



Charity Registration Number 1117923

Chair's Report

Incorporating Annual Report

1 December 2010 – 30 November 2011

Annual General Meeting
Monday 26 March 2012



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Chair's Report

The Rosie Crane Trust, supporting bereaved parents, hereafter referred to as the Trust, was launched on 31 October 2006 having adopted its Governing Document and becoming a registered charity in February 2007. The Objects are to relieve distress whether it be mental, physical, spiritual or a combination, caused by the bereavement. The Trust provides support and/or a listening ear and befriending service, available to all parents who have lost a child of any age and at any stage after the bereavement. These Objects have been, and remain, the true focus for all the Trust's activities.

We had nine objectives for this year, eight of which were renewed. Six were completed and three partially completed. A brief summary of progress against these objectives is contained within this report.

Objective No 1 - Review the current anticipated demand for help, the cost of running existing initiatives, and consider possible changes to, or expansion of, existing services.

To review the current and anticipated demand for help from bereaved parents, the Trust has continued to raise its profile through events and fundraising which have been covered by all the local newspapers whose support has been invaluable. Leaflets and posters have been sent out to interested organisations to raise awareness of the Trust amongst other professionals who may refer parents on to us. This has proved successful, with eight parents referred to us by other professionals. Not all GP surgeries we sent details to last year are displaying our leaflets yet, but we do have others who are displaying details of our services via a power point presentation we have produced for use on the electronic display systems in their patient waiting room areas.

The running costs of the Trust have remained fairly constant this year and are similar to the previous year. Demand has increased slowly and steadily, as we expected, but this has not had a significant impact on our expenditure and has made our services slightly more cost effective.

The full costs of running the drop-in centre have been paid for by fundraising and donations. These costs are still very reasonable thanks to the support and generosity of The Albemarle Centre in Taunton which is where the drop-in centre takes place. We are still considering opening a drop-in centre in Yeovil and have a volunteer who

will run the Taunton drop-in centre when necessary. This will allow me to run a pilot drop-in in Yeovil to see if the demand justifies another centre.

The Trust also operates a 24 hour Listening Ear service where bereaved parents can talk in confidence to trained bereaved parents over the telephone. The majority of Listening Ear callers also come to the drop-in meetings if they live in the area. Those from outside the area continue to receive our newsletters and keep in touch by email and telephone; where possible, we also try to put them in contact with a suitable support group in their own area of the country.

This objective has been completed for this year, but is an ongoing objective to be renewed.

Objective No 2 - Develop and implement a fund raising strategy

The Trustees developed and implemented a fund raising strategy with a plan of the year's fundraising activities, and this has enabled us to maintain a very similar income to the previous two years. These activities are very useful in raising awareness of the Trust as well as generating funds.

This year we continued our Cascade of Coffee Mornings which have proved to be very successful again, with over 120 people attending the three coffee mornings/cream teas and raising over £900, as well as increasing awareness of the Trust and its work.

The very successful Elvis Night was enjoyed and appreciated by those supporting the Trust through their participation in the event. It raised around £700 for Trust funds.

During the year we ran stalls at both the Ilminster Market and at two Lemon Vintage Fairs in Donyatt. Although these events raised only relatively small amounts of money, we were able to raise awareness of the Trust with our display and craft goods.

Unfortunately, the Ilminster Midsummer Experience was poorly attended by other charities, with only one other being there alongside the Rosie Crane Trust. Nevertheless, in spite of poor weather on the day, we were able to talk to most people who came through the gate and further raise awareness of the Trust.

Monks Yard at Horton Cross invited the Trust to run a tombola stall again at its Summer Fete in July. It was a lovely sunny day and over 200 people attended the event. The Trust had over 150 items generously donated for the stall, by both individuals and businesses, and over £170 was raised.

Reviewing these activities has allowed the Trustees to develop and plan future events better and more effectively.

This objective is completed, but as an ongoing objective it will be renewed.

Objective No 3 - Devise and implement a marketing strategy

The new website has been live since March 2011 and has increased awareness of the Trust as well as leading to an increase in overall enquiries. Our marketing plan has been developed and improved from last year.

This objective is partially completed, is ongoing and will be renewed.

