

# Annual report 2023-24

**Bliss**  
for babies born  
premature or sick



Charity Registration No. 1002973  
Company Registration No. 2609219 (England and Wales)

**Bliss – The National Charity for the Newborn**  
**(A Company Limited by Guarantee and having no Share Capital)**  
**Trustees' Report and Accounts**  
**For the Year Ended 31 March 2024**

**Bliss – The National Charity for the Newborn**  
**(A Company Limited by Guarantee)**

**Reference and Administrative Information**

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| <b>Company Number</b>    | 2609219 (England and Wales)  |
| <b>Charity Number</b>    | 1002973 (England and Wales)<br>SC040878 (Scotland)   |
| <b>Legal Status</b>      | The organisation is a charitable company limited by guarantee and as such is governed by its Memorandum and Articles of Association.   |
| <b>Board of Trustees</b> | Jason Parker (Chair)<br>Charlotte Witteridge (Vice-Chair)<br>Calvin Sellers (Treasurer)<br>Alexander Burrows<br>Amy Overend (resigned 24 May 2023)<br>Caroline Farrar (resigned 12 July 2023)<br>Coral Smith (appointed 10 October 2023)<br>Faith-Rose Chattaika (appointed 10 October 2023)<br>Fauzia Paize<br>Jayde Edwards (appointed 10 October 2023, resigned 25 April 2024)<br>John Calder<br>Michelle Peter (appointed 10 October 2023)<br>Mala Shah-Coulon<br>Neil James<br>Tania Seale (resigned 6 December 2023) |
| <b>Chief Executive</b>   | Caroline Lee-Davey   |
| <b>Company Secretary</b> | Kay D'Cruz (resigned 30 April 2023)  |
| <b>Registered Office</b> | 10-18 Union Street<br>London<br>SE1 1SZ  |
| <b>Auditor</b>           | Sayer Vincent LLP<br>110 Golden Lane<br>London<br>EC1Y 0TG   |
| <b>Bankers</b>           | Lloyds Bank PLC<br>3 St George's Road<br>London<br>SW19 4DR  |
| <b>Solicitors</b>        | CMS Cameron McKenna Nabarro<br>Cannon Place<br>78 Cannon Street<br>London<br>EC4N 6AF  |

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**Trustees' Report for the Year Ended 31 March 2024**

**Introduction from the Chair and Chief Executive**

It has been another extraordinary year of achievements for Bliss, in which we have secured the passage of legislation that will be truly game-changing for parents in years to come, developed comprehensive new information on parental touch, introduced digital innovations to improve access and support, and deepened our partnership work – all alongside delivery of our day-to-day activity supporting parents, health professionals, policymakers and researchers to improve care for babies born premature or sick.

We were exceptionally proud to see the passage into law this year of the Neonatal Care (Leave & Pay) Act 2023, which from April 2025 will give all employed parents with a baby admitted to neonatal care for more than a week up to 12 weeks' paid leave, enabling many more parents to be by their babies' side during their neonatal stay. This will be a significant step forward in ensuring that parents are able to be true partners in their babies' neonatal care, and we are delighted to have secured such a powerful campaign victory for so many families in future.

This year we also saw the publication of Bliss-funded research from Oxford University on measuring and managing pain in premature babies, which informed the development of a comprehensive new suite of information materials on the role of parental touch in comforting their baby during painful procedures. We are delighted to have built such a strong partnership with the research team at Oxford, and continue to work with them to ensure this vital new information reaches as many parents as possible.

Our focus on tackling health inequalities has continued across the organisation this year, with a strengthening of our partnership work with a range of organisations including the Raham Project, the Motherhood Group and Five X More. We have also continued to develop and diversify our involvement work, and are pleased to have significantly improved our website accessibility this year to ensure that more parents who need us can access our information and support in a format or language that best meets their needs.

Internally, our work to improve Bliss' own diversity and inclusion significantly informed a full overhaul of our Trustee recruitment process this year, through which we were thrilled to be able to recruit a cohort of new Trustees who bring a wealth of diverse backgrounds and experiences to the Board. We look ahead next year to further change as we hand over to a new Chair of the Board at the end of Jason's term of office in October 2024, and as we start development of our new strategy for 2025 onwards.

As ever, we couldn't do any of this without the incredible support of our brilliant Bliss staff, volunteers, campaigners and supporters, whose dedication and passion drives everything that we do to ensure that every baby born premature or sick has the best chance of survival and quality of life. We are humbled by their commitment, hard work, energy and generosity every day.

**Caroline Lee-Davey**  
**Chief Executive**

**Jason Parker**  
**Chair of Trustees**

**Bliss – The National Charity for the Newborn  
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**Trustees' Report for the Year Ended 31 March 2024**

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The Directors of the Charity (who are the Trustees of the Charity for charity law purposes) present their report and the audited financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2024.

The Trustees confirm that the annual report and financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the Companies Act 2006, the Charities Act 2011 and the requirements of Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102).

**Structure, governance and management**

*Governing document*

Bliss - the National Charity for the Newborn is a company limited by guarantee, incorporated on 9th May 1991 and governed by its Memorandum and Articles of Association, last updated on 26th January 2011. It is also registered as a charity with the Charity Commission, date of registration 20<sup>th</sup> May 1991.

Members of the charity are limited to the serving members of the volunteer Board of Trustees at any given time, who are limited to a guarantee of £1 each in the event of the charity being wound up.

Bliss has two wholly owned subsidiaries: Bliss Sales Limited, the principal activity of which is trading operations that enhance the aims and objectives of Bliss, with available profits gift aided back to Bliss; and Bliss Scotland (Charity) Limited, which is a company limited by guarantee in Scotland and a registered charity in Scotland, the principal activity of which is to carry out Bliss' aims and activities in Scotland.

*Appointment of Trustees*

As set out in the Articles of Association, the Chair of the Board of Trustees is elected by the members of the Board. When Trustee vacancies arise on the Board these are openly advertised, and the appointment of new Trustees is made following an application process including interview by members of the Nominations Committee, and approval by the whole Board. When considering appointments, the Nominations Committee consider the diversity of the current board of Trustees in terms of skills and experience, geographic representation, age, and ethnic and socioeconomic background; and we continually aim to increase the board's diversity.

During this year, Bliss recruited four new Trustees to the Board, with specific aim of increasing the breadth of diversity on our Board, and fully updated our recruitment process and format in order to do so – this included a question-based application format, fully-blinded shortlisting, and an informal chat with the CEO to support with preparation for the formal Nominations Committee interview. We were delighted to receive a really high calibre of applicants, and to be able to appoint four new Trustees to the Board who brought a wide range of different experience and perspectives between them; although unfortunately one of these Trustees subsequently had to resign for personal reasons.

*Trustee induction, training and evaluation*

New Trustees have a comprehensive induction coordinated by senior staff and fellow Trustees; for our newly appointed Trustees this has included time spent with a range of staff to find out about the work of the Charity, buddying with an experienced Trustee, and access to new Trustee training offered by Getting on Board. All Trustees are offered ongoing training as required, as well as regular opportunities to engage with the Charity's staff team, beneficiaries, stakeholders and supporters.

Each Trustee has an annual review conducted by the Chair. The Vice-Chair undertakes a regular review of the Chair, incorporating input from all Trustees and the Senior Management Team (SMT). Once every three years, there is an externally facilitated board evaluation; this is next due to take place during 2024-25. This year, our annual Board away day in September 2023 included a significant focus of ways of working, in light of the appointment of new Trustees, as well as providing an opportunity to reflect on our achievements and challenges at the mid-strategy point.

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**Trustees' Report for the Year Ended 31 March 2024**

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*Organisation*

The volunteer Board of Trustees is responsible for the overall governance and direction of the charity. The Senior Management Team meets regularly and reports to the Board through the Chief Executive.

At the end of the 23/24 financial year the year the Board comprised 12 Trustees overall, including a Chair, Vice Chair, and Treasurer. Trustees are all members of the Board and at least one sub-committee. The Board met five times during the year, plus the annual away day; our two primary sub-committees are the Finance, Risk & Fundraising Committee, which met five times during the year; and the Impact & Delivery Committee, which met three times.

During the year our meetings were split between those held fully in person, and those held fully online. The Chief Executive and SMT attend meetings of the Board and its sub-committees. Bliss Scotland and Bliss Sales Ltd have separate Boards; the Directors of Bliss Sales are made up of Bliss Trustees and one member of Bliss SMT, and the Trustees of Bliss Scotland during the year comprised two Trustees who are also Trustees of Bliss, and two independent Scottish Trustees. Trustee attendance at Board meetings was 83% this year (2023: 72%)

All Trustees are on fixed terms of office of four years and typically serve up to two terms. The following served as Trustees during the period 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024:

Alexander Burrows  
John Calder  
Faith-Rose Chattaika (appointed 10 October 2023)  
Jayde Edwards (appointed 10 October 2023; resigned 25th April 2024)  
Caroline Farrar (resigned 12 July 2023)  
Neil James  
Amy Overend (resigned 24 May 2023)  
Fauzia Paize  
Jason Parker  
Michelle Peter (appointed 10 October 2023)  
Tania Seale (resigned 6 December 2023)  
Calvin Sellers  
Mala Shah-Coulon  
Coral Smith (appointed 10 October 2023)  
Charlotte Witteridge

*Related parties and co-operation with other organisations*

None of the Trustees has any beneficial interest in the company. As members, they each have a potential individual liability of £1. There are no Trustees' interests to be disclosed.

See notes 9 and 20 to the accounts for further information.

*Charity Governance Code*

Bliss continues to apply the Charity Governance Code. During 2021-22 the Board developed and approved an internal controls and governance checklist to ensure effective oversight of key internal controls. This checklist was fully updated and reviewed by Trustees during the year to ensure we were maintaining our high standards around governance.

*Risk management*

The Trustees review the major risks facing the Charity on a regular basis, monitoring reserves and reviewing key financial systems to ensure sufficient resources are available to meet our obligations in the event of adverse

**Trustees' Report for the Year Ended 31 March 2024**

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conditions. The Trustees have also examined other operational and business risks faced by the Charity and confirm that they have established systems to manage significant risks.

Key risks to the Charity include:

- The impact of cost-of-living pressures and a difficult economic environment on the ability of the charity to fundraise, in particular through individual giving and corporate fundraising, and thus on income levels for this financial year and beyond; in particular in the context of Bliss being about to enter its final year of spending down the exceptional £1million donation received in 2020-21
- The impact of a challenging external environment on NHS services, hampering the ability of neonatal units to drive forward improvements in family integrated care for babies in neonatal units
- The impact of a competitive employment market on the ability of the charity to recruit and retain staff; and thus on the ability to deliver our strategy and operational plans in full.

The systems of control and activities to minimise risk include:

- Periodic review of progress against the agreed strategy
- An annual operational plan approved by Trustees
- An annual budget approved by Trustees and their regular monitoring against this budget
- Monthly reviews of financial results, for both income and expenditure, against budgets, as well as a mid-year budget reforecast
- Additional monitoring of cashflow and other activity to reduce cash outlay as required
- Regular review of a risk register by the Finance, Risk & Fundraising sub-committee, at meetings of the full Board of Trustees, and on a monthly basis by the SMT
- Delegated authorities to spend within defined limits
- Legal, HR and finance input from expert advisers.

The Trustees ensure that the management of risk is ongoing and embedded in management and operational procedures.

**Public benefit**

Section 17 of the Charities Act 2011 contains a legal requirement that all charities' aims are for public benefit. The Charity Commission in its "Charities and Public Benefit" guidance states that there are two key principles to be met in order to show that an organisation's aims are for public benefit:

1. There must be an identifiable benefit
2. Benefit must be to the public or a section of the public.

Regular evaluation of Bliss' work demonstrates the clear and positive benefit that we have on tens of thousands of babies, their families and the healthcare professionals who care for them. This is particularly through:

- The provision of free information and support to families of babies in neonatal care, which enables and empowers them to play a full role in their baby's hands-on care, which has proven health and developmental benefits for babies
- The support for audit and improvement of practice in neonatal units, in particular to maximise the involvement of parents in their babies' care
- Highlighting the challenges for neonatal care and supporting development of the solutions to address these through our policy and campaigning work; and
- Supporting public and patient involvement in research to maximise its patient benefit.



We aim to regularly evaluate the impact and effectiveness of our work through a process of measurement and evaluation led by SMT and managers, which is reviewed by Trustees periodically at meetings of the Impact and Delivery Committee and of the full Board.

### **About Bliss**

Bliss was founded in 1979 by a group of concerned parents who discovered that no hospital had all the equipment nor the trained staff it needed to safely care for premature and sick babies. Determined to do something, these volunteers formed a charity to give vulnerable babies the care they deserve. Almost 45 years later, Bliss has grown into the UK's leading charity for babies born premature or sick.

#### Our vision:

That every baby born premature or sick in the UK has the best chance of survival and quality of life.

#### Our mission:

Bliss champions the right for every baby born premature or sick to receive the best care. We achieve this by empowering families, influencing policy and practice, and enabling life-changing research.

#### Our values:

##### *Trusted*

We are entrusted to give voice to all babies born premature or sick. We believe that trust is earned, and our actions must always be based on what is best for babies.

##### *Supportive*

We believe that developing supportive relationships is at the heart of what we do, and only by supporting others are we able to achieve our goals.

##### *Ambitious*

We always go the extra mile to deliver excellence and seek improvement in all we do.

