

Registered Charity No.1063430
Registered Company No. 3376847



Annual Report and Accounts 2023/2024



Hertfordshire Hearing Advisory Service

Board of Trustees Annual Report

For the year ended 31st March 2024

Table of Contents

1	Welcome from the Chairman	4
2	Operational Activities and Achievements	5
	Reducing health inequalities-----	5
	Connected Lives -----	5
	Working in partnership -----	5
	Hertfordshire Sensory Strategy	6
	Social Prescribing and the role of Link Workers-----	7
	Training and Development Centre for professionals -----	8
	'Hearing Aider TM ' Training	8
	Our care provider partners -----	8
	The Training Centre-----	9
	Volunteer Support Service – Our 'Hearing Aiders'-----	10
	Hearing Advisory Services – Our 'Hearing Advisors' -----	11
	HAS Postal Service -----	11
	Supporting NHS Audiology Services -----	11
	Making Assistive Technology accessible-----	12
	Technical Support Service – Our Equipment Specialists -----	12
	Hearing Advisory Services in the East of England-----	13
	Bedfordshire Hearing Advisory Service-----	13
	West Northamptonshire Hearing Advisory Service -----	13
	Gibraltar Hearing Impairment and Tinnitus Association, GHITA -----	13
	Reducing Loneliness and Social Isolation -----	14
	Social Clubs, Self Help Groups -----	14
	@accessherts - Introducing Deaf Services -----	15
	Deaf Clubs – at the heart of the community -----	15
	Deaf Patient Participation Groups-----	15
	Community Sensory Link Worker -----	15
	Deaf Health Forum -----	16
	Increasing awareness of Hearing Advisory Services -----	17
	Measuring Achievement -----	18
3	Our Structure and governance	20
	Our Vision -----	21
	Our Core Values -----	21
	Our Mission -----	21
	Our Aim -----	21
	Our Strategic Intent -----	21
	Our Strategies -----	21
	Our Objectives-----	21
	Our CSR policy-----	22
	Our ESG Policy -----	22
	The Trustees-----	23
	The Board, Committees and Working Groups -----	24
	Honorary Patron, Advisors and Officers -----	25
	Our Benefactors and Supporters -----	26
	Our Charitable and Corporate Benefactors-----	26
	Our Colleagues in the Public Sector-----	26
	Our Colleagues in NHS Audiology Departments-----	26

Hertfordshire Hearing Advisory Service
Board of Trustees Annual Report
For the year ended 31st March 2024

	Our Colleagues in the Charity Sector -----	27
	Our organisations and groups-----	27
	Our Hearing Advisory Service Team -----	28
4	Financial Reports	29
	Hon Treasurer’s Report-----	29
	Independent Examiner’s Report-----	32
5	Financial Accounts	33
	Statement of Financial Activities -----	33
	Balance Sheet-----	34
	Responsibilities of the Directors -----	34
	Movement in Resources-----	35
	Notes and policies to the accounts -----	36

Thank you to our Local Authority and NHS Commissioners



Hertfordshire Hearing Advisory Service
Board of Trustees Annual Report
For the year ended 31st March 2024

1 Welcome from the Chairman

Dear Friends and Supporters

This has been another busy year for the Charity, supporting our clients with first-class services from our team of friendly staff and volunteers.

Services

During the year, our services have continued to provide 'care closer to home', often in partnership with colleagues from other organisations, for a joined-up approach to reducing health inequalities, and access to those services or training provided at community venues or on-line.

With the support of Hertfordshire Community Foundation, we have been able to invest in our new on-line booking system, that is flexible to our current and future needs.

Financial

The challenging economic conditions underline the sense of providing a diverse range of services and incomes to meet our charitable aim. The Charity has managed to address the increased operating charges and costs of living, anticipating a reduction in inflation in the months ahead.

Governance

At the Annual General Meeting, and with continuity in mind, I decided to postpone my retirement as chairman for the time being. I thank Glyn Evans, Susan Street and Tony Edwards who have stepped down this year for their valuable contributions, and I welcome our new Trustees, Julie Bayford and Mark Jarvis to the Board.

Thankyou

Our work is to support people who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing, and have better, enjoyable and productive lives. We could not do this without the dedication and effort from everyone involved in the Charity, and their commitment to our vision, 'Smiles from ear to ear'.

John Stoker

John Stoker
Chairman

2 Operational Activities and Achievements

Reducing health inequalities

Hertfordshire Hearing Advisory Service is committed to reducing health inequalities for people who are profoundly Deaf and use British Sign Language as their main aid to communication.

Research by our colleagues at SignHealth and Royal National Institute for the Deaf, RNID, highlighted that Deaf people in particular faced barriers accessing NHS services, with Deaf people and healthcare staff having difficulties communicating with each other. Deaf people reported feeling excluded, marginalised and disenfranchised by the healthcare system, finding barriers at every step preventing them taking control of their health.

Hertfordshire County Council, HCC, findings through public engagement mirrored much of the national research. Supported by additional funding from HCC, the Charity has worked to develop practical solutions, reported later under 'Deaf Services'.

Connected Lives

Connected Lives is the HCC commissioning model, which positively encourages colleagues to emerge from their silos, and address challenges together. By considering the Hertfordshire Sensory Strategy, NHS Commissioning Guidance, national study recommendations together with our own knowledge and experience of services, together we can make a difference for profoundly Deaf people.

We are enthusiastic to consider and willing to try through the work of our staff, volunteers and colleagues of partner organisations.

Working in partnership

Increasingly, the Charity works with a range of statutory partners including local authorities and NHS primary and secondary care organisations. With over 40 years of experience of service delivery, we continue to be excited about developing new services in other areas where there is no existing service provision.

During the year, we agreed a memorandum of understanding with *SignSmart BSL™*, a sole trader also based at Weltech Business Centre, setting out mutual areas of cooperation and benefit in line with Charity Commission guidance.

Hertfordshire Hearing Advisory Service has always been well supported by the Hertfordshire County Council, since the organisation was first created as a collaboration between the Council, NHS Audiology, Hertfordshire League for the Hard of Hearing and the County's several Deaf Clubs, and named 'Hertfordshire Deafness Support Association', HeDSA.

Hertfordshire Hearing Advisory Service

Board of Trustees Annual Report

For the year ended 31st March 2024

Hertfordshire Sensory Strategy

The Hertfordshire Sensory Strategy continues to be a powerful aid in drawing colleagues together across different departments and organisations, providing the opportunity for effective joint working, unifying ideas, resources and establishing commitment to deliver better health and social care outcomes for shared client groups.

We are committed to working with Hertfordshire County Council, the NHS and partners from Voluntary, Charity, Social, Faith and Enterprise sector, VCSFE, by working through five Workstreams. HHAS is engaged into two of the Workstreams, through Task and Finish Groups identified as 'My Health', and 'My Home, My Community'.

The County Strategy Priorities are set out in the table below and include our current Service Responses, updated from the previous year.

Sensory Services Strategic Priorities	HAS Service Responses
'My Health' Workstream	
Providing clear and accessible information	@accessherts - Deaf Patient Participation Group @accessherts - SignVideo VRi pilot
Improving collaborative work/integrated pathways	@accessherts - Deaf Health Forum
'My Home, My Community'	
Improving emotional/peer support	@accessherts - Deaf Befriending @accessherts - Deaf Group Support @accessherts – Supporting Deaf Households
Making Assistive Technology accessible	HAS Hearing Aid Support Service HAS Assistive Equipment Support Service
Improving wider Sensory Awareness of colleagues	HAS Training Centre @accessherts - The Studio @accessherts - FaceBook page

Originally planned for 3 years, the Hertfordshire Sensory Strategy was extended with the final 12 months ending in March 2025. In March 2024, the Charity's CEO was awarded an ARC Implementation Fellowship, with financial support for the Charity, to make progress on implementing and widening SignVideo, a Video Remote Interpreting service, in primary care. Therefore, the Fellowship year coincides with the end of the Sensory Strategy, and could make a difference to reducing health inequalities across primary care for Deaf people across the UK.

