



Annual Report & Accounts

2023 - 2024

Registered Charity Number: 1042708 / Company No: 2989722

Be Free Young Carers
Charitable Non-Profit Organisation
No: 1042708

Company No: 2989722

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www.befreeyc.org.uk

Trustees

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Loretta Light (Vice Chair)
Laurie Cooper
Colin Mitchell
Angus Horner
Roger Eccleston

Independent Examiners

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Solicitors

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{We would like to thank Osborne Clarke for their continued support with providing us pro bono support and advice.}

Bankers

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ME19 4JQ

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A Message from our CEO

"Our last 12 months have seen a period of substantial growth, development and maturation for our organisation.

Reflecting back on the last year fills me with pride and inspiration for the incredible work that Be Free Young Carers have achieved. I would like to thank our supporters, from funders, to corporates, for their generous donations be it financial or expertise.

A special thanks to our hardworking staff from frontline Youth Workers, Fundraisers and Volunteer Coordinator. A special thanks to our volunteers who have supported us with our respite and befriending provisions. Lastly, to our dedicated Trustees who loan their skills, talents and networks to supporting and steering Be Free Young Carers."



Growth in Services

The last year has seen us react to the increase in demand for our services by increasing our delivery channels to support this development. Our team has been able to increase the amount for respite activities that we offer our young carers in all our current geographical areas.

Our mental health services have risen to the increase in demand and through our Youth Workers and Counsellor, we have been able to run more 121 emotional support and counselling sessions than ever before. Demand has been significant, I am proud that we have kept our waiting lists to a minimum, supporting the gap between statutory services and demand.

Our Mindfulness Movement programme, established to address the young carers well-being specifically at primary school age, has been a success in preventing the declining mental health of young carers by using this programme as an early preventative measure.

Our teams have established more young carer groups in schools, working with teachers to help identify young carers, establishing a network for young carers in schools. This has enabled young carers to experience being part of a social group and build a peer support group within school.

Our Youth Clubs for teenage young carers have continued to grow in all our geographical areas. As these have become more established over the last year, we have utilised the young carers voice to build on our Young Carer Youth Panel. We have seen one of our young carers from our Youth Panel, become the Childrens Commissioner Of England's Ambassador, giving a voice to young carers at a national level.

Amongst all our core services, we are incredibly proud to continue to provide our young carers with additional services aimed to tackle digital, food, hygiene and period poverty. Our team have achieved this by providing all rising years 7s that require a laptop with one, through offering period, hygiene provisions from our office and on our respite trips. We have also fulfilled our commitment to provide our young carers with food throughout our Youth Clubs and Respite provisions.

Our staff remain passionate about changing the landscape for young carers in Oxfordshire and a sincere thank you to all of them for their continued dedication and hard work in leading and executing our core services. They all should be incredibly proud of what they have helped to achieve for young carers.

Growth in our income

Every year, I am thankful for the generosity of our supporters who have donated over 400K to Be Free Young Carers in the past year.

On every income stream we saw growth. Supporters excelled across the board in giving financially to Be Free Young Carers. We saw an increase in the number of businesses and corporates, choosing us as their Charity of the Year, which mimics the trend for businesses getting involved with smaller, agile, community based charities, to have maximum impact. A special thanks to Said Business School for continuing their support both financially and with volunteering, we are excited about entering our third year of this partnership.

I would like to pay a special mention to David Wilson for their annual partnership which saw them raise an incredible amount of money through, sky dives, to clay pigeon shooting, their support has been amazing.

We are incredibly grateful to our steadfast Trust and Foundations who have continued to support Be Free Young Carers this year and were delighted to welcome new supporters on board. A special thanks to SJP Foundation, Tolkien Trust and our friends at The National Lottery, we couldn't do what we do, without your support and generosity.

The increase in our profile over the county saw a rise in individual giving, with supporters taking part in running events, to skydives, to cycling challenges. Not only does this raise funds for our organisation but also vital awareness of young carers and their challenges.

I would also like to pay thanks to our ambassadors, Emma Horwill, Rebecca Reed, Holly Cobb and also to our celebrity ambassador, Darragh Ennis.

I feel it's right to comment on our achievements and successes with a backdrop in the charity sector being so challenging. We remain an independent charity with no statutory funding, at a time when funders are receiving increase in demand, we have maintained a robust fundraising strategy with limited resources, and I am proud and thankful to my team for rising to this challenge.

The Year ahead

The year ahead is one expansion again for our charity as we look to establish Be Free Young Carers as a countywide organisation. After the success of our recent Oxford City expansion, we look to West Oxfordshire to continue this growth and reach more young carers in the more rural west of the county. We are delighted to have received funding from our friends at Step Change, to set us off in this direction in September 2024. We will build on this funding to secure more, so that we can establish our services in West Oxfordshire.

We are also looking to deepen our services into more rural areas that we cover in South Oxfordshire, The Vale and Oxford, in particular Henley and Faringdon, where we know the need is high.

We will strengthen and build on the areas that we are established in, looking to liaise more with schools and teachers, to get to the young carers that are not yet identified and that need support.

Growing our partnerships with other charities and organisations to ensure that the needs of young carers are prioritised and prominently featured in all key strategic agendas, it is essential to integrate their concerns into policy development and implementation processes. By actively involving young carers in discussions, consultations, and decision-making, we can better understand their unique challenges and requirements. This approach will not only highlight their importance but also foster a more inclusive and supportive environment for these young individuals who take on significant caregiving responsibilities. Consequently, targeted resources and programs can be developed to address their specific needs, ultimately enhancing their well-being and enabling them to thrive both personally and academically. We see collaboration as key in our long-term vision to make Oxfordshire a leading county for young carers.