### **Our strategy**

This has been the second year of our 2022-2025 strategy, which explicitly takes a bolder stance in identifying and addressing poor experiences and unequal outcomes amongst the population of babies born premature or sick, and their families. In order to achieve this, there are three underpinning themes across our strategy:

- **Tackling health inequalities:** use the lens of health inequality to identify how we can make the biggest difference for babies born premature or sick; both through seeking to address the evidence gap in what we know about the experience, delivery and outcomes of neonatal care for different groups; and through working closely with specific communities within the neonatal population to develop and deliver our work in ways which better meet everyone's needs
- **Embedding insight and involvement across our work:** put babies' and families' voices at the heart of everything we do
- **Building partnership and collaborative ways of working:** continue and strengthen our existing partnership work and build even greater collaboration across our programmes of work.

**Trustees' Report for the Year Ended 31 March 2024**

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Our five strategic objectives for the 2022-25 period are:

- **Campaigning for change:** Ensure that national and local policy changes are delivered which improve the staffing, systems and investment in neonatal care; and which enable more parents to be at their baby's cotside and to play a hands-on role in their care and decision-making
- **Supporting all neonatal families:** Provide information and support for all families with a baby in neonatal care which helps them to be better informed, more confident, less isolated, and more involved in their babies' care and decision-making
- **Improving care for babies:** Drive excellent and equitable care for every baby in every neonatal unit
- **Putting research into practice:** Put parents' and babies' voices at the heart of research, and use new evidence to inform tangible improvements in care on the ground
- **Working with our amazing supporters and staff:** Build the organisational infrastructure and workforce to enable Bliss to make the biggest difference for babies born premature or sick.

## Review of 2023/24 activities

- 1. Campaigning for change:** *Ensure that national and local policy changes are delivered which improve the staffing, systems and investment in neonatal care; and which enable more parents to be at their baby's cotside and to play a hands-on role in their care and decision-making*

We started this year with a priority focus on supporting the final parliamentary stages of new draft legislation to bring forward paid neonatal leave for both parents. Having worked closely with Stuart McDonald MP on his introduction of the Neonatal Care (Leave and Pay) Bill as a Private Member's Bill in July 2022, and having subsequently done extensive work on the Bill's progression through its parliamentary stages in the House of Commons throughout 2022-23, at the start of this year we supported the final passage of the Bill through the House of Lords, and were delighted that the Bill received Royal Assent in May 2023.

Since then, we have been working closely with civil servants on the detail of secondary legislation, which will continue until this new legislation is enacted in April 2025, at the end of our strategic period. Ahead of this becoming a statutory entitlement we have also prepared a set of resources to support parents with requests to their employers for this leave, and have also highlighted positive examples of good practice of employers proactively introducing it as an employee benefit.

We are incredibly proud of the difference this new entitlement will make for families with a baby in neonatal care when it is implemented, and of Bliss' role in making this happen.

Further policy work to address the barriers to parents in being at their babies' cotside has this year resulted in a webinar for health professionals on *"The impact of the cost of living crisis in neonatal care"*, which shared new insights from research with parents and practical ways that health professionals can help, as well as signposting to relevant Bliss information and support resources. We also undertook research with parents on their access to accommodation while their baby was in neonatal care, to inform new policy recommendations which were co-created with parents, for a campaign launch taking place early next year.

Ahead of the anticipated 2024 general election, we developed and in November 2023 launched 'Neonatal Services for the Future: a manifesto', which set out our key policy priorities across five core areas: workforce, addressing inequalities, supporting parents to be by their baby's side, financial barriers, and support for parents who will not benefit from Neonatal Leave and Pay. We have used this in our campaigning and advocacy work with MPs and political parties, to raise awareness of our policy priorities for the coming years.

Other policy activity undertaken this year included significant work to finalise written evidence that was submitted to the UK Covid-19 Inquiry, as part of our work as a Core Participant along with 12 other pregnancy and baby charities within Module 3 of the Inquiry. This drew heavily on the insights we gathered from parents and health professionals during the pandemic about its impact in neonatal care, and will continue to be a focus of policy work in the coming year as we have the opportunity to review evidence disclosure from other organisations, as well as input into the oral evidence hearings which are due to take place in autumn 2024. Separately, we submitted written evidence to the Thirlwall Inquiry into events at the Countess of Chester hospital, with a particular focus on its broader look at safety and culture in neonatal care. Towards the end of the year we were also invited to give oral evidence to a new House of Lords Pre-Term Birth Committee, and subsequently provided written evidence to the Committee to inform its recommendations.

This year we have also continued to be the voice of babies needing neonatal care at national level, inputting into and influencing policy to drive improvements in care both through attendance at relevant meetings as well as through detailed written submissions to a range of consultations on national policy and professional guidance. This has included input to NHS England's neonatal critical care service specification, to their New Hospitals Programme blueprint for the future of neonatal unit design, as well as to a series of professional guidance from NICE (National Institute of Health and Care Excellence) and BAPM (the British Association of Perinatal Medicine).

**2. Supporting all neonatal families:** *Provide information and support for all families with a baby in neonatal care which helps them to be better informed, more confident, less isolated, and more involved in their babies' care and decision-making*

Evidence is very clear that parental involvement in neonatal care is essential to support improved outcomes for babies born premature or sick, as well as for attachment and bonding as a family. Bliss' work to support parents of babies born premature or sick focuses on informing, enabling and empowering them to play an active role in their babies' care and decision-making during their time on the neonatal unit. This year we have continued to broaden and diversify the range of services we offer to ensure our support is accessible to as many families as possible.

We are pleased to have increased the reach of our core emotional and practical support services for families this year. This has included:

- An 80% increase in core personalised support delivered via email and Bliss Champion volunteers on neonatal units and via video call, to reach an estimated 7,927 families
- Continued development of our interactive digital support for families – including through rolling out our closed Facebook peer support group, as well as building on our Instagram Q&As and Live sessions, to reach 8,052 families
- Significant growth in our ability to reach parents and carers via supportive social media content, through which we have reached an estimated 47,336 families. This included campaigns around NICU Awareness Month in September, in partnership with mental health support organisation Miracle Moon, and Full Term Awareness Week in February
- We have updated our information resources for families, refreshing our key About Neonatal Care resources online and in print, as well as updating content about weaning, medical conditions including Necrotising Enterocolitis, and on common infectious illnesses which affect babies born premature or sick; as well as adding new content in an interactive digital hub to help parents and carers find financial support to help with the additional costs of having a baby admitted to neonatal care. This year our total website and digital tool users reached 126,275
- We continued to distribute our core printed information to neonatal units across the UK, with 31,432 copies of About Neonatal Care – our resource for parents newly arriving on the unit – and Going Home – our resource for parents whose baby is about to be discharged – distributed this year.

Significantly, this year we developed a comprehensive new suite of information resources for parents and health professionals on the role of parents in comforting their baby during procedures on the neonatal unit, building on our research partnership with the University of Oxford. We know that for many years parents have often been asked to step outside the room while their baby undergoes a painful procedure, however Oxford's new research showed that parents felt more useful, reassured, and able to make a difference if they were given the role of comforting their baby through touch. Wider evidence, and additional insights from parents, including those gathered in partnership with the Raham Project, informed the development of new written and video information content to give knowledge and confidence to parents about the benefits of all aspects of parental touch, including kangaroo care / skin to skin, stroking and comfort holding, which we launched in December 2023.

In the first 6 months after launch these resources had a total reach of over 160,000 and engagement of over 8,800, with comments including:

*"This is amazing. I struggled with how to comfort and be there for my daughter when she was first in NICU, but the nurses and doctors caring for her were amazing. Knowing that this information will be available to other parents in NICU is a comfort in itself".*

*"Yes! Every parent should feel supported and involved with their baby, even in NICU".*

**Trustees' Report for the Year Ended 31 March 2024**

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Throughout the year we have built relationships and delivered more work in partnership with community organisations, including the Raham Project – as noted above – the Motherhood Group, Five X More, and LGBT Mummies. We have also specifically focused much of our involvement work on under-represented communities, including a dedicated listening event for Black mothers with a neonatal experience, and in-depth engagement of parents from a range of socioeconomic backgrounds to inform the development of our new financial support online tool. Towards the end of the year we commissioned the Community Interest Company Mabadiliko to undertake a project to understand more about the barriers and enablers to effective involvement with service users from different ethnic backgrounds, and we will use the findings and recommendations from this work to continue to improve the diversity of our involvement work over the coming year.

We continued to embed our impact framework this year, undertaking regular focus groups and surveys to understand more about the impact of our information and support services for parents. Our impact monitoring this year has shown that, of the parents surveyed:

- 89% said accessing our information or support made them feel better informed
- 87% said our information and support helped their neonatal experience
- 85% said accessing our information or support made them feel more confident
- 83% said accessing our information or support made them feel less isolated
- 83% said accessing our information or support helped them feel more involved in their babies' hands-on care on the neonatal unit.

**3. Improving care for babies: *Drive excellent and equitable care for every baby in every neonatal unit***

In order to deliver the best outcomes for babies, it is important that neonatal units follow best practice in both parental involvement and developmental care. The Bliss Baby Charter was designed to standardise high quality family-centred care across the UK. It is a practical framework for neonatal units to self-assess the quality of the family-centred care they deliver against a set of seven core principles.

We now have 183 units (out of a total of 195 across the UK) signed up to the Bliss Baby Charter, and 83 of these units are actively auditing their practice and engaging with improvement plans. Over the course of the year we have received 30 Baby Charter audits, and completed 3 unit assessments, and at the end of the year there were 21 units with Gold or Platinum Baby Charter Accreditation. We were also pleased to see continuing national support for the Baby Charter, with a recommendation that units undertake the Charter – as a valuable way to support improvements in their family-centred care – contained in both the Discovery Phase Report of the Maternity Neonatal Safety Support Programme Cymru from the Welsh Government (published in July 2023) and in the updated NHS England Neonatal Critical Care Service Specification (published in March 2024).

This year we have continued to support health professionals in a number of different ways, including:

- Reaching over 2,000 neonatal health professionals each quarter with our Bliss Journal newsletter, which provides updates on the latest neonatal guidance, evidence and Bliss developments
- Delivering a series of webinars, viewed 450 times, covering:
  - Family Integrated Care and how to enable partnerships with parents
  - Partnership with parents during painful procedures
  - Tackling inequalities in neonatal care
  - Financial support and the impact of the cost of living crisis
- Maintaining strong relationships with the network-level Family Care Coordinators in England, whose role is specifically funded through the National Neonatal Critical Care Review to support neonatal units across each network area to develop and implement Family Integrated Care; as well as continuing to strengthen relationships with the new network-level Allied Health Professionals in England.
- Strengthening relationships with key groups responsible for the implementation of Family Integrated Care, such as neonatal allied health professionals, psychologists and pharmacists, neonatal outreach and transport teams.

**4. Putting research into practice: Put parents' and babies' voices at the heart of research, and use new evidence to inform tangible improvements in care on the ground**

This year, the Oxford University research project funded by Bliss – looking at the measurement and management of pain in premature babies – continued, with a focus on analysis and write-up of the main study looking at the impact of parental touch on the management of pain in babies. Two major papers from this research were accepted for publication in the Lancet Child & Adolescent Health and Pain journals. The paper in Pain highlighted the importance of providing opportunities for parents to be involved in providing comfort to their infants during necessary painful clinical procedures. The Lancet paper was accompanied by an editorial which commented: *"This study is an example of excellence in research. The trial was carefully designed with a clear question, strict inclusion and exclusion criteria, a well-designed and reproducible intervention based on biological plausibility, and defined outcomes, with the strength of using an objective rather than a subjective measure of pain. Only with trials like this might we transform faith in science and test the efficacy of traditional aspects of parental care in order to incorporate them, or not, in bundles to alleviate the pain in neonates"*.

We were particularly pleased to have continued our work with Oxford in using these research findings to inform the development of a new suite of information resources on parental touch to comfort babies during procedures, mentioned above (objective 2). We were also delighted to be awarded a further £50,000 grant from a Government-sponsored post-Covid charity research funding scheme, via the Medical Research Council (MRC), to extend this research further, and we will be allocating this funding to Oxford during 2024/25 to undertake a further study on the use of dynamic parental touch during kangaroo care.

In addition, Bliss continues to support a number of other research projects with parental involvement, ensuring that parents' views and experiences are at the heart of neonatal research to ensure they best reflect and meet the needs of current and future generations of babies. These include projects on subjects as diverse as the PADDINGTON 2 study, looking at the effectiveness of parent-facing health information, the DOLFIN study, a randomised control trial looking at the long-term neurodevelopmental impact of nutritional supplements for premature and sick babies, and PremPath, which looks at how different aspects of antenatal optimisation and care of premature babies shortly after birth are being implemented. Bliss also remains closely involved in key national long-running neonatal research programmes, sitting on the Project Board of the National Neonatal Audit Programme (NNAP) and on the Steering Board of the National Neonatal Research Database (NNRD).

