

Colchester Emergency Night Shelter

a company limited by guarantee

& a registered charity



Supplementary Report of the Trustees for the year ended 31 March 2015

Registered Company Number: 02475258 (England & Wales)

Registered Charity Number: 803328

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COLCHESTER EMERGENCY NIGHT SHELTER

Annual Report & Financial Statements for the year ended 31 March 2014

REFERENCE AND ADMINISTRATIVE DETAILS OF THE CHARITY, ITS TRUSTEES AND ADVISERS

Directors/Trustees:	Peter Kerr (Chairman) Sally Messenger (Acting Chair) Steve Bracey Julie Brice Teresa Hall Pauline Hart Gemma English Sarah Lauwo Charles Olley Ray Ricks Julia Ward	Resigned 7 January 2015 Appointed 20 May 2014 Appointed 19 November 2014 Resigned 25 September 2014 Resigned 2 July 2014 Appointed 19 November 2014 Appointed 25 September 2014; Resigned 18 March 2015 Appointed 13 May 2015 Resigned 30 June 2014
Manager	Marina Woodrow	
Company registration No:	02475258 (England and Wales)	
Charity registration No:	803328	
Registered Office and Principal Operating Address	39 – 41 Alexandra Road Colchester, Essex CO3 3DF	
Auditors providing Independent Examination:	Colchester Community Voluntary Services Winsley's House, High Street Colchester, Essex CO1 1UG	
Bankers:	National Westminster Bank Plc. 25 High Street Colchester, Essex CO1 1DG	
Solicitors:	Birkett Long LLP Essex House, 42 Crouch Street Colchester, Essex CO3 3HH	

Colchester Emergency Night Shelter has received support from the JP Getty Trust and from:

National Lottery
Charities Board

Colchester Borough
Council

Essex County
Council

Lloyds TSB Foundation
for England and Wales



REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2014

The trustees, who are also the directors of the charity for the purposes of the Companies Act 2006, present their report with the financial statements of the charity for the year ended 31 March 2015.

The annual general meeting of the charitable company for 2015 will be held

Chairman's Introduction

This is my first annual report for the shelter as the new Chair of the board of trustees. Peter Kerr retired last Autumn after many years of hard working supporting and helping the shelter and we all offer him our sincere thanks and best wishes for the future.

We have some new Trustees as well; Steve Bracey, Gemma English and Charlie Olley have all joined us in the last few months and can offer a variety of skills and experiences to complement our small but enthusiastic team. They are all very welcome and have already started working hard for us in a variety of areas. What we have in common is unwavering support for Marina and the staff at the shelter, who work tirelessly to ensure that those in need of a bed and support in Colchester can access what they need. There have been some major changes, both locally and nationally, that affect how we can offer care to people who need us; as always, Colchester Emergency Night Shelter responds and reacts with the best interests of the Service Users.

The Trustees had an 'Away day' in January this year – a whole day spent discussing the future of the Night Shelter! As things stand there are many aspects of the shelter that are in need of some updating and we spent some time discussing a new business plan for the next few years. There is still a lot to do on this but I am very optimistic about how the shelter is likely to develop and grow in the future. In the light of this Marina and John worked on our largest ever application for funding from the Lloyds Foundation; they were successful and we can now fund a full time post of Housing Manager. This will help the team enormously and provide an additional security for our Service Users in terms of secure move on accommodation. We have several other bids in the pipeline, hoping to fund other projects, we will all help to move the work of the shelter forwards.

Talking of money, we are as always looking to raise funds through charitable gifts and events. Steve Bracey persuaded the firm he works for, Lockton, to donate a substantial sum from their charity night and Gemma English has started work on a new fundraising event 'A brick in the wall' for when we hope to be able to plan for our own new building sometime in the future. Ian Messenger also helped Jordan get the new website up and running. We must also thank all those volunteers, who cook for us or give of their in other ways, without whom the shelter would not be able to run. Finally I'm grateful to the Sixth Form students of Sandon School in Chelmsford, who have adopted the shelter as their charity for the coming year. Let's hope they raise lots of money!

Finally, I would like to add my personal thanks to all the people associated with the shelter. I have learned so much since taking up the role as a Trustee and I look forward to many more years of support.