This is a time to say thanks, to look forward and be daring as an organisation, to make maximum impact on those thousands of disadvantaged young carers. As we enter our 30th anniversary year, Be Free Young Carers time has come, and we welcome anyone who wishes to be a part of this powerful change to make a long-term impact on the young carers of Oxfordshire to work with us

Chair of Trustees' Statement



'I am very pleased to report another strong year for the Charity as we continue to expand and develop our services to meet the growing need to support Young Carers. The Trustees and I are very grateful to the CEO, staff team and volunteers with BFYC for their continued hard work and outstanding efforts to improve the lives of our Young Carers.'

The clear evidence is that demand, and complexity of needs, for Young Carer support is continuing to grow across the County. Our plan over the next few years is to provide on the ground support to the whole of Oxfordshire. To achieve this, and continue to sustain these services, we will need to increase fundraising, staff and volunteer numbers, and continue to develop partnerships where possible.

It's an exciting and rewarding time to be involved with our Charity. I am very grateful to our excellent group of Trustee's for their continued commitment to the Charity. In the coming year the Trustee Board will continue to develop its capabilities as BFYC moves to the next stage of the journey. Thank you to everyone, I look forward to another year where we can collectively make a difference.'

Reference & Administrative Detail

Be Free Young Carers is a company limited by guarantee, incorporated in England & Wales and a registered charity.

The Trustees who are also Directors for the purposes of the Companies Act 2006, have pleasure in presenting their report and the unaudited financial statements of the Charity for the year ended 31 March 2024.

Structure, Governance & Management

Organisation

The Charity which during the year employed 8 people is led by a well-established, effective Board of Trustees, recruited for their complementary knowledge, skills and experience.

The Board of Trustees now meets four times a year and for the AGM. Three sub committees of the Main Board have been established to support the CEO with the day to day running of the charity. They are Quality and Performance, Fundraising and Partnerships, and Finance and Administration. Each has a Terms of reference, meets in advance of quarterly Trustee meetings, providing oversight and reporting on key activities.

Members of the board of Trustees, who are Directors for the purpose of company law and Trustees for the purpose of charity law, who served during the year and up to the date of approval of this report, are listed below:

David Wells (Chair)
Loretta Light (Vice Chair)
Laurie Cooper
Colin Mitchell
Angus Horner
Roger Eccleston



Trustee Induction

A prospective Trustee is usually known to one or more of the current board members or responded to an advert, and is invited to join the board based on their background and experience. After meeting all the Trustees their election is put to the vote at a Trustees meeting. Those trustees who are involved in recruitment also undergo safer recruitment training.

All new Trustees undergo an induction programme that includes all the necessary written information on the role and responsibilities of a Trustee and an understanding of the Charity's work and mission. All trustees undergo generalised safeguarding training and are fully DBS-checked.

“

Young carers are just amazing. For many of them caring means hard work, patience and often not getting to have the fun other children have. We just can't thank them enough.

”

- Elizabeth Paris, BFYC Vice Chair of Trustees

Public Benefit

The Charity's purposes as set out in the objects contained in the company's Memorandum of Association are to:

- a) Alleviate the conditions of life among people who are caring or who have cared for elderly, sick, disabled, handicapped or otherwise infirm persons at home and who are in necessitous circumstances;
- b) To promote the material welfare of such carers, to relieve and alleviate and to advance, promote, encourage and assist in the relief or alleviation of all kinds of mental and physical infirmity, sickness, disablement or handicap including mental illness attributable to caring among carers and the persons for whom they are caring in South Oxfordshire and the Vale of White horse and the surrounding areas;
- c) To advance the education of the public about the part that carers and caring can play generally.

The aims of the Charity are to enable carers to better manage their caring role through advice, information and support and to identify and raise the profile of carers and caring. Our aims fully reflect the purposes that the Charity was set up to further.

I'M SUPPORTING

BE FREE YOUNG CARERS

[befreeyc.org.uk](https://www.befreeyc.org.uk)

BE FREE YC

Instagram Facebook Twitter

Our Vision

Be Free Young Carers is the only charity in Oxfordshire devoted to improving young carers' well-being and opportunities, through the provision of recreational, emotional and social support.

Our vision is to enable Oxfordshire's young carers to achieve their full potential by delivering a far-reaching developmental and emotional support network of people and resources in their daily lives, their schools and communities.

Our Mission

We are the only independent charity in Oxfordshire working exclusively with young carers.

We support them by widening their life options and improving their emotional and social health, resilience and development because we passionately believe they can be free to fulfil their adult potential unhindered by their childhood responsibilities.

Our Objectives

To consolidate on our already established services in the areas of The Vale of White Horse, South Oxfordshire and Oxfordshire.

To establish fresh networks and connections in remote areas currently under our charity's remit increasing our area coverage and supporting more young carers.

To initiate the West Oxfordshire expansion, through the hiring of a School Liason who will spend time in the West Oxfordshire growing the Charity's profile and activity.

To build upon our strategic expansion plans to become an established countywide charity, supporting Oxfordshire's young carers.

To relieve the mental health burden of being a young carer.

To support Oxfordshire schools identify and support young carers, we do this by arranging school assemblies, world book day tours and by assisting them in setting up young carer clubs.

To be advocates for young carers when liaising with statutory services, families, schools and other key stakeholders.



A Case Study - Trials & Challenges

X registered with us in March 2023, when they were 12 years old, they have been getting support from the YC group at school but asked their Parent G to refer them to BFYC after I attended one of the sessions. Their younger sibling I also registered, and they have a 2-year-old sibling too.

At this time X was caring for their sibling K who has SEN, K was attending the same mainstream school but was on a reduced timetable and received lots of support. K has an EHCP.

