

Little Hearts Matter

Annual Review 08-09



Little Hearts Matter

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One of the highlights of my year is the Little Hearts Matter Annual General Meeting when the whole community of our charity comes together. My various jobs take me into many meetings but this one is different for many reasons.

Centrally, it is always full of children as we meet over two days with activities arranged for them while the adults 'do the business'. The evening before the AGM is full of children and teenagers enjoying themselves under the watchful eye of staff while parents and other relatives try to relax over a meal and share experiences together. To see children chasing around or enjoying the disco you would have to remind yourself of the restrictions they will face in the future.

The fact that two decades ago many of these children would not have survived at all gives poignancy and energy to the occasion. I have watched many of them grow up, shared family anxiety, learned of the challenges that face them. They touch my heart!

The families are inspirational. Not only do they deal with all the problems of their own child, facing continual treatment, struggling with institutions and bureaucracies but they combine this with an interest in others. Parents, siblings, grandparents, aunts, uncles and friends work together to support the charity so that other children can receive its services.

So in the middle of a noisy evening, one of enjoyment and fun, I am able to chat with these remarkable people who will face pain and anxiety on behalf of their children. They will then take part in the Annual Meeting and use time to learn more about what is happening in the charity, able to influence what we do.

This is their charity, they use it, shape it and support it. For me it is a privilege to be included and to add my warm thanks for all they are and do.

foreword



"We got back earlier from our first AGM and Open Day and just wanted to say thank you for such an organised, interesting and informative and positive event. We really enjoyed it. It was good to catch up and meet new families."

Family member

"Been visiting site since we had David but recent changes to it are fantastic, and it is ten times more helpful than it was before, and it was always a bit of a lifeline - thank you all so much for your help and support."

Family member

chair's report



Pete Turner

As we move into 2009, I am again very happy to report another successful year for Little Hearts Matter. 2008 saw the start of the "credit crunch" - a term which has been widely used in the media, but is often not fully understood by all. As a charity, the basic impact is that people have less disposable income, and charity donations are one of the first things which people look at reducing or stopping altogether. It also impacts the amount of corporate sponsorship and donations which are available, as companies are tightening budgets. Despite this, we continue to see large donations and fundraising efforts from our members and friends, for which we are very appreciative, and as a board of Trustees, we will continue to look at ways of improving the efficiency of our operations, whilst striving to improve the services to our membership.

Our staff team continue to do a sterling job, supporting our ever growing membership, and I want to pass on the thanks of myself, and the whole of the Trustee Board for the effort they continue to make - they really are the heartbeat of our charity, without whom we would not be able to achieve many of our charity's objectives.

We have seen a number of significant developments over the last year, all helping to improve the services we offer our membership. Firstly, we have employed a Youth Development Officer. This has enabled us to work much more closely with our junior members over the age of 10, developing specific support for these children as they deal with the transition into adulthood for the first time, and is starting to get them much more closely involved in the running of the charity through the development of a

Youth Council. There is still a great deal of work to do with this ever growing group of children, but we have made significant strides in engaging with them in their environment. Additionally, this year has seen the development of a brand new website for Little Hearts Matter. This is a more user friendly site, which will enable us to be much more proactive in the support we are able to offer our membership.

Looking into the future, we are constantly reviewing ways to improve the services we offer to our membership, and in the current economic environment, striving to provide these improved services in a more efficient and cost effective way. Everything we do as a Board of Trustees is to ensure our membership receives the best possible support at all stages of the challenges our families face.

Finally, I would like to pass on a big thank you to our membership, who continue to donate and raise funds for Little Hearts Matter - and continue to provide the majority of our income. We are constantly delighted at the commitment of our members and friends and the efforts they are prepared to make to help raise money for us, and it is this which drives the Board of Trustees, two thirds of whom are also full members of the charity, to ensure we deliver the best service we can to continue to support all our families throughout their greatest challenges.



chief executive report



Suzie Hutchinson

"The Youth Council is important because it gives the young members the opportunity to voice their thoughts and needs of what the charity should do to meet their ever changing requirements."

Family member

As we move into 2009 it is clear that as a member of the charitable sector we will face many new challenges. The predictions for charitable income are bleak and ensuring that Little Hearts Matter has a consistent funding has to be one of the main priorities for the next few years.

However the greatest challenges of all have to be for the children born with single ventricle heart disease, as they learn to cope with the restrictions that their heart condition creates. For their parents as they learn to support and protect their disabled child, and for the brothers and sisters, grandparents and friends as they try to offer support whilst learning to cope themselves.

Little Hearts Matter's main role and constant aim will be to support these families, offering services they have requested to help them understand and cope with the rollercoaster that is their life every day life. The charity team of Trustees, staff and volunteers plan to meet the growing needs of our ever increasing number of members in new and exciting ways.