Sally Messenger

OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES

Principal Activity

The principal activity of the **Colchester Emergency Night Shelter** in the year under review was that of provider of temporary night shelter accommodation for single, homeless persons in the Colchester area.

The objects of the **Colchester Emergency Night Shelter** which are set out in the Articles of Association of the company are as follows;

(for) the relief of poverty by the provision of emergency and other accommodation advice and assistance for persons who are deemed homeless and are in need of such accommodation advice or assistance."

A copy of the full set of Memorandum and Articles of Association is available for inspection on application to the Secretary at the registered address.

Aims and Objectives

By following its objectives the **Night Shelter** aims to provide short-term emergency accommodation for the homeless and offer help and advice to enable them to find a permanent home. This is done by operating a non-rejection policy for admissions, and by maximising the opportunities made available to the Service Users for the development of their lives.

Ensuring our work delivers our aims

The trustees, staff and volunteers work together to enable the homeless to make new beginnings in their lives. The **Night Shelter**, which has beds for 20 people, mostly in double rooms, is open 7 days each week from 7.15pm in the evening until 9am the following day. It is also open Sunday afternoons and on Bank Holidays. Subsidised meals, free laundry and washing facilities are provided for Service Users for up to 28 days unless special circumstances make it necessary to extend this period. We also offer emotional, practical and resettlement support for our Service Users and put them in touch with other specialist agencies when we believe those agencies to be better equipped to cater for the individual's specific needs. And now funds are available we also offer education in life skills to help our Service Users cope with the world of independent living once they move on.

How our activities deliver public benefit

The trustees have complied with their duty in section 4 of the Charities' Act 2006 to have due regards to guidance published by the Charities' Commission on public benefit. We meet our aims and objectives time and time again, and honour in full the requirements of the Charities Act, which requires that we demonstrate a public benefit; that is a benefit in which the whole population can share. All our charitable activities focus on the relief and prevention of homelessness and are undertaken to further our charitable purposes for the public benefit. Our main activities and who we try to help are described below.

The background to our work today

Colchester Emergency Night Shelter has been keeping homeless people off the streets for over 25 years. It is open every night of the year and, in an average year, we provide 7,000 bed nights shared amongst approximately 250 people. The **Night Shelter** opens for Service Users at 7.15pm and closes at 9.00am but on Sundays and Bank Holidays, when little else is open, it shuts only for a couple of hours in the morning.

Service Users are given breakfast in the morning and a cooked meal every evening. We always provide a roast dinner on Sunday with special meals on Bank Holidays; in other words, 14,000 meals every year! The evening meals are cooked by volunteers, or by staff when no volunteers are available.

The Service Users are asked to make a contribution towards services provided to cover part of the cost of food, toiletries and utilities that they consume or use during their stay. We only ask for a few pounds but to those suffering poverty, a few pounds is a lot of money and usually all they can afford.

Manager's Report 14-15

Colchester Night Shelter provides temporary residence for those that are homeless. The service has progressed and changed over the years although our over-arching philosophy remains the same. This in itself is made difficult with the economic downturn and the government cuts to welfare which has increased homelessness. These rising numbers and the draconian changes to the system have definitely affected our ability to help the most vulnerable in our community but we remain as dedicated as ever to our client group.

Our client group is a difficult one and there are a whole range of complex and overlapping reasons as to why they are homeless. They face a number of issues in addition to, but often compounded by, their situation. These issues can include Addiction problems, Mental Health issues, Offending history and often a combination which are difficult to address and support. The isolation and destructive nature of homelessness means that people find it difficult to access the help they need. This is where the Night Shelter plays an integral part in the transition from homelessness to eventual independent living with the Night Shelter staff continuing to support the client for as long as they are in need of assistance.

We prepare our clients to succeed in securing and maintaining permanent housing by understanding and acknowledging the impact of homelessness on permanent housing placement and identifying the transitional goals and working with them intensively to meet those before they are moved into their accommodation.

