



**FOR GIRLS
FOR FRIENDSHIP
FOR SOCIETY**

Annual Impact Report and Financial Statements Girls Friendly Society in England and Wales (GFS)

30 September 2023



Company Limited by Guarantee Registration Number 3172713 (England & Wales) | Charity Registration Number 1054310

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CHAIR'S WELCOME

Girls Friendly Society (GFS) has been in existence for almost 150 years and has changed during the decades to meet the needs of the time. Our founder, Mary Townsend, worked with a cohort of young women who were isolated and considered vulnerable because of the lives they led; in "service" for the first time in towns and cities, a long way from home. We would love to say that her work is done and GFS is no longer needed but research tells us that this isn't the case. More importantly, the girls we work with tell us GFS is needed more than ever.

Girls as young as 6 tell us they can't be themselves. This holds them back.

Girls tell us that they are under pressure from the world around them and for each girl that is something different and may include one or more challenges. It could be feeling unsafe, social media, peer pressure, bullying and loneliness. Many are starting to talk about the impact of the cost-of-living crisis, and we know that so many struggle with exam pressure, period poverty and lack of support ... and more.

GFS exists to address this fundamental problem and has made the commitment to work in the places and with the girls who need our support the most. They tell us how GFS has enabled them to be themselves, develop confidence, speak up when it matters and so much more:

“I try new things at GFS, which makes me more confident to try things at home. ”

“I feel comfortable here and feel like I can show off my anxiety whereas I have to cover it up at school. ”

“Embracing my sexuality, helped us know it's okay and we can express ourselves. ”



This year has seen us review our strategy and how we have been working. We have looked carefully at the impact we are having for the girls we support as well as consider what we need to do next. We have had a year of consolidation. We have developed a sound



approach to listening to the girls to better understand our role, and how that impacts on plans for the future. Listening to girls and amplifying their voices has become an important part of what we do.

We know that girls at GFS are happier than the national average but less happy in school. We believe in being brave and girl focused. So, in 2024, we need to go to where girls need us most. This means finding a way to grow our impact by working with girls in school, in those areas already evidenced to be difficult if you are a girl.

The charity has put together an Environment Taskforce, responding to the need to consider the environment and how we as an organisation can respond to our responsibilities. It is in its first year but already we have implemented internal and external training as well as looked at individual and organisational responses. Alongside this, the EDI Taskforce has prioritised equity, diversity and inclusion by dedicating time to addressing all areas of the charity so that we can offer an inclusive experience for every girl at GFS but also staff, volunteers and supporters. We know we have more to do and are delivering a plan to be the best we can.

At the same time, we are looking at our back-office functions and all we do to offer GFS a sustainable future for as long as the organisation is needed. Part of this is considering our financial position with more intent. For some time now, the charity has been an unofficial 'spend down' charity and we would like to acknowledge this to enable us to achieve the GFS vision and mission. The Board has begun by initiating a review of this so that it further improves our reach and impact.

In the meantime, we would like to thank you for your support and welcome you to get in touch to find out about our plans. There is nothing we like more than talking GFS!

Amundeeep Dhanoa

Amundeeep Dhanoa
Chair of Trustees

GFS 2022-23 AT A GLANCE

We supported



731 girls
around the UK



This equates to



17,280
attendances

We supported



30 groups
to deliver GFS
activities including



29 regional
events & trips

We recruited



114 new
volunteers,
with more than
200 active
throughout
the year

- ★ GFS Northeast groups hold regional funday
- ★ GFS groups in Wales celebrate volunteers' week
- ★ GFS launches its first work in schools
- ★ National training programme for volunteers supports girls around mental health and ADHD
- ★ Leadership Team collaborate with Surrey University to support development of toolkit

- ★ GFS Day of Learning on Inclusion
- ★ Enstar and ChildrenSalon become corporate supporters
- ★ Big Give women and girls campaign raises vital income
- ★ GFS Hackney Seniors launches
- ★ GFS Pittington celebrates 20 years
- ★ Celebration of our most long-term GFS volunteers
- ★ GFS runners in the London Landmarks half marathon

The Trustees of Girls Friendly Society in England and Wales (GFS) present the Trustees' Report and Financial Statements for the year ended 30 September 2023. This report has been prepared in accordance with Part VI of the Charities Act 2011 and constitutes a directors' report for the purposes of company legislation. The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the accounting policies

set out on pages 34 to 37 of the attached financial statements and comply with the charitable company's memorandum and articles of association and 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 United Kingdom and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102).

STRATEGIC AND IMPACT REPORT

GFS vision, mission and values



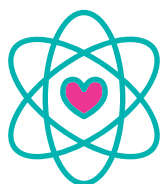
Our vision

Our vision is of a world where girls and young women are free to be themselves and feel proud of who they are.



Our mission

Our mission is to support and inspire girls and young women. We will create spaces where they feel safe and valued, so that they can build strong foundations that will prepare them for life's challenges.



Our values

In everything we do, GFS will be:

- ✔ **Girl-focused**
- ✔ **Brave**
- ✔ **Feminist**
- ✔ **Ambitious**
- ✔ **Inclusive**
- ✔ **Fun**

Why we exist

Girls are under pressure

The world constantly tells girls who they should be. At school, girls experience pressure to fit in with peers, manage friendships and meet academic expectations. Online, they navigate social media, cyber-bullying, influencer culture and beauty standards. And in the wider world, gender stereotypes, sexism and discrimination still shape their experiences.

Navigating these pressures, expectations and attitudes, especially during their vulnerable teenage years, leaves girls feeling unable to be themselves.

This manifests itself in ways that can affect both their health and happiness. It impacts their **relationships**, making it harder to connect with others.

It harms their **wellbeing**; trying to fit in or worrying about who they are and how they look can lead to – or be the result of – anxiety and poor mental health.

It damages their **confidence**, as feeling unable to express themselves can lead to girls missing out and believing their voices don't matter.

Ultimately, it limits their lives, as girls become less likely to engage with **opportunities** and more vulnerable to damaging social pressures, leaving them at risk of exclusion and harm.

Girls as young as six told us they feel unable to be themselves. These pressures on girls and the impact it has on their sense of self means girls are being held back. It prevents girls from reaching their potential - and therefore perpetuates gender inequality.

68%

of girls aged 11-18 in the UK think that gender stereotypes are holding women and girls back (Plan UK, 2021)

62%

of girls aged 7-18 have been told they can't do something because they are a girl (GFS, 2023)



Girls were nearly twice as likely as boys to be unhappy with their mental health (Children's Commissioner, 2021)



69%

of girls aged 7-18 have not done something as a result of worrying about what others would think (GFS, 2023)

Girls lack safe spaces

GFS provides vital safe spaces where girls can experience a welcome break from these pressures and expectations. Parents and carers tell us about the need for local provision in their area, where other services for girls are either not available or not suitable to meet their child's needs.

GFS provides a unique service where girls are able to participate in a welcoming group environment without the pressure of competition or performance, which other after-school services are often structured around. Through our groups and the women role models who form our staff and volunteer delivery teams, we foster inclusive settings where girls are supported and accepted for who they are; as individuals. This can be particularly important for girls who may have struggled in other groups and clubs, which can often be the case for those with additional needs.

For girls, these safe spaces are invaluable. Over half of the girls told us that feeling safe and welcome is one of the most important things about their group. We know that when girls feel accepted, they can start to thrive.

At GFS they feel more relaxed and able to be themselves, more likely to build positive relationships and try new things. Their group acts as a constant source of support during challenging times:

69% of GFS parents and carers say that there is nothing similar for girls in their area (GFS, 2023)

87% of GFS parents and carers say that their child is able to be herself at group because GFS treats girls as individuals. (GFS, 2023)

“I feel safe with my friends here, can be relaxed and be yourself.”

“My daughter was subjected to inappropriate language and behaviour in school ...she didn't want to attend after-school activities because she was scared, so attending GFS helped bring back her confidence and she knew she was safe in GFS.”

“We are fairly certain she has ADHD. Other groups she has tried have been overwhelming and noisy, and she hasn't felt safe. GFS is the opposite of those things - it is calm, personal, quiet and she feels very safe and supported.”


“It's really important she is able to express herself freely which does not always happen when she is around boys.”




Girls need our help from a young age

Girls' happiness has been declining since 2009 and is now at an all-time low. The steepest decline of girls who say they are very happy has been amongst those aged 7-10. (Girl Guiding, 2023)

As girls enter their teenage years, their confidence and self-esteem can start to drop in a way that isn't commonly seen for boys, leaving them more vulnerable to harm and less likely to engage in the things they enjoy or that benefit them.

 **51% of secondary school aged girls told us they don't feel like they can be themselves at school, compared to 26% of girls aged 7-11. (GFS, 2023)**

 **42% of girls aged 7-11 worry about what people think of them. This rises to 79% of secondary school aged girls. (GFS, 2023)**

That's why our early intervention approach focuses on working with girls from a young age. Around 80% of our active girls are between 5 and 11 years of age because we know that it's vital to equip girls with the tools they need to tackle life's challenges sooner rather than later.

Our programme focuses on supporting girls to develop key skills that can help them deal with the things they find difficult. This could be the confidence to speak up and share their ideas, the resilience to cope with disappointments and setbacks or the awareness to manage conflicts and changes in friendships.

Each school term, the core sessions focus on an area of need identified through our research with girls. By revisiting these skills over time, our programme follows the "shallow, deep, profound" approach, based on the first three stages of Bloom's Taxonomy of Learning.



SHALLOW

"I know what it is"
We introduce a concept; what it looks like, when it might be experienced.



DEEP

"I understand it"
Developing understanding of the concept; how it might be experienced, what it feels like.



PROFOUND

"I can apply it to my own life"
Understanding what is being experienced; why and how to internalise the related skill.

This approach was tested effectively with Group Coordinator led groups in the summer term of 2022, and then rolled out to all groups in the autumn term of 2023. It ensures girls are receiving a good level of expert, research-based sessions, as well as each group having their own identity.

All girls have different needs, backgrounds and abilities, so we recognise that girls will take what they need from their time with GFS. With a focus on fun and play, girls may not always notice that they are learning at the time, but activities are structured to:

- 1 Raise girls' knowledge and awareness of a skill or issue (shallow impact).
- 2 Support them to feel more positive and empowered about that issue (deep impact).
- 3 Through longer-term engagement, influence their behaviour and experiences beyond their group (profound impact).

Many girls have told us about the ways in which GFS has had a positive impact in their lives. This includes improved confidence, social and communication skills, better relationships with others and an increased ability to express themselves, as common features:

“ I can trust people more, I tell people more stuff than before and I'm more open with people outside GFS too. ”
.....