Social Prescribing and the role of Link Workers

The Sensory Strategy work aligns to the Connect and Prevent principles within Connected Lives. One important part of the closer working relationships in recent years has been the development of the Hertfordshire Community Navigator Service, HCNS, a partnership to practically support Social Prescribing through its several partner host organisations.

In simple terms, many people make appointments to see their GP with medical conditions or issues that cannot be cured with a doctor's prescription. Examples of this could include housing conditions, loneliness, lack of confidence, money worries, or not feeling a sense of belonging to the community.

In such a situation, a GP can complete a Social Prescription, which is passed to a trained Link Worker. They in turn will meet with the patient and put together a package of support that will improve their health and well-being.

Hertfordshire Hearing Advisory Service hosts two Link Workers, providing service to patients at Bennetts End Surgery and Everest House Surgery in Hemel Hempstead, Hertfordshire. The two surgeries had formed Dana's Primary Care Network but this was dissolved in July 2023, and the two surgeries joined Delta PCN and Beta PCN respectively. The Clinical Directors of both have agreed their support of our work to reduce health inequalities, through our SignVideo pilot and Deaf Patient Participation Group.

Hertfordshire Hearing Advisory Service

Board of Trustees Annual Report

For the year ended 31st March 2024

Training and Development Centre for professionals

Our 'virtual' Training Centre is a means to capture the several providers of training, the range of subjects and course types on offer, and the target audiences for the training. The common factor is that the training directly or indirectly supports people who are Deaf, Hard of Hearing, or have a sensory loss.

The Charity is well placed to create and deliver in-house training, to meet the needs we have identified that improve the lives of our clients, and the people who care for them. At the same time, we can publicise and promote other training providers, whose courses add to the range of subjects, or to the overall capacity of training courses available.

'Hearing AiderTM' Training

Most of us take our hearing for granted, but it is so important for our communication, confidence, independence and quality of life. In a care home setting, the number of residents having a hearing loss can be disproportionately high, presenting a challenge to raise the awareness of residential and care home managers for the need of better on-going support for both hearing aids and assistive technology.

'Hearing AiderTM' Training is an intensive one-day course on hearing aid maintenance and deaf awareness we have developed for busy front-line care home staff. This is ideal in areas where demand for support cannot be met by volunteers, or as in-house training across multi-site care home groups.

Our care provider partners

Hertfordshire Care Providers Association, HCPA, support many of the care home providers, across the county from the smallest to the largest. Their wide range of training courses help maintain the quality of care home provision across the county.

Hertfordshire County Council, HCC are committed to provide courses to their staff through their Workforce Development Programme.

We welcome enquiries for our courses and can provide one-off or calendars of training to match your requirements. Please contact us for further information.

Course development

We are always looking forward to extending our training course offer to Third Sector and Public Sector providers, as they support our objective of reducing health inequalities.

We continued to provide our 'Introduction to British Sign Language' and 'Introduction to Deaf Awareness', and added our 'Living well with hearing loss course', to the HCPA and HCC training schedules.

Our thanks go to HCPA and HCC Workforce Development Team, and our training team, Emma Caswell, Garnet Newman, Frances Dewhurst and Jenny Begg.

The Training Centre

Front-line staff training

For many client-facing staff, there is already an appreciation for Continuing Professional Development. Our smaller courses raise awareness and can help make health information more accessible, remove barriers to communication. These include:

- Deaf Awareness Training
- Sensory Awareness Training
- Introduction to British Sign Language
- Introduction to SignVideo
- Introduction to Assistive Technology (Equipment)
- Introduction to NHS hearing aids (Hearing Aider™ training)

These courses are provided free of charge and are usually delivered via zoom. Alternatively, they can also be provided at our training rooms in Welwyn Garden City or Ipswich, or in-house by arrangement, (expenses may be charged). Please contact us for further details.

Lip Reading Classes

Lip reading is a widely recognised and vital skill that can be taught to aid communication for people with acquired hearing loss. It can be great fun to learn, and many friendships start as the result of classes. Students learn to observe lip patterns, movements of the tongue, jaw and facial expressions. Developing skills that gradually put them all together enable lip readers to interpret what is being said, as an aid to communication.

Courses are available to people of all ages: our tutors and students set individual learning plans and regularly review progress so that by the end of the course it is clear to see how much has been achieved.

Learning to lip read requires dedication and commitment. Our different classes run in 10-week terms, with modest fees that we benchmarked against other similar regional providers.

Our courses are provided on-line via Zoom, so students can study in the comfort of their own home. If you are interested in Lip reading classes please contact Maria Waller on 01472-286060, text 07467 122766, email suffolkinfo@hhas.org.uk, or complete the on-line form on our website.

Hertfordshire Hearing Advisory Service
Board of Trustees Annual Report
For the year ended 31st March 2024

Volunteer Support Service – Our ‘Hearing Aiders’

Our friendly, trained volunteers, ‘Hearing Aiders’ have, since the formation of the Charity, provided our longest running service. We are keen to hear from people with a few hours to spare each month, in a variety of interesting roles.

Visiting Care Homes

Looking after residents in sheltered accommodation, residential and nursing homes, a monthly visit for a couple of hours are enjoyable make a huge difference. It is amazing how a little support and encouragement can get the most benefit out of a hearing aid, increasing someone's confidence, sense of belonging and bringing a smile to their face.

Helping with the Postal Service

Our Postal Service remains a steady and popular alternative to many people, post pandemic. We are currently recruiting for volunteers to help with our Postal Service requests. Based within our offices at Welwyn Garden City and Ipswich, our volunteers really make a difference.

Appreciated, Valued – Volunteering is Fun...!

Volunteering is fun, and can be personally satisfying seeing someone's face light up with the return of a world of sound. Clients tell us they appreciate care being provided closer to home, and without the journey to the hospital.

Many volunteers who join the Charity stay for years, and find that the two or three hours a month they give, working in their own local community, and often say their visits fit in well with their other commitments.

We would be delighted to hear from you, if you have some time to spare.

Thanking, Rewarding, Celebrating

Every year in Hertfordshire, the Charity looks forward to hosting an event to celebrate the achievements of our fantastic Volunteers. During the summer, we were unable to arrange a Volunteers Afternoon, but we hope to get together again in 2024.

We thank our dedicated ‘Hearing Aider’ volunteers in Hertfordshire, Suffolk and Bedfordshire, for their time and support.

The total number of ‘Hearing Aider™’ volunteers in all areas supported by the Charity in 2023/24 was Herts/Beds = 33; Suffolk = 12. (2022/23: 90)

Hearing Advisory Services – Our ‘Hearing Advisors’

Our main Hearing Advisory Services are the staff led side of our activities and operates scheduled services across Hertfordshire, Bedfordshire and Suffolk. These can be really helpful for people who wear a hearing aid and mobility, dexterity or transport problems, living independently in their own homes, rather than sheltered housing or residential homes.

Our services are managed our Service Managers, Maria Waller (Suffolk), Charlotte Spurway (Hertfordshire/Bedfordshire). Supported by software developers, ‘Catch Impact’, our new on-line appointment based system was successfully soft launched across all relevant services. This has been a year of consolidation, as both the staff team and clients have changed to the new ways of working. Clients have particularly appreciated the personal interaction when calling the team for advice or to book into a clinic.

The overall number of HAS Consultations in 2023/24 was:

Hertfordshire and Bedfordshire: Hearing Aids 3,902

Suffolk: Hearing Aids 4,777

HAS Postal Service

Our Postal Service, introduced during the pandemic and using pre-printed strong 'Send' and 'Return' envelopes, has become part of our regular service offer. 'Send' envelopes give simple to follow instructions, and the 'Return' envelopes publicise some of the services and volunteering opportunities available from the Charity.

The number of HAS Postal requests is now reported in the total consultations.

Supporting NHS Audiology Services

The Charity delivers non-statutory services across Hertfordshire, Bedfordshire, and Suffolk. We work in partnership with the Heads of Audiology, and co-operate with our Sensory, Deaf, or Hard of Hearing Charity colleagues, to serve our shared client group, particularly where Departmental catchment areas are not necessarily co-terminus with our county boundaries.