When asked what they did to support their sister they said "I make sure that K has their uniform and everything they need for school because they can't organize this themselves. I have to make sure they get to The Stables in the morning when we get off the bus" X said sometimes there were issues with friendships as they shared a group of friends and sometimes people didn't want to hang around with K, X felt they then had to choose between their friends and K, they always chose K, even though sometimes this made them sad. X also said it could be tricky in some lessons as they could see when teachers were saying things that they knew would upset K and so would attempt to defend their sibling often ending in them getting themselves in trouble.

In April 2023 X started 121 ES sessions, they had 10 sessions, and they talked a lot about their sibling and how they felt compelled to support them and put them first. X seemed to open up during the sessions and agreed to try and let the teachers look after K so that they could focus on themselves/their own needs as they approached their GCSEs.

In October 2023 Parent G and Parent L shared with X that Parent L had been diagnosed with a degenerative condition. X found this very distressing, they were concerned for their parent but was also fully aware that this would change their caring responsibilities. Parent L was being offered treatment but as with all degenerative condition diagnosis it is a waiting game as no one can predict how badly they would be affected or how quickly. At this time it was only presenting as hearing changes so didn't change the family dynamics.

In Feb 2024 Parent G emailed, X was having a difficult time. X's sister K had left the school site and tried to kill herself. K has since not returned to school. X was devastated by the news but put on a brave face for those around. Shortly after this, X's Parent L's condition relapsed, having to be signed off work, in addition to the debilitating nature of the condition, Parent L's mental health was suffering.

X's Parent G enquired as to the availability of further 121 emotional support sessions as X was not interested in counselling due to a prior experience being negative while X had enjoyed the 121s.

Subsequently, X had a further 12 sessions, they used these sessions to get everything off their chest, their life had changed quite dramatically in the space of a few months. Parent G had to watch K 24/7 and ended up sleeping in their room and X had to take more of a caring responsibility for their younger Sibling N as Parent L was struggling with the use of their hands. There had been further incidents where K tried to take their own life and they were self-harming. X admitted they found this hard but didn't want to upset their parents. During this time their other Sibling N started to struggle at school with attendance or going to certain lessons, N explained they had too much on their mind and couldn't cope in lessons. N would be very difficult in the mornings and X would have to ensure N got on the bus. X found that instead of looking out for K in school they were now having to look out for N. They seemed to have a lot on their plate and looked forward to our sessions as they could say whatever they needed to say.

After such a series of events, many children would have struggled but X has coped and seems to be doing well. They have attended 13 respite trips over the last 2 years including the YC festival and have a lovely group of friends, X is also a member of our Youth Panel. X has spoken about BFYC and how the support we have given them has helped on the local TV news. If I ever put a call out for volunteers to talk about YC's they are always the first to come forward.

Reported by Lorraine Nicholls
Youth Worker - Oxford

Main Programmes & Projects

School Holiday Activity Programme

We run respite activities throughout the school holidays, providing young carers with the mental health respite from their caring role and letting them be a child for a few hours. These can include a day out to the seaside, theme park trips and theatre visits. **In the financial 2023/2024 627 trip places were attended by young carers under 12 years old, an increase of 190 trip places.**

Befriending service

Young carers are paired up with our trained volunteers who will meet with our young carers weekly and give them a break from their role. The Befriender is also a trusted adult that the young carer can confide in.

1-2-1 Emotional Support & Counselling Service

Complex cases are referred to our youth workers who will visit the young carer in their school environment and deliver 1-2-1 emotional support. For our extreme cases, we use our trained counsellor to provide the counselling service. Each weekly session is usually for 60 minutes and is over a period of 6 weeks.

Mindfulness Movement

This is aimed at our young carers aged between 8 and 11 and is a preventative measure to aid good mental health and teach wellbeing techniques. Our qualified yoga teachers attend schools and hold 45-minute sessions with young carers teaching them breathing techniques, relaxation methods and wellbeing tools.



“Thank you so much. E had an amazing day. She's shown me all the photos and told me everything. These days out mean so much to her. Thanks again to you and your team for taking the time to makes these young people feel appreciated and rewarded.”

-Parent of a Young Carer

“

I felt like I got my son back, the happy one who enjoyed everything he did with his brother and your volunteer befriender did that, every time they meet up, he would come home saying it was the best day or I had so much fun.

”

-Parent of a Young Carer



13+ Youth Groups

Aimed at our older young carers, these youth clubs meet monthly at various locations, they are user led and are a vital way that we engage with our teenagers.

Young Carer Advocacy in School

We help and support schools to set up young carer clubs, we attend assemblies, offer young carer tool kits and videos to help teachers and children identify, understand, and support young carers.

Employability and Mentoring Programme

This is targeted at our young carers of secondary school age that do not have access to work experience placements, we use our corporate partnerships to secure these and provide mentors. Every young carer in year 7 who needs a laptop is given one, so that they are on a level playing field with other children their age.



627

Young Carers provide with 20 respite activities



174

121 Emotional Support sessions provided to Young Carers



11

Young Carers matched with Befrienders

Be Free Young Carers Service Delivery 2023-2024

School Holiday Activity Programme

Be Free Young Carers have continued with our flagship School Holiday Activity Programme, this has increased in popularity, especially since the pandemic as young carers are keen to get the respite that they need with their role.

We have increased the number of respite activities to keep up with demand. Each activity involves approx. 30-40 young carers and includes activities such as a theme park trip, day at the beach or a visit to a trampoline park.

Thanks to Oxfordshire Community Foundation, we are able to provide our young carers with food during these events. This is needed to ensure that in the cost of living crisis, in school holidays, our young carers have access to food.

Aims:

To provide young carers with a respite break from their role of looking after their loved one, to reduce their stress, anxiety and improve their wellbeing in their caring role.

