

PALS AGM 29th March 2023 at 6.30pm on Zoom

1. Present - Paula Elsley, Helen Randall, Jane West, Emma Potter, Tim and Faye Snook, Henry Banks, Robin Ireland, Fiona MacPherson, May Ebbage-Taylor, Kayla Bell and Jo West

Apologies - Gill Waite and Susan Haines

2. Minutes from last AGM - These were approved and signed by the Chair.

3. Chairman's report - Paula presented her report (see below).

4. Manager's report - Helen presented her report (see below). Henry thanked Helen for her work.

5. Financial report - Helen presented a summary of the finances.

6. Election of Officers -

Chair Jane proposed by Paula and seconded by Henry.

Vice-Chair Paula proposed by Robin and seconded by Tim.

Secretary Emma proposed by Paula and seconded by Robin and Jane.

Treasurer Henry offered to stand in this role, which was seconded by Jane and Robin.

All Officers accepted their positions.

7. AOB - Henry shared that his wife would consider being a Trustee and could take over the role of treasurer. He also had another parent in mind who might like to become a Trustee, which he would share with the Chair outside of this meeting. It was raised that having a husband and wife on the board could be a concern, but Henry offered to stand down as a Trustee if his wife did become one, and he'd sit on the committee board instead. Those present felt that finding a treasurer was key, so Helen can concentrate on her role of running the charity and not be the part time treasurer.

Henry also offered to work with Helen on the task of finding a more centrally located office, as we believe that our time at our current office will end soon.

Everyone was thanked for coming along. Fiona commented that the meeting had been really good. Jo, as a parent shared how grateful she was to every volunteer that supports PALS. Jane ended the meeting by saying a big thank you to Paula as she stands down as Chair, for all her hard work over the years, saying that she had "big shoes to fill".

8. Date of next meeting - October 2023

Approved by *Jo West*

Approved on *15/11/23*

PALS Chairman's AGM report 2022

(Covering April 2021 – March 2022)

In spite of the many challenges due to the Covid 19 pandemic Helen put together an incredible programme of activities for all age groups, both on Zoom and face to face. Helen received great support from Jess, our support worker, in making sure that all age groups had the best possible time. None of this could have happened without our incredible team of volunteers.

During the pandemic PALS has looked very different and had to adapt its methods of delivering activities. It's been challenging working around government guidance which has regularly changed. Helen's done a fantastic job and handled the complex planning required with great professionalism.

In order for what we offer to remain relevant we've regularly reviewed our programme so that we can offer the best possible service to our members. It's very important that PALS members are able to give feedback to Helen on what they would like to see on our programmes. Feedback is also welcome from parents on anything ranging from possible improvements to our website, ideas for activities or fundraising ideas.

We've continued an important area of our work in building links with the local community through networking and joint working with other charities and groups.

As well as dealing with the difficulties that Covid 19 presented our management committee have continued to focus on key areas which included governance, training and raising the charity's profile in the local media and on our social media platforms.

We have a fantastic fundraising committee, Emma and Faye who meet with Helen regularly and have some very creative fundraising ideas! I'd like to thank them for giving up their time and for their continued commitment.

As you can imagine the pandemic has impacted on our fundraising over the last year. However, we are very grateful for the donations received which included £1,100 from the Berkshire Masonic Charity, an amazing £4066.19 from Elstree School, £1,155 from a fishing competition organised by Charlotte's dad Tom, £1,000 from Barratt Development, £3,400 from West Berkshire Council's respite funds, £2,000 Lambert Charitable Trust, £6,000 from

Greenham Trust Ltd and £1,000 from Thatcham Town Council. We also received further donations through the Good Exchange platform.

Covid 19 has also meant that we've not been able to attend or run all of our usual events. Attendance at events is important; not only for fundraising and increasing the charity's profile, but it can open doors for other things too.

I would like to thank Helen for her continued commitment, energy and enthusiasm that she brings to her role. She is a great ambassador for PALS and is a real asset to the charity. PALS would not be where it is today without her hard work. I've enjoyed working with Helen as we have such a great working relationship and are definitely on the same page! We are in contact most days by either phone, text, email, WhatsApp and Facebook Messenger. Quite often all of them!

I'd like to thank Kennet School for allowing us to use the PDR. I would also like to thank Elstree for their continued support. Thanks also to Sue, our bookkeeper, for kindly giving her time to do our payroll. Thanks to Jacob for his help with our website and IT support. I'd like to thank Catherine and Peter Haig for the continued use of the office.

