

Company registration number: 06693843

Charity registration number: 1126928

The Signpost to Polish Success

(A company limited by guarantee)

Annual Report and Financial Statements

for the Year Ended 28 February 2023

Community Accounting Plus
Units 1 & 2 North West
41 Talbot Street
Nottingham
NG1 5GL

The Signpost to Polish Success

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The Signpost to Polish Success

Reference and Administrative Details

Trustees	Danuta Kantyka
	Monika Savage
	Edyta Wysocka
	Pawel Chrostowski
	Jerzy Ziemiewicz
	Philip Jackson
	Zbigniew Luczynski
Senior Management Team	Beata Polanowska, CEO
Charity Registration Number	1126928
Company Registration Number	06693843
Registered Office	Unit B, Tennyson Hall, Forest Road West, Nottingham NG7 4EP
Independent Examiner	John O'Brien, employee of Community Accounting Plus Units 1 & 2 North West 41 Talbot Street Nottingham NG1 5GL

The Signpost to Polish Success

Trustees' Report

The trustees, who are directors for the purposes of company law, present the annual report together with the financial statements of the charitable company for the year ended 28 February 2023.

Trustees and officers

The trustees and officers serving during the year and since the year end were as follows:

Trustees:	Danuta Kantyka
	Monika Savage
	Edyta Wysocka
	Pawel Chrostowski
	Jerzy Ziemiewicz
	Philip Jackson
	Zbigniew Luczynski

Structure, governance and management

Nature of governing document

The charity is a company limited by guarantee and registered charity. It is operated under the rules of its memorandum and articles of association dated 10 September 2008. It has no share capital and the liability of each member in the event of winding-up is limited to £10.

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Trustees' Report

Recruitment and appointment of trustees

We have a Memorandum and Articles of Association and our Directors/Trustees are elected at our AGM through the voting process.

A prospective Director has to present a CV or completed Committee Member Application Form and - if new to the organisation - a covering letter and two references. The candidacy is discussed at the committee meeting by the existing members. All Directors are appointed for a six-month probationary period and, if this is satisfactorily completed, the appointment is confirmed.

The appointment of Directors

The charity may by ordinary resolution:

- Appoint a person who is willing to act as a Director; and
- Determine the rotation in which any additional Directors are to retire.

No person other than a Director retiring by rotation may be appointed a Director at any general meeting unless:

- He or she is recommended for re-election by the Directors; or
- Not less than fourteen nor more than thirty-five clear days before the date of the meeting, the charity is given a notice that:

- (a) Is signed by a member entitled to vote at the meeting;
- (b) States the member's intention to propose the appointment of a person as a Director;
- (c) Contains the details that, if the person were to be appointed, the charity would have to file at Companies House; and
- (d) Is signed by the person who is to be proposed to show his or her willingness to be appointed.

All members who are entitled to receive notice of a general meeting must be given not less than seven nor more than twenty-eight clear days notice of any resolution to be put to the meeting to appoint a Director other than a Director who is to retire by rotation.

The Directors may appoint a person who is willing to act as a Director.

A Director appointed by a resolution of the other Directors must retire at the next annual general meeting and must not be considered in determining the Directors who are to retire by rotation.

The appointment of a Director, whether by the charity in a general meeting or by the other Directors, must not cause the number of Directors to exceed the number fixed as the maximum number of Directors.

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Trustees' Report

Major risks and management of those risks

The major risk to our continued existence is the uncertainty inherent in the search to secure funding continuity, so we submit our grant applications well in advance of the current funding expiry dates.

Objectives and activities

Objects and aims

Any charitable purpose for the benefit of the public in Nottingham and in and around the East Midlands. In particular but not exclusively for Polish and other Eastern European migrants, in particular but not exclusively:

The relief of financial hardship;

The advancement of education and training;

The provision of facilities for recreation and other leisure activities in the interest of social welfare with the object of improving their conditions of life.

Objectives, strategies and activities

- Providing regular English language courses. We hold ESOL classes at Entry 3 and beginner's levels;
 - Offering Polish and other Eastern European migrants 1-2-1 information/signposting sessions. We support them with:
 - completing and understanding a wide variety of official forms and documents;
 - registering with schools and GPs;
 - helping with tenancy issues, bills, council tax;
 - helping with debt or payment issues;
 - supporting homeless people and those facing homelessness;
 - support with employment issues;
 - providing information about important changes to the welfare system concerning EEA nationals.
- In the period from 1 March 2020 to 28 February 2021 we held 735 sessions, helping approximately 270 people.
- Publishing “East Midlands po Polsku”, roughly translated as “The East Midlands in Polish”, in which we continue to inform our readership about issues relevant to the Polish community across the East Midlands. Our readership is now more than 10,000;
 - Running www.empp.co.uk which provides our users with instant information. Running a Facebook page that has over 3,240 followers;
 - Supporting EU Nationals in applying for Settled Status;
 - Organising workshops, meetings, webinars, social gatherings, events, developing a sense of community and working towards community cohesion. Our workshops provide comprehensive and useful information on current, topical issues. Our family events/social activities contribute to the creation of a sense of community amongst the recently arrived migrants;
 - Providing volunteering opportunities for members of New & Emerging Communities which benefit them as well as members of the wider local community.

