

**New Forest Disability Information Service**

**New  
Forest  
Disability**

**Annual Review  
April 2019  
to March 2020**

## ***Mission Statement***

'to empower people living with disabilities in the New Forest and it's surrounding area to enable them to lead active and fulfilling lives integrated in society'



Members of CPAG and Disability Rights UK



charity no:1104589

company no:05124781

## Chairman's Report

Welcome to our 21st Anniversary Annual Review.

This is my opportunity to thank the whole Team for their hard work, fortitude and dedication throughout the year. We have faced a challenging and exciting year during which New Forest Disability has continued to fulfil our core purpose of providing support for people of all ages.

Why has the year been challenging?

NFDIS supports increasing numbers of clients with diverse needs.

Austerity continues to bite which makes it ever harder to attract grants and funding.

Two of our wonderful volunteers succumbed after long illnesses.

The disruption during building alterations at headquarters. The Team have coped brilliantly throughout.

Lymington Hospital has been unable to continue the funding of two contracts that NFDIS was providing for people in hospital.

And the exciting bit:

Cllr Rickman, Leader of NFDC officially opened the new improved office on 4th June 2019. This was made possible by the generous support of lots of individual people and organisations who collectively raised the funds required for the project. Volunteers, staff and trustees, did a myriad of jobs which included fitting the

office, painting inside and out, fitting carpets, assembling furniture and making tea for the troops. Meanwhile, the real work of helping people did not stop at all! All credit to Melissa Oliver, our Office Manager.

The Team has assisted many people who would not access such help readily elsewhere.

We are grateful to NFDC for funding two of the Outreach Team's projects.

New volunteers have joined us to become members of a super Team that is ably led by Jacki Keable our CEO.

As we celebrate twenty one years of NFDIS which is a charity, we are ever mindful that the level of unmet need in the New Forest Community is substantial. The Team at NFDIS offers support to anyone who requests our help, and we hope that our supporters and benefactors will continue to find the funds to continue this service for many years to come.

Dr Reg Odbert - Chair of Trustees



L-R Dr Reg Odbert Chair, Cllr Anne Corbridge Vice Chair,

Cllr Barry Rickman Leader NFDC cutting the ribbon.

## Treasurer's Report

The year under review has been particularly challenging for our staff and trustees, and in its later stages also for the disabled community that we serve.

On the positive side we have benefitted from the enlarged and dramatically improved premises and working conditions, offering greater efficiency for staff, and a more welcoming environment and greater privacy for our clients.

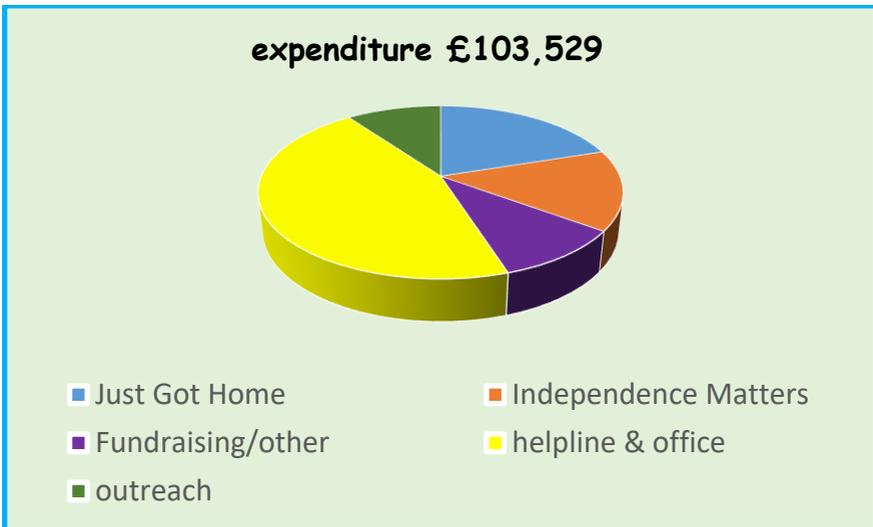
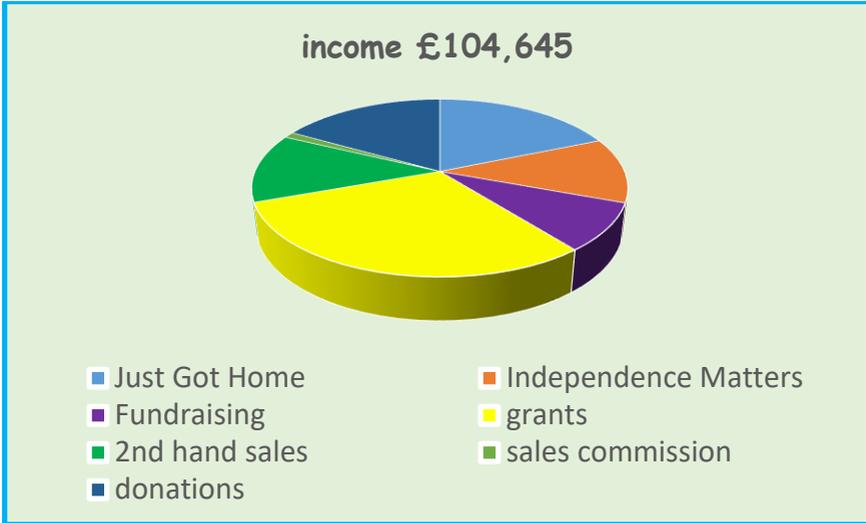
As a result we have been able to provide a better and more extensive service and once again to make a small financial operating surplus.

