

The Squad Trustees Annual Report 2023-2024

This report is designed to supplement the legal and financial information contained in the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2024 by providing a summary of the activities and achievements of The Squad Club during this period.

Vision and Mission

The Squad's vision is to create a member-first community that provides empowering social opportunities to enable adults and young people with learning disabilities to live their lives, be included, to have their voice heard and make their own choices. We consistently strive for this by offering inclusive, informal educational and fun social activities for adults and young people with learning disabilities in Merton, where our Members, Volunteers, and Club Leaders together experience opportunities, learn new skills, build confidence and improve mental, physical and emotional wellbeing.

Overview for the year

In 2023, The Squad proudly celebrated 30 years of making a difference in the lives of people with learning disabilities—a remarkable achievement for any micro charity within a local community. For three decades, we have provided a fun and social environment where our beneficiaries (known as our 'Members') can thrive, learn new skills, and build confidence to reach their full potential. Our commitment to social inclusion and choice has remained at the heart of everything we do, empowering our Members to have a voice and play an active role in both The Squad and their wider communities. This milestone is a testament to the dedication of our volunteers, supporters, and, most importantly, our incredible Members. As we look to the future, we remain committed to creating opportunities, fostering independence, and continuing to grow together.

This year, the organisation experienced a very small reduction in funds; however The Squad has been successful in efforts to generate fundraising revenue through various channels, namely grant funding and individual donations, against a backdrop of challenging circumstances across the charity sector. This has enabled the charity to operate with a stable financial platform for the immediate term, while continuing to deliver valuable services to our members. The Trustees and all of our team continue to work hard to ensure that this can continue and we are looking forward to many successful years ahead.

In the Autumn of 2023, we brought Members, Volunteers, Families, Trustees and local supporters together to celebrate our 30th Birthday. The celebration activities, including karaoke and party games, were chosen by Members and they were instrumental in the organising and coordinating of the event. We are delighted to have reached such a milestone as a small charity.

As we entered 2024, we were informed that the John Innes Youth Centre, that had been our hub for many years for both clubs, had to close with short notice. This meant we had to secure a new venue within the local area that was suitable for the activities our members love, and within budget for our small organisation. This was a challenging time for the charity and for its members; however it also led to some positive opportunities for both clubs to

explore the local area, and for us to build new connections with other organisations across Wimbledon as we explored the options for a new venue. Together, our Club Leaders, Volunteers and Trustees worked extremely hard to continue offering our members as many diverse and beneficial experiences and services as possible.

The charity would not be able to operate without our incredible staff and volunteers, who go above and beyond to ensure our members have a consistently beneficial experience and enjoy every moment of their time with The Squad, and this year has been no exception in this.

2023-24 Activity Report

This year we supported an average of **25 members** in **76 sessions** across the year to take part in fun activities that built their confidence, social skills and independence. These sessions were supported by a core group of an average of **10 volunteers**, who together contributed a total of **734 volunteer hours** to deliver the sessions, in addition to the time taken outside of these sessions for planning, training and team building. We run The Squad through two clubs, the Juniors and the Vets Club that both meet weekly.

Squad Juniors Club

Our Juniors Club is aimed at young people aged 13-25. During this year we ran 38 sessions, with an average of 18 young people attending each session, supported by our Club Leader and a core group of 6 volunteers.

The purpose of the club is to meet the needs of young people and ensure there are activities that they want to be involved and engage with. Sense Charity found that 7 in 10 young people with disabilities suffer from loneliness. The importance of our club nights is seen in the relationships that are developed during our youth club. It extends beyond our Thursday evenings, to friendships in school, meeting on the weekends with parents and having someone to speak to. Knowing they have a strong friendship group at the club is extremely important. Alongside this, it also provides respite support for carers and parents.

We organise three different activities for each weekly session each with a different focus, such as health, creativity and discussion-based activities.

Creative Sessions

Our Creative Sessions are a chance for our members to express their feelings and emotions in different ways, connect with celebrations that are important to their culture and families, and to make meaningful items. These sessions focus on young people's development as outlined by The Young Foundation Framework of Outcomes. Highlights this year included a celebration of Holi, where Members made decorations, and their own Holi powders for a celebration, building knowledge of religion and culture important to many of our Members. We also made homemade Christmas presents after Members highlighted how important it was for them to be able to give gifts at Christmas, but some were struggling with funds. One big highlight this year for the Juniors Club was a Carol Singing evening at Wimbledon Station. Not only was this a chance for our members to showcase their singing talents, but it also raised valuable funds for The Squad of almost £600.00 in donations.

