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Registered Office: The Fire Fighters Charity, Level 6, Belvedere, Basing View, Basingstoke, Hampshire, RG21 4HG.
Charity registered in England & Wales (1093387) and Scotland (SC040096)

The Fire Fighters Charity
Impact Report 2015/16

THE CASE FOR CHANGE

Our work and impact in 2015/16





Welcome

Chief Executive Dr Jill Tolfrey on why 2015/16 was an important year for The Fire Fighters Charity and its beneficiaries.

How do you reflect on a whole year of work? The thousands of beneficiaries whose lives The Fire Fighters Charity touched during 2015/16; the incredible and inspirational ways in which thousands of supporters raised funds for us; the dedication and hard work of our employees; and the selfless commitment of our volunteers. The list of thank yous is endless and I hope that the coming pages will give you a sense of the difference The Fire Fighters Charity makes to those it supports across the fire community, as well as an idea of the increasingly difficult challenge we face every year to generate the funds we need to continue in the provision of those services.

It was this latter point that set the theme for much of 2015/16 and which remains the overriding challenge for the Charity as we look ahead to the next few years. At the root of this challenge is the fact that demand for the Charity's services has increased, with more people becoming aware of how we can help and support them when they need us. This in itself is a trend that we would never want to change.

However, donations have not kept pace with this increased demand and the cost of operating our

services in 2015/16 was around £500,000 more than the money that was so generously given to us over the same period by our donors and fundraisers. Most significantly, we saw a marked drop in the income we usually receive from our regular givers, those committed donors who give to us on a monthly basis through their payroll or by direct debit. The reasons for this are of course complex and deeply rooted in both a wider societal downturn in charitable giving, and in changes to the fire and rescue service itself.

Regardless of the reasons though, this has been a recurring trend over recent years and is one that the Charity simply cannot afford to let continue. If we want to exist to support the fire service community for generations to come then we need to evolve as an organisation and in how we work with the fire and rescue service, as well as with our other donors and supporters across the country, in order to reverse this decline in income.

We started this intensive body of work in 2015/16 and this report sets out the detail of that work, reporting directly on the Charity's performance against its own business plan objectives, hopefully giving you a clear understanding of our planned activities and

outcomes, where we met these, where we fell short and, most importantly, why.

However, this Report also includes some inspirational stories from our beneficiaries, fundraisers and employees and from our 2015 Spirit of Fire event. Indeed, while facts and figures help to paint a picture of performance, it is these first hand experiences that I believe offer the most powerful assessment of The Fire Fighters Charity's impact. So, if you are reading this in consideration of becoming a donor or a supporter of our Charity, I would ask you to look closely at the challenges we face as an organisation, alongside the real life stories of those we work with and support. Having done so, I would ask you to consider how you can help The Fire Fighters Charity to ensure it is here for as long as firefighters continue to need our support.

Thank you for your support.

Dr Jill Tolfrey
Chief Executive





Who, what and why?

Who are we?

The Fire Fighters Charity was founded during the dark days of the Blitz to support the bereaved families of brave firefighters who laid down their lives to tackle the devastation seen across the Capital in the early 1940s.

Today, seventy-three years later, the Charity has evolved to offer a broad range of health and wellbeing services and support to firefighters and their dependants coming to terms with and recovering from illness, injury or trauma.

Through the provision of residential rehabilitation, recuperation, nursing, psychological services and other valuable advice and support services, the Charity positively impacts upon the lives of thousands of serving and retired firefighters across the UK.

What do we do?

Operating from three centres in Cumbria, West Sussex and Devon, as well as within communities the length and breadth of the UK, The Fire Fighters Charity offers tailored, case-specific support to beneficiaries.

Whether recovering from an injury or illness, in need of a recuperative break or in search of support within their own home or community, The Fire Fighters Charity provides a broad range of health and wellbeing services to meet beneficiary need.

The Charity's flagship rehabilitation programmes offer beneficiaries an opportunity to take advantage of an outcome-focused, tailor-made programme of clinical intervention and exercise, blending exercise therapy with pool and gym-based exercise, lifestyle seminars and psychological support services.

Why do we do it?

Firefighting is a dangerous and physical occupation, requiring firefighters to be both mentally and physically strong in order to professionally deal with the life and death situations they encounter on a daily basis. They are not alone either, fire and rescue service support and control teams also deal with life and death calls which can leave emotional scars for those on both ends of the phone.

Every year thousands of firefighters are injured in the line of duty or outside of their work in a manner that prohibits them from doing their job. Others suffer psychological trauma as a result of the horrific situations they often encounter, while many struggle to return to work following a period of illness or surgery.

The Fire Fighters Charity exists to support these men, women and their families, to help them back to work and to provide them with the tools they need to make positive progress in their lives. We are also here for the thousands of retired firefighters who dedicated their working lives to helping others, as well as for the control and support staff who play such a vital role in the day-to-day operation of the UK's fire and rescue services.

2015/16 At A Glance

The need-to-know stats and facts from 12 months at The Fire Fighters Charity.