“ GFS has helped me with being positive and standing up for myself against bullies and mean people. ”
.....

“ At GFS, people are there for you and you learn that accepting help is okay. People who know you really well know what you need even when you won't admit it, and that has helped me accept help and made things better. ”
.....

“ Outside GFS there is loads of judgement and people rain on your ideas and make it a dark day, but it is brighter inside here where you can be yourself, be comfortable and shine. ”

In allowing girls to engage at their own pace, we recognise that the outcomes of their experiences can vary. For many, simply spending time in the group environment with other girls and women can have the most powerful impact.



Strategic Plan - Overview

The GFS Strategic Plan (A Clear View Ahead) was written for the years 2019-2024. We are therefore about to start the final year of the strategic plan. During this time, we aimed to achieve:

Culture

- 💡 **An impressive culture of alignment and empowerment** - Levels of communication and effective cross team working has developed across all our people; volunteers, staff and Board. We have seen retention levels improve and mutual respect increase.
- 💡 **All groups supporting the plan for compliance** - All groups are now far more consistent and operate in the same way with a real commitment to compliance and quality. At the same time, they embrace their differences by responding to local need.
- 💡 **Annual engagement plan for girls, volunteers and staff** - The People and Programme teams have been instrumental in designing this and making it happen – so that we listen, learn and act to support our work and so that girls' voices are fundamental to our DNA.
- 💡 **A reputation for being a happy place to volunteer and work** - We are delighted to report that 100% of staff reported in the staff survey that GFS is a happy place to work and 86% volunteers tell us GFS is a good place to volunteer with 100% proud to be part of the work we do.
- 💡 **Outstanding pride in the volunteers and staff team in what we do** – Improvements in consistency have come, from training and support for everyone, to the development of our core programme. As a result, the whole team not only talks with pride about what we do but also wants us to do more because there is the sense that we do what we do well – particularly with younger girls.

Growth

- 💡 **A structure of support for our volunteers and groups** - This has improved each year as we listened to what volunteers and groups were telling us, from details about their roles and why they volunteered, to training needs. For example, they told us that they wanted to come and volunteer – they didn't want to do admin, data collection, organising – so we introduced Group Coordinators to enable the volunteers to volunteer and to achieve consistency.
- 💡 **Widespread recognition of GFS' vision and mission** - We have seen KPIs around our reach increase every year and now see supporters and other organisations in the sector engage with us. This is vital to build on so that we can grow our impact. Our research work will help us gain a raised profile at a national and local level.
- 💡 **Significant growth in and of groups** – The number of girls we work with has grown in the last four years by approximately 150%. We have more to do in this area and our work in the coming years will enable us to see further growth.

Sustainability

- 💡 **A robust and diverse funding base and financial sustainability** – We continue to develop our successful fundraising pipeline alongside our ambitious fundraising plan despite the considerable difficulties we have faced through Covid and the cost-of-living crisis. Regardless of this we have seen a year-on-year increase in our income. Whilst we have not yet achieved our projected year end targets, we have a robust, long-term plan which will enable us to grow our supporter numbers across all income streams.
- 💡 **A leaner and rationalised central office** - The charity's back-office functions are vital to support our operational delivery, improve efficiency and reduce cost. We have reviewed all contracts to ensure best value as well as rationalised the use of software to reduce cost and improve our working practices. An important part of this work was the decision to close our London office, so that all central staff now work from home and we no longer need to rent an office space.

💡 An appropriate level of unrestricted reserves – There has been much work on how best we can ensure the charity is financially sustainable in the long-term. This sits alongside an important conversation about the charity's reserves and we have a long-term plan by which to reach a break even position in the near future. There are a number of hurdles to overcome on this journey but we are determined to ensure the charity's historic reserves are effectively incorporated into the charity's long-term sustainability plans and, of course, its broad and increased impact on girls and young women.

Future Plans - Overview

We know that girls as young as 6 tell us they can't be themselves. We know that girls who face additional prejudice or disadvantage have even more hurdles in their lives. We need to be working with this young age group before confidence is irreparably damaged so that they can be proud women of tomorrow.

The need for a preventative service is juxtaposed alongside the fact that there has been a significant decline in youth services. Research suggests a decline of more than 70% spend per head on youth services over the past ten years. This translates to more than half the youth services in London closing in that time.

2022-23

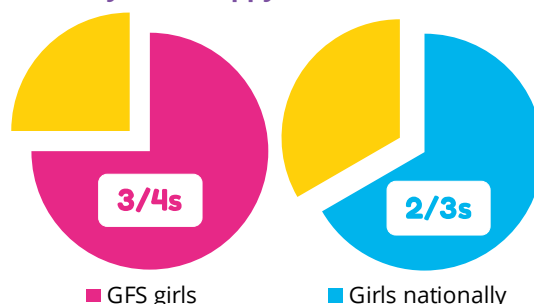
It was an important year of consolidation for GFS to ensure that the initiatives that we had developed became ingrained in our approach to all we did. It was the "Year of Inclusion" where we built on our work together around EDI (equity, diversity and inclusion). We launched an inclusion policy and took training to the volunteers and staff to support the whole team to be more inclusive in their approach and better equipped to include anyone with a support need; girls, volunteers and staff.

We also took time to reflect on what the girls were telling us they needed next. We found that girls are doing better than the national average in terms of happiness when they are at GFS. But when at school they were really struggling. Despite outperforming boys academically at school, girls are still unhappy, according to our own research and that of others such as the

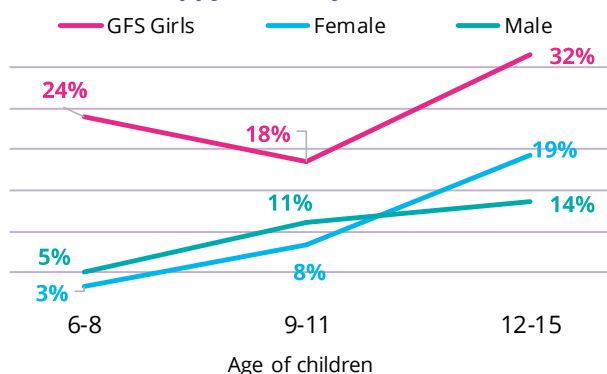
Children's Commissioner. This is something we cannot ignore; girls are telling us they need our help in schools. So, along with the desire to support more girls, we have been inspired by the girls to develop a new service for schools, for 2023-24, and will be delivering in Manchester, Liverpool and Swansea. The service has two components: a school-based group and a series of workshops. These were developed from the learning we gained in our schools' pilot programme and we look forward to evaluating its success.

Background to Girls in Focus Girls who come to GFS are...

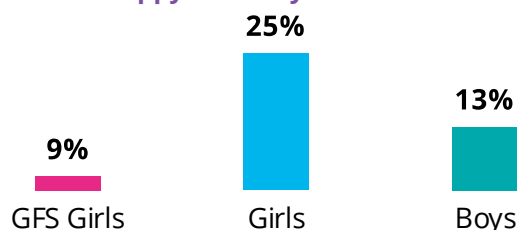
More likely to be happy with their lives overall



% unhappy with "My life at school"



% unhappy with "My mental health"



It is a priority for the Board and Leadership Team to develop the next chapter, which will coincide with our 150th anniversary in 2025. Next year will also include strategic reviews of our work, our place in the sector and our sustainability to be able to launch a new strategy, which will deliver the most impact for disadvantaged girls and young women.

Performance 2022-23

In addition to weekly sessions, our groups had some incredible trips which enabled them to push boundaries and find out more about themselves and who they could be.

Saracens Rugby Club Trip

Two of our London groups joined Saracens women's rugby team training, thanks to an invitation from our corporate partner, Enstar.

“Enstar is committed to making a difference through community involvement, charitable giving, and volunteering. We and our people give our time and money through a Corporate Social Responsibility Programme formalised in 2018 as a global initiative with a local focus. It promotes staff engagement in our support of local charities and causes. Enstar is passionate about making a difference through community involvement, charitable giving and volunteering. Our Global Corporate Social Responsibility Programme promotes staff engagement in our support of local charities and causes in the regions we operate in.

Enstar is delighted to support Girls Friendly Society as part of our commitment to equality for women and girls. ” -Enstar

Regional Fundays

GFS took part in the Big Give's International Women's Day fundraising campaign and raised £5,000 to hold a series of regional fun days for 145 GFS girls.

Workshops

In the Northwest, the girls took part in inspiring workshops provided by external facilitators, Strengthening Wellbeing Together, who led the girls in making a gratitude tree and Pariss from Journal to



Dreams, which took the girls through some fun and empowering teamwork activities. Other groups were visited by the amazing Creating Spaces, who led the girls in a placard making session about issues they were passionate about.

Creature Feature

One hugely popular feature with all girls was our creature experience. Girls explored their limits and tested their bravery by handling unfamiliar animals such as tarantulas and bearded dragons.

Building Trust

For many of us, we are wary when meeting new people. Our groups in the South and Midlands built trust and had a great laugh by letting other girls paint their faces and taking silly snaps at our selfie station.

Our programme supports girls to develop key skills.

Core programme activities aimed to support girls with areas of weakness identified in our 2022 girls survey. Through listening to girl voices, we focused our attention on supporting them with the skills they found most challenging. We were pleased to see girls reporting improvements in this year's annual survey.

Autumn term - Resilience: managing emotions & coping with difficult situations



50%
of girls said they had got better at trying again when they had a setback since joining GFS.



This rose to **72%** of girls, following core programme sessions on resilience.

Spring/Summer terms - Speaking Up: expressing ourselves and sharing our voices



46%
of girls said they'd got better at speaking up since joining GFS.



This rose to **59%** following core programme sessions on speaking up, or 63% for girls who've attended GFS for 6 months+

“One girl in particular who has always been extremely quiet and, even when asked something, would barely reply, this last month has been speaking up, confidently sharing ideas and her confidence is soaring.”

-Group Co-ordinator, GFS Neath

“Some of the girls are becoming increasingly more confident at speaking up and joining in group discussions. They are also willing to put themselves in a position to stand out without being prompted/encouraged to do so.

-Group Co-ordinator, GFS Smethwick”

Girls are putting skills into practice

Girls feel the impact of GFS beyond their groups too. Two thirds of girls say their group makes them feel more confident and three quarters feel they have got better at trying new things since joining GFS. Our “Girls In Focus” project revealed that this particularly emerged through improved social connections and communication skills, with girls feeling more able to trust others and build relationships, alongside increased confidence and resilience in challenging situations:

“I am more brave when I get hurt at hockey, I can cope better with my feelings.”

