

Charity Registration No 1117209
Company Registration No 05966120

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**Unaudited financial statements for
the year ended 30 September 2023**

Sight Concern Bedfordshire

**A company limited by guarantee and not having a
share capital**

Sight Concern Bedfordshire

Reference and administrative details

Trustees (who act as Directors for the purposes of the Companies Act)	Adrian Spurrell Chair Joanna Jameson David Mitchell Calli O'Brien Julie Born Jamile Little (appointed 15 June 2023)
Secretary	Carol O'Brien
Chief Executive Officer	Carol O'Brien
Charity number	1117209
Company number	05966120
Registered & principal office	St Bedes 116 Bromham Road Bedford MK40 2QN
Independent Examiner	Louise Tunley FCA CTA DChA 19 Goldington Road Bedford MK40 3JY
Bankers	CAF Bank Limited 25 Kings Hill Avenue West Malling Kent ME19 4JQ Scottish Widows Bank Plc 67 Morrison Street Edinburgh EH3 8YJ The Charity Bank Limited Fosse House 182 High Street Tonbridge TN9 1BE Nationwide Building Society Kings Park Road Moulton Park Northampton NN3 6NW
Solicitors	HCB Solicitors (formerly Park Woodfine Heald Mellows) Graylaw House 21 Goldington Road Bedford MK40 3JY

Sight Concern Bedfordshire

Trustees' report For the year ended 30 September 2023

The trustees are pleased to present their annual trustees' report for the year ending 30 September 2023 which is also prepared to meet the requirements for a directors' report and accounts for Companies Act purposes.

The financial statements comply with the Charities Act 2011, the Companies Act 2006, the Memorandum and Articles of Association, and the 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; FRS 102) issued in October 2019.

Objectives and Activities

Charitable objectives and reporting under Public Benefit

Sight Concern Bedfordshire's ("SCB"s) objectives continue in accordance with its Constitution. The objects are to promote the relief of blind and partially sighted persons and persons with sensory or any other related disability. The principal objectives of the charity are to support people who are blind or partially sighted resident in Luton and Bedfordshire and people with sensory loss in Central Bedfordshire.

In setting the charity's objectives and planning its aims and future activities the Trustees have given consideration to the Charity Commission's general guidance on public benefit. The main aims of the charity are:

- To provide appropriate help, support, aids, training and advice that contribute to improving the quality of life for people with sensory loss and their carers;
- To help people who use the charity's services maintain choice and control over their lives;
- To provide training to people with sensory loss to monitor their health and use any remaining vision they may have, thereby helping them to maintain their health and emotional wellbeing;
- To raise awareness of the impact and issues of registration as blind or partially sighted and signposting/supporting people to register as appropriate;
- To provide appropriate support to ensure the service users' dignity, and at all times respecting the choices service users make.

Our values are embedded as our staff, trustees and volunteers are part of the same team, sharing a commitment to work together to support the development of everyone's potential. Our values are encompassed in the following 'SPIRIT':

- **Specialist knowledge** – of sensory loss and its impact on daily living
- **Professionalism** – quality and care in all the services we provide
- **Inclusivity** – equality and accessibility for all
- **Relationships** - collaborative partnerships with stakeholders and organisations
- **Integrity** – in service provision and practice
- **Transparency** – ensuring best practice in all we do

Sight Concern Bedfordshire Services

During the year Sight Concern contacted 2544 visually impaired people and 887 service users received direct specialist service from us. The charity closed over 1826 referrals for work, each referral is a record of direct support ranging from telephone advice to a holistic MOT outcome assessment and the creation of an action plan with a specialist advisor. This is a 15% increase on the previous year.

Sight Concern Bedfordshire

Trustees' report For the year ended 30 September 2023

Sight Concern Bedfordshire Services (continued)

Specialist Sight Loss Services

Sight Concern provides a specialist Low Vision service which provides assessments, advice, equipment, and support from our offices in Luton and Bedford. The average appointment is 30 minutes long and includes rehabilitation support and practical advice; access to assistive technology and demonstrations of equipment. The Low Vision Service delivers a hybrid service with approximately 80% face to face clinics and 20% remote clinics. The outreach team work to ensure that statutory services including Moorfields and Community Optometrists are aware and referring to the service. The Low Vision referrals received were 522, Sight Concerns carries out work throughout the year to support the pathway between NHS and voluntary and community sector support, but this is an ongoing issue and area of work.

Visual Impairment Advisors (VIAs) and Sensory Impairment Advisor (SIA) provide intensive support on a 1:1 basis with our most vulnerable clients, encouraging and enabling them to build social networks and regain confidence. The service is provided in Central Bedfordshire and Luton. The VIAs and SIA carry out 'MOT' initial assessment and create support plans that are written with active involvement of the service users and/or their carer or family and include obtaining benefits such as Personal Independence Payments (PIP) and Carer's allowance; concessions such as Blue Badge applications; demonstrating domestic equipment and adaptations; providing access to social groups and referrals to other support organisations. The impairment advisors for Central Bedfordshire and Luton obtained new benefits, principally PIP and Carers Allowance, totalling £552,450 (increase of 72%) during the year for 129 clients. The advisors also obtained 105 concessions including 59 blue badge, bus passes, TV licence discounts and rail cards. The service is provided by telephone with in-person visits at our offices and at people's homes.

Providing local sight loss information

The charity circulates its own newsletter, News and Views, which was distributed quarterly to 2368 people. The newsletter contains opportunities and local events, associated services from partner organisations and sight loss prevention information. The newsletter is distributed in accessible formats including large print, audio recording on memory stick, links to cloud provision and braille.