As the Charity looks ahead, we observe that the pathways to audiology services is also being considered. The ‘Fuller Stocktake – Next steps for integrating primary care’, NHSE 2022, noted primary care as including GP surgeries, Dentist, Optometry, and Audiology. Furthermore, the ‘2023/24 priorities and operational planning and guidance’ NHSE 2022, considering recovering core services and productivity, ‘...moving to self-referral for many community services where GP intervention is not clinically necessary...’ and ‘expand direct access and self-referral where GP is not clinically necessary...routes to audiology – including hearing aid provision’.

The stability of the Charity, benefits from the diversity of income streams derived from countywide contracts, and specialist agreements. With the abolition of Clinical Commissioning Groups in June 2022, we have maintained our observation of and engagement with their successors, Integrated Care Boards, ICBs, and in particular the Hertfordshire and West Essex ICB Primary Care Board. This is an essential step if we are to work with our colleagues in primary care to:

- Reduce health inequalities
- Support audiology pathway development
- Develop social prescribing services with sensory support

Hertfordshire Hearing Advisory Service
Board of Trustees Annual Report
For the year ended 31st March 2024

Making Assistive Technology accessible

Our core service provision has developed to support people and increase the confidence they have in using their own hearing aid. Maintaining aids, and offering support increases personal confidence and reduces the devastating social isolation that hearing loss can cause.

Our community-based services are complimentary to statutory provision, we continue the important process of rehabilitation after hearing loss, started by our NHS Audiology colleagues when dispensing hearing aids.

The services we offer include:

- Advice and information
- Battery exchange and replacement
- Cleaning and re-tubing of NHS hearing aids
- Demonstration of hearing aid functions
- Equipment demonstration or signposting to suppliers
- Hearing Loop installation and information

Technical Support Service – Our Equipment Specialists

Communication is vital to maintaining relationships, being understood, achieving success at work, maintaining our individual well-being and ability to reach our full potential. Without it, we become misunderstood, isolated, anxious and frustrated.

For many people, their listening experience and their lives can be transformed by a simple piece of technology, the Hearing Loop. It allows people who use hearing aids or cochlear implants to listen more easily, cutting out unwanted background noise, and creating a clearer sound. It enables them to participate in everyday activities with dignity and without stress.

Our Technical Support Service has for many years offered advice and information on useful equipment that support daily living. This activity was based around our equipment showroom, and the expertise of our Technical Volunteers.

The Charity is reviewing how we might continue the public-facing work of the Technical Support Service, given our smaller premises at Weltech Business Centre, and the expense of maintaining a range of hearing loops, personal amplifiers, alerting devices, mobile and landline telephony for people to try.

This service assists deaf and hard of hearing people in the home and workplace, supported by our trained staff and technical volunteers.

Hearing Loop Information Service

Our 'Hearing Loop Information Service' provides loop installation advice for village halls, places of worship and community centres, and continued to provide a valuable specialist service to organizations, concerned with providing support for visitors, residents, and parishioners. We continue our efforts to publicise the benefits of hearing induction loop systems which can result in clearer hearing for hearing aid users.

Hearing Advisory Services in the East of England

The Charity continues to work with Audiology Department Heads across the East of England, and to seek additional resources from charitable trusts and others. Our intention is to continue piloting new services where invited by Audiology Departments and Local Authorities during 2024/25, to provide the evidence of need required by the Commissioners, and to support and cooperate with our neighbouring counterpart charities.

Bedfordshire Hearing Advisory Service

The Bedfordshire Hearing Advisory Service extends our 'Hearing Support Service' provides consultation appointments in partnership with health centres, community venues and also some residential homes on an ad hoc basis. With rural areas to the North, our community service is ideal – closer to home, and saving long journeys into Bedford.

This service was made possible because of the support given by our colleagues at the Audiology Department of Bedford Hospital, and Bedfordshire Sensory Services.

West Northamptonshire Hearing Advisory Service

The West Northamptonshire Hearing Advisory Service pilot, supported people with NHS hearing aids dispensed by Northampton Audiology, Horton Audiology, and Central Milton Keynes Audiology is currently on-hold.

We were previously funded by the predecessor of West Northamptonshire Council, having gained the support and encouragement from the parish and town councils. We intend to apply for funding this small but valued service, when funding opportunities allow.

Norfolk Deaf Association, Cambridge Hearing Help and Hearing Help Essex

We keep in touch with our friends in the East of England, at Norfolk Deaf Association, Cambridge Deaf Association, (who merged with Hearing Help Cambridge), and Hearing Help Essex. We continue to jointly promote our client services along county boundaries and continue to cooperate on matters of mutual interest and support.

Suffolk Hearing Advisory Service

The Suffolk Hearing Advisory Service is staff led, and operates scheduled services across the county. It can be a real help for people who wear a hearing aid and have mobility or dexterity problems, and difficulty with transport. The service results are reported in more detail elsewhere in the annual report.

Gibraltar Hearing Impairment and Tinnitus Association, GHITA

Gibraltar is a British Overseas Territory, with a population of over 34,000 people, and served by regular flights between the City and until recently, nearby London Luton Airport on the UK mainland. Our staff team have informally adopted Gibraltar and GHITA as part of our social responsibility, and we continued to offer practical support and advice during the year.

Hertfordshire Hearing Advisory Service
Board of Trustees Annual Report
For the year ended 31st March 2024

Reducing Loneliness and Social Isolation

Social Clubs, Self Help Groups

Everybody wants to live a happy and enjoyable life, reducing the effects of hearing loss and feeling positive. The Charity may provide or support social clubs for clients and their carers, something that will be explored as 'production' with our team, 'co-production' or 'publicity' with others.

Hand in Hand Social Clubs

Commissioned by Suffolk Council, we are able to provide Hand-In-Hand Clubs are social clubs for people with dual sensory loss, (hearing and sight loss). These clubs run every month and are subject to a small subscription. Our clubs encourage people to build relationships and enjoy learning new skills. There is a programme of various activities and social outings helping to develop confidence to allow individuals to have as much control over their lives as possible.

The programme of activities includes support that will help to promote positive health, social inclusion and strategies for living. The clubs are managed by qualified and trained staff supported by a team of trained volunteers.

Hard of Hearing Social Clubs, Self Help Groups

Over the last seventy years, society has changed. How we use our discretionary personal time has seen an increase in television, increasingly powerful technology, dominating our lifestyles. A general decline in clubs and societies, and more specifically hard of hearing clubs and groups. Hearing aids have become both smaller in size, bigger in power, more discreet, empowering and confidence giving.

Altogether, a move away from 'hard of hearing clubs' and a decline in lip-reading class funding, and a general reluctance of surrendering personal time through a regular commitment to running clubs and groups in an increasingly busier world, calls for different models and approaches to be considered.

Hard of Hearing Clubs deliver as self-help groups: They increase personal confidence, a safe space to support and be supported, and a way to reduce social isolation. We will continue to consider different models and approaches over the coming year.

@accessherts - Introducing Deaf Services

@accessherts is the branding of our Deaf Services, and is also our new, accessible FaceBook Channel with BSL content.

The Charity welcomes the investment by Hertfordshire County Council and NHS partners, as we work towards reducing health inequalities and increasing access to information, by developing Deaf Services for people who rely on BSL as their main aid to communication in line with the sensory strategy.

Deaf Clubs – at the heart of the community

The pandemic was difficult for Deaf Clubs - for committees, for members. Social events, revenue for costs, members isolating and shielding all affected individual clubs and for the wider club networks across the region. Clubs are at the heart of the Deaf Community.

During the year, we have maintained links with Ipswich Deaf Club, Welwyn Hatfield Deaf Club, Watford Deaf Club, Hemel Hempstead Deaf Club and Hertford Deaf Club. In Hertfordshire, we were able to support the Deaf Clubs through our 'Supporting Deaf Households' programme, helping them to provide a warm and welcoming space to meet during the autumn/winter and through the cost of living crisis.

Deaf Patient Participation Groups

Local Authority and NHS commissioners rarely collaborate when it comes to Deaf Services. Consequently, in the past, each Clinical Commissioning Group, CCG, has a small Deaf population. Addressing the needs of Deaf people are not always taken into account because the numbers involved are so small compared to the whole population.