“Helped with my anxiety, I can express myself more and talk about my feelings.”

Parents and carers have also reported improvements in their child as a result of attending a GFS group. 52% say GFS has helped their child deal with personal challenges and 70% say GFS has had a positive impact on their child's behaviour outside of group:

“ She was previously in a behavioural plan...since attending GFS she has been able to control how she behaves and is able to talk about why she's upset and resolve problems before they escalate. ”

Our group environments offer vital safe spaces

Over a quarter of girls say feeling safe and welcome is the most important thing about their GFS group. We learnt that girls feel able to relax and be themselves at GFS, allowing them to form more meaningful and supportive relationships, be more open to trying new things and experiencing a positive impact on their wellbeing.

When girls feel safe, relationships can form

Girls told us that the relationships they form at group are valuable. They find dealing with peers and 'girl drama' outside of GFS a challenge, but the skills that they develop at group have supported their ability to make and maintain friendships.

When girls feel safe, they are more confident to try new things

Our non-competitive approach to activities allows girls to participate in the way that suits them best and our Group Coordinators and volunteers are skilled at adapting sessions to ensure all girls are included. This ethos supports girls to engage at their own pace and builds their confidence in having a go at something new.

75%

of girls say they have got better at making friends with different people since joining GFS

69%

of girls say their group helps them get along with people, rising to 81% for the youngest girls (aged 5 – 8)

3 in 5

parents and carers say that the friendships their child has made at group have helped her build positive relationships outside GFS.

“ This is a safe space and you can grow at GFS and express yourself. ”

“ With my friends here, we're all quite different but I can be myself. ”

“ You can find good friends at GFS so you know who you can trust. ”

“ Being able to see what you need in a friend, not just who you think you should be friends with. ”

“ I'm making more friends and choosing wise friends. ”

87%

of girls said they had got better at trying new things within the first 6 months of attending GFS.

83%

of parents and carers say the non-competitive environment helps their child join in more.

“ I try new things at GFS which makes me more confident to try things at home. ”

“ I've got better at games and not hating active stuff as much. ”

CASE STUDY ONE

Trip - Ford Castle - GFS Blyth

“Before the trip, Dakota told us she was ‘scared of heights, water and everything.’ Dakota and the group leaders chatted. They suggested she come along. She wouldn’t be forced to do anything she wasn’t comfortable with. One of the activity workers knew Dakota was scared when they went to the zip line activity, which involved climbing at height with a harness on.

The activity worker and the GFS girls encouraged Dakota to put her foot on the first step; with encouragement, she went up 3 big steps in total.

She was upset that she didn’t get to the top but the GFS girls were full of praise and called her “amazing” for getting up 3 steps. They told her “it’s ok, you didn’t get to the top. You said you were doing one step and you did three! ”

- Group Co-ordinator, GFS Blyth

CASE STUDY TWO

Session - Speaking Up - GFS Rusholme

“Before the session, Layla never liked to speak up in a group setting. Previously she did not interact as much but now she is talking more. I have seen so much confidence come out and she is so vocal. With all of the sessions, she joined in, spoke up in groups about why her group had done certain things and in the debate session, she felt confident to express what her thoughts were. She used to be overwhelmed sometimes and become visibly upset but this seems to have passed and it is great that this programme is helping her to speak out. ”

- Group Co-ordinator, GFS Rusholme

When girls feel safe, they can be themselves

With supportive friendships and a safe space where girls can try things without judgement, girls told us they are able to relax more and feel accepted for who they are. Around 1 in 5 girls say this is the most important thing about their GFS group. It is particularly important for older girls when self-esteem and confidence can start to drop in their teenage years.

75% of girls in their first 6 months at GFS said that their group makes them feel like they can be themselves.

“I want to say this in front of everyone - I feel comfortable here and feel like I can show off my anxiety whereas I have to cover it up at school. ”

“It makes me feel more normal (everyone can be weird here). ”

“It’s free from boys here so it makes me relax ”



When girls can be themselves, they are happier

When girls are free to be themselves without worrying about competing with others, fitting in or being judged, they are happier. GFS girls are less likely to be unhappy with their mental health compared to other girls their age and more likely to be happy with their lives overall.

72% of parents and carers say their child is happier as a result of coming to GFS.

“GFS makes me feel like a rainbow. It makes me a positive person on the outside.”

“My GFS group helps me be nice to myself.”

“GFS keeps me afloat when everything else is hard.”

“Coming to GFS gets me off my phone for three hours and gets me out of my bed.”

“I feel alive at GFS... I'm actually happy here.”



Volunteering at GFS

GFS recruited 114 new volunteers, with more than 200 active throughout the year.

GFS could not reach the number of girls and deliver the impact outlined above without the support of our inspirational volunteers; as Trustees, committee members, content creators, ambassadors and critically our group volunteers. Their contribution is significant and we know they enjoy being part of the GFS movement to enable girls of today to be proud of who they are. We also know that they enjoy and benefit from the experience.

GFS offers our volunteers personalised support in identifying training and development opportunities and adapting roles for greater inclusion, access and participation.

“The girls are the highlight of GFS for me; to be able to create such a lovely safe space for them is so fulfilling; chatting with them, watching them grow in confidence, laughing, learning and making new friends. I know that GFS would have been such a positive experience for me when I was younger and having the opportunity to provide this for other young girls is incredible rewarding.”

“GFS was a huge part of my daughter Frances’s life – who had been in GFS since she was two-three years old. It helped her, her friends, and many other young people realise the good and difficult things in life, and develop the ability to ask questions and form opinions. I didn’t have that as a child, as we were expected to ‘seen but not heard’ as children.”

Upskilling volunteers to better support girls at group

We took a new approach to creating training for our volunteers. Content was guided by volunteers themselves, who identified areas of need amongst the girls they supported. Training was then designed to improve their knowledge, understanding and ability to help girls with issues such as ADHD, autism and anxiety.

Specialist facilitators were recruited to deliver sessions on these subjects, to provide more accessible and continuous learning opportunities. As a result, we noted higher rates of attendance and positive impact amongst attendees, after completing their training:

72% reported a positive change in their confidence of how best to support a girl.

63% reported a positive change in their knowledge and understanding.

97% said that the training session had changed or improved their practice.



Listening to girls

We are committed to being girl-shaped and girl-led. We have explored different ways to hear girls' voices to both understand our impact and ensure that girls and their needs are at the heart of our decision-making.

Our research with girls

To establish some baseline data, we used the Children Commissioner's "Big Ask" survey to assess the wellbeing of GFS girls; asking questions about their friendships, life at school, mental health, local area, experiences online and life overall. This allowed us to benchmark GFS girls against children nationally. Our findings showed that, whilst GFS girls were happier than other girls nationally in some areas, their happiness with life at school was significantly lower.

To explore this further, we carried out focus groups over a six-week period. Our "Girls In Focus" project used participatory methods to engage girls in conversation around what a good or bad day looks like at school, as well as what they value about GFS.

What we learnt from girls was hugely insightful. For those who were unhappy, the school environment was a source of stress, in terms of both academic and social pressure. The negative attitudes of others and worrying about what other people think also affected their wellbeing. They told us about the challenges of navigating friendships, managing conflict and fitting in with their peers. They also illustrated how gender stereotypes can start to affect them from a young age. For example, their experiences of PE in school mirrored the findings of wider research into why girls disengage from sport in their teenage years.

Our annual survey revealed that only one third of GFS girls feel like they can be themselves at school. The findings – along with what girls told us about GFS – helped define our understanding of the problems girls are facing and the solution we currently provide through our services. It helped inform how we can better support girls and talk about their experiences on other platforms.

GFS girls wellbeing benchmark



Girls In Focus



“ There is so much pressure, it's such a hard environment...I can't find the words but before the holidays I had really poor mental health, I wasn't sleeping and I was getting sick. ”

“ I like PE - football, rugby and tennis - they are fun but boys say I'm bad at them. ”

“ People think I'm different because I like to express myself and they say 'calm down.' I mask the way I like to express myself so people don't see it and judge me. ”

Learning from and responding to girls 2023-24

Listening to girls has allowed us to learn, adapt and improve, to ensure we continue to meet their needs appropriately in 2023/24. Girl voices have influenced various aspects of decision-making across GFS, with some key examples:

01 Shaping our Programme around girls' needs and exploring evaluation approaches

Navigating friendships emerged as a key area of challenge for girls during our "Girls in Focus" project. Our core programme for 2023-24 will therefore focus on supporting girls' needs in this area by raising their awareness of how to handle issues and developing key skills to better manage challenges. Our Autumn Programme, launched in September 2023, focuses on celebrating difference, learning to let go of things and positive self-esteem.

02 Making changes to the way we operate to ensure we are reaching girls in key areas

We have worked hard to improve our understanding of the areas we work in and the demographics of our girls and volunteers. Through collecting key data, we have been able to monitor whether we are reaching those most in need within our local communities and make changes to ensure our groups are accessible and inclusive. For example, after girl numbers dropped at GFS Mile End, we consulted local families and found that GFS clashed with evening sessions at mosque. As a result, we successfully trialled our first Saturday group, with girls now attending who were previously unable to.

03 Working in schools to support girls where they need us

We are exploring how we can bring our support into new spaces. As girls have told us that school can be challenging, we are adapting our services to operate in schools. This will help us meet girls where they need us most, whilst removing barriers to inclusion for those unable to attend GFS groups. We are trialling two ways of working with schools:

- After-school groups in schools, two of which launched as a trial in September 2023.
- One-off workshops delivered to girls during the school day, with activities based on our core programme. We will be trialling this new service in 2024.

04 Putting girl voices at the heart of our campaigns

Our learning from girls has directed the theme of our celebrations for campaigns such as International Day of the Girl (IDG). Through our #GirlsAllowed IDG campaign, we advocated that all girls should feel allowed to be themselves wherever they go. This concept has helped us engage with external stakeholders as the voices and experiences of GFS girls have resonated with many people, especially women. As a result, we received a number of significant contributions to our virtual wall, social media blogs and webinars.

05 Keeping girls at the heart of all we do

84% of girls say they feel like they have a say in what happens at their GFS group. As we continue to advocate for girls, we want to make sure they also feel this way about what happens across GFS. Our learning from girls means that their voices will influence our work in 2023-24 through:

- The continuous development of programme and training based on girls' needs.
- The establishment of further listening initiatives through our "Girls In" project, focusing on improving two-way communication with girls through workshops, newsletters and improved listening mechanisms and approaches to evaluation at group.
- Delivering our fundraising and awareness campaign around International Day of the Girl and ensuring that girl voices are embedded within future events, such as our 150th anniversary.



