



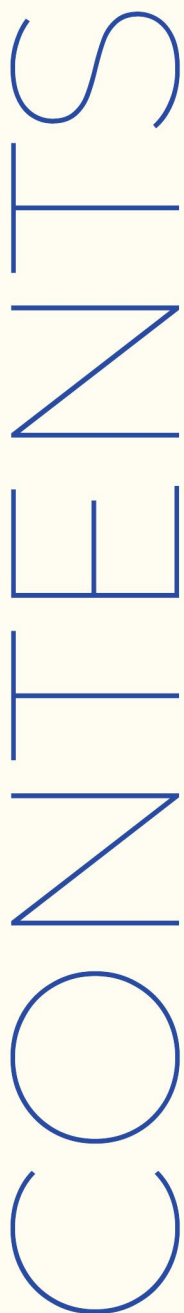
circles
south east

CIRCLES SOUTH EAST

ANNUAL REPORT AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

**REGISTERED COMPANY NUMBER: 06490001
REGISTERED CHARITY NUMBER: 1123361**



01.

Chairs Forward

02.

Purpose and Aims

03.

Circles of Support and
Accountability

10.

Circles ReBoot

12.

ENSO Mentoring

15.

Project Vigilant

16.

Clink Partnership

17.

Reducing Sexual Harm-
Support Hub

22.

Volunteers

25.

Training

27.

Staff wellbeing and
Development

30.

What's Next

33.

Reference, Administrative
details and Financial
review

38.

Independent Examiners
Report

39.

Statement of Financial
Activity

40.

Balance Sheet

41.

Statement of Cash Flow

41.

Notes to Financial
Statements



CHAIR'S FORWARD

This year the charity celebrated its 20th year since the creation of the original pilot project. We have travelled a long road since those early days when we started running Circles in the Hampshire and Thames Valley regions. We have expanded to provide Circles throughout the South East region and London and with expertise learned from this pioneering work have added complementary services supporting those who have experienced sexual harm.

At the beginning of this year, the future of the charity was by no means certain. Changes in the way that the Ministry of Justice and Probation Service commissioned Circles of Support and Accountability created huge uncertainty and challenges for the charity. It is a testament to the passion of all involved that these challenges were overcome and successful bids were made to ensure continued delivery of circles across our core areas in London and the southeast of England.

The charity therefore ended the year with a significantly improved outlook and, probably for the first time in its history, a financially predictable future at least for the next few years.

However, these are not the only achievements from the past year, other noticeable successes are moving to full delivery for ReBoot circles, the success of the Passport to Employment/Clink project, and the continuing growth of the Hub services.

Volunteers continue to be at the heart of everything that we do. Their enthusiasm and dedication are crucial to the success of the charity. Despite significant uncertainty during the year, leading to some delivery areas for circles being put on hold, I'm truly grateful that most volunteers stuck with us and enthusiastically re-engaged once we were able to restart in these areas.

During the year John Williams, who led the charity as chair for over 10 years, stood down. It is with great sadness that he subsequently passed away, leaving a huge void for his family and friends as well as on the board of trustees for this charity.

Looking forward to the coming year we are seeking to build on the foundations achieved last year, take the time that this financial stability provides, strengthen the core of the charity and ensure that we have the right strategies and vision in place to continue to support all our service users well into the future. As the new chair, I look forward to building on the legacy that John and others have achieved and leading the charity into this new exciting era.

PURPOSE AND AIMS OF THE CHARITY

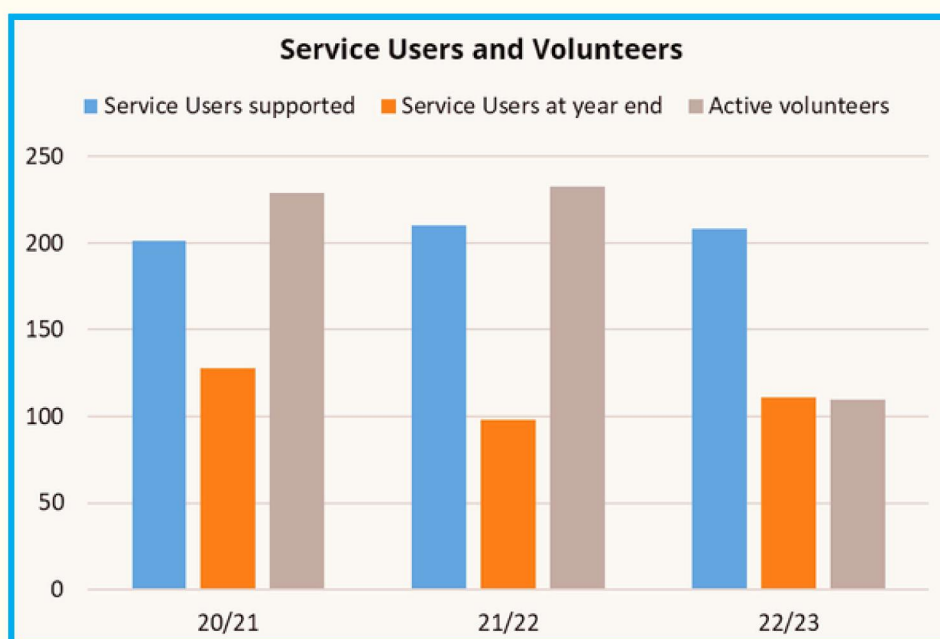
Our charity's purposes are contained in the company's memorandum of association:

To relieve the need and promote the rehabilitation, treatment, education and care of persons who have committed or are likely to commit offences, particularly sexual offences, against others and the families of such persons and others affected by such offences.

Our Aims

The Board of Trustees has determined the primary aim as the prevention of sexual abuse and reduction in the number of new victims created. This is achieved through:

- A range of interventions to support both survivors and perpetrators in their recovery, rehabilitation and reintegration, recognising that each person has a unique set of personal circumstances and therefore will need a tailored response in order to progress
- Reducing stigma and isolation and increasing victims, partners and families wellbeing through helping them cope, recover and make informed life choices
- Risk management provision undertaking assessment of those who have offended and those who may have responsibility for safeguarding
- Awareness; education and an appetite and ability to talk about abuse, identifying appropriate and inappropriate behaviours, highlighting risk, treating all people with fairness and respect
- Identifying motivated and committed members of the public to monitor and support persons who have committed or who are likely to commit sexual offences (the core member).



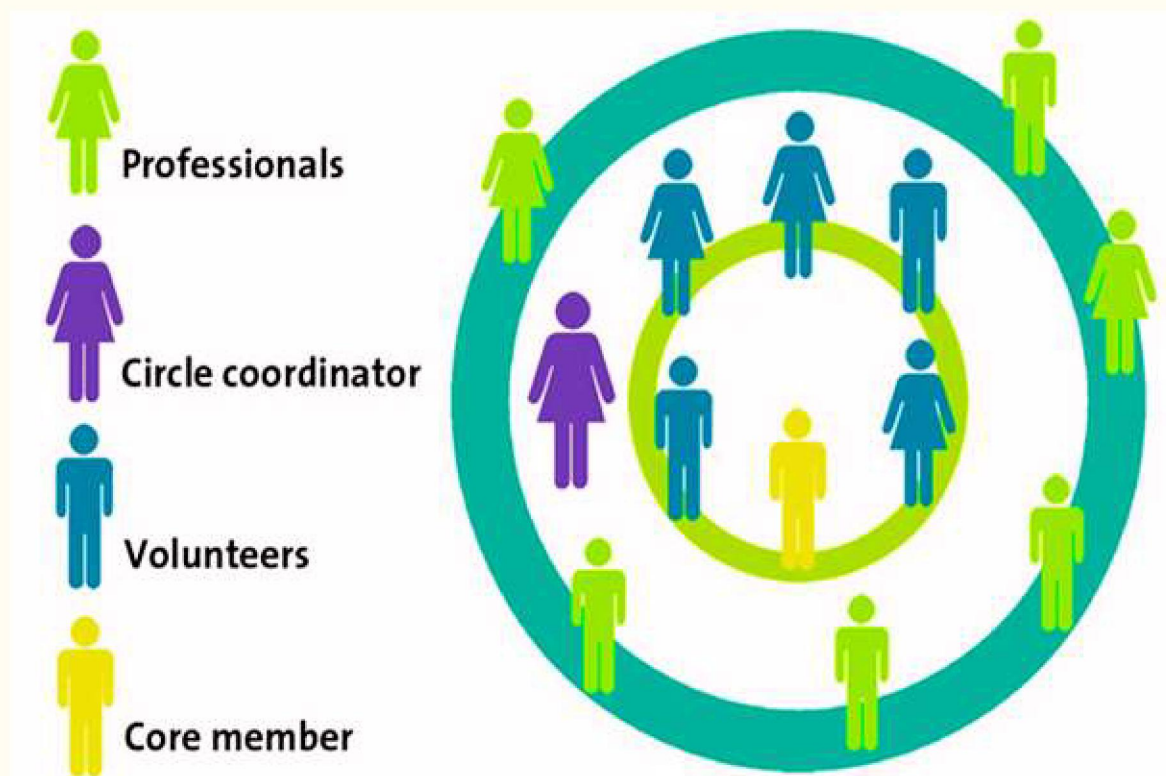
The number of Service users supported during the year has held up well, we experienced a reduction in Circles Core Members but an increase in Service Users accessing Counselling services. The reduction in Active Volunteers in the 2022/23 year reflects the reduction in Circles provision during the year as explained elsewhere, this number has recovered to previous levels in 2023/24.

—Circles of Support & Accountability—

Overview:

A Circle of Support and Accountability (or 'Circle') is a simple concept by which a group of trained and professionally supervised volunteers form a 'Circle' around an individual who has been convicted of a sexual offence (known as the Core Member) living in or due to be released into the community. A Circle provides a structured support network to the Core Member whilst holding them accountable for their behaviour. The Circle works in close partnership with the statutory agencies and is managed by a trained professional known as the Circle Coordinator. Circle support typically lasts between 12 and 18 months.

Circles South East are currently contracted to deliver Circles for the Ministry of Justice (MoJ) in 3 of their Probation divisions – South Central (Hampshire, Isle of Wight and Thames Valley), KSS (Kent, Surrey and Sussex) and London. Circles South East are also able to deliver Circles as one of the options available under current contract arrangements with Surrey Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) and Hampshire and IOW PCC.



The Circle comprises volunteers from the community who are supported by professional staff

Circles of Support & Accountability

Aims:

The key aims of the Circles model are to:

- Strengthen risk management delivered by statutory partners (e.g. Police and Probation) and therefore contribute positively to the protection of the public
- Contribute to a reduction in dynamic risk¹ for Core Members engaging in a Circle
- Increase the likelihood of desistance from sexual offending for Core Members engaging in a Circle
- Reduce Core Members' experiences of social isolation and the associated risks of sexual reoffending
- Support Core Members to work towards more stable, pro-social lives through outcomes such as finding suitable volunteering or employment opportunities, building appropriate social networks and engaging in community activities
- Improve the emotional wellbeing of Core Members.

Target Core Members:

The Circles model is intended to support individuals who have been convicted of sexual offence(s) and who have needs related to social isolation and emotional loneliness (the Core Member). Our current contracts allow us to work specifically with those individuals who are currently managed by statutory agencies (Probation and/or Police). These include individuals who are on licence having been recently released from custody, on community sentences or having completed their sentences being managed by Police on Sexual Harm Prevention Orders and/or the Sex Offenders Register.

As a Circle is a voluntary support service, all Core members engaging in Circles do so voluntarily and therefore they must be motivated to attend and engage with the Circle. Individual contracts have specific eligibility criteria for referral but the majority of Circles services are targeted towards those who are assessed as being high or very high Risk of Serious Harm.