In order to help our clients' access permanent housing, it is important that they know the available services and resources in the community. It would be impossible for us to meet the total and far-reaching range of clients' needs without developing linkages to services outside the Night Shelter so this is a process we begin when the client first arrives with us. Clients with the depth of issues such as ours will mean they must engage with a wide array of services and resources, and obviously, the success of the Night Shelter depends upon its ability to move clients into permanent housing and remain there. We have a wealth of excellent services in Colchester that our clients can access and through all the knowledge and expertise in the various areas we can work together for the best possible outcome for our shared client.

We have developed a comprehensive, coordinated and flexible approach to assist in the development of our services and this is reflected in our new but extremely successful Tenancy Sustainment post where we strive to support movement into permanent housing. The paradox of an effective project is that its greatest strength, that of creating a warm, engaging environment where clients feel respected and safe, can also be its downfall. Clients may not want to leave the security of the Night Shelter. We focus on helping their transition while recognising that they must first experience that feeling of safe, secure housing and in doing so with the continued support of the project, they can firmly close the revolving door of homelessness and open up a world full of new opportunities.

Marina Woodrow

COLCHESTER EMERGENCY NIGHT SHELTER

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Resettlement and Welfare Annual Report

This year has been a trying and testing time in terms of resettlement and welfare at Colchester Night Shelter. Despite the turnaround in the economy the expected boost to resettlement opportunities has failed to materialise and the trend from previous years have continued and looks set to do so for some time. Whilst we have bemoaned the contraction of available housing in the public domain for a number of years now, we are alarmingly witnessing a marked decrease in the availability of private sector rental properties to our client profile. What this has meant is that despite the best efforts of everyone at the Night Shelter our figures for positive resettlement have been poorer than they have been for some years.

	2014-15		2013-14		2012-13	
All Service Users	189		184		218	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Planned	73	39%	84	46%	106	49%
Evicted	26	14%	21	11%	33	15%
Abandoned	59	31%	54	29%	55	25%
Other/unplanned	31	16%	25	14%	24	11%
Long stay Service Users 28 days+	85	45%	83	45%	92	42%
Planned	43	51%	52	63%	60	65%
Evicted	13	15%	8	10%	14	15%
Abandoned	17	15%	16	19%	9	10%
Other/unplanned	12	14%	7	8%	9	10%

As the majority of our clients are not owed a duty by Local Authorities, one of the problems continues to be the inability to access funds for deposits in the private sector. The moratorium on the Rent Deposit Guarantee Scheme this year has meant that what was the main stay of this funding is not available to us at present.

Personal Development

Many of the Service Users staying at the Night Shelter have had problems which have contributed to them becoming homeless. Our aim is to ensure that all Service Users are offered support to identify and address these issues and gain the social skills necessary to maintain their own tenancy once they leave the Night Shelter. We work with clients to develop an action plan which identifies their issues and includes specific objectives to meet their goals. As well as helping people to access outside agencies such as Health in Mind or Adult Community Learning we run a number of activities at the Night Shelter.

We offer help with job hunting, support with recovering from drug or alcohol addiction, help with budgeting, opportunities to volunteer and practical activities such as cooking.

We run a regular Work Club which meets on Friday mornings. We offer support with job hunting including IT training, help with CVs and online applications and opportunities to study for certificates through the Learn My Way website. We can also help people to identify possible areas of work and find suitable training opportunities. As the conditionality for receiving Job Seekers Allowance is tightened it is

increasingly important that Service Users are supported to ensure that they meet the conditions of their Benefit Commitment to avoid incurring sanctions. We continue to work with the DWP Social Justice Coaches in order to support our more vulnerable clients. Our biggest difficulty continues to be the perverse incentives which leave people without an income for the first month when they first start work and deny them any support in paying the rent necessary to continue to stay at the Night Shelter while they look for new accommodation.

We encourage Service Users to consider volunteering as a way of creatively using their time and building up their experience. We offer opportunities for volunteering including conservation work at Cudmore Country Park or can help people find a volunteering placement which meets their interests.

As well as our regular activities we have a range of courses offered by outside agencies such as confidence building, anger management or using social media and recording music. We want to ensure that everybody who stays at the Night Shelter has a positive experience and is able to improve their skills.