FINANCIAL REVIEW

Results for the year

The statement of financial activities on page 30 shows net expenditure for the year before investment losses of £742,985 (2022 – £723,217) being a deficit on unrestricted funds of £334,877 (2022 – £421,265), a deficit on designated funds of £288,959 (2022 – £163,792) and a deficit on restricted funds of £119,149 (2021 – £138,160).

Total income for the year was £312,831 (2022 – £228,588) with income from investments and interest receivable comprising 48% (2022 – 63%) of the total and amounting to £150,988 (2022 – £143,083). Although the income yield from investments is welcome, it is not adequate to sustain our activities and it needs to be supplemented by substantial other sources of income in the future to ensure the financial security which will safeguard the charity's services for the long term.

Expenditure in the year totalled £1,055,816 (2022 – £951,805) with expenditure on charitable activities to £889,010 (2022 – £811,531). The charity's largest expense item continues to be staff costs reflecting the importance of people to the successful achievement of the organisation's aims – both paid staff and volunteers. Trustees continue to strive to achieve the charity's aims within the framework of providing a high-quality service to the girls and young women who require the charity's support.

The final net movement in funds for the year, after net investment gains of £151,121 (2022 – loss of £1,117,922) amounted to a loss of £591,864 (2022 – loss of £1,841,139).

Financial position

Free reserves and reserves policy

GFS' reserves policy is to maintain free reserves, net of the pension fund deficit, of around 3 months' expenditure, £286,000-£383,000. Free reserves are maintained to mitigate risks associated with fluctuating costs and to ensure there is a baseline to cover spend in the coming months. Free reserves, along with designated funds would also be used in the unlikely event of wind up. In September 2023 we had £282,625 in free reserves (2022 – £260,950) this is equivalent to 2.6 months expenditure (2022 – 2.7 months).

The charity also has restricted reserves that are limited in where they can be spent, and endowments that generate income that can be spent. Trustees have structured the reserves to protect the services and allow the charity to continue to fundraise. The additional fundraising income is being built on top of the strong financial foundation the endowment provides, to allow the charity to innovate and to meet the growing demand for our services.

The charity carries a pension deficit of £18,858 (2022 – £32,047).

Other funds

In addition to the endowment funds, on 30 September 2023, GFS had restricted funds which totalled £1,910,031 (2022 – £1,990,317) most of which are restricted to being spent in certain geographic areas and, in particular, specific dioceses. Full details of the funds are given in notes 17 to 19 to the attached financial statements.

The charity has designated funds which on 30 September 2023 totalled £2,298,240 (2022 – £2,861,898). These funds are designated for the growth of the fundraising department, to support the organisation during COVID, and to deliver our strategy to work with more girls and young women. They form the basis of an ongoing piece of work to bolster our services in the coming years, as described in more detail throughout this report.

The pension deficit fund of £18,858 matches the liability on the balance sheet in respect to the defined benefit pension scheme which the charity contributes to on behalf of certain of its employees. Details of the scheme and the deficit funding determined by an actuary are given in note 24 to the attached financial statements.

Investment Policy

The charity has a portfolio of investments which had a market value as of 30 September 2023 of £7,052,233 (2022 – £7,738,460) comprising listed investments of £6,502,688 (2022 – £7,556,506), and cash awaiting investment of £549,545 (2021 – £181,954). The investment portfolio represents in part the charity's endowment funds, the capital of which cannot be spent.

We consider our investments to be a long-term solution. Markets are starting to bounce back after the volatility of the last couple of years. We anticipate our investment portfolio will continue to provide us with an income, it is still necessary for us to supplement this with fundraised income to cover the breadth of our activities.

GFS uses independent investment managers (CCLA and Rathbones) to safeguard our invested funds. These investment managers meet with Trustees once per quarter to review the portfolios, the yield, and the requirements of the charity. The investment objectives are to achieve the highest possible yield from the portfolio and long-term capital growth whilst maintaining the underlying risk at acceptable levels. During the year Trustees agreed to split the money in Rathbones into two portfolios, at different risk levels. The lower risk level means we can withdraw money as needed with minimal risk to the value of the overall portfolio. Our investments are managed on a Total Return basis.

Fundraising Statement

GFS is committed to responsible fundraising practices, which are legal, honest and respectful. We follow the Fundraising Code of Practice. We are registered with the Fundraising Regulator. We do not carry out door-to-door, street or telephone fundraising. We take our responsibility towards our donors very seriously and aim to provide a positive experience. We believe that no one should feel pressured into giving. We take steps to ensure that the vulnerable are protected. We will not contact anyone unless they have requested or consented to receiving fundraising communications. Donors can opt out of receiving fundraising or any other communications at any time. We will never sell, swap or share their data. We aim for all those donating to GFS to have a positive experience. In 2022-23 we received no complaints. However, if we receive them, we are committed to investigating complaints and resolving them swiftly. If anyone is dissatisfied with their experience, please contact us. Feedback enables us to improve our fundraising service.

Public Benefit

Trustees have referred to the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit when reviewing the charity's aims and activities for the year, and the organisational plans for future periods.



GOVERNANCE ARRANGEMENTS

Constitution and Committees

Girls Friendly Society in England and Wales is a company limited by guarantee and is registered under the Charities Act (2011).

The Board of Trustees consists of up to fifteen Trustees, recruited in accordance with the Bye Laws following an open and transparent recruitment exercise designed to address skills and experience gaps emerging on the Board. As well as sitting on the Board every Trustee sits on one of the supporting skill-based committees – People & Operations, Fundraising & Growth, Finance & Investments and Quality & Impact. This wider governance team is recruited in the same open recruitment process to fill gaps and in line with safer recruitment.

Each new Trustee receives an induction pack and ongoing training. Trustees are encouraged to attend individual in-house and external training events with or without staff. Trustees also have a member of the Leadership Team as a link to ensure good staff-board communication. Key pillars of their induction training are Conflict of Interest, safeguarding, inclusion, EDI. No Trustee received remuneration for services as a Trustee during the period or any beneficial interest in any contract with the charity during the period.

Overall responsibility for the charity remains with the Trustees who set and monitor the strategic direction of the charity and agree policy. The Board reviews organisational progress against the strategy on a quarterly basis and self-assesses its practice and progress against the Charity Governance Code.

Trustees' Responsibilities

The Trustees are responsible for preparing Trustees' Report and Financial Statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice). Under

company law the Trustees must not approve the financial statements unless they are satisfied that they give a true and fair view of the charitable company and of its income and expenditure for that period.

The Trustees are responsible for keeping adequate 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.

Each of the Trustees confirms that:

- ✔ **so far as the Trustee is aware, there is no relevant audit information of which the charitable company's auditor is unaware;**
- ✔ **the Trustee took all steps needed to make self aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the charitable company's auditor is aware of that information.**

This confirmation is given and should be interpreted in accordance with the provisions of s418 of the Companies Act 2006. The Trustees are responsible for the maintenance and integrity of 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.

Risk

The Trustees regularly assess the major risks to which the charity is exposed under the following categories: Finance and Investment, People and Operations, Quality and Impact, Fundraising and Growth. The Trustees believe that by monitoring these and developing controls they will have established effective systems to mitigate them or reduce their impact.

The Trustees discuss risks at every committee and Board meeting, although risks may be raised by the Chief Executive to the Board at any time. The Board uses a Risk Rating matrix to help it focus on the principal risks and execute mitigating plans of action. A summary of the top three principal risks and uncertainties identified by the Trustees follows:

- ? Investment strategy not working for us**
- ? Ability to develop and deliver successful FR strategy**
- ? Continuing to run charity on a deficit**

Leadership and Management

The Leadership Team is recruited to lead on each area of specialism the organisation needs and is supported by governance committees. Each member of the Leadership Team attends and presents reports to a committee. They also feed into every Board by way of a joint report as well as attending at least one board meeting a year. The Chief Executive attends all committee meetings and board meetings to provide consistency.

We are a totally virtual team now and so each Leadership Team member has a responsibility to lead their team with great purpose to fulfil the strategy and achieve our organisational objectives. The Leadership Team has an annual plan and objectives that they develop alongside KPI's for the year. They meet weekly to discuss key priorities and have task specific meetings throughout the week. The entire staff team meets virtually once a week to attend training, discuss team goals or receive organisational updates. After every Board meeting a Trustee reports to the staff team on decisions made.

The charity has a remuneration policy which is designed to offer fair pay to attract and retain qualified staff to lead, manage and deliver the

charity's aims. The charity does not have a performance pay approach and neither does it award commission or a bonus scheme. Instead, every two years, GFS reviews its salaries with an external benchmarking sector expert. Results are shared with the Board and feed into the budget. Every other year the Board awards an increase for all staff – this is a % award and based on cost of living and sector practice.

The trustees consider that they, together with the Chief Executive and Leadership Team, comprise the key management of the charity in charge of directing, controlling, running and operating the charity on a day to day basis. None of the trustees receives any remuneration in connection with their role as key management personnel.

Recruitment and Training

GFS is committed to delivering fair and safer recruitment and has a policy in place to ensure this happens. Every paid and unpaid role is assessed to determine if it is eligible for a criminal DBS check and if so at what level. The guidance suggests that these are refreshed every three years and our database flags when this is necessary for each member of the team.

All recruitment and selection across GFS is also guided by the GFS Equity and Diversity Policy. Every post is widely advertised with a genuine focus on ensuring we include considerations for equity, diversity and inclusion. This is at advert stage, within the job description and the interview process. The shortlists are developed using anonymous applications and questions developed to test the key competencies of the role. The candidates are also given the opportunity to see the questions in advance of the interview to support a good interview process and give everyone the best opportunity.

GFS needs to respond to the ever-changing challenges of the day faced by girls and young women. Therefore, there is a need to ensure the entire team is supported to address that need and as a result there is a very real commitment to training and development. It is one of the GFS strategic objectives to invest in the people so that this remains a learning organisation.

The above report has been prepared in accordance with the special provisions relating to small companies within FRS 102 and part 15 of the Companies Act.

