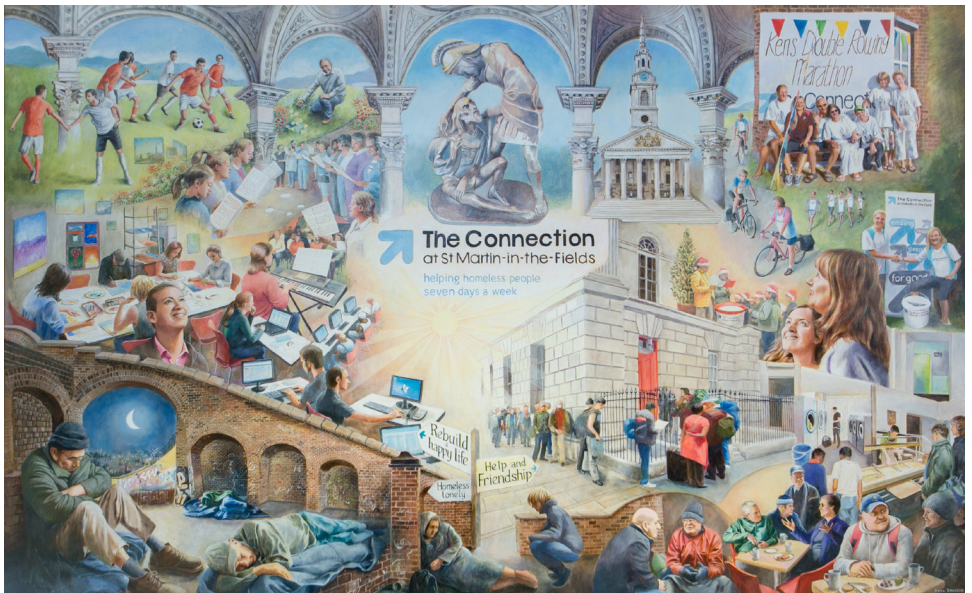


# Friends of

# The Connection

## at St Martin-in-the-Fields

# Annual Review 2017-18



# Highlights of the year

This year we saw the first exciting and encouraging results from the Committee's new strategies for membership development and fundraising. As a result, the Friends was able to make grants totalling over £275,000 to support the work of The Connection, a small increase on the previous year. This was made possible both by the very substantial Valerie Margaret Farbridge legacy, and by a 29% increase in the funds raised from subscriptions, donations and fundraising events and activities.

The following were particularly memorable developments during the year:

We organised the first Connection Coffee Morning to mark World Homeless Day on 10 October. 11 Coffee Mornings were held by Friends in their home neighbourhoods across southern England raising a total of £2,342.



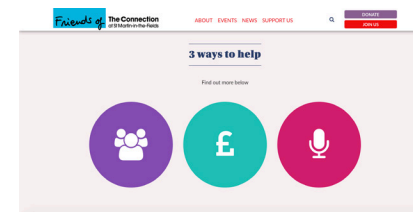
We collaborated with the Brandenburg Choral Festival to hold two evenings of talks in The Connection, a meal in the Café in the Crypt, and a concert in St Martin-in-the-Fields. These Connection with Choral Classics evenings raised over £3,000.

Our Speakers Panel have now undertaken 15 engagements — read more about them on page 8.

The picture generously painted for us by Rosa Branson, which so strikingly and comprehensively illustrates the path off the streets that is the raison d'être of The Connection, took pride of place in a Winter Exhibition of client art. The picture appears on the front of this Review, and reproductions are now on sale as a tea towel and jigsaw puzzle.

The tradition of successful Christmas fundraising continued with carol singing in Charing Cross station and guided walks around Trafalgar Square, together raising nearly £1,500.

This year the Friends took direct responsibility for the annual Queen Eleanor Cycle Ride, which raised a splendid £11,282.



We launched the Friends' new website and greatly increased our social media presence, bringing the Friends to the attention of a much wider public.

Friends have also continued to run their own activities locally, from baking days and jelly sales to yoga days, to further swell our fundraising total, and also continue to provide practical support in the form of warm winter clothes, quality suits and goods to stock The Connection's annual Pop-up Shop.

Legacies continue to play a vital, if unpredictable, part in our overall fundraising. This has been recognised explicitly this year with the posthumous nomination of Valerie Margaret Farbridge for the Guy Mason Award. Valerie Farbridge, who died in 2014, was a stalwart supporter and volunteer for the Social Care Unit (precursor of The Connection) in the 1970s and 1980s, and left the Friends an incredibly generous legacy worth £373,000.

