

Resurrection Furniture report to the APCM 25th May 2023

This report is for the period from our AGM in September 2022 to the present.

The first year in our new shop 21b High Street Alton

At the time of the AGM last year we had just moved into our new premises after months of preparation. Since then, we have settled into the much larger shop and established a new routine. Notable features are:

- The trading space is three times the size of the old shop and allows much better display of goods including single beds, larger settees and household goods. Customers often say how nice the new shop is to visit.
- Extra space has allowed us to undertake more house clearances bringing in more furniture.
- The shop is much busier, footfall is greater, and on some shifts we need three volunteer shop assistants'
- Two shop windows give more space to display furniture.
- Access for the van to the rear of the shop is a vast improvement.
- Our workshop area is a great success for electrical testing of items, and cleaning and repair of furniture e.g., tables, cabinets and clocks.
- There is a holding area at the rear of the shop for sorting out bric a brac, items awaiting delivery or for repair.
- From this May we are now open on Mondays.
- Our branding and website have been changed and improved.

Finance

In June 2022 we set a budget of Income from sales of £126,500, Costs of £80,000 and a trading surplus of £40,000. To achieve this our weekly income needed to be above £2,300 per week. In fact, our weekly sales have been averaging £2,500 pe week, so our predicted surplus at the end of the trading year to 30th June is £50,000. This is an excellent result due to the dedication of all the team of volunteers and Trustees in an unusual year, with extra expenditure, new systems and hurdles such as losing internet communication for two months in January of this year. The total cost of fitting out the new shop and associated expenses was £40,800 met from our reserves.

Grants made in accordance with our charitable objectives

Since June 2022 to this April, we made grants of £29,546. Five grants were made to The Kings Arms, Parish of the Resurrection (youth work and energy saving) the Community Cupboard and the Turkey Earthquake Disaster Appeal totalling £23,850. A further seven organisations received a total of £5,696.

One of the recipients was as a result of a new scheme to encourage our volunteers to recommend charitable groups that we might support. I am pleased to say that the first grant of £1000 was awarded to Alton and Oakley Stitchers in April.

In addition, in response to requests from local organisations we gave furniture free of charge or at a discount for families/individuals in need.

Volunteers

As the shop has grown so has our band of volunteers in the shop, on the van or in the workshop. We now have a total of 58 people and have welcomed four to RF this year. Most volunteers work one or

two morning or afternoon shifts per week often within the same team. The variety of experience and interests of volunteers really enriches the shop day to day. Thank you to everyone, including those who have taken on specific roles so essential to the smooth running of RF.

A special mention must be made of the contribution of our five Trustees who give time in the shop and behind the scenes but also take the not inconsiderable responsibility for all aspects of the charity.

Church on the High Street

As well as advertising Parish events our window displays of the major religious festivals are a strong visual reminder of the Christian message. We uphold the values of compassion, support and care for people in our welcome to customers and the time given to assist the elderly and infirm. Some of our volunteers also need supporting and we welcome this opportunity to give voluntary employment to those who might find it difficult elsewhere.

We can now see that an original objective to have a drop-in centre in the shop is not a practical option even in a larger space due to practical and resource issues and so we plan to amend our charitable objectives at the AGM in the autumn.

Impact

When we moved into our first shop at 24 High Street it took us two years to begin to make a surplus. I am pleased to say that through the hard work of all the team we have increased our sales of furniture this year and now offer all kinds of home goods, bric a brac and electrical goods in an attractive and spacious setting. All of us are proud of the environmental benefits of Resurrection Furniture with its emphasis on repair, reuse and recycle and of the social value of affordable prices of many household items compared to new purchases.

The future

In April this year RF volunteers and trustees met together to discuss the future and how we can improve what we do and be a better charity. Lots of ideas came from this discussion that we plan to implement in the coming months. These included reviewing our objectives for the next few years.

Currently we do not have a manager in place and so our current focus is on recruitment and settling in a new appointee in the next few weeks. Meanwhile Matt has re-joined RF part time and volunteers are helping with the office administration.

Some internal alterations need to be made in the shop to improve layout and presentation. We have also nearly completed reducing our off-site garage space that will save storage costs.

We have lots to do but we can be positive about the future and our wish to make an even bigger contribution to Parish and town life. We are grateful for the support of Andrew and POTR and for our continued close working with the Monthly Market.

Most of all a big thank you to our wonderful team of volunteers, to those who donate items and to our customers who enjoy visiting us so regularly.

John Hubbard

Chairman

Resurrection Furniture

May 2023