Signature 
Date HERE 23 March 2024



INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT TO THE MEMBERS OF GIRLS FRIENDLY SOCIETY IN ENGLAND AND WALES

Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of Girls Friendly Society in England and Wales (the 'charitable company') for the year ended 30 September 2023 which comprise the statement of financial activities, the balance sheet, the statement of cash flows, the principal accounting policies and the notes to the financial statements. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards, including Financial Reporting Standard 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 charitable company's affairs as at 30 September 2023 and of its income and expenditure for the year then ended;
- have been properly prepared in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice; and
- have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006

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 financial statements section of our report. We are independent of the 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 the charitable company'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 annual report and financial statements, other than the financial statements and our auditor's report thereon. The trustees are responsible for the other information contained within the annual report and financial statements. Our opinion on the 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 financial statements or our knowledge 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 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' report, which is also the directors' report for the purposes of company law, for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements; and
- the trustees' report, which is also the directors' report for the purposes of company, 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 charitable company and its environment obtained in the course of the audit, we have not identified material misstatements in the trustees' report. We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters in relation to which the Companies Act 2006 requires us to report to you if, in our opinion:

- adequate accounting records have not been kept, or returns adequate for our audit have not been received from branches not visited by us; or
- the 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' report and from the requirement to prepare a strategic report.

Responsibilities of trustees

As explained more fully in the trustees' responsibilities statement, the trustees (who are also the directors of the 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 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 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

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 is detailed below:

Our approach to identifying and assessing the risks of material misstatement in respect of irregularities, including fraud and non-compliance with laws and regulations, was as follows:

- the engagement partner ensured that the engagement team collectively had the appropriate competence, capabilities and skills to identify or recognise non-compliance with applicable laws and regulations; and
- we obtained an understanding of the legal and regulatory frameworks that are applicable to the charitable company and determined that the most significant frameworks which are directly relevant to specific assertions in the financial statements are those that relate

to the reporting framework (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 United Kingdom and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102)), the Charities Act 2011, and the Companies Act 2006, and other regulations including safeguarding, data protection, fundraising and employment law.

We assessed the susceptibility of the charity's financial statements to material misstatement, including obtaining an understanding of how fraud might occur, by:

- making enquiries of management as to their knowledge of actual, suspected and alleged fraud; and
- considering the internal controls in place to mitigate risks of fraud and non-compliance with laws and regulations.

To address the risk of fraud through management bias and override of controls, we:

- performed analytical procedures to identify any unusual or unexpected relationships;
- tested journal entries to identify unusual transactions; and
- assessed whether judgements and assumptions made in determining the accounting estimates were indicative of potential bias.

In response to the risk of irregularities and non-compliance with laws and regulations, we designed procedures which included, but were not limited to:

- review of the minutes of meetings of those charged with governance; and
- enquiring of management as to actual and potential litigation and claims

There are inherent limitations in our audit procedures described above. The more removed that laws and regulations are from financial transactions, the less likely it is that we would become aware of non-compliance. Auditing standards also limit the audit procedures required to identify non-compliance with laws and regulations to enquiry of the trustees and other management and the inspection of regulatory and legal correspondence, if any

Material misstatements that arise due to fraud can be harder to detect than those that arise from error as they may involve deliberate concealment or collusion.


A further description of our responsibilities is available on the Financial Reporting Council's website at 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. 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.

Catherine Biscoe (Senior Statutory Auditor)
for and on behalf of Buzzacott LLP,
Statutory Auditor

130 Wood Street
London
EC2V 6DL

Signature: 
Date: 3 April 2024

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES

(incorporating an income and expenditure account)

Year to 30 September 2023

	Notes	Unrestricted Funds £	Designated Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Endowment Funds £	Total Funds 2023 £	Total Funds 2022 £
Income							
Donations and legacies	1	41,778	—	92,319	—	134,097	70,430
Investment income and interest receivable	2	93,809	—	57,179	—	150,988	143,083
Miscellaneous income		27,746	—	—	—	27,746	15,075
Total income		163,333	—	149,498	—	312,831	228,588
Expenditure							
Raising funds	3	30,242	136,564	—	—	166,806	140,274
Charitable activities: Community and school based programmes	4	467,968	152,395	268,647	—	889,010	811,531
Total expenditure		498,210	288,959	268,647	—	1,055,816	951,805
Net (expenditure) / income before investment gains / (losses)	7	(334,877)	(288,959)	(119,149)	—	(742,985)	(723,217)
Net gains / (losses) on investments		—	56,422	38,863	55,836	151,121	(1,117,922)
Net (expenditure)/ income		(334,877)	(232,537)	(80,286)	55,836	(591,864)	(1,841,139)
Statement of recognised gains and losses							
Actuarial (losses) / gains on defined benefit pension scheme		(1,343)	—	—	—	(1,343)	99,913
Net movement in funds for the year before transfers		(336,220)	(232,537)	(80,286)	55,836	(593,207)	(1,741,226)
Transfers between funds	20	331,121	(331,121)	—	—	—	—
Net income and net movement in funds for the year		(5,099)	(563,658)	(80,286)	55,836	(593,207)	(1,741,226)
Reconciliation of funds							
Total funds brought forward at 1/10/22		290,719	2,861,898	1,990,317	2,832,164	7,975,098	9,716,324
Total funds carried forward at 30/9/23		285,620	2,298,240	1,910,031	2,888,000	7,381,891	7,975,098

COMPARATIVE STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES


(incorporating an income and expenditure account)

Year to 30 September 2022

	Notes	General Funds £	Designated Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Endowment Funds £	Total Funds 2022 £
Income						
Donations and legacies	1	38,282	—	32,148	—	70,430
Investment income and interest receivable	2	92,466	—	50,617	—	143,083
Miscellaneous income		15,075	—	—	—	15,075
Total income		145,823	—	82,765	—	228,588
Expenditure						
Raising funds	3	26,762	113,512	—	—	140,274
Charitable activities: Community and school based programmes	4	540,326	50,280	220,925	—	811,531
Total expenditure		567,088	163,792	220,925	—	951,805
Net (expenditure) income before investment gains	7	(421,265)	(163,792)	(138,160)	—	(723,217)
Net gains on investments		—	(471,841)	(262,044)	(384,037)	(1,117,922)
Net (expenditure)/ income		(421,265)	(635,633)	(400,204)	(384,037)	(1,841,139)
Statement of recognised gains and losses						
Actuarial gains on defined benefit pension scheme		99,913	—	—	—	99,913
Net movement in funds for the year before transfers		(321,352)	(635,633)	(400,204)	(384,037)	(1,741,226)
Transfers between funds	20	454,000	(454,000)	—	—	—
Net income / (expenditure) and net movement in funds for the year		132,648	(1,089,633)	(400,204)	(384,037)	(1,741,226)
Reconciliation of funds						
Total funds brought forward at 1/10/21		158,071	3,951,531	2,390,521	3,216,201	9,716,324
Total funds carried forward at 30/9/22		290,719	2,861,898	1,990,317	2,832,164	7,975,098

BALANCE SHEET

The financial statements were approved by the Trustees of Girls Friendly Society in England and Wales Company Registration No. 3172713 (England and Wales) and signed on its behalf by:

Trustee 
Approved on: 23 March 2024

Year to 30 September 2023

	Notes	2023 £	2022 £
Fixed assets			
Tangible assets	11	21,853	29,769
Investments	12	7,052,233	7,738,460
		7,074,086	7,768,229
Current assets			
Debtors	13	26,526	89,021
Short term deposits		145,233	36,472
Cash at bank and in hand		214,053	272,472
		385,812	397,965
Liabilities			
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	14	(59,149)	(159,049)
Net current assets		326,663	238,916
Total assets less current liabilities		7,400,749	8,007,145
Provisions for liabilities and charges	15	(18,858)	(32,047)
Total net assets		7,381,891	7,975,098
Funds and reserves			
Restricted funds	17,18,19	1,910,031	1,990,317
Unrestricted funds			
Tangible fixed assets fund		21,853	29,769
Designated funds	20	2,298,240	2,861,898
General funds		282,625	292,997
Pension reserve	24	(18,858)	(32,047)
Endowment funds	16	2,888,000	2,832,164
Total funds		7,381,891	7,975,098

CASH FLOW STATEMENT

Year to 30 September 2023

	Notes	2023 £	2022 £
Cash flows from operating activities:			
Net cash used in operating activities	A	(997,239)	(823,108)
Cash flows from investing activities:			
Investment income received		211,561	66,439
Interest received		654	24
Purchase of tangible fixed assets		(2,000)	(5,418)
Proceeds from the disposal of tangible fixed assets		—	—
Proceeds from the disposal of investments		4,538,653	2,895,702
Purchase of investments		(3,333,714)	(2,183,553)
Net cash provided by investing activities		1,415,154	773,194
Change in cash and cash equivalents in the year		417,915	(49,915)
Cash and cash equivalents at 1 October 2022	B	490,898	540,813
Cash and cash equivalents at 30 September 2023	B	908,813	490,898

Notes to the statement of cash flows for the year to 30 September 2023:

A Reconciliation of net movement in funds to net cash used in operating activities

	2023 £	2022 £
Net movement in funds (as per the statement of financial activities)	(593,207)	(1,741,226)
Adjustments for:		
Depreciation charge	9,916	9,467
Losses (gains) on investments	(151,121)	1,117,922
Investment income	(150,334)	(143,059)
Interest receivable	(654)	(24)
Decrease (increase) in debtors	1,250	6,954
(Decrease) increase in creditors	(99,900)	70,042
(Decrease) in pension provision	(13,189)	(143,184)
Net cash used in operating activities	(997,239)	(823,108)

B Analysis of cash and cash equivalents

	2023 £	2022 £
Cash at bank and in hand	214,035	272,472
Short term deposits	145,233	36,472
Cash held by investment managers	549,545	181,954
Total cash and cash equivalents	908,813	490,898

No separate reconciliation of net debt has been prepared as there is no difference between the net cash (debt) of the charity and the above cash and cash equivalents.

PRINCIPAL ACCOUNTING POLICIES

The principal accounting policies adopted, judgements and key sources of estimation uncertainty in the preparation of the financial statements are laid out below.

Basis of preparation

These financial statements have been prepared for the year to 30 September 2023 with comparative information provided in respect to the year to 30 September 2022.

The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention with items recognised at cost or transaction value unless otherwise stated in the relevant accounting policies below or the notes to these accounts.

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 United Kingdom and Republic of Ireland (Charities SORP FRS 102), the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) and the Companies Act 2006.

The charity constitutes a public benefit entity as defined by FRS 102.

The financial statements are presented in sterling and are rounded to the nearest pound.

Critical accounting estimates and areas of judgement

Preparation of the financial statements requires the Trustees and management to make significant judgements and estimates.

The items in the financial statements where these judgements and estimates have been made include:

- estimating the useful economic life of tangible fixed assets for the purpose of determining the annual depreciation charge;
- the underlying assumptions used by the actuary in determining the deficit on the defined benefit pension scheme;

- the allocation of expenditure across charitable activities; and
- the estimation of future income and expenditure flows for the purpose of assessing going concern (see below).