All of these activities depend on the initiative and hard work of our many volunteers, including, in particular, members of the Committee, to whom we are enormously grateful. We are also greatly reliant on the support of our part-time Charity Administrator, Bert-Jan Zuiderduin, and our colleagues in The Connection's professional Fundraising Team. The Connection's new CEO, Pam Orchard, has been a wonderful source of practical support and wise counsel.

Our plans for the future, building on these excellent results, are set out more fully in the centre pages of this Review.

*Charles Woodd, Chair*

# The Connection – the next 5 years

*Pam Orchard, CEO of The Connection, writes:* The Connection has an ambitious and exciting new 5 year strategy. By 2023, we will aim to:

1. Provide services for 4500 people a year
2. Grow the quality and impact of our services
3. Establish Social Enterprise and Trading activity to increase income and our training offer to clients
4. Increase our fundraised income from £2 million a year to at least £3m a year
5. Improve our profile and influence through excellent communications and evidence of impact
6. Develop our governance and corporate services infrastructure

We have also developed a Theory of Change and service model. This means that what we do will change, and how we deliver services will be different.

## Changes in how CSTM will deliver services

*Co-production* – engaging our clients in the design, delivery and evaluation of our services.

We aim to increase the Step Up Programme and the number of client volunteering opportunities on site. We have already introduced a quarterly client forum and will be creating a link to governance. We will be piloting this approach by including 2 clients in a “co-production group” to guide the changes we are making in the Day Centre.

*A Strengths based approach* – recognising the strengths clients bring as well as the issues.

Our clients have strengths, skills and talents and we must see the whole person, not just a list of problems to be solved. To achieve this, we must make changes to our assessment processes, our client communications, our job descriptions and staff training. We will also be speaking about our clients differently by talking about artists, trainees, gardeners and chefs. If we believe in the potential of our clients, maybe they will believe in their potential too.

Photographs of clients of The Connection during a gardening workshop

## Changes in what CSTM will offer

Our services will operate in three stages:

*Initial Relationship Building* will focus on a strengths based approach. Its main elements will be:

- initial engagement and advice
- the Resource Centre where clients can access meals laundry and washing facilities, IT, and links to other services
- temporary accommodation in the Night Centre
- daytime outreach and harm minimisation through a street-based outreach service

*Building a Future* through recovery will involve:

- supporting resilience and recovery through access to specialist treatment services and co-produced therapeutic groupwork
- working towards housing and resettlement, and supporting clients to reconnect elsewhere in the UK, and internationally

*Fostering independence* through enterprise and employment will include:

- Step Up co-production programme
- creating enterprise opportunities
- training, work experience and employer links
- career guidance and job search

We are also building our engine for service innovation and influencing by creating a Knowledge and Innovation Team, and will be working more closely in partnership with the St Martins Charity (BBC Radio 4 Christmas Appeal).

We remain very appreciative of the support given to us by the Friends of the Connection. None of this work would be possible without it. We look forward to another productive and fruitful year in 2018-19.





# Fundraising Strategy

## 2018-19

This year, the Friends of the Connection aims to raise a total income (excluding legacies) of £150,000 and donate at least £200,000 to The Connection, including legacies. To achieve this, we intend to:

Increase local fundraising by members, offering information and support and helping to promote events



Hold the second Connection Coffee Morning in October at 25 venues



Maximise income from subscriptions and donations by increasing membership through social media, events and our Speakers' Panel



Launch and manage a Spring Appeal. This year's appeal is to raise £25,000 for the laundry and showers at The Connection



Deliver a programme of centrally organised events to raise awareness, build relationships and raise funds. This will include more Connection with Choral Classics evenings and our annual Friends' Day



Organise the 10th Anniversary Queen Eleanor Cycle Ride and raise £25,000. This year's ride takes place 24 – 27 August



Maximise income from legacies, increasing the 5-year average of legacy income by including more promotional material in mailings and on the website, and implementing a wider promotional campaign in coordination with The Connection.



Bike by DTDesign; coffee by Shirley Hernández Ticona; membership by Symbolon; calendar by Schmidt Sergey; house by priyanta; money by emilegraphics. All images from Noun Project.

# The Speakers' Panel

In thinking about the future development of the Friends, we reflected that even people interested in homelessness, and concerned about it, knew rather little of the facts behind this situation, or what The Connection offered to provide a pathway away from rough sleeping. So we decided on an initiative to try to raise awareness of both the causes of homelessness, and The Connection's response, as well as raise funds.