The final weeks of the year were badly affected by the early stages of the Coronavirus pandemic. The problems normally suffered by our clients were severely aggravated by reduced freedom of movement and much less of the social interaction which is so important to disabled people. Our own work had to be changed from primarily face-to-face support to contact mainly by telephone, with correspondingly greater hardship for those affected.

Our staff and volunteers responded magnificently to these challenges and developed new ways of giving the vital support needed, while ensuring that we comply with Government rules and advice on maintaining safe procedures.

A wonderful and extremely generous donation was received from the estate of a former volunteer and trustee, which in accordance with the donor's wishes will be retained to ensure the future health and success of the charity, and so that it can weather any future problems which might otherwise threaten its financial health or even its survival.

We believe that NFDIS faces the current year in a good condition to deal with the substantial difficulties that Coronavirus presents to our own organisation and to the disabled community.

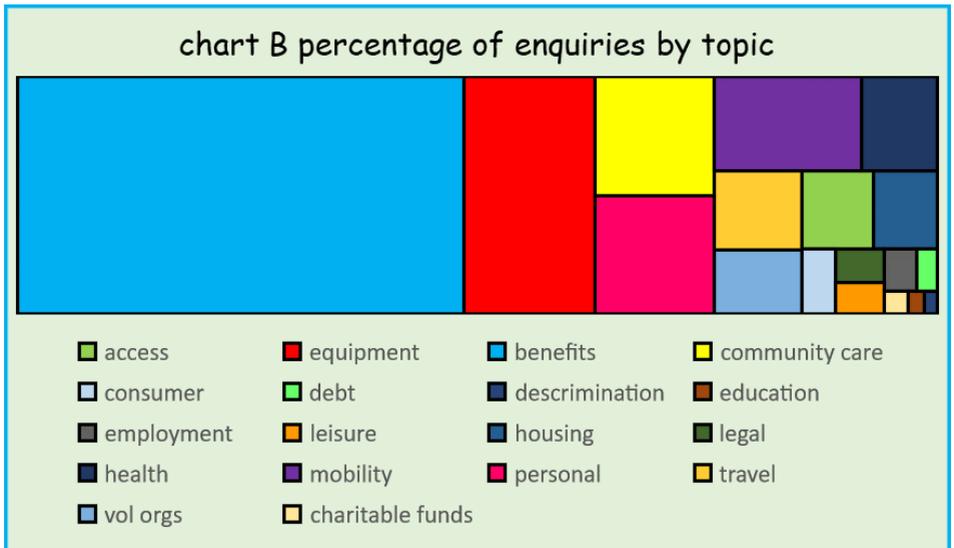


David Wansbrough - Honorary Treasurer

## client enquiry statistics



A record £1,536,407 was secured in welfare benefits for clients



## Chief Executive's report

As we celebrate 21 years of helping people in the New Forest we can reflect on what an unusual end to the year we are experiencing and what an uncertain future for everyone as we experience lock down.

