

Chair's Report Year Ended March 2015

The past year has seen many changes within our organisation. The most profound has been the loss of our CEO of many years Ken Morgan. Ken made the decision to leave the organisation in December after being diagnosed with an illness which caused him to re-evaluate his future.

Losing Ken has been a bitter blow to us all. He has been in place since 2002 and has steered the organisation through the past twelve years with a firm fair hand. Popular with tenants, parents and staff it is taking time for us to come to terms with losing him, and on behalf of tenants, parents, staff and trustees at Kaleidoscope I wish to acknowledge the contribution he made to this organisation.

To ensure that things progress smoothly it was agreed by the Board of Trustees that I should resign my Chair and step in as CEO in April 2015.

Once again we have met our targets, stayed within budget and made a profit of £88,000 on a turnover of £1.8 million. Whilst the purchase of the property and building work at 115 has depleted our funds as expected, we are now slowly re-building our savings to ensure that we can generate sufficient core funding to offer a variety of opportunities to the people we support to enrich their lives.

Building work at 115 is now complete internally apart from minor snagging issues. The courtyard is still outstanding but will be completed in Spring 2016 and funds have been set aside.

On behalf of the Trustees, I wish to thank Derek Butler our architect, Richard Popham and his team who completed the building works, Richard Bostock who made such a splendid job of the decoration, Tony Doidge the plumber, John Rosewarne the electrician and Dave Hurrell the carpenter. All local craftsmen. The work at 115 has been done sensitively, the building has been returned to its former glory and provides a warm welcoming space which really values the people we support. It has been much admired.

From April 2015 The Gordon Carling Foundation will manage their properties through Marchand Petit. This will remove a large burden of work from Kaleidoscope management team.

Looking to the future our plans for the coming year are ambitious but achievable. Financial restraints in care packages will affect us all for the foreseeable future. Health and Social Services are under pressure to continue cutting costs. Things are becoming increasingly more difficult as packages are often only used for things seen to be essential to care and support, whilst other important aspects of a fulfilled and rich life are increasingly taking second place. These smaller packages of support reduce opportunities for people to access their community with paid support, however, if instead of counting deficits we look to enhancing abilities, capacities and gifts and look to the treasure chest which is our local community, we can work creatively to make the most of what is available to us. Now more than ever we are looking to provide interesting alternatives to the old style pattern of day care. Even though support packages are being reduced and services cut, we now have an opportunity to really listen to what people want to do with their lives.

We want to see the involvement of the wider community using the building in different ways to make the best use of 115, to this end we need to write funding bids to cover the cost of some courses and activities. For other courses and activities we will ask tutors/course presenters, to write a package which will cover their costs but ensure that courses still remain financially accessible to attendees. Courses will be time limited and constantly changing.

The various spaces in the building can be rented out at an hourly rate to other organisations looking for meeting spaces.

Building a volunteer base is a long term goal. The Community Connections which we grow through 115 will be central to the way the project develops. At present tenants continue to access many and varied activities and opportunities and we work hard to build links to our local community but we need to do more. As a local organisation supporting local people we are in a strong position to form closer links. One of our most stalwart supporters is Kingsbridge WI. The Wish List, which Kathleen Trute and her team organise, means that even those with no family or connections outside Kaleidoscope still receive a present, chosen with care, on their birthdays and at Christmas time.

Our plans for the coming year include a new website, better use of media to promote Kaleidoscope and a new logo and mission statement which reflects the person centred approach of our organisation.

Being on a separate site from Carling Court will doubtless present some challenges and we need to be flexible.

We support 48 people and employ 96 support staff.

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As CEO of Kaleidoscope I am proud of our dedicated and committed staff team, who bring their varied gifts and skills to the table, I enjoy working with them and know that the tenants they work with and their families also appreciate their care and support. Kaleidoscope is a progressive and innovative organisation. We are mindful of the importance of being person centred and aware of the importance of being valued members of our community. We all have gifts and skills to share and community is something of which we are all a part and to which we can all contribute. The journey for people with learning difficulties has been a long hard road and the experiences of many of the people we now support have been unimaginable. To ensure that things never return to the days of large institutions we all need to be vigilant, mindful and aware of how quickly things can slip back especially in times of financial hardship. There will always be a pressure from the system on organisations such as ours to find economies of scale. Our answer must be to look to our communities, if we look hard enough we will find in the words of Wendell Berry that "What we need is here".

As Chair of this organisation I present this report with confidence that the Board of Trustees of Kaleidoscope South Hams has continued throughout 2014/2015 to follow the aims and objectives of the Trust as set out in the Articles of Association.

Rowena Halle