**5. Working with our amazing supporters and staff: Build the organisational infrastructure and workforce to enable Bliss to make the biggest difference for babies born premature or sick.**

Underpinning our direct delivery work to support babies born premature or sick and their families, health professionals, policymakers and researchers, behind the scenes we have continued to work with a range of partners and our many individual supporters to generate income; as well as strengthen our internal processes and infrastructure to ensure our public-facing work is as impactful as possible. Some of the many and varied highlights of these strands of our work are set out below:

- We continued our longstanding partnership with Pampers, with work focused in particular around World Prematurity Day on 17 November. Activity this year included promoting Pampers' free nappy ordering service for premature babies, and a week-long Q&A session for parents in conjunction with online parenting platform BabyCentre.
- We were grateful to be supported by number of other corporate partners – these included Stewarts Law who selected Bliss as their charity of the year and donated a generous £40,000 from the Stewarts Foundation.
- We were grateful for continued support from a number of charitable trusts and foundations
- Our fundraising with individuals combined both virtual activity – building on the innovation we had done during the pandemic – as well as a full return to in-person events and challenges. We are, as always, enormously grateful to the many hundreds of supporters who took on a range of challenges or organised their own community fundraising to raise funds for our work.

**Trustees' Report for the Year Ended 31 March 2024**

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- Our digital work this year has had a significant focus around improving content, navigation and user experience on our website, including work to update our website templates, transition to a new back-end forms platform, improve the Baby Charter digital tool; as well as building new analytics dashboards using Google Analytics 4 to maximise the insight and learning we can gather from user data to continually improve our digital offer, and introducing a new accessibility toolbar to improve access to our website for those with different or additional needs
- We continued to work across media, social media and online and offline channels to raise awareness of Bliss' work amongst our key audiences, in particular expectant and new parents. Alongside day-to-day activity we held a series of campaigns themed around particular activities or times of the year, with highlights including:
  - Passage of Neonatal Care (Leave and Pay Act), May 2023: significant media coverage secured including Radio 5 Live and BBC Scotland News at 9, and strong engagement with our social posts celebrating this achievement and thanking supporters
  - World Prematurity Day, Nov 2023: extensive activity included partnerships with Pampers and BabyCentre, media coverage including on Sky News and BBC Online, and total social media reach of over 315,000
  - Full Term February, Feb 2024: particular focus on Instagram content saw us increase our accounts reached on this channel to 62,984, a 184% increase on the previous month, and our engagement to 3,122 accounts, a 116% increase on the previous month.
- Alongside our public-facing work to put tackling health inequalities at the heart of everything we do, we have significantly developed our internal approach to equity, diversity and inclusion (EDI), with our cross-team Working Group leading work to develop and commission a new EDI training programme for all staff, which took place this year over two interactive sessions.

**Plans for the future**

In 2024-25 we will be continuing the delivery of our five strategic objectives, with a particular focus on the following areas:

- Input into secondary legislation relating to and planned implementation for the Neonatal Care (Leave and Pay) Act, which will come into force from April 2025.
- Raising awareness of neonatal care and our priority policy areas in the run-up to the general election and with the new government
- Focusing activity on the mental health and wellbeing of families on the neonatal unit
- Continuing the development of our approach to and support for Family Integrated Care
- Delivering a series of health professional webinars highlighting the role of allied health professionals, psychologists and pharmacists in the multi-disciplinary neonatal care team.
- Continuing to deliver and improve the Bliss Baby Charter, supporting more units to deliver tangible improvements to care and achieve accreditation.
- Further improving the quality of our service-user involvement work, especially to improve support for participants and diversity of participation
- Deepening our partnership work with others, in particular at key moments during the year such as Black Maternal Health Awareness Week, NICU Awareness Month, and World Prematurity Day
- Developing our next organisational strategy.

The 24/25 financial year will be the year in which we complete our long-term planned approach to spending down our excess reserves. Back in April 2020 we were fortunate to receive a very generous £1 million unrestricted donation: this was very early in the Covid-19 pandemic when there was considerable uncertainty over our in-person fundraising streams, and it also followed several challenging years financially for Bliss, when our reserves had depleted to below target levels.

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Against this internal and external backdrop Bliss' Trustees took the decision to implement a phased spend-down of this extraordinary donation over a number of years, to provide sustained assurance against a challenging external environment which affects our fundraising – this has shifted from the pandemic through to the cost-of-living crisis – and has enabled us to continue to build our core services while also investing in different areas of fundraising to diversify our income streams and help deliver financial sustainability over the long-term.

This work will conclude in 24/25 when we spend down the final tranche of our excess reserves, so that we end the current strategy period with reserves in line with target. We will also therefore be working throughout the year on ensuring we can set a balanced budget for 2025-26 onwards.

**Thanks and acknowledgements**

We would like to extend our thanks to the following organisations who have supported our work this year:

|   |  |   |
|---|--|---|
| Adint Charitable Trust                    | Pavers Charitable Foundation                     | The Elsie Lawrence Trust                    |
| Abigayle Baxingdale                       | Ricepuds Charitable Trust                        | The Eveson Charitable Trust                 |
| CMS Cameron McKenna Nabarro Olswang LLP   | Sainsburys                                       | The Gilbert & Eileen Edgar Foundation       |
| Delicious Ideas Ltd                       | Sands  | The Goodman Foundation                      |
| Emile et Rose                             | Scottish Government Best Start Programme         | The Hospital Saturday Fund Charitable Trust |
| Dandia Charitable Trust                   | Scottish Government Improving Health & Wellbeing | The Maud Elkington Charitable Trust         |
| Foundation Scotland                       | Sir John Priestman Charitable Trust              | The Meikle Foundation                       |
| Frank Litchfield General Charitable Trust | St James' Place Foundation                       | The Michael & Anna Wix Charitable Trust     |
| Fundraise Together                        | Stewarts Law                                     | The Norman Family Charitable Trust          |
| Goldman Sachs Gives                       | The 29 <sup>th</sup> May 1961 Charitable Trust   | The Peter Stebbings Memorial Charity        |
| James T Howat Charitable Trust            | The Appletree Trust                              | The Pilkington Charities Fund               |
| John James Bristol Foundation             | The Barbour Foundation                           | The Souter Charitable Trust                 |
| Leigh Day                                 | The Belstead Galzoni Charitable Trust            | The Walker Trust                            |
| London Bridge City                        | The Boltini Trust                                | The W E Dunn Trust                          |
| Matthias Hieber                           | The Charles S French Charitable Trust            | The Weinstock Fund                          |
| Masonic Charitable Foundation             | The Childwick Trust                              | The Wixhamtree Trust                        |
| NHS England                               | The Christopher Laing Foundation                 | Thomas J Horne Memorial Trust               |
| NHS Race & Health Observatory             | The Clark Foundation                             | Vitabiotics                                 |
| P F Charitable Trust                      | The Edgar E Lawley Foundation                    | Waterwipes                                  |
| Pampers                                   | The Edward & Dorothy Cadbury Trust               |   |

As ever, we are phenomenally grateful to all of Bliss' incredible supporters who have supported Bliss over the last year, without whom we simply wouldn't be able to achieve what we do for babies born premature or sick. So many people have walked, run, jogged, skydived, baked, and undertaken any number of other challenges to



**Trustees' Report for the Year Ended 31 March 2024**

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raise much-needed funds for Bliss, and their ongoing commitment to supporting our work is truly humbling – thank you.

Through our fundraising, we aim to improve the financial resilience and sustainability of Bliss so that we can help as many of the 90,000 babies who need neonatal care each year as possible. Our supporters are vital to us reaching our goal of helping every single one.

Our fundraising approach to achieving this is to ensure:

- Our supporters are at the heart of everything we do
- We listen to our supporters and communicate with them in the most appropriate way
- We protect our supporters' information and privacy
- We diversify and innovate our fundraising to ensure a sustainable future
- We use data and insight to inform our fundraising planning.

We also pay tribute to our incredible team of Bliss volunteers, whose contribution across many different areas of our work has made such a difference over the last year; whether that was through supporting families, sharing their stories in the media, campaigning, or raising awareness of Bliss. Among these we would like to thank our dedicated Board of volunteer Trustees, who have again gone above and beyond to ensure we are making the biggest difference possible for babies. We would also like to take this opportunity to thank our amazing staff team, each of whom delivers their work with passion and dedication to improving the lives of babies born premature or sick every single day.

Finally, we would like to offer our sincere thanks to the following organisations that have supported our work over the past year, as well as the many hundreds of families, health professionals and other individuals who continue to make such a difference to our work:

|   |   |
|---|---|
| Black Mums Upfront                        | NIDCAP Training Centre                            |
| British Association of Perinatal Medicine | Pregnancy and Baby Charities Network              |
| Department of Health and Social Care      | Royal College of Midwives                         |
| EFCNI                                     | Royal College of Nursing                          |
| Five X More                               | Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists |
| The FINE Faculty                          | Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health     |
| Institute of Health Visiting              | Sands   |
| LGBT Mummies                              | Scottish Government                               |
| Mabadiliko CIC                            | The Lullaby Trust                                 |
| National Neonatal Audit Programme         | The Motherhood Group                              |
| National Perinatal Epidemiology Unit      | The Raham Project                                 |
| Neonatal Data Analysis Unit               | The Smallest Things                               |
| Neonatal Nurses Association               | TinyLife  |
| Netmums                                   | Together for Short Lives                          |
| NHS England                               | Twins Trust                                       |
| NHS Race & Health Observatory             | Welsh Government                                  |

## **Financial Review**

### **Financial Position of the Charity**

The 23/24 financial year represents the second year of our strategy period, and we are really pleased to have achieved significant progress on our strategic plan whilst holding our finances in line with our operating plan. As a result, we ended the 23/24 financial year with funds on target to deliver the final year of our strategic plan.

We planned for a net deficit in 23/24 in order that we could invest part of the surplus generated from the one-off £1m donation (FY 20/21) to deliver against our 2022/25 strategic ambitions. We are really pleased to report that we ended the year in line with that plan, achieving income funding of £2,148k, expenditure of £2,381k to further our strategic aims, and a net deficit of £205k. Our reserves at the end of March 24 sit at just under £700k and we start the final year of our strategy period on target to invest the remaining reserves surplus of £193k in 24/25 and complete our three-year strategic programme.

During 23/24 we have invested in our work to tackle health inequalities, embed insight and involvement in our work and build partnerships and collaborative ways of working.

In terms of funding, 23/24 has once again been a turbulent year for the wider economy and Bliss has continued to feel the pressure on corporate funding as a result of this and the cost-of-living pressures facing many of our supporters, impacting their ability to donate. Our overall income has fallen versus the prior year however despite this, we have continued to rebuild our Community and Events programme and, in this area, have achieved income surpassing pre-Covid levels through continued innovation in virtual fundraising events.

The fundraising backdrop does remain difficult, and we continue to consider how a changing landscape will impact our income, and work to position our portfolio towards opportunities which will sustainably grow our income over time.

### **Reporting**

Our financial results for 23/24 are shown on page 25 to 40. In order to be able to compare our income and expenditure year on year, and to show most clearly how our income and expenditure is generated and spent across the organisation, we use the following four key areas of work throughout our annual accounts.

- Supporting parents and carers
- Engaging with neonatal health professionals
- Campaigning for change
- Supporting research

### **Income**

Income for 23/24 was £2,148k, £140k lower than the prior year. Whilst restricted income has shown modest growth year on year (2024 £274k vs 2023 £259k) unrestricted income has fallen (2024 £1,873k vs 2023 £2,029k).

The fall in unrestricted income comes mostly from corporate donations, alongside some reduction in payroll giving and fewer unrestricted grants from trusts and foundations. In the previous year Bliss had been fortunate to receive support from two major corporate charity of the year partners, however we were not able to secure this level of corporate support in 23/24 with the result that corporate donations fell by £196k (2024 £89k vs 2023 £285k).

Income from trading activities grew by £70k overall (2024 £1,091k vs 2023 £1,021k) and this includes income raised through sporting & community events and income from Bliss Sales Ltd. Fundraising from sporting and community events grew by £130k in the year (2024 £1,046k vs 2023 £916k); this remains Bliss' largest fundraising area, and we thank our supporters for their phenomenal support during the year fundraising from both in-person events and from three virtual fundraising events. Income from Bliss Sales Ltd fell by £59k in the year (2024 £46k vs 2023 £105k) and we have felt the impact of the wider economic pressure on our ability to secure income from corporate sponsorships and corporate brand licensing.

**Trustees' Report for the Year Ended 31 March 2024**

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Income from our charitable activities has grown by £14k overall (2024 £305k vs 2023 £291k) through increased funding to support our Baby Charter programme and additional income from participation in research projects. Across our key areas of work, we would like to highlight some of the funding support Bliss received in the year.

Supporting Parents and Carers

We were grateful to receive £45k from Pampers towards our Bliss Champion volunteer programme which offers support to parents and carers on neonatal units. Sainsburys donated £8k so that we could deliver premature baby clothing to neonatal units, and Leigh Day gave a donation of £7k to enable us to provide Going Home information booklets to parents and carers to support the transition from neonatal unit to home after discharge.

We continued to receive support from the Scottish Government with a restricted grant of £15k to fund our volunteer, information and support work in Scotland. In December 23 we received a grant of £8k from NHS England to provide information around winter illnesses during the RSV season.

Across trusts and foundations, online appeals and crowdfunders, we generated £63k of restricted funding and this has enabled us to provide quality information materials and digital support to parents across the UK.

Engaging with neonatal health professionals

During 23/24 the Scottish Government continued to support our work to drive quality improvement on neonatal units through our Baby Charter audit and accreditation scheme, providing a restricted grant of £48k.

We received £30k of restricted funding from Trusts and Foundations which has enabled us to work with healthcare professionals across the UK to advance our Baby Charter programme.

