



Family matters

Reaching further and supporting more

IMPACT REPORT 2022/23

Welcome



Chief Executive
Dr Jill Tolfrey

Welcome to our Impact Report for 2022/23. I am once again delighted to be able to report back to you on the highlights of another successful year, both in terms of our impact on the health and wellbeing of the fire services community, and in terms of the incredible support you once again showed to us.

Of course, 2022/23 will be remembered as the year in which we sadly lost our Patron, Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II.

Her late Majesty had held the position of Patron and been a loyal supporter of our organisation for 69 years, almost the full duration of her reign. We will forever be indebted to her for her service and for her kind words when writing to our Chair of the Board of Trustees each year, as well as for the happy memories with which she left many of our supporters when awarding them with deserved honours.



On a personal level, it was an honour to represent the Charity – and all of our beneficiaries, supporters, volunteers and employees throughout the Queen’s patronship – at her state funeral in September 2022. Such an incredible once in a lifetime experience, I found myself sitting with one of our beneficiaries, a wheelwright responsible for the wheels on the gun carriage carrying Her Late Majesty. If you are at Harcombe House at any time, all the documents from the service are in the display case.

2022/23 also marked the third year of our Strategic Plan for 2020-25 – a plan that has had to adapt to changing circumstances as we navigated first the covid pandemic, and more recently the cost of living crisis. However, I am enormously proud of how the Charity’s teams have worked in an agile way to meet these challenges and to keep us moving forward in a positive direction on all fronts.

The last financial year in particular saw us achieve a huge amount, from publishing a beautiful and innovative children’s book in support of young people’s mental wellbeing, to helping beneficiaries through tough financial times and shining a spotlight on women’s health. Our Services teams have once again shown how good they are at recognising and responding to current needs across the fire family.

You, meanwhile, once again rose to the challenge of fundraising through a cost of living crisis, helping us to raise much needed income through your generous donations, incredible events and inspirational challenges.

Thank you most sincerely for your continued support.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jill Tolfrey".

Dr Jill Tolfrey
Chief Executive

Remembering our Patron

Queen Elizabeth II passed away on 8 September, 2022, aged 96. The UK's longest serving monarch had been Patron of The Fire Fighters Charity for all but one year of her 70-year reign.

Becoming Patron of the Fire Service National Benevolent Fund (FSNBF) in 1953, the Queen retained great affection for our "outstanding charity" - as she described us in a letter for our Diamond Jubilee year - for the following seven decades.

Her Majesty regularly wrote to our Chair of the Board of Trustees ahead of our Annual General Meetings, attended our Golden Jubilee Celebration in 1993 and would often ask after us when awarding honours to deserving members of the fire services community.

In the weeks that followed her death, many of our beneficiaries, supporters and employees, past and present, reflected on their memories and of time they shared with our much-loved Patron.

Speaking shortly after the Queen's death, Chief Executive, Dr Jill Tolfrey, said: "We have been truly honoured that Queen



Elizabeth II chose to be our Patron, for 69 years of her 70-year reign.

"As the embodiment of public service, Her Majesty's ongoing recognition of the work of our Charity and high regard for the UK Fire and Rescue Service brought status to our Charity and the beneficiaries we serve.

"Today, as we mourn the loss of our Patron, we also celebrate the legacy of support for our Charity, we give thanks for the honour bestowed upon us and the very positive impact Her Majesty's patronage made to

those serving in the UK Fire and Rescue Service."

Representing The Fire Fighters Charity, its beneficiaries, supporters, volunteers and employees, Dr Tolfrey was invited to attend the Queen's funeral service at Westminster Abbey on 19 September.

In the summer of 2022, to mark the Queen's Platinum Jubilee, trees were planted at each of our three centres, alongside interactive sound benches to support the mental wellbeing of visiting beneficiaries.



Embracing change

Year three of our Strategic Plan was all about embracing opportunities to innovate and change, while overcoming circumstances outside of our control.

Our 2020-25 Strategic Plan has had to bend and flex as circumstances outside of our control have impacted the ways in which we have been able to support our beneficiaries, as well as our fundraising activity. However, while none of us could have accounted for the pandemic, changes in the fire and rescue services or the cost-of-living challenges, we have maintained a consistent direction of travel and 2022/23 – the third year of the plan – has been hugely positive on a number of levels.