Beneficiaries:

The overarching beneficiary of a Circle is the wider community – through the intended aims of the Circle, we are contributing to the ultimate goal of 'No More Victims'. By supporting individuals who have caused sexual harm to integrate safely into the community, we intend to help them achieve fulfilling lives and thereby desist from further sexual offending.

¹ Dynamic risk relates to factors that are changeable and also known to have an impact on future sexual or violent offending, such as hostile orientation or anti-social influences. For comparison, Static risk relates to prediction through historical factors known to be statistically predictive of future sexual and violent offending, such as number of previous convictions.

— Circles of Support & Accountability —

Beneficiaries continued:

In addition to this, the local community benefits from our service too. Through our work to raise awareness of the Circles model and sexual harm more widely, community members are given the chance to learn about this important area and provided with opportunities to get involved through volunteering. Our volunteers report a very high level of satisfaction with our training, volunteering opportunities and supervision provision and many eventually leave our service to commence employment in the statutory agencies we support, such as Police, Probation Service and Social Services.

The Circle Core Member is also a key beneficiary. Core Members engage with us voluntarily, aware that their lifestyle has led them to previously inappropriate and abusive behaviour. By engaging with our volunteers, Core Members learn to live life in a more content, purposeful and secure manner, meaning they may no longer choose to commit acts of abuse to meet their needs. Our Core Members report increased feelings of wellbeing as a result of their engagement with a Circle and typically end a Circle feeling more optimistic about the future, having made some positive steps towards achieving their goals.

“I am very thankful for the whole Circles experience. It has been very well structured and carried out with expertise and consideration. The facilitators are very experienced, always willing to listen and explore things that troubled me and help me reach level headed understanding of my mistakes and behaviour”

“I am much happier and content (now), not as impulsive as I used to be and have learned to think things through - I am totally committed to never offending again”

CORE MEMBER

The statutory agencies we deliver Circles for (Probation and Police) also gain hugely from our service delivery. Circles are as much about monitoring and risk management as they are about support and thus they are able to contribute to the dual aims of the statutory agencies – to protect the public whilst supporting rehabilitation.

“(The service user) speaks very highly of his time with (his coordinator) and the other volunteers. There is a noticeable change in his demeanour and presentation now in comparison to when I first met him two years ago”

HAMPSHIRE CONSTABULARY, MAY 2023

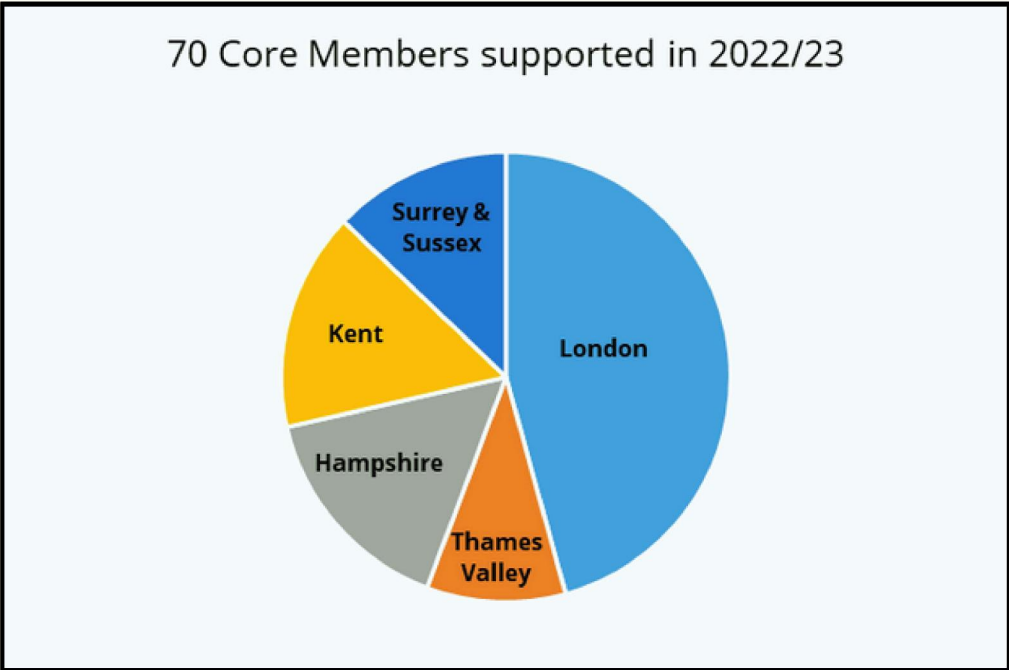
MAIN ACHIEVEMENTS OF 2022-23

We achieved success in a tendering process conducted in open market competition to provide Circles in three Probation regions; London, Kent, Surrey & Sussex and South Central. However, Circles delivery faced numerous challenges prior to the start of mobilisation of the contracts in early 2023. These challenges, towards the end of 2022, have been mostly external as a result of a move to national commissioning of Circles. The impact was a prolonged suspension of new Circle setups and in most cases the suspension or premature closure of existing Circles from the existing Probation contracts. The impact of doing so also had a negative effect on the engagement of volunteers (more information on this is available in the Volunteer section of the report).

Overcoming and minimising the impact of these external hindrances has been a significant achievement in itself. Where staff have had caseloads closed they were redeployed temporarily to other services.

The staff attached to Circles delivery worked hard to ensure that time not spent on delivery was focused on developing the service in order to hit the ground running when the new contracts were implemented. The Circles Initial Volunteer training was reviewed and updated, as were the key documents which support Circles delivery. Coordinators maintained contact with volunteers during this period as well as remaining in touch with Core Members whom they hoped to work with under the new contract arrangements which were pending.

Despite these obstacles, we still supported 70 Core Members in standard Circles.



MAIN AIMS FOR THE YEAR(S) AHEAD

The key aims for the next few years relate to establishing and maintaining new and effective ways of working under the new contract arrangements.

The focus will be on:

- Establishing settled and effective referral pathways
- Developing and implementing new reporting measures to comply with the MoJ contract requirements
- Increasing frequency, stability and the total number of Circle set-ups
- Increasing volunteer recruitment efforts, with targeted recruitment campaigns in key areas
- Building effective working relationships with Probation under the new arrangements associated with the MoJ contracts
- Ensuring there is consistency of practice and delivery across all of our Circles contract areas.



"I would like to take this opportunity to say that I have appreciated the weekly chats that I have been having with the Volunteer. Recently I have been feeling pretty low and down so having someone like the Volunteer to chat to does help"

Core Member

CIRCLE CASE STUDY

The Core Member-CM (our name for the service user) was referred to Circles with a number of convictions for sexual activity with children, and subsequent breaches of his order, mostly for unacceptable online behaviour. The CM was isolated and lonely, and living in a shared house with individuals who were unaware of his history. He stated that he spent all day sitting in his room thinking of ways to kill himself. He had little family contact, no friends or relationships or meaningful use of time.

Prior to the Circle commencing CM had a period of pre-circle phone mentor support to help prepare him for Circle. He was later moved into face to face Circle meetings with a group of 4 volunteers who met and spoke with him on a weekly basis. After 9 months the meetings reduced to fortnightly, and after another 3 months the Circle had a final 6 months of monthly meetings prior to closure. In total CM engaged for over 24 months. In these meetings the volunteers supported CM with improving his confidence and self esteem along with encouraging and motivating him to find meaningful activities to fill his time and supporting him in goal of building appropriate relationships.

By the end of the Circle CM had re-established relationships with his parents and visited them at least once a week, taking care of them and maintaining their garden to a high standard.

He formed a relationship and with the help of the volunteers was able to resolve a number of issues around his need for cleanliness and tidiness which had been a cause of friction in their relationship.

Although unable to find work the CM was actively looking for employment and showed the volunteers numerous examples of garden maintenance he had completed on his parents and other friends' gardens, demonstrating good skills in this area.

CM also made several new appropriate friends and by the end of the Circle seemed to spend the majority of his time in meaningful relationships with other people.

The CM had one notable setback during his time in the Circle when having worked with the volunteers on the content, he sent a message to his adult son on his birthday. He received a number of abusive calls and texts back from his son and ex-wife stating that contact was not welcome and being abusive towards him. CM dealt with this by calling his OM, Visor officer and Circle volunteers to tell them what was happening and how he felt about this. This was an impressive sign that he had developed appropriate problem-solving skills and could apply them appropriately to an extremely emotive situation.

The CM achieved all of the goals he had set for himself. His self-esteem was noticeably increased and his mental health vastly more stable, as evidenced by the way in which he managed the rejection and abuse from his son and ex-wife. He had formed several appropriate pro social networks, making friends, meeting his partner and re-establishing his relationship with his parents and spending his time productively with them. Furthermore the CM had not re-offended was demonstrating new capacity to make positive life choices and demonstrate pre-social behaviour. CM had secured appropriate accommodation, managing his relationship in a mature fashion and demonstrating increased wellbeing throughout all areas of his life.

CM was initially challenging to work with as he struggled to cope with the depth of feelings he had regarding where he was in his life. With poor mental health and low self-esteem, he was capable of spiralling quickly and allowing new problems to become significant obstacles. He was however immensely grateful for the support of the volunteers from the first element of phone support and throughout the Circle process. Once he had begun to engage and feel safe in the Circle the CM was open to sharing his feelings and being challenged by the Circle volunteers, and demonstrated a positive and healthy attitude to making changes to his thinking and behaviours.

At the end of Circle meeting the CM was full of praise for the volunteers and the work of Circles and could not thank the volunteers enough for all the support they had given him. The volunteers were pleased that the CM had achieved his goals and thanked him for his hard work and for being so open with them throughout the Circle.

The CM said he was sad that the Circle was ending as he enjoyed the meetings and considered the volunteers to be friends. The coordinator explained that although the Circle had ended, the CM could still contact the coordinator if required and he would pass on any messages to the volunteers regarding his ongoing progress. This helped to reassure the CM.

The CM described his experience of the Circle as being '*Outstanding*' and commented that the Circle had helped him to understand where he had gone wrong in his life and thanked the volunteers for being '*positive to me*'. He added '*I feel like a completely different person now, they have given me the skills to achieve in my life*'. And '*they have helped me out in every way possible*'.

CIRCLES REBOOT

Overview:

Circles ReBoot incorporates the principles of traditional Circles whilst targeting a different group of service users, using a slightly adjusted delivery method. A ReBoot Circle consists of 3 or 4 trained and supervised Volunteers supported by a Coordinator and an Outer Circle of Professionals. The Circle will be shorter (12 sessions over a 6-month period) with sessions and activities focused specifically on using the Core Member's strengths and aptitudes to achieve agreed goals. A ReBoot Circle is more structured than a traditional Circle and volunteers make use of a specifically designed resource pack to support the Core Member to develop in key areas. Circles South East currently deliver a limited number of Reboot Circles across the entire South East region funded by Circles UK.

Circles South East are also able to deliver Circles ReBoot with Surrey PCC and Thames Valley Police. Hampshire and IOW PCC also had the capacity to refer cases to ReBoot before the end of their contract in March 2023 and moving to the new contract.

Aims:

The key aims of the Circles ReBoot model are to:

- Strengthen risk management delivered by statutory partners (e.g. Police and Probation) and therefore contribute positively to the protection of the public
- Contribute to a reduction in dynamic risk for Core Members engaging in a ReBoot Circle
- Increase the likelihood of desistance from accessing Child Sexual Exploitation Material (CSEM) for Core Members engaging in a ReBoot Circle
- Reduce Core Members' experiences of social isolation and the associated risks of sexual reoffending
- Support Core Members to work towards more stable, pro-social lives through outcomes such as finding suitable volunteering or employment opportunities, building appropriate social networks and engaging in community activities
- Improve the emotional wellbeing of Core Members.

