



AGS Friends – Chair’s Annual Report - Jan 2025

Welcome to the first annual report for AGS Friends.

Establishment:

- The association established formally on 29/1/24, with an elected committee of five members; chair, vice-chair, secretary, treasurer and School SLT lead.
- The association amended its constitution at an EGM on 15/5/24, in order to enable charity registration.
- The association became a registered charity in April 2024, enabling a wider access to charitable grants, and formal status as a charity. Charity Number 1208352
- The committee members are all trustees of the charity, and signatories to the charity’s registered bank account.

Objectives:

The purpose of the charity is to:

- develop effective relationships between Alcester Grammar School, staff, parents and community
- to engage in activities or provide funds, facilities or equipment to support the school and advance the education of students.

Fund-raising Target:

In September 2024, an ambitious target of £10k for fund-raising was set, to assist school with purchase of urgently needed IT upgrade. Due to school still developing their IT strategy, the PTFA contribution has not yet been allocated, however will be agreed with the Committee and be specific to a contribution that is tangible, and benefit students across the school. It is anticipated that the fundraising target will apply to the school year 24/25 and the donation will be made by July 2025.

Legal Position:

- The Charity is legally constituted as an independent organisation, and complies with all Charity Commission requirements, including accounts submission.
- AGSF are registered as a Small Society Lottery under the Gambling Act 2005 with Stratford District Council. LICENCE NO : GA05 SDC 660499
- We have secured TENS license for provision of alcohol at social events and fully comply with the requirements.
- We are scoping to ensure compliance copyright legislation for any film night
- We are subscribed as a member of ParentKind – a national umbrella organisation for school PTA organisations, which provides insurance as well as advice and expertise.

Events

AGSF have run several events, both supporting the school, and organised independently;

- **Catering at school events** (school concerts, parents evenings and leavers event). AGSF support at these events has been two-fold;
 - ✓ Primarily to provide a welcoming environment and needed refreshment for parents/visitors to school
 - ✓ fund-raising for AGS Friends
- **Family Social Events** – AGS Friends have organised two fund-raising social events during the year; a quiz night in July and a bingo night in November. These were intended to provide a social event for families, along with fund-raising. These included entertainment, raffle and interval games, as well as provision of refreshments including alcoholic bar. These events have been very well-received as well as financially successful.

Other Fund-raising

In addition to events, a number of other initiatives have been progressed;

- **AGS Friends Lottery** – under Small Society Lottery license, a lottery has been launched to provide a regular income to AGSF. This has had a good take-up, and has space to expand. It currently has 137 members.
- **AGS Friends Amazing Christmas Raffle** – supported by some excellent prizes, a Christmas raffle was held in December. Using an on-line platform, ticket sales were all electronic; despite some reservations around the platform, the raffle was hugely successful raising £2259 with great support from our local Alcester business community as well as donations from further afield.
- **Easy-Fundraising** – a national online scheme that raises funds for charity; supporters nominate AGS Friends on the platform, and when making purchases from eligible online suppliers, a percentage of the transaction is donated. Currently those nominating AGSF is small, but income has been generated
- **Employer Support Programmes** – many corporate employers offer a match-funding arrangements for employees involved in fund-raising. Early steps have been made to further understand this and register with employers. This is potentially a significant funding stream should it gain traction.
- **Sponsorship** – securing a sponsor for our bingo evening enabled us to purchase ‘cup for life’ for serving refreshments at events. Thanks to Claire Nelson, Designer Travel for her support. Further sponsorship arrangements are welcome.

Future Plans:

For the remainder of the 2024/25 school year, the following plans are being worked on/considered, alongside continued support at school events:

- Refreshments at School Play, including bar
- Quiz Night – Friday 4th April
- Support Alcester Food Festival – parking
- Sports Day – provide refreshments/branded goods

Plans also intend to continue to fundraise by raising participants in AGS Friends lottery, Easy Fundraising and Employee match-funding. Early planning is also considering viability of a Spring Eco-Fair at school in 2026.

Volunteers:

Alongside the amazing committee, we have a team of volunteers (current list of 29) who take turns in assisting with the planning and delivery of events; expertise includes social media posting, graphic design, accounting, stock-taking, sales, hot-drink making, bar skills, ticket selling, organising, furniture moving and tidying up! **A HUGE THANK YOU** to this team of cheerful parents and staff who give their time willingly and in great spirits..

More volunteers are always welcome to ensure the burden doesn't fall on the same shoulders, and any expertise – even if not listed above – is very welcome.

Committee:

A huge thanks to our inaugural committee; myself, Helen Silcox, Gemma Farrington, Julie Parry and Rachel Thorpe for helping get things off the ground – look at the progress!

Julie Parry will be standing down – the lady who saved our sanity with taking control of catering for our first few events and setting us off on our organised path!

I am hugely pleased (and relieved) that the remaining members are standing for re-election, and welcome the nomination of Julia Gilmore standing for the position of vicechair. We therefore have unopposed nominations for all positions.

Conclusion

It is hard to believe that 12 months ago, AGS Friends did not exist! We have achieved so much for our school in just one year. As well as events, effort has gone into building a team of volunteers that brings fun and energy to our endeavours; it feels as if we are creating some momentum. Thanks to everyone who has supported us in 2024 – here's to success in 2025!

Yvonne Bruton, Chair AGS Friends