**The Friendship Cabin - Chairman’s report – AGM December 2024**

We have had another interesting year and continue to consolidate our position.

With the covid pandemic now a distant memory there is no doubt that it has had a lasting effect on our organisation and other organisations operating in the same sector in the way funding is obtained and the ability to continue providing the service.

A great part of our funding comes from the Scottish Government through the Mental Health and Wellbeing fund. Just before the last AGM in December last year we were in negotiation to secure funding for this year but we were reminded that in order to obtain that funding we could not charge a regular fee so basically, we could not receive any money for core funding areas that we are also receiving in membership fees. This meant we were obliged to move to donations only which meant members pay what they could afford and some were restricted to the amount they could donate as many are still suffering from the cost of living crisis so instead of a regular payment we are now obliged to accept a donation. This has meant a drop in daily income of about £3,000 on an annual basis which to some extent has been covered by the monthly fund raising events and thanks to those attendees for their regular support and to those who contribute when not attending. Thanks also to those who have given their time without cost on Friday nights during the year and we are fully aware that new arrangements may have to be made in 2025. We do have several other acts who we use occasionally but these come at a cost so they are used sparingly

We are now happily offering sessions on four days each week all with the same weekly format of physical and cognitive pass times with the emphasis on cognitive when we pay great attention to the process of learning and understanding matters. We are happy to continue with quizzes, games and the soul searching blether when some personal secrets are divulged. Because of many reasons we devote the Wednesday session to music and the support of Music in Hospital and Care in the person of David Hood who has been absolutely outstanding. That organisation, just like ourselves, relies on fundraising and donations and we are currently talking to them about what they can offer in 2025.

As we still wish to offer our clients a warm meal, the supplier has been a continual problem and earlier, after being let down, we felt we had resolved the situation but the feedback told us the quality was not great. We manged to source Susan and she has provided a quality product and on the few occasions we have had a trial lunch, it was found very acceptable and we will continue to operate one menu per day as it is impossible from the ordering point of view and the chef’s point of view to provide several different meals per day.

The clients have enjoyed three trips during the year, firstly and after some sightseeing, a meal was enjoyed at the Coast restaurant in Arbroath and we were delighted that David Hood gave up his personal time to join us. The second trip was to Blair Drummond Safari Park to enjoy seeing the animals close at hand this day was completed with a meal at Scoonie Bowling Pavilion hosted by Mary Parry. The final trip of the year was to Oban where everyone enjoyed a full day out which included a three course meal and we were happy to have Mike from Screen Memories to accompany us and provide some entertainment. For each of our outings we enjoyed using the coaches provided by Bay Travel and our thanks go to Emma for the arrangements and to the personable drivers going out of their way to make travel enjoyable.

The treasurer’s report will give the finance in more detail and thanks go to Allan for his fundraising in doing the 10k Glenrothes run, donations from RWE regeneration, Velux windows, several personal donations and a special donation from Screen Memories passed to us from one of their clients. There were also hidden donations from SPAR, ASDA and Barries Barbers. Those donations have helped us provide trips and the end of year parties.

Looking forward, your newly elected Board will endeavour to maintain the level of service and we continue with our opendoor policy attracting new members in accepting referrals and those through social media.

Grateful thanks to the Trustee members Fiona, Gordon, Irene M, Anne, Marianne, Sasha, Susan and to Lee for keeping the finance in order also grateful thanks to the hardworking volunteers Anita, Sandy, Allan, Mandy and the members who have stepped into help sometimes at short notice. Special thanks however must go to Pearl the hard working and tireless Volunteer coordinator who continues to provide the Cabin with new ideas and games but also her ability to remember dates of note whether it is Volunteers’ day, Halloween, Valentines Day when something special is always arranged and she is always ready to enforce the rules of The Friendship Cabin.