Our inform and prevent agenda – a central part of our 2020-25 Plan – has, for example, continued to diversify with the provision

of online, digital and face to face support, enabling us to reach and make a positive difference to more people.

Moving this work forward has required much innovation and a greater understanding of the health and wellbeing needs of our beneficiaries. This, in turn, has meant that we have been able to deliver support face-to-face and through digital means, such as through our health awareness programmes, webinars and digital consultations (for which we surpassed a delivery milestone of 10,000 consultations in 2022, since launching them in 2020). Face-to-face support at our centres, meanwhile, continued to diversify in order to ensure that the programmes offered reflected the changing needs of our fire family.

Building on this foundation, 2023/24 will see us focus on the further integration of digital and face to face services. We will promote health and wellbeing learning and the fact that we not only support recovery from illness and injury, but are proactively working with our fire family, at home and at work, to help maintain and improve health and wellbeing. Alongside this we will work hard to raise the sustainable income we need to plan for the future and support more people from across our community. We will also build on the great work completed around our values and behaviours and the ongoing work on digital infrastructure to continue to strengthen the organisation and ensure we are best situated for the future.

Growing to reach more

The past year has seen us reaching and making a difference to more people in new and innovative ways, as well as through our traditional programmes and services.

Our Charity has changed. For years, we have been primarily known for the residential support we provide for those recovering from injury or illness, but now we are so much more. Our portfolio of support has grown, with digital, telephone and community-based services now complementing our centre-based residential services.

Our message is clear - you do not have to be recovering from illness or injury to benefit from reaching out to us. All our beneficiaries can benefit from our online resources and digital support wherever they are and whenever they wish.

Our residential programmes integrated further with our digital offerings in 2022/23, in order to meet different needs. Indeed, whether you



are a group of Watch colleagues seeking some support; a family in need of a break; a member of a control room team who wants to build up resilience and improve mental fitness; or an individual after some support to 'kickstart' a path back to fitness, we now have the in-person and online support you need.

Our nursing provision, meanwhile, maintained its Outstanding CQC rating, and our welfare team continued to provide bespoke support within the community helping in situations such as homelessness, financial hardship or home adaptations.

We also launched a telephone befriending provision, for volunteers to engage directly with retired beneficiaries.

All these services link together and are designed to maintain and improve health and wellbeing, with easier access to support. By offering flexible access, we have been able to help twice as many beneficiaries this year. We also now provide wellness coaching direct to members of the fire and rescue services through both digital and face to face delivery.



The year in numbers

A statistical look at the year in regard to some of the ways we supported our fire family.



In total we supported
10,367
beneficiaries

3,719
beneficiaries attended one of our centres

15 Hope programmes were attended by a total of **757** beneficiaries

6,248 digital consultations delivered across our physical and psychological services teams

10,451 copies of our children's book, *The Wolf Was Not Sleeping*, were sent free of charge to beneficiaries

20
the total number of Living Well Groups meeting regularly by the end of the year

7
the number of child and family weeks held at Harcombe House

222
wellness workshops delivered across **17** different fire and rescue services, to a total of **1,753** attendees

858
beneficiaries attended a mental health workshop with our partners Lifelines Scotland



Cost of Living lifeline

We came together to help as many people as we could through the cost of living increases in winter 2022 – including Humberside firefighter Paul Burchett, who was helped by our Welfare team.

Father-of-three Paul Burchett began facing pressures with his finances around three years ago, following the breakdown of his marriage. However, as debts mounted, he continued to try and face them alone without asking for help.

It was only around 18 months later when he realised how bad things had got - as the knock-on effect of the stress around his finances began to hit both his physical and mental health – that he got in touch with us.

“I started to struggle with the fitness tests at work and couldn’t work out why,” says Paul. “I’d been suffering with depression, but not knowing it.” Realising he needed a helping hand with his fitness, Paul got in touch with us and was offered a stay at Jubilee House to focus on his physical health.

Following his visit, Paul had regular calls with a psychological therapist who helped him find ways of coping with the challenges he was

facing. He adds: “We went through coping strategies... it helped me deal with situations and learn to take myself away.

