

WELCOME to our second Newsletter as *forthgiving*. We hope you enjoy reading it and learning about our progress during 2020. We warmly encourage contributions and feedback from members and supporters.

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**In this issue:**

- Keeping going through Covid
- Grants Summary
- Kirsty's Run
- Working with others
- Postponement of Annual Gathering 2021

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### Keeping going through Covid

At the time of our Annual Gathering last January very few of us would have anticipated the changes which Covid restrictions would soon bring to our lives, and *forthgiving* has not been immune to these changes. All our Trustees' meetings are now held on Zoom and we have had to postpone our 2021 Annual Gathering – the first time this has ever had to be done as far as we are aware!

However, I am delighted to report that our work of supporting people in crisis has continued unabated. In particular, in the year to August 2020 we have made a record number of 38 grants to those in need. The way we administer our grants is changing. Most of the applications for support are now received online on our upgraded website, which enables us to streamline the process of review and allows decisions to be taken in a few days rather than waiting for the next Trustees' meeting.

Wherever appropriate, we are also making awards in kind as good quality used goods, particularly furniture, sourced from local charity stores. This allows our funds to go further, benefits another charity, and promotes recycling.

Many thanks are due to our Trustee George Stevenson for pioneering this approach.

A year ago my predecessor Anne Wallace mentioned that we were developing block grant partnerships with frontline care sector charities which in the right circumstances can extend the scope of our grant funding. We are delighted to extend our partnership with the local foodbank, Start-Up Stirling and set up a new arrangement with Trinity Church Falkirk which gives free school clothing to families in need. Two further block grant partnerships are under discussion elsewhere.

I could not end this report without mentioning the amazing achievement of one of our Trustees, Kirsty Rockey who raised £3,500 for *forthgiving* by running a sponsored half-marathon. Many thanks to all our members and supporters for this wonderful addition to our funds.

Thank for very much for your support in the past year, and let's hope 2021 brings a return to something like normal life.



Shaun Nesbitt, Preses

### Grants Summary 2019 – 20: how we have supported people in crisis

**We awarded £8,753 in grants in the year covering 38 Individual and Organisation applicants, summarized below:**

**£500** in block grant to the **Start Up Stirling** food bank charity to extend the work of its Support Service programme, helping their clients across the Stirling Council area to meet a wide range of financial hardship situations and reduce their dependency on food bank support. Since the start of the grant in March 2018, a total of 24 individual clients of SUS have now received small grants from this Crisis Support fund.

**£3,079** to 13 individual clients of **Stirling Council Advice Services, Social Work and Family Support teams**, for the purchase of white goods, mattresses, curtains, bedroom furniture, new carpeting and laminate flooring, a 'smart' TV and the renewal of a taxi licence.

**£40** to a client of the **Salvation Army Stirling Debt Advice Service** for his gym club membership.

**£300** to a client of **NHS Forth Valley Livilands Resource Centre** for supply of new carpeting.

**£50** for supply of a divan bed for a single mother, as endorsed by **Stirlingshire Voluntary Enterprise**.

**£609** to three individual clients of **Shakti Women's Aid, Grangemouth** for a Christmas family meal and gift, purchase of a biometric UK residence card, and essential toiletries and taxi fares.

**£45** to a tenant of **Forth Housing Association** in Stirling for re-connection of his gas supply.

**£700** to two individual clients of **Macmillan Money Matters** for the purchase of a rise-and-fall chair, clothes and bedding.

**£ 580** to two clients of **Home-Start Stirling** to purchase new vinyl flooring and carpeting for families with young children with special needs.

**£1,729** to seven individual clients of **Wheatley Care, Stirling** to purchase items of bedroom furniture and carpeting to provide improved living accommodation.

**£100** to a young family for the supply of a washing machine, endorsed by **Beancross Primary School, Falkirk**

**£50** to a client of the Falkirk office of the **Scottish Welfare Fund** towards emergency heating bills.

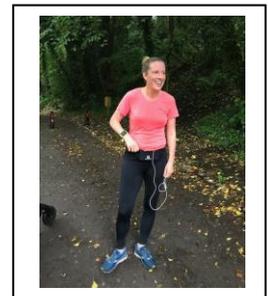
**£100** to a young family to purchase child hygiene products, books and toys, endorsed by **Clackmannanshire Community Health Partnership**

**£646** to three individual clients of **Stirling and District Citizens Advice Bureau** to purchase a washing machine, bunk beds, bedding and furniture, and to cover short-term rent arrears.

**£225** to a client of **Falkirk Council Camelon Social Work** for supply of a double bed and mattress.

### Challenge Fundraising during Covid – Kirsty's Run

During the summer, Kirsty Rockey set a wonderful example of challenge fundraising for a good cause by running a half marathon in aid of *forthgiving* on 11<sup>th</sup> June near her neighbourhood in south Edinburgh. Here she is (*see photo*) having just completed the distance in a time of 1 hour 36 minutes! Kirsty's Run has raised the magnificent total of £3,500 for our grants programme, mostly via the Just Giving web platform page. A letter sent out to all members boosted donations to achieve this figure, and now we hope that others will wish to emulate her efforts. As Captain Sir Tom Moore and others have proved, anyone can achieve their fundraising challenge in their own home!



### Working with Others

All donations to *forthgiving* are guaranteed to benefit our grants programme, which is administered by the Secretary. The database of over 50 social care partner contacts across the Stirling and Falkirk Council areas we work with continues to grow, and we regularly attend annual Funding Fair events hosted by SVE and Falkirk CVS. We are most grateful to the **Callendar Charitable Trust** for its continuing support, particularly for our work in Falkirk, and also to the **Garnett Charitable Trust**.

Using last year's generous grant from the Royal Caledonian Charities Trust to *forthgiving*, we have renewed our crisis funding block grant to the **Start Up Stirling** foodbank charity, who continue to provide feedback on how this helps their clients. Fuel poverty is a growing issue due to Covid restrictions, and one of their service users said recently: "*Having some of my fuel bill paid for me for the month was amazing. It made me feel better, knowing that I could use the money that I had to pay other bills.*" We look forward to working with all the SUS team in 2021.

In the New Year, we will pilot a new crisis funding block grant of £500 to **Falkirk Trinity Church** to develop its Clothing for Schoolchildren in Need project, which operates in partnership with local Primary Schools in parts of the Falkirk area. This also sets a new precedent as our first MoU agreement with a local church.

### Postponement of 2021 AGM and Annual Gathering

Due to the continuing Covid pandemic restrictions on live meetings, Trustees have provisionally re-scheduled the Annual Gathering and AGM for **Monday 12<sup>th</sup> April 2021**. We will update members on arrangements as soon as this becomes possible. An EGM to be held on the same date will consider changes to the charity's governance following the review and consultation with members conducted by the Trustees, as authorized by the last AGM.