Throughout 23/24 neonatal units have continued to engage with our Baby Charter accreditation scheme and this work generated an income of £10k from NHS Trusts.

Supporting Research

We continued to partner with research institutions throughout 23/24 to provide well regarded support and parental involvement for neonatal research projects, and earned £21k for this work.

In March 24 the Medical Research Council (MRC) awarded further grant funding of £50k to Bliss and Bliss will use this to support an additional year of funding for the Oxford Pain research project in 24/25.

**Expenditure**

Our expenditure in 23/24 was £2,381k, in line with our intention for expenditure to be higher than income so that we could strategically invest part of the reserves surplus created by the one-off £1m donation from 20/21. This spend down of the reserves surplus in 23/24 has been used to advance our three underpinning strategic themes; to tackle health inequalities, embed insight and involvement across our work, and to build partnerships and collaborative ways of working.

- We have invested in additional staff resource to embed insight and involvement across all our work.
- We have conducted user research and testing across more diverse communities to tackle health inequalities and extend the reach of our services.
- We improved our digital Information & Support (I&S) tool for families in autumn 23, adding information to support with the financial challenges of having a baby in neonatal care. To inform this project we conducted research across a diverse user group ensuring that the I&S tool is easy to use, representative and accessible.
- We invested in working in partnership with community groups, to help us reach more diverse families, improve our information and support provision, and support us in tackling health inequality.
- During the year we concluded our input into the Oxford Parental Touch project which placed families at the heart of the research, which included partnering with the Raham Project to hold a listening event where parents shared their neonatal experience; this both informed our final written information materials for parents and health professionals, and also formed a video content series to provide a more accessible format for this information.

**Trustees' Report for the Year Ended 31 March 2024**

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- Through our webinar programme we have invested in engagement with healthcare professionals. In June 23 we held a webinar to highlight the impact of the cost-of-living crisis in neonatal care, specifically looking at the financial barriers to parents' and carers' involvement in their baby's care. In November 23 we ran a webinar exploring the importance of parental partnership within Family Integrated Care delivery.
- Following on from Bliss' successful campaigning to bring in the Neonatal Leave and Pay (NLP) Act we invested in additional staff resource in our Policy, Research and Campaigns team. The additional resource has enabled us to encourage early adoption by employers of the provisions within the NLP Act, which does not become mandatory until April 2025. It has also enabled us to conduct further advocacy work on behalf of those parents and carers who will not be covered by the NLP Act. The team also began work on a campaign to improve the consistent provision of accommodation for parents and carers of babies receiving neonatal care so that they can stay close to their babies., including co-creation of the campaign with a diverse group of parents.
- We invested in a high-quality Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) internal training programme from a well-recognised expert. The training forms part of our commitment to embed EDI across our ways of working, and engagement was high across all Bliss teams.

Alongside the additional investment as part of our reserves spend-down, we have also focused 23/24 expenditure on enhancing our core work.

- During the year we have used core funding to invest in our information and resource materials, including our printed About Neonatal Care booklet which provides parents and carers with valuable information at the start of their neonatal journey.
- We invested in improvements to our Baby Charter digital tool which will see healthcare professionals better able to navigate between sections of the audit and accreditation programme, improving ease of accreditation.
- Following the £50k MRC grant awarded to Bliss in 21/22, we reviewed and approved the report outcomes from the Oxford University Measurement of Pain in Premature Infants project and completed onward grant payments of £50k towards this.

We have continued to seek efficiencies across our cost base against the challenging income backdrop, and total expenditure in 23/24 reduced by £138k compared with the prior year.

- Support costs reduced by £214k (2024 £480k vs 2023 £694k) and a major driver of this has been the completion of our move to a smaller serviced office in March 2023 where we have benefitted from a lower rent and service charge in 23/24. Alongside this we have systematically reviewed and reduced other operating costs and are pleased to end the year with a smaller support cost base.
- In order to bring down the cost of fundraising and enhance the effectiveness of our communications we have invested in training to bring some expertise in house. Towards the end of the financial year, we invested in external social media skills training to fundraise more effectively and enhance the reach and effectiveness of our communications. This investment has the dual impact of reducing virtual fundraising costs and external communications support costs going forward and we plan to continue this work in 24/25.

### **Net Position**

As highlighted above our aim for 23/24 was to ensure that our spend during the year reflected the challenges to income but also allowed some investment of our reserves surplus from the one-off donation in 20/21, and we have been really pleased to achieve that with a net deficit before investments of £233k (2023: £231k).

Our COIF Charities Deposit Fund investment increased in value during 23/24 by £28k which meant that we ended the year better than expected with a total deficit of £205k (2023: 243k). The market remains volatile, and we will hold the £28k gain in a designated unrestricted reserve pot until this investment gain is realised.

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In 23/24 we actively sought to improve our charity ratios and have been pleased to improve our charitable spend ratio to 51p in every pound raised (2023: 49p in every £1) reflecting the investments we have made in the charitable areas outlined above.

We were also pleased to improve our cost of fundraising ratio to 54p in every pound raised (2023: 56p in every £1) and although this is some way from where we would like it to be, we are pleased to be making efficiencies and will continue to monitor the return on investment across our fundraising portfolio.

In 24/25 we will enter the final year of our 22-25 strategic plan. We plan to incur a comparable deficit in the final year as we continue to build partnerships, embed involvement in our work and position our fundraising portfolio towards sustainable income growth. This will spend down the final part of the reserves surplus from the £1m donation in 20/21 and as we move forward with our planning for the new strategic period starting in April 2025, we plan for a balanced income and expenditure budget to hold reserves in line with our policy.

**Bliss Scotland (Charity)**

Bliss Scotland offers a wide range of support and information to Scottish families and neonatal units. Income grew during the year to £96k (2023: £82k) following an increase in the Scottish Government grant towards our Baby Charter accreditation scheme. Bliss Scotland also saw an increase in income from sporting and community activities as our Scottish supporters took part in a range of fundraising events to support Bliss services across Scotland. The increase in income enabled us to increase our charitable activity spend in Scotland to £93k (2023: £87k) to support families across Scotland and advance the Baby Charter accreditation levels in neonatal units across Scotland.

No donation was made this year from Bliss to Bliss Scotland (2023: £nil) and as its parent company, Bliss continues to provide administrative, logistical and fundraising support to Bliss Scotland and a charge for this was made to Bliss Scotland of £56k (2023: £30k).

**Bliss Sales**

Bliss Sales Limited is the trading arm of Bliss, selling goods, brand licensing and sponsorship opportunities to individuals and corporate entities. Bliss Sales Limited produced turnover of £46k (2023: £105k) and a profit on ordinary activities before corporate gift aid of £14k (2023: £64k). £14k has been gifted to Bliss (Charity) through the corporate gift aid scheme.

**Reserves policy and going concern**

Reserves are held to ensure that there remains enough liquidity to pay our staff and suppliers during times when cash flow fluctuates, to cover the value of our illiquid assets, to mitigate the financial risks we face such as unforeseen interruptions to our operations, to cover possible shortfalls in budgeted income, and to ensure that we can meet our planned spending commitments during the years ahead.

Bliss' Reserves Policy assesses the level of risk inherent within Bliss operations and sets out a calculation for determining the target level of reserves needed to mitigate that risk. This policy enables Bliss to determine whether currently held reserves are significantly above or below that target level. Where reserves vary from the target, plans will be made to bring reserves back in line with the target.

At the end of the 23/24 financial period, we held our finances on a solid base, ending the year with total funds of £699k (2023: £904k) and unrestricted funds carried forward of £649k (2023: £831k). Of the unrestricted funds Bliss holds £456k in line with our reserves policy which includes designated funds. This leaves £193k of free reserves going into the next financial year and we plan to spend this down in full to complete delivery of our 2022-25 strategic plan.

**Trustees' Report for the Year Ended 31 March 2024**

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Bliss' historic lack of regular multi-year income means that we start each fundraising year with a low level of secured income and while we are investing to change this situation in areas such as trust fundraising, this takes time. In the meantime, our reliance on support newly-generated each year means that we can be vulnerable if we do not reach our fundraising targets, and our reserves provide reassurance in the interim period as we undertake investment in these longer-term income streams. Our solid financial position was based on the receipt of a major one-off donation in 20/21, following which Trustees and the senior management team went through a rigorous process to develop a planned investment programme to spend down the donation over several years and 24/25 will represent the last year of that process.

In the short term this impacts the charity's reserves position with free reserves £193k above target. The trustees set a reserves target to cover 6 months of office costs, 2 months of staff costs, 3 months of operating expenses less 3 months of regular giving donations based on prior donations. The Trustees are comfortable to start the year with reserves above target to allow the final year of investment into the charity and provide additional mitigation against the risks inherent in the external environment. A full review of the reserves required in line with the reserves policy has been carried out during the 24/25 budget process with appropriate levels of additional activity planned for the coming year to bring the actual level of reserves in line with agreed policy by March 2025. After the final year of the current strategic period Bliss aims to operate a balanced income and expenditure budget going forward.

The Trustees have closely reviewed the going concern position prior to signing this report and are of the view that Bliss remains a going concern for the next 12 months, from the date this report was signed; and that there are no material uncertainties related to this.

**Investment powers and policy**

Bliss' Investment Policy supports the assessment of appropriate institutions for holding cash, taking into consideration risk, liquidity and our ethical policy.

Most cash balances are held in easily accessible current accounts, or short term (less than 32-day notice) accounts, and £300k invested in a COIF fund. This is shown within current asset investments.

**Fundraising regulations**

Bliss is registered with the Fundraising Regulator, and all fundraising activities are aligned with the Code of Fundraising Practice to ensure that they are legal, open, honest and respectful. Our values state that in all of our work we aim to be trusted, supportive and ambitious, and these values are enshrined in all fundraising activities and campaigns that the charity undertakes. To reinforce this commitment, Bliss has a number of policies and procedures that underpin its fundraising activities:

- The Bliss Supporter Promise
- Ethical Policy
- Privacy Policy
- Safeguarding Policy
- Complaints Policy
- Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Policy
- Whistleblowing Policy

On occasion Bliss works with professional fundraisers or commercial participators to raise funds. When doing so, Bliss undertakes a thorough vetting and compliance process to ensure that all relationships and activities align with the relevant laws and regulations, and with the Bliss policies described above. Contracts and data sharing agreements are signed by all parties in line with current data protection legislation, and strict account management and monitoring processes are in place for all such relationships.

Any individual undertaking to fundraise on behalf of Bliss is given clear guidance on how to fundraise within the law to adhere to the Code of Fundraising Practice, and fundraising activities carried out on behalf of Bliss by third parties are regularly reviewed through dedicated account management, regular communications with supporters and monitoring of social media activity.

**Trustees' Report for the Year Ended 31 March 2024**

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Bliss takes all complaints about its fundraising activities very seriously. A clear process for submitting complaints is displayed on our website, and all complaints are centrally stored and reviewed regularly throughout the year by the senior management team. A summary of all complaints received is also discussed and reviewed annually at the Board. In the 2023-24 financial year, Bliss received 21 complaints in relation to its fundraising activities, all of which were responded to and resolved to the satisfaction of the complainants.

Many donors and supporters of Bliss have a strong personal connection to neonatal care that may have come from a difficult personal experience, and as such all employees and third-party fundraisers are trained in how to deal with potentially vulnerable supporters. The Bliss Safeguarding Policy outlines the steps needed to report any safeguarding concerns should they arise.

**Pay policy for senior staff**

The directors consider the Board of Directors, who are the charity's Trustees, and the senior management team (SMT), to comprise the key management personnel of the charity. They are charged with directing, controlling, running and operating the charity on a day-to-day basis.

The Trustees are not remunerated. The pay of the SMT is benchmarked against pay of similar positions in charities of a similar size and is reviewed annually. The pay policy for senior staff is in line with the pay policy applied to Bliss' staff, and for the Chief Executive is administered by the Remunerations Committee of the Board (comprising the Chair, Vice-Chair and) the Treasurer.

**Related parties**

Details of related party transactions are in note 20.

**Disclosure of information to auditors**

Each Trustee has confirmed that there is no information of which they are aware which is relevant to the audit, but of which the auditor is unaware. They have further confirmed that they have taken appropriate steps to identify such relevant information and to establish that the auditors are aware of such information.

**Auditors**

In accordance with section 485 of the Companies Act 2006, Sayer Vincent LLP were appointed as auditors of the company in 2017 and have continued to be appointed for the year ended 31 March 2024.

On behalf of the Board of Trustees.

*Jason Parker*  
Chair of Trustees  
16 October 2024

**Bliss – The National Charity for the Newborn  
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**Independent auditor's report to the members of Bliss – The National Charity for the Newborn**

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The Trustees, who are also the directors of Bliss for the purpose of company law, are responsible for preparing the Trustees' Report and the accounts in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

Company Law requires the Trustees to prepare accounts for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charitable company and group and of the incoming resources and application of resources, including the income and expenditure, of the charitable company and group for that year.

In preparing these accounts, the Trustees are required to:

- Select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- Observe the methods and principles in the Charities SORP;
- Make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- State whether applicable UK Accounting Standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the accounts; and
- Prepare the accounts on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charitable company will continue in operation.

The Trustees are responsible for keeping adequate accounting records that disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the Charity and enable them to ensure that the accounts comply with the Companies Act 2006. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the Charity and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

In so far as the Trustees are aware:

- There is no relevant audit information of which the charitable company's auditor is unaware
- The Trustees have taken all steps that they ought to have taken to make themselves aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the auditor is aware of that information.