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Trustees' Report

Public benefit

The Trustees confirm that they have complied with the requirements of section 4 of the Charities Act 2011 to have due regard to the public benefit guidance published by the Charity Commission for England and Wales.

Our activities address the following issues:

the prevention or relief of poverty;

the relief of those in need by reason of age, ethnicity, ill health, disability, financial hardship or other disadvantage;

the advancement of education (ESOL, but also education through delivering information sessions where people can learn more about rules and regulations prevailing in the UK and workshops, which have an educational value in regard to learning more about current, topical issues);

the advancement of community development - our social activities contribute to the creation of a sense of community amongst the recently arrived migrants. They have helped the newcomers develop a better understanding of the host society, assisted in their integration and encouraged positive interactions with the host population as well as nourishing friendships amongst the new arrivals, generated a sense of community spirit and, as a consequence, a more positive attitude towards the society in which they now live;

the advancement of welfare.

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Trustees' Report

Achievements and performance

The Signpost to Polish Success activities 01.03.2022-28.02.2023

This was another rewarding but also challenging year. We just started coming out of Coronavirus and we had 75% staff turnover. The start of the war in Ukraine and experiencing the consequences of Brexit had an impact on all of us in terms of price rises, inflation and for our clients' increased vulnerability.

Immediately from the start of 2022-23 year we became involved in organising in-kind support for Ukrainian refugees, through working with other organisations such as Polish Scouts, Polish Saturday Schools and other local organisations and individuals. We expressed our solidarity with Ukrainian people by attending anti-war and pro-Ukrainian protests organised in Nottingham. In April we started connecting Ukrainian refugees based in Poland with English hosts, supporting both sides in communication. Once the Ukrainian refugees started arriving in Nottingham and Nottinghamshire, we began supporting them through our 1-2-1 Support Sessions by helping them to solve everyday problems and explaining the way British society functions and how to settle in. We also welcomed the Ukrainian arrivals to our ESOL courses and we even organised an additional Summer Course to enable them not only to learn English faster but also to be able to attend an activity during which they would meet, make friends and exchange information. We also started working with the Ukrainian Centre in Nottingham.

In 2022-23 we carried on delivering our services adjusting to the political and social changes. All our services became face-to-face once again.

We carried on delivering our 1-2-1 Information Sessions in the office, having a shielding screen in place. We helped our clients amidst the costs of living crisis, supporting them in ensuring their financial stability, whether through helping them to find or maintain employment, applying for a suitable benefit, training on completing journals for Universal Credit, applying for government energy vouchers, supporting them in paying bills, negotiating their payments or helping by making a Food Bank referral for them.

We provided face-to-face ESOL courses, adding to our usual spring, autumn and winter terms the summer one, especially for our Ukrainian learners. We carried on publishing our monthly newspaper East Midlands po Polsku, we ran a special edition for children in October 2022, covering the topic of Polish patrons of the 2022 year and offering art and craft autumn activities for children.

We maintained close contact with our community through our Facebook East Midlands po Polsku profile, informing its members of the most up-to-date local news and developments, always focusing on building positive relationships. We stayed in touch with local and national organisations by taking part in Zoom meetings and training sessions.

In June 2022, for the first time without restrictions, we organised a family event 'International Children's Day' in and around our office, working together with local Polish organisations, Nottingham Ukrainian Centre, employment agencies, Nottinghamshire Police and others. On the last Saturday in November, we went to Nottingham Playhouse to see the Christmas panto in a group of 50 people of various ethnic backgrounds, to have fun but also to build positive relationships. This year it was Dick Whittington. In February 2023 - together with our fantastic volunteers, we delivered our iconic Fat Thursday on a Saturday, a family event organised with the New Art Exchange.

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Trustees' Report

In December 2022 we started delivering Welbeing sessions during which our attendees had the chance to do yoga exercises on chairs, have inspiring conversations in a supportive environment, make friends and build their strength to stay healthy throughout winter months.

In the spring of 2022, we had to organise two recruitment campaigns for positions of Integration and Support worker and SPS Communication officer. After initial employment, in the case of the Communication Officer we needed to employ again in October 2023. In June 2023 we employed our former Russian speaking volunteer to support Ukrainian refugees.