Objective No 4 - Develop a counselling database

A counselling database has been partially completed, but is still being developed. This database will enable the Trust to signpost bereaved parents to trained, professional counsellors who specialise in bereavement and its associated problems. We now have another Trustee with counselling experience to help with this.

This objective is partially completed and will be renewed.

Objective No 5 - Organise a subsidised counselling service

Organising a subsidised counselling service is linked to the previous objective and is something we are aware needs addressing over the coming year. It is needed to offer swift initial support and an ongoing counselling facility to complement and supplement other formal counselling services. We have invested a lump sum put aside to cover this service in a deposit account where it can gain interest. This will be topped up by fundraising and donations whenever necessary.

This objective is partially completed and will be renewed.

Objective No 6 - Appoint another Trustee to bring the authorised complement back to six persons

This year we have operated with either four or five Trustees which has allowed us to share the administrative burden and develop our strategic direction. One Trustee has resigned and two new Trustees are being appointed, which will bring us up to the full complement of six. There will always be a turnover in Trustees so identifying possible future Trustees is an ongoing objective.

This objective has been completed, but will be kept under review.

Objective No 7 - Identify and gain the help of an eminent person willing to be patron of the Trust

Although we fully realise the appointment of a patron would help to raise the awareness and credibility of the Trust we have been unable to appoint one. We do however feel that when the Trust grows it will be easier to find a patron.

NB. Since this reporting period we have been very fortunate to have appointed Mrs Louise Chapman, owner of The Castle Hotel, as our patron. Louise will be attending

some major fundraising events and has offered to hold a fundraising event at The Castle Hotel this year.

[This objective has been completed.](#)

Objective No 8 - Identify the key operators necessary to further the work of the Trust and obtain the services of committed volunteers

The Trust is fortunate in benefiting from the assistance of committed volunteers and the Trustees greatly appreciate their help. We have a Minute Secretary who has also helped with sending out letters, and a volunteer to help with finance and administration. We have had continued help with health and safety and publicity which has been invaluable. We haven't needed IT support again this year but are very grateful to have two volunteers who have the expertise to help us with this whenever necessary. The Trust needs to continue to increase its use of volunteers in important roles, such as a volunteer organiser, and to reinstate a small fund raising team to whom tasks can be allocated.

[This ongoing objective is completed and will be renewed.](#)

Objective No 9 - Create more meaningful performance measures designed to improve the efficiency of the Trust.

This year we have continued to develop performance measures offering both quantitative and qualitative indicators. A statistics grid covering every aspect of the Trust's activities is completed and reviewed at every Trustees' meeting to enable us to manage our resources effectively. Questionnaires were sent to every bereaved parent who has used our drop-in centres and these have been analysed to measure the effectiveness of the centres. An attendance register is used at the drop-in centres, with attendees also being invited to make comments in our guest book. This less formal approach has proved successful in providing feedback.

[This objective has been completed and will be renewed.](#)

Other Key Information

During the twelve months ending 30 November 2011, the Trust's income decreased to £3,062 and expenditure was also slightly less at £2,342. When added to the opening balance at 1 December 2010, this leaves a current financial balance of £12,790, a small increase from last year, held partly in a current account and partly earning interest in a deposit account. Further details of the Trust's income and expenditure, alongside a comparison with previous years, is included in the Treasurer's Report. We are also in the process of opening accounts with the Charities Aid Foundation who are offering a better rate of interest on a deposit account than our present bank.

We have been very fortunate this year in receiving a number of generous donations from businesses and organisations who have chosen to support the Trust, as well as all the generous donations our individual supporters have contributed.

The number of calls received by the Listening Ear Service decreased slightly from 19 to 11 bereaved parents, but calls from professionals interested in referring people to the Trust increased from 8 to 14. The number of emails from bereaved parents has increased and is the preferred method of communication for those who have had a particularly difficult bereavement. We have had 32 emails from other professionals, again indicating that this is the preferred method of communication.

In the eleven months the Taunton drop-in centre has been open this year, 47 people have attended, more than double last year's total. We arranged a talk on Understanding Bereavement And What May Help by Annie Rivers, an experienced counsellor; 15 people attended this talk and drop-in attendances have increased generally since it was held. Complementary therapies are planned to be included again at some of our drop-in meetings next year.