The Trustees are responsible for the maintenance and integrity of the corporate and financial information included on the charitable company's website. Legislation in the United Kingdom governing the preparation and dissemination of financial statements may differ from legislation in other jurisdictions.

Members of the charitable company guarantee to contribute an amount not exceeding £1 to the assets of the charitable company in the event of winding up. The total number of such guarantees at 31 March 2024 was 12 (22/23: 11). The Trustees are members of the charitable company but this entitles them only to voting rights. The Trustees have no beneficial interest in the charitable company.



## **Opinion**

We have audited the financial statements of Bliss – The National Charity for the Newborn (the 'parent charitable company') and its subsidiaries (the 'group') for the year ended 31 March 2024 which comprise the consolidated statement of financial activities, the group and parent charitable company balance sheets, the consolidated statement of cash flows and the notes to the financial statements, including a summary of significant accounting policies. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards, including FRS 102 The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

In our opinion, the financial statements:

- Give a true and fair view of the state of the group's and of the parent charitable company's affairs as at 31 March 2024 and of the group's incoming resources and application of resources, including its income and expenditure, for the year then ended
- Have been properly prepared in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice
- Have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006 and the Charities Act 2011

## **Basis for opinion**

We conducted our audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK) (ISAs (UK)) and applicable law. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the group financial statements section of our report. We are independent of the group and parent charitable company in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in the UK, including the FRC's Ethical Standard, and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

## **Conclusions relating to going concern**

In auditing the financial statements, we have concluded that the trustees' use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements is appropriate.

Based on the work we have performed, we have not identified any material uncertainties relating to events or conditions that, individually or collectively, may cast significant doubt on Bliss – The National Charity for the Newborn's ability to continue as a going concern for a period of at least twelve months from when the financial statements are authorised for issue.

Our responsibilities and the responsibilities of the trustees with respect to going concern are described in the relevant sections of this report.

## **Other Information**

The other information comprises the information included in the trustees' annual report, other than the group financial statements and our auditor's report thereon. The trustees are responsible for the other information contained within the annual report. Our opinion on the group financial statements does not cover the other information, and, except to the extent otherwise explicitly stated in our report, we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon. Our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the group financial statements or our knowledge

## Independent auditor's report to the members of Bliss – The National Charity for the Newborn

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obtained in the course of the audit or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If we identify such material inconsistencies or apparent material misstatements, we are required to determine whether this gives rise to a material misstatement in the group financial statements themselves. If, based on the work we have performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, we are required to report that fact.

We have nothing to report in this regard.

### **Opinions on other matters prescribed by the Companies Act 2006**

In our opinion, based on the work undertaken in the course of the audit:

- The information given in the trustees' annual report for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements
- The trustees' annual report has been prepared in accordance with applicable legal requirements

### **Matters on which we are required to report by exception**

In the light of the knowledge and understanding of the group and the parent charitable company and their environment obtained in the course of the audit, we have not identified material misstatements in the trustees' annual report.

We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters in relation to which the Companies Act 2006 and Charities Act 2011 requires us to report to you if, in our opinion:

- Adequate accounting records have not been kept by the parent charitable company, or returns adequate for our audit have not been received from branches not visited by us; or
- The parent charitable company financial statements are not in agreement with the accounting records and returns; or
- Certain disclosures of trustees' remuneration specified by law are not made; or
- We have not received all the information and explanations we require for our audit; or
- The trustees were not entitled to prepare the financial statements in accordance with the small companies regime and take advantage of the small companies' exemptions in preparing the trustees' annual report and from the requirement to prepare a strategic report.

### **Responsibilities of trustees**

As explained more fully in the statement of trustees' responsibilities set out in the trustees' annual report, the trustees (who are also the directors of the parent charitable company for the purposes of company law) are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements and for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view, and for such internal control as the trustees determine is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, the trustees are responsible for assessing the group's and the parent charitable company's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the trustees either intend to liquidate the group or the parent charitable company or to cease operations, or have no realistic alternative but to do so.

### **Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements**

We have been appointed auditor under the Companies Act 2006 and section 151 of the Charities Act 2011 and report in accordance with those Acts.

**Independent auditor's report to the members of Bliss – The National Charity for the Newborn**

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Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with ISAs (UK) will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

Irregularities, including fraud, are instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations. We design procedures in line with our responsibilities, outlined above, to detect material misstatements in respect of irregularities, including fraud. The extent to which our procedures are capable of detecting irregularities, including fraud are set out below.

**Capability of the audit in detecting irregularities**

In identifying and assessing risks of material misstatement in respect of irregularities, including fraud and non-compliance with laws and regulations, our procedures included the following:

- We enquired of management, which included obtaining and reviewing supporting documentation, concerning the group's policies and procedures relating to:
  - Identifying, evaluating, and complying with laws and regulations and whether they were aware of any instances of non-compliance;
  - Detecting and responding to the risks of fraud and whether they have knowledge of any actual, suspected, or alleged fraud;
  - The internal controls established to mitigate risks related to fraud or non-compliance with laws and regulations.
- We inspected the minutes of meetings of those charged with governance.
- We obtained an understanding of the legal and regulatory framework that the group operates in, focusing on those laws and regulations that had a material effect on the financial statements or that had a fundamental effect on the operations of the group from our professional and sector experience.
- We communicated applicable laws and regulations throughout the audit team and remained alert to any indications of non-compliance throughout the audit.
- We reviewed any reports made to regulators.
- We reviewed the financial statement disclosures and tested these to supporting documentation to assess compliance with applicable laws and regulations.
- We performed analytical procedures to identify any unusual or unexpected relationships that may indicate risks of material misstatement due to fraud.
- In addressing the risk of fraud through management override of controls, we tested the appropriateness of journal entries and other adjustments, assessed whether the judgements made in making accounting estimates are indicative of a potential bias and tested significant transactions that are unusual or those outside the normal course of business.

Because of the inherent limitations of an audit, there is a risk that we will not detect all irregularities, including those leading to a material misstatement in the financial statements or non-compliance with regulation. This risk increases the more that compliance with a law or regulation is removed from the events and transactions reflected in the financial statements, as we will be less likely to become aware of instances of non-compliance. The risk is also greater regarding irregularities occurring due to fraud rather than error, as fraud involves intentional concealment, forgery, collusion, omission or misrepresentation.

**Bliss – The National Charity for the Newborn  
(A Company Limited by Guarantee)**

**Independent auditor's report to the members of Bliss – The National Charity for the Newborn**

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A further description of our responsibilities is available on the Financial Reporting Council's website at: [www.frc.org.uk/auditorsresponsibilities](http://www.frc.org.uk/auditorsresponsibilities). This description forms part of our auditor's report.

**Use of our report**

This report is made solely to the charitable company's members as a body, in accordance with Chapter 3 of Part 16 of the Companies Act 2006 and section 144 of the Charities Act 2011 and regulations made under section 154 of that Act. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the charitable company's members those matters we are required to state to them in an auditor's report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the charitable company and the charitable company's members as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.

Judith Miller (Senior statutory auditor)

11 November 2024

for and on behalf of Sayer Vincent LLP, Statutory Auditor  
110 Golden Lane, LONDON, EC1Y 0TG

Sayer Vincent LLP is eligible to act as auditor in terms of section 1212 of the Companies Act 2006

**Bliss - The National Charity for the Newborn**  
**(A Company Limited by Guarantee)**

**Group Consolidated Statement of Financial Activities, including Income and Expenditure Account**  
**For the year ended 31 March 2024**

|  | Notes | Unrestricted funds<br>£ | Restricted Funds<br>£ | Total<br>2024<br>£ | Total<br>2023<br>£ |
|--|-------|-------------------------|-----------------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| <b>Income</b>  |       |                         |                       |                    |                    |
| Donations and legacies   | 2     | 735,997                 | -                     | 735,997            | 963,077            |
| Charitable activities  | 3     |                         |                       |                    |                    |
| Supporting parents and carers  |       | -                       | 146,148               | 146,148            | 155,164            |
| Engaging with neonatal health professionals                              |       | 9,580                   | 77,346                | 86,926             | 68,008             |
| Supporting research  |       | 20,823                  | 51,000                | 71,823             | 67,874             |
| Other trading activities   | 4     | 1,091,508               | -                     | 1,091,508          | 1,021,572          |
| Investment income  |       | 15,521                  | -                     | 15,521             | 12,255             |
| <b>Total income</b>  |       | <b>1,873,429</b>        | <b>274,494</b>        | <b>2,147,923</b>   | <b>2,287,950</b>   |
| <b>Expenditure</b>   |       |                         |                       |                    |                    |
| Costs of raising funds   | 6     | 1,162,147               | -                     | 1,162,147          | 1,282,156          |
| Charitable activities  | 7     |                         |                       |                    |                    |
| Supporting parents and carers  |       | 315,334                 | 146,148               | 461,482            | 538,669            |
| Engaging with neonatal health professionals                              |       | 303,015                 | 77,346                | 380,361            | 360,707            |
| Campaigning for change   |       | 237,090                 | -                     | 237,090            | 241,949            |
| Supporting research  |       | 65,605                  | 74,500                | 140,105            | 95,823             |
| <b>Total expenditure</b>   |       | <b>2,083,191</b>        | <b>297,994</b>        | <b>2,381,185</b>   | <b>2,519,304</b>   |
| <b>Net income / (expenditure) before transfers</b>                       |       | <b>(209,762)</b>        | <b>(23,500)</b>       | <b>(233,262)</b>   | <b>(231,354)</b>   |
| Net gains / (losses) on investments                                      | 15    | 28,139                  | -                     | 28,139             | (11,930)           |
| Transfers between funds  |       | -                       | -                     | -                  | -                  |
| <b>Net income / (expenditure) for the year and net movement in funds</b> |       | <b>(181,623)</b>        | <b>(23,500)</b>       | <b>(205,123)</b>   | <b>(243,284)</b>   |
| <b>Fund balances brought forward</b>                                     |       | <b>830,785</b>          | <b>73,500</b>         | <b>904,285</b>     | <b>1,147,569</b>   |
| <b>Fund balances carried forward</b>                                     | 18    | <b>649,162</b>          | <b>50,000</b>         | <b>699,162</b>     | <b>904,285</b>     |

The statement of financial activities includes all gains and losses recognised during the year. All income and expenditure derive from continuing activities.

**Bliss - The National Charity for the Newborn**  
**(A Company Limited by Guarantee)**

**Balance Sheets**  
**As at 31 March 2024**

Company no. 02609219

|   |       | Group<br>2024<br>£ | 2023<br>£        | Charity<br>2024<br>£ | 2023<br>£        |
|---|-------|--------------------|------------------|----------------------|------------------|
|   | Notes |                    |                  |                      |                  |
| <b>Fixed Assets</b>                                   |       |                    |                  |                      |                  |
| Tangible assets                                       | 11    | 27,217             | 22,777           | 27,217               | 22,777           |
| Investments   | 12    | -                  | -                | 1                    | 1                |
|   |       | <u>27,217</u>      | <u>22,777</u>    | <u>27,218</u>        | <u>22,778</u>    |
| <b>Current Assets</b>                                 |       |                    |                  |                      |                  |
| Debtors   | 14    | 218,358            | 217,800          | 207,842              | 200,403          |
| Current asset investment                              | 15    | 334,484            | 306,345          | 334,484              | 306,345          |
| Short term deposits                                   |       | 154,409            | 101,476          | 154,409              | 101,476          |
| Cash at bank and in hand                              |       | 251,727            | 536,676          | 249,727              | 533,925          |
|   |       | <u>958,978</u>     | <u>1,162,297</u> | <u>946,462</u>       | <u>1,142,149</u> |
| <b>Creditors; amounts falling due within one year</b> | 16    | <u>(287,033)</u>   | <u>(280,789)</u> | <u>(288,213)</u>     | <u>(271,354)</u> |
| <b>Net current assets</b>                             |       | <u>671,945</u>     | <u>881,508</u>   | <u>658,249</u>       | <u>870,795</u>   |
| <b>Total assets less current liabilities</b>          |       | <u>699,162</u>     | <u>904,285</u>   | <u>685,467</u>       | <u>893,573</u>   |
| <b>Funds</b>  |       |                    |                  |                      |                  |
| Restricted funds                                      | 18    | 50,000             | 73,500           | 50,000               | 73,500           |
| Unrestricted funds                                    |       |                    |                  |                      |                  |
| Designated Funds                                      | 18    | 28,139             | -                | 28,139               | -                |
| General Funds   |       | 621,023            | 830,785          | 607,328              | 820,073          |
| <b>Total funds</b>                                    |       | <u>699,162</u>     | <u>904,285</u>   | <u>685,467</u>       | <u>893,573</u>   |

The trustees have prepared group accounts in accordance with section 398 of the Companies Act 2006 and section 138 of the Charities Act 2011.