By being around other young carers in similar roles we hope to reduce feelings of loneliness and isolation. We hope to challenge the stigma of being a young carer, and to show young carers that they aren't on their own.

We provide opportunities to develop friendship with other young carers, to build their confidence, establish support networks and reduce the isolation that is often felt in being a young carer.

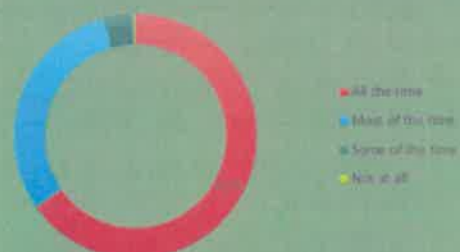
We aim to offer young carers experiences that they wouldn't normally have access to, to increase their confidence by undertaking activities that they may not have done before, to improve their mental health, confidence, and aspirations.

Impact:

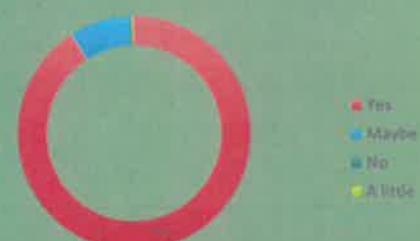
We have provided 627 trip places for young carers over 42 activities in 2023/24. We have increased the hours dedicated to respite for our young carers through activities such as circus skills, ice skating, trapeze, theatre trips, climbing and martial arts.

We also have our annual family fun day, which is free for our young carers and their families. It is a chance for all our young carers to meet up alongside our supporters and volunteers.

Did you have fun and feel happy during the trip?*



Did you feel like the trip provided a break from your caring responsibilities?



Mindfulness Movement

Our Mindfulness movement programme, is now an established in demand service which we offer currently to primary schools in The Vale and South Oxfordshire areas. We hope to be able to install a similar programme that we can offer to schools in Oxford City.

This is headed up by our Yoga practitioner, Emma Horwill, who runs weekly sessions for a 6 week period in primary schools.

Aims:

To give our primary school age young carers the tools to promote good mental health practice by teaching them breathing techniques, yoga and mindfulness.

To increase the confidence in younger children to talk about their mental health and wellbeing in relation to their caring role.



36 Mindfulness Movement sessions have been delivered to 62 young carers.

“

I think the two things we really took away from the session was the two year 5 girls who are now inspired to go and get their own yoga mats and practice for themselves..

And the young chap who had a giggle fit seldom ever laughs like that, so it was wonderful to see. And just how many of them really engaged and tried something different.

”

-Millbrook Primary School Home School Link Worker

Befriending Service

Our Befriending Service has been a success, it provides our more complex young carers with weekly or fortnightly respite from a trained volunteer.

These volunteers become the young carers trusted adult to 'download' their feelings and worries. The befriending service takes place for approximately 6 months and is seen as an intervention service in the young carers' lives, to give them that much needed respite and emotional support as they continue their caring role.

“

L said, "it's probably the best thing I've ever done."

”

-Feedback from a Befriender

Aims:

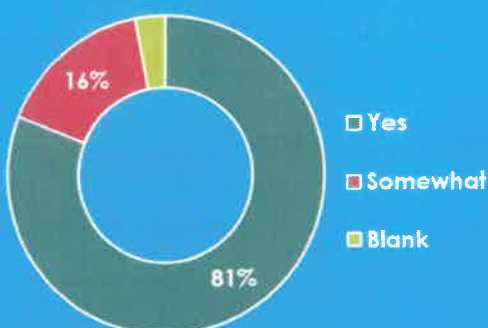
These volunteers become the young carers trusted adult to 'download' their feelings and worries. The befriending service takes place for approximately 6 months and is seen as an intervention service in the young carers' lives, to give them that much needed respite and emotional support as they continue their caring role.

Impact:

In the financial year of 2023/2024, we have initiated 11 young carer and befriender matches.

We had 15 new befrienders apply and complete the onboarding process during the financial year.

Do you feel you can talk to the support worker if you are worried about something



□ Yes
□ Somewhat
□ Blank

1-2-1 Emotional Support & Counselling Service

Our 1-2-1 Emotional Support and Counselling Service has been an area of growth mainly in response to our young carer needs and the stretched statutory services.

We have taken on a counsellor who sees our young carers with more complex needs for 1-2-1 counselling sessions. Whereas our Senior Youth Workers conduct our 1-2-1 emotional support sessions. All of these sessions take place over a 6 week period in the school environment.

“I’ve been wanting to get that off my chest for so long, but I couldn’t tell anyone else because they would think I was an awful person.”

-Be Free Young Carer

Aims:

To provide young carers with a response to help their emotional and mental wellbeing over a 6 week period, improving their mental health and giving them the tools to enable them to use preventative techniques to control their mental wellbeing.

To increase young carers' confidence to become more resilient with their mental health, to offer them an outlet for their mental stresses with a trusted adult.

Impact:

We have provided an average of 174 sessions of 1-2-1 emotional support to 25 young carers and 85+ counselling sessions to young carers.

This has resulted in young carers reporting better mental health increased resilience, and improved coping strategies at the end of the 6 week period.



Be Free Young Carers Emotional Support & Counselling Team

“Thank you for all your dedication and support, as always. Gemma’s one-to-one sessions with J have made a huge difference to his behaviour and well-being. He appears less anxious.”

“It has made a hugely positive impact on our family, so thank you from the bottom of our hearts!”

-Parent of a Young Carer

13+ Youth Groups

Our 13+ Youth Groups have been running for the last 2 years, thanks to the funding from The Peoples Health Trust.

This is a user led programme of monthly meetings for those young carers age 13 – 17 years old.

