

ALONE

Supporting older people
to age at home



Annual Report 2017



ALONE is a national organisation that support older people to age at home. We work with all older people, including those who have difficulties with loneliness, ill health, poverty, poor housing or homelessness.

We support them through these challenges and enable them to access the relevant services to live happily in the community. Our volunteers bring friendship and support to every older person.

All our services are quality approved.

Our Vision is a society where older people are included as valued and empowered members of the community.

Our Mission is to support older people to age at home, through Support Coordination, Befriending, Housing with Support and Campaigning.



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What We Do

Support Coordination

ALONE's Support Coordination service works with older people who need support to age at home. ALONE support older people with everything from their biggest challenges to their smallest problems. Staff work with the older person to assess their situation and enable them to access the relevant services in the community.

Befriending

ALONE's Befriending service provides companionship to older people who are socially isolated through a volunteer visit or phone call. Volunteers provide support with practical tasks and basic advocacy. Befriending is designed to alleviate the negative impacts of loneliness on mental and physical health. All ALONE volunteers are trained and supported by staff. If the older person's needs change, staff coordinate the additional supports the older person needs to enable them to remain living at home.

Housing with Support

ALONE's Housing with Support provides homes to older people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness and need a level of support. Our housing team provide housing & facilities management to our tenants. Our staff work with each tenant to ensure they have the relevant services and supports they need to live independently. The level of support an older person receives is based on their changing needs. Every ALONE home is age-friendly and is maintained to a high standard.

BConnect

ALONE's BConnect service connects organisations and individuals with the knowledge, training and technology they need to support people to live independently at home. We aim to increase efficiency of services for older people in Ireland and prevent duplication of services. Through our coordination of Befriending Network Ireland (BNI), we support more than 50 befriending organisations across the country. The BConnect technology platform includes a Management Information System (MIS), mobile apps, and assistive technology solutions.



Chairman's Message

I am pleased to present this Annual Report for 2017, in what has been an exciting year of expansion for ALONE.

Ireland's demographics are rapidly changing. It is expected that there will be 1.2 million people over 60 in Ireland by 2032. I am glad to say that ALONE is leading the way in preparing for our ageing population, by ensuring the expansion of our services to meet changing needs and growing demand.

This year has been a very busy one for ALONE. Key activities for the Board of Trustees included:

- Sponsoring the 40th anniversary celebrations in ALONE
- Achieving and maintaining our commitments to the Governance Code
- Supporting the introduction of a logic model to assess service outcomes and quality of life for older people
- Continuing to meet our commitments to the Charity Regulator and Housing Regulator
- Reviewing our investment portfolio.

In 2017, ALONE continued to provide Befriending, Support Coordination, Housing with Support, and BConnect services. I would like to thank the staff and managers across all departments who work extremely hard day in day out and continue to show their great commitment to the goals of ALONE.

I would like to thank the Board of Trustees for their continued support and efforts. Thank you in particular to Liz Kilcommons and Patricia Larkin, who left their positions on the Board of ALONE this year. We are very grateful for all they have contributed to the running of ALONE. I would also like to welcome Eimear Cahalin, Ciaran Donegan and Ed Sibley to the Board and congratulate them on their work so far.

Most of all I would like to thank the volunteers. The volunteers give their time freely and generously, and regularly exceed expectations in their roles. Without you, there would be no ALONE. Thank you to each and every one of you.

I look forward to seeing what the coming years bring.

Kind Regards,



Eddie Matthews





Chief Executive's Message

Looking back on 2017, I am very proud of everything we have achieved. It is fantastic to write this message and to be able to comment, every year, on how ALONE is expanding our numbers, our services and our achievements. This year we have doubled the number of people we support and we are growing in our understanding of what we can make happen. It is especially wonderful to see this in 2017, 40 years since the foundation of ALONE.

This has been a busy year for ALONE. Not only have we helped a record number of people to age at home, but we are innovating new solutions like our BConnect technology, implementing new practices such as our volunteer support system, and grown hugely in terms of our staff, our volunteers and the level of support we provide to older people.

We had a number of fantastic achievements this year. We were delighted to be the overall national winners for the HSE Excellence in Healthcare awards. We transitioned 85 older people and volunteers from Crosscare's service to ALONE. We partnered with Netwell CASALA, the research centre for ageing at Dundalk Institute of Technology (DkIT). Most importantly, we supported more older people than ever to age at home.

