **X** tucked hers into her Bible. They all eagerly cut out more hearts to give to staff. Tales of long deceased husbands were shared – a little sadness but overwhelmingly loveliness and an emotional morning”.
5. Both the **Lewis Manning Trust** and **Elevate** demonstrate the added value that the Friends can offer to support patients in the Hospital and from the Community. Services that The NHS value but cannot afford.

Finally, The Chairman talked about the acre of land that the Friends have purchased and transferred to DHC on 28 March 2024. This purchase fully funded by the Friends means that it will be possible to expand the hospital in future to help meet changing health needs. Plans have been agreed to develop this into a car park to increase parking options for staff and patients as new services are provided at the Hospital. The Friends are fully funding this work. It is a "Once in a lifetime opportunity to secure the land for the future of the Hospital". Tributes go to those who originally highlighted this need in the Dorset Plan and for Trustees who have worked tirelessly to make this happen.

This development and the subsequent plans to develop the Minor Injury Unit and Physiotherapy Department (Phase 2) during 2025 will account for almost all of our current funds. Costs on the car park development have increased as have our Phase 2 plans. These additional costs fall in the region of £0.5m. So, The Friends will need to think carefully about how we manage these escalating costs.

As always with the NHS we are in a time of change. There are over 346 Community Hospitals in England. They play an important role in intermediate care, they are often a focus for integration of staff and services and increasingly some services are becoming aligned and integrated more with the Acute Hospitals which can provide benefits which have seen here in Wimborne in relation to theatre throughput and management of waiting lists. One of the targets for the new Government (as set out in their manifesto) is to introduce shared waiting lists to pool resources across neighbouring hospitals to reduce waiting lists. *That has already happened in Dorset.*

The Chairman concluded by saying the new Government has ordered a rapid investigation to be delivered by September 2024 with its findings providing a basis for a 10-year plan to reform the NHS. Locally the Friends hope to become more involved and engaged with NHS Dorset Planning in relation to the role of Community Hospitals.

### **Hospital Management Report - Locality Manager, Brad Rootes (BR)**

BR explained that DHC and Dorset County Hospital (DCH) continue to work together. As the work has developed, DHC now has a number of joint roles shared with Dorset County hospital. Initially this was the Chair of the Board of Trustees' and the Chief Executive, however since then The Chief Nursing Officer, Director for People and Culture, Director of Corporate Affairs, Director of Finance, and the Director of Estates are all now shared post between DHC and DCH. DHC and DCH are currently working on a 5-year joint strategy together.

Matthew Bryant, Chief Executive describes the DHC/DCH relationship as working together as a federated model. The two trusts are working together as closely as is sensible to provide the most effective and efficient care we can. At the same time, both retain their separate identities and focus on looking outwards to work with our other partners in the Integrated Care System.

Within DHC, there are a few additional changes happening within our executive team, which include the Chief Medical Officer, Chief Operating Officer and Service Director for Community Services have all left or leaving. Alex Lister has taken up the interim role of Service Director. Alex started on the 4<sup>th</sup> of Jun and will be working with DHC for 6 months. Alex's substantive role is Deputy COO for UHD.

BR expressed his appreciation and gratitude for the work that the Friends do. He had had the pleasure of working with the Friends for the past 7 years. During this time, he had seen trustees leave after many years of service and new trustees join the Friends, including the handover of the Chair of the Friends from June to Anne. During this time, the commitment to patients, staff, DHC and the hospital has never wavered, and has gone from strength to strength.

From the Friends 5 year strategy, the vision is: **"To improve healthcare for local people by working in partnership with all health and associated services to achieve the very best care at Wimborne Hospital"**. His opinion is that The Friends do what it says on the tin! Examples of this include:-

The Friends' investment (alongside a legacy) in x-ray services at VHW significantly improved the appearance of the x-ray department. In addition, the installation of two new x-ray machines with the power of intelligent technology ensures accurate and high-quality diagnostics required from the first x-ray taken. Because of this and with an increase in referrals, we have been able to increase the activity levels within the x-ray department by 20%. Within Radiology Services, urgent x-ray should be seen within 3 weeks. At VHW 95% are seen within 2 weeks, 5% within 3 weeks. Routine referrals, the target is 6 weeks, with most patients seen within 3 weeks.

