

## **PALS AGM 15<sup>th</sup> Nov 2023 at 6pm on Zoom**

**1. Present** - Paula Elsley, Helen Randall, Jane West, Emma Potter, Henry Banks, Robin Ireland and Jo West

**Apologies** - Kayla Bell

**2. Minutes from last AGM** - These were approved and signed by the Chair. A new office location was the only outstanding action from the last AGM.

**3. Chairman's report** - Jane presented her report (see below) and thanked the Trustees for their work.

**4. Manager's report** - Helen presented her report (see below).

**5. Financial report** - Helen presented a summary of the finances. All present were in approval of the finances. Henry commented that we were in a healthy position with our reserves.

### **6. Election of Officers** -

**Chair** Jane proposed by Paula and seconded by Henry and Robin.

**Vice-Chair** Paula proposed by Robin and seconded by Henry.

**Secretary** Emma proposed by Paula and seconded by Henry.

**Treasurer** Jane offered to remain in this position as an interim. Henry proposed this, which was seconded by Paula.

All Officers accepted their positions.

**7. AOB** - Next year's focus will be on finding a new office and resurrecting the awards party.

Everyone was thanked for coming along.

**8. Date of next meeting** - November 2024

Approved by .....

Approved on .....

## **PALS AGM 19<sup>th</sup> October 2023**

### **Chair's Report**

I would like to start by thanking everybody for giving up their time to attend this evening, and all the other time which is given up supporting PALS. The charity is only able to offer the amazing experiences it does to its members, through your contribution.

The long shadow of Covid is finally fading and we have been able to offer some fantastic activities over the last year. Helen's imagination and creativity ensures there are always new and exciting activities for the PALS to participate in.

I would like to extend my deepest thanks to Helen for her hard work and commitment, what you do really does change lives. I know the committee would also like to extend their heartfelt appreciation.

The charity is in good financial health but this is not something which we take for granted. It is due to the continuous fundraising efforts by parents, staff and volunteers. We have formed some very useful contacts over the last year which we hope will prove helpful in raising our profile and ability to fundraise.

I would ask families and friends to support PALS in any way they can; our presence at Sainsbury's, St Nicolas Church coffee mornings, Speen fete and Thatcham Funday amongst others, would all benefit from additional help and support. Even if you can only offer an hour or two it makes a huge difference.

An emerging focus last year was the need to find alternative office space, this will continue to be a key focus for the coming year. We are grateful to the Haig family, for the free accommodation we have benefited from for many years, but it is now time to find a base closer to Newbury and which suits the changing needs of the charity.

I would like to thank Tim Snook, who has recently stepped down as a Trustee, for his contribution to the charity. We wish you the very best. As we lose one member, we gain another, congratulations to our Trustee Emma Potter on her new arrival, Sebastian.

Finally, as we reflect on the last year, I want to extend huge thanks to our volunteers, you do an amazing job and we simply couldn't do it without you.

Jane West

Chair

## **PALS Manager's AGM Report 2022/23**

Well what a busy year we have had! As we have already said this AGM reflects on our last financial year, so from April of 2022 to March of this year and I am relieved to say that things have certainly returned back to normal for us after a difficult few years.

Fun Factory continues on a Tuesday afternoon and we have had a great year! We have enjoyed crafts, games, cooking and in the nicest months enjoy going out and about to the park or to get an ice cream. One of my highlights with this group will always be our link with Willows Edge and this is back up and running with a visit or two per term to visit the residents, which is great for the young and not so young.

Alternate Fridays brings our Youth Group sessions, and we are extremely grateful for the PDR's continued support of PALS. These sessions are usually just a catch for our young members to sit and chat with each other, or if they wish we can play games, may occasionally have a themed activity or as with the younger ones, everyone likes a visit to the local shop for an ice cream.

The Young Adults group continues to meet monthly, usually in a different venue each month, bowling, laser quest, a local pub, but again just a get together at Fizz for a pizza and catch up is also enjoyed.

During the school holidays we have enjoyed visits to the Five a Day Market, sailing, archery, visiting the alpacas, theatre trips, pottery and lantern building, to name a few.

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

Our links with Elstree School and Cheam School continues, for which we are extremely grateful and we visit them at least once a term. The schools 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.

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 two 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 opportunities are beginning to return to pre pandemic levels, with the return of Thatcham Funday and Christmas lights and Speen fete, which brought in some funds and increased our profile.

Louise's parents continue to organise 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.

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 always I just wanted to end with how much I enjoy working for PALS. I think that we have continued to make great progress, 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**  
**18<sup>th</sup> October 2023**