The Charity, working with partners at primary care level, we were able to hold one Deaf Patient Participation Group, D/PPG. This was associated with an existing PPG, that we believe is the first in England.

Community Sensory Link Worker

The Charity working with Hertfordshire Community Navigator Service, HCNS, led to the appointment of our first Community Sensory Link Worker. The main purpose of the post will be to work to support patients with sensory loss so that they can be discharged to home or respite care. The role, working with our Deaf Services Team, will also support improving the on-going development of our Deaf Services.

Hertfordshire Hearing Advisory Service

Board of Trustees Annual Report

For the year ended 31st March 2024

Deaf Health Forum

The Deaf Services team worked with Officers from the local Hertfordshire Deaf Clubs throughout the year, to develop and establish a Deaf-led “Deaf Health Forum. We are enthusiastic and motivated to deliver this important work to reduce health and social inequalities for Deaf people in Hertfordshire and beyond.

Proposed Aim

The Aim of the Deaf Health Forum is to reduce the health and social care inequalities that create issues of concern to the Deaf Community.

Forum Objectives

The objectives of the Deaf Health Forum are to provide a positive framework for analysing old problems and proposing new ways forward. In other words:

- Change problems into solutions
- Change negatives into positives
- Change barriers into bridges

The Deaf Health Forum addresses two main groups.

- The Deaf Communityⁱ
- Hertfordshire and West Essex Integrated Care Service, HWE ICS

The Deaf Community

The Forum will be supported by the @accessherts team, and work with the county’s two main Deaf Clubs, and two hospital trusts:

- Watford Deaf Club/West Herts Hospital Trust (WHHT)
- Welwyn Garden City Deaf Club/East & North Herts Hospital Trust (E&NHHT)

Membership

The Forum is a community-based group with Officers from the Clubs and @accessherts working closely together, and always Deaf-led by someone who uses BSL as their main aid to communication, with the HAS CEO in attendance to advise on developing connections to the correct part of the emerging HWE ICS structure or existing network structures.

We are enthusiastic and motivated to deliver the Forum and other services. The format of the Forum has assisted with thanks to guidance from colleagues at Healthwatch Hertfordshire, HwH, and H&WE ICS.

Increasing awareness of Hearing Advisory Services

The Charity continues to raise awareness of our services, by modestly investing and improving our channels of communication. Awareness of the Charity was gauged as part of our Measuring Outcomes work, reported elsewhere. Being online is a great and inexpensive way to engage supporters and volunteers, and is an important way to reach service users. More people spend time online, so we need to be ready to meet them there.

Hearing Helpline

Our aspiration is to ensure that the telephones are manned during office hours Tuesday – Thursday, with an answerphone at all other times.

News and Views e-newsletter

‘News and Views’ is the Charity’s periodic newsletter distributed free to our volunteers and available on subscription to our supporters. Publication ceased in the pandemic, and we plan to introduce a less expensive and slimmed down e-newsletter during the year.

HAS Website

The HAS website continues to be updated reflecting the changing services and activities of the Charity, including new ways of working, such as on-line appointment booking and BSL video.

Deaf Befriending, Deaf Services and SignVideo™

SignVideo is the UK market leader in Video Remote Interpreting, VRi, and Video Relay Services, VRs. We continue to highlight the benefits of SignVideo, by arranging demonstrations of the platforms to colleagues in Local Authorities and NHS organisations.

As part of our Deaf Services, the SignVideo app on tablet devices will help us deliver our Deaf Services.

Our Social Media - FaceBook

Social media is now a part of many charities’ communications channels. The challenge for many is to find a balance between providing an interesting news stream, and the cost of using existing staff to maintain coverage. Our solution was to work with Herts Vision Loss, and commission a FaceBook Editor to support both charities as we deliver the sensory strategy.

The FaceBook pages are:

- @hearingadvisoryservice1984
- @accessherts
- @hertsvisionloss2022

We are trying to get as many Likes as possible, so please send these links to any friends and colleagues to get them to Like the our Facebook pages!

Hertfordshire Hearing Advisory Service

Board of Trustees Annual Report

For the year ended 31st March 2024

Measuring Achievement

For the voluntary sector in Britain, the 'Social Return on Investment', SROI, approach is steadily increasing to demonstrate to funding organisations a more rigorous approach to performance management, while attempting to capture the social impacts of public spending. The aim of the SROI approach is to maximise the value of social outcomes produced by a given level of expenditure.

However, outcomes need to be organised in a clear hierarchy, so that they are capable of driving a set of operational plans. The Government's plans focus on creating the right conditions to secure desired outcomes, but do not clearly articulate the outcomes: Charities are expected to articulate the outcomes themselves.

The Charity's Commissioning Managers require us to state how we have measure and monitored outcomes we have agreed to.

Outcome Measurement

Outcome Measurement, with respect to post-hearing aid instrument fitting in a social care context, (as opposed to a clinical or health care context), is a new area of work within the hearing impairment field. The 'Rapid Participatory Appraisal' method, RPA, and questions asked, do appear to indicate whether outcomes have been achieved.

The Charity will need to move from not only measuring what we do, (outputs), to being clear about what it is trying to achieve, (outcomes). This is also consistent with the Charity Commission requirements to report on how our charitable purpose relates to our operational services and our financial activity.

Annual surveying re-introduced

The Charity was able to reintroduce our annual survey in spring 2024, after a break of several years due to the pandemic and restructuring of our hearing aid support services.

Survey 1 'Has our service met your needs?'

The Charity has shared the investment in research and development of our Outcome Measurement RPA model with other sensory impairment charities, in a spirit of open cooperation. The first stage, Survey 1, is a simple freepost postcard. Clients answer questions related to outcome measures and invited to share their more general thoughts and comments, too. They may also provide contact details, to take part in Survey 2.

Survey 2 'How do you feel now..?'

Our second survey to clients up to 3 months later, identifies changes in behaviour after our service had been used. If clients reported an action as a result of our help or advice, it would be a successful outcome. A period of 3 months would be long enough for a change to be noticed, and short enough for the change to be attributed to the service.

24 survey forms were sent out, and 8 were returned, a 33% response.

People are managing their hearing loss better.

In 2023/4, 30% (2022/23: 30%) of those who responded said they were managing their hearing loss better overall, and 70% responded that they had no change from their usual situation.

An annual trend is the low responses to questions about other hearing support and equipment. 77% of respondents (2022/23: 70%) had tried wearing their hearing aid for longer, comfortably. We noted 20% (2022/23: 25%) had tried the 'T' position on their hearing aid, perhaps reflecting the situation we are aware of that more hearing aids are not programmed with 'T' position at the initial fitting. Approximately half of those who responded had asked other people to face them in conversation.

People know where to go for help.

Our HHAS clients are a 'shared group', being also NHS Audiology out-patients. Of those who answered, clients were familiar with NHS Audiology at 66% (2022/23: 78%), and almost 70% with the Charity's services in their county. (2022/23: 50%).

People are no longer socially isolated.

In 2023/24, 54% of respondents said (2022/23: 54%) their 'sense of belonging in areas where they lived had increased to some extent, as a result of having their hearing aids maintained. The lowest response was to a question reporting involvement with their community or groups. Pre-pandemic, we noted while a few people had joined a group, the low response may be due to no appropriate age related or hearing impairment self-help/social groups, no information about groups, or no transport or mobility to access services. It is unclear if the pandemic has changed joining behaviours and choices.

People are more able to access other services.

In 2022/23, 100% of those who responded to questions about their options and choices, appeared to feel that the hearing aid and having it maintained, helped deliver positive outcomes with more control over their hearing loss, and that they felt they had choices, 77%.

Reduction in use of NHS Audiology Departments

The Charity provided overall 10,700 service consultations or advice. Clients are encouraged to use our services if it is more appropriate than travelling to the audiology Departments. Clients reported two additional outcomes that were unexpected about our service:

- Transport - Clients found it difficult to get to hospitals
- Convenience - Clients carers found care closer to home much easier

Improved relationships with family, friends and carers

We asked some general questions about experiences over the past month. 60% of respondents said their hearing difficulties had affected them, or felt they had bothered others. However, in situations where people wanted to hear better, having their hearing aid has helped 55%.

