



PALS Society

End of year review

Chairman's introduction

A warm welcome from me to this review of the first year building our charity, PALS Society. I hope that you will agree that it has been an amazing year and that next year has so much promise to bring confidence, learning, and some hope for young people with autism or a learning difficulty.

I would like to offer a personal thanks to my fellow trustees for helping to keep my ambition grounded with reality and to the army of parents and volunteers who have made all of this possible. A massive thanks to the people of Fareham, the employees at ONS, and the many businesses who have donated IT equipment to our computer upcycling. I will be honest, and never really believed that we would achieve my target of #1000PCs for PALS – but we have. Finally, a thanks to the group of people who form our Steering Group and have contributed their ideas, energy, expertise and connections that have been instrumental in shaping what we do.

I also have to thank the kind individuals and foundations who have contributed financially to our cause. We are truly indebted to you and, with approval, will continue to publicly acknowledge your support and our gratitude. The money that we have raised for the PALS Computing Confidence™ project has truly exceeded all of our expectations, and this gives us not only finances to deliver it, but confidence that we are on the right track. If we can both help our beneficiaries who love computers and members of our community who lack confidence with computers, then this is a real win-win and will start the process of community building.



Our plans for next year are equally ambitious, and we hope that you will join us in our journey.

Steve Bond – Chairman.

Summary

The year has been made up of two main activities. Those which are focused on building the charity and its governance, and those which have been working with our beneficiaries.

The former is essential for the sound running of a charity that is governed by UK Law through the Charity Act 2011, but makes for pretty dry reading in an end of year report. As trustees, though, this takes up most of our time. Given the nature of our work, the areas that we have focused on here are:

- Safeguarding vulnerable children and adults
- Risk management including health and safety
- Financial controls
- Equality and diversity
- Developing policies and procedures for the smooth running of our charity.

The latter – working with our beneficiaries – is the bit that makes it all worthwhile and will be the focus of this report. All of the activities this year have been focused on piloting our service, learning what works and what we need to develop further, and helping us to develop pathways to take young people who have had difficult experiences in school with few, if any, prospects of work to become confident young people who are ready to apply their skills and contribute to society and our economy.

For all that learning, we are truly grateful to our current group of beneficiaries.

Activities

PALS Computing Confidence™

PALS Computing Confidence is a new approach to helping people become more active users of IT. In contrast to training courses for the elderly or people who struggle with computers and modern IT including smart phones and tablets, we are developing a range of services that aim to help people become more confident in experimenting – which is the main skill that IT users need – whilst providing them with services to help when it all goes wrong – which it inevitably does for us all.

This ties in with PALS Society objects because our beneficiaries are truly experts with IT and have a range of talents and a willingness to share their expertise. They often have a degree of patience which is needed to help others who are struggling. So we connect our beneficiaries with people struggling with computers in a model that we consider to be:



“providing a favourite nephew or niece to help with the Tech”.

Our aim, for our beneficiaries is to increase their confidence, range of skills, and through conversations that result from them helping others, to start the process of increasing their inclusion in our

communities. Over time, this will all contribute to their employment prospects delivering such services professionally.

Our other activities this year have all been preparing for the surgeries that will be the main point of contact between our young people and this customer base. We will also deliver seminars that provide interesting and engaging introductions to the basic concepts of computers and IT.

We plan to start delivering the surgeries and seminars over the summer. The cost of delivering these activities are covered by grants for the first 12 months, but eventually will become self-sustaining through donations from the recipients of our services.

Computer Upcycling

If Computing Confidence is the destination for our activities, then our computer upcycling programme is the starting point. This is a simple concept that has some profound aspects. Basically we receive donated computers, components and peripherals, and our young people upcycle them into saleable items. The upcycled items are used by our young people (each has their own computer to use during



our sessions for accessing help or downloading drivers etc), we have provided some to other young PALS who require a laptop for college, and are using the remainder to help our young people develop good practices for cleaning, testing and commissioning the computers for sale. Our plans for selling will depend on volumes, but our aspiration is to sell to local charities and community groups at very low costs and to provide ongoing support services.

So developing skills around product development and sales is a big part of why we are doing the computer upcycling.

But as a first stage for our beneficiaries on the pathway to employment it offers a lot more:

- 🧑‍🔧 For people with social anxiety difficulties, working on something that is familiar and falls within an area of expertise is intrinsically therapeutic - taking a computer apart, cleaning it, diagnosing a problem, thinking about what it would need to get it working - are all relaxing activities if that is your special interest
- 🧑‍🔧 There is huge variety and the potential for unusual and interesting work. No two donations are the same, and we can vary what our young people are working on each week.
- 🧑‍🔧 Occasionally we get products that are genuinely exciting (if you happen to love computers). We have been donated a beautiful Acer Ferrari 200 notebook, worked on an IBM PS/2 computer with mechanical mouse and keyboard, colour laser printers, tablets including ipads, Xbox consoles and many many more (perhaps the most unusual being the controller for an ultrasound scanner used in maternity wards).
- 🧑‍🔧 It genuinely doesn't matter if one of our young people break something – because the item was donated and didn't cost us anything. This hasn't happened often, but there are no

consequences – we simply extract all of the valuable components and anything left gets put into environmentally sound recycling. And we learn from it.

