



# DOWN'S SYNDROME NORTH EAST

Registered Charity No. 1096003

## Down's Syndrome North East Review of the year 2023-2024

### Message from the Chair, Susan Belton

I accepted my nomination as Chair of Down's Syndrome North East for a 9th term, taking the charity into its 21<sup>th</sup> year of independence supporting adults, children and families in the North East. A year continuing to deliver activities to all ages, supporting families old and new and the start of planning for our 21st celebrations.

We continued to have some meetings virtually and returned to the Shipwrights Pub in Sunderland where my very first meeting was held, for face to face meetings.

Our events reached families, children and adults who have Down's syndrome of all ages across the region. From April 2023- March 2024 our volunteers organised and ran the following for our members-

- 38 events which preschool children and babies attended;
- 37 events which primary school aged children attended;
- 32 events which teenagers attended;
- 42 events which adults attended.

We organised craft workshops for all ages throughout the year, starting in April with Pottery Painting at RoseBud Ceramics ([photo](#)) and then Easter Cake Decorating. Our members enjoyed the Art Workshops which included painting the Tyne bridge. Further crafts sessions included a glass workshop. In December 2023, over at Seaburn, a Christmas craft workshop and cake decorating session took place. Thanks to Nicky, Sue and Julie for running those.

Activities for our younger members include Hart Beeps music class in Darlington, Senses Wellbeing Centre sensory sessions, Pendragon sensory room, Rainbows Sensory room, as well as Sensory Spot and Let's Pretend Imaginary play in Hartlepool ([photos](#)). In August 2023, we also tried out a new venue called Clart About Cafe in Consett, which was a great success.

Three 21, our monthly meet up for younger children and their families, continued to run each month at Winlaton Community Centre, welcoming new parents, practising Makaton signing and exploring messy play.

On a sporty note, several swimming sessions were held across the year at Paddle Pod swimming pool in Shiremoor, Oasis hydropool in Hartlepool and the Fish Tank in Newton Aycliffe. We have also continued to run our regular bowling sessions in Washington and at Teesside Park, which were enjoyed by a regular group of attendees.

In the Summer, we had visits to the Alan Shearer Centre in Newcastle to enjoy the hydrotherapy pool and play areas. Hall Hill Farm near Lanchester was also a popular day out, enjoyed by all ages, feeding and handling animals, enjoying varied play areas and watching sheep racing!

Much fun was had by all ages at the forest school sessions we held, exploring camp fires, building dens and toasting marshmallows, amongst other activities. Near Lanchester, we joined Noo Noo's forest school at Haystax. At Rossmere school (Hartlepool), Amanda's Creature Comforts joined us for some animal handling too.

The adult members took part in activity days at Moorhouse Scout Centre, a great time to meet up with friends and gain confidence which was further developed at the weekend in Kingswood where 25 adults were supported by volunteers Nicky, and team. The staff at the centre were brilliant working with our members.

At Tees Barrage water sports centre in June 2023, bell boating was enjoyed by all ages and their families-thanks to Nicky for organising this.

Theatre visits started with the Lion King at the Empire Theatre in Sunderland for members of all ages and their families who thoroughly enjoyed this wonderful show. The young members were treated to Zog at the Hippodrome in Darlington and teens and adults had a great time at the Cirque Show, also at Darlington Hippodrome. Leanne arranged complimentary tickets for both events in Darlington.

Every year, another highlight is attending the Christmas pantomime at the Customs House in South Shields. This year's was Alladin and as always, we had a fantastic time enjoying meeting the cast afterwards too.

Singing Hands performed for us in Newcastle in September 2023, bringing nursery rhymes for the children and pop songs for the teenagers. This was once again sold out and a great opportunity for families to meet and catch up.

A big thank you to Marty for continuing the very popular parties which are thoroughly enjoyed by a group of our adult members for both online and live parties. They had fun dressing up, dancing and singing along. To favourite songs. For many party regulars, the live party we all enjoyed in Lanchester was a real highlight of the year.

Pilates Plus has continued via Zoom on Wednesdays and Saturdays throughout the year, all free of charge for attendees. We have a good stretch and keep fit together with Marie from ZenergiZe.

The adult members continue to enjoy the parties organised by Julie and Sue H, with a disco and a buffet, which is a great opportunity to catch up with friends for both the adults and their families. North of the Tyne discos, taking place in Newcastle, have also been enjoyed by our adult members who love to be up on the dance floor.

We have also continued to hold very successful afternoon tea events thanks to Ros, Linda and team with live music and games, not forgetting the delicious food.

Blast, an art and dance weekend workshop, is our annual event organised by Melanie, Gill and team of volunteers. It was held in June 2023 and was attended by 25 adults. They produced amazing art work and a wonderful dance which was performed at Durham Gala Theatre.