Our Vision: *Smiles from ear to ear*

Our Mission: *Hearing Advisory Service works to improve the health and well-being for people affected by hearing loss*

Hertfordshire Hearing Advisory Service
Board of Trustees Annual Report
For the year ended 31st March 2024

3 Our Structure and governance

Hertfordshire Hearing Advisory Service, HHAS, helps people affected by hearing loss and associated conditions in Hertfordshire and Bedfordshire, and is a charitable company, limited by guarantee. Originally established in 1982 as Hertfordshire Deafness Support Association, HeDSA, HHAS was incorporated in May 1997.

In November 2016, the Trustees passed a Special Resolution, changing the Objectives and Governing Document, to better reflect current best practice published by the Charity Commission and the Charity’s own operating requirements.

Charity Registration No.	1063430
Company Registration No.	3376847
Company Secretary	Mr Philip Linnegar*

Our Performance and Results

This Board of Trustees Annual Report 2023/24 connects the HHAS governing document and the Statement of Financial Activity. This is achieved by reporting the aim of the charity, our strategies, and how successfully our principal activities have been achieved using different strategies. Our main service activity is summarized elsewhere in this report.

Our Vision

Smiles from ear to ear.

Our Core Values

- *We like people with hearing loss and want to achieve the best life outcomes for them*
- *We like to support our Staff & Volunteers who work with passion, emotion, empathy*
- *We like to provide an oasis of calm*
- *We like people to feel that they are the centre of our attention*
- *We like people to feel their talents are useful*
- *We like people to feel they can stick with us*

Our Mission

Hearing Advisory Service works to improve the health and well-being for people affected by hearing loss.

Our Aim

Hertfordshire Hearing Advisory Service is established to relieve those people suffering from hearing impairment, deafness, sight impairment, blindness, deafblindness (dual sensory loss), and associated conditions as well as their carers.

Our Strategic Intent

The strategic intent of Hertfordshire Hearing Advisory Service is to sustain and extend as a charity that serves people, (clients) who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing, in Hertfordshire, Suffolk, Northamptonshire and Bedfordshire, in order to mitigate the effects of their Deafness or hearing loss.

Our Strategies

During the second pandemic year, the Board considered how the Charity would be meet its strategic intent, by adapting our five charitable strategies:

- To maintain the volunteer base and service provision
- To provide postal and other services, and seek resources to sustain operations
- To increase awareness of HAS and gain publicity about its work
- To maintain close links with existing partner organisations
- To set and meet high standards of performance for trustees, staff and operations
- To maintain a process of performance goals and reviews with all HAS personnel

Our Objectives

In furtherance of the Charity's aim, the objectives were met by providing high quality local services set out in this annual report.

Hertfordshire Hearing Advisory Service

Board of Trustees Annual Report

For the year ended 31st March 2024

Our CSR policy

As a successful Investor In People organisation, the Charity adopted a Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) to attract some of the positive benefits possible for our people and clients. We worked with Gibraltar Hearing Impairment and Tinnitus Association, GHITA, to provide Hearing AiderTM training, expertise and assistive equipment. We maintain contact with the GHITA Committee, and congratulate their chairman, Edgar Triay, on being awarded the Gibraltar Award, GA, in the 2023 New Years Honours.

Our ESG Policy

The Charity is now looking at the Environmental, Social and Governance Agenda (ESG) to see whether further benefits are possible for the organisation.

Environmental View

Hertfordshire Hearing Advisory Service and Herts Vision Loss are located in adjoining Head Offices to the WelTech Business Centre in Welwyn Garden City. These offices are more energy efficient, with arrangements for recycling. In Ipswich, we continue to be based at Suffolk House.

Widening Society

The Charity are looking forward to forming new connections with the communities we serve. Social Prescribing is a significant development for public health and well-being.

The Charity continued to be supported by specialist providers and consultants, in keeping with our aspiration to use local businesses, and pay invoices within 30 days.

Governance

The next 12 months are going to be difficult. This is a time for the Charity to reflect, in some areas strengthen, and develop support for service users.

The Charity has become a corporate member of the National Council for Voluntary Organisations to supplement support from our professional advisors, the Hertfordshire Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic Network, Herts BAME, and the Hertfordshire Carers Group.

The Board had agreed to consider the formation of a Remuneration Sub-Committee of the Finance and General Purposes Committee. The Charity developed an appropriate Terms of Reference, and Pay Policy, so the Board subsequently agreed to put this on hold.

The Trustees

The Members of the Board are the directors for the purposes of the Companies Act and the charity trustees for the purposes of the Charities Act. The Trustee Board members determine the general policy and ensure the governance of the Company.

During 2023/24, three Trustees stepped down from the Board. We thank Susan Street*, Glyn Evans* and HAS Vice Chairman, Tony Edwards for their service to the Charity.

Claire Oliver is Head of Group Assurance for M Group Services. With over 15 years of experience in the delivery assurance services, Claire now leads on internal audit, risk management, investigations and business continuity planning for the Group. Claire has been Hon. Treasurer of the Charity since 2016.

Dennis Furnell* is a naturalist and broadcaster, who has been involved with national and international conservation projects. He has worked on BBC and Independent Radio, and BBC Television, Channel 4, Anglia TV and The Discovery Channel. He was also instrumental in helping to set up the Visual Language Media Group, a television training facility for people with hearing impairment.

James Bole is an experienced Rehabilitation Officer for people with visual impairment, working in the sensory community in North Lincolnshire. He worked across the country (particularly Hertfordshire) and lectured at Birmingham City University on implantable miniature telescopes and sensory adaptations. He is involved on a Dementia and Sensory loss project, that involves the Parliamentary committee on Dementia, headed by Sir George Howarth. James works in the veterans community, supporting people with complex sight loss.

John Stoker* is an HHAS Volunteer, and Chair of Trustees. He was formerly a Regional Director with a large multi-national consulting firm having enjoyed a long career as a mechanical, electrical and environmental engineer, both in the UK and overseas. John's leisure activities include motor-caravanning, singing and playing guitar.

Julie Bayford is CEO of The Phoenix Group for Deaf Children and Young Adults, a charity for Deaf children, young Deaf adults and their families in Hertfordshire. Having been involved in community work for over 30 years, Julie has worked for Phoenix for 12 years, gaining much experience in deafness and bringing a wealth of charity sector experience to the HHAS Trustee Board.

Philip Linnegar* is CEO of Hertfordshire Hearing Advisory Service. His former appointments include CEO for Middlesex Association for the Blind, CEO for Hertfordshire Society for the Blind, Interim CEO for the National Association for Patient Participation, NAPP, and Head of Membership & Development at Hearing Concern.

During 2023/24 he retired as both Secretary of WFC ENABLES, at Watford Football Club, and of Chairman of Hemel Aces Football Club. He became Chairman of Friends Of Bennetts End Surgery, FOBES, their Patient Participation Group, a Trustee of NAPP, and a Trustee of Phoenix Group for Deaf Children. Philip's other interests include learning to swim, British Sign Language, motorsport, and developing keyboard skills to include manual pipe organ instruments.

* Indicates deafness or hearing impairment

Hertfordshire Hearing Advisory Service

Board of Trustees Annual Report

For the year ended 31st March 2024

The Board, Committees and Working Groups

During the 2023/24 financial year, John Stoker chaired the Board and the Annual General Meeting. John is chair of the Service Committee, and Claire Oliver is chair of the Finance and General Purposes Committee.

Each Trustee has taken responsibility for monitoring our activities in specific operational areas. Through their chairman, each Committee or Group present their reports or recommendations for action to the Board.

Trustees are appointed where they have the necessary skills and experience to contribute to the charity's development. Prospective Trustees are invited to attend HHAS Board meetings at least once, as a non-voting observer. This forms part of the Board co-option process. New Trustees are supported through an induction process, based on the NCVO Best Practice guidance.

We are grateful to all our Trustees and Committee Members for the commitment of time and consideration they have given towards the good governance of the Charity.

