

INTERIM CHAIR OF TRUSTEES

Dear Friends

I use that term with a great sense of gratitude to so many who have made grants, donations practical and financial, commissioned funds, individuals, places of faith, schools and so many more. Please don't be offended if I've missed you, it's not intentional but these past 12 months have been somewhat of a whirlwind.

Just over 2 years ago I became a Narthex Trustee and a little over a year ago I was asked to be Interim Chair of Trustees due to John Self - Narthex Chair of Trustees for 24 years, being diagnosed with a terminal illness and sadly dying in May 2021. There has needed to be so much change. Nigel our CEO often quotes something he heard many years ago, "that change is here to stay", in Narthex that is truly the case.

As with so many of our contemporary charities we have faced 2 of the most dramatic years in our history. With Covid, Covid mutations along with so many things that we have faced as a

team of staff, volunteers and Trustees has hit us hard. Sadly we have lost friends, loved ones and colleagues. We have seen growth in need and for many sheer desperation, people have lost their jobs, been furloughed and have come to us out of utter destitution, including food and utility poverty. I have witnessed personally a level of poverty that is shocking as I've volunteered in our Tyseley centre, broken people coming for food, clothes, personal hygiene items and just someone to listen to them.

As interim chair I can only be amazed at the level of commitment of our staff and volunteers who have turned up daily over the past year to support people attending our foodbanks, from our advice and debt support staff, others who have supported refugees and asylum seekers all choosing to potentially put themselves in harm's way to ensure those in need were and are supported. Many of our staff and volunteers have contracted Covid and as soon as recovered were back in work looking after the very people who could make them

sick again. It has been humbling to see such dedication and compassion, to see extraordinary levels of support that is outside our normal pattern of support. Thank you to you all.

Writing a Chairs Report is a new role for me, I have spent over 40 years in the Energy Supply sector working on million £ projects, but I have not previously witnessed work that is impossible to put a value on because it is priceless.

I'm not planning to go into too much detail of what we do, I want you to read the reports from our staff who are on the coal face of what we do daily, they have earned the right to be heard and to add their voice to the growing number who are calling for change. I do however want to say thank you to them all and to our volunteers who turn up daily making a change to so many. I want to say a huge thank you to my fellow Trustees and to Nigel Brookhouse who has been our CEO for over 10 years and has been the driving force of so much change.

I want to thank all of our financial donors who have made it possible for Narthex to do the amazing work we have done this past year

through your partnership. You have partnered us so amazingly in 2021 and I want to ask that you continue that partnership with us in 2022 so that together we can achieve so much. THANK YOU.

Nigel our CEO will put a lot more detail in his report so that you can capture the incredible work you have helped us do this past year.

In closing I wish to express my gratitude for making it such a joy to stand in as Interim Chair of Narthex and hopefully we will see so much more happen in the coming year.

I also want to acknowledge that Narthex has fulfilled its mandate as a charity in regards to our CIO and has achieved over and above what is expected of us as a charity. We have also managed the charities finance in a responsible manner that has the charity using all of our funds in accordance with our trust document and any express wish or designation of our donors.

Sincerely

Jamie

Jamie Walsh

Interim Chair of
Trustees