The accounts were approved by the Board of Trustees on:

**Trustee: Jason Parker**  
Date: 16 October 2024

**Bliss - The National Charity for the Newborn**  
**(A Company Limited by Guarantee)**

**Statement of Cash Flows**  
**For the year ended 31 March 2024**

|  |       | 2024<br>£ | 2023<br>£ |
|--|-------|-----------|-----------|
|  | Notes |           |           |
| Cash generated (used in) operating activities                      | 21    | (226,790) | (141,262) |
| Cash flows from investment activities                              |       |           |           |
| Dividends and interest income                                      |       | 15,521    | 12,255    |
| Purchase of tangible fixed assets                                  |       | (20,747)  | (18,825)  |
| Cash provided by / (used in) investing activities                  |       | (5,226)   | (6,570)   |
| Increase / (decrease) in cash and cash equivalents during the year |       | (232,016) | (147,832) |
| Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the year             |       | 638,152   | 785,984   |
| Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the year                   |       | 406,136   | 638,152   |
| Cash and cash equivalents consist of:                              |       |           |           |
| Cash at bank and in hand   |       | 251,727   | 536,676   |
| Short term deposits  |       | 154,409   | 101,476   |
|  |       | 406,136   | 638,152   |

**Bliss - The National Charity for the Newborn  
(A Company Limited by Guarantee)**

**Notes to the Accounts  
For the year ended 31 March 2024**

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**1 Accounting Policies**

The important information, principal accounting policies adopted, judgements and key sources of estimation and uncertainty in the preparation of the financial statements are as follows:

**1.1 Statutory information**

Bliss - the National Charity for the Newborn is a charitable company limited by guarantee and is incorporated in England and Wales. The registered office address is 10-18 Union Street, London SE1 1SZ

**1.2 Basis of preparation**

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) - (Charities SORP FRS 102), The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) and the Companies Act 2006/Charities Act 2011.

The accounts are prepared in sterling, which is the functional currency of the charity. Monetary amounts in these financial statements are rounded to the nearest £1.

Assets and liabilities are initially recognised at historical cost or transaction value unless otherwise stated in the relevant accounting policy or note.

In applying the financial reporting framework, the trustees have made a number of subjective judgements, for example in respect of significant accounting estimates. Estimates and judgements are continually evaluated and are based on historical experience and other factors, including expectations of future events that are believed to be reasonable under the circumstances. The nature of the estimation means the actual outcomes could differ from those estimates. Any significant estimates and judgements affecting these financial statements are detailed within the relevant accounting policy below.

**1.3 Public benefit entity**

The charitable company meets the definition of a public benefit entity under FRS 102.

**1.4 Preparation of the accounts on a going concern basis**

After reviewing the group's forecasts and projections the Trustees have a reasonable expectation that the group has adequate resources to continue in operational existence for the foreseeable future. The group therefore continues to adopt the going concern basis in preparing its consolidated financial statements.

**1.5 Group financial statements**

The financial statements consolidate the results of the Charity, its wholly owned subsidiary Bliss Sales Limited and with Bliss Scotland (Charity) Limited on a line-by-line basis. Bliss Scotland (Charity) Limited has been consolidated given that it has trustees in common with the main charity and is subject to common governance processes. A separate Statement of Financial Activities and Income and Expenditure Account for the charity has not been presented because the charity has taken advantage of the exemption afforded by section 408 of the Companies Act 2006.

**1.6 Income**

Income is recognised when the charity has entitlement to the funds, when any performance conditions attached to the items of income have been met and where it is probable that income will be received and quantified with reasonable accuracy.

Grants receivable in respect of expenditure charged to the Statement of Financial Activities during the year have been included in the Statement of Financial Activities. Income from government and other grants, whether 'capital' or 'revenue' grants, is recognised when the charity has entitlement to the funds. Where conditions to receiving the grant need to be met, income is recognised where it is probable that it will be received and measured with reasonable accuracy.

For legacies, entitlement is taken as the earlier of the date on which either the charity is aware that probate has been granted, the estate has been finalised and notification has been made by the executors that a distribution will be made, or when distribution is received from the estate. Receipt of a legacy, in whole or in part, is only considered probable when the amount can be measured reliably and the charity has been notified of the executors' intention to make a distribution. Where legacies have been notified to the charity or the charity is aware of the granting of probate and the criteria for income recognition have not been met, the legacy is treated as a contingent asset and disclosed if material.

**1.7 Donated services**

Donated professional services are recognised when the service is given and is valued as either the economic benefit of the service to the charity or the cost to the donor.

**1.8 Investments**

Fixed asset investments represent the investment held in the subsidiary company Bliss Sales Limited by the Charity. As these shares are unlisted, the trustees consider the appropriate market value of the investment to be the equivalent to the original cost.

Current asset investments are stated at market value. Unrealised gains and losses on the revaluation at the balance sheet date are included in the Statement of Financial Activities.



**Bliss - The National Charity for the Newborn  
(A Company Limited by Guarantee)**

**Notes to the Accounts (Continued)  
For the year ended 31 March 2024**

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**1.9 Cash and cash equivalents**

Cash and cash equivalents include cash in hand, deposits held at call with banks, other short-term liquid investments with original maturities of three months or less. Short term deposits are held in an interest bearing 32 day account with Lloyds. Cash at bank is held in a business account at Lloyds Bank PLC

**1.10 Financial Instruments**

The charity has elected to apply the provisions of Section 11 'Basic Financial Instruments' and Section 12 'Other Financial Instruments Issues' of FRS 102 to all of its financial instruments.

Financial instruments are recognised in the charity's balance sheet when the charity becomes party to the contractual provisions of the instrument.

Financial assets and liabilities are offset, with the net amounts presented in the financial statements, when there is a legally enforceable right to set off the recognised amounts and there is an intention to settle on a net basis or to realise the asset and settle the liability simultaneously.

Basic financial assets, which include debtors and cash and bank balances, are initially measured at transaction price including transaction costs and are subsequently carried at amortised cost using the effective interest method unless the arrangement constitutes a financing transaction, where the transaction is measured at the present value of the future receipts discounted at a market rate of interest. Financial assets classified as receivable within one year are not amortised.

Basic financial liabilities, including creditors and bank loans are initially recognised at transaction price unless the arrangement constitutes a financing transaction, where the debt instrument is measured at the present value of the future receipts discounted at a market rate of interest. Financial liabilities classified as payable within one year are not amortised.

Debt instruments are subsequently carried at amortised cost, using the effective interest rate method.

Trade creditors are obligations to pay for goods or services that have been acquired in the ordinary course of operations from suppliers. Amounts payable are classified as current liabilities if payment is due within one year or less. If not, they are presented as non-current liabilities. Trade creditors are recognised initially at transaction price and subsequently measured at amortised cost using the effective interest method.

**1.11 Provisions**

Provisions are recognised when the charity has a legal or constructive present obligation as a result of a past event, it is probable that the charity will be required to settle that obligation and a reliable estimate can be made of the amount of the obligation. The amount recognised as a provision is the best estimate of the consideration required to settle the present obligation at the reporting end date, taking into account the risks and uncertainties surrounding the obligation.

Where the effect of the time value of money is material, the amount expected to be required to settle the obligation is recognised at present value. When a provision is measured at present value the unwinding of the discount is recognised as a finance cost in net income/(expenditure) in the period it arises.

**1.12 Tangible fixed assets and depreciation**

Tangible fixed assets costing more than £500 are capitalised and included at cost. Depreciation is provided on all tangible fixed assets at rates calculated to write off the cost, less estimated residual value of each asset over its expected useful life, as follows:

|                               |                 |
|-------------------------------|-----------------|
| Fixtures and fittings         | over 3 years    |
| Office and computer equipment | over 3-5 years  |
| Leasehold property            | length of lease |

**1.13 Fund accounting**

Unrestricted funds are available for use at the discretion of the trustees in the furtherance of the general objectives of the charity.

Designated funds are unrestricted funds, which are reserved for a specific purpose and available for use at the discretion of the trustees in the furtherance of the general objectives of the charity.

The purpose and use of restricted funds are imposed by donors or by specific terms of charity appeals.

**1.14 Expenditure**

Expenditure is recognised once there is legal or constructive obligations to make payment to a third party, it is probable that settlement will be required and the amount of the obligation can be measured reliably. Expenditure is classified as either the costs of raising funds, charitable expenditure or other expenditure that does not fall into the first two categories.

Irrecoverable VAT is charged as a cost against the activity for which the expenditure was incurred.

**1.15 Support and governance costs**

Support costs are costs that assist the work of the charity but do not directly undertake its activities. Governance costs are costs directly attributable to the running of the Board. Both these costs have been allocated between the cost of raising funds and charitable activities on the basis of the staff time spent on each activity.

**Bliss - The National Charity for the Newborn  
(A Company Limited by Guarantee)**

**Notes to the Accounts (Continued)  
For the year ended 31 March 2024**

**1.16 Operating leases**

Rentals under operating leases are charged to the Statement of Financial Activities as incurred.

**1.17 Tax status**

The company is a registered charity and is not subject to corporation tax.

**1.18 Value Added Tax**

The charity is registered under a partial exemption scheme for VAT and as with many other charities, is unable to recover most of the VAT charged on its expenditure.

**1.19 Pension scheme**

The charitable company operates a defined contribution pension scheme. The assets of the scheme are held separately from those of the charitable company in an independently administered fund. The pension cost charge represents contributions payable under the scheme by the charitable company to the fund. The charitable company has no liability under the scheme other than for the payment of those contributions. No contributions were owing at the balance sheet date.

**1.20 Grant giving policy**

The charity occasionally provides grants for projects that have the potential to improve outcomes for premature and sick babies. Grants are recognised in accordance with the applicable accounting standard.

**1.21 Volunteers**

The assistance received from volunteers has not been financially recognised.

| <b>2 Donations and legacies</b> | <b>2024</b>    | <b>2023</b>    |
|---------------------------------|----------------|----------------|
|                                 | <b>£</b>       | <b>£</b>       |
| <b>Unrestricted</b>             |                |                |
| Trust funding                   | <b>82,040</b>  | 92,850         |
| Corporate funding               | <b>89,170</b>  | 284,829        |
| Donated professional services   | <b>10,286</b>  | 20,181         |
| Individual giving               | <b>317,956</b> | 332,231        |
| Payroll giving                  | <b>151,107</b> | 158,190        |
| Legacies                        | <b>85,438</b>  | 74,796         |
|                                 | <b>735,997</b> | <b>963,077</b> |

Donated professional services of £10,286 (2023: £20,181) relates to pro-bono legal work carried out on behalf of Bliss by CMS Cameron McKenna Nabarro Olswang LLP which are recognised when the service is given and are valued as either the economic benefit of the service to the charity or the cost to the donor.

**Bliss - The National Charity for the Newborn**  
**(A Company Limited by Guarantee)**

**Notes to the Accounts (Continued)**  
**For the year ended 31 March 2024**

| 3 | Income from charitable activities                  | 2024<br>£      | 2023<br>£      |
|---|--|----------------|----------------|
|   | <b>Restricted</b>                                  |                |                |
|   | <b>Supporting parents and carers</b>               |                |                |
|   | Government grants                                  | 22,757         | 65,000         |
|   | Other grants                                       | 123,391        | 90,164         |
|   |  | <u>146,148</u> | <u>155,164</u> |
|   | <b>Engaging with neonatal health professionals</b> |                |                |
|   | Government grants                                  | 47,782         | 44,238         |
|   | Other grants                                       | 29,564         | -              |
|   |  | <u>77,346</u>  | <u>44,238</u>  |
|   | <b>Supporting research</b>                         |                |                |
|   | Other grants                                       | 51,000         | 59,440         |
|   |  | <u>51,000</u>  | <u>59,440</u>  |
|   | <b>Unrestricted</b>                                |                |                |
|   | <b>Engaging with neonatal health professionals</b> |                |                |
|   | Accreditation Fees and reimbursements              | 9,580          | 23,770         |
|   |  | <u>9,580</u>   | <u>23,770</u>  |
|   | <b>Supporting research</b>                         |                |                |
|   | Researching Innovation                             | 20,823         | 8,434          |
|   |  | <u>20,823</u>  | <u>8,434</u>   |
|   | <b>Total</b>                                       | <u>304,897</u> | <u>291,046</u> |

Restricted income from charitable activities represents grants received from government and trusts to further Bliss' charitable objectives, plus restricted grants or donations from corporate partners . Unrestricted income from charitable activities represents accreditation fees for participation in our Bliss Baby Charter scheme, and any fees charged for health professional training events, as well as fees charged in trading relationships for the provision of research support.