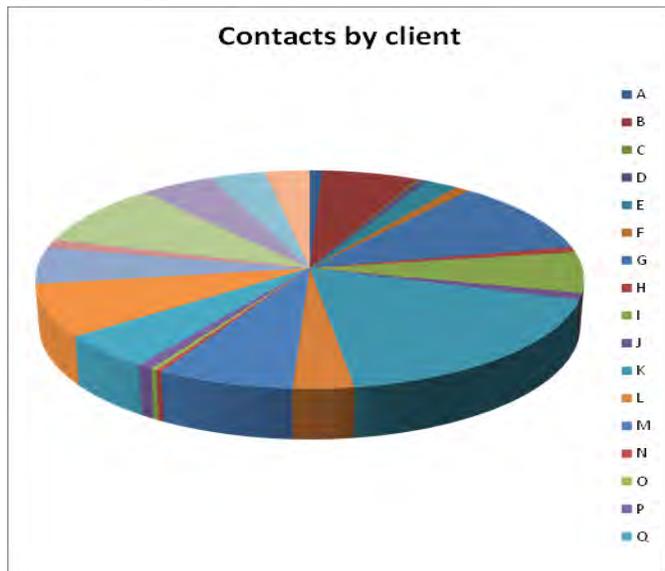
Despite the difficulties we have continued to meet the targets for the Supporting People outcomes with nearly 50% of Service Users increasing their work capability or skills and over 70% increasing their support networks.

Sylvia Jeffcock

Tenancy Sustainment

The Tenancy Sustainment Officer, as a new role, has evolved from the supporting of clients to keep up with bills and looking after their new homes into a much more person centered and individualised form of support based around the individual needs of clients on a one by one basis. Each client completes and independent living checklist and assessment interview from which a support plan is derived. I also meet clients on a regular basis whilst they are staying in the shelter to gain a better understanding of their needs and to begin to form a supportive and workable relationship, where possible.

Support needs vary greatly from client to client. This can be for a host of different reasons based on their age, level of education, mental health issues, or confidence. This chart shows the split, by clients, of time spent in support:

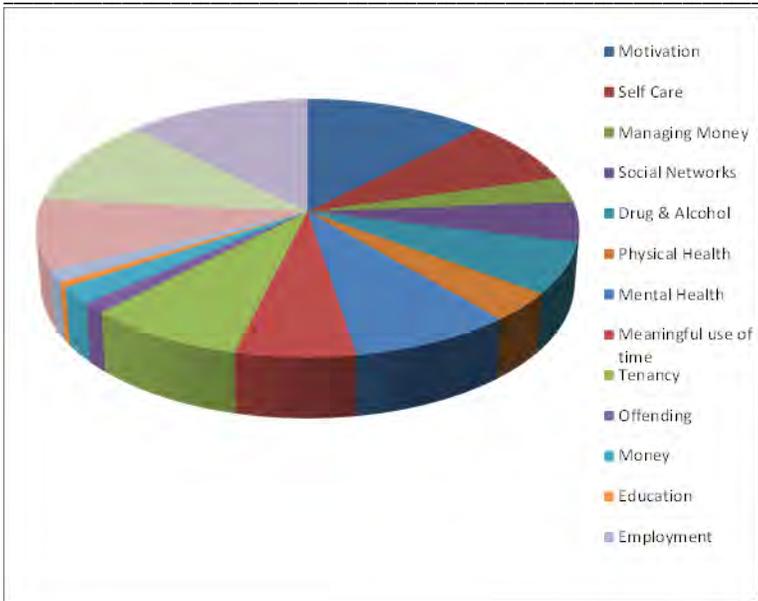


Some clients require very little support from the outset and really just need to know there is someone there they can fall back on and will move on very quickly and find their feet. Others need much more intensive support, especially those with mental health issues or no family connections. Between these two extremes are those clients who need pointing in the right direction and are able, with low level support, to progress at a slower pace. The area of support also varies from client to client and, once again, is based on an assessment of their individual needs. We use the Independent Living Checklist and the Homelessness Outcomes STAR to record both clients needs and those areas that they have been supported in. This chart shows the monitored areas of support spread across all clients.

Currently 20 clients are in active support. The type of support supplied to individual clients themselves can vary depending on the changing circumstances of their resettlement.

