

The WAY Foundation

Charity No 1072649

2008 Chairman's Annual Report

Before we find out who is the new Chairman, you have to suffer a few words from the old one. Old being the operative word, since a birthday a few days ago... I would like to give a brief overview of what the committee has been doing over the last 12 months and outline a couple of projects in the pipeline for the future.

Expanding our horizons pretty much sums up WAY's major achievements over the last year. We've been very active as a whole – local group events and holidays across Europe show what a friendly and communicative bunch we are. We want some good times too and you'll see in a minute what I mean.

In Scotland, our membership continues to rise, and we have people in the most far flung of places who have joined WAY – people on the Isle of Arran and in the far north of Scotland are recent additions. This has been achieved mainly by Scottish members themselves who have spread the word around the country, and by the events that have taken place there recently – a second successful WAY weekend for Scottish members in September, with a third planned for this coming autumn, a conference and promotional event in Dundee in September, and a New Year four day holiday just 2 months ago. We're growing fast in Scotland and the members there are working hard to put WAY on the map. There are more groups springing up across the country, more people volunteering to become area contacts or organising events in their local area and Linsey Black, our new area contact co-ordinator, is in Edinburgh. We have such a strong member base in Scotland at the moment that the committee is seriously considering holding the next AGM there. Further afield, we have also been making inroads in Ireland. Although WAY has long had a presence in Northern Ireland, this wasn't the case in the south of the country. WAY is not restricted by the charities commission or the constitution to be a UK only charity, so we are free to publicise ourselves in the Republic of Ireland as well. Thanks to a handful of members who have organised their own publicity and got themselves interviews and features in the Irish Times, there is now a rapidly growing group in southern Ireland, with members joining from Cork, Dublin, Limerick and Tipperary, to name but a few. The group, WAYIreland, is working with WAYUK and using our experience in order to devise the best ways for them to grow and develop. From the numbers joining on a regular basis, there is clearly a need for WAY in Ireland and all credit to the members here today who are making that happen.

Promotions

Paul Hutt is the committee member responsible for all the promotional activity we have taken part in this year. However, promotions covers a wide range of activities. Sharon handles press to great effect, Caroline oversees the much improved website, Glynn

handles all the mail to our web inbox and deals with all the replies. The phone team is often the first impression a potential member has of WAY and it's all PR, all either raising awareness of WAY or giving a good impression to the outside world of WAY. This last year has seen a surge in promotional activity of the exhibition and conference type, the vast majority of it due to Paul and his efforts to ensure we get noticed in as many places as possible.

There have been one or two changes since the last AGM, two major ones in terms of personnel.

Administrator – As Martin mentioned, Gemma Richardson became the new administrator for WAY in the summer, after Linda Heywood stepped down. Gemma has more than proved her worth with her efficiency and constant good humour, despite some of the tasks I've allotted her and the timescales I've landed on her.

Newsletter - due to ill health, our newly appointed Editor last year unfortunately had to withdraw her services, so Caroline stepped up to the challenge remarkably well in her place, despite the other demands on her time. The newsletter has been beset by problems at times – unreliable printers, nobody to stuff envelopes, late delivery – but despite that, it's remained the most effective communication tool we have in WAY. These days it looks professional, has a consistent feel to it, has a great title, reads well and is eagerly awaited each quarter by the whole membership. You don't have to just read it either, do contribute to it as well. If you have a story to tell, a poem or a problem to air and share, let the newsletter speak for you.

Looking ahead, there are a few things we are committed to which I can share with you. Raising awareness of WAY will continue unabated – in the press, in promotional activity – we will be putting ourselves about in the best possible way. Lindsay Nicholson, our patron, is now back in the saddle after a period of illness and as she says in the note to you all, keen to do some work on behalf of WAY and work with the Chairman to exploring more ways of how we can do that. We will also be planning the next AGM within a matter of weeks – so your feedback form is all important for that! And then there are the holidays and the events we need to know about if you want them organising, funding and attending.

A new initiative we want to get off the ground is also in the offing. Some time ago, we realised that the older WAY got, the older its members were also going to get. The all important 50 seemed to take on a new significance. Despite the age restriction when joining WAY, it's not a case of being asked to leave when you hit your 50th birthday. In fact, we realise the different issues faced by members in the older age bracket and we want to do something specifically for them. Without generalising too much, 50 plus members are more likely to be coping with the dreaded teenagers or children leaving home, considering retirement or buying a second home, or moving from a house where they lived for a long time with their partner, perhaps even becoming a grandparent – issues that are slightly different to the requirements of members 20 years younger than them. So we're launching something we were going to call WAY Plus, but it sounds as if it's for the larger WAY member but is actually for the older WAY member so we're

going for WAY Up. It is being led by Gaynor Williams, and it's very much in the early stages as to how this is going to work, but we want it to be an initiative available to every member over 50 who wants to chat online or even face to face in a local group, about the stuff that bothers them without feeling they're ancient or past it among a group of 30 something members. Once the strategy has been confirmed about how it will run, it'll be clearly publicised in the newsletter and online.