**Bliss - The National Charity for the Newborn  
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**Notes to the Accounts (Continued)  
For the year ended 31 March 2024**

|   |   |              |            |           |
|---|---|--------------|------------|-----------|
| 4 | Income from other trading activities                                | 2024         | 2023       |           |
|   |   | £            | £          |           |
|   | Unrestricted  |              |            |           |
|   | Money raised through sporting and community activities              | 1,045,865    | 915,505    |           |
|   | Income from trading activities - Room Rental                        | -            | 825        |           |
|   | Income from trading activities - Bliss Sales Limited                | 45,643       | 105,242    |           |
|   |   | 1,091,508    | 1,021,572  |           |
| 5 | Net income / (expenditure) for the year                             | 2024         | 2023       |           |
|   |   | £            | £          |           |
|   | Net income / (expenditure) for the year is stated after charging:   |              |            |           |
|   | Operating lease - land and buildings                                | -            | -          |           |
|   | Auditors' remuneration - audit                                      | 15,700       | 14,700     |           |
|   | Depreciation of fixed assets  | 16,307       | 53,209     |           |
| 6 | Costs of raising funds  | 2024         | 2023       |           |
|   |   | £            | £          |           |
|   | Unrestricted  |              |            |           |
|   | Seeking donations, grants and legacies                              | 384,673      | 371,795    |           |
|   | Staging sporting and community activities                           | 537,604      | 573,036    |           |
|   | Costs of trading activities - Bliss Sales limited                   | 37,153       | 34,592     |           |
|   | Support costs - staff (note 8)                                      | 82,861       | 102,531    |           |
|   | Support costs - other (note 8)                                      | 119,855      | 200,202    |           |
|   |   | 1,162,146    | 1,282,156  |           |
| 7 | Charitable activities   |              |            |           |
|   | Analysis of expenditure on charitable activities by fund            | Unrestricted | Restricted | Total     |
|   |   | 2024         | 2024       | 2024      |
|   |   | £            | £          | £         |
|   | Supporting parents and carers                                       | 315,334      | 146,148    | 461,482   |
|   | Engaging with neonatal health professionals                         | 303,015      | 77,346     | 380,361   |
|   | Campaigning for change  | 237,090      | -          | 237,090   |
|   | Supporting research   | 65,605       | 74,500     | 140,105   |
|   | Total   | 921,044      | 297,994    | 1,219,038 |
|   | Analysis of expenditure on charitable activities by fund prior year | Unrestricted | Restricted | Total     |
|   |   | 2023         | 2023       | 2023      |
|   |   | £            | £          | £         |
|   | Supporting parents and carers                                       | 383,505      | 155,164    | 538,669   |
|   | Engaging with neonatal health professionals                         | 316,469      | 44,238     | 360,707   |
|   | Campaigning for change  | 241,949      | -          | 241,949   |
|   | Supporting research   | 59,883       | 35,940     | 95,823    |
|   | Total   | 1,001,806    | 235,342    | 1,237,148 |

**Bliss - The National Charity for the Newborn  
(A Company Limited by Guarantee)**

**Notes to the Accounts (Continued)  
For the year ended 31 March 2024**

| Analysis of expenditure on charitable activities   | Total<br>2024<br>£ | Total<br>2023<br>£ |
|--|--------------------|--------------------|
| <b>Supporting parents and carers</b>               |                    |                    |
| Staff costs  | 356,126            | 339,102            |
| Direct costs                                       | 46,751             | 69,997             |
| Support costs                                      | 58,605             | 129,570            |
|  | <u>461,482</u>     | <u>538,669</u>     |
| <b>Engaging with neonatal health professionals</b> |                    |                    |
| Staff costs  | 314,297            | 258,072            |
| Direct costs                                       | 17,464             | 17,874             |
| Support costs                                      | 48,600             | 84,761             |
|  | <u>380,361</u>     | <u>360,707</u>     |
| <b>Campaigning for change</b>                      |                    |                    |
| Staff costs  | 198,214            | 175,379            |
| Direct costs                                       | 2,832              | 5,907              |
| Support costs                                      | 36,044             | 60,663             |
|  | <u>237,090</u>     | <u>241,949</u>     |
| <b>Supporting research</b>                         |                    |                    |
| Staff costs  | 68,686             | 44,790             |
| Direct costs                                       | 11,527             | 11,871             |
| Research Grant                                     | 50,000             | 25,000             |
| Support costs                                      | 9,892              | 14,162             |
|  | <u>140,105</u>     | <u>95,823</u>      |
| <b>Total</b>                                       | <u>1,219,038</u>   | <u>1,237,148</u>   |

During the 21/22 financial year the MRC awarded a £50k grant to Bliss which was restricted and carried forward into 23/24 with the purpose of making payments for a research grant to Oxford University on the measurement of pain in premature infants. Following successful grant reports in 23/24 Bliss made the payments of £50k to the Oxford University project. At the end of the 23/24 financial year a further grant of £50k was received from the MRC and this has been held in restricted funds with the purpose of awarding a further £50k towards the Oxford University project in 24/25.

**8 Support costs**

|                                       | Costs of<br>raising funds<br>£ | Charitable<br>Activities<br>£ | Total<br>2024<br>£ | Total<br>2023<br>£ |
|---------------------------------------|--------------------------------|-------------------------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| Staff costs                           | 82,861                         | 124,293                       | 207,154            | 205,062            |
| Depreciation                          | 6,523                          | 9,784                         | 16,307             | 53,209             |
| Telephone and IT costs                | 56,574                         | 50,632                        | 107,206            | 128,869            |
| Audit and other professional fees     | 6,352                          | 9,528                         | 15,880             | 19,687             |
| Trustee Expenses                      | 1,003                          | 1,526                         | 2,529              | 1,525              |
| Office rent, rates and service charge | 18,493                         | 27,739                        | 46,232             | 156,634            |
| Other office costs                    | 7,439                          | 10,146                        | 17,585             | 44,373             |
| Other support costs                   | 23,472                         | 43,786                        | 67,258             | 85,060             |
|                                       | <u>202,717</u>                 | <u>277,434</u>                | <u>480,151</u>     | <u>694,419</u>     |

Support costs are allocated to the particular activity where the cost relates directly to that activity. However, the cost of overall direction and administration of each activity, comprising the salary and overhead costs of the central function, is apportioned on the basis of estimated staff time attributable to each activity.

**9 Trustees**

No trustees or any persons connected with them received any remuneration during the year (2023: £nil).  
12 trustees received reimbursements of travelling expenses totalling £2,528 (2023: 4 trustees received £1,525).

**Bliss - The National Charity for the Newborn  
(A Company Limited by Guarantee)**

**Notes to the Accounts (Continued)  
For the year ended 31 March 2024**

**10 Employees and employment costs**

**Number of employees**

The average number of employees during the year was 43 (2023: 42)

The average number of full-time equivalent employees during the year was:

|   | 2024        | 2023        |
|---|-------------|-------------|
| Supporting parents and carers               | 5.3         | 5.1         |
| Engaging with neonatal health professionals | 3.6         | 3.6         |
| Campaigning for change                      | 3.0         | 2.0         |
| Supporting research                         | 0.3         | -           |
| Communications                              | 6.9         | 6.6         |
| Fundraising                                 | 12.2        | 10.9        |
| Administration and CEO                      | 4.7         | 5.2         |
| Scotland                                    | 1.2         | 1.6         |
|   | <u>37.2</u> | <u>35.0</u> |

**Employment costs**

|                         | 2024<br>£        | 2023<br>£        |
|-------------------------|------------------|------------------|
| Staff costs consist of: |                  |                  |
| Wages and salaries      | 1,352,563        | 1,242,097        |
| Social Security Costs   | 134,513          | 125,444          |
| Pension contributions   | 66,344           | 60,671           |
|                         | <u>1,553,420</u> | <u>1,428,212</u> |

One employee earned between £80,000 and £89,999 and one employee earned between £70,000 and £79,999 (2023: one employee between £80,000 and £89,999). No other employee earned in excess of £60,000.

The Charity's trustees are not paid nor received any other benefits from employment with the Charity or its subsidiaries during the year (2023: £nil).

The total employee benefits of the key management personnel amounted to £265,845 in pay and pension contributions (2023: £263,073) and £29,866 was paid in employer's national insurance contributions (2023: £30,890).

Redundancy and termination payments are recognised in full upon the termination of employment. 0 employees received payments of this kind during the year (2023: £nil).

A staff untaken leave accrual has not been included as being immaterial.

**11 Tangible fixed assets**

**Group and Charity**

|  | Leasehold<br>property<br>£ | Office<br>Equipment<br>£ | Computer<br>Equipment<br>£ | Total<br>£     |
|--|----------------------------|--------------------------|----------------------------|----------------|
| <b>Cost</b>                            |                            |                          |                            |                |
| At 1 April 2023                        | 10,008                     | 11,507                   | 67,571                     | 89,086         |
| Additions                              | 10,008                     | -                        | 10,739                     | 20,747         |
| Disposals                              | -                          | -                        | -                          | -              |
| <b>At 31 March 2024</b>                | <u>20,016</u>              | <u>11,507</u>            | <u>78,310</u>              | <u>109,833</u> |
| <b>Depreciation</b>                    |                            |                          |                            |                |
| At 1 April 2023                        | -                          | 11,507                   | 54,802                     | 66,309         |
| Charge for the year                    | 6,394                      | -                        | 9,913                      | 16,307         |
| On disposals                           | -                          | -                        | -                          | -              |
| <b>At 31 March 2024</b>                | <u>6,394</u>               | <u>11,507</u>            | <u>64,715</u>              | <u>82,616</u>  |
| <b>Net Book Value at 31 March 2024</b> | <u>13,622</u>              | <u>0</u>                 | <u>13,595</u>              | <u>27,217</u>  |
| Net Book Value at 31 March 2023        | 10,008                     | 0                        | 12,769                     | 22,777         |

**Bliss - The National Charity for the Newborn  
(A Company Limited by Guarantee)**

**Notes to the Accounts (Continued)  
For the year ended 31 March 2024**

**12 Fixed Asset Investments**

**Investment in subsidiary**

**Charity**

|  |                 |
|--|-----------------|
| Cost at 1 April 2023 and 31 March 2024 | <u><u>1</u></u> |
| Historical cost                        |                 |
| As at 31 March 2022                    | <u><u>1</u></u> |

Holdings of more than 20%

The charitable company controls more than 20% of the following entities;

| Company subsidiary undertakings  | Country of registration or incorporation | Class       | Shares held | Control |
|----------------------------------|--|-------------|-------------|---------|
| Bliss Sales Limited              | England and Wales                        | Ordinary £1 | 1           | 100%    |
| Bliss Scotland (Charity) Limited | Scotland                                 | N/A         | N/A         | 100%    |

The principal activity of Bliss Sales Limited is trading operations that enhance the aims and objectives of Bliss. All activities have been consolidated on a line by line basis in the statement of financial activities. Available profits are gift aided to the charitable company.

Bliss Scotland (Charity) Limited is a company limited by guarantee in Scotland and a registered charity in Scotland. Its principal activity is to carry out Bliss' aims and objectives in Scotland. Control is exercised through the Chair and Treasurer of Bliss Scotland (Charity) Limited also being Trustees of Bliss. All activities have been consolidated on a line by line basis in the statement of financial activities.

**The results of Bliss Sales Limited (a company registered in England and Wales, company number 03602721) for the year ended 31 March 2024 were as follows:**

|  | 2024<br>£       | 2023<br>£       |
|--|-----------------|-----------------|
| <b>Turnover</b>                              | <b>45,643</b>   | 105,242         |
| Cost of Sales                                | <u>-</u>        | <u>-</u>        |
| <b>Gross profit</b>                          | <b>45,643</b>   | 105,242         |
| Administration expenses                      | <u>(31,453)</u> | <u>(40,800)</u> |
| <b>Operating profit</b>                      | <b>14,190</b>   | 64,442          |
| Gift aid payable to Bliss and Bliss Scotland | <u>(14,190)</u> | <u>(64,442)</u> |
| Corporation tax                              | <u>-</u>        | <u>-</u>        |
| <b>Profit / (loss) for the year</b>          | <u><u>-</u></u> | <u><u>-</u></u> |

**The aggregate of the assets, liabilities and funds was:**

|                    |                        |                 |
|--------------------|------------------------|-----------------|
| <b>Assets</b>      | <b>11,749</b>          | 72,127          |
| <b>Liabilities</b> | <u><b>(11,748)</b></u> | <u>(72,126)</u> |
| <b>Funds</b>       | <u><u>1</u></u>        | <u><u>1</u></u> |

At the balance sheet date £232 was owed by **Bliss to Bliss Sales Ltd** (2023: £53,274 was owed by Bliss Sales Ltd to Bliss).

**Bliss - The National Charity for the Newborn  
(A Company Limited by Guarantee)**

**Notes to the Accounts (Continued)  
For the year ended 31 March 2024**

**13 Fixed Asset Investments (continued)**

The results of Bliss Scotland (Charity) Limited (a company limited by guarantee, registered in Scotland, company number SC365557 and a registered charity in Scotland, registration number SC040878) for the year ended 31 March 2024 were as follows:

| Notes  | Unrestricted funds<br>£ | Restricted Funds<br>£ | Total<br>2024<br>£ | Total<br>2023<br>£ |
|--|-------------------------|-----------------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| <b>Income</b>                                      |                         |                       |                    |                    |
| Donations  | 2,598                   | -                     | 2,598              | 2,484              |
| Charitable activities:                             |                         |                       |                    |                    |
| Supporting parents and carers                      | -                       | 19,457                | 19,457             | 21,000             |
| Engaging with neonatal health professionals        | -                       | 47,782                | 47,782             | 44,238             |
| Campaigning for change                             | -                       | -                     | -                  | -                  |
| Supporting research                                | -                       | -                     | -                  | -                  |
| Other trading activities                           | 26,289                  | -                     | 26,289             | 13,795             |
| <b>Total income</b>                                | <b>28,887</b>           | <b>67,239</b>         | <b>96,126</b>      | <b>81,517</b>      |
| <b>Expenditure</b>                                 |                         |                       |                    |                    |
| Costs of raising funds                             | 12,582                  | -                     | 12,582             | 14,420             |
| Charitable activities:                             |                         |                       |                    |                    |
| Supporting parents and carers                      | 2,087                   | 19,457                | 21,544             | 24,947             |
| Engaging with neonatal health professionals        | 6,623                   | 47,782                | 54,405             | 44,939             |
| Campaigning for change                             | 3,882                   | -                     | 3,882              | 2,092              |
| Supporting research                                | 730                     | -                     | 730                | 503                |
| <b>Total expenditure</b>                           | <b>25,904</b>           | <b>67,239</b>         | <b>93,143</b>      | <b>86,901</b>      |
| <b>Net income / (expenditure) before transfers</b> | <b>2,983</b>            | <b>-</b>              | <b>2,983</b>       | <b>(5,384)</b>     |
| Transfers between funds                            | -                       | -                     | -                  | -                  |
| <b>Net movement in funds</b>                       | <b>2,983</b>            | <b>-</b>              | <b>2,983</b>       | <b>(5,384)</b>     |
| Fund balances brought forward                      | 10,712                  | -                     | 10,712             | 16,096             |
| <b>Fund balances carried forward</b>               | <b>13,695</b>           | <b>-</b>              | <b>13,695</b>      | <b>10,712</b>      |

A net management charge of £56,196 (2023: £30,470) was made by Bliss to Bliss Scotland (Charity) Ltd

No donation (2023: £0) was made by Bliss to Bliss Scotland (Charity) Ltd

At the balance sheet date, £13,067 (2023: £10,622) was owed by Bliss to Bliss Scotland (Charity) Ltd.

