

The future of the Nightingale Fellowship

Frequently Asked Questions

Question	Response
Closure – why, how, when?	
1. Why are we discussing closure now?	<p>The Nightingale Fellowship Council has been discussing the possibility of closure for over 20 years now, and this has been addressed in Presidents’ letters and at AGMs. However, as with many other Nurses’ Leagues, the age profile and diminishing number of members mean this question is now at the forefront of our strategic discussions. The 2028 centenary anniversary of The Nightingale Fellowship (the Fellowship) would appear to be an excellent time to truly celebrate, closing the Fellowship on a ‘high’ rather than with a whimper.</p>
2. Why does the Fellowship need to close as there seems to be plenty of money in the accounts?	<p>Falling membership and the increasing age profile of our members means that the amount we receive from annual subscriptions is falling.</p> <p>Without additional income from members it is necessary to further use charitable funds (Benevolent Fund and Esmond Bequest) to meet the running costs of the Fellowship, a situation which will worsen year on year and this has to be justifiable to the Charity Commission</p> <p>We have now gone well beyond the tipping point of a justifiable amount of charitable fund money being used towards running the alumni.</p> <p>The charitable bequests are restricted to grants for nurses in need, and although it is reasonable to charge those bequests for the cost of managing and promoting the grants, the Charity Commission would look unfavorably at using them to support the general interests of the Nightingale Fellowship members.</p>
3. What is the difference between an alumni organisation and a charity?	<p>An alumni organisation fulfills a social role of enabling former affiliates of an organisation (such as students of a specific university) to remain in contact. This might involve organising events as well as use of social media and journals. A charity is an organisation, registered to support a charitable purpose. In the case of the Nightingale Fellowship this is ‘the relief of hardship, distress</p>

	<p>or ill-health of its members.’ Members should be actively involved in raising money for its charitable fund.</p> <p>Since the establishment of the single entity charity the Nightingale Fellowship membership events should remain ancillary or incidental to the furtherance of the charitable purposes.</p>
<p>4. Closing down a charity seems like a huge task. Who will be assisting the Trustees with this?</p>	<p>We will work closely with The Trust Partnership (TTP) and take legal advice to ensure that the closure meets all the Charities Commission regulations.</p>
<p>5. You have made the decision to close, why not close now instead of waiting until 2028?</p>	<p>2028 marks the 100th anniversary of the Fellowship. This gives the Trustees almost 8 years to ensure a smooth closure, and transition the Benevolent Fund to a reputable organization. There will also be time to set up more local groups and plan some special celebrations.</p>
<p>6. Are there Trustees willing to take the Fellowship forward to 2028?</p>	<p>Yes. There is a solid and experienced team of Trustees in post now, with excellent support from TTP. There is also a succession plan in place for all the Honorary Officer roles.</p>
<p>7a. Why might the annual membership subscription need to increase?</p>	<p>Currently it is costing around £75,000 per annum to administer the Nightingale Fellowship, including membership activities. Based on current activity, these costs are forecast to rise year on year over the next eight years, depending on activity and inflation. The current running costs are met as follows :</p> <p>30% from subscriptions, 68% from the Benevolent Fund, and 2% from the Esmond Bequest. A breakdown of costs is reported annually at the Annual General Meeting and recorded in the Journal.</p>
<p>7b. Why would I consider donating to the Fellowship if the plan is to close within the next 8 years?</p>	<p>Predominantly, we intend to grow the Benevolent Fund, as this will remain available for Nightingale nurses following closure of the Nightingale Fellowship. We also need to raise money for general administrative purposes, to reduce the percentage of support from the Benevolent Fund.</p>
<p>8. I have paid my annual subscription for years. I am now a Life member, why are you changing the subscription structure now?</p>	<p>We are extremely grateful to those Life members who have paid their subscriptions, without fail, over so many years. Sadly, some people dip in and out of paying their subscriptions, and join/re-join just in time to receive the benefits of Life</p>

