



# SUSSEX SEARCH AND RESCUE

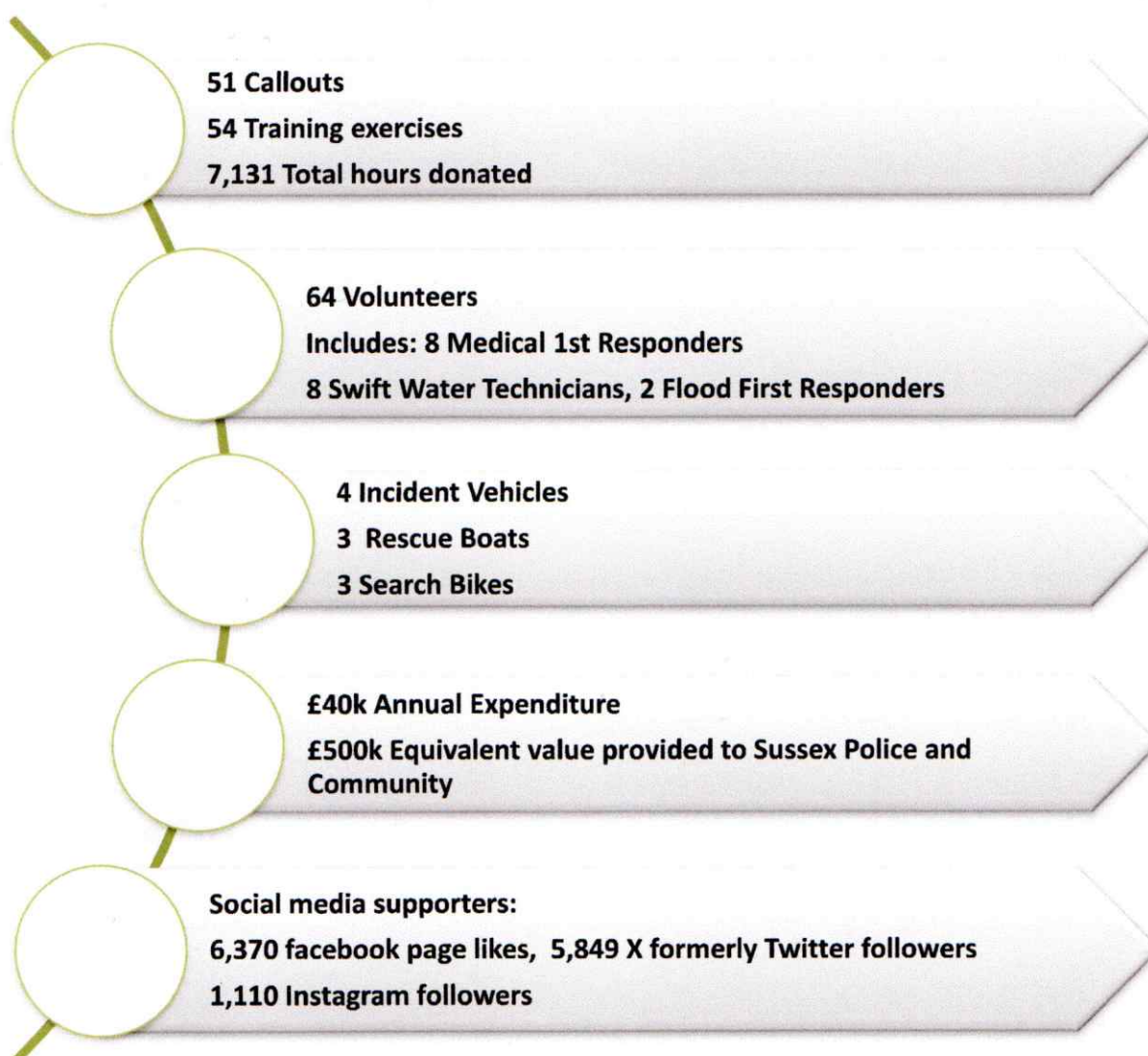
Registered Charity No 1097190

[www.Sussar.org.uk](http://www.Sussar.org.uk)



## Trustee Annual Report and Financial Statements for the Year end 31<sup>st</sup> December 2023

### 2023 Statistics



Sussex Search and Rescue is registered as a charity in England and Wales No 1097190.

Registered address:

C/O Haywards Heath Police station, Bolnore Road, Haywards Heath, West Sussex. RH16 4BA.



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## **Reference and Administration details.**

### **Charity's principal address:**

C/o Haywards Heath Police Station  
Bolnore Road  
Haywards Heath  
West Sussex  
RH16 4BA

**Registered Charity No: 1097190**

### **Names of the charity trustees who manage the charity**

Mr Daniel Wood	Chair
Mr Andrew Nixon	Secretary
Miss Jackie Deacon	Treasurer

## **Structure, Governance and Management**

The charity is governed by a constitution, which is adopted by the members. Trustees are elected by members annually at the Annual General meeting held in January.

The charity is managed by the Honorary Officers, namely the Chairman, the Secretary and the Treasurer, together with the support of an elected executive committee.