In total 60 people have contacted the Trust for support in the five years since it started, with 1 coming from the single advert in the Somerset County Gazette in August 2008, 2 being referred from Cruse, 9 by a friend's suggestion, 10 being referred by their General Practitioner, 12 by personal contact, 16 from publicity, 6 from the website, 2 from other professionals and 2 unknown.

The Trust has more than 140 supporters receiving newsletters, and 20 regular volunteers who provide the vital skills and expertise needed to support the work of the Trust and its fundraising events.

We were invited to give a talk to Yeovil Samaritans Leaders in February, and Adrian Cox and I gave the talk jointly. The leaders were very interested in the Trust and our services. The evening turned out to be informative both for the leaders and for us.

The Way Forward

The Trust has continued to support an increased number of bereaved parents, both locally and nationally, through its Listening Ear Service and drop-in centre. Awareness of the Trust is growing amongst parents and professionals but more marketing is needed to increase this further.

The Trust's new and improved content management website has enabled us to add photographs of fund raising activities and events and keep information up to date. More of our parents have written about the children they have lost and agreed to have their stories added to the website. I feel that this could help parents who view the website to relate to these stories and make it easier for them to make the initial contact. I know from personal experience that this can be a very big step to take.

In addition, I and one other Trustee have attended three training sessions: a Bereaved Parents Networking Event run by The Child Bereavement Trust at the Royal Society of Medicine in London; Search Engine Optimisation provided by Connecting Somerset; and Boosting Your Business on the Web provided by Ilminster Chamber of Commerce which was a good networking event as well. These training events also enable us to raise awareness amongst other professionals and help more bereaved parents.

By reviewing objectives and risks at every meeting of the Trustees we can evaluate the services we offer and continue to enhance them in an efficient and effective manner.

The Trustees are researching the services offered by other bereavement organisations to identify differences, create closer links and correctly position the Trust within the bereavement field.

We are very grateful to everyone who has supported us throughout this year and for all the generous donations we have received.

Carol Crane, Chair
26 March 2012

The Trustees declare they have approved the Trustees' report above		
Signed on behalf of the charity's Trustees		
Signature		
Full Name		
Position		
Date		

Appendix A

Trustees and Officers	
Trustees	Position in Organisation
Roger Allen	Trustee/Health & Safety/Publicity
Jenny Barnes	Trustee/Listening Ear Operative
Adrian Cox	Trustee/Drop-in Centre Volunteer
Carol Crane	Chair of Trustees Data Protection Officer/Lottery Promoter Drop-in Centre Organiser
Terry Hort	Treasurer and Trustee
Advisers and Volunteers	
Advisers and Volunteers	Position in Organisation
Sylvia Baigent	Refreshments
Colin Barnes	Listening Ear Operative
Les Bayliss	Newsletter Distribution
Liz Blackmore	Refreshments
Jane Brown	Refreshments
Anne Clifford	Minute Secretary and Administration
Jenny Jerez Harris	Bring and Buy at Cascade of Coffee Mornings
Linda Jones	Refreshments
Ron Jones	IT Support
Roger Doughty	IT Support
Tracey Kambouris	Admin Support/Marketing
Sandra Ricciardi	Admin Support
Jill Taylor	Refreshments
Christine Trueman	Fundraising Support

Appendix B

List of Skills Required to Carry Through the ‘Objects’ of the Trust	
Role	Skills Required
Administration	Organisation and office skills
Counselling	Professional qualifications
Data Protection and Privacy	Administration and confidentiality
Drop-in Centre Organiser	Experience and interpersonal skills
Equality of Opportunity and Diversity	Trained in Equality and Diversity
Financial Management	Accounting and financial qualifications
Fund Raising	Organisation and interpersonal skills
Health and Safety	Trained in Health and Safety
Human Resources	Interpersonal skills
Information Technology	IT skills and website experience
Leadership	Leadership skills
Listening Ear Operative	Experience and interpersonal skills
Marketing	Experience
Media and Publicity	Communication and IT skills
Planning	Organisational skills
Project Management	Organisational and interpersonal skills
Team Work	Organisational and interpersonal skills
Training	Professional qualifications
Volunteer	Various skills