Finance and General Purposes Committee

Tony Edwards	Trustee
John Stoker	Trustee
Claire Oliver	Committee chair, Hon Treasurer
Philip Linnegar*	CEO

Strategy and Governance Committee

John Stoker	Committee chair
Vacancy	Trustee
Claire Oliver	Trustee, Hon Treasurer
Philip Linnegar	CEO

Service Committee Hertfordshire

Garnet Newman	Service Co-ordinator
Elaine Bond	Audiology Manager, West Herts Hospital NHS Trust
John Stoker	HHAS Volunteer and Trustee, (Chair)
Jenny Begg	HHAS Volunteer
Tom Lyon	Audiologist, Royal Free London Hospital NHS Trust

* Indicates deaf or hearing impaired members, volunteers or staff

Service Committee Bedfordshire

Anna Lazenby	Head of Audiology, Bedford Hospital NHS Trust
Alison Lowe	Senior Practitioner, Bedford Sensory Services
Carol O'Brien	Project Manager, Sight Concern Bedfordshire
Garnet Newman	Co-ordinator, Bedfordshire Hearing Advisory Service

Service Oversight Suffolk

Caroline Carr	Managing Director, Sensing Change Suffolk
Caroline Wells	Suffolk Commissioning
Philip Linnegar	Chief Executive Officer
Maria Waller	Service Manager, Suffolk

Honorary Patron, Advisors and Officers

Hon President

The Charity is supported by our Hon President, Sue Walter. Sue is a former Lip Reading Teacher, and is a prolific and long standing 'Hearing Aider' Volunteer.

Our first Hon President was Bert Chiswell.

Hon Patron

Our long-standing patron is The Rt. Hon. Sir Mike Penning MP. During the year, Sir Mike confirmed his intention to stand down as Patron in 2024.

Independent Examiner

In 2022, we changed arrangements for our independent examination in-line with with Charity Commission 'Statement of Recommended Practice', and formally agreed to the appointment of Stuart Cuzner, a partner at Menzies LLP, as the Charity's Independent Examiner.

Insurers	Arthur J Gallagher Insurance Limited Devonshire House, Riverside Park, Barnstaple EX31 1EY
Bankers	CAF Bank plc 25 Kings Hill Ave, Kings Hill, West Malling, ME19 4TA

Public benefit

In setting our objectives and planning our activities, our trustees have given careful consideration to the Charity Commission's general guidance on public benefit and in particular to keeping our costs and charges for any services to a minimum.

Secondly we ensure the benefits we offer are either restricted to those with hearing impairment, affected by hearing impairment, or designed to encourage engagement by deaf people with the wider community. Thirdly, in providing our services and activities, we always show due commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of our service users.

Hertfordshire Hearing Advisory Service
Board of Trustees Annual Report
For the year ended 31st March 2024

Our Benefactors and Supporters

We take this opportunity to record our grateful thanks to all our Benefactors and friends who have provided us with valuable support in many different ways during the past year.

Our Charitable and Corporate Benefactors

The Cunliffe Family Charitable Trust
The Hertfordshire Community Foundation
The Suffolk Community Foundation

Our Colleagues in the Public Sector

Bedford Council, Sensory Services Team
Central Bedfordshire, Sensory Services Team
Central Milton Keynes Sensory Advice Resource Centre Team
Hertfordshire County Council, Sensory Services Team
Suffolk County Council, Sensing Change Team
NHS Commissioning in
Bedfordshire, Hertfordshire, Suffolk and Northamptonshire

Our Colleagues in NHS Audiology Departments

Cambridgeshire	Addenbrookes Hospital
Bedfordshire	Bedford General Hospital; Luton and Dunstable Hospital
Milton Keynes UA	Central Milton Keynes Hospital
Hertfordshire (West)	Hemel Hempstead General Hospital; St Albans City Hospital Watford General Hospital
Hertfordshire (East)	Lister Hospital, Stevenage, QE2 Hospital, Welwyn Garden City Hertford County Hospital
Middlesex	Royal Free London
Suffolk	James Paget Hospital Ipswich General Hospital West Suffolk Hospital
Gibraltar	Gibraltar Health Centre

Our Colleagues in the Charity Sector

The Charity continued to work and co-operate with other charities and organisations, in pursuit of our strategic and charitable objectives. We work closely with other countywide social care charities, and the county branches of national charities, such as Hearing Dogs for Deaf People, and Phoenix Group for Deaf Children.

The Charity maintains a dialogue with colleagues across the Eastern Region, (Essex Hearing Help, West Norfolk Deaf Association, Cambridge Hearing Help), through the Eastern Area Region Hearing Help Group, and similar organisations elsewhere in England and overseas.

Particular thanks go to:

Andrew Palmer	CEO, Cambridgeshire Deaf Association
Sophie Ede	CEO, Essex Hearing Help
Carol O'Brien	CEO, Sight Concern Bedfordshire
Jo Carter; Clement Musondo	CEO, Herts Vision Loss
Bob Jones	CEO, Watford and 3 Rivers Trust.

Our Facilities Teams

Weltech Business Centre	Louise Levene and the Centre Management Team
-------------------------	--

Our organisations and groups

Organisations and Groups

Lowestoft Hand in Hand Club	Ipswich Hand In Hand Club
Bury St. Edmunds Hand in Hand Club	Ipswich Lip Reading Group
Felixstowe Hard of Hearing Club	Martlesham Hard of Hearing Club
Clothworkers' Foundation	Danais Primary Care Network
Bennetts End Surgery Team	Everest House Surgery

And to all our voluntary helpers and all other voluntary societies with whom we have co-operated during the year.

Our Consultants

We thank our consultants who assist the Charity in specialist operational support areas:

Emma Williams	HR Initiatives, HR Consultants
Beth Moore	Social Media Editor, BM Services
Vacant	PR Consultants
Jeff Wiblin	Equity Services, IT Consultants

Hertfordshire Hearing Advisory Service

Board of Trustees Annual Report

For the year ended 31st March 2024

Our Hearing Advisory Service Team

The Board of Trustees pay tribute to the staff for their commitment, hard work and dedication. The day to day management of the Company is delegated to the Chief Executive Officer, CEO, who is an ex officio member of all the committees and working groups. The CEO is supported by the Senior Management Team, SMT.

Chief Executive Officer

Philip Linnegar*~

Finance Manager

**Monica Ansbro~
Sally Oliver**

Service Manager – Herts/Beds

Charlotte Spurway *~

Service Coordinator
Hearing Advisor – Postal/HQ
Hearing Advisor – Hertfordshire
Hearing Advisor – Bedfordshire
eNewsletter/Website Editor
Technical Advisor
Principle LRC Volunteers
Bovingdon LRC Volunteers

Garnet Newman
Jacqui Compton
Bob Macdonald
Simon Windle
Charlotte Spurway
Philip Linnegar
Jenny, Barbara, Jane and Jackie
John C, Mike L*, Bob*, Sue B, Jan and Joan*

Deaf Service Manager

Emma Caswell*~

Deaf Outreach Worker
Deaf Outreach Worker
Community Sensory Link Worker

Golda Dahan*
Zoe Overing
Robert Hobbs

SP GP Link Workers

Vacant, Susie Brown

Service Manager - Suffolk

Maria Waller~

Hearing Advisors
Administrators
Lip-reading Teachers
Lip-reading Teacher (North)
Hand In Hand Club Coordinators
Principle Suffolk Volunteers

Maria Waller/Steph Daley
Maria Waller/Steph Daley
Maria Waller/Steph Daley
Lizzie Servant
Christine Roe/Steph Daley
Hugh and Sue W, Peter F, Rupert P

* Deaf or hearing impaired members of staff or volunteers.

~ Senior Management Team

4 Financial Reports

Hon Treasurer's Report

The Balance Sheet (page 34) shows a cash balance, (cash at bank and in hand), of £37,382 an increase of £10,865 from the previous year. There is a total surplus of £2,454 this year, (2023/23: £19,095 deficit), which includes depreciation of £7,628 (refer to page 35, Movement in Resources).

The Statement of Financial Activities (page 33), are in accord with Charities SORP (FRS 102), and all gains and losses are recognized.

Risk Management

The Trustees have assessed the major risks to which the charity is exposed, in particular those related to the operations and finances of the Charity, and are satisfied that systems are in place to mitigate our exposure to major risks.