We never fail to hear fantastic stories of how ALONE has helped people. One woman got in touch recently who had picked up an ALONE poster over a year ago, but never had the courage to call. She has since been matched with a volunteer and says that for the first time in a long time, she has something to look forward to.

Sometimes the stories are less uplifting. Every day we meet older people who are lonely, in need or who have housing difficulties. As each year goes by, we see the demand for our services increasing. This year, we doubled the amount of people we supported in response to demand for our services.

ALONE works to provide a solution to the problems, big and small, that older people face day to day. We want to be able to support every person who comes to us and the many more who may not yet be aware that help is available to them. More than that, we want to change the policies and attitudes that have resulted in these problems in the first place. Although we are very proud of how far we have come this year, we recognise the huge distance there is still to go.

There are many worthy charities in Ireland. What makes ALONE special is our staff, volunteers, donors, board members, partners and supporters. All of these people work tirelessly to bring about real change for older people in Ireland. Without their backing, none of what is contained in this report would be possible. I would like to thank each and every one of you for your continued support.

Our full accounts are published on our website. If you have any further questions, please don't hesitate to get in touch. You can visit our website, www.alone.ie, email us on hello@alone.ie, or call us on 01 679 1032.



Seán Moynihan



Key Achievements

Our Key Achievements in 2017

- We were the overall national winners of the HSE Excellence in Healthcare awards.
- We won the inaugural Freedom Tech award for outstanding contribution to assistive living technology.
- We won the tender to supply the first housing with support demonstrator project in Ireland.
- We celebrated 40 years of ALONE.
- We reached 750 volunteers.
- 10 external organisations signed up onto our technology platform.

- We established an ALONE service hub in Louth.
- We maintained all our quality standards.
- We completed the ThinkTech program with Social Innovation Fund Ireland.
- We built an app for volunteers.
- We were funded by the Health Service Executive (HSE) to run our services in North Dublin City and County.



Key Achievements

- We doubled the number of people we supported to **1,903** individuals across all our services.

- Our Befriending service supported almost **700** people.

- Our Coordination of Supports service engaged in **1,146** cases.

- Fundraising income increased by **15%**

- We received **1,776** calls from older people to front desk.

- Staff numbers increased from 19 to **31**

- We had **9** new tenants and 6 emergency placements.

- **10** external organisations began using the BConnect Management Information System (MIS).

- We invested **€120,000** to support the growth of other organisations.

- We ran **18** training sessions for other organisations.

- We assisted **8** befriending services to set-up in counties Clare, Dublin, Meath, Sligo, Wicklow, Wexford, and Tipperary.

- We held **25** volunteer recruitment sessions.

- We trained **402** new volunteers.

- We hosted 15 corporate volunteer days, providing over **1300** hours of volunteer maintenance



Volunteering Supports

Without volunteers, we would not be able to deliver our key services. In 2017 we increased our number of volunteers while also providing them with supports from ALONE staff.

We doubled the number of fully trained volunteers in one year (402 fully trained in 2017). We held 25 recruitment sessions and implemented a streamlined process for training new volunteers.

A more targeted approach to recruitment and training began with information sessions now more mobile. We went to specific areas where there is a greater need for more volunteers.

We have doubled our numbers of Volunteer Leaders with a new process put in place for peer support and volunteer engagement.

We continued to deliver multiple large and small events throughout the year. During the year, ALONE delivered 8 large events in addition to continuing on the very successful smaller events programmes such as the Wild Strawberries cinema club.

We hosted 15 corporate volunteer days throughout the year providing over 1300 hours of volunteer maintenance to ALONE Housing with Support.

Case Study: Ann-Marie Doherty

“As an ALONE volunteer, I have a warm heartfelt memory of meeting my friend Eva on my first visit. As I am from Donegal, I was worried she may not understand my accent. In my head, I kept telling myself to not speak too fast when we first met.

When we did meet, I just started off talking and introduced myself. She started to smile immediately and her eyes watered. She said “As soon as you started speaking, warm memories of Donegal and my mother have come flooding back to me. I haven’t heard the Donegal accent spoken to me in person in years. Even if you came and sat talking about the weather I think the accent would comfort me.”