Target Service Users:

The Circles ReBoot model is intended to support individuals who have been convicted of accessing Child Sexual Exploitation Material (CSEM, or sometimes referred to as 'indecent images of children'). Circles ReBoot is designed specifically to meet the needs of individuals who meet a lower risk threshold, but where it is likely risk will escalate without intervention.

CIRCLES REBOOT CONTINUED...

Beneficiaries:

As with traditional Circles, the main beneficiaries of Circles ReBoot delivery are the wider public, local communities, our volunteers, Core Members and our statutory partners.

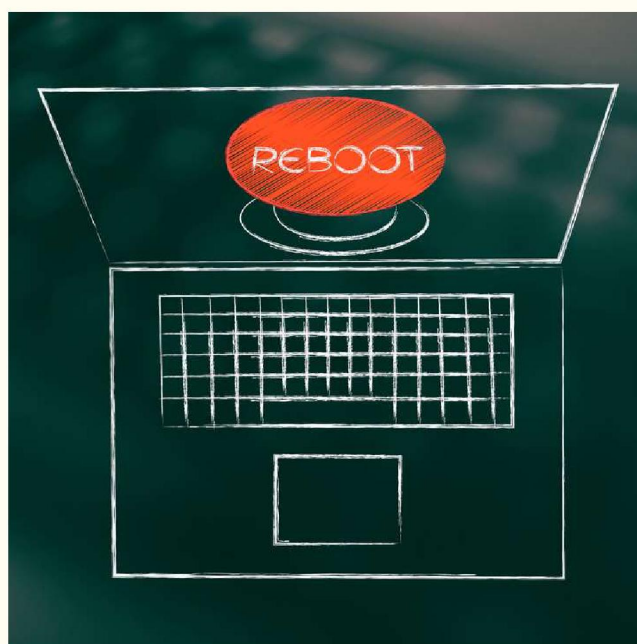
The added benefit for statutory partners is that quite often, those individuals who have been assessed as posing a lower risk are not able to access support services or rehabilitation programmes. Often services are targeted at individuals within the higher-risk profile, leaving statutory partners unable to make onward referrals for lower-risk individuals. Circles ReBoot provides an avenue for additional non-statutory support which therefore appears to be lacking in some areas for this service user profile.

Main Achievements of 2022-23:

After a successful Pilot project where some changes were made to the model, we were able to move to full delivery ReBoot Circles. This has been welcomed by statutory partners, including the Metropolitan, Hampshire and Isle of Wight, Thames Valley and Surrey Police who were able to make referrals to the service.

Main Aims for the year(s) ahead:

Over the coming year, Circles South East would like to secure further funding for continued delivery of the Circles ReBoot model within our region.



ENSO MENTORING

The Enso Model:

The Enso Mentoring model is based on the essence of Circles' work. Those persons who have multiple complex needs, convicted, and imprisoned for committing offence(s) of sexual violence or violence (the Service User), can access the Enso mentoring service. This can be done while still serving their sentence or once they have been released, and the support they are offered will be tailored to their individual needs. Support whilst in Custody, will take the form of prison visits and letter writing. This Correspondence Mentoring will be used to start building relationships with their volunteers and give hope for their future lives in the community.

Once in the community, access to paired or group mentoring support is available. The focus of this mentoring support is to build trusting relationships and to provide Service Users with a network of people they can engage with in safe social activities.

Project Structure:

After much support and determination on the part of Kent, Surrey and Sussex Probation's Public Protection management, budgets and contracts were secured in September 2022 for a further year, for both Kent and Sussex, with developmental seed money for Surrey.

Volunteers and Training:

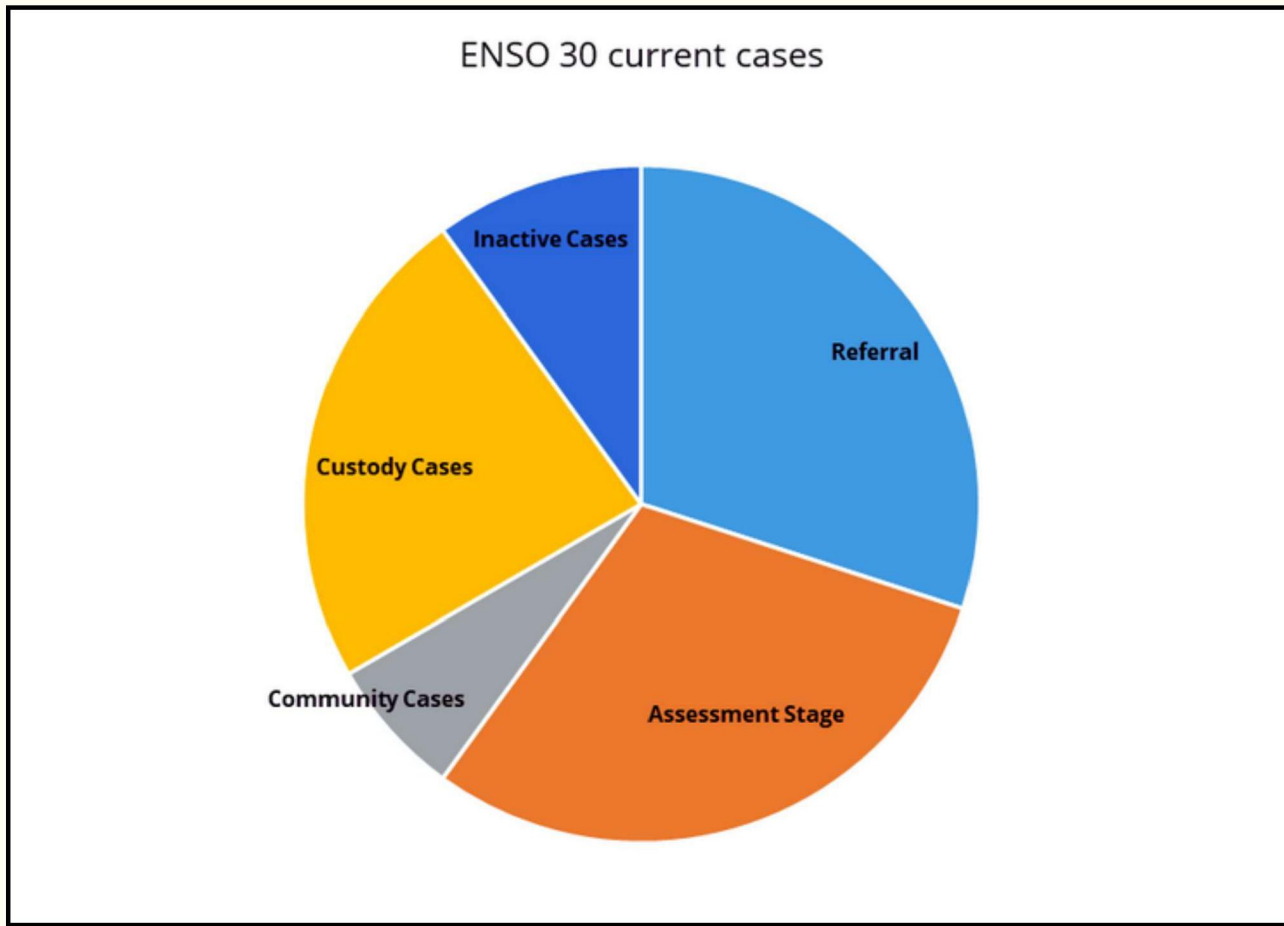
Volunteers who deliver the Enso mentoring model are experienced Circle volunteers who have been specifically trained. Out of a total of 150 trained Circle South East volunteers across the KSS region, 56 have received further training specifically for Enso and 31 of the 56 have said they only want to deliver Enso.

Operational Overview:

All operational outcomes are measured against a set of Key Performance Indicators specifically designed for the Kent, Surrey, and Sussex Enso Mentoring Project.

The chart below shows the current activity that was being undertaken at the end of the last reported quarter.

ENSO MENTORING CONTINUED...



Main Aims for the year(s) ahead:

At the time of writing this report, Probation has agreed to fund arrangements for the next 12 months across Kent, Surrey and Sussex regions.

"A mentor empowers a person to see a possible future and believe it can be obtained"

SHAWN HITCHCOCK



ENSO Project Success (Case Example)

JW had been in and out of custody for most of her adult life, having multiple complex traumatic experiences, substance misuse, self-harm, and violence (to and by). Relational work with the coordinator was key in establishing and maintaining a trusting working relationship with the mentee, before transitioning to introduce to volunteers due to their significant trust concerns.

Upon one release, the mentee was introduced to a pair of volunteers, however, the mentee found this a bit overwhelming, which was effectively managed by the coordinator.

Contact was maintained following a recall and a change in coordinator was sensitively managed due to attachment issues. Upon her re-release, the mentee was introduced to the new coordinator at her accommodation.

New volunteers were carefully selected and gradually introduced, first online (although the mentee struggled a bit with this) and then in person, meeting regularly in the community.

Fortunately, volunteer consistency was able to be maintained when the mentee moved areas due to temporary accommodation and the coordinator also joined meetings periodically to cover absence.

In conjunction with the support offered by professional Probation and Health staff, Enso mentoring supplemented the intensive support required by the mentee which enabled her to settle effectively within the community. She went on to obtain voluntary work with her local Salvation Army group, reporting a significant improvement in her confidence, pride in her appearance, reduced (no further known) incidents of self-harm, maintained abstinence from substances and for the first time in her adult life, she successfully completed a licence period within the community.

The coordinator, staff and volunteers joined the mentee for a community activity in celebration of her successful completion. To offer a smooth transition, upon agreement of all involved, the volunteers set up a specific email account to update on progress periodically.

JW (2020-2023)

PROJECT VIGILANT

Thames Valley Police began Project Vigilant in November 2021 in response to a large number of reported sexual crimes within the Oxford nighttime economy (NTE). A Project Vigilant deployment consists of uniformed and non-uniformed officers who go out into the NTE, the non-uniformed officers identify individuals whose behaviour is of concern, who they believe may be looking for an opportunity to offend sexually and give this information to uniformed patrols who then apprehend the individual and take appropriate action to explore the reasons for their behaviour. Thames Valley Police (TVP) were aware that whilst Project Vigilant deployments prevent an offence from happening on that occasion, the problematic behaviour does not stop there. They needed an intervention for these individuals to explore the underlying thoughts, feelings and motivations and work with them to prevent further offences from taking place. This is where the partnership with Circles South East was created.

The 2 objectives of the partnership are:

1. Working with potential perpetrators
2. Training and information sharing
 - To TVP staff about the partnership and how that works in practice for them
 - Community groups to raise awareness of Violence against women and girls (VAWG), concerning behaviours and what action to take
 - To educate and empower women and girls to stand against VAWG in all of its forms.

In April 2022, Circles South East was written into Thames Valley Polices strategic plan and funding was agreed upon for a further 3 years. This demonstrates their commitment to VAWG and the strength of our partnership. To date, we have had contact with 5 individuals at risk of sexually harmful behaviour and delivered training/information-sharing sessions to over 200 individuals. We have continued the day-to-day Project Vigilant work of information sharing, training, identifying, assessing and working with individuals at risk of sexually harmful behaviour.

Main Aims for the year(s) ahead:

To build on the work we have already done Circles South East will appoint a new Operational Lead, who will be responding to requests and will be visiting as many teams and training events as possible. We will also be delivering VAWG workshops to universities across Thames Valley and we will be looking at a number of ideas to reach men and women who would benefit from intervention, education and empowerment.