So it's all good stuff, we're busy, we're proactive, we're growing. But it's not just a team of 12 who decide what goes on WAY - you all have a say in it too. If you have any ideas about funding, or spending, or organising, let the committee know. We want your ideas and suggestions so tell us before someone else nicks the idea or claims funding for it. To contradict Frank Sinatra, let's do it **your** way.

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2008 Secretary's Annual Report

Last year I was lucky enough to represent WAY at the Child Bereavement Charity Conference where one of the speakers was David Trickey. David is a clinical psychologist and well known to WAY having spoken at our AGM in the past; he is very popular, bordering on hero worship by some. He was speaking to the conference about how bereavement can result in post traumatic stress and the value of therapy, counseling etc. All very clever and rather frightening. But he went on to explain that this was for a minority of people; the majority of people really only needed to have somebody who understood their plight and had time to sit and chat over a cup of coffee.

For me this is where WAY comes in, the purpose of WAY is to bring people together so we have somebody who understands our position and is there to talk to. So how do we do that? Well WAY is made up of 1903 members all who have been bereaved at a young age. 310 men and 1593 women. There are 84 regional groups and a quick count of volunteers shows over 90 members are willing to give up their time to help run WAY. I would like to thank all those members for all their hard work. So what are they all doing.

Top of the list must be all the area contacts doing a difficult job trying to get members together to do the bread and butter work of WAY, supporting our members who are struggling to cope.

Other volunteers help with the writing, editing, printing and distribution of the quarterly magazine 'The WAY Forward'. The magazine has gone from strength to strength, the new format is excellent.

A team of members man the WAY telephone line answering calls from distressed potential members often dealing with difficult situations. They are organized and supported by a team leader.

Some jobs like doing our PR, even appearing on TV or radio seem quite sexy, while other jobs like running the book club are more mundane, but no less important.

Holidays are an increasingly important part of WAY and once again numerous members are involved in organizing trips from skiing at New Year to camping and caravanning holidays. The thought of going on holiday alone is too much for many members, but with WAY it is possible.

Some volunteers start their own projects and the Hertfordshire WOW initiative is an excellent example. WOW offers life coaching to members trying to cope with work after being bereaved. A local idea for the members, run by the members with the help of WAY.

A charity is like a small business and like a business we have to manage our admin, finance, fund raising, IT, data protection, etc, as well as dealing with the charities commission who regulate charities. Much of this work is done by the committee who meet 4 times a year, plus the AGM. But many more hours work is done running our small business, be it organizing the AGM, updating the web site, promoting WAY to other organizations, or liaising with all the other volunteers within WAY.

This year we have a new administrator working for WAY, our only paid member on the team. The post was advertised to WAY members and it was a difficult decision picking the successful candidate from an excellent field of applicants. The role is an important one and key to the smooth running of WAY.

So what is WAY all about, it is about our members helping each other at a local level, backed up by a lot of volunteers helping to achieve this. Most of our members need our support, but a lot stay on to give that support once they no longer need it themselves. So if you think you are ready how about giving something back, it only has to be a coffee morning to support that other local member who needs a chat and before you know it somebody will be putting you forward for chairman!

THE WAY FOUNDATION
CHARITY NUMBER 1072649
ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2008

INCOME & EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT

	2008	2007
	£	£
Income		
Members subscriptions	10230	16042
Members renewals	10455	7150
Donations	3949	7920
Pagel travel fund		
Charibands	209	211
Christmas Card Sales	392	392
Bank interest	936	756
Raffles		
Gift aid	200	9728
Just Giving	1545	2247
Other donations	722	11894
AGM	1396	893
Holiday	1680	
Total receipts	31714	57233
Expenditure		
Telecoms and website	3702	5114.85
Advertising and promotion	1031	672
Postage	3110	4270
Staffing costs	6345	5917
Printing/copying	4403	4811
Committee expenses	2737	1948
Christmas cards	700	-
Grants to local groups	2597	3688
Holidays	2342	1639
AGM and other meetings	7362	9079
Insurance	1069	1064
Other	1382	1617
Just Giving	211	121
Total expenditure	36991	39940.85
Net deficit/surplus	-5277	17292.15

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BALANCE SHEET

	31-Dec-07	31-Dec-07
Current Assets		
Bank Current Account	10688.73	15871
Bank Deposit Account	19905	20000
	30593.73	35871
Financed by:		
Unrestricted funds		
Accumulated surplus brought forward	35871	18578
Net deficit/surplus for the year	-5277	17293
	30594	35871

Rachel Green
 Chair

Deborah Glass-Woodin
 Treasurer

Nicola Pearce ACA
 Independent Examiner