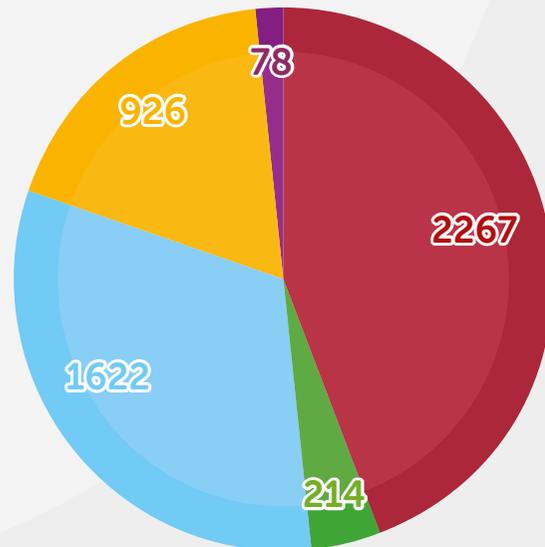
Part 1: Who we worked with



We helped 5,107 individuals in 2015/16, a rise of 3% on 2014/15

Breakdown of beneficiaries

● Serving firefighters	2267
● Support staff	214
● Former personnel	1622
● Dependants	926
● Other	78



Part 2: How we helped them

2,451 beneficiaries completed a residential rehabilitation programme



Of those beneficiaries who attended rehabilitation, 1,053 accessed one to one sessions with a psychological therapist at a centre

492 people were supported through the Charity's Beneficiary Support Services and helpline



111 people were supported through the Charity's Child and Family Programme

2,053

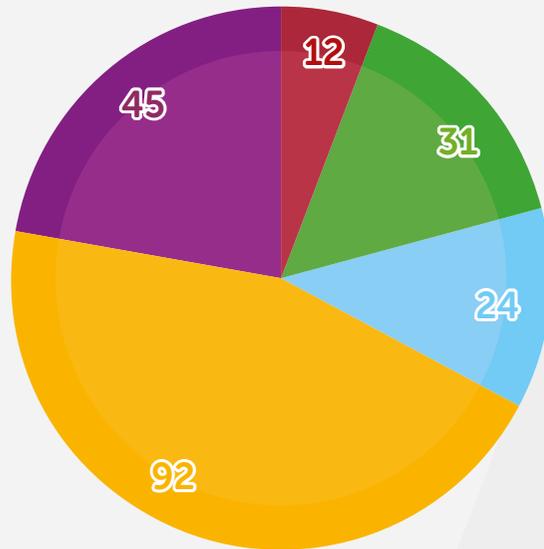
beneficiaries came to a centre for a recuperation break

Part 3: Who worked for us

Our Employees

● Beneficiary Support Services	12
● Central Management and Support	31
● Fundraising, Marketing and Engagement	24
● Estates and Facilities	92
● Rehabilitation	45

This diagram illustrates the number of employees by employment group and includes both part-time and full-time roles.



100,000 HOURS

The aggregate time given by all our volunteers in their support of the Charity. This incredible figure includes those who assist the Charity in co-ordinating fundraising activities, raising awareness of Charity services and supporting beneficiaries through the provision of home visits. The Charity is hugely grateful to every volunteer, without whom it would not be able to achieve positive outcomes for so many beneficiaries every year.



Part 4: Highlights of the year

- 95% of beneficiaries who completed an end of stay evaluation after attending for rehabilitation reported a substantial or moderate change in their condition (61% reported a substantial change, 34% reported a moderate change)
- We introduced a non-denominational chaplaincy service at Jubilee House
- We revised our recuperation criteria to ensure that we matched beneficiaries with the most appropriate service for their individual needs
- New centre-based equipment included: An Oxford pool hoist for Harcombe House - to assist those with mobility needs in accessing the pool - and two profiling beds for Jubilee House (nursing department). These are specialist beds that allow height and postural adjustment and support beneficiaries with mobility needs
- 99% of beneficiaries who completed an end of stay evaluation after attending for rehabilitation rated their experience as good or outstanding
- We launched 'Donate For A Mate' an ambitious Direct Debit sign-up fundraising campaign encouraging serving and retired fire and rescue service employees to donate £8 per month
- The Charity's Trading Arm – Fire Fighters Trading Ltd – enjoyed a bumper year, with merchandise sales totalling £170,716 (a 41% increase on 2014/15) and textile recycling generating £417,826 (a 8% increase on 2014/15)
- The Charity signed the Blue Light Time To Change Associations pledge, an initiative in partnership with Mind, the mental health charity that seeks to breakdown the stigma that often surrounds mental health concerns amongst the blue light services

Putting beneficiaries first

2014-17 Strategic Aim:
Our outcome focussed service delivery is underpinned by evidence of beneficiary need.



2015/16 Strategic Objectives:
We will provide services to more beneficiaries; services reflect beneficiary individual need.



The Fire Fighters Charity has evolved significantly over its 73 year history, always seeking to deliver services that meet the needs of its present day beneficiary base. 2015/16 was no different as the Charity once again witnessed an increase in demand for its services and continued to explore ways in which it could effectively deliver those services within the constraints of a shrinking financial envelope.

This increase in demand for services continues a trend that has seen the total annual number of people supported by the Charity rise by around 10%, from 4,675 in 2010/11 to 5,107 in 2015/16. However, the Charity's total annual income has actually declined by around 10% (almost £1m a year) over the past six years, from £8,971,384 in 2010/11 to £8,065,396 in 2015/16. Committed to delivering and maintaining the quality of its

service provision the Charity therefore called upon its reserves throughout 2015/16 to prop up income and adequately fund its services.