- 🌱 All of our activities are in an environment that is intrinsically safe for our young people. The work is designed around their specific interests. We take their sensitivities and anxieties really seriously. And there is no blame, only praise and learning.

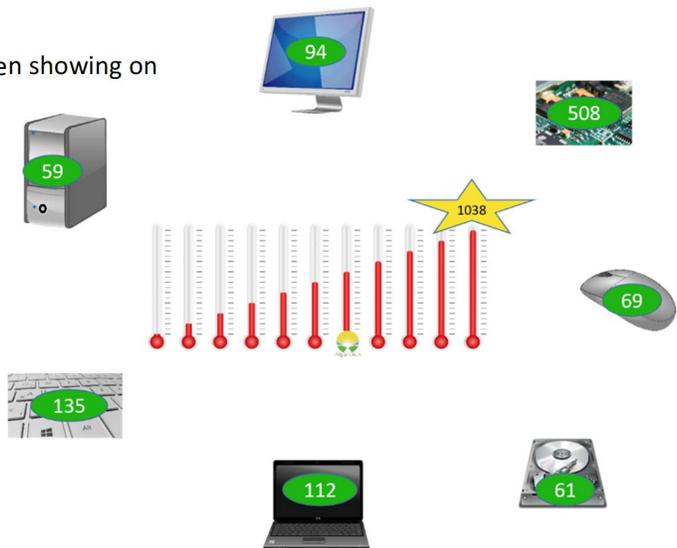
Our current estimate of stock value, once upcycled, from the 1000+ donations that we have received and are now stored in our container is in excess of £5,000

The main source of donations for our cause is through the drop-box at Tesco in Fareham, and we are most grateful for all the support we have received from Kari and the team at Tesco. We now empty the box twice a week, and it's fair to say that the interest that has been generated has far exceeded anyone's expectations. We are also incredibly grateful to the good people of Fareham who struggle in with computers, laptops, printers and other bits which are dropped off before they do their shopping.



We have also received donations from private individuals, from Rotary who are a big supporter of PALS Society locally, from socially responsible corporations as they upgrade their IT suite, and most recently from employees at the Office for National Statistics in Titchfield who have set up a drop box for Autism awareness month.

Throughout the past four months we have been showing on social media (Facebook and Twitter) an infographic of our collections, and here is the final one which shows the breakdown of items.



Our next challenge is to upcycle these into 100 assets ready for sale.

Projects

Test bench

This piece of equipment works as a computer, but with all of the components accessible so that we can rapidly swap items. We have used it to test all of the memory sticks that we have had donated, to test a graphics card, and, mainly, for securely wiping all of the data from the hard drives that are donated (as shown below in the picture) using the Eurosoft ZeroData utility.

To ensure that all data is completely removed and unrecoverable, we write over the entire hard drive with random letters up to three times, and then 'zero' the drive so that the number 0 is written to all parts.

The test bench allows us to do this rapidly and to ensure that all of the computers that our young people work on do not contain sensitive information from people who donate, and to protect our young people from any inappropriate materials.



Network Attached Storage (NAS)

The NAS project aimed to develop a high volume data storage solution that could be accessed securely over the internet. This is a bit like the service offered by DropBox or iCloud. It is really useful for people who amass lots of pictures, videos, or music that they want to archive safely. People can put all of these large files on a detachable hard drive, but run the risk of them becoming infected with a virus or being damaged at the same time as the main computer (through fire, flood, burglary etc), and often people just buying and installing ever larger hard drives is prohibitively expensive – often requiring a larger and more expensive computer.

We aim to use the NAS to store any data or files that we need for our computing confidence program, and ultimately to offer this as a service for customers to store large quantities of data safely that can be accessed from multiple devices.

Open Computer

The Open Computer project is still work-in-progress and is nearing completion. The aim is to create a fully working computer in a plexi-glass box so that people can see the workings and understand how the various components fit together. It has served as a very interesting project for one of our young people learning about drafting and 3-D design, as well as how to design a product to meet customer requirements.

The product will be used during our Computing Confidence seminars to help demonstrate and demystify computers.

Server

We are building and commissioning a remote access server to allow secure access to high power processing for our beneficiaries working on projects. The aim is that they should be able to work where they choose (as long as they have internet access) rather than imposing a work environment on them.

They will log in through a VPN (secure interface) and the server will look and act exactly like the laptop that they are using to log on. But all of the processing power is centralised in the server.