I wish to extend huge thanks to all the wonderful members of our Team who stepped up and swiftly gear changed our services to be handled over the telephone and added befriending calls to the most vulnerable and isolated people in our community, all whilst socially distancing.

The complexity of our casework challenging welfare benefit decisions, and our tribunal success rate, has been extremely high and although we helped slightly fewer people, the time required and the number of enquiries presented, rose quite steeply. During the year we secured over £1.5m of benefits for our clients – another record year!

We are pleased to report 100% of our clients, who responded to our client satisfaction survey, stated they were highly or very satisfied with our service; the advice they received and the Advisor's knowledge who helped them. 100% who responded they would recommend our service to family or friends and our clients are typically representative of the ethnicity and diversity of the New Forest population.

None of our service would be possible without our fantastic volunteers, trustees, fundraising group and small staff team, all of whom go above and beyond to help everyone to the best of their ability. Well done everyone, thank you and who knows what the following year may bring!

Jacki Keable - Chief Executive

## Our Services

### **FREE**

Disability Information and Advice Service

Welfare benefit & Blue Badge applications  
face to face, over the telephone or home visits to the housebound

Welfare Benefit Tribunal Service  
challenging benefit outcomes all the way to Tribunal Hearings

Working in partnership with NFDC :

Advice and advocacy for Lymington Hospital in-patients visiting them  
whilst in hospital

Just Got Home Service  
support service for patients returning home from hospital including  
Home Visits for discharged patients

Independence Matters Project  
promoting and supporting disabled adaptations to your home

Befriending Service  
During the Covid-19 lockdown we offered a new befriending and support  
service to anyone feeling lonely or unable to shop etc

Sales of new and lightly used mobility equipment and daily living aids



# Independence Matters

**Do you have difficulty using your bath,  
or find stairs and steps difficult?**

New Forest District Council offer grants and loans for adaptations to your home that could help make your life easier.

Please contact our Private Sector Housing team  
on 023 8028 5151 for further details.

**New Forest District Council has linked up with local charity New Forest Disability, to promote adaptations to help people stay independent in their homes. New Forest Disability provides free, impartial, confidential information and advice to those of any age and any disability, throughout the New Forest area.**

### **What we can help with**

Funding is available to assist New Forest residents with a disability to live safely, independently and with dignity in their own homes. We can help with a wide range of adaptations, including:

- Installing a level access shower.
- Widening doors for wheelchair access.
- Fitting grab rails, ramps or stair lifts.

We can also assist with arranging a needs assessment, surveyor and builder to carry out the work.

Loans are also available to help with essential work such as roof and window repairs or a broken boiler. Loans are administered by the Parity Trust, a charitable organisation.

### **Who can apply**

Council or housing association tenants, private tenants and home owners can apply. Applications for adults will be means tested and you may have to contribute to the cost. Applications for children are not means tested.

**Please call New Forest District Council for more information - 023 8028 5151.**



**New Forest District Council**  
Appletree Court, Beaulieu Road, Lyndhurst,  
Hampshire. SO43 7PN • **023 8028 5151**  
[newforest.gov.uk](http://newforest.gov.uk) • [newforestdc](https://twitter.com/newforestdc) • [newforestgov](https://www.facebook.com/newforestgov)

**New Forest Disability**  
NFDIS Head Office, 6 Osborne Road, New Milton,  
Hampshire. BH25 6AD • **01425 628750**  
[newforestdis.org.uk](http://newforestdis.org.uk) • [info@newforestdis.org.uk](mailto:info@newforestdis.org.uk)  
 [NF\\_Disability](https://twitter.com/NF_Disability) • [New-Forest-Disability](https://www.facebook.com/New-Forest-Disability)