Despite this challenging environment there were some considerable achievements in 2015/16. Most notably, the Charity saw an uptake in demand for its psychological support services and signed the Blue Light Time To Change Associations pledge, an initiative in partnership with Mind, the mental health charity that seeks to breakdown the stigma that often surrounds mental health concerns amongst the blue light services (see more details below).

Elsewhere, a significant review of the Charity's operations was undertaken to make sure that beneficiaries who accessed its services were directed to the most appropriate type of service for their need. The review looked to ensure that more beneficiaries could be supported within the

resources available and that all services could be measured through the use of appropriate outcome measures.

This review was undertaken in 2015 and its proposals were approved by the Trustee Board in February 2016, they included the introduction of clearer recuperation criteria which went live in March 2016. All applications for services are now going through a triage system to ensure beneficiaries receive the most appropriate service for their need. Far from denying people access to recuperation, this new system allows the Charity to redirect recuperation applications to the rehabilitation programme or alternative support if it is deemed more appropriate to meet their need.

Further plans in regards to the services offered by the Charity were developed over the course of 2015/16, for implementation in 2016/17.



Success Story

In February 2016 The Fire Fighters Charity signed the Blue Light Time To Change Associations pledge, joining a growing number of emergency service employers, associations and support organisations showing their commitment to ending mental health stigma and discrimination in the workplace.

This followed a year that had seen a growing demand for the Charity's Psychological Services as therapists across the three centres held 2,329 one-to-one sessions with beneficiaries.

Upon signing the pledge, CEO Dr Jill Tolfrey said: "The Fire Fighters Charity is pleased to support Mind by signing this pledge to promote wellbeing and end mental health stigma. With our primary goal being to support the fire community in their time of need, we work closely with our beneficiaries to provide whole-person focused rehabilitation, where participants engage in psychological support alongside physiotherapy and exercise therapy."



A word from

Director Of Beneficiary Services,
Sharon Bailey

During the course of our lifetime many of us will experience an unforeseen life changing event. These events can often be traumatic and it is during difficult times such as these that The Fire Fighters Charity recognises the benefit of Recuperation.

Recuperation may be suitable for beneficiaries who have had an unplanned hospital admission due to serious illness or surgery, or may be needed following the loss of a partner or child. Recuperation may also be appropriate for those who require a period of rest following a life limiting or terminal diagnosis or who are undergoing a chemotherapy or radiotherapy treatment programme for cancer.

All applications are assessed on an individual basis to ensure that we are offering the right services, in the right way for each beneficiary.

Who We Helped: Meet Jamie

Jamie Thompson, 39, suffered life threatening spinal injuries after falling over 12-metres. At one stage fearing he would never walk again, The Fire Fighters Charity helped to get him back on his feet and focussed on a return to work.

After falling twelve and a half metres onto a concrete surface, Northamptonshire firefighter Jamie Thompson suffered an unstable fracture to his spine and damage to his feet. He was lucky to be alive, and he knew it.

Following the accident, Jamie remained in Coventry University Hospital for 12 days, undergoing a complicated and lengthy operation to construct a complex titanium framework around his spine and severely damaged thoracic vertebra. Once out of hospital he was then confined to a hospital bed in his dining room at home for a further four and a half months

As soon as it was safe for him to do so, Jamie embarked on a road to recovery that saw him attend two intensive rehabilitation programmes at Marine Court, the second in May 2015. A long term donor, Jamie had been giving to the Charity through his payroll and by playing the Fire Fighters Lottery for years before his accident. He was also aware of what services he was eligible for, having been visited at his station by a Charity Fundraiser who had spoken to his whole watch and explained the work of the Charity.

However, despite being aware of the services provided by the Charity, Jamie was surprised

by those that were provided to him when he visited Marine Court.

“I knew there would be physiotherapists here,” he says. “I knew there was a swimming pool, but as far as the hydro pool and the AlterG anti-gravity treadmill were concerned, they were just an incredible bonus, especially for me and my injuries.

“For seven and a half months I had been struggling to walk and was told I was not allowed to run because of the impact on my spine. So to come here and use the anti-gravity treadmill to run for the first time, I could have cried, it was absolutely amazing.

“The experience here is amazing, the physiotherapy is second to none, the professionalism of the physios and the staff is amazing. I have had true one to one physiotherapy.”

But what difference could two weeks at one of The Fire Fighters Charity’s rehabilitation centres really make to someone who has suffered such severe injuries?

“From horrific injuries where I didn’t think I would survive, I have gone from walking a little bit hunched with quite serious back pain through to walking a little bit further with relatively low pain. In so far as strength

training, I have pushed myself on to the extent that I feel like I am nearly getting on track to where I was pre-accident.”

A long-term supporter of the Charity, Jamie is now even more certain than ever of the need for the fire community to do the same: “I think it is really important for firefighters, friends and families of firefighters to donate to The Fire Fighters Charity,” he says. “I donate every month, I think it is very important that we do so.”