The Friends agreed to purchase a new Echo Machine for the Cardiology service. BR met with the lead physiologist and asked her, now that they have been utilising the new echo for a while, about the major benefits. Maxine stated: In every way, it is better for the patient. The clarity and detail of the echoes are far superior to the previous echo and provides more accurate measurement. This in turn results in a significant decrease of patients having to have repeats echoes at UHD or Southampton. In addition, we can now upload the echo onto UHDs storage platform. So now UHD and Southampton have access to high quality echoes done at VHW, which has significantly reduced the requirement to rescan, reducing impact on both patient and staff.

Last year, the Friends agreed to purchase a Slave Monitor for the Day Surgery Unit. David Dickson, retired Consultant Anaesthetist explained the benefit. There are two benefits of the Slave Monitor. Firstly, for staff, who no longer need to keep their heads turned to view the monitor and stay in that position for the length of the procedure. This has reduced neck strain on staff. Secondly, as this gives a slightly different view, the consultant now has two views if required, which enhances patient outcomes.

These are just three examples of many, where the Friends have, in his opinion not only met but exceeded their vision.

On behalf of DHC, BR thanked The Friends for their continued support to patients, staff and the community the Hospital serves.

### **Treasurer's Report**

Jenny Leeder (newly appointed Treasurer) provided the Treasurer's Report. Details of the draft accounts were published in the latest Newsletter and we have now had the final accounts. There are, as always, a few minor variations between draft and final accounts but overall funds held are as shown. This in turn means the income and expenses recorded are a true reflection even if perhaps allocated to varying categories.

An example of what was meant about categories is the subscriptions. They are notably down year on year, but the drop may be exaggerated because some of that income was allocated to the incorrect category in 2023. However, there is certainly room for improvement over this coming tax year. Overall, we consider the drop is about 13% rather than the 32% it reflects

From the figures we can see that the last tax year has brought significant drops in legacy payments, but the current year's figures are probably more reflective of what we may receive in years to come. This aspect is out of our control, and I can see 22/23 was an exceptional year for legacies.

The interest received was excellent and this was on the back of higher interest rates in deposits than had been experienced in previous years, and that, along with some low-risk investments have produced some excellent returns but those investment accounts are now closed.

The result of the total value of the interest received was that we needed a full audit yet again rather than the soft touch audit. That change in auditing was given at short notice and that is why the final accounts have been later than we would prefer.

Going forward JL has established a new accounting system for our records which I think will assist the accountants when we come to year end. Further, unless we have an extraordinary income, it is expected that the accounts will be a soft touch and therefore timelier.

As far as the interest we can expect over the next year that will be more challenging. The remaining interest bearing accounts, of which we have 7, have a mix of interest rates, fixed and variable, and notice periods and it is now time to explore options for short term bonds with more attractive rates. We are now kept fully informed of project costs and expenditure to date along with expected timescales so this will help us to identify the most appropriate new accounts.

The goal this year is to try and maximise interest rates while managing the savings levels within FCA guarantees and when we are not able to keep to the £85,000 limit then retain funds in those accounts which are Charity Based.

### **Appointment of Auditor**

It was proposed that Francis Clark remain our Auditors for a further year (2024/2025). Proposed by Melanie Fawcett and Seconded by Sharon Powell. It is our intention to go out to the market for 2025/2026.

### **Any Other Business**

The President expressed his confidence in the Trustee body after many changes this year. We have a strong team with extensive experience and expertise across many professions.

He wanted to thank Terry Wheeler, Robin Cook, Dianne Marsh and Linda Bowman who in their various ways had made sure that the land to the rear of the Hospital was included in the Core Strategy. Without them it would not have been possible to acquire the land for immediate development as a car park and also to hold it for future hospital development.

The meeting closed at 8 pm.