



March 2017



Welcome to our Spring update

Coaches and Learners

Numbers are steady at the moment with about 15 working pairs. Just a reminder that our main resource bank is at Forest Road Centre in Cinderford, where all of our reading books are kept as well as folders containing worksheets for reading and comprehension, punctuation, spelling, writing etc. There are also similar folders at Coleford, Lydney and Mitcheldean libraries. We have an arrangement at the libraries that learners can borrow books on extended loan – just mention FRED at the desk.

I am always happy to deliver books to you if you find it difficult to get over to Cinderford. There is a full list of our books and book collections on the website www.forestreadeasydeal.org.uk under the Resources tab.

I try to make contact with everyone on a regular basis and I also do regular progress reviews with learners but feel free to contact me any time if you have any issues/concerns or would like some help with finding suitable resources.

Additional Training Session

The recent reading coach meeting was really well attended by newly trained and more experienced coaches. Coaches shared their experiences in small groups and we heard some great stories about learner success. There was also a 'hands on' activity on how to get the best from these resources. The Q & A session enabled coaches to discuss various challenges and to come up with some solutions. One of the main things which came out of the discussions is how diverse our learners are! Evaluations suggested coaches would have liked more time looking at resources, so we'll run another session in a couple of months.

AGM

After the session, more coaches and some of the management team joined us for tea with delicious cakes provided by Janet and Jennifer. Our Chair, Roger Deeks, then led a short AGM.

Kris talked about our proposed launch of FRED+ which we hope will broaden our offer to a wider group of learners. Willing coaches will work with learners on extended reading activities tailored to each individual. Early writing skills will also be available. We are planning to revamp our existing publicity material and shared a draft copy of our leaflet to gauge opinion. Feedback was generally positive so watch this space.

Janet, our Treasurer outlined the financial position (see below) and reported on a number of grants received from local organisations. There have been constant financial pressures on FRED, many of which have been alleviated by the voluntary efforts of coaches and committee members.

Roger outlined statistics and evidence demonstrating the continuing need for FRED. The Trustees' responsibilities were outlined and three were elected. The Chair invited anyone who

was interested in being a Trustee, supporting the work of the committee, or who had a question about governance to contact Jennifer (Secretary) or Roger (Chair). Roger thanked the Committee, made up of Kris, Sheila, Megan, Janet, Ann and Jennifer for their hard work and commitment over the last year. Lastly the coaches, who volunteer so much time, were thanked as without their support FRED would not be possible.

Accounts for FRED 1st April 2016 – 1st April 2017

FRED has been very grateful to receive donations from several sources over the year and to have successfully applied for a grant from West Dean Council. This will, hopefully, help FRED reach new learners and increase awareness of FRED in the Forest area. The University of Gloucester has also funded much needed books, a copy of which is given to every new learner and coach. Travelling expenses for coaches attending training and meeting up with their learners has been the biggest expenditure, together with Insurance and the usual running costs of an organisation such as FRED.

There have been no publicity costs of late, not only as funds were low but because the launch of FRED+ later this year will mean that current leaflets will need to be updated.

A big thank you to everyone who has helped and supported FRED over the year, including those who donated their token in Waitrose Supermarket, Monmouth! We have been awarded over £400. A full record of these accounts is available from Janet - janet.williams3@btinternet.com

Contacts Team – from Megan



The next event planned for our FRED stall, is the Activities Festival at the Speech House on 23rd April. I would love some company so if anyone can spare an hour or two, please email me: meganjenkins@btinternet.com

We need to decide which events to attend this year as some of them generated very little interest last year as we had no choice about where to erect the stand and were given awful positions. We will go ahead with some of the Speech House events as they are very good for networking and promoting FRED to potential coaches, but I appreciate that we need learners and we have had limited success so far.

The way forward seems to be through organisations who can promote FRED to their client base on our behalf, and I'll continue to chip away at those. Any help or suggestions gratefully received!



Social Media

FRED would really like a social media presence. If you or anyone you know would be willing to operate a Twitter and Facebook account for FRED, please contact me. Roger will be happy to talk this through with anyone interested.

Many thanks from us all for
your continuing support