FACT FILE

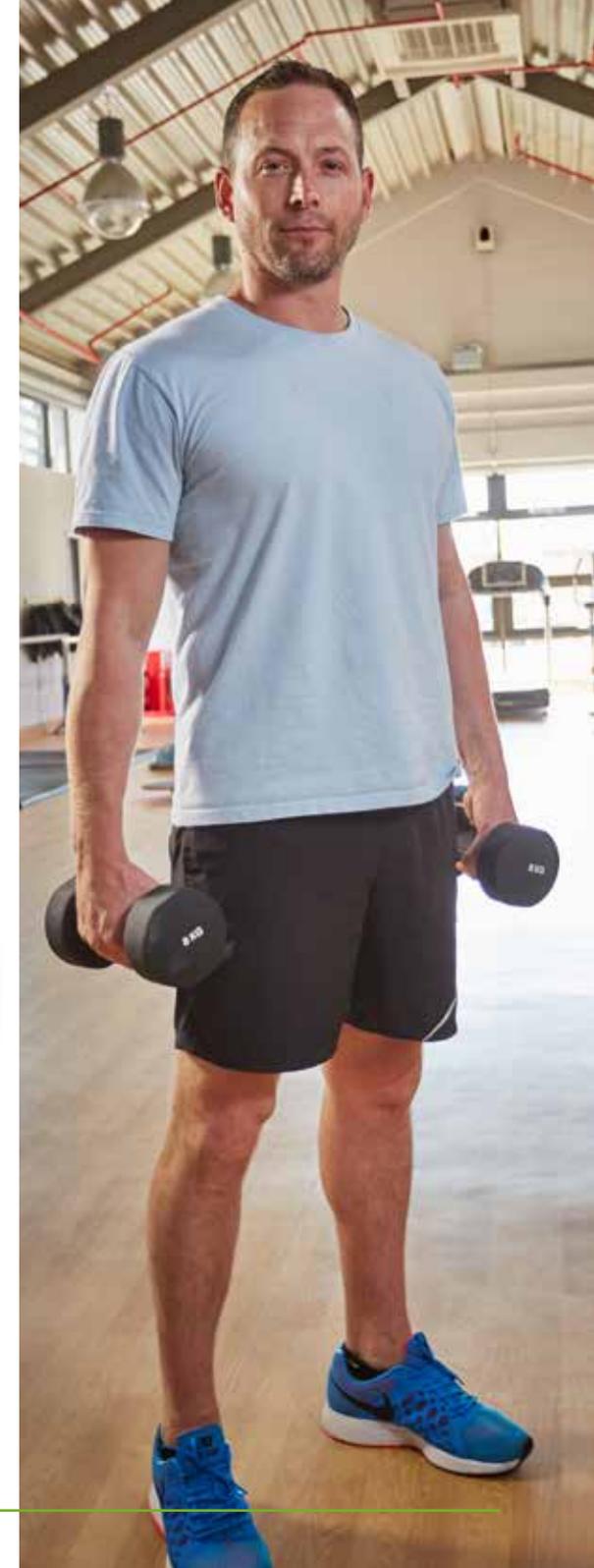


Name:
Jamie Thompson

Age: 39

Position:
Crew Manager, Northamptonshire Fire and Rescue

Reason for contacting the Charity:
Fall from height that left him with severe spinal injuries



A Day In The Life: Exercise Therapist

Working for The Fire Fighters Charity since October 2014 Mark Greaves-Lord, Exercise Therapist, has supported hundreds of beneficiaries at the Charity's Marine Court centre. Here he explains what a day in the role can involve.

What does the role of an Exercise Therapist entail and how does it fit within the rehabilitation programme that is offered at the centres?

We are here to ensure that all the beneficiaries that come to us are safe to exercise, whatever their reason for attending rehabilitation with us. Beneficiaries receive personalised programmes that are tailored to meet the needs that we identify during initial assessments. The Exercise Therapists then work with the beneficiaries to help guide them through their individual programmes and to ensure they are able to achieve what they want to achieve in a safe and controlled manner. We also deliver education sessions on weight management, nutrition and physical activity; empowering beneficiaries to make healthy lifestyle choices.

What is a typical day for you?

A typical day would include a team briefing, hydrotherapy, individual-focused rehabilitation, and an education lecture. After lunch we would go for a group walk by the coast, followed by a higher intensity gym session or more hydrotherapy, with a group relaxation session to end the day. It's a busy day!

Why is the support that beneficiaries receive at our centres so different?

The most significant difference is that we can give our beneficiaries time. As a result we can offer them the kind of intensive support and dedicated one-on-one interaction that they might not get elsewhere. This allows us to progress each individual depending on their needs and hopefully give them the confidence and skills they need to support themselves independently when they return home.

By bringing a holistic approach, we look at overall health and wellbeing rather than just the specific injury. We understand that there is an emotional element to a physical injury, and as such we can provide psychological support at our centres too.

FACT FILE



Name: Mark Greaves-Lord

Role: Exercise Therapist

Location: Marine Court

Time with the Charity: 2 years.

What do you find most satisfying and rewarding about your job?

Because we can dedicate so much time to each individual, we see results. It is really satisfying to know that you are making a difference to almost everybody you see.

What do you find most challenging about your role?

We have little challenges every day, due to the nature of what we do. Everyone presents different needs, but by working closely as a team, including the physiotherapists and psychological therapists, we can find the best solution for each individual.

What advice would you give to beneficiaries contemplating accessing our services and, likewise, what would you say to supporters who are thinking about donating to us?

If you're thinking about applying – apply. If it is appropriate for you to access our services, and you are eligible, then you will be able to. You've got nothing to lose by applying. To people thinking about supporting the charity and donating, it is really simple – donate! I don't think people realise how far their donations go towards changing people's lives. The Charity offers such an amazing service, which it can only do if people continue to donate.