“They then suggested I look at the Charity’s Welfare team as well. They’ve helped me hugely. Financially, when I split with my wife, I had to sell the house to move in by myself. I’ve got three boys to look after – we have them equally. I pay her some child maintenance and everything had just got on top of me, I didn’t know where to turn. My anxiety and the money situation were definitely linked.

“In the financial climate at the time, it wasn’t brilliant. The Charity offered me some emergency assistance to help with the basics, as well as a lot of advice and signposting. They were really helpful. Looking after three boys, having the reassurance that I can feed them and myself means everything.”

Wellness in practice

Our Wellness and Behaviour Change Coaches reached more beneficiaries throughout the year via online workshops and webinars – with some fantastic feedback from participants.

In 22/23 the coaching team had 2,000 interactions with beneficiaries via over 200 workshops or through online webinars, talks or other courses, covering everything from nutrition to neurodiversity. Here's what those beneficiaries told us through post-session feedback assessments:



Wellness coaching

Of the participants who responded to post-session feedback assessments:



98% were likely to practice what they have learned (52% highly likely)



96% were confident in their ability to use what they have learned: (38% highly confident)



95% were confident that attending the workshop would result in improved wellbeing (44% highly confident)



2 months after workshop, 72% of those responding practice what they learnt in a workshop at least 1 to 2 times per week

“Great workshop! Really informative and I’m looking forward to using the tools and strategies advised.”

(Lancashire FRS)

“I’ve had back pain for 27 years and this workshop was explained in a way that it never was to me.”

(Scottish FRS)

Overcoming challenges

A look back on a challenging year for our income generation teams as they worked to raise the funds we need to sustain and develop our broad range of services.

Raising the money we need to support our services each year is always a challenge, but after two difficult, Covid-impacted years and with the rising cost of living, inflation and interest rates further piling pressure on us all, 2022/23's aspiration to surpass the £10m income mark, was always going to be an uphill challenge.

However, our dedicated supporters, donors and volunteers once again dug deep and helped us to raise an incredible £9.6m this year, which was a small but important increase on the year before.



In communities across the UK, people came together to support us. Our National Car Wash, for example – in partnership with the fantastic team at Autoglym - once again showed the strength of support the public has for our fire family. It brought in a total of £269,859 in 2022/23 – up from £187,672 the year before. With a 60% increase in participation from the previous year, 444 Car Wash events were held at fire stations, with our Mega March campaign in 2023 seeing 120 events held in March alone. Thank you to everyone who grabbed a bucket and sponge to wash cars for us, or who came along and donated.

Thank you also to all those who contributed monthly by giving to us regularly or playing our lottery. With inflation impacting our running costs, it is important that we continue to grow this income. In 2022/23 this was helped by celebrating the 20th anniversary of the Fire

Fighters Lottery, with a Lottery Super Draw, income from which totalled a fantastic £66,000 from 3,411 players.

Our recycling activities continue to help both the environment and our beneficiaries, and because of so many people choosing our banks to place their clothes recycling, we raised an incredible £921,000 this year, thank you to everyone who donated and to our recycling partners for their support.

Since 2019, the number of people we've helped has more than doubled - from around 4,000 people a year, to 10,000 – and to do that we've had to increase our expenditure by around £2m a year. Our challenge now is therefore to work with our amazing fundraisers and donors to increase our income so that every person who reaches out to us can get the support they need.

A few highlights

Although a challenging year, there was so much to celebrate in 2022/23 in regard to the work of our income generation teams and the incredible support of our fundraisers, donors and volunteers. Here are just a few further highlights...



More one-off donations

We received 2,243 one-off donations through our website throughout the financial year, totalling more than £221,700.

Fire Family Challengers

Our Fire Family Challengers took part in an incredible array of fundraising activities, at home, in their local communities and even across the Atlantic in a boat. Together they raised a staggering £227,148.