The mechanism for this has been our Speakers' Panel of seven trained Friends. All of them have attended briefing sessions with senior Connection staff and have been out at night with the Outreach team. Over the first year the Panel spoke on 15 occasions to a wide range of audiences — from City business men at a retirement party, to sixth formers at school, to a club for people with learning disabilities, to a party for companies in the construction industry. Every occasion has been challenging in different ways. Although Speakers have access to a Power Point presentation, this is not always appropriate and sometimes audiences only want a very short address.



Message for clients at The Connection created in response to a talk at Caxton Youth Centre

Although the main objective of these talks is to raise awareness, we know that over £11,000 has been raised for The Connection through events associated with our talks. This has been an exciting innovation and well worthwhile. We have made plans to continue with the Panel, building on that experience and hopefully reaching a greater number of audiences.

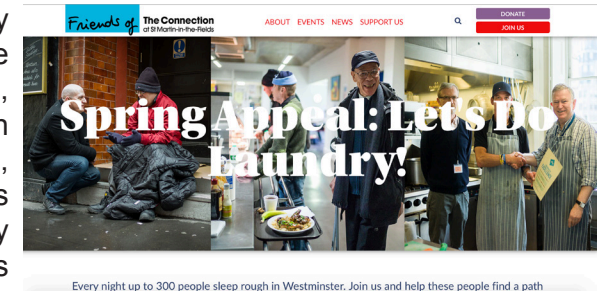
If you would like to discuss inviting a speaker on homelessness to an event you are organising, do please contact us by email: friends@cstm.org.uk; or by phone: 020 7766 5522.

*Nigel Thorpe, Secretary*

# Communications

As more and more of the world communicates online, and as one of the key focuses for the Friends (outside of raising money) is raising awareness, in 2017-18 the Friends took on the challenge of relaunching their website, along with its social media presence online.

This happened in two key steps. First, a complete overhaul of the website, keeping in brand with The Connection's website, but showing the Friends as the active community that it is. Our key desires were to ensure that it was easy for new members to join and book for events and to simplify the fundraising process using online donation forms and portals like BT-MyDonate. Since launching the new site we have seen an increase in online visits which is really encouraging for such a new website.



The second step was the reignition of the Friends' social media channels. We focused first on Facebook, and later expanded to Twitter, Instagram and LinkedIn. The number of channels grew with the number of dedicated volunteers we recruited, and eventually a Social Media Team (SMT) was set up to manage and share responsibilities across all the channels. Keeping them updated with fresh images and stories is key to growing, and holding on to, engagement.

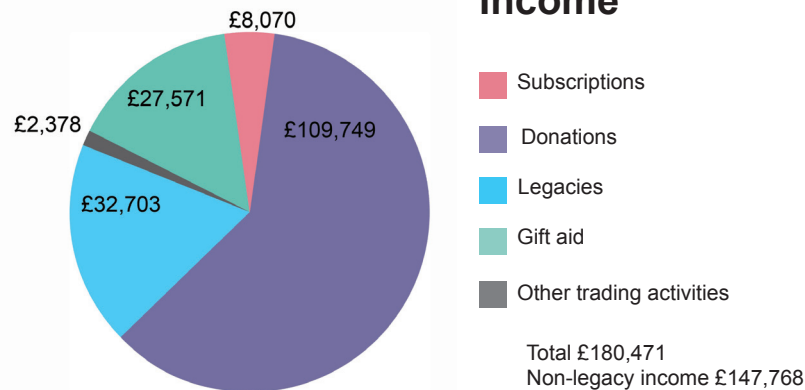
Since relaunching the social media channels our Facebook posts have been reaching around 500 people a week on our Facebook page, and in May we reached 6.6k. On Twitter, we reached 19.5k people throughout the month of May. Hopefully, as we continue to grow our presence online, this will convert to both more members and more funds raised for The Connection. It is also wonderful to share the hard work our Friends put in, so please do share your photos and stories online with us!

*Emily Cecil-Dennett, Trustee*

# Accounts

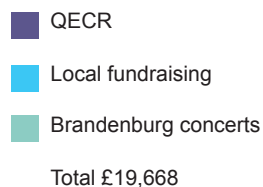
Our financial performance in 2017-18 was very satisfactory. We were able to make grants to the Connection totalling £276,534, an increase of nearly £6,000 on the previous year. Although in accounting terms we ran a deficit of £109,549, following a large surplus in 2016-17, this reflected the fact that a major legacy was credited to us in 2016-17, when the details were made known, while payment of the funds over to the Connection was possible only when they became available in 2017-18. Such swings in the net financial position due to the differential timing of particular transactions are unfortunately unavoidable.