I'd also like to thank our committee members and trustees for giving up their time and for all of their hard work on behalf of PALS. There's a huge amount of work that goes on behind the scenes in order to keep the charity running.

PALS is a great charity to be a part of and although the last year has been a very challenging and different one we have continued to move the charity forward. PALS is in a good place and will continue to offer a great programme for all of our members.

I look forward to seeing what the next year will bring.

Paula Elsley
PALS Chairman

29th March 2023

PALS Manager's AGM Report 2021/22

Well what an interesting year we have had. As Paula has already said this AGM reflects on our last financial year, so from April of 2021 to March of last year.

The year started with lateral flow testing for Covid, face masks, cleaning and sanitising everything, lots of outside activities, visits to Henwick Farm, Zoom meetings were still a thing, some one-to-one work with some of our more vulnerable members and our usual groups split into smaller school/age groups, it all seems so long ago now!

Tuesday afternoons would bring Fun Factory as usual, although a different venue, as we were not able to hire our usual hall due to restrictions from the school. We did crafts, games and as the year went on our activities became more like our usual programme of the fun things we do. One of my highlights with this group will always be our link with Willows Edge and this is back up and running with two trips per term to visit the residents, which is great for the young and not so young.

Fridays brought Youth Group and we decided to run this every week during the summer term, so each group had a meeting once a fortnight, as they usually would pre-Covid times. We rejoined the groups back up together in September and as with Fun Factory, as the year went on we returned to our usual activities. We are extremely grateful for the PDR's continued support of PALS throughout the pandemic.

Both groups took part in an art project organised by Thatcham Town Council, reflecting on the difficult times that everyone had faced during the pandemic and encouraging people to write their thoughts about the lockdowns, both positive and negative. We spent many an hour painting lots of different shaped cardboard.

The Young Adults group was held fortnightly and was a mix of Zooms and outside activities as well. We enjoyed picnics, walks and just being together, before returning to new activities, including a trip to the VR venue at Greenham Business Park for a gaming session.

The school holidays enabled us to thankfully do all the usual things we do, visits to the Five a Day Market, sailing, archery, visiting the alpacas, a day at PGL, theatre trips, pottery and lantern building, to name a few.

We were also able to return to PGL for our residential and had a fab time, abseiling, orienteering and canoeing.

We are now back to our usual sessions and long may this continue, but we always know that Zoom is never too far away should we need it!

Our link with Elstree School continues, for which we are extremely grateful and we visit them at least once a term. The school provides a small team of helpers at each session and it's great to see these children grow in confidence with helping children who may be different from them in some ways. And I'm thrilled to say

that our link with Cheam School has been re-established and we are also visiting them once a term.

Our partnership with Berkshire Youth continues to grow with their centre now in Newbury, enabling them to link more effectively with us and other youth organisations.

We have welcomed four new members to PALS.

I must thank all of our volunteers as without them none of this would be possible. You are all amazing! And a special mention to Jess, who continues to support every session we run!

Emma and Faye have continued to help with fundraising and to raise the profile of PALS. We meet on a regular basis to look at ways that we can do this. Also, a big thank you to Sue who continues to volunteer quietly behind the scenes completing our payroll each month, despite being in Devon!

Recruiting of volunteers is always on our agenda and the Volunteer Centre has always been good to us and signpost any potential volunteers our way when they can.

Behind the scenes Paula and I have spent a lot of time on Zoom doing all the good governance and admin needed to run the charity.

Raising our awareness continues to be very important. Our social media platforms are regularly updated and the number of followers is growing.

Fundraising picked up again in the year, and the return of Thatcham Funday and Christmas lights and Speen fete brought in some funds and increased our profile.

Rufus, one of our older PALS, organised a cake sale at his college and Louise's parents have been busy organising stalls at Thatcham car boot sale, and this has raised several hundred pounds for which we are very grateful.

Greenham Trust has been extremely supportive with their grants and match funding. We continue to have a fantastic relationship with Sainsbury's Newbury and were able to return to the store for a collection day at Christmas.

During this year, we were partnered with Reading Oddfellows and what a busy year we had with them, Paula and I had to learn how to bowl, I had to wear a posh dress and eat lots of cake, but their support raised over £4k, which was absolutely amazing, and they are now PALS' friends for life!

I would like to take a moment to thank the committee, especially Paula, who spends many hours each month supporting myself and the charity.

As I near the start of my ninth year with PALS, I just wanted to end with how much I enjoy working for PALS. I think that we have continued to make great progress over this period despite the many challenges that we have all faced, and firmly believe that we have made and continue to make a positive difference to the young people that we support.

Helen Randall
PALS Manager
28th March 2023