As a Dublin woman, she had been living in Dublin most of her life but her mother was from Donegal. She spent all her childhood summers there. What were the chances? We all have something in common. Eva is a very good friend of mine. And I like to think I bring back happy memories of happier times for her.”



Befriending and Support by Volunteers

In 2017 our Befriending service continued to grow from strength to strength in Dublin and the North East of Ireland. We increased our numbers of volunteers and our befriending now includes a telephone befriending service.

ALONE's Befriending service supported almost 700 older people in total across Dublin and the North East. This is an exceptional increase of 84% to the number of older people visited in 2016.

ALONE successfully transitioned all 85 older people and volunteers from Cross Care's Care-local service.

During the year, the ALONE telephone befriending service supported over 260 older people with advice, information, and friendly calls. Our volunteers carried out a total of 23,655 calls to older people in need of support.



Case study: Jim Birch

"I was so used to meeting people every day, I never stopped talking. I've been doing that for 49 years. Until one day I retired and suddenly all of that comes to an end.

I was scared. I was afraid that my mental health might fall down. **I had to have somebody to chat, not talking to people anymore is a shock to the system. I felt like that could be the end of me.**

My brother-in-law was a fireman, like Mr. Bermingham, so I quickly thought about ALONE. I rang up and asked to join in. That was 2 years ago. I was matched with my volunteer Ionelia. ALONE matches you with a volunteer that shares hobbies and has things in common with you. She is young, so at first I thought we might not have much to talk about, but we got on from the very start. She works in a shop so she understands what is like to work interacting with different people every day. It's like I knew the lady for 20 years, we have great conversations. Some days we go for a walk around the area, or go to the shops. Other days, when it's raining, we stay in and have a cup of tea. We are very good friends now.

We all get old, but sometimes it's not until you retire that you say: 'thank God for an organisation that looks after old people'."

Support Coordination

In 2017, the ALONE Support Coordination service engaged in 1,146 cases, an increase of over 80% when compared to 2016.

Our Support Coordinators assist older people through everything from their biggest challenges to their smallest problems. Throughout 2017, the needs of the older people we support continued to be varied and complex.

This work was recognised when we won the overall HSE Excellence Award out of more than 400 projects for our joint project with the HSE, 'Innovative Support Co-ordination for Older People'. The project focused on ALONE's staff working in partnership with statutory bodies and community organisations in the area to provide tailored, individual support. This guarantees the best use of local services and to promote independence, choice and well-being to older people.

During the year, our team completed pilot projects with Dun Laoghaire Rathdown County Council and Cluid Housing Association across 7 counties.

Case Study: ALONE Support Coordinator, Michael

"Tara lives alone and finds it difficult to arrange for work to be done to her home. Although she has a supportive family, she doesn't like to keep asking them to do things for her. I visited her and identified some adaptations that might assist her. I arranged for some rails to be fitted to aid her mobility and safety at home. **Tara was delighted to have all the work done and she now feels secure at home.**"



Housing with Support

ALONE has 100 units of housing for older people in Dublin. In 2017 we continued to provide and develop our Housing with Support and to provide lifetime tenancies.

Along with Circle Voluntary Housing Association, we won the tender to supply the first housing with support in Ireland. This will be the national demonstrator project for housing with support in Ireland and will be used as an example for other organisations. The project will commence in 2018.

- ALONE's rental income increased by 17% over 2016 levels. Our total rental income was €505,000.
- In 2017 we had 9 new tenants and 6 emergency placements.
- We undertook 9 refurbishments of varying levels.
- We had a 97% occupancy level in our housing.
- We updated our housing management and rent management systems.

Case study: Anonymous, 63

"I was on the housing list for 19 months and then the social worker said I should go down to Council and tell them I was homeless. I had been living with extended family and it was very difficult. I was technically homeless because I didn't have a tenancy, it wasn't my home.

I tried and I tried. I sent emails. I wrote to organisations and charities and properties. I was geared up for being in a hostel, going from one to another. I said 'if that's what's going to happen, that's what you're going to do'.

When I went down to the Homeless Family Unit on the second visit, I sat down with her and she said, 'we've got somewhere for you to live'. I couldn't believe it, I said 'Are you kidding me?' She said 'No, it's with the ALONE charity'.

