



The Friends of Conquest Hospital

Annual General Meeting Minutes

17th May 2025

Present

- Thomas Gardiner (Chair of Trustees)
- Sarah Coop
- Rosie Guy
- Jeremy Llewellyn-Jones
- David Walker
- Richard Wray

- Jo Clark (General Manager)
- Claire Bridges (Treasurer)

Also in attendance Anne Duke and Lee Clark, plus five members of the public.

1 Apologies for absence

- Baroness Fookes (Patron)
- Sebastian Hedencrona
- Sarah Kowitz
- Alastair Fairley
- Richard Fisher

- Lisa Field (Admin Manager)

Apologies were also received from John & June Gavin, Robert Park, Judy Rogers, and Betty Sampson.

Thomas Gardiner welcomed everyone to the 2025 Annual General Meeting of the Friends of Conquest Hospital. He introduced himself as the new Chair of Trustees and thanked Sarah Kowitz, previous Chair of Trustees, for her commitment and service to The Friends over many years, in particular in helping to modernise the charity. He noted that he had been the finance trustee for three years so he had a good understanding of the charity and how it works and would aim to build on the progress made over the recent years.

2 Approval of Minutes of the last AGM

The Minutes of the last AGM were circulated by email prior to the AGM.

Proposer: Sarah Coop

Seconded: Richard Wray

Those present at the last AGM on 18th May 2024 agreed that the minutes were a correct representation of the meeting.

3 Report from the Chair of Trustees

Thomas Gardiner presented his Chair of Trustees Report, see appendix for the full report.

He acknowledged that personnel changes had limited the work of The Friends, but that some events such as pub quizzes and craft fairs had gone ahead. He welcomed several organisations that had nominated us as their charity of the year and that the turnover in the shops had returned to pre-covid levels. He also welcomed two new staff, Jo Clark & Lisa Field.

Thomas announced the new branding for the organisation with the helping hands of the old logo given a fresh new take and the heart motif indicating the position the NHS holds for many of us.

He also announced the launch of the new website generously funded by Sarah Kowitz on our behalf.

He also highlighted changes in personnel, equipment purchases and the Music in Hospitals programme, plans being developed to introduce free and enhanced membership tiers and a desire to push forwards the Conquest 21 courtyard scheme.

Thomas thanked all those who contributed so much, including our members, staff at the Friends and the Conquest Hospital, and our volunteers, without whom we could not operate.

4 Report from the General Manager

Jo Clark presented her General Manager Report, see appendix for the full report.

She noted that as she had been in post for three weeks, she was unable to comment much on the year to which the AGM related and thanked everyone for their warm welcome to the Friends and confirmed that the Friends are indeed friendly.

She highlighted the new look, mobile-friendly website being launched today – a significant step forward.

Jo outlined the priorities for the coming year:

- encouraging and expanding our volunteer services in our shops, on the trolley, in the gardens and at our events
- growing and creating new ways to become involved in the Friends
- developing our fundraising opportunities
- reaching out to our communities, including local businesses and schools
- continuing to ensure the governance and financial stability of the charity

5 Financial Report

Claire Bridges presented her Financial Report for the year from July 2023 to July 2024, see appendix for the full report.

She highlighted the purchases of equipment totalling £69,977, increased income from donations to £135,352, shop income improving year on year with a surplus in year of £17,115 and income from investments remains steady at £5,743. Claire also noted a generous donation from the Morant Trust of £115,676 for the purchase of the Karl Storz Stack System which has been purchased in the current financial year.

She noted that at the end of the 2023/2024 financial year the Friends held £31,630 less in general funds and an increase of £84,046 in total funds.

6 Approval of the Annual Accounts for the year ending 30th June 2024

The Annual Accounts were circulated by email prior to the AGM.

Proposer: Jeremy Llewellyn-Jones

Seconded: David Walker

The Annual Accounts for the year ending 30th June 2024 were approved by those present and the Trustees.

7 Re-election of Chair

Thomas Gardiner stood down as Chair of Trustees. Proposal to re-elect Thomas Gardiner as Chair of Trustees.

Proposer: David Walker

Seconded: Jeremy Llewellyn-Jones

The meeting agreed unanimously to approve the re-election of Thomas Gardiner.

8 Re-election of Trustees

Thomas Gardiner noted that three new Trustees had been appointed: Richard Fisher, a Partner at a local law firm Heringtons and Dr David Walker and Dr Rosie Guy both recently retired doctors from the Conquest who are keen to see The Friends continuing success and bring a depth of knowledge not just about their own specialities but often as important how the hospital works.

Thomas noted that traditionally the entire board has been up for re-election each year and we will do so again this year. However, from next year in line with our constitution and with charity best practice, we will move to a three-year rotating election of a third of the board each year.

Proposer : Claire Bridges

Seconded : Lee Clark

The meeting agreed unanimously to re-election the following Trustees:

- Sarah Coop
- Alastair Fairley
- Richard Fisher
- Dr Rosie Guy
- Sebastian Hedenrona
- Sarah Kowitz DL
- Jeremy Llewellyn-Jones
- Dr David Walker
- Dr Richard Wray DL

9 Any Other Business

There were no other matters arising.

The date for the next AGM will be circulated once confirmed.

Thomas Gardiner thanked those attending for their time and support and closed the meeting.