	<p>membership. This is why we felt it was necessary to change the rules around Life membership and raise the qualifying age to 70 in 2019.</p> <p>It must be noted that overall subscriptions have barely covered the cost of printing and posting the Journal twice a year, let alone the other events, and the administrative costs incurred.</p>
<p>9. If Life members were asked to pay, and membership subscriptions were increased, could that prevent the closure of the Nightingale Fellowship in 2028?</p>	<p>This is unlikely as our membership will naturally decrease during the next decade to a point where the burden on the charitable funds would be unsustainable.</p>
<p>Membership</p>	
<p>1. What will happen to members' personal details after closure?</p>	<p>The Trustees and TTP, who support the Fellowship with their administrative duties, take General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) responsibilities very seriously. They already ensure that all members' personal details are stored appropriately, and will ultimately ensure that they are destroyed appropriately. However, the details of existing members at the time of closure would be transferred to the administrative organisation chosen to run the Benevolent Fund in order to ensure that applicants and recipients of funds are bona fide.</p>
<p>2. Do I need to cancel my Standing Order?</p>	<p>You will be informed when this needs to be done.</p>
<p>Benefits of membership</p>	
<p>3. Why do I have to pay more, and seemingly get less, when the Fellowship is going to close anyway? Such as only one Journal a year.</p>	<p>Please see below re the Journal. The extra funds are to help with the development of local groups and activities during the last years of the Fellowship, and the general running costs of the alumni section of the Fellowship.</p>
<p>4. Journal – costs and online access</p>	<p>If the Fellowship is to continue until its centenary in 2028, then additional non-charity finance will be needed to cover its running costs. The Journal has been very expensive to produce. In 2019 the cost of producing two Journals amounted to £26,000. As a result, in 2020, the Trustees decided to bring the editorial responsibility in-house reducing these costs by 50%. Costs could be reduced further, as more and more members are able, or choose, to access both the Journal and Fellowship news online.</p>
<p>5. How will I be able to keep in contact with the Nightingale Fellowship to know what is happening?</p>	<p>The Nightingale Fellowship website can keep you more up-to-date than the Journal because of the long lead time needed to produce it. By using the</p>

	website, members will be kept fully informed of current events and activities.
6. How will you provide me with information when I don't have a computer, or know how to use technology?	Please contact The Trust Partnership (01285 841908) if you have absolutely no access to technology yourself either through friends, family, or your local library. We need to know exactly how many members may have this issue.
7 What do I get for my subscription if I have to pay for the Journal and to attend the AGM?	As a Full member of the Fellowship you have access to the Benevolent Fund, and access to our administration team five days a week. You will also have access to the members only section of the Fellowship website, with advance notice of events which may need to be pre-booked. Following COVID-19 it is highly likely that numbers attending future events will be substantially restricted.
8 Why has the Nightingale Fellowship been unable to attract new members?	Despite several recruitment drives over the last 20 years it has been difficult to recruit new members. We have tried to recruit at tea parties, the AGM, and set reunions. We have also opened up membership to nurses and midwives who have trained at King's College London University, as well as to the Guy's and St Thomas' Trust (GSTT) new Nightingale Academy alumni. Sadly, there are a large number of Nightingales who trained prior to 1996 who have chosen not to join the Fellowship. For younger nurses the Fellowship Alumni is not something they feel any association with. Over 95% of our members trained prior to 1990.
Charitable Funds	
Benevolent Fund	
1. Will I still be able to apply for a Benevolent Grant after the closure date?	We are working to ensure that the Benevolent Fund is both healthy and available only to Fellowship members for the foreseeable future. Following closure, instructions on how to apply for benevolence will be sent to all existing members.
2. I currently benefit from the Benevolent Fund and am confident that all my details are kept private. Can you guarantee this going forward?	The Trustees will work with any future administrators of the Benevolent Fund to ensure that the organisation is highly professional and works within GDPR and Charity Commission rules and regulations.
3. If the Benevolent Fund is open to all Nightingales, how quickly will the money run	There is currently a substantial amount of money invested through our Investment Managers –

out?	Waverton Investment Management Ltd. The Trustees are confident that the legacies will benefit Nightingales for a number of years to come. Our aim is to boost the Benevolent Fund over the next eight years to ensure a lasting legacy of benevolence in memory of the Fellowship.
4. Will there be money left after all Nightingales have died? Who will be able to use this?	The Trustees are working hard to ensure that there will be a legacy to leave more widely, to all nurses, once there are no longer any Nightingales alive. As guardians, the Trustees want to ensure that any money left will be administered with due diligence by an appropriately appointed successor organisation.
5. What will happen to all the benevolence money?	The Trustees will investigate and agree the best organisation to appropriately administer the Benevolent Fund.
Esmond Bequest and Sir Geoffrey Bateman Award (SGBA)	
1. What will happen to the education funds?	The SGBA has been gifted by the SGB Trust to The Nightingale Academy to fund research internships. This has been match-funded with money from the Esmond Bequest. The Trustees will ensure that the Esmond Bequest is administered by an appropriate organisation in line with the original will of Mrs Esmond. These two actions will substantially reduce the the Fellowship’s running costs over the next eight years, and enable the Trustees to concentrate on alumni and benevolence activity.
2. Why would I remain a member if those who trained at the Nightingale School but are not members can access the Benevolent Fund?	We are confident that most members of the Nightingale Fellowship have joined in the spirit of the original 1928 ethos – that of keeping in touch, friendship with fellow alumni, and charitable giving for those in need and hardship. Nightingales have always been most generous in helping others – whether fellow Nightingales or not.
The Future	
Keeping in touch with Nightingales, St Thomas’ and nursing	
1. How will Nightingales keep in touch in the future?	It is expected that over the next few years, more local Nightingale groups will be established. There is also the Guy and St Thomas’ Veterans’ Association which meets annually. Membership is