The charity works in partnership with Sussex Police and all members are police vetted before being accepted as operational within the team, this vetting is renewable every three years.

The charity is also a full member of the wider national network of the Association Lowland Search and Rescue.

### **Objectives and activities**

The primary objectives of Sussex Search and Rescue are:

-To relieve the suffering and distress among persons endangered by accident or natural hazard by the provision of a trained search and rescue unit to assist Sussex Police and other agencies.

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- To preserve and protect good health by the provision of education and training in outdoor safety and skills with a view to promoting the safe enjoyment of outdoor recreation.
- To promote research into the science of search and rescue and to disseminate the useful knowledge gained, for the benefit of the public.

The trustees have continued with their duty having due regard to the commission's public benefit guidance when exercising any powers or duties to which the guidance is relevant.

## **Operational achievements**

We were very proud after the decision of the Chief Constable Jo Shinner, to agree to continue as our Patron. The trustees and team fully appreciate the confidence and support of the Chief Constable and her recognition of the importance of the team in her force's work to locate vulnerable missing people.

Total number of call outs increased slightly to 51, these were primarily in Sussex but also, as usual, included assists with other neighbouring counties as requested. A couple of these had the added complexity of having attracted a high level of local and national publicity. Several searches requested or required the use of our Sonar capability, some of which were cross team searches using the specialist capabilities of each team.

After securing our licence as an Outreach Training Centre, 2023 saw the first successful MOD 2 and MOD 3 water courses take place, which included participants from our inhouse team and also several from surrounding county teams.

This is an essential resource to ensure our water capability is able to requalify inline with the Defra standards, (the only standards recognised by all emergency services and Lowland Rescue for water teams in the UK). By holding this licence to host training courses we are also able to offer surrounding county teams options to request or attend courses for retraining their capabilities and encourages further cross team collaboration cost effectively. The trustees would like to acknowledge and recognise the substantial time and effort on top of business as usual that has been put in by our Water team lead and those others involved to get us to the required level to obtain this status to be able to use this in house and offer wider within the Lowland rescue community.

Having secured a new base for our equipment with West Sussex Fire and Rescue services, the equipment team ensured this transition happened seamlessly with minimal effect on our operation status. We have settled in well and it has been a big factor in enhancing our relationship with the West Sussex Fire and Rescue service team.

We remain an active member of the Sussex resilience forum, which held regular meetings throughout the year and also ran several preparatory exercises on potential scenarios which

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could affect the communities across Sussex, we were recognised as one of the key resources which could be deployed should these scenarios become reality.

As a member of the Association of Lowland Rescue, we annually provide them and to the police, statistics on all incidents attended, these are built up nationally with the intention of improving search planning for future incidents.

## Membership

The member volunteers committed to a total of 7,131 registered hours in 2023, with unquantified unregistered hours, proving their commitment and dedication continues to be the greatest asset of the organisation.

The team finished the year with a membership number of 64 which included

- 55 operational members
- 7 non-operational members
- 6 support members

During the year the Inflow included:

- 11 new members under training, which was over our initial target of 8

Sadly, the team saw eight retirements, one transfer to another county team and one move to a support role. We also saw a very successful recruitment campaign attracting over 140 applicants.

During 2023 the trustees agreed it would be beneficial to set up a Team Members Attitude Survey to understand the team moral and views, especially for those who may not participate in more public discussions.

This was an extremely valuable exercise and whilst the majority of members were content with how the organisation was run, it highlighted some valuable points for committee consideration. e.g. The need to improve communication and the pressures on members both financially and personal. These and other issues identified from the survey helped shape committee activity and team policies.

The trustees would like to express their appreciation to the team for their participation, candour, honesty and support during this process.

## Training

Unfortunately, during 2023 we found ourselves without a training officer, however we were fortunate to have a training team who stepped up and ensured the invaluable training sessions

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continued and we were able to put on a total of 54 training exercises in various disciplines required to keep the team competent.

Alongside the main search training nights, our specialised capabilities also had their monthly trainings sessions.

Sonar, which included a course run by an international sonar trainer, and a presentation by our sonar lead at the south east regional water training conference.

Water, which included a team exercise with the East Sussex Fire and Rescue Service and one with the HM Coast Guard.

2023 saw:

- 11 new search technicians recruited and qualified
- 5 members qualify up to team leader level.
- 8 members obtain the Outdoor First Aid qualification
- 1 member qualified as an Outreach Water Instructor
- 4 water team members were qualified to MOD2 – Water First Responder level.
- 2 water team members progressed and qualified to MOD3 – Water Technician level.
- 4 water team members requalified to MOD3 – Water Technician level.
- 2 members completed and qualified in the Search Operations course.

## **Financial Review**

The charity finished the year in a healthy financial position with £53k of unrestricted reserves which are held in order to fulfil future charitable aims and objectives, build a fund towards future replacement of the vehicles and to be sufficient to cover a minimum of 12 months operational expenditure.