CLINK PARTNERSHIP

The Clink Kitchen is a national charity that works inside prisons to train and support prisoners to gain qualifications in hospitality. In a desire to be equitable and inclusive the Clink, in 2021 piloted their services to prisoners convicted of sexual offences, incarcerated at HMP Brixton. The Clink's concern at working with this cohort of offenders, led to an approach to Circles South East to form a partnership, whereby a prisoner with a sexual conviction having successfully completed the Clink Kitchen programme could be supported by Circles South East upon their release.

The Clink Project has now been operational for 18 months during which time 13 referrals have been assessed for the Passport to Employment Mentoring scheme. One was assessed as not suitable and we engaged with the remaining 12. Out of these 12,

- 6 have gained employment
- 1 has accessed full-time education
- 1 has been given access to a Circle of Support and Accountability
- 1 has been referred and accessed the Circles South East Counselling service
- All 12 have been supported, reducing risk factors and promoting personal desistance.

In 2022 the mentoring programme Passport to Employment was specifically designed for this project using trained volunteers to mentor those prisoners with sexual convictions, who have undergone the Clink training programme to access employment upon release. Its success has demonstrated the potential use of the programme within a wider context.

As well as the operational work with those service users being released from HMP Brixton, Circles South East provided in-house training on working with this particular cohort of prisoner to Clink staff as well as designing and running the first volunteer training in delivering the Passport to Employment Mentoring programme.

Main Aims for the year(s) ahead:

Envisaging that this project would be widened to all Clink Prison Kitchens we are working with the Clink Charity to seek funding. We are also looking to further develop the 'Passport to Employment' programme

REDUCING SEXUAL HARM - SUPPORT HUB

2022 – 2023 represented our second of the three years of Lottery Funding for the Support Hub. Our Service User targets increased from year one for the Protective Adults Service (Breaking the Cycle) and Family Programmes (Forging the Links), while those for the Counselling Service remained the same. Lottery targets for the year were therefore 36 Service Users for programmes and 20 for the Counselling Service.

Apart from this target, our aims for the year were to consolidate services, re-write Breaking the Cycle to bring it in line with Coercive Control legislation and other updates, increase our training programme and begin the process of re-writing the Forging the Links programme into a linear format. We also wanted to integrate services so that Service Users could access programmes according to need and simultaneously as required. It was recognised therefore that Support Hub staff would require investment in terms of training and skills development so that there would be increased parity of skills levels between programmes.

Waiting lists remained lengthy for all services so, while this indicated the need for the services we provide, it also required attention so that waiting times could be reduced.

As always with Support Hub activities, a key aim has been to extend the type and amount of services delivered for which we charge, contributing to the overall funding strategy of the Charity. The model we use is that we offer free Lottery funded spaces for Breaking the Cycle up to the target number, then charge referring agencies for places after that. Risk assessments and perpetrator interventions are charged for. As a pilot programme Forging the Links is delivered free of charge, as is the counselling service. In this way, we maintain our aim that Support Hub services are always free to access for service users.

Service Users and Other Beneficiaries:

Breaking the Cycle continued to be available to parents, carers or other family members responsible for children in their care, where a risk of sexual harm had been identified. While ostensibly the programme acts as an assessment of adults' capacity to protect at-risk children, it has also acted as a therapeutic setting in its own right, acknowledging as it does the trauma of discovering sexual harm risk, and often history, within family groupings, and helping participants to accept this new reality.

Forging the Links on the other hand has solely been provided to families, including children, recovering from sexual harm trauma. Post-statutory intervention families are often left confused with many of the issues that arose during the process unresolved. Professionals often withdraw leaving confused and anxious families to deal with the aftermath themselves.

REDUCING SEXUAL HARM - SUPPORT HUB CONTINUED...

To date, these have been the types of families referred (or self-referring) into the service. Our Coordinator for the service is qualifying to be a Family Psychotherapist, and Forging the Links is designed to be responsive, so that families have the time and space to explore issues thoroughly, with the service users largely setting agendas. We have used the experience of working with these families to assist in the design of the more formal manual we are writing for Forging the Links.

Our counselling service offers up to 30 sessions of client-centred therapy to anyone impacted by sexual harm. This is in contrast to the much shorter Cognitive Behavioural Therapy driven services offered traditionally by the NHS and allows clients more time and space to address the effects sexual abuse has had on them.

Our services are always over-subscribed indicating the value professionals place upon them, continuing to refer and recommend Circles South East to colleagues.

Value to Communities:

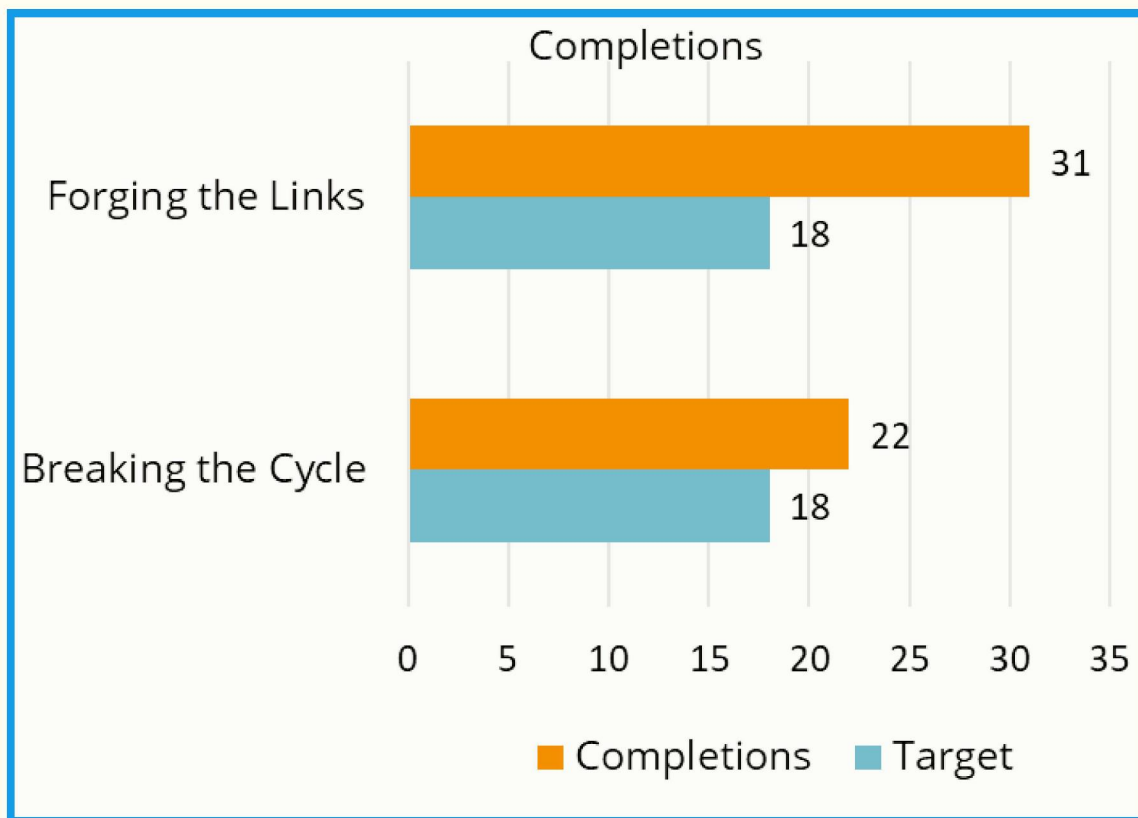
Support Hub services are not confined to any area geographically as we deliver the majority of services online. As such we are now contributing to the national network of services provided to those impacted by sexual harm. We view our services as restorative for those recovering from the impact of sexual harm. In addition, by speaking openly about these issues, and educating service users during programmes and the wider community via training, media presence and forums, we are also acting to prevent further sexual harm.

Service user wellbeing, solutions for referring fellow professionals and major contributions to the wider Violence Against Women and Girls strategy are key community benefits of what the Circles South East Hub offers.

Main Achievements of 2022-23:

We have supported 68 service users allocated to both programmes in the last 12 months. We achieved a total of 53 lottery-funded programme completions for the year. Of the 25 referrals we received for Breaking the Cycle 22 were completed during this period. We have had huge success with the Forging the Links programme with 31 completions. We engaged with a further 15 service users, (additional to targets), for the Breaking the Cycle programmes.

REDUCING SEXUAL HARM - SUPPORT HUB CONTINUED...



At the end of March 2023 we had a pool of 27 counsellors, of whom five were on placement. We have received 84 referrals since April 2022. These come from a variety of sources including Local Authorities, Probation, NHS Trusts and self-referrals (20). Our criteria is that someone has been impacted by sexual harm. 32 clients started counselling with us since April 2022.

12 new counsellors started with the Charity during the year. However, our Counselling Coordinator left the Charity in October 2022 and it took us until January 2023 to fill the vacancy, so we were then in a position to begin recruiting counsellors again. This said, despite the setback, we were able to exceed the annual target.

The re-write of Breaking the Cycle was completed and piloting began in October 2022. This involved a complete overhaul of the programme, including updates of case studies, extra sessions on coercive control, online offending and assessments. The updated programme will be reviewed 12 months after commencing the pilot.

REDUCING SEXUAL HARM - SUPPORT HUB CONTINUED...

Main Aims for the year(s) ahead:

2023 – 2024 represents the last year of Lottery funding. Targets have increased from 56 to 68 service users (48 for programmes) engaging with Hub services. We are confident of meeting this target.

We have engaged Roehampton University Forensic Psychology Dept. to undertake an independent evaluation of Support Hub services. They will examine programmes, and data collected regarding service users and referring agency satisfaction with services, and will carry out interviews with stakeholders. The results will help to inform all future developments.

Alternative funding will be sought from April 2024. It will be a major challenge to maintain the Support Hub Team and services in their entirety. As such the Forging the Links programme re-write will focus on supporting statutory interventions (Parole, Child Protection and Fostering processes) and will include assessment reports for referring agencies. The re-write is well underway. The aim is to be able to invoice for the service so that Forging the Links becomes self-sustaining financially, as is Breaking the Cycle. Similarly, we intend to sell CPD training sessions, helping to sustain the Counselling Service and to develop and extend Assessments and Interventions for which we can again invoice referring agencies. Breaking the Cycle is currently being reviewed and alterations are being made to the updated manual. We feel that the “products” we have available and those we plan to develop in the future will be attractive to commissioners, fellow professionals and potential self-referrers.

Branding and marketing are important features of these plans for self-sustainability, together with ensuring the Team infrastructure and admin systems are sufficiently robust to cope with an influx of work.

In the meantime, we are also seeking to secure continuation trust funding to maintain service delivery post-April 2024.

SUPPORT HUB CASE STUDY

It has long been a Support Hub ambition to be able to offer as complete a service as possible to those who come to us with complex issues. Below is an example of recent practice that demonstrates this:

Ms A, the mother of two teenage daughters approached us following the suicide of her long-term partner on the day he was due to be sentenced for serious historic sexual offences that predated their relationship.

She initially referred herself to the Family Programme to help resolve difficulties between herself and her daughters, one of whom claimed to have been indecently assaulted by her stepfather. Ms A had taken protective steps so that her daughters were never at further risk but had carried on her relationship as the assault was apparently innocuous and was explained as a “slip of the hand”

Ms A and her daughters were then horrified when details of her partner’s previous offending behaviour emerged, and she began to recognise signs of his manipulation in their relationship.

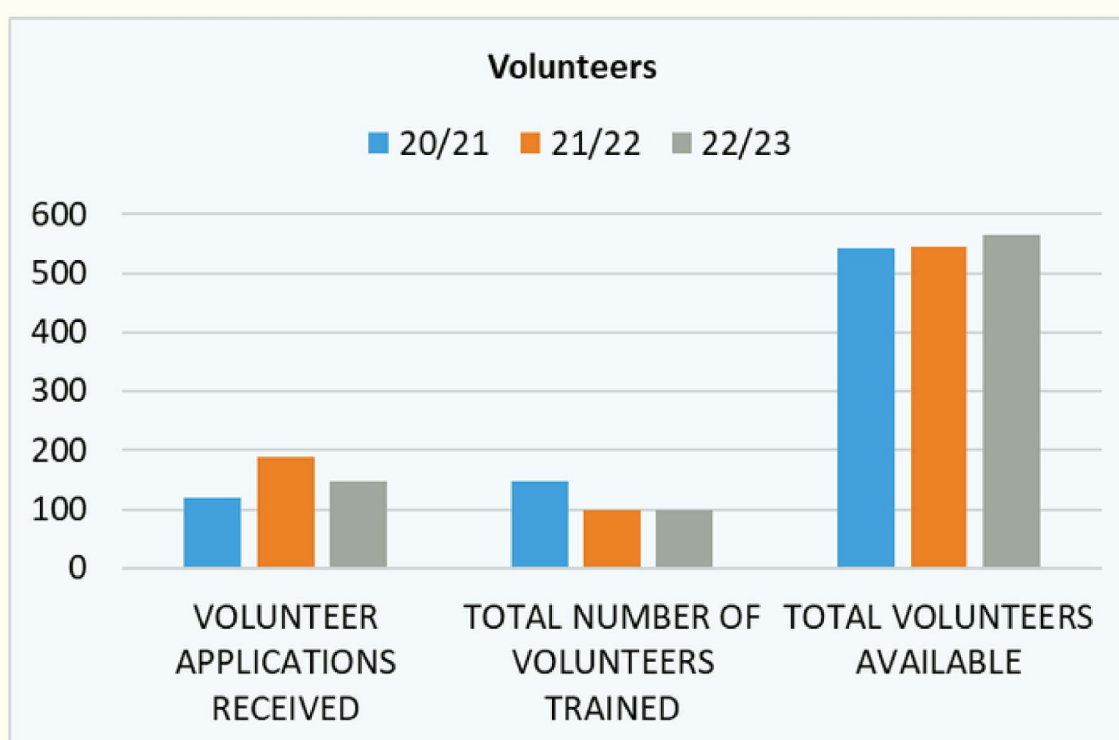
At this stage, as signs of post-traumatic stress became apparent, Ms A was referred to our Counselling service. Simultaneously a request was made for a member of the team with experience of working with perpetrators of sexual harm to work with Ms A helping her to understand how such behaviour is carried out, grooming techniques and methods of coercive control.

The purpose of this was to help Ms A absolve herself of the lingering sense of responsibility she felt for continuing her relationship and the risk this posed to her daughters. Instead, we helped her to realise that her protectiveness had helped prevent further abuse and that she had achieved this in adverse circumstances. Through the Family Programme Ms A’s daughters were also able to reconcile their mother’s behaviour with the fact that her partner had deceived her so completely for so many years.

VOLUNTEERS

All organisations in the voluntary sector are reporting a national decline in volunteer recruitment. This has meant we have had to undertake a full review of our recruitment strategy, promotion and marketing of opportunities and implement a new active campaign across our regions. We have reviewed and amended all promotional materials and implemented the use of a QR code to increase the ease of the application process for volunteers. Staff are actively recruiting across voluntary and community groups, universities, and professional networks.

Below are the volunteer figures for the last three years.



Aims:

Circles South East aims to recruit, train and maintain a highly skilled workforce of volunteers across London and the South East who are prepared and confident to support individuals convicted of sexual harm.

Volunteers are over 18 and may be professionals, retired, students, lay-persons or individuals with lived experience of the criminal justice system, from any walk of life, provided they are vetted by us, and trained to our high standards. The only exception to this is those who volunteer for Counselling services which require the volunteer to meet counselling-specific qualifications and criteria.

We look for volunteers who are accountable, reliable and empathic.

VOLUNTEERS CONTINUED...

Target Volunteers:

As mentioned above our volunteers are diverse and will ideally represent the community within which they volunteer. For this reason, volunteers have been recruited from national and local volunteer hubs and organisations and a new Volunteer Recruitment Policy has been developed to increase recruitment and promote diversity with Circles South East.

How public/community benefits (directly or indirectly):

The public benefits greatly from the recruitment of our volunteers. Their training and supervision means throughout communities across the South East and London there are individuals who are insightful and prepared to tackle the problems sexual harm generates and the toxic environments within which sexual harm germinates.

These volunteers receive training that provides strengths not specific only to sexual harm but allows them to manage a range of sensitive topics with care and insight, using a range of skills and techniques to ensure these are managed more effectively.

Volunteers operate in their own communities, meaning the community directly benefits from the support that volunteers provide the service users.

Statutory agencies, and therefore the public, greatly benefit from the training, supervision and support that we provide our volunteers, as so many of our volunteers progress from volunteering to working in the criminal justice system for Police, HMPPS or Social Services, often citing the Circles experience provided them with the necessary insight and experience to secure this employ.

Main Achievement in 2022-2023:

This year has seen some significant achievements within volunteer recruitment, the first of which is the development of our new and improved Volunteer Database, DoVE. This database launched in early 2023 is still in the fine tuning stage as we work with our developers to ensure we have an efficient and useful system. DoVE will enable Circles South East to monitor and improve our training provision and quality, along with our volunteer recruitment and retention, allowing us to observe and amend any patterns that could lead to unnecessary volunteer departures or any unsatisfactory engagement. Furthermore, this system will help Circles South East to monitor the diversity of our volunteer cohorts and help us ensure we are providing our service users with Circles that feel inclusive and representative of their communities.

VOLUNTEERS CONTINUED...

While still in its infancy, the addition of the Volunteer database has already led to an improved experience for volunteers as they can access more training, and more services through the variety of interventions offered by Circles South East, simply being more visible to the different staff groups within Circles South East.

Volunteers on training:

Volunteers have expressed satisfaction with the training, highlighting aspects such as enjoyable delivery, and increased preparedness to support core members. Such feedback is indicative of a successful and well-received training program, suggesting that the content is engaging, well-structured, and beneficial. Overall, these comments are a testament to the effectiveness of the training and the positive impact it had on the individuals involved.

“The training was great and I definitely feel more prepared to support and hold the core member accountable. Thank you! ”

“I enjoyed this training session and felt it was presented and given in a way that made it pleasurable”

“The delivery of the training was great!”

VOLUNTEERS, 2022-2023

Volunteer Recruitment:

Overcoming obstacles in volunteer recruitment has been an achievement over the last year, as volunteering nationally has seen recruitment slow. This has led to a decrease in the number of volunteers coming forward, and the normal turnover of volunteers has led to a reduction in some areas. Circles South East has released a new volunteer recruitment policy which has prompted renewed investment in this area, and some areas have already started to see the impact of this with increasing numbers being recruited.

TRAINING

Aim:

Circles South East aims to train professionals working in humanitarian fields to be skilled, prepared and confident in supporting those who have sexually harmed, with the goal of assisting the rehabilitation of such individuals more effectively and ultimately preventing further victimisation.

By delivering this training Circles South East aims not only to serve the non-profit, charitable and statutory agencies with the criminal justice system but to serve the public and communities as a whole with more direct and open challenging of sexually harmful behaviour and supporting those at risk of causing to sexual harm to make changes to their lives in order to remain offence free.

Circles South East also aims to use delivery of training to external agencies to assist the organisation in remaining financially stable and to enable Circles SE to develop innovations, services and supports that serve our long-term goal of No More Victims.

Audience:

In 2022-23 training audience has been primarily statutory agencies and the charities, non-profits and businesses that deliver these services, most pertinently within the NPS. Circles South East has also delivered training to Mental Health, Housing and Employment focused agencies.

How public/community benefits (directly or indirectly):

The public benefits greatly from our delivery of training.

The training of professionals across the country means the messages of successful reintegration and rehabilitation are promoted and increases the number of individuals who are insightful and prepared to tackle the problems sexual harm generates and the toxic environments within which sexual harm germinates, within their professional roles but also as members of the public.

The enhanced confidence and skills of practitioners supervising those who have sexually harmed means that these individuals are more effectively managed in the community, and our focus on identifying risk means when risks do occur these can be identified quickly and managed before a service user relapses into causing harm.

TRAINING CONTINUED...

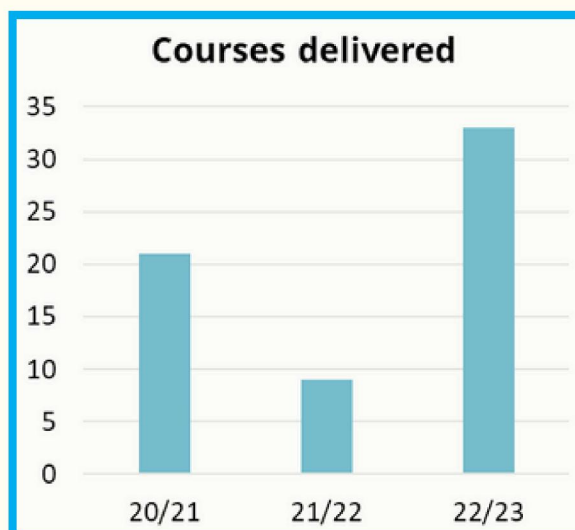
Main Achievements in 2022-23:

In 2022-2023 we have delivered training to the following organisations:

- Belong London
- Catch 22
- Forward Trust
- Society of St James
- St Giles

The St Giles and Catch 22 training contracts have formed part of wider training and staff development spanning several years and delivering several different training sessions, including reflective practice groups, workshops and consultancy.

Circles South East has also delivered training opportunities to its partners such as Thames Valley Police.



"Enjoyable for a topic deemed disturbing. You have removed my preconceptions and as a result, will be more effective working with clients"

"Presenters running the session are always lovely and very knowledgeable. Thank you"

"Thank you for coming and being engaging and informative! Definitely changed my view on people who sexually harm and how it is important to help them to stop there being more victims"

TRAINEES

STAFF WELLBEING & DEVELOPMENT

Circles South East is committed to maintaining and supporting staff wellbeing. As our team has grown further, we have recognised the need to be intentional about ensuring that we maintain the cohesion that has always been a valuable part of the Circles South East ethos. In addition to this, COVID restrictions saw us move our meetings online resulting in savings in both staff travel time and the charity's finances, as we moved out of these restrictions we needed to strike a balance between this priority of team cohesion and the need to use our time and resources wisely.

We decided to continue team meetings online for the majority of meetings and arrange quarterly face-to-face meet-ups for staff which would take place instead of that month's online team meeting. These face-to-face meetings involve an element of continuous professional development (CPD) and some social time for the team to spend together. The CPD has covered the following areas: Safeguarding, Systemic Family Therapy and Probation Service: Sentencing Guidelines and Community Disposals. We aim to support the continued professional development of staff and provide an opportunity to build and maintain relationships which contribute to a healthy, positive environment within which to work. We provide team yoga sessions online and regular individual supervision meetings for each staff member. We also have counselling available should staff require it and a whistleblowing policy for any issues to be raised confidentially.

As part of our ongoing vision for continued staff cohesion and holistically supporting the Team, we are investigating Employee Assistance Programmes as a means of providing our staff with increased access to support, advice and money-saving discounts and also looking into the use and benefit of coaching for employees – we would need to access funding to progress this coaching further should we decide that was the right direction.