They are very much in control of what they do at these meetings, where they meet and what they want to discuss. This is important as we were finding that by the time young carers reached secondary school age, they stopped engaging with us. We have seen numbers for this service increase year on year and we are now duplicating this service in the Oxford City area.



Aims:

To increase teenage young carers engagement with us, to empower them to run workshops and activities for them, to promote their self-esteem and leadership skills.

To make meaningful friendships with other young carers, to feel comfortable to address topics that they would like to know more about, to relieve the isolation that can come with being a young carer and to promote good mental health.

“

This is the best activity I've been on with any of the charities I've had help from - it was so fun to meet people my own age who weren't lots younger than me.

”

-13+ Be Free Young Carer

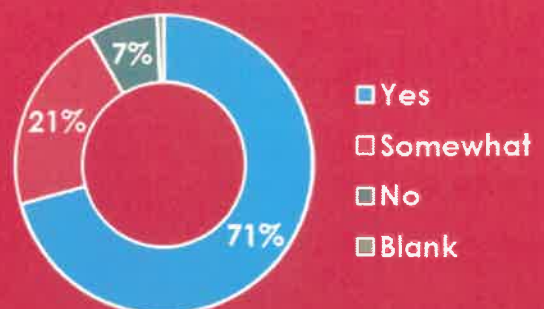
Impact:

We have hosted 13 meetings of our Youth Clubs and held 13 activities ranging from escape rooms to a trip to Thorpe Park.

We also provide food for our young carers to combat the impact of the cost of living crisis and food poverty.

We also provide free period products for our young carers to combat period poverty.

Did you make new friends?



A Case Study - Networks of Support

“ I've been collaborating with One-Eighty to support a young carer struggling with overwhelming anxiety and stress which had led to suicidal ideation.

As the level of support he required surpassed what I could offer, I sought One-Eighty's expertise to explore additional interventions which could be tailored to meet the young carer's needs. During my initial meeting with them, they showed great empathy and encouraged me to make a referral, despite the family's ongoing struggle to secure funding.

A month later I was contacted with the fantastic news that they had managed to secure funding themselves and the support for this young carer could go ahead! Through progress reports it sounds like their work with this young carer is going really well and already having a positive impact on the young carer and his family.

I'm incredibly grateful that they took the time to listen to the situation and thought to offer their funding towards this young carers support, especially after the family had been battling for something to be put in place for so long.



Gemma Thorpe
Youth Worker - South
Oxfordshire



Our Social Return on Investment

We have worked closely with the Carers Trust and Civil Society Consulting to create our Social Return on Investment (SROI) calculation. This is a representation of the value we have been able to create based on the attendance and services we offered between May 2023 and May 2024

**Every pound invested
in Be Free Young
Carers has £9.03 of
value.**

An SROI calculator is an estimation of the value we have and does not include all the information on all of the services we offer and can not include the benefits of young carers repeatedly attending sessions or multiple different services.

Our SROI shows our donors that the money that they donate goes further and can have a significant impact on the lives of the young carers we support but also in creating further support systems for young carers and providing education and awareness of the challenges young carers face.

In order to generate this number we have considered:

- How many young carers attend our sessions.
- How we interact with other services.
- Our regular volunteers.
- The support we offer to schools.

Our Fundraising Strategy

The last year has seen our Fundraising team build upon our robust fundraising strategy plan which is one of growth to support our current strategic plan of expansion into a countywide organisation, while also maintaining our services and presence in the geographical areas we cover. This involves building on those partnerships and relationships that we have with supporters and funders.

We are fiercely proud to be an independent charity, receiving no statutory funding from local government or the NHS. This sees us rely on donations from the community, corporate and business partnerships and our main income coming from Trusts and Grants. I am incredibly proud of what our fundraising team have achieved with the backdrop of funding cuts and increased competition. Over the coming year we will look to expand and invest in this team to ensure we remain sustainable.

We will continue to build on our successes with fundraising, while looking to grow and develop other areas such as developing a new area of fundraising with our Ambassador club launching in 2025 for our corporate partners and setting up membership for those that would like to donate regularly to us. Our projects and beneficiaries continue to be highly fundable and attractive. The coming year will see us providing high quality supporter engagement and stewardship to those that support us. We continue to be deeply grateful to all our supporters new and old.

Finance

The Charity achieved an overall surplus of £82,979 for the year ended 31 March 2024 against a surplus of £20,762 in 2023. Total funds at year end were £288,577 (2023: £205,598). Income was received from Grants, Trusts, and Donations.

Total Income for the year was £413,413 (2023: £338,145). Total expenditure for the year was £330,434 (2023: £317,383).

Reserves policy

The Board of Trustees has designated a reserve of £55,000 to pay liabilities, complete and close work with current clients in the event of the organisation having to close. A separate designated reserve of £31,340 is to cover the cost of the balance of the loan from Guideposts.

The Charity has £18,100 in restricted funds, and £3,670 invested in Fixed Assets, with the remaining £266,807 as Free Reserves which satisfies the requirements of the policy. However £150,000 of these funds are ring fenced for our countywide expansion project.

Day to Day Operations

Sabiene North (CEO) and her team of nine deliver the day to day operations of the charity. These consist of two part time members of staff, with one staff member working remotely. Each team member has bimonthly 1-2-1 and performance reviews which reflect the charities overall business aims and objectives.

The staff handbook provides information on internal policies and procedures. Our frontline staff all have access to clinical supervision monthly and/or as and when they require this support, to help with the cases that they are dealing with. We also have a employee assistance programme in place for staff which includes free six week counselling should staff require this.

Looking Forward -Future Developments

We have joined the network partnership of Carers Trust which will see us access new and in-depth resources to further highly our cause and collaborate with other young carer groups to advocate for young carers on a larger scale.