With thanks to our corporate supporters:

3tc Software	Kinnerton
Bakkavor	Confectionary Company
Briggs Equipment	Motorola Solutions
Brunswick Group Advisory Ltd	Motorola
Budgens of Holt	MSA
CA3 Productions	NFU Appleby in Westmorland
Co-op	NFU Newton Abbot
EG Group	Pilkington UK
Elvis & Kresse	SSS Public Safety
Firefighter Mortgages	Telent
Flamesavers Credit Union	The Original Factory Shop
Frequentis UK Ltd	UK Fire Association
Glastonbury Festival Events	UK Fire Training
Helping Hoodies	William Wood
JP Morgan Event	Watches

Fire Family Christmas

Our community once again came together at Christmas time, putting on events such as Santa Sleighs and grottos, to raise £156,721.

Open Days on the up

It was great to see fire and rescue services once again welcoming their local communities on to their stations, with open day income rising significantly to £180,342 this year, up from £11,968 the year before, when open days were severely impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic.

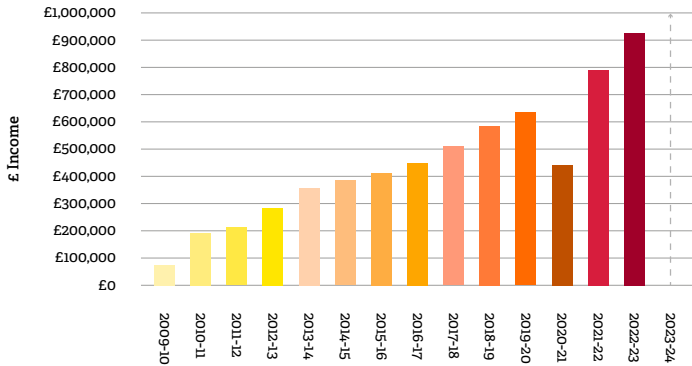
With thanks: Trusts and Foundations

B&Q Foundation
Chatsworth House Trust
Colefax Charitable Trust
Edith Murphy Foundation
Florence Turner Trust
The A M Fenton Trust
The Grace Trust
The Jeannine Vassiliou Charitable Trust
The Lady Hind Trust
The Pilkington Charities Fund
The Walker Trust
The White Oak Charitable Trust
The Wimbledon Foundation
Miss E C Hendry Charitable Trust
Zochonis Charitable Trust

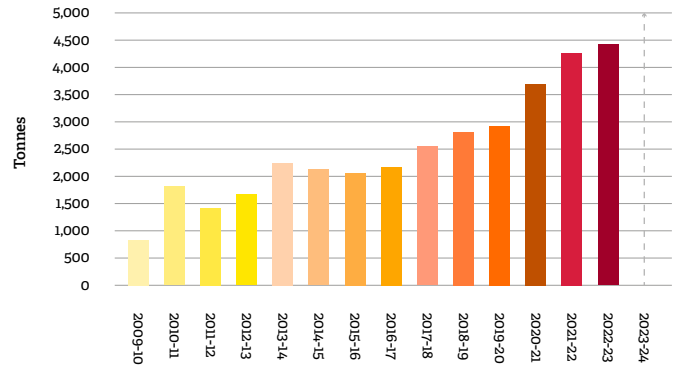
Rags to riches

We've seen incredible growth in our recycling income since its launch in 2009 and now aim to hit the £1million mark in the next financial year - not only helping to divert unwanted clothing away from landfill, but also helping us to change lives in our fire services community.

