

Rainbow Turtle
Chair's report
April 2021 – March 2022

Introduction

Welcome to the AGM for the Rainbow Turtle charity. Rainbow Turtle consists of two arms, the charity whose aim is to educate about and promote Fair Trade in Renfrewshire, and the shop, Rainbow Turtle Just Trading, which is a business and runs the shop in Gauze St which also supports and promotes Fair Trade.

This AGM is for the charity and fulfils part of our requirements as a charity. As such we shall cover what the charities activities and finances but also, for interest and information, there will be short account on the shop's progress.

This short report covers April 2021 to the end of March 2022.

Trustees and Members

The charity is required to have a board of trustees. At present we have six trustees and we are always looking for more, so if you are interested in becoming a trustee please let us know.

Trustees at 1st April 2021

Colum Scriven
Gillian Henry (treasurer)
Steph Mayo
Chris Johnstone (chair)
Anne MacInness
Annie Hay
Marianne Sermanni

Trustees at 31st March 2022

Colum Scriven
Gillian Henry (treasurer)
Steph Mayo
Chris Johnstone (chair)
Ann MacInnes
Marianne Sermanni

Annie Hay resigned as a trustee in August 2021. She had been a trustee for many years and we thank her for all her time, effort and goodwill in promoting and working for Rainbow Turtle.

The remaining six trustees were re-elected to the board of trustees at the 2021 AGM.

Charity Finances

Despite covid, Rainbow Turtle is fairly stable financially with regular income from members and irregular, but currently substantial, income from the Council via Local Partnership funding. I am pleased to say that the bank balance remains healthy. The finance report is attached and we thank our treasurer, Gillian Henry, for all her work in preparing this. In addition, I would like to thank Angela Cairns for her help in checking the charity accounts.

Rainbow Turtle Charity and Education

Covid continued to interfere with our activities for a lot of 21/22. We did not have access to the office for a lot of this year and schools were closed to any extraneous visitors. However,

**Rainbow Turtle
Chair's report
April 2021 – March 2022**

despite this we managed to move forward and promote Fair Trade and Rainbow Turtle across Renfrewshire and wider.

The trustees met regularly, mainly by Zoom calls and I would like to thank them for all their hard work and good-natured positivity.

Gemma Elliott, our education officer and shop manager, left at the end of March 2021. She had worked for Rainbow Turtle for many years and her input was greatly appreciated.

We were delighted to appoint Linda Okhuoya-Ologe as our new education officer at the end of August. She has settled in well and already run a variety of events and represented Rainbow Turtle in a number of meetings and organisations. Her work with the trustees and Elise Kelly, our shop manager, led a variety of events including a great evening during COP26 at the Life Church in Paisley. There were three speakers, a Fairtrade coffee farmer, a sustainable fashion designer and a sustainable development educator. The event was well attended and very well received.

Rainbow Turtle was also represented by Linda at the COP26 Green Zone event and the Fairtrade farmers' event.

Linda has made contact with the schools and introduced herself. She has presented several times at Mary Russell School in Paisley and updated the school leaflets. However, covid continued to restrict her access to schools for more face-to-face events.

There was a very successful schools T-shirt competition for Fairtrade Fortnight and the entries were showcased in the shop window. In addition, we had a stall at the Paisley Food and Drinks Festival. Linda worked with CREATE Paisley at an event with children in Linwood.

Linda has made connections across Renfrewshire and wider afield to represent and promote Rainbow Turtle. These include CREATE, Pachedu, Kairos Women, Gatehouse Coffee Roaster, JTS, the Scottish Fair Trade Forum, the Scottish Government cross-party Fair Trade group and Paisley First, amongst others.

CREATE helped us produce a number of shop window displays related to local and national events.

The Charity and shop have also been involved in a variety of activities to support the community. These included attending the Paisley First climate change meeting, providing work experience for school children, being involved with the government's Kickstart scheme and taking part in Dementia Week and being a Dementia friendly shop.

The Rainbow Turtle podcast was re-invigorated and we have maintained a social media presence. The membership has been steady.

**Rainbow Turtle
Chair's report
April 2021 – March 2022**

Rainbow Turtle Shop

The shop was open for most of the year following covid. Gemma Elliott, our part time shop manager, left at the end of March. We were sad to see her go and thank her for all her input to Rainbow Turtle over the years.

We were delighted and lucky to appoint Elise Kelly as the new shop manager in April in time for the shop re-opening. We took advantage of the closure to re-arrange the shop layout, make use of the second door to create a one way system, and to refit all the lights to make the shop brighter and greener.

As always, the volunteers have been wonderful in supporting Rainbow Turtle and being the welcoming face in the shop. Rainbow Turtle is indebted to their commitment and persistence. Thank you all.

The shop has had strongish sales, but margins are tight and we need to keep pushing and promoting the shop to increase sales as much as possible. We continue to look at the best ways of doing this.

I would like to thank Colum Scriven and Pat McCormack, our accountant, for all his help in preparing the shop accounts.

SCIO

Last year we said we were looking at moving the charity and the shop into a single unit called a SCIO. Following last Year's AGM we paid Sencot for legal advice and had a series of meetings moving towards a SCIO. However mainly due to the concern about certain aspects of moving to a combined SCIO, progress stalled. These issues included the difficulties of combining two sets of accounts, and the risk of raising the combined income above the VAT threshold and once again having to apply VAT to our products in the shop. The chair has contacted Sencot recently and things are moving forward again.

Summary

2021/22 has been a year of recovery following the worst of covid. We have been re-vitalised with a new shop manager and a new education officer. As always Rainbow Turtle thrives on all the people who give their time to support the charity including the volunteers, trustees and many others across Renfrewshire.

Thank you all for help this past year and we all look forward to working together in the coming years to keep promoting Fair Trade in a more equitable, greener world.

Chris Johnstone
Chair of Trustees
2 Oct 2022