2024 and beyond, looks to be another period of growth and expansion as we increase our presence in West Oxfordshire and look to North Oxfordshire to complete our countywide expansion. Under pinning this is our robust fundraising strategy which will see further expansion of the team to support this growth.

Be free Young Carers are committed to deliver substantial services in Oxfordshire and will continue to advocate for young carers. We aim to put Oxfordshire County on the map as being a beacon of what young carer support should look like to other counties. We will continue to monitor our impact as we under take our bold expansion by focusing on our SROI and feedback from our beneficiaries, professionals and families.

Once expansion has been completed, we will then be able to continue our strategic ambitions to support young carers at the trigger pints in their lives, from transitioning to secondary school to the next steps after school. This is an area where there is very little support or direction and one which our young carers have stressed to us that they need help with. At age 18 they only have the option to use adult based services, we know that the transition from our services to adult carers is a huge step and one where we have the expertise to guide them, under pinning this will require further investment and support from funders and supporters.



Trustees' Responsibilities

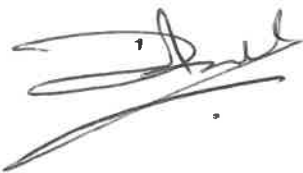
The Trustees (who are also directors of Be Free Young Carers for the purposes of company law) are responsible for preparing the Trustees' Report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice). Company law requires the Trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year, which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charitable company and of the incoming resources and application of resources, including the income and expenditure, of the charitable company for the year. In preparing these financial statements, 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 financial statements;
- prepare the financial statements 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 proper accounting records that disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charitable company and enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 2006. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charitable company and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities. The Trustees consider that the accounts for the year ended 31 March 2024 should be prepared on a going concern basis as there are no material uncertainties about it using this basis.

This report was approved by the Trustees on18/9/24.....

On Behalf of the Trustees of Be Free Young Carers



D Wells
Chair of Trustees



Independent Examiner's Report to the Trustees of Be Free Young Carers

I report to the charity trustees on my examination of the accounts of the company for the year ended 31st March 2024 which are set out on pages 22 to 31.

Responsibilities and basis of report

As the charity trustees of the company (and also its directors for the purposes of company law) you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006 ('the 2006 Act').

Having satisfied myself that the accounts of the company are not required to be audited under Part 16 of the 2006 Act and are eligible for independent examination, I report in respect of my examination of your company's accounts as carried out under section 145 of the Charities Act 2011 ('the 2011 Act'). In carrying out my examination I have followed the Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the 2011 Act.

Independent examiner's statement

Since the company's gross income exceeded £250,000 your examiner must be a member of a body listed in section 145 of the 2011 Act. I confirm that I am qualified to undertake the examination because I am a member of the Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales which is one of the listed bodies.

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination giving me cause to believe that in any material respect:

1. accounting records were not kept in respect of the company as required by section 386 of the 2006 Act; or
2. the accounts do not accord with those records; or
3. the accounts do not comply with the accounting requirements of section 396 of the 2006 Act other than any requirement that the accounts give a 'true and fair view' which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination; or
4. the accounts have not been prepared in accordance with the methods and principles of the Statement of Recommended Practice for accounting and reporting by charities applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102).

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in this report in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.


Caroline Webster FCA
UHY Ross Brooke
Windrush Court
Abingdon Business Park
Abingdon
OX14 1SY

.....22/11/2024

Statement of Financial Activities (including income and expenditure) for the year ended 31st March 2024

	Note	2024 Unrestricted General	2024 Unrestricted Designated	2024 Restricted	2024 Funds	2023 Funds
		Total £	Total £	Total £	Total	Total £
Income From:						
Donations and general grants	3	309,906	-	92,100	402,006	330,195
Charitable Activities	4	1,022	-	5,000	6,022	6,139
Other income	4	5,385	-	-	5,385	1,811
Total		316,313	-	97,100	413,413	338,145
Expenditure on:						
Charitable activities	6	234,930	-	95,504	330,434	317,383
Total		234,930	-	95,504	330,434	317,383
Net movement in funds		81,383	-	1,596	82,979	20,762
Transfers between funds		5,000	(5,000)	-	-	-
Total funds brought forward		97,754	91,340	16,504	205,598	184,836
Total funds carried forward		184,137	86,340	18,100	288,577	205,598

The notes on pages 24 to 31 form part of these accounts.

Balance Sheet as at 31 March 2024

Be Free Young Carers

Company Number: 2989722

	Note	2024	2023
		£	£
Fixed Assets			
Tangible Assets	7	3,670	5,757
Current Assets			
Debtors	8	485	485
Cash at bank and in hand		318,858	242,948
		319,343	243,433
Creditors: Amounts falling due within one year	9	(34,436)	(43,592)
Net Current Assets		284,907	199,841
Net Assets	13	288,577	205,598
Funds			
Restricted Funds	11	18,100	16,504
Unrestricted Funds			
General Funds		184,137	97,754
Designated Funds	12	86,340	91,340
Total of Charity's funds		288,577	205,598

These accounts are prepared in accordance with the special provisions of Part 15 of the Companies Act 2006 relating to small entities and the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS102).

- I. For the year ended 31 March 2024 the charity was entitled to the exemption under Section 477 of the Companies Act 2006;
- II. No notice from members requiring an audit, has been deposited under section 476 of the Companies Act 2006;
- and III. The trustees acknowledge their responsibilities for:
 - a. ensuring the company keeps accounting records which comply with Section 386 and
 - b. preparing the accounts which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the company as at the end of the financial period and of its surplus or deficit for the financial period, in accordance with the requirements of Section 393, and which otherwise comply with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006 relating to accounts, so far as applicable to the company.