ALONE have been great to me. When I moved in here they had a card, flowers, a home sweet home sign. I thought it was really kind and thoughtful and it meant a lot to me that they did that.

I'm in my own home now and I can do what I want to do. **It's a massive weight off my shoulders. I love my little house."**





Knowledge Management, Compliance, and Technology (KMCT)

This is the second year of ALONE's KMCT department. This year, KMCT grew to include Befriending Network Ireland and we launched our technology platform, BConnect.

- ALONE's technology platform BConnect was launched in 2017. 10 external organisations began using the Management Information System (MIS). We commenced piloting of BFriend (the volunteer app), BHome (assistive technology in the home), and BWell (the app for older people).
- With BConnect, we were the winner of the inaugural Freedom Tech Award at the 2017 Assistive Technology Conference, run by Enable Ireland and Disability Federation Ireland.
- We maintained our three quality standards: ISO 9001:2008, Befriending Networks, and Investing in Volunteers.
- We developed impact measurement methodology and framework.
- Befriending Network Ireland held the BNI Seminar, with over thirty befriending services in attendance from all parts of the country.
- We introduced Support Work and Advocacy Training, a new form of training for the staff of services covering case work management and advocacy.
- We ran 18 training sessions for services over the course of 2017. Fifteen unique services received training.
- We assisted eight befriending services to set-up in counties Clare, Dublin, Meath, Sligo, Wicklow, Wexford, and Tipperary.



40 Years of ALONE

In 2017 we celebrated the 40th anniversary of ALONE.

We marked the day with an event hosted by the Lord Mayor of Dublin Brendan Carr in Dublin City Hall, where we celebrated our volunteers, staff and everyone who has taken part in ALONE's journey.

ALONE's 40th anniversary enabled us to highlight the issues of isolation and loneliness in Ireland for older people today. This campaign culminated in a full episode of RTE's Nationwide dedicated to documenting the history of ALONE right up to our work today.

We had another cause for celebration in December when journalist and writer Valerie Cox launched her book about **ALONE: The First 40 Years**.

As ALONE continues to move forwards, we hope that in the coming years we will be able to expand our services even further and support more older people to age at home.



40 Years of ALONE

1977 A.L.O.N.E ('A Little Offering Never Ends') founded by Dublin firefighter Willie Bermingham on May 13th.

1982 ALONE successfully lobbies the government to grant £1 million in funding to The Task Force for Special Housing Needs of the Elderly scheme.

1986 10 ALONE homes for older people are built in Artane with lifetime tenancies.

1988 ALONE Millennium Plot opened in Glasnevin Cemetery to ensure impoverished older people would not be buried in an unmarked grave. More than 150 people have been buried there since 1988.

1991 Thanks to ALONE supporters, 10 older people are housed in newly-built ALONE housing at Willie Bermingham Place.

2009 As austerity hits Ireland, ALONE begins a larger-scale recruitment drive of staff and volunteers to cope with demand for services. 85 volunteers are taken on to befriend older people and alleviate loneliness.

2014 ALONE CEO & Board invest €1.4million to ensure all people in Ireland can age at home with 5 year plan 'No one left behind'.

2016 ALONE is the first Irish Befriending organisation to receive the Quality in Befriending Award.

2017 ALONE is the overall national winner of the HSE Excellence in Healthcare awards. Volunteer numbers double. 1,903 older people are supported to age at home.



Campaigning for Change

ALONE's campaigning activity grew again this year with the formation of the Age Alliance, our submissions to government, and our national billboard campaign.

We led in the formation of a new group of six NGOs representing the sector called Age Alliance. Through this new group, we work closely to campaign as a unified voice with key stakeholders. As part of this group we have submitted joint submissions to a range of government departments.

We submitted pre-budget submissions to the Department of Social Protection.

We submitted to government departments on Rebuilding Ireland Review, Ireland 2040, Private Rental Strategy, and Statutory Home Care Provision.

Our corporate partnership with JC Decaux provided significant free outdoor advertising for a national billboard campaign created by creative agency Bonfire. The campaign drew widespread attention to the unique needs of older people as they age at home.

2017 Christmas Campaign: 'Do One Thing'

In Christmas 2017, the 'Do One Thing' Campaign raised ALONE's profile as an organisation with services that combat social isolation and loneliness among older people. We asked the public to 'do

one thing' this Christmas to support older people in their community. Ambassadors for the campaigns included Vincent Browne and Baz Ashmawy.