Assessment of going concern

The Trustees have assessed whether the use of the going concern assumption is appropriate in preparing these accounts. The Trustees have made this assessment in respect to a period of at least one year from the date of approval of these accounts.

The Trustees have concluded that there are no material uncertainties related to events or conditions that may cast significant doubt on the ability of the charity to continue as a going concern. The Trustees are of the opinion that the charity will have sufficient resources to meet its liabilities as they fall due. In making their assessment, the Trustees have considered the impact of pandemics and fluctuating markets on the charity.

The Trustees will continue to keep both income and expenditure under review but do not anticipate that the impact on the charity's finances will be material or impact on the charity's going concern

Income recognition

Income is recognised in the period in which the charity has entitlement to receipt, the amount can be measured reliably and it is probable that the funds will be received.

Income comprises donations, legacies, investment income, interest receivable, income from charitable activities and miscellaneous income.

Donations are recognised when the charity has confirmation of both the amount and settlement date. In the event of donations pledged but not received, the amount is accrued for where the receipt is considered probable. In the event that a donation is subject to conditions that require a level of performance before the charity is entitled to the funds, the income is deferred and not recognised until either those conditions are fully met, or the fulfilment of those conditions is wholly within the control of the charity and it is probable

that those conditions will be fulfilled in the reporting period.

In accordance with the Charities SORP FRS 102 volunteer time is not recognised.

Legacies are included in the statement of financial activities when the charity is entitled to the legacy, the executors have established that there are sufficient surplus assets in the estate to pay the legacy, and any conditions attached to the legacy are within the control of the charity.

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 executor to the charity that a distribution will be made, or when a 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 executor's intention to make a distribution. Where legacies have been notified to the charity, or the charity is aware of the granting of probate, but the criteria for income recognition have not been met, then the legacy is treated as a contingent asset and disclosed if material.

Dividends are recognised once the dividend has been declared and notification has been received of the dividend due.

Interest on funds held on deposit is included when receivable and the amount can be measured reliably by the charity; this is normally upon notification of the interest paid or payable by the bank.

Income from charitable activities comprises grants from government and other agencies. Such income is recognised when the charity has entitlement to the funds under agreements or other the contractual arrangements for the payment of each grant.

Gifts in Kind

Gifts in kind are accounted for at a reasonable estimate of their value to the charity or the amount actually realised. Gifts in kind for sale

or distribution are included in the accounts as gifts only when sold or distributed by the charity. Gifts in kind for use by the charity are included in the Statement of Financial Activities as incoming resources in the period they are receivable.

Expenditure recognition

Liabilities are recognised as expenditure as soon as there is a legal or constructive obligation committing the charity to make a payment to a third party, it is probable that a transfer of economic benefits will be required in settlement and the amount of the obligation can be measured reliably.

All expenditure is accounted for on an accruals basis. Expenditure comprises direct costs and support costs. All expenses, including support costs, are allocated or apportioned to the applicable expenditure headings. The classification between activities is as follows:

- a Expenditure on raising funds includes all expenditure associated with raising funds for the charity. This includes investment management fees, staff costs associated with fundraising and an allocation of support costs.
- b Expenditure on charitable activities includes all costs associated with furthering the charitable purposes of the charity through the provision of its charitable activities as described in the Trustees' report i.e. providing opportunities for girls and young women to develop their self confidence, wellbeing and resilience to enable them to fulfill their potential. Such costs include:
 - Staff costs and associated expenses
 - Day to day running expense of schemes and projects
 - Special projects and equipment
 - Maintenance and building costs for the schemes and projects.

This expenditure includes both costs that can be allocated directly to such activities and those indirect costs necessary to support them.

All expenditure is stated inclusive of irrecoverable VAT.

Allocation of costs

Support costs are those costs that enable charitable activities to be carried out. These costs include expenses relating to personnel development, financial procedures, provision of office services and equipment, and a suitable working environment.

Governance costs comprise the costs involving the public accountability of the charity (including audit costs) and costs in respect to its compliance with regulation and good practice.

Support costs and governance costs are apportioned to expenditure headings based on the headcount relating to each activity.

Tangible fixed assets

All assets costing more than £1,000 and with an expected useful life exceeding one year are capitalised.

Freehold land and buildings

- Freehold land and buildings are stated in the financial statements at cost and after deducting depreciation.
- Depreciation is charged at the following annual rate based on net cost:
- Freehold buildings 2%
- No depreciation is charged on freehold land

Other tangible fixed assets

All other tangible fixed assets are stated at cost. Depreciation is calculated at the following annual rates in order to write off the cost of each asset over its estimated useful life:

- | | |
|---------------------------------|------------------------------|
| • Computer equipment | 33% on cost |
| • Office equipment | 20% on cost |
| • Other equipment and furniture | 10% on cost |
| • Fittings in leased property | Over the period of the lease |

Fixed asset investments

Listed investments are a form of basic financial instrument and are initially recognised at their transaction value and subsequently measured at their fair value as at the balance sheet date using the closing quoted market price.

The charity does not acquire put options, derivatives or other complex financial instruments.

Realised gains (or losses) on investment assets are calculated as the difference between disposal proceeds and their opening carrying value or their purchase value if acquired subsequent to the first day of the financial year. Unrealised gains and losses are calculated as the difference between the fair value at the year end and their carrying value at that date. Realised and unrealised investment gains (or losses) are combined in the statement of financial activities and are credited (or debited) in the year in which they arise.

Debtors

Debtors are recognised at their settlement amount, less any provision for non-recoverability. Prepayments are valued at the amount prepaid. They have been discounted to the present value of the future cash receipt where such discounting is material.

Cash at bank and in hand

Cash at bank and in hand represents such accounts and instruments that are available on demand or have a maturity of less than three months from the date of acquisition. Deposits for more than three months but less than one year have been disclosed as short term deposits.

The classification of current assets in the prior year has been updated to show deposits with a maturity of between three and twelve months as short term deposits.

Creditors and provisions

Creditors and provisions are recognised when there is an obligation at the balance sheet date as a result of a past event, it is probable that a transfer of economic benefit will be required in settlement, and the amount of the settlement can be estimated reliably.

Creditors and provisions are recognised at the amount the charity anticipates it will pay to settle the debt. They have been discounted to the present value of the future cash payment where such discounting is material.

Fund structure

The general funds comprise free reserves, the tangible fixed assets fund and the pension deficit fund. The free reserves those net assets are which may be used towards meeting the charitable objectives of the charity and which may be applied at the discretion of the Trustees.

The pension deficit fund represents the liability in respect to the defined benefit pension scheme to which the charity contributes on behalf of certain of its employees.

The designated funds comprise monies set aside by the Trustees for specific purposes.

The restricted funds are monies raised for, and their use restricted to, a specific purpose, or donations subject to donor imposed conditions.

The permanent endowment funds comprise monies which must be held indefinitely as capital. The income therefrom can be used for general purposes and is credited directly to general funds.

Leased assets

Rentals applicable to operating leases where substantially all of the benefits and risks of ownership remain with the lessor are charged to the statement of financial activities on a straight line basis over the lease term.

Pension contributions

The growth plan pension scheme is a multi-employer scheme providing benefits for some 1,300 non-associated employers. It is therefore not possible to identify the underlying share of the charity's assets and liabilities within the scheme. However, as a member of the scheme, the charity has a legal obligation to make pension deficit reduction payments when required by the scheme's actuary. The full cost of these repayments, discounted to present values, is recognised in the year a pension deficit reduction plan is agreed.

In July 2014, all eligible members of staff were required to enrol in the charity's workplace pension scheme, under auto-enrolment. Staff members were entitled to opt out of this scheme. The percentage contribution of salary into the scheme is a minimum rate of 2.5%. The charity pays employer's contributions at a rate of 7.5%.

Financial instruments

The charity only holds basic financial instruments as defined in FRS 102. The financial assets and financial liabilities of the charity and their measurement basis are as follows:

Financial assets – trade and other debtors are basic financial instruments and are debt instruments measured at amortised cost. Prepayments are not financial instruments.

Cash at bank – is classified as a basic financial instrument and is measured at face value.

Financial liabilities – trade creditors, accruals and other creditors are financial instruments, and are measured at amortised cost. Taxation and social security are not included in the financial instruments disclosure definition. Deferred income is not deemed to be a financial liability, as the cash settlement has already taken place and there is an obligation to deliver services rather than cash or another financial instrument.

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

1 Income from: Donations and legacies

	General Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total Funds 2023 £
Donations and similar income	38,020	92,319	130,339
Legacies	3,758	—	3,758
2023 Total funds	41,778	92,319	134,097

	General Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total Funds 2022 £
<i>Donations and similar income</i>	<i>35,082</i>	<i>32,148</i>	<i>67,230</i>
<i>Legacies</i>	<i>3,200</i>	<i>—</i>	<i>3,200</i>
<i>2022 Total funds</i>	<i>38,282</i>	<i>32,148</i>	<i>70,430</i>

GFS has been asked to record the donations of two of its funders in 2022/23 within the charity's annual accounts. These are the Portal Trust, who donated £6,000 to support GFS Mile End, and SCVO Vision 2030 who donated £5,000 to support GFS Smethwick.