Our most important communication tool is the website. Work to develop the services that it offers culminated in the early part of 2009. The new site offers easier messaging and more information as well as being bright and welcoming.

Going to school is such a wonderful step forward but each child faces many new, challenging experiences in school some of which are created by their disabilities. The LHM support team have created a series of new information books to help both parents and teachers work together to enable each child to achieve their best. These new resources will be available in March.

As our membership grows so does the number of older children. The charity now

has more than 150 junior members over the age of 10. The appointment of the Youth Development Officer last year has allowed the charity to build a relationship with the teenage children. Their support and information needs have formed the basis of a number of new service developments that will be introduced over the next year such as a youth website - the Zipper Zone, a youth newsletter, lifestyle information and peer group events. The youth group propose to develop a Youth Council so that they can feed their service needs to the Trustee Board.

It is well documented that children with congenital heart disease often reach adulthood with little understanding of their heart condition, its treatments or the lifestyle restrictions that the conditions create. This causes problems as young people transfer into adult healthcare, look to form long-term relationships and build an independent adulthood. Starting the information process in teenage years is too late. Children affected with complex heart disorders have to gradually build an understanding of their heart condition and its challenges.

The support team are working to provide services for the five to ten year olds. Helping them from an early age will support them as they grow and eventually move into adulthood.

We strive to support wherever we can, working within the budget to carefully and imaginatively build services.



treasurer's report



David Baumber

Financial Review

The Statement of Financial Activities shows that there has been a net outflow of funds of £23,488. This has arisen due to decisions made to increase the levels of service and support offered by the Charity. Examples of this spend include extra filming for support DVDs, extra profile work to increase awareness, a bereavement event, new publications such as the feeding pack and antenatal booklet, and increased office resource for database and website development.

Everyone has contributed in generating funds for the Charity and the total income is comparable between the two accounting periods when the numbers are adjusted to take account of the different number of months in each period. It can be seen that a higher proportion of the income, however, has come from donations and fundraising (74% versus 58%) and these funds continue to be the lifeline of the Charity.

The Balance Sheet shows the financial position of the Charity as at 31 December 2008. There is an increase in tangible fixed assets due to the money spent on developing the new main LHM website and the new youth website (this is also the reason for the increase in creditors as we did not pay the suppliers until 2009). The fall in the cash position is the result of the net outflow of funds discussed above, but as can be seen there is still a strong cash position at the end of the year. The Trustees aim to always have between three and six months of core funding in the general fund bank account at any point in time.

Statement of Financial Activities As at 31 December 2008

	Nine months to 31 December 2008 £		Year ended 31 March 2008 £	
Incoming resources				
Donations	65,251	32.5%	82,287	30.3%
Fundraising	83,473	41.6%	76,088	28.1%
Grants	10,000	5.0%	20,000	7.4%
LHM Run	14,239	7.1%	28,100	10.4%
Tesco/Industrial Agents' Society	13,528	6.7%	40,000	14.7%
Other	14,075	7.1%	24,772	9.1%
Total income	200,566	100.0%	271,247	100.0%
Resources expended				
Cost of generating funds	(10,091)	4.5%	(15,665)	6.6%
Charitable activities:				
Salaries/agency staff	(108,956)	48.6%	(120,098)	50.4%
Building costs	(17,394)	7.8%	(22,402)	9.4%
PR/awareness	(17,142)	7.7%	(14,654)	6.1%
Open day	(9,640)	4.3%	(10,033)	4.2%
Filming	(9,606)	4.3%	(3,377)	1.4%
Publications	(7,448)	3.3%	(3,464)	1.4%
Travel	(7,224)	3.2%	(3,508)	1.5%
Other	(28,192)	12.6%	(35,721)	15.0%
Governance costs	(8,361)	3.7%	(9,603)	4.0%
Total expenditure	(224,054)	100.0%	(238,525)	100.0%
Net (expenditure)/income	(23,488)		32,722	
Opening funds balance	228,083		195,361	
Closing fund position	204,595		228,083	

Balance Sheet
As at 31 December 2008

	As at 31 December 2008		As at 31 March 2008	
	£	£	£	£
Tangible fixed assets		22,753		3,033
Current assets:				
Stock	-		271	
Debtors	6,647		6,377	
Cash	203,944		230,952	
	<u>210,591</u>		<u>237,600</u>	
Creditors:				
Amounts falling due within 1 year	<u>(28,749)</u>		<u>(12,550)</u>	
Net current assets		<u>181,842</u>		<u>225,050</u>
Net assets		<u>204,595</u>		<u>228,083</u>
<i>Analysed as:</i>				
<i>General</i>		<i>96,604</i>		<i>107,384</i>
<i>Restricted Funds</i>		<i>107,991</i>		<i>120,699</i>
Total Charity Funds		<u>204,595</u>		<u>228,083</u>

Copies of the full signed financial statements which also include the independent accountants report are available from the Little Hearts Matter office.