

Report from Chair of Trustees for year 2019-2020

My year as Chair of the Trustees has been a turbulent one.

Should we be VAT registered or not? The first item was to tackle the VAT situation. After much discussion and with reference to a wide ranging number of sources, we are satisfied that at this moment in time we do not need to be registered for VAT.

Cash Reserves

Following many complaints to the Management and Trustees regarding the level of our reserves, it was decided to gradually reduce our cash reserves down to the equivalent of 6 months normal expenditure as recommended by the Third Age Trust. This was achieved by reducing members' contributions for attendance at group meetings from £1 to 50p and also serving free coffee and biscuits at Horizons. As from January 2021 attendance fees will revert to being £1 per session.

Merger of Trustees and Management? It has been increasingly difficult recruiting volunteers to serve on our committees and after the matter was widely discussed it was decided that we would consider reverting to having just the one committee – an Executive Committee – members of which would be the Trustees as in previous years. We must now refer the matter to the Membership, either at the 2021 AGM or at an EGM. This would mean our Constitution would need to be rewritten. Maybe a huge surge of volunteers would reverse this decision!

Trustees Forum. Following a successful Trustees Forum in 2019 it was decided to hold another one in January 2020. This was well attended and all suggestions were looked into.

Covid-19. All groups had to be suspended following the invasion of this dreadful virus. As yet, we do not know for sure when a full return to normality will be achieved but we are aiming for a restart in January 2021. We would all much prefer for it to be sooner but we have to consider all members and we have to be absolutely sure that it will be as safe as possible for all members.

Pauline L Jones

Chair of Trustees