Communications

We secured over €3.3 million worth of media coverage in 2017, growing from €1.3 million in 2016.

We issued 41 press releases, resulting in over 400 articles about ALONE in national, regional, and online publications.

Fundraising

ALONE depends on donations from the public to maintain our day-to-day operations. In 2017 we surpassed our fundraising targets.

We increased our focus on developing corporate partnerships while maintaining other fundraising income streams.

We hosted 15 corporate volunteer days throughout the year providing over 1300 hours of volunteer maintenance to ALONE Housing with Support.

Human Resources

- ALONE staff numbers increased significantly in 2017 to cope with demand for our services and we hired our first HR manager.
- Staff numbers increased from 19 staff in January to 31 staff at the end of December.
- Improvements were made to HR processes, including staff induction and our recruitment and selection practices
- We introduced a new training and learning framework for staff and volunteers.
- We introduced an online self-service HR System for staff and managers.
- We created a cross-functional planning for growth group to engage and consult with staff on strategic matters.

Admin

We received 5,111 calls at front desk in 2017, 1,672 of which were from older people.



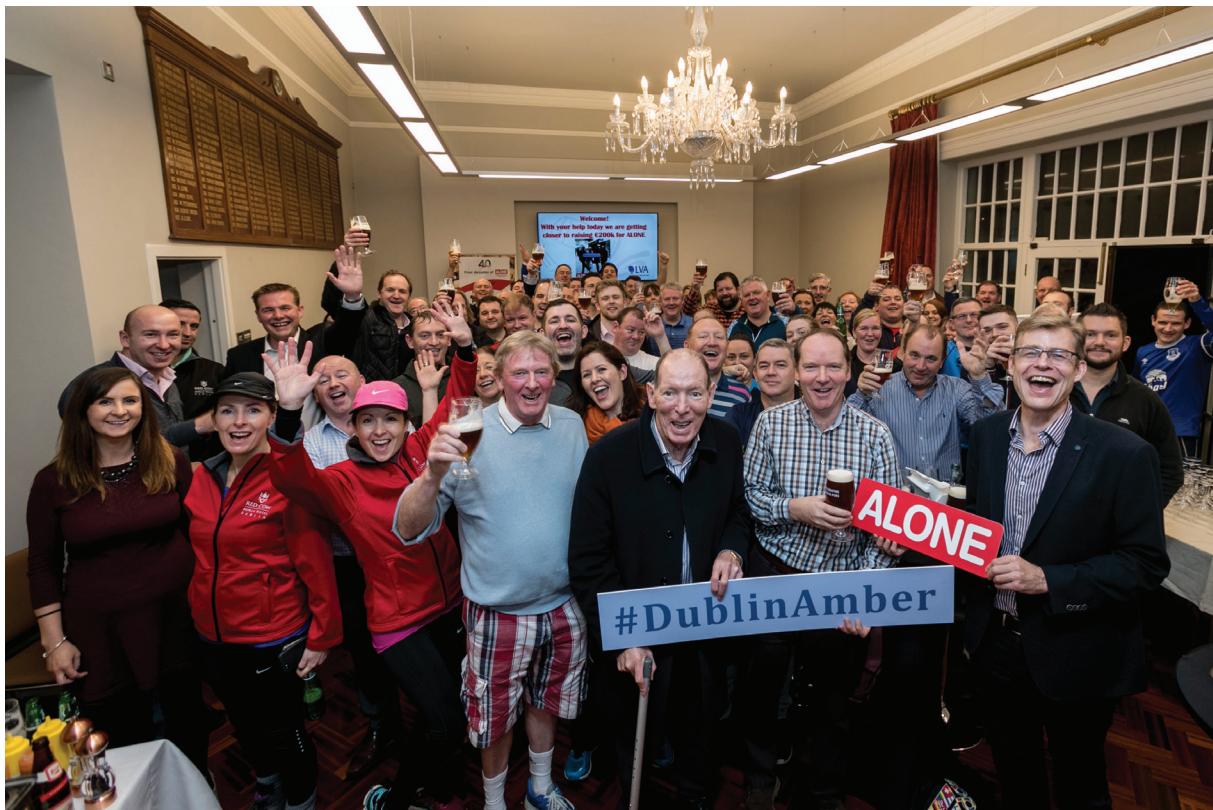
LVA Partnership with Licensed Vintners' Association and Diageo

To celebrate the bicentenary year of the Licensed Vintners' Association (LVA), Diageo and LVA publicans came together to raise funds for ALONE. Together, they set a lofty goal: to raise €200,000 to support older people.