During the year, the parent charity received gross income of £2,020k (2023: £2,165k), and made a net loss of £208k (2023: loss of £238k).

**14 Debtors**

|                                    | Group<br>2024<br>£ | 2023<br>£      | Charity<br>2024<br>£ | 2023<br>£      |
|------------------------------------|--------------------|----------------|----------------------|----------------|
| Trade debtors                      | 18,915             | 77,019         | 8,399                | 6,347          |
| Other debtors                      | 10,659             | 65,023         | 10,659               | 65,023         |
| Amounts owed by group undertakings | -                  | -              | -                    | 53,274         |
| Prepayments and accrued income     | 188,784            | 75,758         | 188,784              | 75,759         |
|                                    | <b>218,358</b>     | <b>217,800</b> | <b>207,842</b>       | <b>200,403</b> |

**15 Current Asset Investments**

Current asset investments related to funds invested by the Charity in a common investment fund which was independently managed by CCLA Investment Management Limited

|   | 2023<br>£      | 2022<br>£      |
|---|----------------|----------------|
| <b>Fair value as at 1 April 23</b>        | <b>306,345</b> | <b>318,275</b> |
| Additions                                 | -              | -              |
| Disposals                                 | -              | -              |
| Net unrealised gains (losses) to 31 March | 28,139         | (11,930)       |
| <b>Fair value as at 31 March 24</b>       | <b>334,484</b> | <b>306,345</b> |
| <b>Historic cost as at 31 March</b>       | <b>300,000</b> | <b>300,000</b> |



**Bliss - The National Charity for the Newborn**  
**(A Company Limited by Guarantee)**

**Notes to the Accounts (Continued)**  
**For the year ended 31 March 2024**

| 16 Creditors                       | Group<br>2024<br>£ | 2023<br>£      | Charity<br>2024<br>£ | 2023<br>£      |
|------------------------------------|--------------------|----------------|----------------------|----------------|
| Trade creditors                    | 75,435             | 48,821         | 75,435               | 48,822         |
| Tax and Social Security Costs      | 31,359             | 31,171         | 31,359               | 31,171         |
| VAT                                | 6,703              | 21,649         | 3,545                | 10,541         |
| Other creditors                    | 7,185              | 14,295         | 7,185                | 14,295         |
| Amounts owed to group undertakings | -                  | -              | 13,299               | 10,622         |
| Accruals                           | 24,784             | 36,803         | 21,739               | 34,103         |
| Deferred Income                    | 141,567            | 128,050        | 135,651              | 121,800        |
|                                    | <b>287,033</b>     | <b>280,789</b> | <b>288,213</b>       | <b>271,354</b> |

**Deferred Income**

Deferred income relates to funds received during the year, related to future periods

|                                      | Group<br>2024<br>£ | 2023<br>£      | Charity<br>2024<br>£ | 2023<br>£      |
|--------------------------------------|--------------------|----------------|----------------------|----------------|
| Balance at the beginning of the year | 128,050            | 128,425        | 121,800              | 125,300        |
| Amount released in the year          | (32,092)           | (25,275)       | (10,758)             | (22,150)       |
| Increase in provision in the year    | 45,609             | 24,900         | 24,609               | 18,650         |
| Balance at the end of the year       | <b>141,567</b>     | <b>128,050</b> | <b>135,651</b>       | <b>121,800</b> |

**17 Commitments under operating leases**

As at 31 March 2024, the Charity had commitments under non-cancellable operating leases. The total future minimum lease payments were as follows:

|                            | Land and Buildings |              | Plant & Machinery and IT |               |
|----------------------------|--------------------|--------------|--------------------------|---------------|
|                            | 2024<br>£          | 2023<br>£    | 2024<br>£                | 2023<br>£     |
| Operating leases payable   |                    |              |                          |               |
| Less than one year         | 9,944              | 9,558        | 6,206                    | 4,682         |
| Between one and five years | -                  | -            | 7,917                    | 10,534        |
|                            | <b>9,944</b>       | <b>9,558</b> | <b>14,123</b>            | <b>15,216</b> |

**18 Analysis of charitable funds**

| Current year                                       | Balance<br>1 April 2023<br>£ | Income<br>£      | Expenditure<br>£   | Transfers<br>£ | Funds<br>31 March 2024<br>£ |
|--|------------------------------|------------------|--------------------|----------------|-----------------------------|
| <b>Analysis of movements in unrestricted funds</b> |                              |                  |                    |                |                             |
| Designated fixed asset fund                        | -                            | -                | -                  | -              | -                           |
| Designated COIF valuation fund                     | -                            | 28,139           | -                  | -              | 28,139                      |
| General fund                                       | 830,785                      | 1,845,290        | (2,055,052)        | -              | 621,023                     |
| <b>Total Group and Charity</b>                     | <b>830,785</b>               | <b>1,873,429</b> | <b>(2,055,052)</b> | <b>-</b>       | <b>649,162</b>              |

**Analysis of movements in restricted funds**

|   | Balance<br>1 April 2023<br>£ | Income<br>£    | Expenditure<br>£ | Transfers<br>£ | Funds<br>31 March 2024<br>£ |
|---|------------------------------|----------------|------------------|----------------|-----------------------------|
| <b>Supporting parents and carers</b>                    |                              |                |                  |                |                             |
| NHS England   | -                            | 8,300          | (8,300)          | -              | -                           |
| Other Grants  | -                            | 118,391        | (118,391)        | -              | -                           |
| <b>Engaging with neonatal health professionals</b>      |                              |                |                  |                |                             |
| Other Grants  | -                            | 29,564         | (29,564)         | -              | -                           |
| <b>Supporting research</b>                              |                              |                |                  |                |                             |
| MRC   | 50,000                       | 50,000         | (50,000)         | -              | 50,000                      |
| Other Grants  | 23,500                       | 1,000          | (24,500)         | -              | -                           |
| <b>Total Charity</b>                                    | <b>73,500</b>                | <b>207,255</b> | <b>(230,755)</b> | <b>-</b>       | <b>50,000</b>               |
| <b>Supporting families and their babies in Scotland</b> |                              |                |                  |                |                             |
| Supporting parents and carers                           | -                            | 19,457         | (19,457)         | -              | -                           |
| Engaging with neonatal health professionals             | -                            | 47,782         | (47,782)         | -              | -                           |
| <b>Total Bliss Scotland (Charity) Limited</b>           | <b>-</b>                     | <b>67,239</b>  | <b>(67,239)</b>  | <b>-</b>       | <b>-</b>                    |
| <b>Total Group and Charity</b>                          | <b>73,500</b>                | <b>274,494</b> | <b>(297,994)</b> | <b>-</b>       | <b>50,000</b>               |

**Bliss - The National Charity for the Newborn  
(A Company Limited by Guarantee)**

**Notes to the Accounts (Continued)  
For the year ended 31 March 2024**

**18 Analysis of charitable funds (continued)**

**Supporting parents and carers**

NHS England: this grant was awarded to provide information and support for parents of babies in neonatal care around Winter Illnesses in 23.24

**Engaging with neonatal health professionals**

These funds were received from trusts and foundations to support our work on the Baby Charter together with healthcare professionals

**Supporting research**

MRC : this grant was awarded to support charities to continue or extend their research activity. We will use this income to continue our Oxford Pain Research  
This grant was received from a consortium to research barriers to supporting neonatal care

**Supporting families and their babies in Scotland**

These funds were received mainly from the Scottish Government, to support in the delivery of our work across Scotland.

| Analysis of charitable funds (prior year)   | Balance<br>1 April 2022<br>£ | Income<br>£      | Expenditure<br>£   | Transfers<br>£ | Funds<br>31 March 2023<br>£ |
|---|------------------------------|------------------|--------------------|----------------|-----------------------------|
| Analysis of movements in unrestricted funds |                              |                  |                    |                |                             |
| Designated fixed asset fund                 | -                            | -                | -                  | -              | -                           |
| General fund                                | 1,097,569                    | 2,029,108        | (2,295,892)        | -              | 830,785                     |
| <b>Total Group and Charity</b>              | <b>1,097,569</b>             | <b>2,029,108</b> | <b>(2,295,892)</b> | <b>-</b>       | <b>830,785</b>              |

The designated fixed asset fund was used for fixed asset purchases. During the year Trustees decided not to designate funds in this way.

| Analysis of movements in restricted funds (prior year) | Balance<br>1 April 2022<br>£ | Income<br>£    | Expenditure<br>£ | Transfers<br>£ | Funds<br>31 March 2023<br>£ |
|--|------------------------------|----------------|------------------|----------------|-----------------------------|
| Supporting parents and carers                          |                              |                |                  |                |                             |
| NHS England  | -                            | 50,000         | (50,000)         | -              | -                           |
| Other Grants   | -                            | 84,164         | (84,164)         | -              | -                           |
| Engaging with neonatal health professionals            | -                            | -              | -                | -              | -                           |
| Supporting research                                    |                              |                |                  |                |                             |
| MRC  | 50,000                       | -              | -                | -              | 50,000                      |
| Other Grants   | -                            | 59,440         | (35,940)         | -              | 23,500                      |
| <b>Total Charity</b>                                   | <b>50,000</b>                | <b>193,604</b> | <b>(170,104)</b> | <b>-</b>       | <b>73,500</b>               |
| Supporting families and their babies in Scotland       |                              |                |                  |                |                             |
| Supporting parents and carers                          | -                            | 21,000         | (21,000)         | -              | -                           |
| Engaging with neonatal health professionals            | -                            | 44,238         | (44,238)         | -              | -                           |
| <b>Total Bliss Scotland (Charity) Limited</b>          | <b>-</b>                     | <b>65,238</b>  | <b>(65,238)</b>  | <b>-</b>       | <b>-</b>                    |
| <b>Total Group and Charity</b>                         | <b>50,000</b>                | <b>258,842</b> | <b>(235,342)</b> | <b>-</b>       | <b>73,500</b>               |

**Bliss - The National Charity for the Newborn  
(A Company Limited by Guarantee)**

**Notes to the Accounts (Continued)  
For the year ended 31 March 2024**

**19 Analysis of net assets between funds**  
Current year

|  | Unrestricted<br>funds<br>£ | Restricted<br>Funds<br>£ | Total<br>2024<br>£ |
|--|----------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------|
| Tangible fixed assets                          | 27,217                     | -                        | 27,217             |
| Current assets                                 | 908,978                    | 50,000                   | 958,978            |
| Creditors, amounts falling due within one year | (287,033)                  | -                        | (287,033)          |
|  | <u>649,162</u>             | <u>50,000</u>            | <u>699,162</u>     |

Prior year

|  | Unrestricted<br>funds<br>£ | Restricted<br>Funds<br>£ | Total<br>2023<br>£ |
|--|----------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------|
| Tangible fixed assets                          | 22,777                     | -                        | 22,777             |
| Current assets                                 | 1,088,797                  | 73,500                   | 1,162,297          |
| Creditors, amounts falling due within one year | (280,789)                  | -                        | (280,789)          |
|  | <u>830,785</u>             | <u>73,500</u>            | <u>904,285</u>     |

**20 Related parties**

The aggregate donations from related parties, which includes amounts donated by trustees, and amounts donated to trustee fundraising events and tribute funds, amounted to £2,120 (2023: £581).

**21 Reconciliation of the net movement in funds to the net cash flow from operating activities**

|   | 2024<br>£        | 2023<br>£        |
|---|------------------|------------------|
| <b>Net movement in funds</b>                                    | <b>(205,123)</b> | <b>(243,284)</b> |
| Depreciation charge   | 16,307           | 53,209           |
| Dividend and interest income shown in investing activities      | (15,521)         | (12,255)         |
| Net (gains) / losses on investments                             | (28,139)         | 11,930           |
| (Increase) / decrease in debtors                                | (558)            | 63,872           |
| Increase / (decrease) in creditors                              | 6,244            | (14,734)         |
| <b>Net cash generated from / (used in) operating activities</b> | <b>(226,790)</b> | <b>(141,262)</b> |



[bliss.org.uk](https://bliss.org.uk)



[ask@bliss.org.uk](mailto:ask@bliss.org.uk)

Charity Registration No. 1002973 Company Registration No. 2609219 (England and Wales)

**Bliss**  
for babies born  
premature or sick