Pension Statement

Hertfordshire Hearing Advisory Service introduced pension auto-enrolment, and adopted the Friends Provident/Friends Life Stakeholder Pension scheme, subsequently managed by Aviva. Pension provision is kept under review, and last year it was decided to move our auto-enrolment scheme to The People's Pension. The current scheme is available to all qualifying staff.

Payments

The Trustees acknowledge the importance of maintaining goodwill, by meeting financial obligations to volunteers, staff and suppliers, in a timely manner. The Charity seeks to pay its bills within 30 days of receipt.

Financial scrutiny

The Hon Treasurer takes the lead in supervising the charity's financial affairs, and the maintenance of proper financial records and procedures, in order to ensure the Charity's financial viability. The Finance and General Purposes Committee met twice during the year, to discuss and make recommendations on, amongst other matters, the budget for the next financial year and the Annual Report and Accounts respectively.

Going concern

The Trustees consider that there are no material uncertainties about the charitable company's ability to continue as a going concern. They have approved a break-even budget for 2024/25.

They are confident that, with appropriate budgetary controls and even in the current difficult economic climate, Hertfordshire Hearing Advisory Service will continue in operation and that it is appropriate to prepare these financial statements on a going concern basis.

Hertfordshire Hearing Advisory Service
Board of Trustees Annual Report
For the year ended 31st March 2024

Reserves Policy

The Trustees have reviewed and updated the Charity's reserves policy, to more explicitly articulate the links between the policy and the Charity's key risks and strategic objectives.

In doing so, Hertfordshire Hearing Advisory Service differentiates between short, medium, and long term risks as follows:

1. Short Term: Meeting working capital requirements and mitigating unbudgeted, in-year financial risks. In HHAS's situation, examples might be to manage the cash flow implications of contractual payments.

Reserves held to mitigate these short-term risks must be held as cash or short-term deposits immediate access as needed.

2. Medium Term: Mitigating the financial impact of changes foreseen over the next 1-3 year planning cycle, allowing sufficient time for the Charity to develop and meet these challenges whilst minimising the impact of any required changes. Examples would include managing the foreseeable impact of changes in public sector funding or benefits policy.

Reserves held to mitigate these medium-term risks can be held as long-term cash deposits or bonds, as their drawdown can be planned over a longer period of time.

3. Longer term: Ensuring the Charity can invest in planned renewal of infrastructure and intellectual property, so that its assets do not become outdated over time. This would include investment in property, IT and digital assets, and in the development of staff.

Reserves held to mitigate these long-term risks would be designated by the Board of Trustees against an agreed investment plan. Trustees will expect the Charity to build these reserves back up over time, in order to support ongoing investment.

4. Supporting Innovation: Having funds available to identify and act on opportunities to branch out into new activities that will achieve its charitable objectives, whilst minimizing risk and impact on the Charity's existing activities. This would include research and development of new services and policy areas.

Reserves held to support innovation will be designated by the Board of Trustees against a clear investment plan. These funds would be held to support explicitly high-risk activity, and as such there is less requirement of a financial return.

The Board of Trustees will review the level of reserves set against each risk category, regularly as part of the annual budgeting cycle, and immediately in the event of a significant change in the Charity's activities, size or risk profile.

Based on the Charity's current size and scope of activities, the Trustees consider that one month's operating expenditure is sufficient to cover short term risks; and a further two months operating expenditure is sufficient to mitigate medium terms risks.

Hertfordshire Hearing Advisory Service
Board of Trustees Annual Report
For the year ended 31st March 2024

The Trustees have prepared this report in accordance with the provisions of Part 15 of the Companies Act 2006.

Signed on behalf of the Trustee Members

Trustee

Date

Signed by:

462DF4C07BCD495...
Claire Oliver
19-Nov-2024

Hertfordshire Hearing Advisory Service
Board of Trustees Annual Report
For the year ended 31st March 2024

Independent Examiner's Report

To the trustees of Hertfordshire Hearing Advisory Service ('the Company')

I report to the charity trustees on my examination of the accounts of the Company for the year ended 31st March 2024.

Responsibilities and basis of report

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

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

Independent examiner's statement

Since your charity's gross income exceeded £250,000 your examiner must be a member of a listed body. I can confirm that I am qualified to undertake the examination because I am a registered member of FCA which is one of the listed bodies.

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

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

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

Stuart Cuzner ACA FCCA

Menzies LLP
Richmond House
Walkern Road
Stevenage
SG1 3QP

DocuSigned by:

CE674248388045E...

06-Dec-2024

Hertfordshire Hearing Advisory Service
Board of Trustees Annual Report
For the year ended 31st March 2024

5 Financial Accounts

Statement of Financial Activities

For the period 1st April 2023 to 31st March 2024

	Note	Unrestricted Fund £	Restricted Fund £	Total £	Year to 31/3/2023 £
<u>Incoming Resources</u>					
Grants	1	172,567	141,050	313,617	271,491
Donations & Projects		9,019	0	9,019	5,524
Bank Interest		828	0	828	412
Net income from trading		5,819	0	5,819	9,405
Other		14,723	0	14,723	11,445
Total Incoming Resources		202,956	141,050	344,006	298,277
<u>Resources Expended</u>					
Direct charitable expenditure	2	87,064	141,050	228,114	203,041
Fund Raising & publicity	3	26,752	0	26,752	29,392
Management & admin costs	4	86,686	0	86,686	84,939
Total Resources Expenses		200,502	141,050	341,552	317,372
Net Incoming (Outgoing) Resources		2,454	0	2,454	(19,095)
Balance brought forward As at 1 st April 2023		61,153	0	61,153	80,248
Balance Carried Forward As at 31st March 2024		63,607	0	63,607	61,153

The operating profit for the year arises from the company's continuing operations. No separate Statement of Total Recognised Gains and Losses has been presented as all such gains and losses have been dealt with above.

The notes on pages 36 to 38 form part of these financial statements.

Hertfordshire Hearing Advisory Service
Board of Trustees Annual Report
For the year ended 31st March 2024

Balance Sheet

As at 31st March 2024	Note	March 2024	March 2023
<u>Fixed Assets</u>			
Tangible Assets	5	21,200	20,571
Total Fixed Assets		21,200	20,571
<u>Current Assets</u>			
Debtors		34,885	60,551
Cash at Bank & in hand	6	37,382	26,517
Prepayments		12,136	4,923
Total Current Assets		84,403	91,991
<u>Liabilities:</u>			
<u>Amounts falling due within one year</u>			
Creditors		10,528	16,496
Barclaycard		750	301
Advance payments		30,718	34,612
Total		41,996	51,409
Net Current Assets		42,407	40,582
Total Assets		63,607	61,153
<u>Represented by:</u>			
Surplus from previous years		61,153	80,248
General Reserve		0	0
Surplus/Deficit for the year		2,454	(19,095)
Total		63,607	61,153

For the year ended 31/03/2024 the company was entitled to exemption from the requirement to have an audit under section 477 of the Companies Act 2006. The Members have not required the Company to obtain an audit of its accounts in accordance with section 476 of the Companies Act 2006.

Responsibilities of the Directors

The Directors acknowledge their responsibility for complying with the requirements of the Act with respect to accounting records and for the preparation of the accounts.

The Directors acknowledge their responsibility for:

- i) Ensuring the Company keeps accounting records which comply with the Companies Act 2006 and;
- ii) Preparing accounts which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the Company as at the end of its financial year, and of its profit and loss for the financial year in accordance with the Companies Act 2006, and which otherwise comply with the requirement of the Act relating to accounts, so far as is applicable to this company.

Signed on behalf of the Trustee Members

Trustee

Claire Oliver

Date

19-Nov-2024

Signed by:

462DF4C07BCD495...