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FINANCIAL REVIEW

Principal funding sources

Voluntary donations

Investment policy

The **Night Shelter** does not have sufficient surplus funds to run a formal investment policy involving a mixed portfolio. When funds are not required immediately to meet everyday expenses they are placed in an interest bearing and risk free deposit account operated by one of the major clearing banks.

Reserves policy

FUTURE PLANS

The Trustees of the **Night Shelter** intend to continue the activities outlined above in the forthcoming years subject to satisfactory funding arrangements.

Following a successful funding bid to Colchester Borough Council, the planned appointment of a Tenancy Sustainment Officer in 2014-15 will give us the opportunity to assist our Service Users and ensure that the transition into more independent living is a smooth and consistent one and to reduce the level of returning service users. This will provide an opportunity to develop the use of the Outcome Star to track Service Users' progress and to introduce a 'Passport to Independence' which would give Service Users a series of practical steps which they could take such as registering with a doctor or obtaining suitable forms of ID as well as attending financial workshops. We also hope to take advantage of Lloyds Money for Life scheme to offer Service Users money management courses in-house.

In the next year, before 31 March 2015, it is intended to finish the major refurbishment of the property including replacement of all remaining wooden windows and renovation of the storage areas. This will enable management to better concentrate on the provision of support to Service Users without the distraction of maintaining a deteriorating property.

GOVERNANCE, STRUCTURE AND MANAGEMENT

The Governing Document

The **Colchester Emergency Night Shelter** is a registered charity and a company limited by guarantee. The governing instrument of the charity is the Memorandum & Articles of Association of the company. The governing body of the company is the board of directors, the members of which are also the trustees of the charity. The members of the company elect the directors and trustees. Membership of the company is by invitation and each member is liable for the sum of £1.00 if and when the company is wound up. A list of the current directors and trustees appears at the top of page 3.

Organisational Structure

The governing body of the **Colchester Emergency Night Shelter** is the Board of Management. This is made up from the directors of the company who are also the trustees of the charity. The Manager and Assistant Manager are also members of the Board of Management, which meets every eight to ten weeks throughout the year to cover general business. They also meet at other times, as necessary, for special

At their regular meetings the trustees consider a written report submitted by the management of the **Night Shelter** and a financial report. This includes a note of the bank balance and a comparison between actual income and expenditure. An Annual Budget and regular financial forecasts are produced and these documents are used as management tools throughout the year. The trustees work to an agenda at their meetings that incorporate a rolling list of Action Points. This, together with a business plan, ensures all tasks are monitored to their conclusion.

The **Night Shelter** remunerates fourteen persons. Nine of these are permanent employees and receive a regular wage or salary, whilst of the others, three are relief workers who are paid an allowance, and two are Community Service Volunteers, who are paid a weekly subsistence allowance. The permanent employees are the coordinator, the assistant coordinator, three project workers, one Project Sunday Plus worker, a Resettlement worker, a book-keeper, an administrative assistant, and a cleaner. All of the paid employees are part-time except the co-ordinator who works full time. The relief workers are Sunday Project Plus and weekday relief workers; the latter are required to stay at the **Night Shelter** overnight as part of their duty.

Recruitment, Appointment and Induction of Trustees

Trustees for the charity are drawn from members of the public usually by word of mouth but also from the publicity that the charity receives in local churches, at other local charities and at the offices of local authorities. Trustees are appointed by the Board of Management once the Board is satisfied as to the suitability of the candidate. Trustees hold office for three years after which they are eligible for re-election for a further period of three years.

The Trustees give their time voluntarily and received no benefits from the charity: they do not receive a wage and do not claim expenses

To be effective in office the trustees need a good understanding of the role and responsibilities of a charity trustee and must be aware of the legal rules on eligibility to serve as a charity trustee. All new trustees have their duties and legal, financial and managerial responsibilities and liabilities explained to them. They are informed about the **Colchester Emergency Night Shelter**, its vision and values, its aims, its programme, its sources of income, and the context in which it operates. They are also provided with a copy of the charity's governing document, the latest financial statement and a copy of the 'Reference Handbook for Trustees'

Risk management

The Trustees and Management regularly review risks to Colchester Night Shelter. These reviews are designed to ensure that the health and safety of staff, volunteers and Service Users are safeguarded; that adequate insurance is in place where insurable risks are identified; and the financial resources are protected.