This is work in progress and we aim to complete by Autumn 2018. Not only is this a useful product for our charity, but the skills of commissioning and setting up are valuable in the workplace and our beneficiaries working on the project learn about security of information and devices - much needed in this modern world.

Content/Learning

In addition to the upcycling and projects our young people have been working on and learning about:

-  PAT testing
-  Laser Printer servicing
-  PC testing
-  PC performance benchmarking
-  Memory testing
-  Hard drive wiping
-  Installing Windows
-  CPU cleaning / extraction
-  Anti-static protection
-  Preparing product for sale
-  Pricing products
-  Working alone
-  Working together
-  Helping as a team
-  Strengths
-  Learning from mistakes
-  Safety – personal and computer

We have certainly been busy over the past six months!

Venues/Sessions

FNWCA (12 sessions)

Our first venue was made available by the kindness of Derek Ashworth and the board of trustees from the Fareham North West Community Association who allowed us to use their facilities rent free for three months. This was a great venue and helped us to develop our rules, processes, and bring together our first group of beneficiaries.

One of the great features of this community centre is the two rooms which permitted our youngsters



to find a quiet place away from the work area. There was also an excellent kitchen, and access outside to a swing park which was often used by our youngsters to get some fresh air and relax.

We hope to return there when we deliver our Computing Confidence sessions and surgeries to help the people of North West Fareham become more confident users of IT and to help them with any problems.

Tesco (6 sessions)



PALS Society's good friend at Tesco in Fareham, Kari Pratt, kindly made available the community space to PALS every other Friday for upcycling and future surgeries. This is fitting as the majority of the kit that we work on has been donated through Tesco, and a lot of our infrastructure provided through the Bags for Good grant that we received. It has also been very helpful in spreading the word throughout our community.

The space is incredibly well appointed and we strongly

recommend it to any community group that wants to meet up. The support from all the staff at Tesco has been overwhelming – including our friend Michael who always helps us bring in all of the equipment on trolleys – seeing the convoy of Tesco trolleys loaded up with computers, monitors and boxes of kit is quite a sight!

CYP (10 sessions)

The aim of PALS Society using the Crofton Youth Project is to bring our activities back to our local roots as we are registered in the lovely village of Stubbington, and to open access to young people with alternative learning styles in the schools of Crofton and Baycroft. It is a large hall with a kitchen,

comfortable seating area, and everything that we need for running the Computing Confidence sessions and surgeries.



We have been very fortunate to attract a grant from the Crofton Lions to cover our rent for this community location for the first three months, after which we will have to cover the rent from the proceeds of our

operations. In other words, PALS Society aims to be financially sustainable through donations at our surgeries and sales of upcycled equipment.

Volunteers

Most charities, and PALS Society is no different, are run through the amazing efforts and commitment from volunteers – people who want to help and be part of something good. We are very fortunate to have a talented and dedicated bunch of volunteers that help make all of the sessions run smoothly, and offer our young people someone to talk to and demonstrate their brilliance (being able to help others understand IT is a major skill that they need to develop). Some of our volunteers also bring along strong technical skills to help our young people learn and develop. Our volunteers are:

-  Val
-  Audrey
-  Maggie
-  Tim
-  Andrew
-  Chris
-  Alessandra
-  Miles
-  Mark

And we at PALS Society thank you all for everything that you do for us.

External Support

In addition to the sterling efforts from our team of volunteers, PALS Society have been very fortunate to have had support from a number of external organisations who work in the voluntary sector. The message here is that the work of charity and community groups is incredibly valuable and that there are brilliant organisations out there who want to help – and we are indebted to them all.

-  **UnLtd.** Our chairman won a 'Do-It' Award from UnLtd which provided finances for our server project and a whole package of support including coaching from the incredibly talented Nemo Shaw who helped keep our first year on track and grounded.

- ☀️ **Debevoise and Plimpton** have provided pro-bono legal advice as part of the package of support from UnLtd. Our legal team of Ben, Freddie, Martha and Chris have provided advice on topics ranging from employment, a change to our objects through the Charity Commission, and a set of Articles of Association for a social firm linked to PALS Society.
- ☀️ **Deutsche Bank** have provided the time, energy and skills of Pinkie Shah to act as a mentor for our chairman to help with planning and taking the charity forward.
- ☀️ **Trustees Unlimited** have connected our chairman with Gordon Muir from Social Investment Business to act as a critical friend and mentor.
- ☀️ **PriceWaterhouseCooper and One Community** have provided review and advice on preparing grant applications, and in particular the National Lottery Awards for All grant which we won in March.
- ☀️ **One Community and Community Action Fareham**, have both supported us locally and continue to connect us with the right people to provide help and support on the ground.