A Double Challenge

2014-17 Strategic Aim:

Our increased engagement with beneficiaries has raised the level of awareness and uptake of our services. Income generation meets the increased demand.



2015/16 Strategic Objectives:

1. We will know who our beneficiaries are and we will engage with them, allowing us to inform them about our services and generate income.
2. We will deliver income to match the expenditure levels required to deliver our services.

Over recent years the Charity has worked hard to spread the word in regards to its services, telling beneficiaries across the country what services it can support them with and how they can be accessed. This continued throughout 2015/16 and was coupled with the introduction of a more direct fundraising approach in a bid to boost the Charity's income generation.

Across 2015/16 the Charity was able to help 5,107 people, three per cent more than in 2014/15. Of this number an incredible 2,451 beneficiaries completed a residential rehabilitation programme at one of the Charity's three centres – 106 more than in 2014/15. Psychological therapy sessions, meanwhile, were accessed by 1,053 beneficiaries (57 more than in 14/15).

In contrast the amount of money coming into the Charity in 2015/16 from regular giving - the

Charity's most significant income stream - fell by £80,000, from £2,474,000 in 2014/15 to £2,394,000 in 2015/16. The cost of operating the Charity's services, meanwhile, rose by £65,546.

This contrasting trend in demand for services and income, led the Charity to launch an ambitious new fundraising campaign in 2015/16. Donate For A Mate sought to boost fundraising income by directly asking supporters of the Charity to become regular donors or to increase their donations to a target figure of £8 per month. The campaign asked donors to consider donating in support of their friends and colleagues, and to come together as teams to support their peers. It used consistent messaging, imagery and branding to convey a strong and direct ask to the whole fire and rescue community.

This integrated approach to fundraising – with the Charity working closely with fire and rescue

service beneficiaries across the UK, as well as reaching out to retired communities and dependants – was driven by the requirement to reverse the downward trend in regular donations, to inform supporters and beneficiaries as to the high costs of providing rehabilitation and support services to individuals, and to consequently encourage them to donate.

Future regular giving-focussed campaigns such as Donate For A Mate – together with robust income generation plans coming from a newly formed Income Generation and Engagement Strategy Team – will play a crucial role in driving the Charity towards its goal of becoming sustainable by 2020. However, as of 2015/16 this new approach has not yet resulted in the change needed in regular giving behaviour and adoption to support service delivery. It is therefore anticipated that these campaigns will bear fruit and bring about the change needed in the coming years.





A word from **The CEO and Chair**



Dr Jill Tolfrey, CEO

We knew that we were going to invest in services and we did it at a time when surpluses were reasonable. What we couldn't legislate for was the change in the environment in regards to the austerity agenda and many more pressures on the pound in everyone's pocket, which means people are less likely to give to the Charity. All charities are suffering from the same problem, this is something that affects everyone. So what we need to look at now is how we can redress the balance and ensure that we provide the services in the most efficient and economical way possible, in other words ensuring that every penny we spend is spent in the best possible way.

Ken Seager, Chair

The fact that more people seek our services year on year and we are able to meet that demand is something that causes me a great deal of satisfaction as Chair. The downward trend in income, meanwhile, has become much more dramatic in the last three or four years. We have been victims of our own success in that regard and the gap has grown to a point where we are just not sustainable at the moment. The Charity must therefore be much more direct in its approach to asking for money. People need to know how costly it is to run our services and how we can only do so with their support and their donations, whether serving or retired.



Success Story

Trading's Bumper Year

The Charity's Trading Arm – Fire Fighters Trading Ltd – enjoyed a bumper year, with merchandise sales totalling £170,716 (a 41% increase on 2014/15) and textile recycling generating £417,826 (a 8% increase on 2014/15).

The success of Fire Fighters Trading Ltd – which operates Harcombe House Holidays, textile recycling, merchandise sales and the sale of commercial rehabilitation – will play a crucial role in the Charity's income generation strategy over the coming years, helping to offset the downturn in traditional fundraising.

In regards to merchandise sales, these figures can be attributed to a wider range of gift items, clothing and toys, as well as a consistently high performing national Shop In A Box scheme and increased marketing exposure, including the publication of the Charity's first ever merchandise catalogue.

In regards to recycling, increased support from a growing number of fire stations has seen more recycling banks sited on station forecourts in local communities across the UK.

Who We Helped: Meet the Cunnea Family

A much needed family break was welcomed by the Cunnea family from Hampshire when they attended the Child and Family Programme at Harcombe House in March 2016.



David and Katie Cunnea live in Southampton and have two children, Ruby (8) and Finley (7). David is a retired works firefighter from Hampshire, having worked at MOD Middle Wallop in Hampshire for the last 26 years. Their daughter Ruby has Angelman Syndrome, a genetic condition that affects brain development and causes severe physical and intellectual disability as well as seizures and sleep problems.

The family visited Harcombe House to attend the Child and Family Programme for the second time in March 2016, having last visited in April 2012.

Having a child with Angelman Syndrome affects day to day life quite significantly as David – who recently retired to become

Ruby's full time carer – explains: "Ruby has to be watched 24 hours a day; she's like a three-year-old in an eight-year-old's body and doesn't understand dangers. One of the great things about this week is you get to know everybody else on the programme and they are in a similar situation to you. Ruby can just go up to someone's table in the restaurant and they will instantly say; 'Oh, hello Ruby.' In a normal holiday camp everyone stares at her and they can get annoyed or even cross, which is upsetting. You just don't have to worry about that here."