These accounts were approved by the Board of Trustees on 18/9/24.


D Wells
(Director and Trustee)

The notes on pages 24 to 31 form part of these accounts.

Notes to the Accounts for the year ended 31st March 2024

1. Accounting policies

The following accounting policies have been used consistently in dealing with items which are considered material in relation to the Charity's accounts:

a) Basis of Accounting

The accounts are prepared under the historical cost convention, and in compliance with applicable accounting standards, Statement of Recommended Practice Accounting and reporting by Charities in accordance with Financial Reporting Standards applicable in the United Kingdom and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) effective from 1 January 2019 and the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the United Kingdom and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102), the Charities Act 2011 and the Companies Act 2006. The entity constitutes a public benefit entity as defined by FRS 102.

Following agreement at an Extraordinary Meeting on 21 February 2014 the Charity entered into a Constitutional and Service Level Agreement with Guideposts Trust which enables the charity to share the resources of Guideposts Trust. Additionally, Guideposts Trust has provided financial support to enable the charity to maintain services whilst a long term strategic plan to develop and grow sustainable services to carers in the region for both organisations was researched and developed. To date Guideposts Trust has outstanding financial support totalling £31,340 to the Charity by way of an intercompany loan, repayment of which will not be requested until the Charity generates the surpluses to do so.

On the back of commissioning changes in the County which has left the charity the only provider of Young Carers respite services in Oxfordshire against growing need, the charity is seeing interest from potential funders to support expansion of their support and wider awareness of the charity's work and impact. The Trustees consider that there are no material uncertainties regarding the charity's ability to continue as a going concern.

b) Company Status

The company is limited by guarantee with no share capital and is a registered charity. The liability of each member in the event of a winding up of the company is limited to £10. The members of the company are the Trustees as named on page 2.

c) Tangible fixed assets and depreciation

Tangible fixed assets are stated at historical cost less depreciation. Depreciation is provided at rates which reflect the anticipated useful lives of the assets and their estimated residual value.

Computer Equipment

25% straight line

d) Fund Accounting

General funds are expendable at the discretion of the Trustees in the furtherance of the objectives of the charity and for the overall administration of the charity.

Restricted funds are those upon which restrictions and specific criteria for their use are imposed by the donor. The costs of raising and administering such funds are charged against the specific fund.

e) Pension Costs

The charity operates a defined contribution pension scheme for its employees. The assets of the scheme are held separately from those of the Charity in an independently administered fund. The pension cost represents contributions by the Charity to the funds, which are recognised when they become payable.

Notes to the Accounts for the year ended 31st March 2024 (Continued)

1. Accounting policies (continued)

f) Income

All income & endowments are included in the Statement of Financial Activities when the charity is entitled to the income and the amount can be quantified with reasonable accuracy and receipt is probable. The following specific policies are applied to particular categories of income:

- Donations and general grants are included in full in the Statement of Financial Activities when they are received by the charity.
- Donated services and facilities are included at the value to the charity where this can be quantified. The value of services provided by volunteers has not been included in these accounts.
- Investment income, including interest income is included when receivable.
- Income to fund charitable activity; where related to performance and specific deliverables, are accounted for as the charity earns the right to consideration by its performance. Where the charity's entitlement is not conditional on the delivery of specific performance, the grant is recognised once the charity becomes unconditionally entitled to the grant.

g) Operating Leases

Rentals payable under operating leases are charged against income on a straight line basis over the lease term.

h) Expenditure

All expenditure is accounted for on an accruals basis when the liability is incurred and has been classified under headings that aggregate all costs related to that category, including all applicable VAT. Where costs cannot be directly attributed to particular headings they have been allocated to activities on a basis consistent with use of resources.

- Charitable activities include expenditure associated with the provisions of activities and services for beneficiaries and include both the direct costs and support costs relating to these activities.
- Governance costs include those costs incurred in the governance of the charity and its assets and are primarily associated with constitutional and statutory requirements.
- Support costs include administrative functions and have been allocated to activity cost categories on a basis consistent with the use of resources, e.g. allocating property costs by floor areas, or per capita staff costs by the time spent and other costs by their usage.

i) Debtors

Trade and other debtors are recognised at the settlement amount due after any trade discount offered. Prepayments are valued at the amount prepaid after taking account of any trade discounts due.

j) Creditors

Creditors and provisions are recognised where the charity has a present obligation resulting from a past event that will probably result in the transfer of funds to a third party and the amount due to settle the obligation can be measured or estimated reliably. Creditors are normally recognised at their settlement amount after allowing for any trade discounts due.

Notes to the Accounts for the year ended 31st March 2024 (Continued)

2 Net Movement in Funds

Net Movement in Funds for the year is stated after charging:

	2024	2023
Independent Examiner's Remuneration	1,500	1,500
Operating Lease Cost - property	17,829	10,395
	<hr/>	<hr/>

3 Donations and General Grants

	2024 £	2023 £
Donations from Parishes and Towns	10,738	4,754
Donations from individuals and organisations	52,231	43,146
Donations from legacies	27,143	35,247
Other Trusts and Foundations	311,894	247,048
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	402,006	330,195
	<hr/>	<hr/>

4 Income to Fund Charitable Activities

	2024 £	2023 £
South Oxfordshire District Council	6,022	6,139
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	6,022	6,139
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Other Income		
Bank interest received	5,385	1,811
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	5,385	1,811
	<hr/>	<hr/>

Notes to the Accounts for the year ended 31st March 2024 (Continued)

5	Employees	2024 Number	2023 Number
	The average number of employees during the year was:		
	Employees	8	8
		<u>8</u>	<u>8</u>
	Their total remuneration was:		
		£	£
	Wages and salaries	205,215	206,618
	Social security costs	14,956	11,304
	Other pensions costs	5,201	5,475
		<u>225,372</u>	<u>223,397</u>

The charity operates a defined contribution pension scheme for its employees. The assets of the scheme are held separately from those of the charity in an independently administered fund. The pension cost represents contributions payable by the charity to the funds, which are recognised when they become payable. Contributions payable by the charity amounted to £720 at 31st March 2024 (2023: £472). The total paid to Key Management Personnel was £49,500 (2023: £46,411) and there were no employees earning more than £60,000 in the year.

