**Report of the Trustees of ‘KIDS LIKE US’ for the year 2023 - 2024**

**Aims of ‘KIDS LIKE US’:**

1. To educate the public in all matters relating to arthritis and particularly as it pertains to children.

2. Fund research into the causes of arthritis particularly in children.

3. To alleviate the suffering of those with arthritis particularly children, and to provide support to those who by reason of caring for a person with arthritis are leading a restricted life and need assistance.

**Fund Raising**

For many years, our main fund raising has supported the Breakaway for adolescent patients. This year we were able to take a group of more than sixteen children away in August 2023. A ‘Get to Know You’ day was held on 11th June 2023 at Red Point for the group to meet. The total cost for the Breakaway was £3955. Each year we concentrate on outreach events to offer all young people with Juvenile Arthritis, their siblings, and their parents the opportunity to come together with the committee members and offer mutual support. This year we held a picnic locally, with indoor and outdoor games, a pottery painting session, our annual Christmas party, and a morning at the Police Museum in Birmingham. We have been able to support local businesses for each of these events and we will continue to do this wherever possible in the future. These activities were all suggested by the children, and they thoroughly enjoyed taking part in them.

The Outreach Team is led by Louise and supported by Kirsty, Marion, Moira & Gemma.

Donations to the Charity have continued, some regular supporters and some new. ‘We Are All Making A Difference’ (WAAMAD) generously donated £1000. Owen, the brother of one of our warriors, Ira, completed the Soapbox Race and raised £910, Kaleidoscope Choir, family connections to our warrior Alfie, raised £526 at a fundraising evening and our warrior Molly, raised £228 selling homemade festive goodies. Other donations totaling over £1300 were received throughout the year.

**Applications for funding 2023 - 2024**

This year we concentrated our applications to Trusts who donate to charities focusing on children with disabilities, as discussed last year.

We have received the following generous donations:

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| CB & HH Taylor 1984 Trust | 1000 |
| DMF Ellis Charitable Trust | 1000 |
| GJW Turner Trust | 1000 |
| Lord Austin Trust | 1000 |
| Patrick Trust | 1000 |
| Pamela Barlow Trust | 1000 |
| Goodenough Charitable Trust |  750 |
| Albright Grimley Charity | 500 |
| Lillie Johnson Charitable Trust | 500 |
| W E Dunn Trust | 500 |
| Dumbrek Charity | 500 |
| Geoff Hill Charitable Trust £250 x2 | 500 |

Previous donors Limoges Trust granted us £250 this year, and Mason Samaritan Fund granted the Charity £1500.

**Requests for funding 2023- 2024**

 (a) Request for funding for Outreach Activities

It was agreed by the committee to continue the outreach activities as they were proving beneficial to the children and families who attend them, and they were also raising awareness of the charity. It was felt a budget of £2500 per year was appropriate.

During the last year we have addressed these areas:

1. Leaflets: last year it was agreed that our leaflets should be more accessible. This may be possible by using QR codes and producing the leaflets in various languages e.g., Urdu, Arabic, Punjab & Turkish. We have been in close contact with Birmingham Childrens Hospital to ensure that only the most relevant leaflets are available and in the most accessible form, either digital or paper form. This is ongoing.
2. Outreach: the events are becoming more popular and to secure places we have agreed to taking a small deposit. This has reduced the issue of people booking but not attending. Events are advertised on our website, via our mailing list and on our Facebook page. ‘Save The Date’ invites are given at each event for future events.
3. A complaint log has been introduced and will be held by the Secretary. It was highlighted whilst completing an application that this was missing. The Log and the Safeguarding documents are to be taken to each event.
4. Katie explained how her team at BCH are focusing on the concerns of 16 -18-year-old patients as they transition to adult clinic, move away to University etc and as some of the committee members have been through this process they offer to attend some groups and meet the young people. Katie also updated us on how her team are promoting Kids Like Us to all patients and their families.
5. We have agreed that we will encourage both Birmingham Childrens Hospital and New Cross Hospital to submit a funding request for items both large and small.
6. At the AGM the following people were appointed to the following roles:

 Kirsty Turner - Chair

 Marion Scott – Treasurer

 Moira Green - Secretary

 Louise Green – Outreach Lead

 Gemma Turner – Social Media Lead

On behalf of ‘Kids Like Us’ I would like to formally offer our thanks to Mike Walmsley who is the independent examiner of our accounts.

Finally, I would like to acknowledge the time and effort that each member of the committee has given to ‘Kids Like Us’ over the last year and to thank them, their families, and friends for their continued support.

With the strategy still foremost in our minds and the achievements of the last year acknowledged, the focus over the next year will be to reach out to more families at Birmingham Children’s Hospital, University Hospital Coventry & Warwickshire & New Cross, Wolverhampton. This will ensure the charity will go from strength to strength.

On behalf of the Trustees of ‘Kids Like Us’