Information, advice and guidance is provided via the charity's telephone helpline, face to face (when possible) and via the Facebook Book page Messenger to visually impaired people and relatives, as well as friends or carers of visually impaired people. The number of Facebook followers has increased to 916, and Instagram 183 with Sight Concern posting daily information about Sight Concern's services, events and the services of other related organisations, as well as sharing information about eye health and relevant news articles for the visually impaired.

The Sight Concern Visual Impairment Champion attends local events and promotes the services and support available for people with Sight Loss. Events attended this year included a Festivals for Older People and aging well, regular social prescribing events, sight loss resources and technology sessions and a new monthly technology clinic. The Visual Impairment Champions role has expanded to promoting equality through social media and attending equality organisations, for example Bedford an Inclusive Town and creating awareness campaigns with Central Bedfordshire Council.

Sight Concern uses CharityLog as the primary method for recording monitoring and outcome data. Sight Concern is part of a shared data project where Vista, Sight Concern Bedfordshire, 4Sight West Sussex, Focus Birmingham, MySight Nottingham, Support4Sight, Warwickshire Vision, NESS North East Sensory Services and WILL use a shared Charitylog instance for over 28,000 individual people.

Sight Concern Bedfordshire

Trustees' report For the year ended 30 September 2023

Sight Concern Bedfordshire Services (continued)

Sight Concern also runs a large number of volunteer led services:

- The listening post telephone service makes routine calls, at a regular time, to keep in contact with visually impaired people who are home-bound or otherwise lack regular social contact.
- Our Peer Support Volunteer, who has lived experience of sight loss, is here to help those who are newly diagnosed or have had a significant deterioration with a limited number of phone calls.
- Support for office work including working with British Wireless for the Blind, processing our donations, processing invoices, removing old documentation for shredding or carrying out telephone surveys.
- The charity circulates Talking Newspapers where volunteer readers create audio recordings of the local newspapers. The services support 35 people who each receive around 25 recorded newspapers in a year by e-mail. An Alexa Skill has been launched giving listeners access to our talking newspaper via Alexa devices. There are 23 listeners measured by unique IP addresses. After the success of the RNIB Alexa project, we plan to provide a small amount of Alexas to enable more people to access this service.
- The charity is a distributor of British Wireless for the Blind Radios, we referred 29 people to the British Wireless for the Blind Connect service.
- Outreach events were held to demonstrate technology and promote Sight Concern services or attending at community events such as Ageing Well in: Flitwick, Biggleswade, Shefford, Leighton Buzzard, Dunstable, Woburn, Moorfields, Luton and Bedford, talking to 475 people about sight loss.
- An accessible IT Club in Luton is held in Café 59 and Bedford in Homebrook house. 1-1 Tech Support is also provided by Sight Concern at it's Bedford office. The sessions include information on accessing online media and social networks and sharing tips for using technology to make everyday life easier for example calendar reminders.
- Sight Concern runs regular clubs including Crafty Bunch, Friday club, Dunstable Socialeyez. Family group continues to support children with visual impairment and their families, we also launched our Youth Forum fortnightly session for 11 to 16 year olds, providing a space for young visually impaired people to connect and share life experiences and tech tips.

The charity works closely with Local Authority Social Services, Optometrists, Social Prescribers, and with Charities that have overlapping client groups such as older people, to ensure that the advice and signposting is up to date. The Local Optical Committee for Bedfordshire has a new Chair, Laura Hing. Laura Hing and Central Bedfordshire LA have worked closely with Sight Concern, as we work together to improve referrals to Sight Concern.

Sight Concern Bedfordshire Staffing

Sight Concern values the team and focuses on wellbeing. We use the NVCO workforce wheel as our outcome-based approach to monitoring all aspects of people management. Sight Concern evaluates its outcomes each year to feed into our workforce development. The overall outcome score has risen since we started in 2018, with all the mean scores moving from above 3 out of 5, to above 4 out of 5, maintained for the last two years. This means the different aspects of people management are rated as working quite well or excellent. The Charity Operations manager has been in place for over a year and has embedded the people management that is reflected in these scores.

Sight Concern Bedfordshire

Trustees' report For the year ended 30 September 2023

Key developments during the October 2022 September 23 year

SCB worked to achieve our business plan for new work in 2023 meeting the three strategic objectives; sustainability through the fundraising strategy, profile through the marketing plan and partnerships, and the provision of Quality Services.

Quality - SCB completed the external charity evaluation in Spring 2023 to enable us to take an in depth look at our services, and the sector within which we operate. To do this, we employed the services of two consultants specialised in carrying out charity evaluations and advice services to assess our current position, to look at how to develop our activities and to ask, and confirm that our strategic goals are still valid following the pandemic Profile – we built on our success for national eye health week marketing, social media and outreach. With support from Visionary and RNIB Sight Concern's Social media fundraising "Take on 250" had its most successful year. With support from our marketing trustee, we created and implemented our first brand guidelines.

Sustainability – We sought to diversify grants and trusts. Through the Visionary and RNIB relationship, Sight Concern Bedfordshire benefited with two years free access to Bequeathed online free will writing, with a focus on legacy income generation.

Over the year contracts and grants were maintained. The Bedfordshire and Luton Community Fund, Community Infrastructure grant for the Luton work was renewed for a further year from April 2023. The role of Luton and Dunstable Foundation Trust Eye Clinic Liaison Officer (ECLO) funded by Sight Concern and Royal National Institute for the Blind (RNIB) continued to play a vital role in the eye care pathway. In the period in 2022/23 (April - March) the ECLO reached 1433 people affected by sight loss and a significant proportion of new people that were referred to Sight Concern came from the ECLO service.

Trustees highlighted that small charities such as Sight Concern are exposed to cyber threats. The National Cyber Security Centre provided a subsidy award by way of Minimal Funding Assistance Exemption of a value of £3,300. The subsidy provided 20 hours of remote support, which led to improvements in the charity's digital security and the award of the Cyber Essentials Certificate.

Sight Concern worked closely with local VCSE organisations continued, including paid partnerships. The MIND workshop on loneliness was well attended by beneficiaries, carers, volunteers, and professionals. Support4Employment partnership with Support4Sight project completed in March 2023 with positive feedback continuing from participants into 2024. Successes included, beneficiaries going from unemployed to in work and having improved employment opportunities. As a charity we learned how significant a timely 1-1 expert support service is at when you lose your sight while employed; to help navigate and support at a key time.

Volunteers

Volunteers are a key part of Sight Concern Bedfordshire's overall strategy. Sight Concern Bedfordshire can call upon more than 100 volunteers in the Bedfordshire and Luton area.

Remote services are still proving popular with 30 Telephone befriending calls and Zoom Social Club taking place each week and online meetings for Youth Forum during school holidays. The charity aims to use volunteers as effectively as possible and to ensure volunteers participate at all levels within the charity. Admin volunteers are now offered flexibility and can be set up to work remotely or in one of our offices; they are currently supporting: Low Vision Clinic, reporting, surveys, and British Wireless for the Blind referrals and deliveries.

Trustees undertook a equity diversity inclusion survey and skills audit to help identify gaps within the current board. Sight Concern was delighted to appoint Jamile as trustee, bringing a wealth of skills, Luton knowledge and lived experience to the board.

Sight Concern Bedfordshire

Trustees' report For the year ended 30 September 2023

Volunteers (continued)

We operate a full screening and training scheme for all our volunteers that is tailored to the specific role undertaken by a given volunteer. Communications with volunteers increased including 1-1 calls, group Zoom calls and email updates from the Chair of the board. All volunteers complete training before beginning their role which is delivered both face to face and online to be as inclusive as possible. Further support is offered throughout the year, this included IT training and Peer support Training. We recruited 10 new volunteers in 22/23, 5 of whom have lived experience of sight loss. The volunteers have been placed into various roles, including IT support, Telephone Befriending. We also support existing volunteers to try different roles and share ideas for services. Youth Forum and Peer Support calls were both projects coproduced with existing visually impaired volunteers.

Thank you for your support

Sight Concern is helped by many people, businesses, and organisations throughout the year. We would like to extend our thanks to:

Bedfordshire and Luton LLAL Community Investment Fund managed by the Bedfordshire and Luton Community Foundation (BLCF)
Access to Work grant to help two members of staff continue to work independently at Sight Concern
George W Dickens Charity
Biggleswade Talking News
Bedford Society of Friends (Quakers)
Inner Wheel Club North Luton
East Beds Charity Cricket Shield

Our thanks go to our staff and volunteers and supporters for their resilience, creativity and sheer hard work in adapting and continuing to move Sight Concern onwards and upwards.

Future Plans

The charity recognises that the number of people affected by sight loss continues to grow. In Bedfordshire (Luton Borough, Central Bedford, and Bedford Borough) the number of people with severe sight loss is expected to grow by 17% during the next five years (reference RNIB sight loss data tool). Sight Concern Board of Trustees is committed to adapting to meet this need by developing and improving the services offered. The three strategic objectives are **sustainability** through the fundraising strategy, **profile** through the marketing plan and partnerships, and the provision of **Quality Services**.

This will include:

- Sight Concern will implement the learnings from the external consultation to implement a standard approach, an access and triage role and expand advice service to cover all Bedfordshire.
- Work with the NHS to include non-clinical patient support in the eyecare pathway by engaging with Moorfields Bedford, the Local Eye Health Network (LEHN) and the Bedford Local Optical Committee. Work with Central Beds to allow for secure web-based professional referrals.
- Expand our locations in the community to deliver services face to face across the region, focusing on one off events for larger geographical outreach.
- Focus on key strong local partnerships to signpost and refer service users and to ensure the best outcomes.
- Work to expand trustee board, focusing on gaps identified including digital.
- Work on public transport and mobility for visually impaired people to enable increased independence.
- Improve access to legacy giving
- Develop peer led service

Sight Concern Bedfordshire

Trustees' report For the year ended 30 September 2023

Financial review

During the year Sight Concern Bedfordshire made a loss of £9,262 (2022: surplus of £35,244). During the accounting period incoming resources amounted to £312,627 (2022: £360,248). Total resources expended were £329,182 (2022: £307,987). At the year end, total funds carried forward were £616,611 (2022: £625,873), of which £555,996 (2022: £561,513) were unrestricted.

Reserves Policy

Sight Concern Bedfordshire has little income from fixed asset investments, such as endowments, and is largely dependent for income on donor funding, including legacies. These income streams can fluctuate significantly year to year, leading to potential liquidity issues. Over the past 10 years, year-end cash balances have fluctuated by over £500,000, due to a small number of irregular large donations, and while this has reduced to a fluctuation of approx. £180,000 in the past 5 years, the trustees believe there is a need to hold reserves at a level which provides protection against such issues, to enable the charity to continue to operate in all circumstances including any significant unexpected fall in income.

Sight Concern Bedfordshire is required to hold Restricted Fund reserves where the use of donation has been restricted for specific purposes. It also holds Designated Funds, where the Trustees have already committed to supporting new developments, activities and projects using legacy funds from our unrestricted reserves balance. This includes maintaining and supporting current services which are underfunded by external sources, or match-funding certain projects where third parties are also committed. At 30 September 2023, an amount of £135,050 has been officially designated to meet the costs of these projects.

As with any organisation, the charity faces risks which could impact its ability to continue. Due to the fluctuation and unpredictability of income on an annual basis, we therefore need to ensure that, in addition to the Restricted and Designated Fund reserves, an appropriate level of free reserves is maintained. This means we can respond to unforeseen events, without jeopardising our ability to continue support for visually impaired people and meet our obligations as they fall due.

The Trustees have reviewed the existing reserves policy and concluded a risk-based policy should be implemented to support decision making in managing the level of our free reserves held on an ongoing basis. An initial review of risks has been undertaken, assessing the expected cost should a risk arise, weighted by the likelihood of that risk occurring. The resulting financial impact of the weighted risks have been considered in total, and a weighted risk reserve requirement of £210,000 was determined. The risks, their expected costs and likelihoods are documented and will be reviewed regularly as part of ongoing management of the charity's finances.

At the year end, there was an excess of free reserves over and above the requirements of the risk-based reserves policy. The charity intends to use this excess over the next 5 years, by actively seeking new projects to develop and enhance the services we provide, in line with our purpose and values.

Investment policy

Principle funding sources

In the context of the wider charity sector, Sight Concern Bedfordshire is a smaller regional charity but has a wide range of services to fund. In a normal year without exceptional legacy income, around 46% of total funding comes from the public sector. 34% of funding is obtained from grant giving bodies, the largest of which is awarded by Bedfordshire Luton Community Foundation's from the Luton Rising – Community Investment Fund.

Sight Concern Bedfordshire

Trustees' report For the year ended 30 September 2023

Risk management

The principal area for attention is a risk management strategy which comprises:

- The trustees considering risks and risk management throughout the year at board meetings. The risk register is updated quarterly or more frequently if required.
- Establishing policies, systems and procedures to mitigate any risks identified.
- The implementation of procedures designed to minimise or manage any potential impact on the charity should those risks materialise.

The process extends to all areas of services and involves staff and volunteers. The risk register incorporates all forms of risk in relation to the charity and its operations, including contracts, finance, information technology, staff, volunteer and service user recruitment and activities, health and safety and reputation.

Trustees have recognised as a prime risk, the long-term financial sustainability of services provided to visually impaired people for Local Authorities. In addition to developing and delivering new and existing services for Local Authorities in a sustainable way, we are implementing a fundraising strategy created with the help of the Cranfield Trust. As a result, we have increased our focus on applying for Grants and Trusts and promoting end of life giving.

Fundraising activities

The charity does not currently carry out formal fundraising activities. The amounts allocated for raising funds represent staff time spent on promotion and publicity in general, in order to raising the profile of the charity and raise general awareness of the charity for donors and funding organisations. Sight Concern has used a professional fundraiser to write grant applications and to help create a case for support. The charity does not use professional fundraisers to target donations from individuals.

Structure, governance, and management

The company was incorporated on 13 October 2006 as a company limited by guarantee not having share capital and being a registered charity in England and Wales. The governing document of the charity is its Articles of Association. The trustees set the classes and conditions of membership and approve all new members. The current membership requirements being a Trustee of the charity, each member undertakes to contribute no more than £10 to the Charity's assets in the event of the charity being wound up.

The charity seeks to have on its board, members with the appropriate skillset to enable it to be managed in an effective manner. Any new appointment is made at a properly convened trustees' meeting. New trustees receive an induction which includes trustee responsibilities, meeting staff, senior management and existing trustees, a review of the charity's literature including recent accounts and minutes of trustee meetings.

Pay policy for senior staff

The board of trustees and the senior management team comprise the key management personnel of the charity, in charge of directing and controlling, running and operating the charity on a day-to-day basis. All trustees give of their time freely and no trustee received remuneration in the year. Details of trustees' expenses and related party transaction are disclosed in note 23 to the accounts.

The key management remuneration policy is set by the Trustees and is reviewed on an annual basis as part of the budget setting process.

Sight Concern Bedfordshire

Trustees' report For the year ended 30 September 2023

Trustees

The following were Trustees as well as directors of the charitable company throughout the year.

Joanna Jameson

David Mitchell

Adrian Spurrell

Calli O'Brien

Julie Born

Jamile Little (appointed 15 June 2023)

2 of the 6 Trustees who served during the year are registered blind or partially sighted.

Sight Concern Bedfordshire

Trustees' report For the year ended 30 September 2023

Statement of Trustees' responsibilities

The trustees (who are also directors of Sight Concern Bedfordshire for the purposes of company law) are responsible for preparing the Trustees' Annual Report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

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.

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.

As far as the trustees are aware:

- there is no relevant 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.

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.

This report has been prepared in accordance with the provisions of Part 15 of the Companies Act 2006 relating to small companies.

By order of the board of trustees



Adrian Spurrell
Chair

Date: 6 June 2024

Independent Examiner's Report to the Trustees of Sight Concern Bedfordshire For the year ended 30 September 2023

I report to the charity trustees on my examination of the accounts of the company for the year ended 30 September 2023 which are set out on pages 12 to 26.

Responsibilities and basis of report

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

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

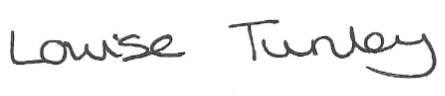
Independent examiner's statement

Since the company's gross income exceeded £250,000 your examiner must be a member of a body listed in section 145 of the 2011 Act. I confirm that I am qualified to undertake the examination because I am a member of the Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales, which is one of the listed bodies.

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

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

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



Louise Tunley FCA CTA DChA
Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales (ICAEW)

19 Goldington Road
Bedford
MK40 3JY

Date: 6 June 2024

Sight Concern Bedfordshire

Statement of financial activities (incorporating the Income and Expenditure account) For the year ended 30 September 2023

	Notes	2023 Unrestricted Funds £	2023 Restricted Funds £	2023 Total Funds £	2022 Total Funds £
Income from:					
Donations and legacies	4	29,983	-	29,983	69,195
Charitable activities	5	6,210	267,886	274,096	286,639
Investments	6	8,548	-	8,548	4,414
Total income		<u>44,741</u>	<u>267,886</u>	<u>312,627</u>	<u>360,248</u>
Expenditure on:					
Raising funds	7	11,111	-	11,111	540
Charitable activities	7	46,467	271,604	318,071	307,447
Total expenditure		<u>57,578</u>	<u>271,604</u>	<u>329,182</u>	<u>307,987</u>
Gain/(Loss) on revaluation of investment assets	14	7,293	-	7,293	(17,017)
Net income/(expenditure)		<u>(5,544)</u>	<u>(3,718)</u>	<u>(9,262)</u>	<u>35,244</u>
Transfers between fund		<u>27</u>	<u>(27)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>
Net movement in funds		<u>(5,517)</u>	<u>(3,745)</u>	<u>(9,262)</u>	<u>35,244</u>
Reconciliation of funds:					
Total funds brought forward		<u>561,513</u>	<u>64,360</u>	<u>625,873</u>	<u>590,629</u>
Total funds carried forward	17,18	<u><u>555,996</u></u>	<u><u>60,615</u></u>	<u><u>616,611</u></u>	<u><u>625,873</u></u>

The notes on pages 15 to 26 form part of these financial statements.

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

All income and expenditure derives from continuing activities.

Sight Concern Bedfordshire

Balance sheet (Company number 05966120) As at 30 September 2023

	Notes	2023	2022
		£	£
Fixed assets			
Tangible Assets	13	4,454	4,029
Investments	14	94,286	86,993
Total fixed assets		98,740	91,022
Current assets			
Stocks		7,924	7,260
Debtors	15	69,505	59,682
Bank and cash balances		505,373	519,353
Total current assets		582,802	586,295
Liabilities:			
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	16	(64,931)	(51,444)
Net current assets		517,871	534,851
Total assets less current liabilities		616,611	625,873
Net assets		616,611	625,873
The funds of the charity:			
Unrestricted income funds	17	555,996	561,513
Restricted income funds	18	60,615	64,360
Total charity funds		616,611	625,873

The notes on pages 15 to 26 form part of these financial statements.

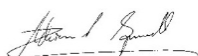
For the year ended 30 September 2023 the company was entitled to exemption from audit under section 477 of the Companies Act 2006 relating to small companies.

Directors' (Trustees') responsibilities:

- The members have not required the company to obtain an audit of its accounts for the year in question in accordance with section 476;
- The directors acknowledge their responsibilities for complying with the requirements of the Act with respect to accounting records and the preparation of accounts.

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the provisions of Part 15 of the Companies Act 2006 relating to small companies.

The financial statements were approved by the board of trustees on 6 June 2024 and signed on their behalf by



Adrian Spurrell
Chair

Sight Concern Bedfordshire

Statement of cash flows For the year ended 30 September 2023

	Note	2023 £	2022 £
Cash flows from operating activities:			
Net cash used in operating activities	24	(20,618)	23,825
Cash flows from investing activities:			
Interest, dividend and rental income		8,548	4,414
Payments to acquire tangible fixed assets		(1,910)	(1,829)
		<hr/>	<hr/>
Net cash used in investing activities		6,638	2,585
		<hr/>	<hr/>
Change in cash and cash equivalents in the year		(13,980)	26,410
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the year		519,353	492,943
		<hr/>	<hr/>
Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the year		505,373	519,353
		<hr/> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/>

Sight Concern Bedfordshire

Notes to the financial statements For the year ended 30 September 2023

1 Accounting policies

1.1 Basis of preparation and assessment of going concern

Sight Concern Bedfordshire is a private charitable company, limited by guarantee, registered in England and Wales and was incorporated on 13 October 2006. The charitable company's registered number and registered office address can be found on page 1. The presentation currency of the financial statements is the Pound Sterling (£). The company has no share capital and in the event of the charity being wound up, the liability in respect of the guarantee is limited to no more than £10 per member of the charity.

The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention with items recognised at cost or transaction value unless otherwise stated in the relevant note to these accounts. The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the 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 (FRS 102)) (issued in October 2019) - (Charities SORP (FRS 102)), the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) and the Companies Act 2006.

Sight Concern Bedfordshire constitutes a public benefit entity as defined by FRS 102.

The Trustees consider that there are no material uncertainties about Sight Concern Bedfordshire's ability to continue as a going concern due to the level of reserves held compared with usual annual expenditure. The most significant area of uncertainty is the level of investment return and the performance of investment markets (see the investment policy in the trustees' report for more information).

1.2 Incoming resources

The charity derives its income from donations, legacies and other voluntary income and grants that provide core funding.

Items of income are recognised and included in the accounts when all of the following criteria are met:

- The charity has entitlement to the funds;
- Any performance conditions attached to the item (s) of income have been met or are fully within the control of the charity or its subsidiary;
- There is sufficient certainty that the receipt of the income is considered probably; and
- The amount can be measured reliably.

Donation income is included within the Statements of Financial Activities as it is received. Legacies are recognised when the above criteria are met. Grants are recognised in the period to which they relate.

1.3 Operating leases

Rent payable on operating leases is accounted for in the year to which it relates.

1.4 Governance costs

Governance costs are those costs associated with maintaining the governance of the charity as opposed to the management of the charity's activities.

Sight Concern Bedfordshire

Notes to the financial statements For the year ended 30 September 2023

1.5 Resources expended

Expenditure is recognised in the period to which it relates and liabilities are recognised in the period in which they arise. Other expenditure is allocated between support costs for assessing grants, fundraising and management and administration of the charity. Where it relates to more than one category, it is apportioned over relevant headings. The basis of apportionment reflects time and resources expended directly on various activities or in support of these activities.

Allocation of costs:

Services	80%
Management and administration	20%

1.6 Tangible fixed assets and depreciation

Other tangible fixed assets are stated at cost less depreciation. Depreciation is calculated to write off the cost less estimated residual value of fixed assets over their estimated useful lives. The depreciation rates used are as follows:

Computers and peripherals	25% reducing balance method
Equipment and furniture	25% reducing balance method

1.7 Fixed asset investments

Investments are stated at market value at the balance sheet date. All gain and losses (realised and unrealised) are recognised in the SOFA in the period to which they relate.

1.8 Stock

Stocks are recognised at the lower of cost or net realisable value less any provision for slow-moving or obsolete stock.

1.9 Short term employee benefits

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 pension scheme. Contributions payable to the charity's pension scheme are charged to the statement of financial activities in the period to which they relate. Redundancy and other termination payments are accounted for when the employment contract is terminated.

1.10 Voluntary assistance

The charity receives help and support in the form of voluntary assistance. This is not included in the accounts in accordance with the SORP.

1.11 Fund accounting

Unrestricted funds are those funds available for the general running of the charity and the use of those funds is limited only by the objects of the charity. Designated funds are also unrestricted in as much as they are established by the trustees for a specific purpose and the trustees may, at their discretion, transfer funds out of a designated fund in the future. Restricted funds are those funds that have been donated for a purpose specified by the donor. The use of restricted funds is not at the discretion of the trustees. Permanent endowments are funds that have been set up for the long term use of the charity and the assets of these funds cannot be expended.

Sight Concern Bedfordshire

Notes to the financial statements For the year ended 30 September 2023

1.12 Financial instruments

Debtors and creditors 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 the statement of financial activities in support costs.

2 Key areas of judgement and estimate

In applying the accounting policies, the Trustees have made critical accounting judgments, estimates and assumptions. These estimates and assumptions are based on historical experience and are reviewed on a continual basis.

The critical accounting judgments, estimates and assumptions that have a material effect on the amounts recognised in the financial statements for both the current and next financial years are discussed below.

3 Comparative Statement of Financial Activities

The Statement of Financial Activities for the year ended 30th September 2022 is presented for illustrative purposes.

	Unrestricted Funds 2022 £	Restricted Funds 2022 £	Total Funds 2022 £
Income:			
Donations and legacies	69,195	-	69,195
Charitable activities	7,110	279,529	286,639
Investments	4,414	-	4,414
Total income	80,719	279,529	360,248
Expenditure:			
Raising Funds	540	-	540
Charitable Activities	31,297	276,150	307,447
Total expenditure	31,837	276,150	307,987
(Loss)/gain on revaluation of investment assets	(17,017)	-	(17,017)
Net income/(expenditure)	31,865	3,379	35,244
Reconciliation of funds:			
Total Funds brought forward	529,648	60,981	590,629
Total Funds carried forward	561,513	64,360	625,873

Sight Concern Bedfordshire

Notes to the financial statements For the year ended 30 September 2023

4 Income from donations

	Unrestricted 2023 £	Restricted 2023 £	Total 2023 £	Total 2022 £
Donations	10,132	-	10,132	8,372
Legacies	16,250	-	16,250	58,371
Group income	979	-	979	725
Memory Giving	725	-	725	1,604
Gift Aid	316	-	316	12
Collecting boxes	1,581	-	1,581	111
	<u>29,983</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>29,983</u>	<u>69,195</u>

All of the £69,195 received in 2022 was unrestricted.

The charity benefits greatly from the involvement and enthusiastic support of its many volunteers, details of which are given in our annual report. In accordance with accounting standards, the economic contribution of general volunteers is not measured in the accounts. In kind support to the value of £3,300 was provided by Cyber Essentials Funded Services.

5 Income from charitable activities

The incoming resources classified under charitable activities are outlined in more detail below. This income is classified as such as it relates to specific projects and outcomes.

	Unrestricted 2023 £	Restricted 2023 £	Total 2023 £	Total 2022 £
Grants:				
Access to Work Support	-	8,254	8,254	8,091
George W Dickens Charity	1,000	-	1,000	1,000
Panacea Trust	-	10,000	10,000	-
Central Beds Council	-	-	-	12,352
Independent Evaluation	-	3,960	3,960	3,960
Luton Airport grant	-	104,233	104,233	110,059
Luton Borough Council	-	-	-	16,000
Service Level Agreements:				
Other Services	690	-	690	-
Central Beds Sensory Impairment	-	63,171	63,171	59,232
Bedford Low Vision Clinic	-	39,072	39,072	31,161
Luton Low Vision Clinic	-	33,446	33,446	38,674
Sub total carried forward	<u>1,690</u>	<u>262,136</u>	<u>263,826</u>	<u>280,529</u>

Sight Concern Bedfordshire

Notes to the financial statements For the year ended 30 September 2023

5 Income from charitable activities (continued)

	Unrestricted 2023 £	Restricted 2023 £	Total 2023 £	Total 2022 £
Sub total brought forward	1,690	262,136	263,826	280,529
Other services:				
Resource centre sales	-	-	-	-
Low vision clinic sales and service income	4,449	5,750	10,199	5,937
Events for Service Users	71	-	71	173
	<u>6,210</u>	<u>267,886</u>	<u>274,096</u>	<u>286,639</u>

In 2022, £279,529 restricted funding was received, being £110,059 grant from Luton Airport Funding; £8,091 from Access to Work Support; £12,352 Central Beds Council; £16,000 Luton Borough Council; £59,232 Central Beds Sensory Impairment SLA; £31,161 Bedford Low Vision Clinic; £38,674 Luton Low Vision Clinic and £3,960 Wixhamtree Independent Evaluation Grant.

6 Investment income

	Unrestricted 2023 £	Restricted 2023 £	Total 2023 £	Total 2022 £
Interest on bank accounts	4,895	-	4,895	1,156
Share Dividends	3,653	-	3,653	3,258
	<u>8,548</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>8,548</u>	<u>4,414</u>

All income in 2022 was unrestricted.

7 Expenditure

2023	Staff costs £	Other costs £	Depreciat- ion/loss on disposal £	Support costs £	2023 Total £
Charitable Activities					
Direct services	120,585	36,273	706	22,125	179,689
Management and Admin.	65,007	26,370	779	29,916	122,072
Governance (Note 8)	14,410	-	-	1,900	16,310
Total for charitable activities	<u>200,002</u>	<u>62,643</u>	<u>1,485</u>	<u>53,941</u>	<u>318,071</u>
Fundraising	-	11,111	-	-	11,111
	<u>200,002</u>	<u>73,754</u>	<u>1,485</u>	<u>53,941</u>	<u>329,182</u>

Sight Concern Bedfordshire

Notes to the financial statements For the year ended 30 September 2023

7 Expenditure continued

2022	Staff costs	Other costs	Depreciation/(loss) on disposal	Support costs	2022 Total
	£	£	£	£	£
Charitable Activities					
Direct services	128,353	44,213	941	38,455	211,962
Management and Admin.	21,963	25,402	402	30,958	78,725
Governance (Note 8)	13,100	-	-	3,660	16,760
	<u>163,416</u>	<u>69,615</u>	<u>1,343</u>	<u>73,073</u>	<u>307,447</u>
Total for charitable activities	163,416	69,615	1,343	73,073	307,447
Fundraising	-	540	-	-	540
	<u>163,416</u>	<u>70,155</u>	<u>1,343</u>	<u>73,073</u>	<u>307,987</u>

Other expenditure is allocated between support costs for assessing grants, fundraising and management and administration of the charity. Where it relates to more than one category, it is apportioned over relevant headings. The basis of apportionment reflects time and resources expended directly on various activities or in support of these activities.

Allocation of support costs:

Services	80%
Management and administration	20%

Support costs is analysed as follows:

	2023 £	2022 £	Basis of apportionment
Rent, insurance and service charges	27,106	26,319	Invoiced costs
Computer costs	439	4,436	Invoiced costs
Telephone	5,591	4,938	Invoiced costs
Printing, postage and stationery	766	1,651	Invoiced costs
Repairs and renewals	5,785	5,718	Invoiced costs
Other costs	808	1,120	Invoiced costs
Other staff costs	6,596	8,641	Invoiced costs
Legal and professional fees	1,900	3,660	Invoiced costs
Consultancy costs	4,950	16,590	Invoiced costs
	<u>53,941</u>	<u>73,073</u>	

There were no grants to institutions.

8 Governance costs

	2023 £	2022 £
Trustee costs	-	-
External advisors	1,900	3,660
Staff costs	14,410	13,100
	<u>16,310</u>	<u>16,760</u>

Sight Concern Bedfordshire

Notes to the financial statements For the year ended 30 September 2023

9 Staff costs

	2023 £	2022 £
Salaries	184,807	155,204
Social Security costs	6,210	1,809
Pension Costs	8,985	6,403
	<u>200,002</u>	<u>163,416</u>

No employee earned more than £60,000 (2022: none).

The average number of employees during the year was as follows:

	2023	2022
Chief Executive Officer	1	1
Resource Centre staff	-	-
Full time	11	12
Part time	<u>12</u>	<u>13</u>

The charity operates a Stakeholder Pension Scheme for its employees and contributes at a rate of 6%, this scheme has been amended to meet auto-enrolment requirements. There are 8 current members of the scheme (2022: 8).

10 Key Management Personnel

Key Management Personnel during the year were trustees of the organisation who are not paid and staff member Carol O'Brien as CEO. Total gross salaries and employer pensions contributions amounted to £35,336 (2022: £33,346).

11 Taxation

As Sight Concern Bedfordshire is a registered charity, the charitable company is not liable to corporation tax.

12 Statement of Financial Activities

The net movement in funds is stated after charging:

	2023 £	2022 £
Independent Examiner's fees	1,900	-
Auditor's fees	-	3,660
Depreciation	1,485	1,343
Rent on licence	<u>19,895</u>	<u>19,301</u>

Sight Concern Bedfordshire

Notes to the financial statements For the year ended 30 September 2023

13 Fixed assets

	Computer Equipment £	Restricted fund equipment £	Total £
Cost			
At 1 October 2022	8,437	13,000	21,437
Additions	1,910	-	1,910
	<u>10,347</u>	<u>13,000</u>	<u>23,347</u>
At 30 September 2023	10,347	13,000	23,347
Depreciation			
At 1 October 2022	6,359	11,049	17,408
Charge for the year	997	488	1,485
	<u>7,356</u>	<u>11,537</u>	<u>18,893</u>
At 30 September 2023	7,356	11,537	18,893
Net book values			
30 September 2023	<u>2,991</u>	<u>1,463</u>	<u>4,454</u>
30 September 2022	<u>2,078</u>	<u>1,951</u>	<u>4,029</u>

All assets are held for direct charitable purposes.

14 Fixed asset investments

	1 Oct 2022 £	Additions £	Unrealised gain/(loss) £	30 Sep 2023 £
United Utilities Group Plc (772)	6,862	-	461	7,323
Santander (UK) Plc (507)	1,105	-	548	1,653
Sarasin GlobalStar – Cautious Fd (2,500)	23,787	-	(952)	22,835
Murray Income Trust (7,500)	55,239	-	7,236	62,475
	<u>86,993</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>7,293</u>	<u>94,286</u>

All investments are listed investments.
The historical cost of the investments is £70,601.

15 Debtors

	2023 £	2022 £
Trade debtors	57,679	6,390
Prepayments	10,177	7,063
Accrued income	1,649	46,229
	<u>69,505</u>	<u>59,682</u>

Sight Concern Bedfordshire

Notes to the financial statements For the year ended 30 September 2023

16 Creditors: amounts falling due within one year

	2023 £	2022 £
Trade creditors	7,776	8,959
Taxation and social security	2,211	1,076
Other creditors	1,499	1,405
Accruals and deferred income	53,445	40,004
	<u>64,931</u>	<u>51,444</u>

Included in other creditors is an amount in respect of pension contributions of £1,499 (2022: £1,405) outstanding at the year end.

Deferred income

	2023 £	2022 £
At 1 October 2022	31,986	30,121
Received during the year	224,729	192,173
Released to incoming resources	(207,913)	(185,996)
	<u>48,802</u>	<u>36,298</u>

Income is deferred where it relates to the following financial year.

17 Unrestricted funds

	Balance at 1 Oct 2022 £	Movement in year		Transfers £	Balance at 30 Sept 2023 £
		Incoming resources £	Resources expended £		
General fund	509,692	52,034	(42,103)	(98,677)	420,946
Designated fund	51,821	-	(15,475)	98,704	135,050
	<u>561,513</u>	<u>52,034</u>	<u>(57,578)</u>	<u>27</u>	<u>555,996</u>

Details of designated funds are listed on page 7 in the Trustees Report.

Sight Concern Bedfordshire

Notes to the financial statements For the year ended 30 September 2023

18 Restricted funds

	Balance at 1 Oct 2022 £	Movement in year		Transfer Funds £	Balance at 30 Sept 2023 £
		Incoming resources £	Resources expended £		
Luton BC Airport fund	3,431	104,233	(104,750)	-	2,914
Central Beds Sensory Impairment	21,361	63,171	(68,454)	-	16,078
Beds PCT Low Vision Clinic	1,248	39,072	(40,320)	-	-
Luton low vision clinic	33,101	39,196	(43,285)	-	29,012
Grants:					
The Will Trust	474	-	(27)	(27)	420
Wixamtree IT Grant	680	-	(170)	-	510
Luton IT donation	343	-	-	-	343
Access to Work Support	349	8,254	(8,137)	-	466
Beds. & Luton Comm Fd.	1,163	-	(291)	-	872
Panacea Trust (Bedford Pro)	-	10,000	-	-	10,000
Independent Evaluation	2,210	3,960	(6,170)	-	-
	<u>64,360</u>	<u>267,886</u>	<u>(271,604)</u>	<u>(27)</u>	<u>60,615</u>

A brief description of each restricted fund is outlined below:

Luton BC airport fund – funding for support and advice to service users in the Luton area
 Central Beds Sensory Impairment – support to sensory impaired service users in the Central Beds area
 Bedford Low Vision clinic – funding for running a clinic in Bedford for service users to attend
 Luton Low Vision clinic – funding for running a clinic in Luton for service users to attend
 The Will trust – funding for the provision of equipment, including mini bus services for service users
 Wixamtree IT Grant – funding to replace server and update IT services
 Luton IT donation – donation in memory of Peter Miles to be used for IT at Luton
 Access to Work grant – provide equipment to help support one employees to work independently
 Bedfordshire & Luton Community Foundation – Bedfordshire Coronavirus Emergency Fund provided in 2019/20 to support the charity to work remotely during Covid-19, balance is depreciation of equipment.
 Panacea Trust – funding for Bedford to reduce poverty, reduce isolation and improve wellbeing
 Independent Evaluation, funded by Wixamtree, Harpur Trust and Sight Concern

Sight Concern Bedfordshire

Notes to the financial statements For the year ended 30 September 2023

19 Net assets held by funds

2023	Fixed Assets £	Cash at bank & Investments £	Other Assets £	Creditors £	Total £
General fund	2,991	553,464	12,746	(13,205)	555,996
Restricted funds	1,463	46,195	64,683	(51,726)	60,615
	<u>4,454</u>	<u>599,659</u>	<u>77,429</u>	<u>(64,931)</u>	<u>616,611</u>
2022	Fixed Assets £	Cash at bank & Investments £	Other Assets £	Creditors £	Total £
General fund	2,078	543,937	66,942	(51,444)	561,513
Restricted funds	1,951	62,409	-	-	64,360
	<u>4,029</u>	<u>606,346</u>	<u>66,942</u>	<u>(51,444)</u>	<u>625,873</u>

20 Share capital

The company is limited by guarantee and has no issued share capital. The liability of members is limited to no more than £10.

21 Trustees' remuneration

No trustee received any remuneration for their services (2022: none). During the year there were no expenses incurred in relation to the trustees (2022: £nil).

22 Related party transactions

Donations from trustees during the year amounted to £nil (2022: £nil).

There were no other related party transactions during the year.

Sight Concern Bedfordshire

Notes to the financial statements For the year ended 30 September 2023

23 Financial commitments

At 30 September 2023 the charitable company had no annual commitments under non-cancellable operating leases (2022: £nil)

There are no capital commitments (2022: £nil).

24 Reconciliation of net income/(expenditure) to net cash flow from operating activities

	2023	2022
	£	£
Net (expenditure) for the year	(9,262)	35,244
Depreciation charges	1,485	1,343
(Gains)/ Losses on investments	(7,293)	17,017
Dividends, interest and rents from investments	(8,548)	(4,414)
(Increase)/decrease in stocks	(664)	1,288
(Increase)/decrease in debtors	(9,823)	(34,921)
Increase/(decrease) in creditors	13,487	8,268
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Net cash provided by operating activities	(20,618)	23,825
	<hr/>	<hr/>