## Income



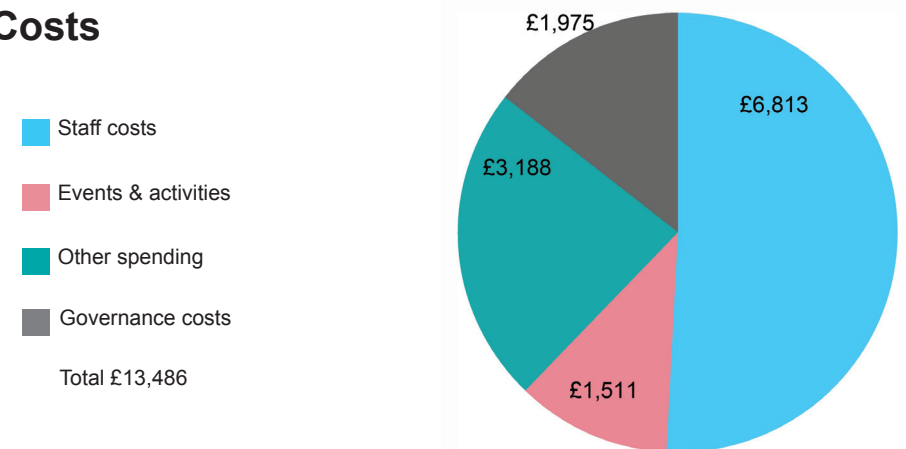
Our non-legacy income in 2017-18 was over £147,000, up more than £33,000 on the previous year. The breakdown is shown above. As well as reversing the previous downward trend in donations and subscriptions, our efforts to raise money from events and local fundraising activity were very successful, as shown in the second chart. With the new Spring Appeal launched this year we are hopeful that we will be able to meet the target of £150,000 for non-legacy income, set in our fundraising strategy.

## Surplus from events and activities



Our balance sheet is strong. The net assets of the Friends at the end of 2017-18 stood at £149,409, with cash reserves of £32,417 slightly higher than the minimum requirement set out in our reserves policy: 8 months of normal average costs. The additional assets, around £117,000, were a reflection mainly of a legacy due to be paid in the current year and a significant amount of gift aid due to be received from the government. With these payments expected, we are confident that we shall well exceed our annual target of £200,000 for grants to The Connection this year, and hopefully close to or above the grant made in 2017-18.

## Costs



Since November we have taken over responsibility for funding our administrator. This increases the transparency of our finances, but will be broadly revenue neutral for The Connection as it will be offset by a lower grant from the Friends. This switch has added to our measured costs, taking them well above the level of income generated by annual subscriptions; in 2018-19 we will be required to fund a full year, raising costs further. Nevertheless our costs will remain a small fraction of the income we generate; in 2017-18 they were a mere 9% of non-legacy income, 7½% of total income, as the final chart illustrates.

*Chris Riley, Treasurer*

# A big Thank You...

To all our Friends, volunteers, Committee members and other supporters, who have helped to make 2017-18 such a successful year!

## How to make a donation

You can make a donation to the Friends online at [friendsoftheconnection.org.uk/donate](http://friendsoftheconnection.org.uk/donate), visit [mydonate.bt.com/charity/search](http://mydonate.bt.com/charity/search) and search for Friends of the Connection, or simply send a cheque payable to *Friends of the Connection* to the Friends office (details below). If you are a UK taxpayer and are able to Gift Aid any donation, the Friends will be able to claim 25% more from the Government in reclaimed tax.

## Come and join us

By joining the Friends, you will become one of a growing country-wide network of people who have made a commitment to support The Connection through the Friends.

As a Friend, you will:

- receive a printed Newsletter and other related material
- be able to opt to receive more frequent email updates
- be invited to our annual Friends Day and AGM at The Connection
- have the chance to attend other events at or around The Connection, to learn more about homelessness and The Connection's work and see what facilities are offered in the building
- receive information about concerts and other fundraising events which support the Friends and The Connection
- be supported to raise funds for the Friends in your home community

It only costs £15 a year to join the Friends (though you are welcome to donate more!) You can join online at [friendsoftheconnection.org.uk/become-a-friend](http://friendsoftheconnection.org.uk/become-a-friend) or contact the Friends' office for an application form.

Friends of the Connection, 12 Adelaide Street, London WC2N 4HW.

Email: [friends@cstm.org.uk](mailto:friends@cstm.org.uk).

Tel: 020 7766 5522 (Tues, Wed, Fri - 10-3 pm)

[www.friendsoftheconnection.org.uk](http://www.friendsoftheconnection.org.uk)