Our Christmas parties at the Marriott hotel, Metro Centre, are always a big success. In 2023, our junior party was attended by 42 families who enjoyed Nicky Noo Noo's games and disco, had fun with soft play and all received Christmas presents. Our teens also enjoyed Christmas celebrations at their party with 22 families coming along.

Every year we welcome new families to DSNE, many of whom have had a baby recently and 2023-2024 was no different. Our new baby gift boxes continue to be delivered to hospitals across the region with families coming along to talk to maternity staff about why the boxes are so beneficial. Between April 2023 and March 2024, 30 boxes were delivered to hospitals and 8 boxes were sent out directly to families.

### **World Down's Syndrome Day**

To celebrate World Down's Syndrome Day in 2024 and begin our 21st birthday celebrations, we held a fabulous Gala Ball and Family Celebration Day on 23rd and 24th March. It was a fun packed weekend for all ages with 150 attending the ball. The Saturday evening gave the adults a chance to dress in ball gowns and suits and enjoy live music from The Baldy Holly Band, a three-course dinner. We raised funds with a raffle, tombola and bottle stall- an opportunity to win a bottle from water to whisky!

On Sunday 24<sup>th</sup> March, we welcomed over 160 attendees to the Family Celebration Day; children, parents and grandparents all came along to have fun. Everyone was greeted by characters from Disney, Marvel and children's TV favourites. Nikki Noo Noo joined us as usual for a fun disco and party games. We were delighted and entertained by Flash, the magician, and Mrs Merlin who provided balloon modelling and fantastic face painting. Lots of fun was had in the soft play area and all of the children had a great time creating their own pizzas, helped by Lynsey Dixon, who works at the Marriott Hotel.

### Current Committee

Chairperson	Susan Belton	Trustee
Vice Chair/ social media and events organiser	Caroline Turner	Trustee
Treasurer	Michelle Varty	Trustee
Minutes Secretary/Ball Coordinator	Linda Dixon	Trustee
What's On Where and Diary Editor	Lesley Bond	Trustee
Newsletter Editor/ GDPR Officer	Alex Marshall	Trustee
Membership Secretary/ Voice Box Editor/Safeguarding Officer/Adult Events	Nicky Ramsay	Trustee
DBS Coordinator/virtual events coordinator	Melanie Atkinson	Trustee
Website & Gmail Coordinator/Events organiser	Leanne Baister	Trustee
Swimathon Coordinator and Book liaison	Ros Collinson	Trustee
Adult Party/ Residential Event Coordinator	Julie Carson	Trustee
Events Organiser for Adults	Sue Hodgson	Trustee
Three 21 Organiser/IT support	Eleanor Baggaley	Trustee

All our committee members organise events throughout the year-thank you for your continued hard work.

We continue to keep trustees and volunteers updated with mandatory training. A lot can be done virtually at times that suits, although first aid is face to face.

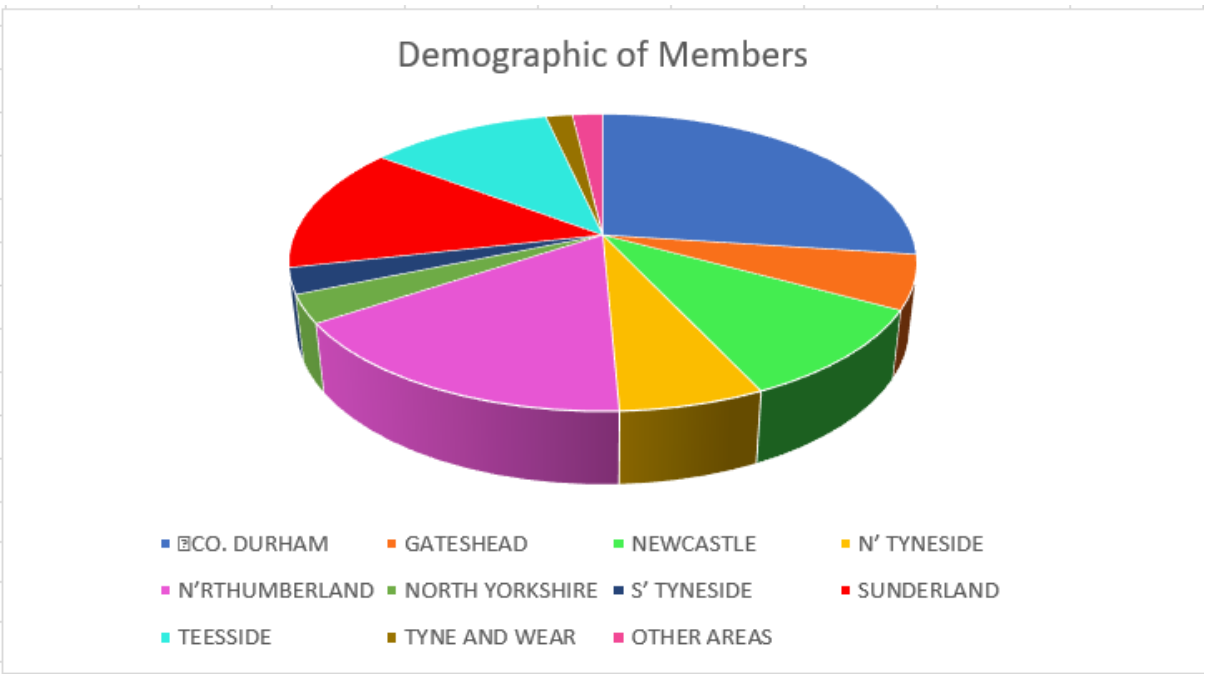
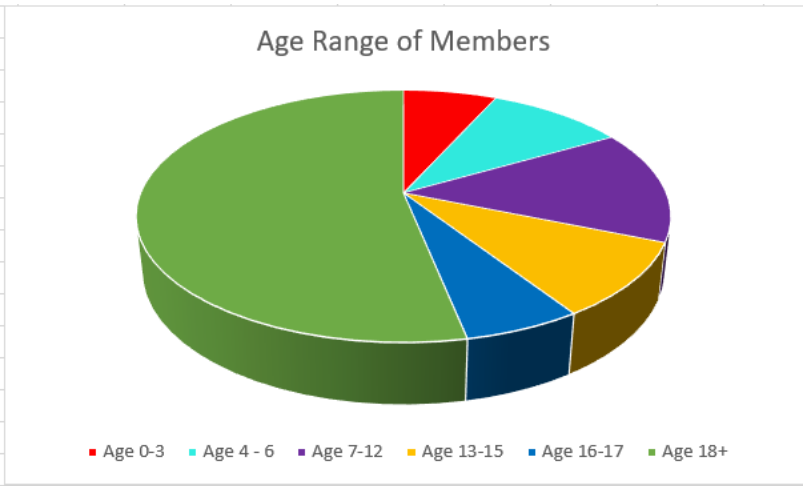
We hold a committee meeting every month which continues to be a combination of online and face to face; members are welcome to attend. We also hold development days for the committee and volunteer days to ensure we are continually moving the charity forward. Most recently, trustees attended a development day in February 2024 to review policies and make plans for the future.

Some changes are now taking place within the committee. I would like to thank Ros for all of her amazing work organising and running events and for the continued drive for inclusion and raising awareness in the community. Although Ros is stepping down as a trustee, I am sure just as much work will be done through her continued volunteering role.

I would also like to take this opportunity to thank Leanne for all the work moving the charity

forward. Leanne is also stepping down as a trustee, but will continue as a volunteer organising events and raising awareness.

**Demographic information of Age and Location of Members:**



**Fundraising**

Thank you to everyone who participated in the Great North Run in September 2023 for us. We very much appreciate all those runners who continue to support us with their sponsorship which goes a long way to enable the charity to grow.



I would like to thank you for the continued support and fundraising you all do throughout the year which is so important to the continued running of the Charity.

On 16<sup>th</sup> November 2023 8 DSNE teams of 54 swimmers took part in Rotary Club of Durham's Annual Charity Swimathon. Our teams raised an amazing £2,761.87 well done to everyone.

We continue to appreciate the donations from families who have sadly lost family and friends. If you would like a dedication and a photo about their life we would love to share it in the newsletter.

## **Publicity**

The charity is being supported by Asda and Morrisons who have not only donated money and baby box items, but offered us an opportunity to promote the charity with display tables in stores in Thornaby, Hartlepool and Darlington, both raising money and raising awareness.

Our website continues to be updated and developed, now including information about our baby gift boxes and our events, online copies of 'Grapevine' and access to membership.

We continue to develop our social media to promote and advertise the charity. Facebook remains most popular with our community; you can follow us on Instagram @downs\_syndrome\_north\_east, where we are regularly gaining followers, and our X (Twitter) feed remains active (@dsneinfo). If you enjoy social networking, then 'like' and share our pages to help raise our profile!

## **Forthcoming Events**

All event details can be found in the Grapevine, our quarterly newsletter, as well as our monthly 'What's on Where' (WOW), which is sent out via email and on social media. For our adult members, please check out the 'Voicebox' too. We are always keen to receive information, photos and news about what you've been doing to go in 'Voicebox'. Remember to look at Facebook, Instagram and X (Twitter), share your photos, especially if you have been to an event, and let us know what you are up to.

Hope everyone is enjoying the 21st celebrations and look forward to reporting about them next year.

Thank you,

Susan Belton

2024

**DOWN'S SYNDROME NORTH EAST LIMITED****PROFIT & LOSS ACCOUNT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024**

	<b><u>31/03/24</u></b>	<b><u>31/03/23</u></b>
<b><u>Income</u></b>		
Donations	37598	32706
Fund raising	19157	14041
Bank interest	710	170
From events	14463	24525
Gift Aid	752	0
Grants received	14580	0
	<b><u>87260</u></b>	<b><u>71442</u></b>
 <b><u>Costs of generating funds</u></b>		
Just Giving	216	216
Other fundraising	0	0
	<b><u>216</u></b>	<b><u>216</u></b>
 <b><u>Charitable expenditure</u></b>		
Accountancy fees	360	360
Bank charges	91	93
Depreciation	430	365
Insurance	512	502
Data protection fee	35	35
Christmas & theatre	10208	7719
Activity breaks	8534	15262
Other events	24460	35924
Running costs	11539	21454
	<b><u>56169</u></b>	<b><u>81714</u></b>
 Net incoming/(outgoing) resources	<b><u>30875</u></b>	<b><u>-10488</u></b>



**DOWN'S SYNDROME NORTH EAST**  
**BALANCE SHEET AS AT 31 MARCH 2024**

	<u>31/03/24</u>	<u>31/03/23</u>
<b><u>FIXED ASSETS</u></b>		
<b><u>Equipment</u></b>		
Cost	5907	5907
Additions	688	0
Disposals	0	0
	<u>6595</u>	<u>5907</u>
Less : Accumulated Depreciation	4878	4448
	<u>1717</u>	<u>1459</u>
<b><u>Cash at Bank</u></b>		
Treasurer's account	53770	23855
HICA	41009	40315
	<u>94779</u>	<u>64170</u>
<b><u>Less:</u></b>		
<b><u>Current Liabilities</u></b>		
Accruals and deferred income	373	381
	<u>96123</u>	<u>65248</u>
<b><u>Capital &amp; Reserves</u></b>		
Balance b/fwd	65248	75736
Profit/(Deficit) for year	30875	-10488
	<u>96123</u>	<u>65248</u>

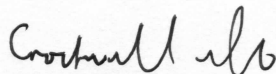
**DOWN'S SYNDROME NORTH EAST**  
**SCHEDULE OF FIXED ASSETS AS AT 31 MARCH 2024**

	<u>Year</u> <u>Purchased</u>	<u>Cost</u> <u>b/fwd</u>	<u>Additions</u>	<u>Disposals</u>	<u>Cost</u> <u>c/fwd</u>	<u>Depeciation</u> <u>b/fwd</u>	<u>Depreciation</u> <u>Disposals</u>	<u>Depreciation</u> <u>for year</u>	<u>Depreciation</u> <u>C/fwd</u>	<u>NBV</u> <u>31/03/24</u>	<u>NBV</u> <u>31/03/23</u>
Projector	2006	1014			1014	1013		0	1013	1	1
Parachute	2007	60			60	59		0	59	1	1
Hard drive	2014	100			100	99		0	99	1	1
Hard drive	2016	79			79	78		0	78	1	1
Gazebo	2016	112			112	111		0	111	1	1
Disc reader/writer	2016	25			25	24		0	24	1	1
Printer	2016	59			59	58		0	58	1	1
Printer	2017	1740			1740	1518		45	1563	177	222
Printer	2017	40			40	35		1	36	4	5
Flask	2017	25			25	21		1	22	3	4
External hard drive	2018	118			118	73		9	82	36	45
Secure storage boxes	2018	67			67	42		5	47	20	25
Banner	2018	86			86	53		7	60	26	33
Filing cabinet	2018	48			48	30		4	34	14	18
Dell Computer	2020	731			731	451		56	507	224	280
Dell Laptop	2021	979			979	478		100	578	401	501
HP Pavilion Laptop	2021	624			624	305		64	369	255	319
HP Envy 6020e Printer	2024		68		68			14	14	54	0
Circuit Machine	2024		468		468			94	94	374	0
Heat Press	2024		152		152			30	30	122	0
		<b>5907</b>	<b>688</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>6595</b>	<b>4448</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>430</b>	<b>4878</b>	<b>1717</b>	<b>1459</b>

## **Down's Syndrome North East**

### **Accountants' report to the members of Down's Syndrome North East**

A full audit has been carried out and all income and expenditure was supported either by receipts or corresponding entries in the bank statements. We have prepared a Profit & Loss Account and Balance Sheet and we have identified any restricted funds where applicable. In our view the records have been well maintained and provide a sound basis for these financial statements.



**Crockwell & Co  
Accountants**

91-93 Fowler Street  
South Shields  
Tyne and Wear  
NE33 1NU

**16 October 2024**