In 2017, more than €60,000 was raised towards that goal through the fundraising efforts of LVA members and their customers. We are so grateful for the effort and enthusiasm shown by everyone involved throughout the year. John Gleeson, Chairman of the LVA 2017-18, says, "Community has always been at the heart of the Dublin pub. We want to support the important work ALONE does in helping older people to stay in their homes and remain active in the local community. We loved engaging with our customers on this initiative throughout the year. We are delighted with the funds raised during 2017 and are thrilled that, in 2018, we surpassed our ambitious target of €200,000."

Diageo worked closely with the LVA publicans to create a limited edition 'Dublin Amber' pale ale, which was sold exclusively in Dublin pubs, with 50c from each pint going to ALONE.* AnnMarie Phillips, Diageo On Trade Director, says, "Giving is in the DNA of Guinness, and we feel that ALONE are the perfect fit for this partnership. For decades ALONE has been making a real, positive difference to the lives of so many older people and we are privileged to be able to support that."

* All funds received from through the sales of Dublin Amber will be accounted for in ALONE's 2018 Annual Report.



Financial Summary

ALONE doubled the number of people we supported in 2017. There is more demand for our services than ever before. However, our fundraising income only increased by 15%.

ALONE relies on donations for our day-to-day running costs and to keep our services operational.

We need the support of the public now more than ever to keep our services running and to cope with the demand for our services.

ALONE has five key sources of funding, which have seen the following changes:

1. Rental income increased by 17% against 2016 income.
2. Fundraising income increased by 15% and donations in kind (goods and services) increased by 65%.
3. Legacy donations decreased by 27% against 2016 income.
4. The value of our investment portfolio increased by 1%.
5. Funding from various statutory bodies for 2017 amounted to 23% of total income.

Income chart

| | |
|--------------------------------|---------|
| General donations | 258,758 |
| Corporate Donations | 220,913 |
| Legacies | 218,077 |
| Rent | 505,039 |
| Grants (incl Statutory Income) | 638,368 |
| Investment Income | 26,711 |
| Services Income | 2,681 |
| BLK Income | 183,388 |

Expenditure chart

| | |
|-------------------------------|-----------|
| Governance Costs | 86,892 |
| Cost of Generating Funds | 61,425 |
| Direct Charitable Expenditure | 1,735,144 |

Organisational Development & Governance

- Maintained a united board while introducing a new scheme of incorporation via the High Court in January 2017.
- Welcomed three new Board Members and their formal appointment to the Board.
- Sponsored 40th year celebrations in ALONE.
- Introduced the position of Assistant Chairperson.
- First year members resigned at the AGM and came forward for reappointment.
- Achieved and maintained our commitments to the Governance Code.
- Supported the introduction of a logic model which will assess service outcomes for the older people we support.
- Met all our commitments to the Charity Regulator and Housing Regulator.
- Reviewed our investment portfolio and re-tendered the service provider.
- Introduced notifiable events to the Board.

Board of Trustees

Mr. Eddie Matthews (Chairperson)

Ms. Annette Gavigan (Secretary)

Ms. Liz Kilcommons (until 20 February 2017)

Ms. Patricia Larkin (until 31 May 2017)

Mr. Joe Sheehy

Mr. Pat Morgan

Mr. Jeremy Chapman

Mr. Michael Hodgins

Mr. Ed Sibley (from 27 February 2017)

Mrs. Eimear Cahalin (from 20 February 2017)

Mr. Ciaran Donegan (from 27 February 2017)

Mr. Kevin McConville (Honorary Member)

Chief Executive Officer

Mr. Seán Moynihan





ALONE

Supporting older people
to age at home

ALONE

Olympic House, Pleasants Street, Dublin 8.
Tel: +353 (0)1 679 1032

Available to download from www.alone.ie
Find us on
Facebook, Twitter, Instagram & LinkedIn
Registered Charity Number: CHY8259

