



# The Tracy Sollis Leukaemia Trust

(registered charity number 1069269)

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## Annual Report – January - December 2020

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### ● Aims and Objectives

*The aim of The Tracy Sollis Leukaemia Trust is to relieve sickness, suffering and distress of those diagnosed with leukaemia and similar blood disorders. The Trust achieves this by providing complementary therapy for patients, purchasing laboratory equipment for life saving research and offering short term break for patients on referral from the medical profession.*

Grant applications which fall within The Trust's remit will be considered.

● **The Charity is run by a Board of Trustees and as of December 31<sup>st</sup> 2020 are listed as follows:-**

- Mr Neil Batchelor (*Chairperson*)
- Vivien Bentley (*Vice Chairperson*)
- Mr Hugh David Keeling (*Trustee and Treasurer*)
- Mrs Susan Sollis BEM
- Mrs Debbie Edmondson
- Mrs Gillian Gregg
- Mrs Doreen Dale
- Mrs Marion Bratt
- Mrs Helen Springthorpe
- Mrs Suzanne Palmer
- Margueritte Bayley (*Trustee and Minute Taker*)

● **A Challenging Year**

The coronavirus pandemic has had an enormous impact on the normal day to day running of the charity, regarding both its income and expenditure.

The Trust's charity shops were doing well at the start of the year until experiencing the unprecedented consequences of covid 19. The pandemic led to a national lockdown which officially commenced on March 23<sup>rd</sup>. It was however, decided to close the shops one week prior to this date, being March 17<sup>th</sup>, as a customer had displayed worrying signs of the infection and the risk of contamination was of concern. It was imperative that the health and safety of both our customers and volunteers were the Trust's priority.

During the closure the shops were given a deep clean in readiness for re-opening. All precautions were taken with face shields and surgical gloves provided for everyone working on the shop floor. A safety screen was put up in front of each of the shops counters, hand sanitiser was provided for both customers and staff and notices put on display requesting a minimum of 2 metres social distancing. The Trust invested in a card reader to help minimise cash sales - cash being thought to be another high risk of transmission.

Notification was received by Wychavon County Council that The Trust could apply for a grant for each of its rented premises i.e., shop 5, shop 7 and the kiosk which is the charity's office. The grant was with regard to the enforced closure which had been ordered by the Government and had lasted for a period of three months. The grant was applied for and subsequently the trust was awarded the sum of £10,000 for each of the properties as aforementioned. This was very much appreciated.

Following the lockdown, the re-opening of the shops on June 15<sup>th</sup> was of concern. We were unsure as to whether customers would return and whether they would fully adhere to the new mandatory safety rules. We had also lost several long standing volunteers who had left as they came within the high risk vulnerability group. This meant that extra hours were needed by the remaining volunteers and new volunteers sought. It was very reassuring when our customers reappeared and responded well to the newly adopted safety procedures.

Trading returned and was going well, but a second lockdown was on the horizon. On 5<sup>th</sup> November a second lockdown of non- essential shops took place. The year ended with both shops being understandably down in income compared to previous years.

## ● AGM

The Trust's AGM is normally held in the Mediaeval Barn at the Fleece Inn Bretforton. Due to National Pandemic Restrictions this was held via ZOOM on Monday 18<sup>th</sup> May 2020.

## ● Events

Newly introduced Government legislation meant that the Trust had to cancel its organised events for the year. Among those planned included the Trust's Patron, Guitarist Gordon Giltrap MBE, who was to be appearing with special guest Carrie Martin at the Fleece Inn, Bretforton. This was a big disappointment especially as the event was a complete sell out. Refunds were subsequently issued.

The other cancelled main event was the Annual Stour Concert Brass and Avonbank Brass Band concert. This was to have been held at Evesham Arts Centre during the month of September. Fortunately the cancellation took place before the tickets went on sale.

## ● Complementary Therapy

The Trust's Complementary Therapist, Carrie Adams, normally visits between 500/600 patients per year. Newly introduced covid restrictions meant that Carrie was unable to visit the Laurel Ward at Worcester Royal Hospital. Prior to the new restrictions Carrie had managed to see a total of 100 patients during the months of January and February.

## ● Short Term Breaks

No short term breaks for patients took place. This has not been feasible from a health and safety point of view.

## ● Research.

Professor Alejandro Madrigal has worked within the Anthony Nolan Research Institute since 1993. It was with regret that the Professor retired in March. He is a highly esteemed scientist and his commitment has been second to none. He will be greatly missed and we wish him well.

The Tracy Sollis Laboratory is situated within The Anthony Nolan Research. Research has been greatly affected by the pandemic resulting in activities being curtailed. There were no forthcoming requests for equipment, apart from pipettes, which were subsequently purchased.

The Trust usually makes an annual visit to the Research Institute. This year it had to be cancelled due to national travelling restrictions and covid health and safety rules. It's an event which everyone normally looks forward to and which provides a unique insight into progress being made.

## ● The Future

Due to the pandemic the activities of the Trust have been very restricted both by income and expenditure. The Trust is searching in adapting ways that it can progress in its fight against leukaemia. This is both on the research front and by assisting an individual patient's needs. Covid 19 has changed circumstances for many and it is therefore necessary to evaluate these needs and respond accordingly.

***Sue Sollis BEM***