



Charity Mentors, Chairman's Report - October 2020

This past year has been a far greater challenge for Charity Mentors East Sussex than any of us could have predicted. Having embraced CIO status in November 2019 the Trustees have had to formalise our banking arrangements, establish protocols for Health and Safety, Data Protection, Insurance, Privacy Notice and Lone Working policy; duties that are incumbent upon us to comply with Charity Commission rules. I am indebted to Ken Walker for all the work he has done on our behalf regarding these policies.

Our Project Co-ordinator, Ian Noble, has increased the number of available Mentors to 21 and although mentoring activity has decreased markedly since March following the onset of the Covid19 pandemic, there is evidence this autumn of an uptake in requests from charities for mentoring help.

We are seeing a general reticence within the Voluntary sector to consider mentoring at a time when the very survival of some charities is in jeopardy. CMES is positioning itself as a charity that helps other charities and this is a useful mantra going forward. During the previous 12 months, we have mentored 34 organisations.

Our Funding committee, under the leadership of Sally-Anne Murray, has succeeded in attracting funds from the Ernest Kleinwort Foundation, the Lund Trust, Hastings Direct and others who wish to remain anonymous, so our funds are looking much healthier. We are grateful to these organisations for their support and to our treasurer, Tim Hancock, for his diligence in managing the finances.

Our Mentors are being encouraged to engage with Mentees virtually having first met face to face whilst complying with current restrictions. We have recently held a virtual 'event' to bring together our Mentors and future Mentees to allow an exchange of ideas, encourage charities to come forward for guidance and plan, for the future. Feedback from attendees has been very positive. We are grateful to Rebecca Newby, Katrina Hodges and Ian Noble for planning this occasion and to Chris White for organising the necessary IT.

Going forward we are in active discussions with colleagues in West Sussex to roll-out a mentoring programme for the whole of Sussex and progress with this initiative will be subject of a future report.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank our Trustees; Martin Richards, Ken Walker, Rebecca Newby and Tim Hancock for their wisdom and advice and to our Co-ordinator, Ian Noble, for his energy and drive thus ensuring the success of CMES now and into the future.

Chris Gebbie
Chairman: Charity Mentors, East Sussex.