The major risks are identified as:

- risk to staff and/or property relating to the increasingly complex and difficult nature of Service Users;
- overconfidence concerning the ability of the client group to change and so not reaching outcomes such as reduction in revolving door service use or worse committing a serious and irrevocable offence;
- risk of inappropriate staff behaviour influencing the reputation of the project;
- major structural failure of the property;
- financial risks which include funding reduction or withdrawal and reduction in donations due either to recession or to change in perception; although Colchester Night Shelter is not dependent on a single source of funding, loss of any one of the sources would be seriously detrimental to continuation of the project; the recent climate of no increase in core funding is in effect a regular reduction in income levels against inexorably increasing costs.

But whilst the likelihood of one occurring or even a combination is a possibility, contingency measures are put in place to mitigate potential risks:

- Individual service users are risk assessed before entry to the project and are subject to ongoing risk assessment throughout their stay;
- Staff and volunteers are screened before appointment and there is an induction programme as well as ongoing training for all members of staff;
- A full set of appropriate policies and procedures are in place; staff are trained in their implementation and outcomes monitored closely;
- Consultancy services are bought-in for health and safety and H.R. from Peninsula Business Services;
- The Trustees undertake a complete survey of the structure of the property annually and receive regular maintenance and issue reports from the Manager at every meeting ;
- Insurance is taken out and is subject to regular reviews with Management and Trustees;
- Funding bids are prepared and submitted for every new strategy and project and every effort will be made to further diversify income to reduce risk;
- Costs are constantly monitored in order to ensure cost-effective provision and value for money;
- Benchmarking exercises are carried out regularly against similar organisations to ensure that the level of income and costs are commensurate with the level of service which funders expect Colchester Emergency Night Shelter to deliver; the result of these exercises will be shared with funders where levels of income are identified to be insufficient.

Voluntary services received

The **Night Shelter** also benefits from the free and greatly valued assistance of many volunteers who work at the **Night Shelter** during the evenings and all day Sundays & Bank Holidays. The Trustees recognise the tremendous effort that other individual trustees, staff and volunteers make to ensure the **Night Shelter** functions, and recognize too that but for their services, often rendered under very difficult circumstances, the **Night Shelter** would not be able to deliver the exceptional services provided to our Service Users and other members of the public.

Statement of Trustees' Responsibilities

The Trustees (who are also the directors of the **Colchester Emergency Night Shelter** for the purposes of company law) are responsible for preparing the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

Company law requires the trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charitable company and of the incoming resources and application of resources, including the income and expenditure, of the charitable company for that period. In preparing those financial statements, the trustees are required to

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- observe the methods and principles in the Charity SORP;
- make judgments and estimates that are reasonable and prudent; and
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the company will continue in business.

The trustees are responsible for keeping proper accounting records which disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charitable company and to enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 2006. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the company and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

In so far as the trustees are aware:

- There is no relevant audit information of which the charitable company's independent examiner is unaware; and
- The trustees have taken all steps that they ought to have taken to make themselves aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the independent examiner is aware of that information.

Statement as to disclosure of information to auditors

So far as the Trustees are aware, there is no relevant information (as defined by Section 418 of the Companies Act 2006) of which the charitable company's independent examiner is unaware, and each trustee has taken all the steps that they ought to have taken as a trustee in order to make them aware of any audit information and to establish that the charitable company's independent examiner is aware of that information.

COLCHESTER EMERGENCY NIGHT SHELTER

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Independent Examiner

Colchester Community Voluntary Services were re-appointed as the charitable company's Independent Examiner during the year and have expressed their willingness to continue in that capacity.

This report has been prepared in accordance with the Statement of Recommended Practice: Accounting and Reporting by Charities (issued in March 2005) and in accordance with the special provisions of Part VII of the Companies Act 1985 relating to small entities.

Approved by the Trustees and signed on their behalf by:

.....
Sally Messenger: Chair
Dated: