

**REPORT & ACCOUNTS FOR
YEAR ENDED 31 JULY 2023**

THE AUDITORY VERBAL CENTRE

Company Number 04569764

(England and Wales)

Charity Number 1095133

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LEGAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE DETAILS

Trustees	Jane Barry (Chair) Paul Clifford (Treasurer) Eleanor Conroy Frances Owen Amanda Wilkinson (resigned 29 November 2022) Vinay Purwaha Amelia Ehren Gillian Smith (appointed 01 August 2022) Katherine Bartrop (appointed 01 August 2022)
Secretary	N/A
Chief Executive	Anita Grover
Company Number	04569764 (England and Wales)
Charity Number	1095133
Registered Office	Bignell Park Barns Chesterton Oxfordshire OX26 1TD
Business Address	Bignell Park Barns Chesterton Oxfordshire OX26 1TD
Bankers	Lloyds Bank 1 High Street Oxford OX1 4AA
Auditor	Wenn Townsend St Giles' Oxford OX1 3LE

TRUSTEES' REPORT (INCLUDING DIRECTORS' REPORT AND STRATEGIC REPORT)

1. The trustees present their report and the audited financial statements of the charity for the year end 31 July 2023. The trustees have adopted the provisions of the Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP) "Accounting and Reporting by Charities" (FRS 102) in preparing the annual report and financial statements of the charity.
2. The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the accounting policies set out in note 1 of the accounts and comply with the charity's governing document, the Charities Act 2011 and Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland published in October 2019.

STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE & MANAGEMENT

3. The organisation is a company limited by guarantee and a registered charity. It is registered as The Auditory Verbal Centre and uses the working name, Auditory Verbal UK (AVUK). The members of the company are the same as its directors, who are its trustees for the purposes of charity law and served throughout the year and up to the date of approval of this report, unless otherwise stated. The company is established under a memorandum of association, which sets out the objects and powers of the charitable company and is governed under its articles of association.
4. The Board is responsible for oversight of the management of all the affairs of the charity. It seeks to ensure that all activities are within UK law and come within the agreed charitable objectives. The Board's work includes setting strategic direction, agreeing the financial plan and ensuring that activities are conducted within agreed governance frameworks.
5. The charity is governed by its board of trustees who meet on average once every three months. These meetings comprise of the trustees, with the CEO and Director of Finance and Operations in attendance. These meetings make decisions about the policies and strategic direction of the charity. The Board delegates all other operational and management matters to the Chief Executive. All decisions are recorded in the minutes of the meeting. Decisions on employment and remuneration are discussed by the Chair, Treasurer and CEO with senior appointments involving the wider Board. In 2022-23 two new Board sub-committees were established, these are the Finance and Risk sub-committee and the People and Development sub-committee. Other members of the AVUK team are invited to attend Board meetings or subcommittees to present new proposals, plans, and research and discuss progress. Trustees also meet members of the team outside of Board meetings and keep abreast of new developments through online media and by visiting the centres.
6. The trustees seek to act independently and impartially with their sole interest being the furtherance of the charity's objectives. In addition, all trustees have declared that there is nothing that, to their knowledge, could conflict with trustee independence before they were appointed as a trustee. Any potential conflict of interest must be declared in advance of any agenda item, and, in such an event, an individual trustee may be excluded from the decision-making process.
7. The trustees have considered the major risks to which the charity is exposed. These have been reviewed and a range of measures and systems are in place to manage them. The strategic risk register is reviewed in detail by the Finance and Risk Committee who offer ongoing reporting to the full Board. Major issues are discussed as they arise, to ensure swift remedial action where needed. Financial risk is mitigated by a multi-donor strategy, minimising reliance on one income stream. A monthly system of current and forecasted financial reporting is in place; trustees review the data from this at the Finance and Risk Subcommittee and report into full trustee meetings. The Chair, CEO, Director of Finance and Operations, and Treasurer ensure a regular dialogue in between meetings. Policies on reserves and fundraising/administrative expenditure are in operation (see paragraphs 88 - 98).

8. The trustees consider the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit and believe that the activities of AVUK are in line with that guidance.

Safeguarding at AVUK

9. Safeguarding children at AVUK takes several forms. As an organisation, AVUK recognises our role in safeguarding a vulnerable group and ensuring children are given the opportunity to thrive. We have written policies for families and staff, based on mandatory government procedures and practice guidance. An audit of both our policy and practice is undertaken each year. Day-to-day responsibility for ensuring policies and procedures are adhered to is shared between the CEO and the Family Support team, with designated safeguarding support in each centre. The Board has a dedicated safeguarding lead and undertakes all required child safeguarding measures and criminal record checks.
10. We have three Designated Safeguarding Leads who are supported by additional leads at Board level and within the senior management team. This ensures Safeguarding Leads cover both centres and the whole working week. All staff are kept aware of their recording and reporting responsibilities through formal supervision and informal discussions. All staff and Trustees undergo bi-annual Safeguarding training, which is being undertaken again in Autumn 2023. The training is repeated for new joiners as part of their induction. Any immediate safeguarding concerns are discussed with families at the earliest opportunity, and we use our parent consultations to address any areas of potential concern.
11. As part of liaison with local services, staff have contributed to 'Team around the Child' meetings and worked with children and families' teams as required. We follow fair and safe recruitment procedures for all staff. Enhanced DBS checks are carried out for all staff and volunteers and regulated yearly through the DBS update service.

Annual Review 22/23

OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES

Our vision

12. We want all deaf babies and children to have the same opportunities in life as their hearing peers. We want the families of deaf children, who want their child to learn to listen and talk to have the opportunity to access an Auditory Verbal therapy programme close to where they live and through publicly funded services.

Our mission

13. We want to raise expectations and outcomes for deaf children. We work to increase awareness, understanding and access to Auditory Verbal therapy by providing services direct to families and sharing our expertise with health and education professionals through our internationally accredited training programme so that many more families can access an Auditory Verbal therapy programme close to where they live.

Public benefit statement

14. The trustees have referred to the guidance in the Charity Commission's general guidance on public benefit when reviewing AVUK's aims and objectives and in planning our future activities. In particular, the trustees have considered how planned activities will contribute to the aims and objectives they have set.

STRATEGIC REPORT

15. This year we published our ten-year strategy, [*Creating a Sound Future for Deaf Children*](#) that outlines our plan to transform the landscape of Auditory Verbal therapy provision in the UK, so that every family who wants their child to learn to listen and talk will be able to access an Auditory Verbal therapy programme through publicly funded services in their local area.
16. To achieve this, we need to increase the number of specialist therapists in the UK, we need to support families, and we need to build sustainable services for the future that are inclusive and enable equality of opportunity.
17. Over the past year we have sought to undertake the initial steps required to make our strategy a reality, which was reflected in our three objectives: to support families, to transform service provision, and to embed changes and build for the future. We are proud to say that we have continued to deliver our family programme across the UK, we have increased our reach and positive reputation, and we have successfully increased the number of professionals training in Auditory Verbal practice. We are very grateful to all the staff and volunteers for their continued professionalism and commitment to AVUK and to all those who fund and support the charity in so many ways.

OUR WORK TO SUPPORT FAMILIES OF DEAF CHILDREN

18. We have delivered a high-quality Auditory Verbal programme and supported 82 families this year on our regular caseload and a further 76 families through initial enquiries, appointments, and ad hoc sessions. As part of our new strategic vision, we continue to work towards our long-term goal of 120 families on our regular caseload at any one time.
19. The cost-of-living crisis has negatively impacted on many families around the UK, and we are pleased to say that we have successfully managed to ensure that families are able to continue undertaking their Auditory Verbal therapy programme with the support of our generous supporters through our bursary scheme. The number of families on our regular caseload receiving means-tested bursaries has increased by nearly a quarter to 75% (62 families). On behalf of these children and their families, we would like to thank all our funders for allowing them to continue to access this life-changing programme through these tough economic times.
20. As part of our continuing efforts to ensure continuous improvement and the best quality of care for families, we seek feedback through our annual Family survey. This year we issued the survey to 84 families and received a response rate of 33% (28 respondents). This represents a 10% growth rate in responses in comparison to last year and is an encouraging level of engagement, as typically the average response rate to an external survey is 10-15%.
21. The respondents represented a wide range of experiences of the services offered by AVUK, with families having accessed AVUK services from less than 6 months to over 3 years. We had responses from families accessing services in-centre (in either Bermondsey and Bicester), via telepractice, and via the hybrid model.
22. Responses to the survey have continued to be overwhelmingly positive. Regarding family services, we have increased family satisfaction to nearly achieving either satisfied or very satisfied across the board. Auditory Verbal therapy is a parent coaching approach, and we are pleased to report that this year we have improved upon last year, with 100% of parents now reporting that they feel encouraged to participate and contribute to their child's sessions. In line with last year's results, most parents continue to find their parent coaching and take-home notes either helpful or very helpful.
23. We asked parents to inform us of their experiences with AVUK and the impact it has had on them. We were very pleased to receive a large amount of positive feedback, including:

"AVUK has positively impacted our child's outcomes in a significant way. As a family, we have felt hugely supported by AVUK through our child's first few years, in terms of speech and language

therapy, advice on audiology and optimising the hearing technology and how to best support and advocate for our child. The level of support given by AVUK has not been replicated in any other services which we access for our child."

"Quite simply, it helped our daughter learn to listen and talk - which we thought would never be possible."

"In a nutshell AVUK are clearly aiming for better than good. Striving to overachieve will ultimately ensure my son's outcome will be the best it can be. I truly believe had we only had the support from our LA [Local Authority] then we would not have made half the progress we are seeing now."

"We'd be lost without AV therapy! The techniques it gives us are invaluable."

"AVUK has been essential to help both kids become confident with their speech and language skills. Their language in particular has flourished. It has also given the whole family a lot of support and reassurance, as we manage the kids' hearing impairment on top of the rest of their upbringing."

24. As part of our continued endeavor to strive for excellence, the survey also asked where we could improve. Most parents felt they were able to raise any issues they might have with AVUK. However, the survey results highlighted a few areas for improvement, particularly relating to the awareness of the family support services that we offer. Although we have increased awareness in comparison to last year, we will continue to implement further actions to ensure all families are aware of the full range of support available.

25. Our dedicated Family Support Manager joined AVUK in April 2021. Since joining, they have led AVUK in supporting families by helping them to navigate the Education, Health and Care plan process, delivering a parent buddy system, and supporting their access to other relevant services. This year we have also delivered the Family Links parenting programme under the umbrella of the 'Early Years Research Grant Challenge'. This is funded by the National Deaf Children's Society, and we will continue to roll out the programme further over the next 2 years.

26. This evidence based, 10 week 'Nurturing Programme' improves the emotional health of both adults and children and strengthens family relationships. It is a cognitive-relational programme, providing parents with new skills to develop an understanding of behaviour in the context of relationships. Families that have used these services have overwhelmingly found them to be positive and useful, with several parents noting that these additional services have served as a highlight of their experience with us, stating:

"The support I've received has encouraged me to trust my gut and advocate for my son and challenge health services. I feel listened to and heard as a mum of a deaf child."

"I loved the family links program/course. Really enjoyable, very well facilitated and totally parent focused. I enjoy the sessions and seeing H's progress."

27. We continue to be enormously grateful to Mark and Katya Sabah, for the work they have done to host parents' evenings for other parents with children on the AVUK programme. Having graciously hosted the first Parents Evening last year in their home, they have since done so on two further occasions. The Parents Evenings offer current and recently graduated families who live in and around London an opportunity to get together in an informal setting to share their stories and challenges and offer advice and support to each other. These parents' evenings have been warmly received and we thank the Sabah Family for their continued support.

28. Accessibility to support for all families is at the forefront of our vision, and so we offer families the option of receiving their Auditory Verbal therapy programme either in-centre, through telepractice or via a hybrid of both. This enables them to attend therapy sessions despite any barriers that might exist such as location, work hours, and family commitments. We are proud to say that our effective

delivery of therapy is consistent across all options, with each mode of delivery receiving a minimum rating of 90% for satisfied or very satisfied amongst parents on the programme.

29. The clinical team continues to run frequent 'Meet an AVT' events online, giving families the opportunity to hear from an experienced therapist and ask any questions. This year saw a 42% increase in sign-ups to these events.

OUR WORK TO TRANSFORM SERVICE PROVISION IN THE UK

Engaging for Change

30. Following the launch of our #HearUsNow Campaign in 2021, we have continued to be assisted by Atticus Partners in engaging with decision makers, including MPs, and the public and private sectors, to build a groundswell of support for Auditory Verbal therapy to be offered on the pathway for deaf children in the UK.
31. Our CEO has held several meetings with cross-party Members of Parliament (MPs) to continue to grow support from across the political spectrum for our aims. This year AVUK has been registered as a charity in Scotland and we have accelerated our engagement work in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. We want to thank parents of children we have worked with who have contributed to supporting our campaign in a number of ways.
32. In total, we have engaged more than 50 MPs, Members of Scottish Parliament (MSP), Members of Senedd (MS) and other elected representatives, with supporters asking Parliamentary Questions, highlighting our work in Parliamentary debates, and raising awareness of our work and impact with national, regional and local health bodies and local authorities.
33. In the wider public sector, we have engaged with several Integrated Care Boards (ICBs) across England and NHS England on increasing access to Auditory Verbal therapy and training more professionals in the approach. We are proud to be part of the #SENDInTheSpecialist coalition, led by the Royal College of Speech and Language Therapists, the National Deaf Children's Society, Speech and Language UK and Voice 21. With over 120 other organisations, we are part of a unified voice calling on the UK Government to invest in the specialist workforce for children and young people with special education needs and disabilities.
34. We were very proud to have Orson, an 8-year-old AVUK graduate, speak to more than 20 cross-party MPs about wanting every deaf child to have the same opportunities that he has had. Orson also delivered a letter to the Prime Minister at 10 Downing Street and appeared on a segment in the Sunday Mirror and on ITV London, sharing his story.

Increasing the numbers of professionals training in Auditory Verbal practice

35. We have continued to grow our training programme in Auditory Verbal practice for Speech and Language Therapists, Teachers of the Deaf and Audiologists in the UK and around the world. This comprises a 6-month Foundation course and a 2½ year Advanced course. We are delighted to report that 31 professionals who have completed our AG Bell Academy accredited advanced course have now become certified Auditory Verbal therapists, of whom 14 are in the UK (including some of the therapists currently working for AVUK).
36. During 2022/23 we delivered high-quality training to 12 Foundation cohorts comprised of 61 professionals. This included 23 professionals from the UK, of whom 20 were able to receive a full AVUK bursary to cover their training fees thanks to the generosity of our donors. This marks another year in which we have exceeded our original target for the number of Foundation cohorts.
37. We were also able to improve upon the number of professionals pursuing our Advanced training, successfully meeting our target to deliver training to 8 cohorts (comprised of 30 professionals). 8 of the 30 professionals are from the UK and 7 of them required full bursary funding in order to

undertake their advanced training. We are very grateful to the Foundations who have supported our training bursary programme which is enabling UK professionals to pursue their training in this approach. We are seeing a growing demand for both our Foundation and Advanced courses from Speech and Language Therapists and Teachers of the Deaf. We have also worked with a Local Authority in Yorkshire to deliver bespoke training for communication support workers.

38. Attendees of our training courses continue to take significant value from both the Foundation and Advanced courses stating:

"I have to say that in the last 6 months, I have experienced the greatest clinical and professional growth since graduating as a qualified speech and language therapist. I have attended various training courses since then but none that have changed my practice or increased my knowledge and confidence as much as AVUK's foundation course. I'm more motivated than ever to continue developing my practice to meet the AG Bell Academy's requirements to sit the LSLS CertAVT® examination."

"I've learnt so much about early language development and it's really changed my practice. I've realised how important it is that deaf children, especially those that are born to hearing families, have all the opportunities to develop language and communication so that they're ready to start school alongside their peers."

"I would consider myself a life-long learner and I have always been interested in expanding and developing my knowledge. When I researched AVUK's training, I realised that it suited me for many reasons; it was online, the number of participants was small, and it was conducted by an experienced Auditory Verbal Therapist. I look forward to using the knowledge and experience I gained during the last number of years with families of children with hearing loss."

39. AVUK continues to support its training alumni beyond the duration of our training programme. This year we have continued to develop our Continued Mentoring Programme to create a sustainable and valued scheme to provide a supportive peer-to-peer network for years to come:

"Belonging to the CMP group has been invaluable for me since completing the AVUK Advanced Training Course. Each month we have the opportunity to post questions related to our practice and we all benefit from each other's expertise. Qualified and experienced Listening and Spoken Language Specialists from AVUK provide advice and guidance and up to date information to help us to find solutions to problems."

40. As new therapists further develop their confidence and practice, they will be in a position to mentor others through the training process with support from AVUK. There are several UK professionals likely to sit their exams later in 2023/early 2024, which will increase capacity to deliver Auditory Verbal therapy in the UK, while supporting our vision of developing a wider 'train the trainer' programme to accelerate training reach in the UK.
41. In addition to our Mentoring programme, Foundation and Advanced courses, we have built upon our success in the delivery of short courses for professionals based both in the UK and internationally and over the past year we have successfully delivered a programme of bi-monthly AG Bell Academy-accredited courses/webinars. These have proven tremendously popular, with most of these courses being fully booked owing to the excellent reputation of our training and effective engagement driven by our communications team. With support from donors, we have been able to offer most of these short courses free of charge.

Demonstrating What Works: Our Research and Sharing Best Practice

42. In November 2022, we published our latest [Position Paper](#), which collated the latest evidence on how early interventions, hearing technology and social policy have advanced, adding to the growing evidence base for the effectiveness of the Auditory Verbal approach.

43. In April 2023, we published [research](#) conducted by YouGov that detailed the knowledge gap of the UK public regarding the potential for deaf children to learn to speak as well as their hearing peers, with only 2 in 5 (41%) of UK adults believing this to be possible. Positively, the research also revealed that 80% of UK adults believe that Auditory Verbal therapy should be available to all deaf children by publicly funded bodies like the NHS.
44. Outside of our publishing, we have also shared our research and expertise by presenting at the following events:
- September 2022 British Association of Teachers of the Deaf (BATOD) Conference – Noel Kenely & Amy Spicer presented on '*The Parent Journey*'.
 - November 2022 European Association of Cochlear Implant Users Conference – Anita Grover presented on '*The Future (Re)Habilitation and Cochlear Implants*'.
 - March 2023 National Sensory Impairment Partnership (NATSIP) Conference – Noel Kenely presented on '*Engaging parents for success*'.
 - March 2023 University College London (UCL) Audiology Masters lecture – Noel Kenely presented a lecture on '*Functional Listening and Speech testing*'.
 - June 2023 South African Cochlear Implant Group conference – Frances Clark presented a workshop on '*Practical with Paediatrics*' as well as a keynote on Auditory Verbal therapy.
 - June 2023 AG Bell Global Symposium – Noel Kenely, Amy Spicer, and Sarah Hogan presented on '*Engaging Families Each Step of the Way*'.
45. This has allowed us to increase awareness of Auditory Verbal practice amongst a broader pool of professionals. In addition, to ensure continuous excellence in our own understanding on the latest developments regarding hearing loss and early language development, we also attended two sector conferences:
- October 2022 British Academy of Audiology Conference
 - March 2023 Talk To Your Baby Conference
46. For future research, we intend to publish the next annual edition of our Position Paper by November 2023, collaborate with the First Voice Network on their 2023/2024 Sound Outcomes report, and to continue to develop our research programme to support our 10-year strategy and clinical best practice.

Increasing our profile and reach

47. An essential component to making our strategic aim of ensuring that every family who wants their child to learn to listen and talk can access an Auditory Verbal programme through the NHS and publicly funded services in their local area a reality, is to ensure that awareness of our work continues to grow. We set ourselves ambitious targets, which we are pleased to say we have met over the past year.

Increasing coverage in national and local media

48. We increased our coverage in national and local media by 6% this year with 53 news pieces featured. This has helped us spread awareness of Auditory Verbal therapy across the UK and challenge the perceptions of what deaf children can achieve.
49. This year's highlights include TV coverage on ITV London for Loud Shirt Day, The Sunday Mirror featuring Orson Grimer delivering his letter to 10 Downing Street, a feature in Metro London featuring AVUK graduate Ava Pearson, and online coverage on Sky News and Yahoo News.

BBC Radio 4 Appeal

50. On the 22nd and 26th January 2023, children's laureate Joseph Coelho presented an [appeal](#) on behalf of AVUK on BBC Radio 4. Through using social media adverts and organic content to create
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awareness about the appeal, we reached almost 40,000 accounts, with an average cost per click for Facebook, Instagram and LinkedIn achieving better than industry benchmarks. Through the appeal, we were able to raise £16,205.

BBC Documentary

51. We were delighted to feature in Rose Ayling-Ellis's BBC 1 documentary, Signs for Change, which was aired on 26th June 2023. The documentary highlighted AVUK's provision of Auditory Verbal therapy and featured an interview with Senior Auditory Verbal therapist, Noel Kenely, and AVUK graduate, Harrison. The documentary contributed significantly to a spike of interest including:
- A 114.31% increase in unique visitors to the AVUK Website in the week following the airing of the documentary and an increase in initial enquiries from families.

Loud Shirt Day

52. We ran our Loud Shirt Day event on 21st October 2022. As one of our longest standing engagement events, we managed to build upon our successful history by:
- AVUK website saw an increased traffic of 9.03% in the two weeks surrounding Loud Shirt Day (15th – 29th October) compared to the previous two weeks (30th September- 14th October)
 - Securing 7 media pieces, including a piece on ITV London.
 - Achieving 16 sign-ups to take part in Loud Shirt Day from a range of sectors including Ensors Accountants, Geospatial Commission (Cabinet Office) and the Yorkshire Cochlear Implant Centre, amongst others.
 - Running our first Loud Shirt Day parliamentary event with more than 20 MPs attending.

Achieve Anything Summit

53. We were very pleased to welcome inspirational deaf young people from across the world to our centre in Bermondsey, London, for the start of the international *Achieve Anything Summit*. This was organised by the Cochlear Foundation and called on world leaders to address hearing loss and prioritise better access to hearing healthcare and support for millions of children around the globe.
54. As part of the summit, national ambassadors from the UK, Brazil, India, France and the US, were brought together to work with hearing advocacy network Cochlear Implant International Community of Action (CIICA) to launch a consultation process for the development of a global declaration on hearing loss for children and young people. We were very pleased to see Ava Pearson, an AVUK graduate, appointed as the UK ambassador for the event.
55. During the summit, [four young people who learned to listen and speak at our charity had the opportunity to meet Malala Yousafzai](#), activist, UN Messenger of Peace and the youngest person ever awarded the Nobel Peace Prize. Commenting on the experience, Hope Dennis, one of our graduates stated:

"This has been an unforgettable experience. I can't believe I've met someone who has won the Nobel Peace Prize, and she is such an inspiration. I really hope this summit can help more deaf children get the kind of support I had which for me has also meant I can do everything my hearing friends can."

Digital Channels

56. We have exceeded our target of 15%- 20% total growth on our social media presence across Instagram, X (formerly known as Twitter), Facebook, YouTube, and LinkedIn, by achieving a 21% increase in followers across all our platforms. We have also increased the number of subscribers to our newsletter mailing list by over a quarter (26.71%) to 1,314 individuals. This increase can be

partially attributed to our decision to segment our newsletters to specific audiences, ensuring that subscribers receive a newsletter tailored to their interests.

EMBEDDING CHANGES & BUILDING FOR THE FUTURE

57. As an organisation we strive for excellence in all we do. This year, we have sought to empower our staff by investing in our people, processes, and technology. Our aim is to be a fair, equitable, and inclusive organisation that ensures our people can be the best they can be. This year we have continued to be a collaborative organisation, forming part of a strong national and international community that shares best practice, looks outwards and works collaboratively to achieve excellent outcomes for deaf children. We have been working on our infrastructure to enable our people to be effective and efficient. Our fundraising approach has been strategically focused and concentrated on securing the long-term sustainable funding needed to make our goals a reality whilst meeting our annual expenditure requirements.

Equity, Diversity and Inclusion

58. AVUK has continued to review and challenge its processes and culture to become a more diverse and inclusive organisation, both for staff and service users. A Diversity and Inclusion steering group meets regularly, with the involvement of the CEO, to review progress and take forward new tasks. The group maintains an Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Action Plan, reflecting on what has been done, what next steps need to be taken, and what challenges they are likely to face. A staff working group has been established from across the organisation to take forward actions and make recommendations to the steering group. The Trustee Board has a standing 6-monthly Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion agenda item to review and challenge AVUK's progress in this sphere.
59. Over the past year we have focused on achieving our goals in five key areas:
60. **Language** - We continue to promote the use of our EDI Language Guide, which sets out best practice in inclusive communications. We have instituted a 6-monthly review and update of the Language Guide to ensure continual improvement on the document and its use.
61. **Resources** - We have updated our resources to ensure that they provide a wider representation of different ethnicities, abilities, religions and sexual orientation. We conduct 6-monthly reviews of therapy resources to ensure that they reflect our principles of diversity and inclusion. We were very pleased to receive from Playmobil UK donated boxes of toys that contain ethnically diverse characters for both the Bermondsey and Bicester centres.
62. **Recruitment** - We have started to implement anonymised recruitment for recruitment exercises. We continue the use of diverse websites/agencies to ensure the widest possible target audience for role adverts. We have identified a need for an EDI recruitment policy document, and so are aiming to have this drafted, finalised and published in recruitment exercises over the coming year.
63. **Data** - We made significant progress on ensuring that we can collect and review data regarding protected characteristics, doing so in a manner reflective of our EDI values. We have updated internal systems to avoid gender-based language. We have identified current gaps in data and moved to close these gaps to ensure that we have comprehensive information.
64. **Lived Experience** - We continued to give staff and external speakers the opportunity to talk about their lived experiences regarding different protected characteristics during whole-team meetings and to draw on external speakers. These sessions have been very well attended, with positive participation by the whole team. One of our sessions was a talk by the Ministry of Justice Gender Equality network on the topic of menopause. This session offered useful insights into the challenges that women undergoing menopause may experience and detailed how AVUK colleagues could support colleagues. We were also delighted to welcome two deaf individuals to share their lived

experience during all-staff meetings, and one of our trustees also shared their experience on living with hidden conditions. We will continue to arrange these sessions over the next year.

65. We have also engaged parents for their perspective on AVUK as an inclusive charity in our annual family survey. We were very pleased that 89% of parents either strongly agreed or agreed that we are an organisation that respects inclusion and diversity. There was no negative perception of AVUK on this basis, with the other 11% stating that they neither agreed nor disagreed.

Our People

66. We have refined our hybrid working policy to enable staff to operate in a way best suited to their working style and needs, in line with feedback received from our staff members. We have developed our handbooks, internal guides and toolkits in line with best practice and to reflect our organisation's policies and working practices.
67. We have continued to prioritise staff wellbeing, particularly in the context of widespread hybrid working. There is a weekly breakfast club which enables team members to socialise and discuss their work, as well as a staff wellbeing working group, which brings together members of different teams to identify opportunities to better support staff.
68. A monthly Pulse Survey tracks staff views on workload, work-life balance, happiness at work, being well informed at work and viewing AVUK as a safe space to speak up about issues. There is also an opportunity for all staff to give comments.
69. Although the results fluctuate between months, they have remained broadly stable over the last year, and average scores have never fallen below 3 out of 5 (with 1 being the worst and 5 the best possible score) for any of the questions. The results allow the Senior Management Team and Trustee Board to monitor staff satisfaction and identify issues. The results are shared with the entire organisation.

Leavers and Joiners

70. We are very grateful for the long service of Catherine White, LSLS Cert AVT, who left the organisation after almost 20 years of supporting families and professionals in June 2023. We would also like to thank Emma Latham and Charlotte Shepherd for their contribution to the fundraising team following their departure from AVUK.
71. During this year we were pleased to welcome three new members of staff to the fundraising team: two permanently and one on maternity cover.
72. We are grateful to the Whitehall and Industry Group Charity Next programme for the continued opportunity to benefit from secondees from the Civil Service Fast Stream for 6-month secondments. This year we have hosted two secondees. We have also taken part in the Whitehall and Industry Group Women Leadership Programme by hosting delegates for a day's immersion into an organisation's key challenges and we are grateful to all participants from across the public, private and voluntary sectors for their contributions on the day and since the programme took place.

Claire Campbell

73. In November 2023 we were saddened to learn of the passing of Claire Campbell, our former Chair of the Board and passionate advocate of AVUK, following a long and brave battle with cancer.
74. As the mother of three children, two of whom are profoundly deaf and who learnt to listen and talk at AVUK, Claire was a source of inspiration to many families across the country. Alice's Ears, a beautifully honest and open blog Claire created with her husband Chris, recorded their family's journey with Auditory Verbal therapy. The blog became an important resource for many parents of deaf children with Auditory Neuropathy Spectrum Disorder.

75. Drawing on her own experience of AVUK's family programme, Claire was dedicated to helping other families to have the same opportunity to access the specialist early intervention therapy her children benefited from.
76. Becoming a trustee in 2011, Claire went on to be Chair of the Board in 2013, where she championed the development of the family bursary scheme to increase access to Auditory Verbal therapy. Claire led the Board during a time of significant growth for the charity following the October Club partnership in 2014 which enabled us to expand our professional training programme, open a new centre in Bermondsey, London, and launch our first five-year strategy. After stepping down as Chair in 2020, Claire remained a passionate advocate and continued to give a huge amount of time and energy to AVUK as a member of our Advisory Panel.
77. Claire touched the lives of so many people and has left a legacy that will benefit deaf children and their families for years to come. In the summer of 2023, we launched the inaugural Claire Campbell Awards to recognise the outstanding achievement of other deaf children and adults who, like Claire, have gone above and beyond to support deaf children.

Advisory Panel

78. We are grateful for the ongoing support of our voluntary advisory panel, who make themselves available to support the organisation as needed on a pro-bono basis. The members of the panel can be found [here](#).

Fundraising Advisory Board

79. We are grateful for the ongoing support of our Fundraising Advisory Board, established in 2022 to support our efforts to diversify our fundraising streams and support the long-term funding requirements of the charity as set out in the 10-year strategy.

Developing the Board of Trustees

80. This year we have established two new subcommittees focusing on Finance and Risk, and People and Development which have strengthened Board analysis, reporting and decision making.
81. Trustees have also held an annual strategy day in addition to our regular Board meetings and undertaken a skills audit and recruitment process which resulted in new additions to the Board. Trustees have attended staff town hall meetings and contributed to meetings of the whole team.

Our Collaborations

82. We are proud to have worked with many organisations and representative bodies to raise expectations and support deaf children both in the UK and around the world. This has included being part of the SEND in The Specialists coalition led by the Royal College of Speech and Language Therapists and working with organisations across the speech, language and communications needs sector through the Communications Consortium led by Speech and Language UK. We have also worked with the National Deaf Children's Society, the British Deaf Association and National Sensory Impairment Partnership this year as well as the representative bodies of professionals working with deaf children across the UK. We are grateful to all of our colleagues in these organisations for their expertise and support in collaboration.
83. Our international collaboration has included working with the Cochlear Implant International Community of Action (CIICA) this year through events and communications and the Alexander Graham Bell Academy. We are also proud to be an international member of the First Voice Network, which brings together organisations across Australia, New Zealand, South Africa and the UK working to support and advocate for deaf children and their families.

Our Infrastructure

84. This year we have continued to develop our IT infrastructure to ensure that our staff have the tools available to do their work well.
85. In the past year we decommissioned our AVUK server as part of our successful programme to replace QuickBooks Desktop accounts package with Xero online. AVUK is now running solely on cloud-based applications, meaning the end-of-life server with its remote connectivity problems and ongoing support/maintenance costs is no longer an issue for our organisation.
86. We have continued to develop the functionality of our Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system, with the fundraising team having received specialist training to help them understand and use the system. We also delivered a training session for all staff on MS Teams, ensuring that they can use Teams in an effective and efficient manner.

Our Funding

87. The charity sector has continued to experience fundraising difficulties over 2022/2023, a consequence of the cost-of-living-crisis and economic difficulties within the UK. We are grateful to all our supporters who have enabled our work to continue this year and to the newly established Fundraising Advisory Board who give their time voluntarily to support our work in this area.

Fundraising Activities

88. Our fundraising team make applications for funding, organise events, and carry out fundraising activities to generate income for the charity. AVUK does not use third party fundraisers and there have been no complaints about fundraising activity this year. The charity is a member of the Fundraising Regulator and has due regard to the Code of Fundraising Practice in the UK.
89. All the charity's marketing activities are undertaken directly to ensure that it is not unreasonably persistent or intrusive. Marketing materials contain clear details of how to unsubscribe to future communications and care is taken to limit the level of communications being sent out.

Financial & Fundraising Overview

90. The fundraising team has successfully raised sufficient funding to allow us to maintain our existing services, while building for the future by securing new supporters. We are grateful to all our supporters, both new and old, for allowing us to continue operating at this economically difficult time. We could not continue transforming outcomes for deaf children without your generous support.
91. Over the past year we have continued to increase our team skills and capacity to ensure AVUK is able to raise the necessary funds, recruiting two new members of staff to join our fundraising team.
92. We are pleased to work with our partner-of-choice Markerstudy Group, who provide us with invaluable fundraising and communications support. We were also pleased to form relationships with a number of new corporate partners including Richer Sounds and FIS World Pay; their assistance is highly appreciated.
93. Trustees seek to maximise funds spent in the direct furtherance of the charity's objectives and keep the proportion of charitable funds spent on administration and fundraising to a prudent minimum level commensurate with the effective and professional operation of the charity and its future sustainability.
94. Accounts for this financial year have been successfully audited.
95. Total income for the period amounted to £1,282,021 (2022: £1,359,779); Total income for the year was forecasted to be £1,593,891 including a fundraising target of £1,328,000. The final contribution

for fundraising was £1,019,176, reflecting a successful year for the fundraising team, given that an event originally due to take place before year end was delayed until September.

96. Unrestricted income amounted to £900,521 (2022: £853,784) with donations of £637,676 (2022: £603,903). Restricted income amounted to £381,500 (2022: £505,995) all from donations. Income from charitable activities increased slightly to £261,982 (2022: £249,709) demonstrating the success in adapting to a challenging fundraising landscape caused by the cost-of-living crisis.
97. Expenditure amounted to £1,585,377 (2022: £1,295,460) split between £184,499 (2022: £372,912) of restricted and £1,400,878 (2022: £922,548) of unrestricted spending. An overall deficit of £303,356 (2022: surplus £64,319) was delivered comprising of a restricted surplus of £197,001 (2022: £133,083) and an unrestricted deficit of £500,357 (2022: deficit £68,764). This has resulted in an increased restricted reserve of £162,775 (2022: £116,056) and a reduced unrestricted reserve of £266,521 (2022: £616,596). AVUK remains in a strong position to maintain its services.
98. Our priorities for 2023/24 and beyond include a continued focus on the level of unrestricted reserves in order to support existing and planned charitable activity and to mitigate financial risks. We aim to keep 3 months' budgeted expenditure as reserves, provided that not less than 50% is unrestricted.

Risk Overview

99. The trustees review the organisation's strategic risks and mitigation plans at their spring and autumn meetings. The top three strategic risks to the organisation and the plans and strategies for managing them are:

Risk	Management Strategy
Failure to deliver on fundraising targets.	Appraisal, budgeting and authorisation procedures have been implemented. New forecasting tool established to highlight income fluctuations. Stewardship reporting in annual report. Adequacy of financial returns achieved (benchmarking comparisons) are monitored. Regulatory compliance reviewed.
Detrimental changes to economic environment increasing demand and competition for charitable donations in all areas and possible increase demand for bursary support.	Ensure diverse revenue streams, invest in resources and ensure support and focus on fund raising. Keep tight control on costs by monitoring expenditure against budget.
Insufficient Reserves due to increased costs due to inflation, potentially reduced income due to competition in fundraising and potentially increased demand for bursaries.	Reserves policy and reserve levels regularly reviewed. Focus on cost reduction and diversity of fundraising portfolio.

OUR PRIORITIES FOR 2023/24

100. This year has seen AVUK take the first steps to ensure that our goals outlined in our 10-year strategy become a reality. Our plans for 23/24 are based on delivery and development towards our vision. Our work will continue to focus on how we transform service provision; how we increase understanding, profile and reach of Auditory Verbal therapy; and how we develop ourselves and our organisation to be the best we can be in line with our values and mission.

Transforming service provision for deaf children

Engaging for Change

101. We will create a strategic programme of 4 workstreams comprising of: Research and Evidence; Professional Training, Family Programme, and Engagement and Outreach, to support planning, prioritising, resourcing and delivery of projects over the next 10 years.

102. Our Engagement and Outreach workstream will be focused on continuing to build a groundswell of support for our Hear Us Now campaign amongst decision makers, supporters, families, professionals, and the public sector to secure AV therapy on the care pathway by end of 2024 and secure investment for training a small proportion of the public sector workforce of speech and language therapists, audiologists and teachers of the deaf.
103. We will also develop and deliver an enhanced outreach plan to reach more professionals working with deaf children and key influencers in professional sector, with a particular emphasis on Heads of Service, professional membership bodies and those charities advocating for deaf children.
104. We will continue to accelerate our engagement in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland to move towards sustainable public services in each country.

Building our Workforce

105. Our training workstream will be focused on delivery and development towards our goals set out in the 10-year strategy.
106. In 2023/24 we will increase the number of training courses for professionals, with 15 Foundation and 10 Advanced cohorts to complete their training over the next year. We will also continue to develop, refine and update our training material to reflect the latest best practice.
107. We will continue to roll out our successful programme of Alexander Graham Bell Academy accredited short-courses and webinars for professionals, with topics and dates clearly identified so they can be shared at least 12 months in advance.
108. We will deliver and expand the Continued Mentoring Programme, in conjunction with those currently involved, to facilitate peer-to-peer support, coaching. and support for newly qualified AVTs. We will draw on this group to develop the 'Train the Trainer' model of training provision. We will also roll-out phase one of our work with universities and develop a plan for further engagement with the 'workforce of the future'.
109. We will continue the development of our partnerships with Integrated Care Boards to support development of Auditory Verbal therapy capability and to work with NHS England, NHS Scotland, NHS Wales and Health and Social Care Northern Ireland, as well as other health and education bodies and organisations across the UK, to enable equality of access to Auditory Verbal therapists for families who want their children to learn to listen and talk.
110. We are excited to be building a partnership with the Guys and St Thomas's hospital trust in London. We are aiming to deliver an AV programme to specified families as well as training to build AV therapy capacity for the future, with an evaluation model to support delivery in other areas in 2024.
111. We will further develop an internal and external quality assurance process for AVUK training and expansion of external accreditation by summer 2024. We will continue to work with the Alexander Graham Bell Academy and Board to champion and share best practice in the field of Auditory Verbal therapy and training to support the professional development of practitioners in the UK and around the world.

Increasing understanding, profile and reach

112. We will continue to share research and best practice with the professional community to demonstrate the benefits of an Auditory Verbal approach. In 2023-24 AVUK is hoping to field representatives to the following conferences: Rehabilitation Conference for Hearing Impairment (October 23); British Academy of Audiology (November 23); Family Centered Early Intervention Conference 2024 (May 2024); Cochlear Implant International Community of Action Advocacy Conference (May 2024) and the annual Alexander Graham Bell Global Conference (June 2024).

113. We will increase the promotion of Auditory Verbal training to professionals as career choice by summer 2024, striving for a 10% increase in enquiries and having all short courses fully subscribed.
114. We will host our Wonder of Sound Event in September 2023 to raise vital funds so we can continue to support deaf babies and children across the UK and hold our seventh Loud Shirt Day on 20th October 2023, to challenge perceptions of what deaf children can achieve.
115. We will continue to develop our digital channels, targeting an increase in engagement across social media channels by 25%, website visits by 10%, and newsletter listings by 25%. We will engage current/potential supporters through targeted and impactful communications to increase income towards our targets of £2.1m per year.
116. We will continue to build strong working relationships with key sector stakeholders including the British Deaf Association, National Deaf Children's Society (NDCS), National Sensory Impairment Partnership, Royal National Institute for Deaf People, Royal College of Speech and Language Therapists, British Academy of Audiology, British Association of Teachers of the Deaf, and The Health and Social Care Alliance Scotland to increase understanding of and access to Auditory Verbal therapy. We will also continue to work with our international colleagues in the Cochlear Implant International Community of Action, the AG Bell Academy and the First Voice Network.
117. Our research workstream will be focused on demonstrating the outcomes from Auditory Verbal therapy and training in Auditory Verbal practice. We will expand and publicise our research and outcomes, publishing our position paper by the end of 2023 and collaborating with [First Voice](#) on their 2023 Sound Outcomes Report.

Developing our organisation and building for the future

Equity, diversity and inclusion

118. Building on our progress in the last year, the EDI steering group will develop the 2023/4 diversity and inclusion action plan with the 6-monthly reports to the Trustee Board in Autumn 2023 and Spring 2024. We will maintain our programme of Lived Experiences sessions, with a bi-monthly focus on lived experience of deafness. We will continue to monitor our reach in underrepresented communities based on data and continue to increase the diversity and breadth of skills and experience on our board of trustees. We will also work to increase the visibility of deaf role models internally and externally.

Our People

119. Our people will continue to be a key focus for our organisation; we will deliver a well-being programme that fosters cross team working, supports flexibility, and reflects diversity of interests. We will help to develop our team members by delivering a whole team training exploring our 'best self' with support of Graham Loudon Carter during Winter 2023/4. We will also deepen audiology knowledge within the AVUK clinical team and develop our 'innovation space' to enable us to be at the forefront of clinical practice and ways of working.

Our Infrastructure

120. To help support our staff, we will create an IT User Group to facilitate cross department learning, help formulate IT policy and priorities, as well as providing additional user training on Office 365 and general technology across the financial year.
121. We will continue to roll-out CRM, focussing on functionality and processes for the Communications and Engagement team and continue embedding the system across the organisation. We are also aiming to obtain cyber-security accreditation by the end of 2023.

122. As part of our drive to be an environmentally conscious charity, we will make progress towards paperless processes, formulating requirements and creating an implementation plan over the next year.

Our Funding

123. Our fundraising team underpins our strategic programme to deliver our annual objectives. Working towards our ten-year strategy, we will aim to generate £1.35m of voluntary funding in 23/24 including increased funds from corporate funders while continuing to provide the framework to deliver at least £2.1m year on year.
124. We are delighted to have the support of a new Fundraising Advisory Board, established in 22/23 to drive activity to successfully acquire new high-value long-term funding partners. We will also further develop our family alumni network to support fundraising, engagement and advocacy.

Supporting Families

125. Our family programme workstream will oversee our work to deliver support to families and further develop our programme to work with up to 120 families per year as set out in our 10-year strategy. In 23/24 we will continue to deliver excellent therapy and seek to ensure that we maintain a regular caseload of around 65 families at any one time. We will deliver a regular programme of family support and information through one-to-one sessions; signposting funding, themed online events and courses (Family Links, Healthy Minds and Building Confident Kids) and annual parent-only consultations.
126. To ensure that we continue to maintain excellent standards, we will run our annual parental survey in January 2024 and compare results to those from the past year. We are also aiming to increase awareness of Auditory Verbal therapy by continuing our successful series of free online events for families interested in AV therapy through social media, online platforms and in collaboration with partners such as the National Deaf Children's Society. We will continue to promote AV therapy as an option for families of deaf children and increase the number of initial appointments in line with the capacity of our family programme.

Trustees' Responsibilities

127. The trustees (who are also directors of the Auditory Verbal Centre for the purposes of company law) are responsible for preparing the Trustees' Annual Report (including the Strategic Report) and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).
128. Company law requires the trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year, which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charitable company and of the incoming resources and application of resources, including the income and expenditure, of the charitable company for that period. In preparing these financial statements, the trustees are required to:
- Select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently.
 - Observe the methods and principles in the Charities SORP 2019 (FRS 102).
 - Make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent.
 - state whether applicable UK Accounting Standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements.
 - Prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charitable company will continue in operation.
129. The trustees are responsible for keeping adequate accounting records that disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charitable company and enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 2006. They are also responsible for

safeguarding the assets of the charitable company and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

130. In so far as the trustees are aware: there is no relevant audit information of which the charitable company's auditor is unaware; and the trustees have taken all steps that they ought to have taken to make themselves aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the auditor is aware of that information.
131. The trustees are responsible for the maintenance and integrity of the corporate and financial information included on the charitable company's website. Legislation in the United Kingdom governing the preparation and dissemination of financial statements may differ from legislation in other jurisdictions.
132. In approving the Trustees' Annual Report, we also approve the Strategic Report included therein, in our capacity as company directors.

On Behalf of the Trustees

Jane Barry
Chair of Trustees
3 October 2023

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jane Barry', with a stylized, flowing script.

Independent Auditor's Report to the Members of Auditory Verbal Centre Limited

Opinion

133. We have audited the financial statements of The Auditory Verbal Centre (the 'charitable company') for the year ended 31 July 2023 which comprise the Statement of Financial Activities, the Balance Sheet, the Cash Flow Statement and notes to the financial statements, including a summary of significant accounting policies. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards, including Financial Reporting Standard 102 The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).
134. In our opinion the financial statements:
- give a true and fair view of the state of the charitable company's affairs at 31 July 2023, and of its incoming resources and application of resources, including its income and expenditure, for the twelve months then ended;
 - have been properly prepared in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice; and
 - have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006.

Basis for opinion

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

Conclusions relating to going concern

136. In auditing the financial statements, we have concluded that the trustees' use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements is appropriate.
137. Based on the work we have performed, we have not identified any material uncertainties relating to events or conditions that, individually or collectively, may cast significant doubt on the charitable company's ability to continue as a going concern for a period of at least twelve months from when the financial statements are authorised for issue.
138. Our responsibilities and the responsibilities of the trustees with respect to going concern are described in the relevant sections of this report.

Other information

139. The trustees are responsible for the other information. The other information comprises the information included in the trustees' annual report, other than the financial statements and our auditor's report thereon. Our opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and, except to the extent otherwise explicitly stated in our report, we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon.
140. In connection with our audit of the financial statements, our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements, or our knowledge obtained in the audit or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If we identify such material inconsistencies or apparent material misstatements, we are required to determine whether there is a material misstatement in the financial statements or a material misstatement of the other information. If, based on the work we have performed, we

conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, we are required to report that fact. We have nothing to report in this regard.

Opinions on other matters prescribed by the Companies Act 2006

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

- the information given in the trustees' report (incorporating the strategic report and the directors' report) for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements; and
- the strategic report and the directors' report have been prepared in accordance with applicable legal requirements.

Matters on which we are required to report by exception

142. In the light of our knowledge and understanding of the charitable company and its environment obtained in the course of the audit, we have not identified material misstatements in the strategic report and the directors' report.

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

- adequate accounting records have not been kept, or returns adequate for our audit have not been received from branches not visited by us; or
- the financial statements are not in agreement with the accounting records and returns; or
- certain disclosures of directors' remuneration specified by law are not made; or
- we have not received all the information and explanations we require for our audit.

Responsibilities of trustees

144. As explained more fully in the trustees' responsibilities statement [set out on pages 19-20], the trustees (who are also the directors of the charitable company for the purposes of company law) are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements and for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view, and for such internal control as the trustees determine is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

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

Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

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

147. A further description of our responsibilities for audit of the financial statements is located on the Financial reporting Council's [website](#). This description forms part of our auditor's report.

148. Irregularities, including fraud, are instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations. We design procedures in line with our responsibilities, outlined above, to detect material misstatements in respect of irregularities, including fraud. The specific procedures for this engagement and the extent to which these are capable of detecting irregularities, including fraud is detailed below:

- Enquiry of management and those charged with governance around actual and potential litigation and claims;
- Reviewing minutes of meetings of those charged with governance;
- Reviewing financial statement disclosures and testing to supporting documentation to assess compliance with applicable laws and regulations;
- Performing audit work over the risk of management override of controls, including testing of journal entries and other adjustments for appropriateness, evaluating the business rationale of significant transactions outside the normal course of business and reviewing accounting estimates for bias.

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

Use of our report

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



Ajay Bahl BA BFP FCA (Senior Statutory Auditor)

**For and on behalf of Wenn Townsend,
Statutory Auditor
30 St Giles'
Oxford
OX1 3LE**

Date: 3 October 2023

**STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES
(INCLUDING INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 JULY 2023**

	Note	Unrestricted £	Restricted £	2023 Total £	Unrestricted £	Restricted £	2022 Total £
Income from:							
Donations	2	637,676	381,500	1,019,176	603,903	505,995	1,109,898
Charitable activities	3	261,982	-	261,982	249,709	-	249,709
Investments		863	-	863	172	-	172
Total income		900,521	381,500	1,282,021	853,784	505,995	1,359,779
Expenditure on:							
Raising funds	4	495,890	-	495,890	293,504	52,495	345,999
Charitable activities	5	904,988	184,499	1,089,487	629,044	320,417	949,461
Total expenditure		1,400,878	184,499	1,585,377	922,548	372,912	1,295,460
Net income/(expenditure)		(500,357)	197,001	(303,356)	(68,764)	133,083	64,319
Transfers between funds		150,282	(150,282)	-	250,798	(250,798)	-
Net movement in funds		(350,075)	46,719	(303,356)	182,034	(117,715)	64,319
Total funds brought forward		616,596	116,056	732,652	434,562	233,771	668,333
Total funds carried forward		266,521	162,775	429,296	616,596	116,056	732,652

All income and expenditure derives from continuing activities.

The statement of financial activities includes all gains and losses recognised during the year.

The notes on pages 27 to 38 form part of these financial statements.

BALANCE SHEET AT 31 JULY 2023

	Note	31 July 2023 £	31 July 2022 £
Fixed assets			
Tangible assets	10	<u>36,148</u>	<u>57,656</u>
Current Assets			
Stocks		1,313	623
Debtors	11	239,260	117,501
Cash at bank and in hand		<u>319,679</u>	<u>671,316</u>
		560,252	789,440
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	12	<u>(167,104)</u>	<u>(114,444)</u>
Net current assets		<u>393,148</u>	<u>674,996</u>
Net assets		<u>429,296</u>	<u>732,652</u>
Charity funds			
Unrestricted reserves	13	266,521	616,596
Restricted funds	14	162,775	116,056
		<u>429,296</u>	<u>732,652</u>

These financial statements were approved and authorised for issue by the Board on 3 October 2023.

Jane Barry
Chair of Trustees



Company Number 04569764 (England and Wales)

The notes on pages 27 to 38 form part of these financial statements.

STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS

		Year ended 31 July 2023	Year ended 31 July 2022
	Note	£	£
Cash flow from operating activities	17	(351,811)	23,539
Cash flow from investing activities:			
Payments to acquire tangible fixed assets	10	(689)	(35,037)
Interest received		863	172
Net cash flow from investing activities		174	(34,865)
Net increase in cash and cash equivalents		(351,637)	(11,326)
Cash and cash equivalents at 1 August		671,316	682,642
Cash and cash equivalents at 31 July		319,679	671,316

NOTES FORMING PART OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE PERIOD ENDED 31 JULY 2023

1 SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES

General information and basis of preparation The Auditory Verbal Centre is a charitable company limited by guarantee registered in the UK. In the event of the charity being wound up, the liability in respect of the guarantee is limited to £1 per member of the charity. The address of the registered office is given in the charity information on page 3 of these accounts. The nature of the charity's operations and principal activities are to achieve the relief of people suffering from hearing difficulties and the relief of distress by the education of their families and carers of the needs of people with hearing difficulties.

The charity constitutes a public benefit entity as defined by the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102). The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) issued on 16 July 2014, the Charities Act 2011, the Companies Act 2015, the Financial Reporting Standard and UK Generally Accepted Practice as it applies from 01 January 2019 (Charities SORP 2019).

The financial statements are prepared on a going concern basis under the historical cost convention. The financial statements are prepared in sterling which is the functional currency of the charity.

The significant accounting policies applied in the preparation of these financial statements are set out below. These policies have been consistently applied to all years presented unless otherwise stated.

Unrestricted funds are donations and other incoming resources receivable or generated for the objects of the charity without further restriction and are available as general funds.

Designated funds are unrestricted funds earmarked by the Trustees for particular purposes.

Restricted funds are to be used for specific purposes as laid down by the donor. Expenditure which meets these criteria is charged to the fund.

Income recognition:

All incoming resources are included in the Statement of Financial Activities when the charity is legally entitled to the income, after any performance conditions have been met, the amount can be measured reliably and it is probable that the income will be received.

For donations to be recognised the charity will have been notified of the amounts and the settlement date in writing. If there are conditions attached to the donation and this requires a level of performance before entitlement can be obtained, then income is deferred until those conditions are fully met or the fulfilment of those conditions is within the control of the charity and it is probable that they will be fulfilled.

Donated facilities and donated professional services are recognised in income at their fair value when their economic benefit is probable, it can be measured reliably and the charity has control over the item. Fair value is determined on the basis of the value of the gift to the charity. For example, the amount the charity would be willing to pay in the open market for such facilities and services. A corresponding amount is recognised in expenditure.

Income from charitable activities includes fees receivable for therapy sessions and training. Investment income is interest receivable on cash at bank.

No amount is included in the financial statements for volunteer time in line with the SORP (FRS 102).

Further detail is given in the Trustees' Annual Report.

Expenditure recognition

All expenditure is accounted for on an accruals basis and has been classified under headings that aggregate all costs related to the category. Expenditure is recognised where there is a legal or constructive obligation to make payments to third parties, it is probable that the settlement will be required and the amount of the obligation can be measured reliably. It is categorised under the headings of cost of raising funds and expenditure on charitable activities including direct and support costs.

Irrecoverable VAT is charged as an expense against the activity for which expenditure arose.

Operating leases

Rentals payable under operating leases are charged to the SOFA on a straight line basis over the period of the lease.

Taxation

The charity is an exempt charity within the meaning of schedule 3 of the Charities Act 2011 and is considered to pass the tests set out in Paragraph 1 Schedule 6 Finance Act 2010 and therefore it meets the definition of a charitable company for UK corporation tax purposes.

Support costs allocation

Support costs are those that assist the work of the charity but do not directly represent charitable activities and include office running costs, non-salary communications' costs, governance costs and management costs. They are incurred directly in support of expenditure on the objects of the charity and include central management costs. Premises overheads have been included as direct costs.

Fundraising costs are those incurred in seeking voluntary contributions including communications staff costs but do not include the costs of disseminating information in support of the charitable activities.

Tangible fixed assets are stated at cost less accumulated depreciation. Depreciation is provided at rates calculated to write off the cost of each asset over its expected useful life, which with the exception of the leasehold improvements and systems development, is estimated, at a maximum of 3 years. Leasehold improvements have been depreciated over the term of the lease and systems development over 5 years.

Stocks are carried at the lower of cost and net realisable value.

Debtors and creditors receivable/payable within one year with no stated interest rate and receivable or payable within one year are recorded at transaction price. Any losses arising from impairment are recognised in expenditure.

Employee benefits start when employees have rendered service to the charity, short-term employee benefits to which the employees are entitled are recognised at the undiscounted amount expected to be paid in exchange for that service. The charity operates a defined contribution plan for the benefit of its employees. Contributions are expensed as they become payable.

Going concern

The financial statements have been prepared on a going concern basis as the trustees believe that no material uncertainties exist. The trustees have considered the level of funds held and the expected level of income and expenditure for 12 months from authorising these financial statements. The budgeted income and expenditure is sufficient with the level of reserves for the charity to be able to continue as a going concern.

			2023	2022
2 INCOME FROM DONATIONS				
	Unrestricted	Restricted	Total	Total
	£	£	£	£
AB David Charity	2,000	-	2,000	2,500
Anonymous	7,219	-	7,219	-
BBC - BBC Radio 4 Appeal	16,205	-	16,205	-
Birkdale	-	-	-	2,500
Braintree United Charities	-	-	-	500
Brightside insurance	9,276	-	9,276	-
City Bridge Trust	-	-	-	40,000
Esme Fairbairn	120,000	-	120,000	-
Freemasons	-	-	-	500
Garfield Weston Foundation	45,000	-	45,000	45,000
GJW Turner	10,000	-	10,000	10,000
Goldman Sachs International	-	-	-	13,000
Halbard Trust	1,000	-	1,000	-
Hedley Foundation	-	3,500	3,500	-
Headingley Rotary	-	-	-	3,000
Hill House School	1,808	-	1,808	2,186
HMRC gift aid	1,779	12,000	13,779	33,658
J A Pye Settlement	2,500	-	2,500	-
Hugo Stone	-	-	-	1,108
I can communication trust	-	-	-	35,000
Jonathan Lerner	-	-	-	3,000
Jorge Villon	-	96,000	96,000	56,500
Julian Hodge Bank	-	10,000	10,000	-
The King's Fund	-	-	-	3,189
The Leathersellers Foundation	10,000	-	10,000	10,000
Louise Nichol's Charitable Trust	-	-	-	5,000
Man Charitable Trust	50,000	-	50,000	50,000
Marguerite Foundation	-	150,000	150,000	150,000
MariaMarina Foundation	147,000	-	147,000	110,000
Markerstudy Insurance	1,000	-	1,000	-
Mulberry House School	-	-	-	806
Pemberly Hall	8,000	-	8,000	-
Rathbone Investment Management	5,000	-	5,000	-
Richer Sounds Foundation	10,000	-	10,000	-
Schroders Charity Trust	4,000	-	4,000	-
Sohn Foundation	25,000	-	25,000	-
Sporting Bears Motor Club	7,500	-	7,500	-
Susanna Peake Charitable Trust	5,000	-	-	50,000
The Sobell Foundation	-	25,000	25,000	25,000
Tambour Foundation	-	30,000	30,000	-
The Barratt Foundation	2,500	-	2,500	-
The Charities Trust	7,592	-	7,592	-

The Considered Ask Foundation	-	30,000	30,000	-
The Dorothy Hay-Bolton Charitable Trust	3,000	-	3,000	3,000
The Grace Trust	1,250	-	1,250	-
The Hargreaves Foundation	-	25,000	25,000	-
The Lovel Foundation	10,000	-	10,000	20,000
The Syncona Foundation	80,000	-	80,000	80,000
The Wonder of Sound Event	-	-	-	363,040
Donations from individuals, community groups and small trusts below £1,000	44,047	-	44,047	36,411
	637,676	381,500	1,019,176	1,109,898

3 INCOME FROM CHARITABLE ACTIVITIES

	Unrestricted	Restricted	2023 Total	2022 Total
Sale of Books / CD's	266		266	298
Sessional Income	180,130		180,130	167,694
Training Income	70,196		70,196	70,704
Other Income	11,390		11,390	11,013
	261,982	-	261,982	249,709

Included within Other income for the Charity is £nil (2022: £3,881) of Government grants relating to the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme.

4 RAISING FUNDS

	Unrestricted	Restricted	2023 Total	2022 Total
Staff Costs	334,112	-	334,112	205,753
Other Costs	161,778	-	161,778	140,246
	495,890	-	495,890	345,999

5 CHARITABLE ACTIVITIES

	Unrestricted	Restricted	2023 Total	2022 Total
Direct Costs:				
Staff Costs	212,983	184,499	397,482	371,138
Other Direct Costs	47,465	-	47,465	29,454
Support Costs (note 6)	639,260	-	639,260	543,109
Governance Costs (note 7)	5,280	-	5,280	5760
	904,988	184,499	1,089,487	949,461

6 SUPPORT COSTS

	Unrestricted	Restricted	2023 Total	2022 Total
Indirect Staff Costs	367,419	-	367,419	288,935
Recruitment	23,173	-	23,173	20,762
Staff Training & Conferences	8,334	-	8,334	7,655
Travel & Other Staff Costs	3,986	-	3,986	1,409
IT	52,840	-	52,840	34,387
Premises	132,196	-	132,196	150,852
Insurance	1,190	-	1,190	1,163
Consumables	1,930	-	1,930	1,384
Legal & Professional	3,010	-	3,010	1,673
Accountancy & Payroll	20,611	-	20,611	11,902
Bad Debt	4,950	-	4,950	672
Depreciation	17,398	-	17,398	19,014
Bank Charges	1,760	-	1,760	1,720
Sundry Expenses	463	-	463	553
Costs of goods sold	-	-	-	28
	639,260	-	639,260	543,109

Support costs in 2022 related to £417,098 to unrestricted expenditure, and £126,011 to restricted costs.

7 GOVERNANCE COSTS

	Unrestricted	Restricted	2023 Total	2022 Total
Auditors Remuneration	<u>5,280</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>5,280</u>	<u>5,760</u>
	<u>5,280</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>5,280</u>	<u>5,760</u>

8 EXPENDITURE

	2023	2022
	£	£
Net income/(expenditure) is stated after charging:		
Depreciation of tangible fixed assets	22,197	22,816
Operating lease rentals, including VAT	135,082	130,260

The key management personnel are the trustees, the chief executive, the director of finance and operations and the operations manager. The trustees neither received nor waived any remuneration during the period (2021: Nil). The total cost of employment of key management personnel was £145,882 (2022: £168,595). There was one employee with an annual salary in the £60,000-£70,000 band (2022: 1 employee) and one employee in the £70,000 - £80,000 band (2022: nil) on which pension contributions of £12,848 (2022: £8,521) were paid.

The charity pays attendance travel expenses and provides refreshments at trustee meetings. Total cost was £nil (2022: £nil).

The average monthly number of employees and full time equivalent (FTE) during the period was as follows:

	2023	2023	2022	2022
	Number	FTE	Number	FTE
Raising funds	4	3	4	3
Charitable activities/support	24	15	25	15
	28	18	29	18

The total staff costs and employees benefits was as follows:

	2023	2022
	£	£
Staff costs analysis		
Salaries	967,935	745,057
Social security costs	71,889	55,287
Other pension costs	59,189	64,874
	1,099,013	865,451
Staff costs by function		
Raising funds	334,112	151,460
Charitable activities	764,901	713,991
	1,099,013	865,451

9 TAXATION

The charitable company is exempt from corporation tax for its charitable activities.

10 TANGIBLE FIXED ASSETS

	Training Equipment £	Office Equipment £	Leasehold Improvements £	Systems Development £	Total £
Cost					
At 1 August 2022	27,632	139,778	11,094	56,526	235,030
Additions	-	689	-	-	689
At 31 July 2023	<u>27,632</u>	<u>140,467</u>	<u>11,094</u>	<u>56,526</u>	235,719
Depreciation					
At 1 August 2022	27,632	123,147	11,094	15,501	177,374
Charge for the year	-	7,220	-	14,977	22,197
At 31 July 2023	<u>27,632</u>	<u>130,367</u>	<u>11,094</u>	<u>30,478</u>	199,571
Written down value					
At 31 July 2023	<u>-</u>	10,100	<u>-</u>	26,048	36,148
At 31 July 2022	<u>-</u>	16,631	<u>-</u>	41,025	57,656

11 DEBTORS

	2023 £	2022 £
Rent deposit	23,500	23,500
Trade debtors	49,229	44,087
Sundry debtors	2,705	(181)
Prepayments	163,826	50,095
	<u>239,260</u>	<u>117,501</u>

12 CREDITORS: AMOUNTS FALLING DUE WITHIN ONE YEAR

	2023 £	2022 £
Trade creditors	20,162	15,832
Accruals and deferred income*	111,116	75,901
Other creditors	35,826	21,618
	<u>167,104</u>	<u>114,444</u>

*Deferred income represents training courses invoiced in advance net of bursary awards, totalling £72,633 (2022: £60,761) of which £42,309 (2022: £23,916) relates to the year ending 31 July 2024 and £30,324 (2022: £36,845) to future periods.

13 UNRESTRICTED RESERVES

	£
At 1 July 2022	616,596
Net surplus/(deficit) for the period	<u>(350,075)</u>
At 31 July 2023	<u>266,521</u>

14 RESTRICTED FUNDS

	At 1 Aug 2022	Incoming resources	Resources expended/ transferred	At 31 July 2023
	£	£	£	£
Hedley Foundation		3,500	(3,500)	
I Can, Communication Trust	2,917		(2,917)	
J Villon	-	108,000		108,000
Julian Hodge Bank		10,000	(10,000)	
Kintbury Capital	6,825		(6,825)	
The Lovel Foundation	20,000		(20,000)	
Marguerite Foundation	-	150,000	(150,000)	
Maria Marina Foundation	48,207		(48,207)	
Moondance Foundation	29,775		-	29,775
Susanna Peake Charitable Trust	8,332		(8,332)	
The Considered Ask Foundation		30,000	(30,000)	
The Sobell Foundation	-	25,000	(25,000)	
The Hargreaves Foundation		25,000		
				25,000
The Tambour Foundation		30,000	(30,000)	
	116,056	381,500	(334,781)	162,775

There were no gross transfers between restricted and unrestricted funds. Restricted funds towards the costs of therapy sessions or training provision were allocated during the period.

Restricted funds (prior year)

	At 1 August 2021	Incoming resources	Resources expended	At 31 July 2022
	£	£	£	£
Braintree United Charities	-	500	500	-
CHK Charities Ltd	48,926	-	48,926	-
City Bridge Trust	-	40,000	40,000	-
GJW Turner	-	10,000	10,000	-
I Can, Communication Trust	-	35,000	32,083	2,917
John Horniman's Children's Trust	2,500	-	2,500	-
Jonathan Lerner	-	3,000	3,000	-
J Villon	-	52,495	52,495	-
Kintbury Capital	6,825	-	-	6,825
The Leathersellers Foundation	-	10,000	10,000	-
The Lovel Foundation	2,066	20,000	2,066	20,000
Man Charitable Trust	42,500	-	42,500	-
Marguerite Foundation	23,638	150,000	173,638	-
Maria Marina Foundation	48,207	110,000	110,000	48,207
Moondance Foundation	36,259	-	6,484	29,775
Susanna Peake Charitable Trust	-	50,000	41,668	8,332
The Sobell Foundation	20,000	25,000	45,000	-
The Stanley Grundy Charitable Trust	2,850	-	2,850	-
	233,771	505,995	623,710	116,056

There were no gross transfers between restricted and unrestricted funds. Restricted funds towards the costs of therapy sessions or training provision were allocated during the period.

15 FINANCIAL COMMITMENTS

The charity renewed the lease on its Oxfordshire premises for five years with a break clause after three years from 1st February 2020, terminating in January 2025, at an annual rent of £17,052 plus VAT. There is a lease on its London premises at an annual rent including service charge of £103,338 plus VAT.

16 ANALYSIS OF NET ASSETS BETWEEN FUNDS

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	2023 Total £
Tangible fixed assets	36,148	-	36,148
Stock	1,313	-	1,313
Debtors	239,260	-	239,260
Bank and cash balances	156,904	162,775	319,679
Current creditors	(167,104)	-	(167,104)
	266,521	162,775	429,296

Prior year	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	2022 Total £
Tangible fixed assets	57,656	-	57,656
Stock	623	-	623
Debtors	117,501	-	117,501
Bank and cash balances	554,260	116,056	671,316
Current creditors	(114,444)	-	(114,444)
	616,596	116,056	732,652

17 RECONCILIATION OF NET INCOME/(EXPENDITURE) TO NET CASH FLOW FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES

	2023 £	2022 £
Net income /(expenditure) for year	(303,356)	64,319
Interest receivable	(863)	(172)
Depreciation	22,197	22,816
(Increase)/decrease in stock	(690)	28
(Increase)/decrease in debtors	(121,759)	(33,240)
Increase/(decrease) in creditors	52,660	(30,212)
Net cash in/(out)flow from operating activities	(351,811)	23,539

18 Related party transactions

- The charity paid attendance travel expenses, a training course and provided refreshments at trustee meetings. Total cost was £nil (2022: £nil) of which nothing was owed at 31 July 2023 (2022: £Nil).
- The total of donations received from trustees was £nil (2022: £nil).
- Individuals related to the trustees' received services with a value of £nil (2022: £180).

OUR SUPPORTERS

AVUK is pleased to acknowledge the wonderful support it has received from its various supporters. Of the contributors this year we would especially like to thank:

AB David Charity and Michael Shellim
Barratt Foundation
BBC Radio 4
Esmée Fairbairn Foundation
Garfield Weston
Hodge Foundation
Hargreaves Foundation
Kintbury Capital
The Lovel Foundation
Man Group plc Charitable Trust
Maria Marina Foundation
Markerstudy
Marguerite Foundation
Richer Sounds
Sohn Investment Conference London
Tambour Foundation
The Considered Ask
The Syncona Foundation

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Thank you.