Health Sessions

Sports sessions are always a popular choice amongst our members, including basketball, football, badminton and rounders. We also built connections with other local facilitators to provide opportunities for yoga, dance and aerobics which were very well received.

Members Voice and Discussion

In every session we deliver, we include opportunities for discussion amongst our members to reflect on topics that are important to them, and support them to develop their own voice and opinions. One example of these discussions is that every term our members together decide what they would like to do in the next term of Squad, and they are fundamental in crafting the next term's schedule. This year we had many different discussions, and also made use of outside facilitators such as SEND Youth Voice, which helped members to build awareness of how everybody communicates in different ways, to build better collaboration and understanding between members.

Squad Vets Club

The Vets Club is for members aged 25+ and is a well-established and supportive service for its members, which aims to create opportunities for members to socialise in the community

and with their peers. Whilst the hunt for a new venue this year led to some challenges for the charity, this also led to some wonderful opportunities to run sessions across London for the Vets group, which we know provides significant benefits to our members, enabling them to experience new things and develop their confidence and choice. The activities were tailored to provide a balance of recreational, but also educational and culturally enriching activities. Highlights this year included;

Theatre and Music

Music and Theatre provide valuable opportunities for self-expression for our members and this year we collaborated with other local facilitators to deliver this. One highlight was a DJ Workshop with Merton Music Foundation, and our Members and Volunteers also enjoyed a brilliant trip to Wimbledon Theatre.

Art and History

Developing knowledge and building connection with our local community is important to our Vets members, and this year we developed this through a range of brilliant activities and trips, including visiting the Van Gogh Experience, Wimbledon Art Studios, completing a Mitcham History Tour, and attending a Night at the Museum at Wimbledon Museum, where they opened just for us to be able to explore the exhibits.

Health and Exercise

It is a well-established fact that adults with learning disabilities are less likely to meet recommended guidelines for activities, with the *Sport England Active Lives Survey* (2020) finding that only **25% of adults with learning disabilities** participated in regular physical activity, compared to **63% of the general population**. Therefore, we continue to prioritise offering a range of exercise based activities to our members, ensuring they are fun and varied, focused on building enjoyment of movement to encourage more chance of active participation being sustained afterwards. Highlights this year included a visit to a local golf

centre and tennis centre, a London Wetlands Walk, Festive Light Trail Walk, Bowling, and we built connections with our local leisure centre to provide access to our local gym where members built their knowledge of the different equipment available.

Finances and Governance

The Board of Trustees takes its obligations to responsibly manage our finances very seriously.

During the 2023-24 financial year, our individual donations and community fundraising opportunities continued to perform well, showing a recovery from the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic. We were successful in grant fundraising and maintained adequate charity reserves, and this will continue to be our focus for 2024-25 as we seek grants to help us fund a new venue for our sessions and contribute to the long-term financial security of our organisation to help us continue to develop and grow to meet the need for our services within our local community and borough.

Conclusion

More than anything else, we are delighted to see The Squad's membership continue to enjoy the services that we provide and to give continued excellent feedback regarding the impact that the charity has on their lives and wellbeing.

We would like to take this opportunity to formally thank the Club Leaders of the Juniors and Vets Clubs and our dedicated volunteers, for their continued hard work and support. The Squad would not be able to exist without the support from the dedicated volunteer teams. We want to say an enormous thank you to our volunteers who make the Squad so special, giving everything to ensure our members have the best experience in every interaction with the charity and creating a unique community for our members that empowers them to be confident, independent, and to have fun. Finally, and most importantly, we want to thank our Members, who continue to provide the inspiration and motivation to help us grow and succeed.