The notes on pages 36 to 38 form part of these Financial Statements

Hertfordshire Hearing Advisory ServiceBoard of Trustees Annual Report
For the year ended 31st March 2024***Movement in Resources***1st April 2023 to 31st March 2024

		Unrestricted Fund £	Restricted Fund £	Total £	Year to 31/03/23 £
<u>Incoming resources</u>					
Grants and contracts	1	172,567	141,050	313,617	271,491
Donations & Projects	2	9,019	0	9,019	5,524
Bank Interest		828	0	828	412
Net income from trading		5,819	0	5,819	9,405
Other		14,723	0	14,723	11,445
Total Incoming Resources		<u>202,956</u>	<u>141,050</u>	<u>344,006</u>	<u>298,277</u>
<u>Outgoing resources</u>					
Staff Salaries & related costs		96,591	141,032	237,623	209,573
Staff Auto Enrolled Pension		6,934	0	6,934	6,697
Staff travel & expenses		7,507	0	7,507	7,633
Staff recruitment		508	0	508	932
Staff & Vol. Training		1,757	0	1,757	0
Trustees/Vol. travel & expenses		737	18	755	1,951
Postage		1,445	0	1,445	896
Property costs/rent		25,376	0	25,376	26,559
Venue Hire – Clubs and classes		5,515	0	5,515	4,105
Printing and Stationery		6,206	0	6,206	6,489
Telephone & internet		3,595	0	3,595	4,310
Website & computer		6,441	0	6,441	2,286
Insurance & licenses		4,999	0	4,999	7,448
Legal & consultancy		12,813	0	12,813	15,638
Advertising & publicity		1,049	0	1,049	2,943
Events & catering		2,434	0	2,434	2,343
Subscriptions & membership		3,438	0	3,438	2,402
Vehicle Fuel & maintenance		3,524	0	3,524	5,229
Repair and maintenance		797	0	797	493
Depreciation		7,628	0	7,628	8,203
Payroll and Bank Charges		1,062	0	1,062	1,192
Other		146	0	146	50
Total Outgoing		<u>200,502</u>	<u>141,050</u>	<u>341,552</u>	<u>317,372</u>
Net Incoming/Outgoing Resources		<u>2,454</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>2,454</u>	<u>(19,095)</u>
Balance Brought Forward as at 01/04/23		61,153	0	61,153	80,248
Balance Carried Forward as at 31/03/24		63,307	0	63,307	61,153

The notes on pages 36 to 38 form part of these Financial Statements

Hertfordshire Hearing Advisory Service
Board of Trustees Annual Report
For the year ended 31st March 2024

Notes and policies to the accounts

Basis of Accounting

The financial statements are prepared under historical cost convention as modified by the revaluation of certain assets and in accordance with the Charities SORP (FRS 102) (effective 1 January 2019) and the Companies Act 2006.

Income

Grants, donations and legacies are taken to the statement of financial activities when there is a reasonable assurance of receipt. Grants relating to future period are deferred.

Tangible Fixed Assets and Depreciation

Tangible assets are stated at cost less depreciation. Depreciation is provided at the following, which is rated in order to write each asset over its estimated useful life.

Furniture	10% on written down value
Computer Equipment	25% on written down value
Display Equipment	20% on written down value
Motor Vehicle	25% on written down value

Stock

Stock of equipment for on-sale and consumables are valued at the lower of cost and net realisable value after making due allowance for obsolete and slow moving items.

Taxation

The company is a registered charity and is exempt from tax on its income and gains applied to charitable purpose. The company is not registered for VAT.

Allocation

Resources expended are allocated to the particular activity where the cost relates directly to that activity. However, the cost of overall direction and administration on each activity, comprising the salary and overhead costs of the central function, is apportioned on the following basis which is an estimate based on staff time, of the amount attributable to each activity:

Fund-raising and publicity	20%
Management and administration of the charity	80%

Restricted, Unrestricted and Designated Funds

Restricted funds are to be used for specific purposes as laid down by the donor. Expenditure that meets these criteria is charged to the fund, together with a fair allocation of management and support costs. Unrestricted funds are donations and other incoming resources receivable or generated for the objects of the charity without further specified purpose and are available as general funds. Designated funds are unrestricted funds earmarked by the Board of Trustees for particular purposes.

Hertfordshire Hearing Advisory Service
Board of Trustees Annual Report
For the year ended 31st March 2024

Notes to the accounts for the period 31st March 2024

1. Grants	Unrestricted Fund £	Restricted Fund £	Total £	Year to 31/03/23 £
NHS Hertfordshire	113,605	0	113,605	104,752
HCC Community Wellbeing	0	24,612	24,612	22,725
NHS Bedfordshire	17,462	0	17,462	17,462
NHS Suffolk/SCC	41,500	0	41,500	52,375
Suffolk Lip Reading Classes	0	30,000	30,000	22,500
Suffolk HIH Clubs	0	11,500	11,500	8,625
HVCCG Social Prescriber LW	0	74,938	74,938	43,052
Total Grants	172,567	141,050	313,617	271,491

It should be noted that the above takes into account the entries of deferred income made by the charity and reflected in these financial statements. Such entry has been made to ensure appropriate accounting in accordance with the financial reporting framework.

2. Direct Charitable Expenditure	Unrestricted Fund £	Restricted Fund £	Total £
Vehicle expenditure	18,198	0	18,198
Volunteer expenses	960	18	978
Support officer salaries & expenses	67,006	141,932	208,938
Overheads	0	0	0
Total Direct Charitable Expenditure	87,064	141,050	228,114

3. Fund Raising & Publicity	Unrestricted Fund £	Restricted Fund £	Total £
Staff salaries and expenses	16,747	0	16,747
Publicity	10,005	0	10,005
Overheads	0	0	0
Total Fund Raising & Publicity	26,752	0	26,752

4. Management & Administration	Unrestricted Fund £	Restricted Fund £	Total £
Salaries & expenditure	27,912	0	27,912
Insurance & licenses	16,412	0	16,412
Office expenses	21,921	0	21,921
Consultancy and Legal expenses	12,813	0	12,813
Depreciation	7,628	0	7,628
Total Management & Administration	86,686	0	86,686

Hertfordshire Hearing Advisory Service
Board of Trustees Annual Report
For the year ended 31st March 2024

5. Fixed Assets	Office Equipment £	Office Furniture £	Display Equipment £	Motor Vehicle £	Total £
Costs at 01/04/23	39,096	14,689	7,885	16,990	78,660
Additions	8,256	0	0	0	8,256
Disposal	16,921	10,149	7,885	0	34,955
Costs at 31/03/24	30,431	4,540	0	16,990	51,961
Depreciation at 01/04/23	21,578	12,876	7,791	15,844	58,089
Charge for the year	6,265	525	88	750	7,628
Disposal	16,928	10,149	7,879	0	34,956
Depreciation at 31/03/24	10,915	3,252	0	16,594	30,761
Net Book value at 31/03/24	19,516	1,288	0	396	21,200
Net Book value at 31/03/23	17,518	1,813	94	1,146	20,571

Fixed Assets Segregation	2023/24	2022/23
	£	£
Direct charitable purposes	12,720	12,343
Indirect charitable purposes	8,480	8,228
Total	21,200	20,571

6. Cash at Bank and in Hand	2023/24	2022/23
	£	£
Cash at hand	330	1,198
CAF Cash & CAF Gold A/C	25,660	22,234
Bank Account (Suffolk)	11,392	3,085
Total Cash	37,382	26,517

Number of Employees earning between £50,000 and £60,000 P/Annum was: 1
 Number of Employees earning between £20,000 and £30,000 P/Annum was: 2

The average number of paid employees, analysed by function and
 Reported from this year as Full Time Equivalent (FTE) at 31st March 2024:

	2024	2023
Direct services	4.8	4.8
Fundraising & Publicity (10% of CEO's time)	0.2	0.2
Management & Administration	4.0	4.0
Total	9.0	9.0
Remuneration paid to Trustee members was:	Nil	Nil
Reimbursement of expenses paid to Trustee Committee Members was:	Nil	Nil
Transactions with any members of the Trustees Board:	Nil	Nil

Hertfordshire Hearing Advisory Service
Annual Report and Accounts 2023/24

The Chairman and Board of Trustees thank you for your interest in the work of the
 Hearing Advisory Services in Suffolk, Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire
 Weltech Business Centre, Ridgeway, Welwyn Garden City AL7 2AA
www.hhas.org.uk

ⁱ The Deaf Community. People in and around Hertfordshire who use British Sign Language as their main aid to communication.