In 2023 the organisation was successful in securing £17.7k in grant funding. Three restricted grants from the Ruth Lee annual funds, Sussex resilience forum and the Gatwick Community fund for various equipment for the team and two unrestricted grants from the Peoples Postcode Lottery and Brighton and Hove Council.

The fundraising income remained consistent year on year, even though we received a one off £10k legacy in 2022. Events and organisational donations were back on par with pre pandemic levels.

Team members excelled themselves yet again with the extra time and effort put in to attend around 90 fundraising activities, community talks and events.

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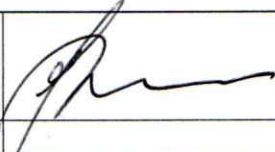
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## Declaration

The Trustees declare that they have approved the trustees' report above.

Signed on behalf of the Charities trustees:

Signature:			
Full name:	Jackie Deacon		
Position:	Trustee		
Date:	28 <sup>th</sup> October 2024		

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**Independent examiner's report to the trustees of Sussex Search and Rescue  
(Registered number 1097190)**

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of Sussex Search and Rescue for the period ended 31 December 2023

**Responsibilities and basis of report**

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

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

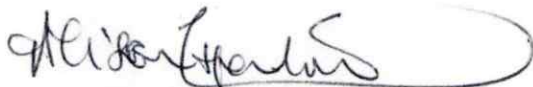
**Independent examiner's statement**

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

1. accounting records were not kept in respect of the Trust as required by section 130 of the Act; or
2. the accounts do not accord with those records; or
3. the accounts do not comply with the applicable requirements concerning the form and content of accounts set out in the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 other than any requirement that the accounts give a 'true and fair view which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination.

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

Signed:



Alison Henton, FCA

18 Lucastes Lane  
Haywards Heath  
West Sussex  
RH16 1LD

Date: 18 10 2024



Bringing the missing home

## SUSSEX SEARCH AND RESCUE - 1097190

### Receipts and payments account for the year ended 31 December 2023

	2023 Unrestricted £	2023 Restricted £	2023 Total £	2022 Total £
<b>Receipts</b>				
Donations	31,462	10,228	41,690	41,780
Training Courses	125	-	125	-
Interest Received	404	-	404	24
VAT Refund	2,835	1,123	3,958	5,587
<b>Asset and investment sales</b>				
Sale of assets				2,000
<b>Total receipts</b>	<b>34,826</b>	<b>11,351</b>	<b>46,177</b>	<b>49,391</b>
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>34,826</b>	<b>11,351</b>	<b>46,177</b>	<b>49,391</b>
<b>Payments</b>				
Operational equipment	6,248	1,220	7,468	10,569
Vehicle repairs, maintenance and fuel	11,197	-	11,197	12,144
Member training	3,154	-	3,154	2,938
Fundraising equipment & Marketing	437	-	437	1,252
Insurance	4,449	-	4,449	4,405
Other expenditure	5,341	-	5,341	6,622
	30,826	1,220	32,046	37,930
<b>Asset and investment sales</b>				
Purchases of assets	1,121	6,432	7,553	14,457
<b>Total payments</b>	<b>31,947</b>	<b>7,652</b>	<b>39,599</b>	<b>52,387</b>
<b>Net of receipts (payments) for the year</b>	<b>2,879</b>	<b>3,699</b>	<b>6,578</b>	<b>(2,995)</b>
<b>Reconciliation of funds in the year</b>				
Cash funds at previous year end	49,890	2,698	52,588	55,583
Net income (expenditure) for the year	2,879	3,699	6,578	(2,995)
<b>Cash funds at year end</b>	<b>52,769</b>	<b>6,397</b>	<b>59,165</b>	<b>52,588</b>


### Statement of assets and liabilities as at 31 December 2023


	2023 Unrestricted £	2023 Restricted £	2023 Total £	2022 Total £
<b>Cash funds</b>				
Operations account	7,612	-	7,612	5,636
Paypal Account	842	-	842	145
Vehicle replacement account	44,315	6,397	50,712	46,807
	52,770	6,397	59,167	52,588
<b>Net assets and liabilities</b>	<b>52,770</b>	<b>6,397</b>	<b>59,167</b>	<b>52,588</b>

Assets retained for the Charity's own use.	Fund to which Asset Belongs	Cost 2023 £	Cost 2022 £
Vehicles	Unrestricted	56,651	56,651
Computer Equipment	Unrestricted	11,864	11,267
Radio Equipment	Unrestricted	2,729	2,729
Radio Equipment	Restricted	25,736	25,736
Medical Equipment	Unrestricted	3,643	3,643
Medical Equipment	Restricted	1,555	-
SAR Equipment	Unrestricted	4,985	4,580
Water Equipment	Restricted	17,199	15,391
Water Equipment	Unrestricted	4,820	4,820
Sonar Equipment	Restricted	7,566	5,570
Other Equipment	Unrestricted	1,180	1,180
		<b>137,929</b>	<b>131,568</b>

Signed on behalf of the trustees by:

Date: 26th January 2024

  
Daniel Wood  
Chairman

  
Andrew Nixon  
Secretary

  
Jackie Deacon  
Treasurer