## Client Feedback

client

- I was nervous about coming but instantly you put me at ease...calmed me down and calmly went through all the problems I had that appeared insurmountable - but you sorted it!

tribunal

- I could not believe how much support you gave me - even supporting me at the tribunal
- it was a scary experience but you helped me get through it...

professional

- your knowledge is second to none, we are so lucky to have your input for our clients ...
- the system is so complex I do not know where to start - so I call you!

grateful

- thank you seems so little, but you helped when we thought no one was interested in our case ...
- I shall forever be grateful that I was referred to you ...

patient

- I cannot believe how much you arranged for me when I was ill ...
- we are so lucky to have your service at Lymington Hospital, I felt so isolated without my family but you helped sort things out ...

## The NFDIS Team

<b>Senior Tribunal Advisor</b>	Mel
<b>Advisors</b>	Barbara, Heather, Nora, Jayne
<b>Information Officers</b>	Jenny, Sheila, Annie, Roger, Marguerite, Nick, Callum, Richard, Lynette, Dan, Steve, Josey
<b>Data Entry Clerks</b>	John, Roger, Matt
<b>Admin Assistant</b>	Margaret
<b>Outreach Co-ordinator</b>	Geraldine
<b>Office Manager</b>	Melissa Oliver
<b>Chief Executive</b>	Jacki Keable

## Board of Trustees

<b>Reg Odbert - Chairman</b>	<b>Penny Clark - Trustee</b>
<b>Anne Corbridge - Vice Chairman</b>	<b>Philip Latham - Trustee</b>
<b>David Wansbrough - Treasurer</b>	<b>Simon Smith - co-opted</b>
<b>Pam Lacey - Secretary</b>	<b>Trustee</b>

## Fundraising Group

Beryl Odbert - Chairman, Chris Halling - Minutes Secretary  
Penny Clerk, Kathy Osland-Moore, Lourdes Ball

## We thank supporters:

Ascot Ladies  
Balmer Lawn Garage  
Dave Jones & Son  
Doughty's Fabrics  
First Friday Lunch  
Henry Smith  
Charitable Trust

Heppenstalls  
Solicitors  
Hythe Masonic Lodge  
Lymington Hospital  
Community Service  
Cllr A Glass Chairman  
NFDC  
M Sparkes coffee  
morning

Time & Tide  
Tu sei Bella  
Voices of the Forest  
Waitrose Lymington  
Tesco - New Milton

ExxonMobil

The Burry Trust

Collection buckets:

One2Go

Brockenhurst

Hare & Hounds, Sway

Silver Hind, Sway

Moss on the Green

Otters Nursery

Pollyanna

Hairdressers

Quiz Master Bob

Quiz Master Craig

Solent Model Yacht  
Club

South Lawn Hotel

Sway Butcher

Sway Carnival

Committee

Tea @3

## We thank our supporters

Bransgore PC  
Brockenhurst PC  
Beaulieu PC  
Copythorne PC  
Denny Lodges PC  
East Boldre PC  
Ellingham, Harbridge  
& Ibsley PC  
Fawley PC  
Godshill PC  
Hordle PC  
Hale PC

Lymington &  
Pennington TC  
Marchwood PC  
Martin PC  
Milford-on-Sea PC  
New Forest District  
Council  
New Milton TC  
Sandleheath PC  
Sway PC  
Totton & Eling TC  
Woodgreen PC

Working in partnership with:



Lymington New Forest Hospital and The Grove in Hythe and  
Hythe, Totton, Ringwood, Lyndhurst, Fordingbridge and Lymington  
Libraries providing outreach services.



This Annual Review was  
generously sponsored by  
Heppenstalls Solicitors

Providing free, confidential, impartial disability related information, advice and guidance throughout the New Forest and surrounding areas.

anyone - any age - any disability

New  
Forest  
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Head Office  
6-8 Osborne Road  
New Milton  
Hampshire  
BH25 6AD

Helpline: 01425 628750

[info@newforestdis.org.uk](mailto:info@newforestdis.org.uk)  
[www.newforestdis.org.uk](http://www.newforestdis.org.uk)