Activities on the popular programme throughout this busy week included swimming, arts and crafts and a trip to the local adventure park. The children were also treated to a visit from an animal handler, where they got to hold

and interact with all sorts of creatures, from tarantulas to rabbits.

Ruby's condition also affects her brother's lifestyle, so being able to spend a week with people in similar situations proved beneficial for Finley too, as David explained:

"It's quite difficult for Finley. He's like an only child with all the negatives of having a sister. Ruby likes other children and wants to play but doesn't really know how, so will just mess up the game. Finley doesn't often have friends at home as other children don't always understand, so it's been great to come away with other families. He's made friends with a little boy and has been going over to his bungalow to play. I would say Finley has benefitted the most from this experience as he gets to go out and play safely without us."

Child and Family Programme

Alongside our traditional rehabilitation, recuperation and support services, we also offer a week's activity break for families with one or more children with special care needs. Having a child with care needs can put a great deal of strain on a family, and our breaks give parents and siblings the chance to spend quality time together in a safe and welcoming environment. The Child and Family Programme runs over four separate weeks at Harcombe House during school holidays.

A Day In The Life: Psychological Therapist

Working as a Psychological Therapist at Jubilee House, Kerry Hodgkinson has seen an increasing number of beneficiaries reaching out for psychological support during her four years with the Charity. Here she discusses what the role involves.

What does your role entail and how does it fit within the rehabilitation programme that is offered at the Charity's centres?

Being aware of the mind/body connection the rehabilitation team work collaboratively to ensure that each beneficiary receives the best support and care possible during their stay. By listening to and understanding each individual we can help to facilitate change, normalising feelings and emotions.

Through a programme of workshops we also work on building awareness of mental health concerns and equipping beneficiaries with the tools they need to manage such things as sleep disorders and insomnia, stress and anxiety, all of which are common amongst firefighters and can be managed. We also offer opportunities for beneficiaries to take part in mindfulness exercises.

The Charity saw a substantial increase in demand for its psychological services in 2015/16, why do you think this was, and what response do you see from people when they access the psychological services?

I think that nationally there is an increased awareness and understanding of mental health and that people are now more willing to speak about it, to come forward and to access support services. We've seen with Mind's recent report into the mental health of emergency service

workers that, although it is still a major concern, some of the stigma around mental health is beginning to be broken down. From our Charity's point of view this has been reflected in the increase in people wanting to access the service. Our beneficiaries accept that it is okay to ask for help and are doing so in increasing numbers, which is really pleasing to see.

By accessing the psychological services people can find relief and understanding, taking the scare factor out of their feelings. We see a lot of people that have lost hope, so for them it is about instilling and finding hope again. Individuals can feel more positive and energised, more confident after accessing the services. And what is really important is that they are also able to find self-compassion.

FACT FILE



Name: Kerry Hodgkinson
Role: Psychological Therapist
Location: Jubilee House, Penrith
Time with the charity: 4 years.

You mentioned Mind earlier. The Charity signed Mind's Blue Light Time To Change Associations pledge last year, joining a growing number of emergency service employers, associations and support organisations showing their commitment to ending mental health stigma and discrimination in the workplace. Do you think this is a battle that we are winning?

It is an ongoing battle that we are all trying to fight. Working within the Fire and Rescue Service requires resilience and ways of coping, but often it can still be seen by individuals as a sign of weakness when reaching out for psychological help. That's what we spend a lot of time educating people on; it doesn't mean that you're abnormal by talking to someone. This is a winnable battle and we are certainly seeing it heading in the right direction here at The Fire Fighters Charity.

What do you find most satisfying and rewarding about your job?

Seeing changes and improvements in people's mental health. Just one session can absolutely lift someone, and make them feel okay by normalising how they are feeling. It is a privilege to hear someone's story, and help them on their journey of understanding and identifying ways of moving forward. It is the most rewarding job ever.



What advice would you give to beneficiaries contemplating accessing our services and, likewise, what would you say to supporters who are thinking about donating to us?

For beneficiaries it's about not dismissing what they need. It's about reflecting on how life is for them as an individual, and not comparing themselves to others.

For supporters it's about remembering that it's their donations that keep the Charity going. The service we offer to beneficiaries is amazing and it is well deserved. We need to sustain and develop our services, and we can only do this with donations.

Keep on doing it!

Efficiency Drive

2014-17 Strategic Aim:

Our efficient and responsive Charity values people and demonstrates resources are used for the maximum benefit of our beneficiaries.



2015/16 Strategic Objectives:

1. In achieving the best possible outcomes for beneficiaries we will demonstrate good value for money by setting targets for cost efficiencies and optimal use of assets.



The Fire Fighters Charity is proud to work alongside some of the UK's most dedicated and inspirational volunteer fundraisers who, amongst other things, can be found walking, running, climbing, swimming, cycling, baking and washing cars on a daily basis to raise funds for injured firefighters across the UK.

Every penny raised by our fundraisers and donated in support of their efforts by their friends, families, colleagues and members of the public is precious. The Charity therefore has a moral obligation to ensure that this money is spent in the most efficient and appropriate way possible, to achieve its objective of helping as many beneficiaries as possible.