In the year ahead we are looking to engage with larger organisations to access training for our staff such as NOTA training and access to workshops as part of the Violence Against Women and Girls conference run by Oxford Brookes University and the HMPPS Insight Festival. We will also continue to consult with staff regarding CPD opportunities that they would find useful in their role and development.

Service User Engagement Group

The Circles South East (CSE) Service Users Engagement Group (SUEG) started in 2019, its overall aim is to ensure the Service User voice becomes an integral part of CSE policy development, presentation and service delivery. Recognising that certain aspects of this could prove controversial the group was also tasked with anticipating and discussing concerns, developing strategies to manage any risk in an effective, proportionate way.

STAFF WELLBEING & DEVELOPMENT CONTINUED...

In this way the group recognises the value of the Service User's (SU) input, reducing the likelihood of making false assumptions and allowing for the promotion of Service User priorities.

The SUEG currently has 4 SUs, 3 of whom have finished Circles. The SUs who have completed their Circle and 1 year of attendance on SUEG are known as Delegates; there are a maximum of 4 Delegate positions at any one time. There is space for 2 further SUs from current Circles known as SUEG representatives. We currently have 2 volunteers and we will begin active recruitment to bring this to 4. The group meets every 6 weeks to consider the above questions and issues. CSE staff are represented in the group.

This year the SUEG group has been involved in document control activities, training and recruitment but the main focus has been on seeking funding to allow us to implement the changes required to enable expansion of the group according to our plan. We are keen to introduce an opportunity to progress to a sessional paid role for members of the SUEG whereby specific pieces of work (currently limited to training and promotional work) can be undertaken on behalf of the charity as paid employment at an agreed hourly sessional rate. To be considered for this role the following criteria will apply and an interview will be required:

- SUEG membership as a SUEG Delegate with regular attendance and engagement for a minimum of 1 year.
- Agreement to be involved in all aspects of SUEG evolution including the development of the SUEG progression route – in consultation with the wider SUEG and the Steering Group.
- Agreement to be actively involved in the development of and ongoing engagement with a tailored personal support package.
- Agreement to engage with training and quarterly sessional standardisation meetings as required.
- Agreement from any professionals working with SU – and agreement from SU that they will maintain an open and transparent dialogue with officers regarding any work undertaken.



“Supporting employee wellbeing should be a priority for every employer. It creates an environment where individuals can thrive and organisations can prosper”

KATJA RAITHEL, 2022

STAFF WELLBEING & DEVELOPMENT CONTINUED...

SU delegates are currently considering the following questions:

- What sort of tasks might be included? What will the interview process look like – who will be on the panel? How will we ‘score’ people and offer constructive feedback? How will we manage disappointment for those who may not be ready – can we link this to the development plans? What expectations will we have of our SU part-time staff – How will these staff be supervised and supported – will this be different to current part-time staff and if so how and why? Can we look at a process which utilises a buddy system with volunteers for SU part-time staff? What will training look like? What disciplinary process will we have in place – if people do need to be deselected what support will there be?
- In what ways could involvement in the above be used to enhance employment/usefulness opportunities outside of the Circles Programme?

In addition to this, we are keen to work on expanding the use of the *RocketChat* instant messaging service to enable us to use the anonymity and professional oversight offered by this innovative service to allow us to harness the value of our SU’s lived experience to enhance other services. For example, we are seeking funding for our Passport to Employment mentoring service but future plans include the input from SUs who have moved through our SUEG route to employment. Funding is being sought to enable work on this as the work is complex, support needs have to be considered and put in place and as mentioned above, the work is controversial.

The SUEG Advisory Group is made up of representatives of Police and Probation partnership agencies but with recent changes to the roles and availability of participants the group is being relaunched in 2024 with an updated membership to include representatives from additional agencies. Terms of Reference have been written and will be agreed upon when the new group meets.

Circles UK have now included the introduction of Service User Engagement Groups into the Code of Practice, requiring all Circles Providers to constitute their own groups. Our work is being adopted as a template for other Circle Providers to follow.

As far as we are aware to date our work is unique and as such we would welcome the opportunity to form or be part of any forum or group considering this type of programme.

WHAT'S NEXT – CHIEF EXECUTIVE OVERVIEW

The last 12 months have been about recognising the strengths and significant achievements of the charity. We have spent considerable time reviewing and developing our infrastructure to ensure we have robust governance and effective systems and structures in place. It has, however, been a year with significant challenges with unanticipated delays and obstacles attached to contracts and funding. This has resulted in considerable additional time from Senior Management allocated to troubleshooting, revising strategic plans, targets and staffing to ensure service delivery continues to be managed effectively alongside adherence to key priorities.

Looking ahead towards the next 12 months and beyond we have identified several key priorities that the team will continue to work towards:

Strengthening the Charities Infrastructure

- Production of a new Strategic & Business Plan for the next 3 years
- Establishment of a new Finance and Strategic Trustee lead who will work closely with the Chief Executive
- Establishment of a new Strategic Sub Group to ensure a continued focus on innovation and development and accountability to our strategic aims
- Implementation of a new Business Development Manager
- Implementation of a Marketing & Communication Officer and sales and marketing strategy.

Key to achieving the above targets will be securing Capacity Building funding to support our proposed plans and we will be approaching several donors who focus on development funding for charities. We have been incredibly lucky to have the continued support of Lloyds Bank Foundation and access to their enhanced programme which is providing us with ongoing consultancy across strategic planning, protection of products, branding and marketing. In addition to this, we will be undertaking a full staff structure review of the Senior Management Team and administration resources. This is to ensure we are equipped to manage the requirements of our new contracts and the planned expansion of services into new areas of our region.

Service delivery – Probation contracts

Having commenced mobilisation of three Probation Contracts in March we are now focused on the implementation of key milestones so we are ready to commence delivery of services from June 23. We are fortunate to have retained an existing service across the Kent, Surrey and Sussex regions and only paused delivery in the South Central region with continued support from Hampshire PCC ensuring we have maintained Circles across Hampshire.

WHAT'S NEXT – CE OVERVIEW CONTINUED

This will greatly assist us in moving to set up Circles quickly and our existing relationships with Probation will contribute greatly to the success of the contract. The London region will be more challenging as we are effectively starting the project again after the closure of Circles earlier this year due to the end of our contractual obligations, we have managed to retain a healthy pool of trained volunteers who will be ready to be allocated once we start to receive new referrals for the service.

Our challenge will now be to operate Circles under the contract requirements and test the viability of the service in order to secure continued renewal of the contracts. Key to this will be the new volunteer recruitment strategy in which we will move back to active recruitment within local communities. We have the support of Circles UK who will be coordinating national recruitment advertising to support all providers of Circles. We are optimistic that we will be able to tackle the national decline in volunteering and maintain community engagement across all our services.

New Developments

Finally, we continue to focus on innovation and development of our services. We have five key areas we will focus on over the next 12 months:

- The continued development of the preventative and educational role of the charity through our Project Vigilant work. We are hopeful that the project will expand further in Thames Valley and that we will see the rollout of the service to other Police forces in our region.
- We are continuing to work with The Clink Charity to secure funding to continue delivery of the Passport to Employment Mentoring Support Service. We are also exploring the continued development of the toolkit we have designed and how it can be incorporated into a national strategy to improve opportunities for people seeking employment with sexual convictions.
- We are seeking funding to support our work with the Service User Group and explore our overall aim of peer mentoring opportunities for service users who have the potential to support others at the start of their rehabilitation and reintegration into the community.
- We are reviewing our strategy and model to support young people displaying harmful sexual behaviour and will be working to establish additional specialism within the team to take this work forward.

WHAT'S NEXT – CE OVERVIEW CONTINUED

- Finally, we will be putting significant effort into the sustainability of the Support Hub Services. This year the Hub supported 50% of the SUs who engaged with the charity. There is a continued and growing requirement for access to the partner and family programmes. The counselling service has growing demand due to the closure of provision by other providers. We are seeing an increase in volunteer counsellors signing up to work with the charity so have the resources to meet the demand. The Hub has huge potential for expansion and to support the future sustainability of the charity through its income generation across training and assessment work.

We have an exciting year ahead but one with several challenges to overcome. Staff continue to work exceptionally hard with our Service Users and Volunteers within our local communities. Our volunteers continue to give their time each week and have been incredibly patient and willing to engage with all the changes as a result of the new Probation contracts. Without our volunteers, we would not be able to provide the support we do to those in need of help so it seems appropriate now to remind ourselves of what unites all of us at the charity.

***“As volunteers, we are not paid
and are not involved because we
have to be, but because we choose
to be”***

TRUSTEES REPORT

The trustees, who are also directors of the charity for the purposes of the Companies Act 2006, present their report with the financial statements of the charity for the year ended 31 March 2023. The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the accounting policies set out in Note 1 to the financial statements and comply with the Charity's governing document, the Companies Act 2006 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 (FRS 102) (effective 1 January 2019)".

Reference and Administrative Details

Company number	06490001
Charity number	1123361
Registered office	29 Broadway Didcot Oxfordshire OX11 8XD
Trustees	John L Williams (Chair to 5.11.2022, Resigned 10.1.2023) Nora Holford (Chair from 5.11.2022) Lydia Fransham Elizabeth Jones Rebecca Seaborne Mark Goldup
Key Management Personnel	Rebekah Saunders (Chief Executive) Alex Downer (Senior Manager, South Central) Ashleigh Palombo (Senior Manager, London) Chris Wilson (Senior Manager, Kent Surrey & Sussex) Dom Williams (Senior Manager, Victim Support) Sarah West (Senior Manager, Vigilant) Timothy Trimble (Finance and Administrative Manager)

Bankers

CAF Bank Ltd
25 Kings Hill Avenue
Kings Hill
West Malling
Kent
ME19 4JQ

Independent examiner

Azets Audit Services
Suites B&D
Burnham Yard
Beaconsfield
Buckinghamshire
HP9 2JH

Structure, Governance and Management

Constitution

Circles South East is a charitable company limited by guarantee with company number 06490001 and incorporated on the 31st January 2008. Circles South East was registered with the Charity Commission, registration number 1123361 on 28th March 2008. Prior to this, Circles South East was a project of the Religious Society of Friends known as HTV Circles. On 1st April 2008, the ownership and operation of HTV Circles was transferred to the charity.

The company was established under a Memorandum of Articles which established the objects and powers of the charitable company and is governed under its Articles of Association.

Board of Trustees

The directors of the company are also charity trustees and for the purpose of charity law and under the company's articles are known as members of the Management Committee.

The Board of Trustees advertises vacancies as they arise although it is always seeking to attract new skills and strengths to assist the governance of the Charity. A selection sub-group will process applications and present potential candidates to the Board for consideration and nomination for election. The Board seeks to ensure that the needs of the Charity are appropriately reflected in the diversity and experience of the Trustees.

Trustees are elected to the Board for a period of 2 years and may be recommended for re-election. One-third of the Trustees are obliged to retire by rotation at each annual general meeting and may offer themselves for re-election. The Trustees to retire by rotation shall be those who have been longest in office since their last appointment.

Induction and Training

All newly appointed Trustees receive a detailed induction and information pack to familiarise themselves with the charity and their role as a Trustee. The Board has regular Away Days to discuss future plans and objectives and discuss their role as a Trustee. Trustees are able to visit the team and liaise with the Chief Executive of the Charity to assist in their role. Training is arranged as the Board identifies specific requirements. Trustees must adhere to the Code of Conduct and be eligible for appointment as specified in the Articles of Association.

Risk Management

A Risk Register on the governance and operational activity of the charity is reviewed quarterly by the board. This ensures that the Charity has taken all reasonable precautions to reduce risk with systems in place to minimise risk and manage issues appropriately. Risk assessments are undertaken appropriately by staff on all aspects of operational activity.

Organisational Structure

Circles South East has a Management Committee of up to 15 trustees/directors who meet quarterly and are responsible for the governance and the strategic direction of the charity. The trustees are drawn from a variety of professional backgrounds relevant to the work of the charity.

There are 6 subgroups underpinning the work of the charity:

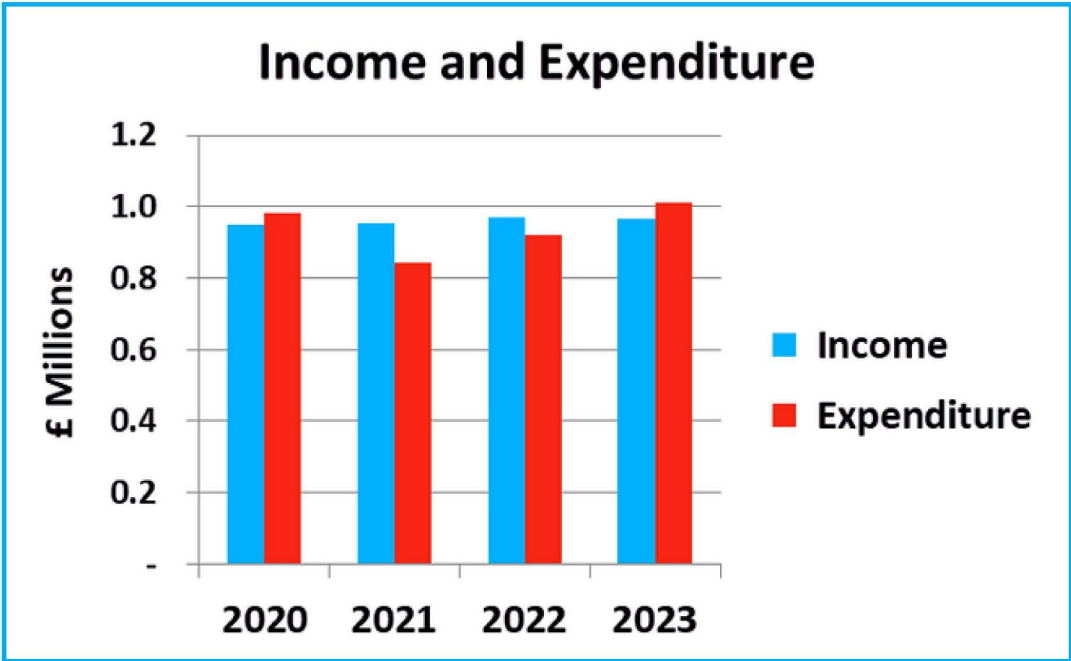
- Finance & General Purpose (including a Fundraising subsection)
- Communications
- Policies, Procedures and Human Resources
- Equality, Diversity & Inclusion
- Innovation & Development
- Volunteer and Staff Development & Wellbeing

A scheme of delegation is in place and day-to-day responsibility for the management of services, strategic development and income generation is with the Chief Executive supported by the Senior Management Team which includes a Finance & Administration Manager.

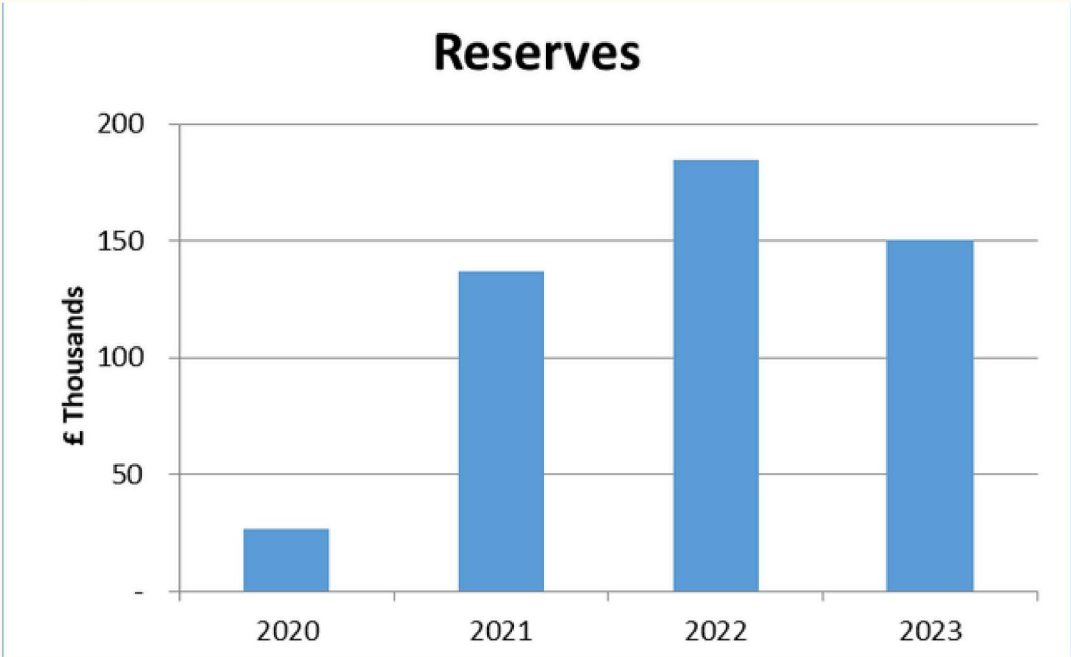
Financial Review

Financial Performance during the year

Income received during the year of £975,763 (2022: £969,174) was slightly higher than the previous year. Spending at £1,010,146 (2022: £921,721) showed an increase over the previous year. This resulted in a deficit for the year of £34,383 compared to a surplus in the previous year of £47,453.



Reserves Policy



Circles South East needs to have reserves because of the complex and short-term nature of its funding arrangements. The charity is largely dependent on institutional funders and public sector commissioners to provide the services to its beneficiaries. This funding is therefore subject to shifting policy considerations, political decision-making, and the risk inherent in constant public sector re-organisation. Each of the funding streams that the Charity relies upon may not be renewed due to these factors or may need to be renegotiated. Historically this funding has been very short-term, with guarantees provided for 12 or 24 months, and the Charity has experienced several changes in the principal commissioning arrangements for its services. In particular, the new governance and funding arrangements introduced in relation to the delivery of probation services have yet to settle down, and this creates particular financial risks for the charity. The reserves are therefore required in order to allow time for a renegotiation of the contracts to ensure the stability of service provision or to allow for the services to be run down to an appropriate level requisite with the funding available in an ordered way.

For the purposes of calculating the target level of reserves, we assume funding of around half of our projects is suddenly withdrawn. In this situation we will require sufficient reserves in place to fund an orderly closure of the affected projects and to maintain core support services at existing levels during this period and for some reasonable time afterwards. Holding reserves also ensures we maintain working capital that can fund our day-to-day operations for example when grants are received in arrears.

Based on the budget agreed for the following year we estimate the reserves requirement on this basis to be approximately £221,000. Actual reserves which are wholly unrestricted, stood at £150,101 at the end of March 2023. This represents a shortfall to the reserves requirement of £70,611. Reserves can be generated from the contract income and from fees levied for the provision of services. In order to build reserves up to the required level the Charity will transfer any surplus funds to reserves that it is free to do so, and not draw upon these during the financial year until the target level is reached unless a convincing business case can be constructed which illustrates that current investment of these funds will in the medium-term generate more funds in return and thereby improve the overall reserves position within a reasonable timeframe. Once the Reserves Requirement is reached the Charity will monitor on a quarterly basis the revised reserves target and this will be part of the quarterly report produced for the Board. The basis for setting the reserves target will be reviewed annually.

The Trustees are aware the reserves level at 31 March 2023 remains below target level have ensured the 2023-24 budget process produced a realistic budget that will result in a surplus for the charity in 2023-24 so that our reserves could be built back up again.

Approved by order of the board of trustees and signed on its behalf by:


.....
N Holford Chair of Trustees

19th December 2023
.....
Date

Independent Examiner's Report to the Trustees of Circles South East

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of Circles South East (the Company) for the year ended 31 March 2023 which are set out on pages 39 to 49.

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 Charity's accounts 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 (ICAEW), 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:

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.

Signed: *Christopher Nisbet*

Date: ...20/12/2023

Mr C J Nisbet FCA
Azets Audit Services
Suites B&D
Burnham Yard
Beaconsfield
Buckinghamshire. HP9 2JH

CIRCLES SOUTH EAST
STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES
(INCLUDING INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT)
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

		2023			2022		
		Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Total funds	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Total funds
	Notes						
INCOME							
Donations							
Statutory agencies		331,058	114,365	445,423	328,801	122,200	451,001
Charities		13,629	130,300	143,929	25,661	138,800	164,461
Trusts and foundations		230,621	38,629	269,250	221,047	61,225	282,272
Other donations		81	-	81	555	-	555
Income from Charitable Activities							
Partner support and intervention		84,250	-	84,250	54,185	-	54,185
Other		32,830	-	32,830	16,700	-	16,700
Total		692,469	283,294	975,763	646,949	322,225	969,174
EXPENDITURE							
Charitable Activities							
Circles		604,433	152,994	757,427	388,929	322,225	711,154
Counselling		44,931	130,300	175,231	138,461	-	138,461
Partner support and intervention		68,198	-	68,198	52,534	-	52,534
Youth		9,290	-	9,290	19,572	-	19,572
Total	3	726,852	283,294	1,010,146	599,496	322,225	921,721
Net Movement in Funds							
	4	(34,383)	-	(34,383)	47,453	-	47,453
RECONCILIATION OF FUNDS							
Total funds brought forward		184,484	-	184,484	137,031	-	137,031
Total funds carried forward		150,101	-	150,101	184,484	-	184,484

All recognised gains and losses are included in the statement of financial activities.
The results for the year all relate to continuing activities.
The notes form part of these financial statements.

**CIRCLES SOUTH EAST
BALANCE SHEET
AT 31 MARCH 2023**

				2023	2022
		Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Total funds	Total funds
	Notes	£	£	£	£
FIXED ASSETS					
Tangible assets	7	7,290	-	7,290	9,258
CURRENT ASSETS					
Debtors	8	94,694	-	94,694	71,994
Cash at bank and in hand		91,380	-	91,380	161,681
CURRENT LIABILITIES					
Creditors amounts falling due within one year	9	43,263	-	43,263	58,449
NET CURRENT ASSETS					
		142,811	-	142,811	175,226
TOTAL ASSETS LESS CURRENT LIABILITIES					
		150,101	-	150,101	184,484
TOTAL NET ASSETS					
		150,101	-	150,101	184,484
THE FUNDS OF THE CHARITY					
	11				
Unrestricted funds				150,101	184,484
Restricted funds				-	-
TOTAL					
				150,101	184,484

The charitable company is entitled to exemption from audit under Section 477 of the Companies Act 2006 relating to small companies.

- The members have not required the charitable company to obtain an audit of its financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2023 in accordance with Section 476 of the Companies Act 2006.
- The trustees acknowledge their responsibilities for complying with the requirements of the Companies Act with respect to accounting records and the preparation of accounts.

These financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the provisions applicable to small companies to the small companies regime of the Companies Act 2006 and with the Financial Reporting Standard 102 SORP.