Textile Recycling - Income - All Collection Points



Textile Recycling - Weight (Tonnes) - All Collection Points



Income

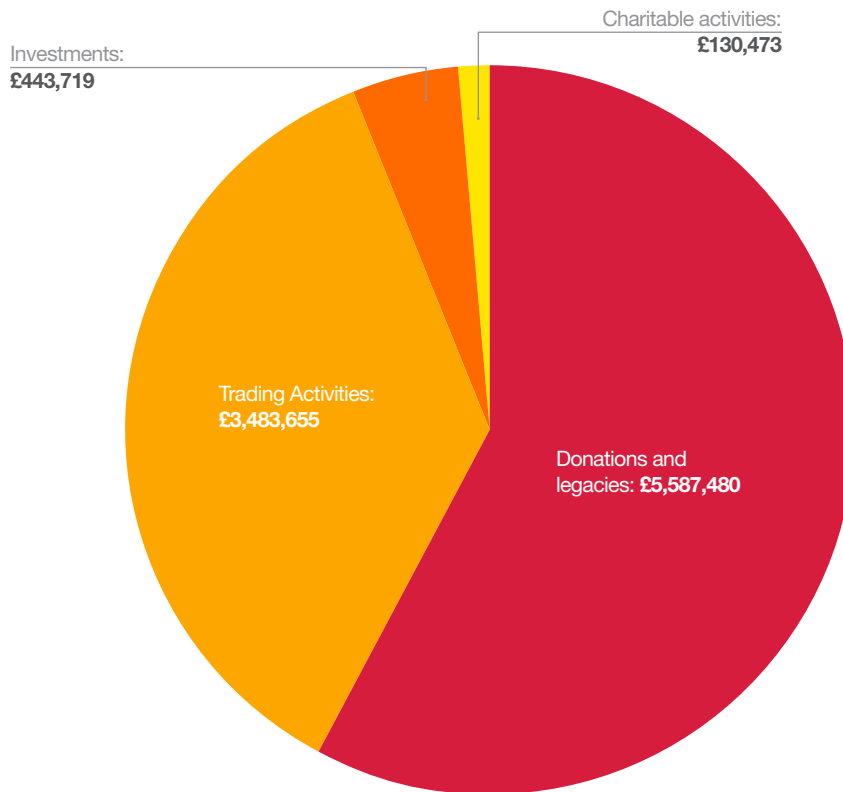
The target for 2022/23 was for income to continue to grow and to surpass the £10m income total that had been generated in the two years prior to COVID, unfortunately this did not happen. New economic challenges for donors linked to rising inflation, interest rates and energy costs created a difficult fundraising market.

Regular giving and lottery activities raised a comparable amount of income to that of the prior year and contributed 43% of total incoming resources.

Corporate and other donations income continued to recover following the decline linked to Covid, increasing by £0.3m compared with 2021/22. Legacy income, which exceeded expectation in 2021/22, returned to a more expected level in 2022/23, a fall of £0.3m. So overall these combined activities, which represent 33% of total incoming resources, were comparable to the prior year.

Trading income increased by £0.2m to £1.7m in 2022/23, recycling activities accounted for most of this, reaching a record £921k for the year.

While there has been good progress with increasing income in many areas, overall, income has not increased as targeted. To continue to support the thousands more beneficiaries that the current strategic direction has enabled, income will need to grow at a much faster pace over the coming years.



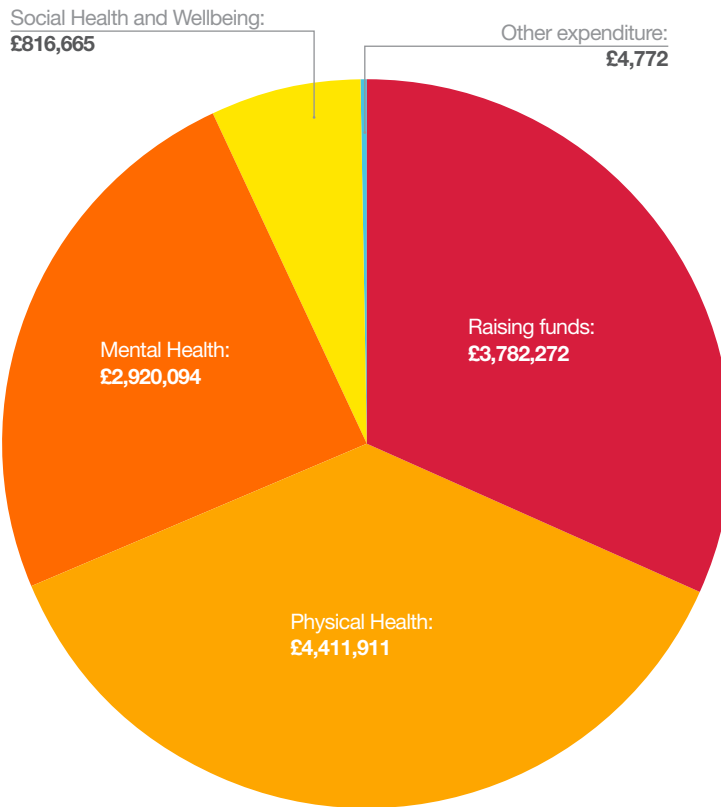
Expenditure

Total expenditure for the year was £11,935,714 compared with £9,838,926 for the year before, a £2.1m or 21% increase, which was used to great effect to increase the scale and pace of the implementation of the strategic plan.