2015/16 saw the Charity undertake a number of key activities to ensure that this is the case. A target reduction of 20% in the Charity's deficit position was sought and this was achieved through a reduction in expenditure, while maintaining net income as close as possible to forecast projections for the year. Savings were achieved by identifying and implementing efficiency savings across a number of departments. The end result was that the Charity was able to accommodate a three per cent increase in beneficiaries with only a 0.3% increase in expenditure.

Central to the Charity's efficiency drive in 2015/16 was the investment in and development of a new customer relationship management and database system across all areas of the Charity.

Allowing a joined-up approach to managing the way the Charity interacts with its beneficiaries, supporters, donors, volunteers and partners, this new system will replace a number of inefficient separate systems that were previously used across the Charity's centres and Head Office. Improving efficiency across the organisation is central to the introduction of this future-proof technology, as is the ability to communicate with people effectively, enhancing beneficiaries' interactions with the Charity and ensuring all our audiences receive the information they require.

Further sustainability plans were developed during 2015/16 to build on these efficiency improvements and savings. These are scheduled for implementation in 2016/17.



Success Story

Car Wash Champions

Firefighters and staff from Bamber Bridge Fire Station in Lancashire, epitomised the importance of ensuring that The Fire Fighters Charity maximises the use of every penny it is given by raising £8,040.11 and becoming 2015/16 National Car Wash League Champions.

As a thank you for their incredible efforts the winners won a day out at Rockingham Race Circuit with behind the scenes access to the

British Touring Car Championship, courtesy of event sponsor AutoGlym.

The National Car Wash League is the Charity's most significant annual fundraising competition and raised a total of £464,520 in 2015/16, almost £20,000 more than in 2014/15. This staggering amount of money was raised by firefighters across the UK and donated by members of the public who brought their cars along to their local fire stations to be cleaned. The competitive

event sees stations and fire and rescue services competing to raise as much money as they can, with trophies and prizes awarded nationally and in each region.

The twice yearly event is held in March and September and event sponsor AutoGlym donate £40,000 worth of car shampoo each year in support. This generous sum saw the company win the Corporate Supporter of The Year award at the 2015 Spirit of Fire Awards ceremony in London.



A word from The Director of Finance

The Charity has always strived to help more people in more ways and this creates an ongoing challenge with managing the Charity's finances. Over the years we have continually looked at finding both cost savings and opportunities to invest in new, more cost effective ways of working, we've also looked to put money aside when times are good and draw on it when we feel it is right to do so.

Following a period of investment in services the budget needed for 2015/16 required a greater level of reserves than we thought was sensible and so action was needed to address this. Within the year we were able to reduce the amount of reserves required by more than the 20% that we challenged ourselves to achieve. We also identified new financial models which would address the longer term sustainability challenge while continuing to support the aim of helping more people in more ways.

At the same time we have continued our investment in a new relationship management system which will provide the opportunity to be more efficient in how we work, help to develop our income generation and engagement, and aid our service delivery and beneficiary experience. Tough times can bring the best out of an organisation and 2015/16 has done that.

That's The Spirit

In October 2015 the fire community came together for the Charity's Spirit of Fire Awards in London. The event celebrated the incredible bravery and dedication of firefighters, the fire community and members of the public. Hosted by BBC Newsreader Nicholas Owen, and with awards presented by a host of celebrities and special guests, the entertaining evening was enjoyed by all.

Winners on the night included: Strong Arm Challenge (Team of The Year); Sarah Lewis, Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service (Best Newcomer); Martin Lown, Herefordshire Fire and Rescue Service (Supporter of The Year); Bedfordshire Fire and Rescue Service (Fire Service of The Year); AutoGlym

(Corporate Supporter of The Year); Peter Lau, West Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Service (Beneficiary of Courage); Joe Bowers, South Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Service (Youth of Courage); Gareth Salmon, London (Adult Hero); Joe Thornton and Richard Jordan, Humberside Fire and Rescue Service (Firefighter of The Year); Anthony 'Tony' Dale (Lifetime Achievement Award).

Although 2015's event was the last in this format and of this scale, the Charity is looking forward to once again celebrating such incredible achievements, but with a cost neutral event that allows it to recognise the difference individuals have made, without directing money away from the delivery of services.



Beneficiary of Courage award winner Peter Lau



Firefighters of the Year Richard Jordan and Joe Thornton



Best Newcomer, Sarah Lewis



Comedian Russell Howard presented Joe Bowers with his Youth of Courage award



Firefighters of the Year Richard Jordan and Joe Thornton

“The event celebrated the incredible bravery and dedication of firefighters, the fire community and members of the public.”