2 Income from: Investment income and interest receivable

	General Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total Funds 2023 £
Investment income (see below)	93,155	57,179	150,334
Interest receivable	654	—	654
2023 Total funds	93,809	57,179	150,988

	General Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total Funds 2022 £
<i>Investment income (see below)</i>	<i>92,442</i>	<i>50,617</i>	<i>143,059</i>
<i>Interest receivable</i>	<i>24</i>	<i>—</i>	<i>24</i>
<i>2022 Total funds</i>	<i>92,466</i>	<i>50,617</i>	<i>143,083</i>

Investment income was received from the following sources:

	Total 2023 funds £	Total Funds 2022 £
UK equities	56,255	47,275
Overseas equities	19,711	23,826
UK fixed interest based common investment funds	72,231	63,866
Property unit trusts	—	7,894
Alternatives	2,137	198
	150,334	143,059

3 Expenditure on: Raising funds

	General Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Designated Funds £	Total Funds 2023 £
Investment manager's fees	30,242	—	—	30,242
Staff costs	—	—	133,468	133,468
Other direct fundraising costs	—	—	3,096	3,096
2023 Total funds	30,242	—	136,564	166,806

	General Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Designated Funds £	Total Funds 2022 £
<i>Investment manager's fees</i>	26,762	—	881	27,643
<i>Staff costs</i>	—	—	112,631	112,631
<i>2022 Total funds</i>	26,762	—	113,512	140,274

4 Expenditure on: Charitable activities - community and school based programmes

	General Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Designated Funds £	Total Funds 2023 £
Staff costs and recruitment	332,563	193,805	138,506	664,874
Staff travel, training and subsistence	15,937	6,846	2,500	25,283
Direct volunteer costs	7,259	3,009	—	10,268
Direct project costs	25,024	29,173	—	54,197
Premises	24,197	8,633	—	32,830
Office, administration and misc	34,609	16,867	11,389	62,865
Marketing and communications	7,666	2,656	—	10,322
Governance costs (note 6)	20,713	7,658	—	28,371
2023 Total funds	467,968	268,647	152,395	889,010

	General Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Designated Funds £	Total Funds 2022 £
<i>Staff costs and recruitment</i>	393,906	148,332	21,346	563,584
<i>Staff travel, training and subsistence</i>	7,994	1,999	—	9,993
<i>Direct volunteer costs</i>	7,823	2,455	—	10,279
<i>Direct project costs</i>	24,632	19,278	—	43,910
<i>Premises</i>	49,725	12,431	—	62,156
<i>Office, administration and misc</i>	56,246	19,572	2,957	78,775
<i>Marketing and communications</i>	—	8,549	6,639	15,188
<i>Governance costs (note 6)</i>	—	8,309	19,338	27,647
<i>2022 Total funds</i>	540,326	220,925	50,280	811,531

5 Support costs

Support costs are those costs which enable the charitable work of GFS. They include indirect overheads and many of the head office costs which facilitate the branches and projects.

Support costs included within raising funds and community and school based programmes are as follows:

	General Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Designated Funds £	Total Funds 2023 £
Staff costs and related costs	149,676	50,558	25,366	225,600
Travel, training and subsistence	18,437	6,146	—	24,583
Premises	12,065	4,022	—	16,087
Office, administration and misc	35,749	15,712	11,389	62,850
Governance costs (note 6)	20,713	7,658	—	28,371
2023 Total funds	236,640	84,096	36,755	357,491

	General Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Designated Funds £	Total Funds 2022 £
Staff costs and related costs	181,708	48,472	—	230,180
Travel, training and subsistence	7,994	1,999	—	9,993
Premises	30,332	7,583	—	37,915
Office, administration and misc	32,264	13,215	20,597	66,076
Governance costs (note 6)	17,640	8,309	1,698	27,647
2022 Total funds	269,938	79,578	22,295	371,811

Supports costs are allocated across the expenditure headings in notes 3 and 4 as follows:

	Raising Funds (note 3) £	Charitable activities (note 4) £	Total 2023 £	Basis of appointment
Staff costs and related costs	136,564	89,036	225,600	Headcount
Other support costs:				
• Travel, training and subsistence	—	24,583	24,583	
• Premises	—	16,087	16,087	
• Office administration and misc	—	62,850	62,850	
• Governance costs	—	28,371	28,371	
2023 Total	136,564	220,927	357,491	

	Raising Funds (note 3) £	Charitable activities (note 4) £	Total 2022 £	Basis of appointment
Staff costs and related costs	112,631	117,549	230,180	
Other support costs:				
Travel, training and subsistence	—	9,993	9,993	
Premises	—	37,915	37,915	Headcount
Office, administration and misc	—	66,076	66,076	
Governance costs (note 6)	—	27,647	27,647	
2022 Total	112,631	259,180	371,811	

6 Governance costs

	General Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Designated Funds £	Total Funds 2023 £
Legal and professional fees	20,361	7,537	—	27,898
Committee expenses	352	121	—	473
2023 Total funds	20,713	7,658	—	28,371

	General Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Designated Funds £	Total Funds 2022 £
Legal and professional fees	17,640	8,309	648	26,597
Committee expenses	—	—	1,050	1,050
2022 Total funds	17,640	8,309	1,698	27,647

7 Net expenditure before net investment losses

Net expenditure before net investment losses is stated after charging:

	2023 £	2022 £
Staff costs (note 8)	766,773	659,138
Auditor's remuneration		
Audit - current year's fee	23,240	14,760
Depreciation	9,916	9,647
Operating lease rentals	33,777	37,917

8 Staff costs

	2023 £	2022 £
Staff costs during the year were as follows:		
Wages and salaries	646,742	571,368
Social security costs	60,911	49,468
Pension costs	72,309	181,486
Pension scheme adjustment	(13,189)	(143,184)
Total	766,773	659,138

Staff costs (including wages and staff travel, training and subsistence) by function were as follows:

	Direct costs £	Support costs £	Total 2023 £
Charitable activities	601,121	89,036	690,157
Cost of raising funds	—	133,468	133,468
2023 Total funds	601,121	222,504	823,625

	Direct costs £	Support costs £	Total 2022 £
Charitable activities	456,028	117,549	573,577
Cost of raising funds	—	112,631	112,631
2022 Total funds	456,028	230,180	686,208

The number of employees who earned £60,000 per annum or more (including taxable benefits) during the year was as follows:

	2023	2022
£80,000 - £90,000	1	1

The average number of full time equivalent employees in 2023 was 18 (2022 – 16).

The key management personnel of the charity in charge of directing and controlling, running and operating the charity on a day-to-day basis comprise the Trustees, Chief Executive and the Leadership Team. The total remuneration (including taxable benefits and employer's pension contributions) of key management personnel for the year was £324,835 (2022 – £327,972).

9 Trustees' expenses and related party transactions

During the year 2 Trustees (2022 – 3) were reimbursed a total of £290.43 (2022 – £122.03) for travel and subsistence.

No Trustee received any remuneration in respect to their services as a Trustee during the year (2022 – nil).

During the year, the charity received donations from Trustees totalling £80 (2022 – £31).

10 Taxation

Girls Friendly Society in England and Wales is a registered charity and therefore is not liable to income tax or corporation tax on income derived from its charitable activities, as it falls within the various exemptions available to registered charities.

The charity is only able to reclaim VAT on very limited expenditure.

11 Tangible fixed assets

	Furniture and equipment £	Total £
Cost		
At 1 October 2022	55,857	55,857
Additions	2,000	2,000
At 30 September 2023	57,857	57,857
Depreciation		
At 1 October 2022	26,088	26,088
Charge for the year	9,916	9,916
At 30 September 2023	36,004	36,004
Net book values		
At 30 September 2023	21,853	21,853
At 30 September 2022	29,769	29,769

12 Investments

	2023 £	2022 £
Listed investments:		
Market value at 1 October 2022	7,556,506	9,389,577
Additions at cost	3,333,714	2,183,553
Disposals at book value (proceeds: £4,538,653 realised gains £84,298)	(4,455,355)	(3,016,282)
Net unrealised investment losses	66,823	(997,342)
Market value at 30 September 2023	6,502,688	7,556,506
Cash held by investment managers	549,545	181,954
	7,052,233	7,738,460

During 2023, the GFS Trustees have maintained a balanced investment objective going forwards; on a total return basis. Returns generated from a balanced approach are a combination of income and the potential for capital growth, with the intention to protect against inflation over the time horizon and unusual exceptions in market downturns, whilst providing an income for the charity in line with the portfolio aim.

In September 2023, Trustees downgraded the risk grade of part of the investment portfolio to get the best return on investment. At the end of September 2023, sales for this move had been made but not all purchases completed which has led to an increase in cash held by investment managers.

Listed investments held at 30 September 2023 comprised the following:

	2023 £	2022 £
UK fixed interest based common investment funds	1,487,499	1,575,404
UK equity based common investment funds	1,164,032	3,313,672
Overseas equity based common investment funds	3,486,300	2,070,243
Other	364,857	597,187
	6,502,688	7,556,506

All listed investments held are dealt in on a recognised stock exchange.

At 30 September 2023, the charity had the following material investment holdings:

	Market value £	Percentage of portfolio %
RATHBONE UNIT TRUST MGMT Greenbank Tot Rtn P/f S Inc	2,831,230	44%
COIF Charities Ethical Investment Fund income units	1,421,579	22%

13 Debtors

	2023 £	2022 £
Prepayments	6,491	4,741
Security deposits	-	3,000
Investment income receivable	20,035	81,280
	26,526	89,021

14 Creditors

	2023 £	2022 £
Expense creditors	1,785	3,711
Other taxes and security costs	22,090	20,304
Other creditors	2,693	649
Accruals	32,581	134,385
	59,149	159,049

15 Provision for liabilities

	2023 £	2022 £
Provision for pension scheme deficit reduction payments (note 24)		
• Payable within one year	14,654	32,047
• Payable within one to two years	4,204	-
• Payable within two to five years	-	-
	18,858	32,047

16 Endowment funds

The capital funds of the charity include permanently endowed monies, which must be retained indefinitely:

	At 1 October 2022	Transfers	Investment gains/(losses) £	At 30 September 2023 £
Endowment fund	2,070,581	-	40,821	2,111,402
Francis Street Fund	761,583	-	15,015	776,598
	2,832,164	-	55,836	2,888,000

	At 1 October 2021	Transfers	Investment gains/(losses) £	At 30 September 2022 £
Endowment fund	2,351,348	-	(280,767)	2,070,581
Francis Street Fund	864,853	-	(103,270)	761,583
	3,216,201	-	(384,037)	2,832,164

The two endowment funds are as follows:

Endowment fund

The endowment fund was established under a Charity Commission Scheme dated 31 July 2002. The Scheme replaces former trusts, a Scheme of the Commissioners dated 15 November 1972 and declaration of trusts dated 5 September 1974 and 21 November 1976. It states that income and capital shall be used:

- the Trustees must first apply the income to meet the proper costs of administering the charity and of managing its assets and thereafter the remaining income must be applied in furthering the objects of the charity; and
- for the object of the charity, the Trustees may also apply expendable endowment and permanent endowment but only on such terms for the replacement of the amount spent as approved by the Commissioners.

Francis Street Fund

The Francis Street Fund was established during the year ended 30 September 2004 when the Francis Street hostel, which was managed by the charity, was sold by the freeholder. Under the terms of the disposal, the net proceeds were donated to the charity to be held as a permanent endowment.