£1.7m (83%) of the additional expenditure was spent on Charitable activities, with approximately £0.8m of additional funds spent on each of our Physical and Mental Health provisions.

In total, charitable activities expenditure increased by 27% this year, which enabled a 74% increase in the number of beneficiaries supported, increasing from 5,955 in 2021/22 to 10,367 in 2022/23.

In 2022/23 68p of every £1 spent was on charitable activities, an increase from the 65p spent in 2021/22.



Focus on year four

Chief Executive Dr Jill Tolfrey on what to expect from 2023/24 as we look to bring our current Strategic Plan to a successful close.

2022/23 was the third year of our current Strategic Plan and, as we reflect on those three years, we can be proud of all that has been achieved. We have reached or exceeded key targets in an ever-changing environment and by moving at scale and pace we have provided more support for more people.

At the same time, there have been external environmental challenges, over which we have no control, that have impacted on our fundraising income. So, this fourth year is about consolidating the progress we have made and wrapping up the 2020-25 plan one year early.

This fourth year will therefore focus on promoting how we have changed and how easy it now is for our beneficiaries to access



health and wellbeing support through digital and face to face means.

We will also set up further infrastructure to increase our understanding of our beneficiaries' needs and their experiences with us, while also looking at more ways to reach all those people we exist to support, especially on call and retired beneficiaries, as well as families.

2023/24 will also see us continuing to develop our strategic position and focus on our

relationships with individual fire and rescue services. Within the organisation we will be continuing our digital developments and improving our processes to ensure that every individual's journey with us is seamless. We will also be doing more work on equity, diversity and inclusion and continuing to focus on limiting our impact on the environment.

At the end of this year, we will be well placed to move into the next strategic plan for 2024-27, which is currently under development.

Milestones and memories



Chair of the Board of Trustees, John Baines, on a challenging year and hopes for the future.

It's impossible to reflect on 2022/23 without firstly recognising the incredible support that was shown to us over 69 years by Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II. Our late Patron was a great supporter of our Charity and throughout her reign she kept a close eye on our organisation, regularly writing to my predecessors on the Board of Trustees, attending our Golden Jubilee celebrations and, I am told, often asking after us when awarding honours to our deserving beneficiaries.

Her Majesty's loss in September 2022 was felt across the Charity and I was so pleased that



our Chief Executive was able to represent us all at the funeral service in Westminster Abbey.

I have also been delighted over the last year at the great strides forward we have taken with our digital services. We are now able to reach and support more people, in their own homes, across the UK. Reaching our 10,000th digital consultation was a significant milestone that is worth our reflection and praise for the teams involved. Today we are able to bring members of our physical and psychological services teams into people's homes, meaning we can support thousands more who would otherwise be unable to attend one of our centres.

However, while on the one hand expanding our digital potential must be celebrated, it also shines a light on the work we still have to do to reach some groups in our fire family. In particular, I am keen for us to do all we can in the years ahead to reach and work with on call firefighters and beneficiaries in our devolved nations, using every digital and in-person

opportunity to do so. The same applies to our 'hard to reach' groups, including our retired community, dependants or those left behind, together with green book staff and others in our wider fire family.

As ever, the Board of Trustees also recognises the hard work and dedication of the Charity's teams over the year, as well as the incredible fundraising and support shown to us by the fire services community. Raising the funds we need to support a growing number of beneficiaries, year on year, is never easy, let alone in a challenging financial environment such as we all find ourselves in today. Nevertheless, raising that income is central to our ambition to support every member of our fire family, for life, so I thank you all for your continued support.

With very best wishes,

John Baines
Chair of The Board of Trustees

Keep in touch

Crisis Line: 0300 373 0896

**To find out more about the support
we offer, call:** 0800 3898820

Telephone: 01256 366566

www.firefighterscharity.org.uk



The Fire Fighters Charity



@firefighters999



thefirefighterscharity