Strong Arm Challenge scooped Team of The Year

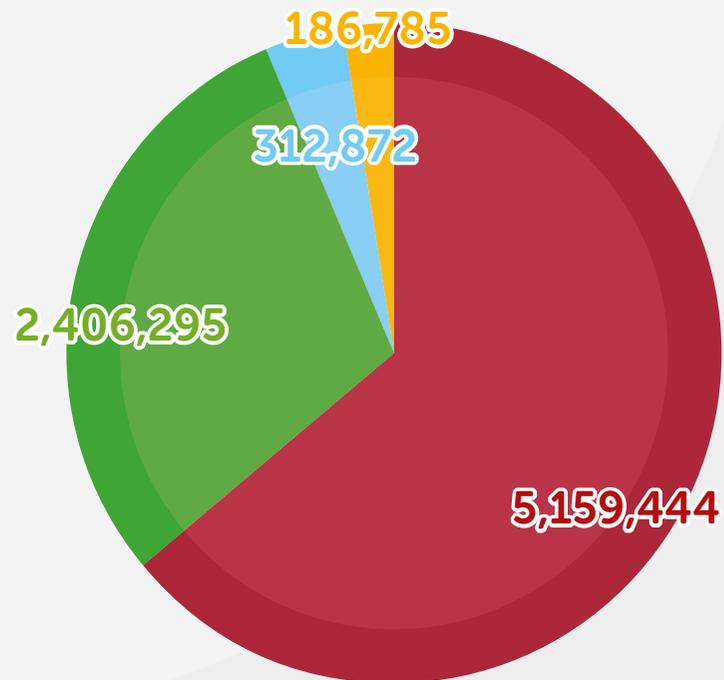


CFO Nigel Williams accepts Anthony Dale's Lifetime Achievement award

Our Finances

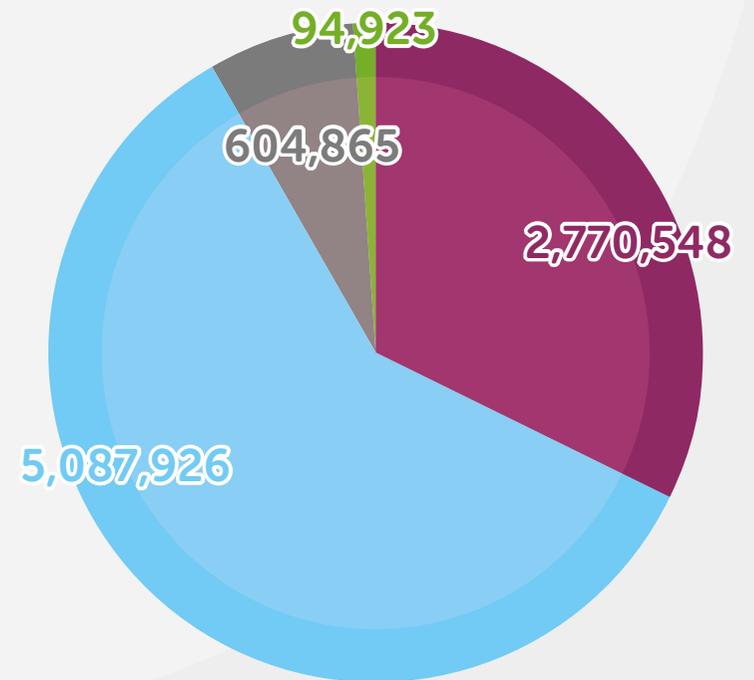
Income (£)

• Donations and legacies	5,159,444
• Other trading activities	2,406,295
• Income from investments	312,872
• Income from charitable activities	186,785
Total income	8,065,396



Expenditure (£)

• Raising funds	2,770,548
• Rehabilitation and recuperation centres	5,087,926
• Beneficiary support	604,865
• Retirement homes & other expenditure	94,923
Total expenditure	8,558,262



A Glimpse Ahead



The challenges faced by the Charity in 2015/16, as a result of an increased demand for services and a decline in income, look set to define the organisation's direction of travel for the next few years as it targets sustainability – with income matching expenditure – by 2020.

Providing first class health and wellbeing services to a growing number of beneficiaries remains the Charity's overarching goal, but this is only going to be possible if it can raise enough money each year to do so. Reviewing the Charity's services and operations to ensure that the right services are provided to the right beneficiaries in the right way, recognising where efficiencies and savings can be made, and recruiting the right teams to support the Charity's drive towards a sustainable future are also all crucial and much of this work will be carried out in 2016/17, making it a pivotal year for the Charity.

In regards to raising sufficient income to meet the cost of service provision, and as we have seen in this Impact Report with the introduction of Donate For A Mate in 2015/16, the coming years will inevitably see the Charity directly reaching out to the fire and rescue service,

as well as to members of the public, to ask for donations. Those donors who regularly give to the Charity on a monthly basis are the lifeblood of the organisation and growing that number is crucial to achieving sustainability. The Charity's marketing and fundraising teams will therefore look to engage with the fire community to communicate messaging around the importance of donating and around the scale of individual donations required to fund support for beneficiaries nationally, regionally and locally.

Establishing closer connections with fire and rescue services – as well as an understanding of how they are changing is also central to the Charity's future success. By working in partnership with fire and rescue services it is hoped that we can support our beneficiaries when we are needed, as well as helping them to establish strong local community links through fundraising activities that bring local people and the fire and rescue service together. In return we hope that fire and rescue services will support us by encouraging personnel to regularly donate.

In terms of the business, all of this activity will continue to fall within the framework of the Charity's three strategic aims, as outlined

in this Impact Report. However, these will be superseded in 2017/18 with a revised strategic plan that will outline the Charity's objectives and activities for delivering the results it needs to achieve sustainability. This strategic plan will set targets for the Charity to work towards. It will set out how, with the continued support of our committed donors and fundraisers, the recruitment of new donors, much valued contributions from Trusts and legacies, and the delivery of income from commercial channels, The Fire Fighters Charity will be sustainable by 2020.

Thank you for your support.

Become a Regular Donor Today

To help The Fire Fighters Charity to achieve its target of becoming sustainable by 2020 you can become regular donor today. Simply visit www.ffcdonateformate.org.uk and complete a five-minute Direct Debit form to help secure the long term future of your charity. Thank you.