CHARITY COMMISSION
FOR ENGLAND AND WALES

The Squad Club

1094398

CC16a

Receipts and payments accounts

For the period
from

4/1/2023

To

3/31/2024

Section A Receipts and payments

	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Endowment funds	Total funds	Last year
	to the nearest £	to the nearest £	to the nearest £	to the nearest £	to the nearest £
A1 Receipts					
Grants - Juniors Restricted	-	14,500	-	14,500	17,500
Grants - Vets Restricted	-	-	-	-	5,115
Grants - Unrestricted	1,500	-	-	1,500	-
Membership Subscriptions	1,930	-	-	1,930	1,347
Donations	3,880	-	-	3,880	9,443
Giftaid	-	-	-	-	1,276
Interest Income	886	-	-	886	253
Other	50	-	-	50	131
Sub total (Gross income for AR)	8,246	14,500	-	22,746	35,065
A2 Asset and investment sales, (see table).					
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
Sub total	-	-	-	-	-
Total receipts	8,246	14,500	-	22,746	35,065
A3 Payments					
Overheads (Legal, accounting & insurance)	2,650	-	-	2,650	3,010
Memberships & Marketing	185	-	-	185	207
Rent	1,296	1,296	-	2,592	2,106
Salaries - Juniors Club	-	6,605	-	6,605	6,605
Salaries - Vets Club	6,606	-	-	6,606	6,605
Salaries - General	-	-	-	-	-
Juniors Club Expenses (inc Bus)	-	2,571	-	2,571	2,647
Vets Club Expenses	1,443	-	-	1,443	833
Other Expenses	720	-	-	720	727
Sub total	12,900	10,472	-	23,372	22,740
A4 Asset and investment purchases, (see table)					
Security safe	-	-	-	-	582
	-	-	-	-	-
Sub total	-	-	-	-	582
Total payments	12,900	10,472	-	23,372	23,322
Net of receipts/(payments)	- 4,654	4,028	-	- 626	11,743
A5 Transfers between funds	-	-	-	-	-
A6 Cash funds last year end	34,311	11,812	-	46,123	34,380
Cash funds this year end	29,657	15,840	-	45,497	46,123

Section B Statement of assets and liabilities at the end of the period

Categories	Details	Unrestricted funds to nearest £	Restricted funds to nearest £	Endowment funds to nearest £
B1 Cash funds	CAF Accounts	28,406	15,840	-
	Paypal	91	-	-
	Petty Cash	1,160	-	-
	Total cash funds	29,657	15,840	-
	(agree balances with receipts and payments account (s))	OK	OK	OK
		Unrestricted funds to nearest £	Restricted funds to nearest £	Endowment funds to nearest £
B2 Other monetary assets	Details			
	Giftaid unclaimed		-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
B3 Investment assets	Details	Fund to which asset belongs	Cost (optional)	Current value (optional)
	None		-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
B4 Assets retained for the charity's own use	Details	Fund to which asset belongs	Cost (optional)	Current value (optional)
	None		-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
B5 Liabilities	Details	Fund to which liability relates	Amount due (optional)	When due (optional)
	PAYE/NIC Payable		660	
			-	
			-	
			-	

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Signed by one or two trustees on behalf of
all the trustees

Signature	Print Name	Date of approval
<i>P. Catt</i>	Philip Catt	27/01/2025
<i>R. Isman</i>	Renaud Isman	27/01/2025

Guarantees and debt

No guarantees have been given by The Squad Club (CIO), where potential liability under the guarantee is outstanding at the year end date of 31 March 2024.

No debt is outstanding at the year end date, 31 March 2024, which is owed by The Squad Club (CIO) and which is secured by an express charge on any assets of the CIO.



Section A

Independent Examiner's Report

**Report to the trustees/
members of**

Charity Name
The Squad Club

**On accounts for the year
ended**

31 March 2024

**Charity no
(if any)**

1094398

Set out on pages

Included in the CC16a account pages and the Trustees annual report
(remember to include the page numbers of additional sheets)

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the above charity ("the Trust") for the year ended 31/03/2024.

**Responsibilities and
basis of report**

As the charity trustees of the Trust, you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 ("the Act").

I report in respect of my examination of the Trust's accounts carried out under section 145 of the 2011 Act and in carrying out my examination, I have followed the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the Act.

**Independent
examiner's statement**

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

- accounting records were not kept in accordance with section 130 of the Act or
- the accounts do not accord with the accounting records

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

Signed: Martin Davies

Date: 27 January 2025

Name: Martin Davies

**Relevant professional
qualification(s) or body
(if any):**

FCA
The Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales (ICAEW)

Address:

A3 Broomsleigh Business Park
Worsley Bridge Road
London SE26 5BN

Section B**Disclosure**

Only complete if the examiner needs to highlight matters of concern (see CC32, Independent examination of charity accounts: directions and guidance for examiners).

Give here brief details of any items that the examiner wishes to disclose.

N/A