

# THE FRIENDS OF COMBE DOWN SURGERY

## ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Tuesday March 26 at 6.30 pm at Combe Down Surgery

**1. Welcome.** The Chairman, Debbie Williams welcomed the members present

**2. Present:** - Debbie Williams (Chair), Dr Kate Jenkins, Becky Wych, (Nursing Team), Rosie Warburton, (Deputy Practice Manager)  
Janet Read (Secretary), John Weinle (Treasurer), James Davis, Ninette Flowerdew, Tony Price , Mary Read, Daphne Roethenbaugh, Philip Slater, (all committee)  
Sue Crookes, David Pyman

**Apologies for absence:** John and Pauline Moore, Elsie Pyman, Sue West

**3. The minutes** of the A.G.M. held on Wednesday 1st March 2023 were approved

### **4. Matters arising from the Minutes**

Internet banking has yet to be achieved, but the signatories for cheques have been updated. We have discussed finding a new chairman which is still outstanding but still a requirement.

### **5. Chairman's Report**

Looking back over 2023 I believe in many ways it has been a successful year. Our decision to host 4 large fairs as opposed to the previous monthly smaller ones provided us with a much larger income. This was helped in part by our decision to increase the entrance fee and raffle ticket price. It was also greatly assisted by Dr Smith's retirement in the autumn and a generous donation by Dr Batterham at the Christmas fair. Linda's card donations, Ninette's green fingers and Tony's rock cakes also draw in the crowds!! It was a net gain of £1300. These spring, autumn, summer and Christmas fairs have continued to bring joy to the community and with our new banner we are able to further promote the Friends. At this point I would like to say a very big thank all the committee members for continuing to give up time at meetings and events and also kindly donating prizes, gifts ,plants, cakes, etc.

We held a social event at the Hub in January which made a nice change from the usual fundraising and in recognition of the committee and drivers contributions.

Currently we are a committee of 10 members, including vice chair from the surgery and would really benefit from additional members. We are helped by Sue West at coffee mornings and Doctors and some Surgery staff.

In addition to the Surgery events we also partook in the Firs field Coronation event, May 2023. How very wet and cold it was. We had hoped to raise the Friends profile whilst offering free BP and resuscitation training which Geoff White provided. We had the minibus on the field and it took a lot of effort. It didn't really match our hopes but I am pleased we made the effort to show ourselves as part of the Combe Down community. We have decided not to take part in 2024 but will reconsider in 2025.

### **6. Statement of Accounts for year ending 31<sup>st</sup> December 2023**

Treasurer, John Weinle presented his report. Our income for 2023 was £9187 and expenses were £5845.56 with a net surplus of £3,341.92. This is a much brighter picture than last year when there was a deficit of £3919.81. The main reasons for the change is an increase of subscriptions following the changes made at the last AGM, an increase in minibus donations, a near doubling of income from the fund raising events and a reimbursement of a £2331 overspend on equipment from the Combe Down Surgery  
Expense include minibus costs of £1886.32 and £3610 on surgery equipment

As at 31<sup>st</sup> December 2023 we have £13,596.38 in HSBC and £38769.77 in Virgin Money John is looking for a more favourable interest rate to what we get from Virgin Money at the moment

## **7. Minibus report**

James Davis, lead driver for the minibus, gave the following report

### Patient Numbers

Patient numbers in 2023 were very similar to 2022. However, we've had a good start to 2024 with the first 2 months of the year seeing a definite increase in patient numbers. I put this down to stronger promotion of the message by the surgery that we have the minibus available as a service to our patients. I know Sam Robinson is keen to get the message across. Rosie Warburton and the reception team are I know are doing all they can in this area.

In addition we have now opened up Friday as a minibus day. As long as I know there are patients who need transport in advance then we can manage it. This means theoretically that we offer the service 5 days a week. 4 days to Combe Down and 1 day (Tuesday) to Odd Down.

### Drivers

I am happy to say we have added one driver to our rota just recently – Robin Phillips, a neighbour of Tony. Robin has already shown great flexibility, filling in for Bernard Harris on Monday.

Bernard has decided to stand down as our Monday Lead Driver after fulfilling the role for many years.

However, he has kindly offered to stay on as one of our Locum Drivers to be called upon when needed. I believe the Surgery intend to show Bernard a token of their appreciation in the coming days. Much deserved! Bernard has been brilliant.

As well as driving patients often twice a week Tony continues to look after the vehicle with superb dedication with his close liaison and relationship with Combe Down Garage. MOT, tax and insurance are all due in the next 3 months. (End of March, April, May). My recommendation is to keep it going for the next 12 months and look at the costs as we go.

We need to know as accurately as possible what the vehicle does cost the Friends over the year, so that when we discuss its future we have some numbers to go on.

John Peat, Peter Hulbert, Brian Martin, Russell Wakefield and now Robin Phillips have all made themselves available to drive over the last 12 months when Bernard, Tony or I have needed support. We are very grateful to them for this.

### Going Forward

I very much hope we can keep this service going for the patients because we know how much they appreciate it and, often, love the opportunity to chat with us. We become like old friends! However, I'm well aware of the age of the vehicle (despite its very low mileage of 36K) and we do have always to keep in mind its burden on the finances of the Friends and whether this money could be better spent elsewhere. A commitment to replace the vehicle should that time come, will be a big decision to take. For the time being we need the patient numbers to keep high so that we all have a justification for our efforts and keeping it on the road.

## **8. Re-appointment of Chairman, Treasurer and Secretary**

All three officers were re-elected unanimously.

## **9. Surgery Update**

Dr Jenkins reported that patient numbers are currently 13,400 and increasing by 200 a month. This is a sign of the good reputation of the surgery as the increase is made up of both new patients and patients moving from other surgeries. The surgery is trying to recruit a new GP but this is not easy and is symptomatic of the situation all over the country. A new Practice Manger, Natalie Lowe, has just been appointed and a new Receptionist Team Leader. The surgery is looking to appoint more receptionists and admin staff.

The new triage system is going well but can be busy at times due to the volume of emails.

Work on the old pharmacy is due to be completed soon and will provide two new consulting rooms and more storage space. The rooms will need to be kitted out and the Friends' have agreed to donate £6,500 towards this

## **10. Any Other Business**

It was suggested that the donations from the Friends need to be advertised with display boards around the surgery and information boards at the Summer Fayre.

Becky thanked the Friends for all they do and commented that the surgery was lucky to have an organisation like the Friends. Having the extra equipment meant that patients did not have to be sent elsewhere for various tests avoiding the need to wait.

Debbie told us that next summer the Friends will celebrate their twentieth anniversary this should be marked in some way.

The meeting closed at 19.30