6 Analysis of Expenditure

Charitable Activities

	2024 Total	2023 Total
	£	£
Staff Wages and Salaries	225,372	223,397
Staff Welfare and Training	5,129	148
Direct Costs – Outings, Events and Consultants	58,123	49,257
Premises Expenses and Insurance	22,285	20,706
Office and Travel costs	439	964
Advertising & Publicity	4,230	6,370
Bank Charges	71	72
Recruitment Costs	299	1,337
Depreciation	2,803	2,681
IT Software, Services and Equipment	4,393	7,453
Other Costs	-	105
Governance Costs	1,800	1,680
Accountancy and Other Professional Costs	5,490	3,213
	<u>330,434</u>	<u>317,383</u>

Notes to the Accounts for the year ended 31st March 2024 (Continued)

7 Tangible Fixed Assets

	Equipment	Total
	£	£
Cost		
At 1st April 2023	15,508	15,508
Additions	716	716
At 31st March 2024	16,224	16,224
Depreciation		
At 1st April 2023	9,751	9,751
Charge for year	2,803	2,803
At 31st March 2024	12,554	12,554
Net book value		
At 31st March 2024	3,670	3,670
At 31st March 2023	5,757	5,757

All assets are held for charitable purposes.

8 Debtors due within one year

	2024	2023
	£	£
Other debtors	485	485
	485	485

9 Creditors: Amounts falling due within one year

	2024	2023
	£	£
Due to Guideposts Trust Limited	31,340	36,340
Other creditors	3,096	7,252
	34,436	43,592

Notes to the Accounts for the year ended 31st March 2024 (Continued)

10 Leasing commitments

Total commitments due under operating leases for premises used by the Charity are as follows:

	2024 £	2023 £
	Land and Buildings	Land and Buildings
Operating lease	4,428	3,839
	<u>4,428</u>	<u>3,839</u>

11 Movements on Restricted Funds

Current year

	Balance 1 Apr 2023 £	Income £	Expenditure £	Transfers £	Balance 31 Mar 2024 £
The National Lottery	7,000	75,000	(75,000)	-	7,000
The National Lottery 2	6,672	-	(6,672)	-	-
UK Youth	2,000	5,000	(2,000)	-	5,000
Masonic	832	-	(832)	-	-
St James's Place Charitable Foundation	-	11,000	(11,000)	-	-
Charles Lewis Foundation	-	5,000	-	-	5,000
Oxford Community foundation	-	1,100	-	-	1,100
	<u>16,504</u>	<u>97,100</u>	<u>(95,504)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>18,100</u>

Notes to the Accounts for the year ended 31st March 2024 (Continued)

£75,000 from the National Lottery is for our expansion into Oxford City.
 £5,000 from UK Youth is for Cost of Living support.
 £11,000 from St James’s Place Charitable Foundation is for our expansion into Oxford City for Youth Worker salary.
 £5,000 from Charles Lewis Foundation is for respite activities.
 £1,100 from Oxford Community Foundation is for energy.

12 Movements on Designated Funds

Current year

	Balance 1 Apr 2023 £	Income £	Expenditure £	Transfers £	Balance 31 Mar 2024 £
Guideposts Trust Fund	36,340	-	-	(5,000)	31,340
Contingency Fund	55,000	-	-	-	55,000
	<u>91,340</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>86,340</u>

The Guideposts Trust fund is designated to cover the loan payments. The Contingency fund is to enable an orderly winding up if the charity needed to close.

Notes to the Accounts for the year ended 31st March 2024 (Continued)

13 Analysis of Net Assets between Funds Current Year

	Tangible Fixed Assets £	Net Current Assets £	2024 Total Assets £
Restricted Funds			
The National Lottery	-	7,000	7,000
UK Youth	-	5,000	5,000
Charles Lewis Foundation	-	5,000	5,000
Oxford Community Foundation 2	-	1,100	1,100
Unrestricted Funds	3,670	266,807	270,477
	3,670	284,907	288,577

Previous Year

	Tangible Fixed Assets £	Net Current Assets £	2023 Total Assets £
Restricted Funds			
The National Lottery	-	7,000	7,000
The National Lottery 2	-	6,672	6,672
UK Youth	-	2,000	2,000
Masonic	-	832	832
Unrestricted Funds	5,757	183,337	189,094
	5,757	199,841	205,598

14 Trustee Remuneration and Related Party Transactions

No Trustee received any remuneration during the year (2023: £NIL) and reimbursed expenses (2023: £NIL).

No Trustee of the Charity has any personal interest in any contract or transaction entered into by the Charity during the year (2023: £NIL).

In February 2014 the Charity entered into an agreement with Guideposts Trust, a registered charity and whose objects were compatible with that of the Charity. The agreement enabled Guideposts to support the Charity to continue providing young carers with the vital support, advice and other services to improve the quality of their lives. A member of the Guideposts Senior Management Team is able to sit on the board of Trustees of the Charity. Guideposts has previously provided financial support to the Charity; an inter-company loan of £31,340 represents financial support provided at the balance sheet date. An annual repayment is made by the Charity subject to it generating sufficient surpluses to do so.