	<p>open to doctors, nurses, allied health professionals and administrative and ancillary staff who have retired from St Thomas'. Please contact Helen Lawrence, Veterans' Secretary, on 01803 552421 for further information.</p>
<p>2a. Where are the local Nightingale groups?</p>	<p>Local Nightingale groups were established across the UK several years ago to encourage new members, and raise awareness of the Benevolent Fund. Since 2018, the groups were re-ignited to organise local tea parties to celebrate Florence Nightingale's bicentenary in 2020. In some parts of the UK they are flourishing, in others they are still embryonic. We also have groups overseas.</p> <p>The Trustees would like to invest resources in developing local groups, especially as so many Nightingales may not be able to travel to London. Following the COVID-19 Pandemic it is unclear if and when St Thomas' will allow large gatherings. If we are allowed to return for our AGM and Chapel service, then we may have to limit numbers and require members to enter a ballot to book a place.</p>
<p>2b. How do I find out about them?</p>	<p>The development of local groups will be published on the Fellowship website, as well as in the Journal.</p>
<p>2c. How often do they meet?</p>	<p>The frequency and type of meetings will depend on what is wanted locally, and support from volunteers.</p>
<p>2d. Will I have to pay to join a local group?</p>	<p>It is possible that some groups may decide to charge for attendance, but it is hoped that all groups will also fund raise for the Benevolent Fund and other relevant charities, such as the Florence Nightingale Museum.</p>
<p>3. Is there a possibility that the annual chapel service could continue after the Fellowship closes?</p>	<p>This is something that will need to be discussed with the Chaplaincy and the Chief Nurse as it requires substantial organisation and will incur costs.</p>
<p>4. What will happen to all the Nightingale badges and artefacts the Fellowship has in its possession?</p>	<p>The Trustees will ensure that right and proper transference of any assets will be part of the closure plan.</p>
<p>5. Will the badges in Central Hall remain?</p>	<p>These will remain as part of the 2020 Legacy Project to renovate Central Hall.</p>
<p>6. Some years ago, the faculty at King's College London (KCL) commissioned an art installation</p>	<p>These badges were gifted to KCL from the Nightingale Fellowship. We very much expect</p>

<p>with many Nightingale badges. Can you reassure the members that these badges will not fall into the wrong hands?</p>	<p>that the installation will remain at the faculty for many years to come, and transfer to any successor academic institution.</p>
<p>7. When the Fellowship closes, how will Miss Nightingale’s birthday continue to be acknowledged?</p>	<p>The Florence Nightingale Foundation organises an annual service at Westminster Abbey on the Wednesday before or after the 12th May. Any nurse can apply for free tickets to attend this service. The service marks International Nurses’ Day – timed to coincide, and to celebrate, Miss Nightingale’s birthday.</p>
<p>8. How can I maintain my interest in, and support for, nursing and nurses, as well as nursing fellowship?</p>	<p>There are several membership organisations which you could join to keep you in touch with nursing colleagues and continue your interest in nursing.</p> <p>For example: The Royal College of Nursing - www.RCN.org.uk The Company of Nurses - www.companyofnurses.co.uk The European Association of History of Nursing - EAHN.net The NHS Retirement Fellowship - nhsrf.org.uk</p>
<p>9. I want to visit the St Thomas’ site and stay in touch with what is going on at GSTT</p>	<p>You may be eligible to join the Veterans’ Association. Please contact Helen Lawrence, Veterans’ Secretary, on 01803 552421 for further details.</p> <p>You can also visit the Florence Nightingale Museum when it reopens.</p> <p>GSTT have a very active website, and a You Tube, Facebook and Twitter presence.</p>
<p>Further Information</p>	
<p>1. I would like more information about the Fellowship’s administrative costs, investment strategy returns and the current climate</p>	<p>Please contact us via email: info@thenightingalefellowship.org.uk with any questions that you feel have not been answered here or in the annual accounts that are published in the Journal.</p>
<p>2. I really want to talk to someone about this as I have more questions</p>	<p>Please email the office first: info@thenightingalefellowship.org.uk and arrangements will be made for the most appropriate person to respond to your query. We will answer your question direct and use it to extend the Frequently Asked Questions already written</p>

--	--