Fund raising

We have been very fortunate this financial year to have attracted an amazing amount of money to help develop and grow our charity and the PALS Computing Confidence™ service in particular.

Although the amount of grant is important, so too is the timing (the County Councillor grant from Pal Hayre was instrumental in getting our activities started), also getting grants that are not tied to specific projects that can be used to cover core charity costs such as insurance.

And, all grants and donations serve the purpose of reaffirming to the board of trustees that we are on the right track.

So, the major sources of income for PALS Society this year (excluding donations made for services or upcycled computers) has been, in time order:

Grant Provider and Use	Amount	Logo
Hampshire County Council: £991 – the grant that got us started	£991	
Fareham Borough Council – to provide the kit needed for PALS Computing Confidence	£4,922	
Tesco Bags of Help - £4,000 – money to be spent on delivering Computing Confidence (we were thrilled that the people of Fareham voted us for the top award) 	£4,000	
A Foundation, that wishes to remain anonymous, to kit out our young people in branded clothing at the surgeries and to	£1,000	

purchase / upcycle a computer for our website development service		
Our Chairman, his son and a friend who braved the Solent and a New Years Day dip	£400	
Crofton Lions - £480 to cover the first three months use of the Crofton Youth Project for our upcycling and surgeries	£480	
National Lottery Awards for all - £9,203, to be used to develop the PALS Computing Confidence™ program and specifically to cover costs of premises, storage, and transportation for the large amount of donations that we are receiving	£9,203	
And many many friends, family and people who love our cause!		

Grand total approximately £21,000

Communications

This is an area that we are working hard to improve. We have spent time on our branding and promotional materials and are using them at every opportunity. Our two main brands are our charity logo depicting a bright future rising in vibrant colours.



And our PALS Computing Confidence project logo which depicts freedom and the bright colours and energy bursting to get out.

We are also have a presence on Social Media with a Facebook Page: <https://www.facebook.com/PALS-Society-313529625723879/>

And a Twitter account: @PALSSociety

To date, we have 110 followers on Facebook and a post reach of 224 this week. We typically post once or twice per week with news about PALS Society and posts about notable achievements at our upcycling sessions.

On Twitter we have a more modest 42 followers and similarly Tweet about our successes in the upcycling, and forward interesting Autism or SEN Tweets from those we follow.

In addition to the electronic form of communication we regularly meet up with our wide network of supporters and provide talks at workshops, seminars, and Rotary lunches. Our message is starting to get out and we have received a number of unsolicited approaches for volunteers or beneficiaries as the word gets out.

Finances.



PALS Society Balance Sheet Year ending - 30th April 2018

	£
Fixed Assets	
Office Equipment	282
	<u>282</u>
Current Assets	
Debtors	114
Bank Account	16,051
VAT Liability	597
	<u>16,763</u>
Current Liabilities	
Creditors : Short Term	339
Current Assets less Current Liabilities:	<u>16,423</u>
Total Assets less Current Liabilities:	<u>16,706</u>
Long Term Liabilities	
	-
Total Assets less Total Liabilities:	<u>16,706</u>
Capital & Reserves	
P & L Account	16,706
	<u>16,706</u>



PALS Society Profit & Loss
Year ending - 30th April 2018

	YTD
	Actuals
	£
Sales	
Donations	1,523
Donations from Activities	245
Grants	19,116
Other Income	0
	<u>20,884</u>
Purchases	-
Direct Expenses	
Charitable Expenditure - Stock for Charity Shop	22
Cost of Fund Generation - Fund Raising	147
Gross Profit/(Loss):	<u>20,715</u>
Overheads	
Support Costs - Rent and Rates	120
Support Costs - Travelling Expenses	160
Support Costs - Printing and Stationery	486
Support Costs - Telephone and Computer charges	2,856
Support Costs - General Expenses	292
Management & Admin - Bank Charges and Interest	33
Management & Admin - Professional Fees	63
	<u>4,009</u>
Net Profit/(Loss):	<u><u>16,706</u></u>

Impact.

This statement was prepared with the collaboration of the 3 young people attending PALS Society workshops and their families. It was very positive that all the young people were prepared to contribute to it.

PALS has had a beneficial impact on the young people in a variety of ways, although it has only been running for a short time. Where the impact is not so great, parents report that this could be due to erratic attendance due to other factors in their young person's life. PALS provides support and guidance which gives the young people a sense of purpose and responsibility which helps them gain confidence.

Families report that PALS is a structured regular activity which motivates their YP to get up, leave the house and interact with others, which is a major achievement. They say that seeing allowances being made for the anxieties of others makes them feel less isolated.

That's how accepting PALS is, all inclusive

It positively broadens his horizons and opportunities

I look forward to coming, I've made friends and learnt more



PALS gives a purpose and opportunities

Actually going to PALS is the therapy they need, to succeed and to have someone say well done!