The financial statements were approved by the Board of Trustees and were signed on its behalf by:


N Holford Chair of Trustees


Date

Circles South East is a registered company number: 06490001

**CIRCLES SOUTH EAST
STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023**

				2023	2022
		General	Restricted	Total	Total
	Notes	£	£	£	£
Cash flows from operating activities					
Cash generated from/ (absorbed by) operations	13	(68,781)	-	(68,781)	40,867
Cash Flows from Investing Activities					
(Purchase) of tangible fixed assets		(1,520)	-	(1,520)	(2,272)
Net Cash provided by (used in) Operating Activities		(1,520)	-	(1,520)	(2,272)
Increase (Decrease) in cash and cash equivalents		(70,301)	-	(70,301)	38,595
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the year		161,681	-	161,681	123,087
Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the year		91,380	-	91,380	161,681

**CIRCLES SOUTH EAST
NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENT
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023**

1. ACCOUNTING POLICIES

Accounting convention

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the Companies Act 2006 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 (FRS 102) (effective 1 January 2019)”. The charitable company is a Public Benefit Entity as defined by FRS 102.

The financial statements are prepared in sterling, which is the functional currency of the charitable company. Monetary amounts in these financial statements are rounded to the nearest £. The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention. The principal accounting policies adopted are set out below;

a) Charity information

Circles South East is a private company limited by guarantee incorporated in England and Wales. The registered office is Baptist House, 129 Broadway, Didcot, Oxfordshire. OX11 8XD

b) Incoming resources

All income is included on the Statement of Financial Activities when the charity is legally entitled to the income and the amount can be quantified with reasonable accuracy.

c) Resources expended

Expenditure is accounted for on an accruals basis and has been classified under headings that aggregate all cost related to the category. Support costs are allocated to activities on the basis of time spent. Governance costs include the costs of Trustees meetings, accountancy fees and professional fees.

d) Tangible fixed assets

Depreciation is provided at the following annual rates in order to write off each asset over its estimated useful life.

Fixtures and fittings	- 15% on reducing balance
Computer equipment	- 25% on reducing balance

The gain or loss arising on the disposal of an asset is determined as the difference between the sale proceeds and the carrying value of the asset and is credited or charged to profit or loss.

e) Taxation

The charity is exempt from corporation tax on its charitable activities.

f) Financial instruments

The charitable company has elected to apply the provisions of Section 11 'Basic Financial Instruments' and Section 12 'Other Financial Instruments Issues' of FRS 102 to all of its financial instruments.

Financial instruments are recognised in the charitable company's balance sheet when the charitable company becomes party to the contractual provisions of the instrument.

Financial assets and liabilities are offset, with the net amounts presented in the financial statements, when there is a legally enforceable right to set off the recognised amounts and there is an intention to settle on a net basis or to realise the asset and settle the liability simultaneously.

Basic financial assets

Basic financial assets, which include debtors and cash and bank balances, are initially measured at transaction price including transaction costs and are subsequently carried at amortised cost using the effective interest method unless the arrangement constitutes a financing transaction, where the transaction is measured at the present value of the future receipts discounted at a market rate of interest. Financial assets classified as receivable within one year are not amortised.

Basic financial liabilities

Basic financial liabilities, including creditors and bank loans are initially recognised at transaction price unless the arrangement constitutes a financing transaction, where the debt instrument is measured at the present value of the future payments discounted at a market rate of interest. Financial liabilities classified as payable within one year are not amortised.

Debt instruments are subsequently carried at amortised cost, using the effective interest rate method.

Trade creditors are obligations to pay for goods or services that have been acquired in the ordinary course of operations from suppliers. Amounts payable are classified as current liabilities if payment is due within one year or less. If not, they are presented as non-current liabilities. Trade creditors are recognised initially at transaction price and subsequently measured at amortised cost using the effective interest method.

g) Fund accounting

Unrestricted funds can be used in accordance with the charitable objectives at the discretion of the trustees.

Restricted funds can only be used for particular restricted purposes within the objects of the charity. Restrictions arise when specified by the donor or when funds are raised for particular restricted purposes. Further explanation of the nature and purpose of each fund is included in the notes to the financial statements.

h) Pension costs and other post-retirement benefits

The charitable company operates a defined contribution pension scheme. Contributions payable to the charitable company's pension scheme are charged to the Statement of Financial Activities in the period to which they relate.

i) Going concern

At the time of approving the financial statements, the trustees have a reasonable expectation that the charity has adequate resources to continue in operational existence for the foreseeable future. Thus the trustees continue to adopt the going concern basis of accounting in preparing the financial statements.

j) Government grants

Government grants are recognised at the fair value of the asset received or receivable when there is reasonable assurance that the grant conditions will be met and the grants will be received.

A grant that specifies performance conditions is recognised in income when the performance conditions are met. Where a grant does not specify performance conditions it is recognised in income when the proceeds are received or receivable. A grant received before the recognition criteria are satisfied is recognised as a liability.

CIRCLES SOUTH EAST NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENT- CONTINUED FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

2. INVESTMENT INCOME

	2023	2022
	£	£
Deposit account interest	330	-

3. ANALYSIS OF EXPENDITURE

Charitable Activities	Staff costs	Other direct costs	Support costs	2023 Total	2022 Total
	£	£	£	£	£
Circles	603,524	95,500	58,403	757,427	711,154
Counselling	150,603	15,017	9,611	175,231	138,461
Partner support and intervention	59,351	3,672	5,175	68,198	52,534
Youth	7,462	1,089	739	9,290	19,572
	820,940	115,278	73,928	1,010,146	921,721

CIRCLES SOUTH EAST
NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENT- CONTINUED
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

ANALYSIS OF SUPPORT COSTS

	Circles	Counselling	Partner support and intervention	Youth	2023 Total
	£	£	£	£	£
Office Costs	51,443	8,466	4,558	651	65,118
Insurance	167	27	15	2	211
Communication and IT	4,758	783	422	60	6,023
Governance	2,035	335	180	26	2,576
	58,403	9,611	5,175	739	73,928

4. NET MOVEMENT OF FUNDS IS AFTER CHARGING

	2023	2022
	£	£
Independent Examiner's Fees	2,438	2,162
Depreciation	3,488	5,376

5. TRUSTEES' REMUNERATION AND BENEFITS

There were no trustees' remuneration or other benefits for the year ended 31 March 2023 (2022: £Nil)

	2023	2022
	£	£
Trustees' expenses reimbursed to 1 trustee (2022: nil) for travel expenses	63	-

CIRCLES SOUTH EAST
NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENT- CONTINUED
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

6. STAFF COSTS

	2023	2022
	£	£
Wages and salaries	710,491	645,984
Social security costs	66,809	59,579
Contributions to a defined contribution pension scheme	43,640	42,616
	820,940	748,179

No employee received employment benefits (excluding pension costs) in excess of £60,000.

The key management personnel of Circles South East comprise the Trustees and the Chief Executive. The total employee benefits of the key management personnel (including pension costs) were £66,608 (2022 £65,604).

The average number of staff employed during the year was as follows:

Number of Co-ordinators	18	18
Number of Administration Staff	4	4
Number of Management Staff	1	1
	23	23

The average number of full-time equivalent staff employed during the year was as follows:

Number of Co-ordinators	15	15
Number of Administration Staff	3	3
Number of Management Staff	1	1
	19	19

CIRCLES SOUTH EAST
NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENT- CONTINUED
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

7. TANGIBLE FIXED ASSETS

	Fixtures and fittings	Computer equipment	Total
COST	£	£	£
At 1 April 2022	4,277	21,921	26,198
Additions	-	1,520	1,520
Disposals	-	(4,132)	(4,132)
At 31 March 2023	4,277	19,309	23,586

DEPRECIATION

At 1 April 2022	3,626	13,314	16,940
Charge for year	100	3,338	3,488
Disposals	-	(4,132)	(4,132)
At 31 March 2023	3,726	12,570	16,296

NET BOOK VALUE

At 31 March 2023	551	6,739	7,290
At 31 March 2022	651	8,607	9,258

8. DEBTORS: AMOUNTS FALLING DUE WITHIN ONE YEAR

	2023	2022
	£	£
Grants due	91,148	68,840
Other debtors	3,546	3,154
	94,694	71,994

CIRCLES SOUTH EAST
NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENT- CONTINUED
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

9. CREDITORS: AMOUNTS FALLING DUE WITHIN ONE YEAR

	£	£
Trade creditors	20,749	29,772
Taxation and social security	17,298	17,967
Other creditors	5,216	10,710
	43,263	58,449

10. OPERATING LEASE COMMITMENTS

The following operating lease payments are committed:

	Equipment	Property	2023	2022
	£	£	£	£
Payable within one year	-	17,263	17,263	23,800
Payable one year to five years	-	23,238	23,238	11,900

11. MOVEMENT IN FUNDS

	At 1.4.22	Income	Expenditure	At 31.3.23
	£	£	£	£
Unrestricted Funds				
General fund	175,484	117,161	142,544	150,101
AB Charitable Trust	-	20,000	20,000	-
AS Charitable Trust	-	25,000	25,000	-
Esmee Fairbairn	-	55,000	55,000	-
Garfield Weston	9,000	-	9,000	-
Hampshire Police	-	17,500	17,500	-
Henry Smith	-	60,000	60,000	-
Lloyds Bank Foundation	-	27,250	27,250	-
NPS London Division	-	59,611	59,611	-
NPS Kent, Surrey & Sussex	-	190,521	190,521	-
NPS South West South Central Division	-	33,426,	33,426,	-
Rayne Foundation	-	25,000	25,000	-
Surrey PCC	-	30,000	30,000	-
Tudor Trust	-	32,000	32,000	-
	184,484	692,469	726,852	150,101

CIRCLES SOUTH EAST
NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENT- CONTINUED
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

Restricted Funds	At 1.4.22	Income	Expenditure	At 31.3.23
	£	£	£	£
Clinks Partnership	-	7,000	7,000	-
City Bridge Trust	-	25,000	25,000	-
Circles UK (Reboot)	-	6,629	6,629	-
Hampshire Community Safety Fund	-	52,500	52,500	-
Thames Valley Police	-	61,865	61,865	-
The National Lottery Community Fund	-	130,300	130,300	-
		283,294	283,294	
TOTAL FUNDS	184,484	975,763	1,010,146	150,101

Movements in funds

Unrestricted Funds

General Funds are provided for Management salaries and Support Services.
Other Undesignated Funds further the work of providing Circles and other related services such as Counselling, Assessment, Training and Partner Support.

Restricted Funds

Clinks Partnership

A grant to provide support to Clinks work at HMP Brixton.

City Bridge Trust

A grant to provide Circles activities in the London area.

Circles UK (ReBoot)

A grant to provide reboot Circles in the South East.

Hampshire Community Safety Fund

A grant to provide Circles activities in Hampshire.

Thames Valley Police

A grant to support the Police Vigilant project in the Thames Valley area.

The National Lottery Community Fund

A grant for the work of Reducing Sexual Harm Community Hub.

CIRCLES SOUTH EAST
NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENT- CONTINUED
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

12. RELATED PARTY DISCLOSURES

£4,064 was paid during the year to Rebecca Seaborne (a Trustee) for consultancy services relating to operational activities. This payment is permitted by sub-clause (5) of the Memorandum of Association and the trustees have followed the procedure and observed the conditions set out in sub-clause (6) of this clause. (2022: none)

13. CASH GENERATED FROM OPERATIONS

	2023	2022
	£	£
Surplus/ (Deficit) for the year	(34,383)	47,453
Adjustments for:		
Depreciation and impairment of tangible fixed assets	3,488	5,376
Movements in working capital:		
(Increase)/Decrease in debtors	(22,700)	(14,079)
Increase/(Decrease) in creditors	(15,186)	2,117
Cash generated from/ (absorbed by) operations	(68,781)	40,867

14. ANALYSIS OF CHANGES IN NET FUNDS

The charity had no debt during the year.



REGISTERED COMPANY NUMBER: 06490001

REGISTERED CHARITY NUMBER: 1123361