17 Restricted funds - summary

	At 1 October 2022	Income £	Expenditure £	Investment gains/ (losses) £	At 30 September 2023 £
Society funds - restricted grants	5,309	92,319	(49,183)	-	48,445
Trust funds (note 18)	203,583	8,863	(22,508)	3,145	193,083
Diocesan funds (note 19)	1,781,425	48,316	(196,956)	35,718	1,668,503
	1,990,317	149,498	(268,647)	38,863	1,910,031

	At 1 October 2021	Income £	Expenditure £	Investment gains/ (losses) £	At 30 September 2022 £
<i>Society funds - restricted grants</i>	46,433	32,148	(73,272)	-	5,309
<i>Trust funds (note 18)</i>	228,060	7,187	(14,365)	(17,298)	203,583
<i>Diocesan funds (note 19)</i>	2,116,028	43,430	(133,287)	(244,745)	1,781,425
	2,390,521	82,765	(220,925)	(262,044)	1,990,317

18 Restricted funds - trust funds

The income funds of the charity include restricted trust funds comprising the following unexpended balances of donations, grants and other income held on trusts to be applied for specific purposes:

	At 1 October 2022 £	Income £	Expenditure £	Investment gains/ (losses) £	At 30 September 2023 £
Packe holiday and housing trust	155,982	6,194	(17,245)	2,499	147,430
Greenlands, Peel, Isle of Man	40,572	2,263	(4,486)	523	38,872
Almoners Trust	7,029	406	(777)	123	6,781
Total	203,583	8,863	(22,508)	3,145	193,083
	At 1 October 2021 £	Income £	Expenditure £	Investment gains/ (losses) £	At 30 September 2022 £
<i>Packe holiday and housing trust</i>	175,044	5,712	(11,026)	(13,748)	155,982
<i>Greenlands, Peel, Isle of Man</i>	45,093	1,195	(2,840)	(2,876)	40,572
<i>Almoners Trust</i>	7,923	280	(499)	(675)	7,029
	228,060	7,187	(14,365)	(17,299)	203,583

The use of the trust funds held at 30 September 2023 is restricted to the following:

Packe Holiday & Housing Trust

The provision of housing and holidays for the needy.

Greenlands, Peel, Isle of Man

The furtherance of the charity's objectives in the Isle of Man.

Almoners Trust

The provision of support for elderly members.

19 Restricted funds - Diocesan funds

The income funds of the charity include restricted Diocesan funds comprising the following unexpended balances of donations, grants and other income held on trusts for use by GFS within the specific dioceses:

	At 1 October 2022	Income £	Expenditure £	Investment gains/ (losses) £	At 30 September 2023 £
Dioceses with branch activities:					
• Birmingham	111,615	9,569	(17,384)	4,123	107,923
• Carlisle	80,926	6,938	(8,372)	2,990	82,482
• Liverpool	236,772	4,853	(31,331)	4,668	214,962
• Other	202,787	3,266	(20,977)	1,408	186,484
Dioceses without branch activities:					
• Other Diocesan funds	10,044	162	(1,040)	70	9,236
• Branch support funds	1,139,281	23,528	(117,854)	22,461	1,067,416
Total	1,781,425	48,316	(196,958)	35,720	1,668,503

	At 1 October 2021	Income £	Expenditure £	Investment gains/ (losses) £	At 30 September 2022 £
Dioceses with branch activities:					
• Birmingham	133,267	9,425	(8,394)	(22,683)	111,615
• Carlisle	96,626	6,833	(6,086)	(16,447)	80,926
• Liverpool	284,617	4,069	(17,928)	(33,986)	236,772
• Other	221,249	3,217	(13,936)	(7,743)	202,787
Dioceses without branch activities:					
• Other Diocesan funds	10,958	159	(690)	(383)	10,044
• Branch support funds	1,369,311	19,727	(86,252)	(163,505)	1,139,281
Total	2,116,028	43,430	(133,286)	(244,745)	1,781,425

20 Designated funds

	At 1 October 2022 £	Investment (losses)/gains £	Designated/ (released) £	At 30 September 2023 £
Total - transitional investment fund	2,861,898	56,422	(620,080)	2,298,240

	At 1 October 2021 £	Investment (losses)/gains £	Designated/ (released) £	At 30 September 2022 £
<i>Total - transitional investment fund</i>	3,951,531	(471,841)	(617,792)	2,861,898

The designated fund is for future investment in the fundraising strategy and implementation of the charity's five-year strategic plan.

21 Analysis of net assets between funds

	General funds						
	Free reserves £	Pension deficit fund £	Tangible fixed asset fund £	Designated funds £	Restricted funds £	Endowment funds £	Total
Fund balances at 30 September 2023 are represented by:							
Tangible fixed assets	-	-	21,853	-	-	-	21,853
Investments	-	-	-	2,298,240	1,865,993	2,888,000	7,052,233
Net current assets (liabilities)	282,625	-	-	-	44,038	-	326,663
Pension provision	-	(18,858)	-	-	-	-	(18,858)
	282,625	(18,858)	21,853	2,298,240	1,910,031	2,888,000	7,381,891

	General funds						
	Free reserves £	Pension deficit fund £	Tangible fixed asset fund £	Designated funds £	Restricted funds £	Endowment funds £	Total
<i>Fund balances at 30 September 2022 are represented by:</i>							
<i>Tangible fixed assets</i>	-	-	29,769	-	-	-	29,769
<i>Investments</i>	-	-	-	2,861,898	2,044,398	2,832,164	7,738,460
<i>Net current assets (liabilities)</i>	292,997	-	-	-	(54,081)	-	238,916
<i>Pension provision</i>	-	(32,047)	-	-	-	-	(32,047)
	292,997	(32,047)	29,769	2,861,898	1,990,317	2,832,164	7,975,098

22 Financial commitments

At 30 September 2023 the charity had no future minimum commitments under non-cancellable operating leases on land and buildings (2022 – nil)

23 Liability of members

The charity is constituted as a company limited by guarantee. In the event of the charity being wound up members are required to contribute an amount not exceeding £1.

24 Pension costs and provisions

The charity participates in a multi-employer scheme which provides benefits to some 950 non-associated participating employers. The scheme is a defined benefit scheme in the UK. It is not possible for the company to obtain sufficient information to enable it to account for the scheme as a defined benefit scheme. Therefore it accounts for the scheme as a defined contribution scheme.

The scheme is subject to the funding legislation outlined in the Pensions Act 2004 which came into force on 30 December 2005. This, together with documents issued by the Pensions Regulator and Technical Actuarial Standards issued by the Financial Reporting Council, set out the framework for funding defined benefit occupational pension schemes in the UK.

The scheme is classified as a 'last-man standing arrangement'. Therefore, the company is potentially liable for other participating employers' obligations if those employers are unable to meet their share of the scheme deficit following withdrawal from the scheme. Participating employers are legally required to meet their share of the scheme deficit on an annuity purchase basis on withdrawal from the scheme.

A full actuarial valuation for the scheme was carried out at 30 September 2017. This valuation showed assets of £794.9m, liabilities of £926.4m and a deficit of £131.5m. To eliminate this funding shortfall, the Trustee of the scheme has asked the participating employers to pay additional contributions to the scheme as follows:

Deficit contributions

From 1 April 2022 to 31 January 2025:

£11,243,000 per annum
(payable monthly and increasing by 3% each on 1st April)

Unless a concession has been agreed with the Trustee, the term to 31 January 2025 applies.

The scheme's previous valuation was carried out with an effective date of 30 September 2014. This valuation showed assets of £793.4m, liabilities of £969.9m and a deficit of £176.5m. To eliminate this funding shortfall, the Trustee has asked the participating employers to pay additional contributions to the scheme as follows:

Deficit contributions

From 1 April 2016 to 30 September 2025:

£12,945,440 per annum
(payable monthly and increasing by 3% each on 1st April)

From 1 April 2016 to 30 September 2028:

£54,560 per annum
(payable monthly and increasing by 3% each on 1st April)

The recovery plan contributions are allocated to each participating employer in line with their estimated share of the Series 1 and Series 2 scheme liabilities.

Where the scheme is in deficit and where the company has agreed to a deficit funding arrangement the company recognises a liability for this obligation. The amount recognised is the net present value of the deficit reduction contributions payable under the agreement that relates to the deficit. The present value is calculated using the discount rate detailed in these disclosures. The unwinding of the discount rate is recognised as a finance cost.

Present values of provision

	2023 £'000	2022 £'000	2021 £'000	2020 £'000	2019 £'000
Present value of provision	19	32	175	226	276

Reconciliation of opening and closing provisions

	2023 £'000	2022 £'000
Provision at 1 October 2022	32	175
Unwinding of the discount factor	1	1
Deficit contribution paid	(14)	(33)
Re-measurements – impact of any change in assumptions	-	(1)
Remeasurements - amendments to the contribution schedule	-	(110)
Provision at 30 September 2023	19	32

Income expenditure and impact

	2023 £'000	2022 £'000
Interest expense	1	1
Re-measurements – impact of any change in assumptions	-	(1)
Remeasurements - amendments to the contribution schedule	-	(110)
Costs recognised in statement of financial activities	1	(110)

Assumptions

	2023 %	2022 %	2021 %	2020 %	2019 %
Rate of discount	5.88	6.22	0.72	0.58	0.98

The discount rates shown above are the equivalent single discount rates which, when used to discount the future recovery plan contributions due, would give the same results as using a full AA corporate bond yield curve to discount the same recovery plan contributions.



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TRUSTEES, SENIOR MANAGEMENT, AUDITOR, BANKERS, LEGAL COUNSEL, CONTACT DETAILS

Trustees

- L Massey (Chair) (resigned 16th September 2023)
- A Dhanoa (Chair) (appointed 16th September 2023)
- M Young (Treasurer)
- P Sanger (Vice Chair)
- T Banda
- O Lewis
- F Payne (appointed 3 December 2022)
- C Radia (appointed 3 December 2022)
- S Rose Smith
- B Thomas
- R Turton
- P Winks (resigned 3 December 2022)
- G Whitfield
- A Young

Chief Executive & Leadership Team

- L Sercombe (Chief Executive)
- D Hannam (Head of Fundraising & Communications - appointed March 2023)
- B Huie (Head of People)
- C Hunt (Head of Operations N - appointed March 2023)
- J Moonie Dalton (Head of Operations S)
- N Shoults (Head of Finance & Support Services)
- E Stone (Head of Fundraising & Communications - resigned February 2023)
- K Ward (Head of Operations N - resigned February 2023)

Registered office and head office

- Office 4012, Beyond Aldgate Tower, 2 Leaman St, London, E1 8FA (Until September 2023)
- GFS, 3rd Floor, 86-90 Paul Street, London, EC2A 4NE (From September 2023)

Company registration number

3172713 (England and Wales)

Charity registration number

1054310

Auditor

Buzzacott LLP, 130 Wood Street,
London, EC2V 6DL

Investment Managers

Rathbone Investment Management
8 Finsbury Circus, Finsbury,
London, EC2M 7AZ
CCLA
1 Angel Lane, London EC4R 3AB

Principal Bankers

Barclays Bank plc, 1 Churchill Place,
London, E14 5HP



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