At the end of March 2022, we finalised the fifth and final year of our National Lottery Community Fund (formerly Big Lottery) project. We applied for an extension to support Ukrainian refugees and finalised this additional project in November 2022.

We also delivered the project “Pomocna Dłoń dla Polonii w Nottingham i okolicach”, supported by funding from the Polish Government. Polish Consulate in Manchester also supported our Family events and an October special edition of EMpP.

We were successful in applying for grants for our events and activities, receiving funding from Castle Cavendish Ltd.

We continued to be a member of Fareshare - a scheme where supermarkets such as Tesco donate unwanted food to charities. We continued referring our clients to Himmah and Trussell Trust food banks, appreciating this partnership very much.

We represented the interests and spoke on behalf of members of the Polish and other Eastern European communities at several key local Zoom groups/meetings. We took part in Area 4 Partnership Zoom and BAME Health Inequalities meetings and had a meeting with the East Midlands representative of the Bank of England to present him with the key facts about our service users and our community.

During winter 2022-23 we joined other local organisations to provide a Community Costs of Living event in Hyson Green during which local people could enquire about support.

We were surprised that still a relatively high number of members of our community need help with settled status. Some people have not applied yet, some have not received decisions from the EU Settlement Scheme Resolution Centre regarding their application and some needed to update their details. These people will need IT and language support in order to access their profiles on the Home Office website to update them.

We liaised with the Polish Consulate in Manchester regarding various issues, one of them being the obtaining of Polish identity documents for our clients. We also briefed the Consulate on the challenges and difficulties Polish migrants face living in Nottingham and the surrounding areas. The manager of SPS maintained membership of the Advisory Committee to the Polish Consul in Manchester.

We attended commemorative events, representing the Polish post-2004 community. We attended the Warsaw Airbridge Remembrance Service and All Saints ceremony at the Newark War Cemetery, as well as the ceremony commemorating the repatriation of the remains of the three Polish Presidents in Exile: Władysław Raczkiewicz, August Zaleski and Stanisław Ostrowski who were buried in Newark-upon-Trent Cemetery.

We will now present our 2021-22 activities in more detail:

ESOL at SPS

We delivered four courses funded by Castle Cavendish Ltd and two led by University of Nottingham student teachers. They were held at the SPS premises. 136 learners attended our lessons twice or more. They were 46 men and 90 women, in the age group 18 to 72. The average participation per session was 11 people at beginners' level and 8 students at intermediate. The average participation per person was 6-7 lessons. Several students took part in lessons at both levels. The classes were conducted once a week, for 2 hours, at the intermediate level and for beginners. Some students had been attending ESOL at SPS in the previous years, however many were new. Some students were referred to us by the Jobcentre Plus work coaches.

We have had more learners from countries other than Poland, such as Afghanistan, Turkey, Bulgaria, Iran, Hungary and many from Ukraine. Some of our learners, especially the Ukrainian refugees, returned to SPS to help during 1-2-1 Information Sessions.

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All learners who completed the end of the course questionnaire said they would recommend our course to somebody else. A majority of them stated that the overall length of the course was perfect or good. They would like to have lessons more than once a week and would want to continue learning English at SPS. An overwhelming majority of participants described the content of the course as excellent or good. The tutor received very similar ratings overwhelmingly described as excellent. The atmosphere during lessons was positive, supportive and friendly. Students are welcome to suggest the topic for conversations during the lessons. Our learners gained new friends and also learned about life in the UK. Two of our ESOL learners became SPS volunteers during our International Children's Day family event.

Case studies: We have many examples where we see that students make noticeable progress in English. Language barriers have been slowly disappearing, and our students start feeling comfortable and independent in dealing with basic matters of everyday life such as: arranging a doctor's appointment, buying airplane tickets, opening a bank account, or even talking to teachers about their children.

Ania, age 56, who had problems with communication, was a bit lost in the first lesson. Within a few weeks, she found new friends on the course and gained confidence: "Everything was good. The teacher was great, always well explaining". Sofia, age 60, came to the first class with her son because she did not have the courage to speak up. She made incredible progress in a short time, she started to come alone, because she felt comfortable and safe in class: "I am very pleased with Abi's lessons, they are very interesting. I am so happy being here". Dawid, 26, has been attending courses for several years, making progress. He has a learning disability, but he felt comfortable in class among other students. A few weeks ago he told us that he found a part time job, which we consider as an incredible success. Maria, 35 years old, attended an English course at intermediate level for four terms. She also quickly joined the everyday life of our organisation by becoming a volunteer at events. Even now, when she no longer has time to come to lessons because she has a permanent job, she still continues to be a volunteer.

"There are multilingual people in the group, it is good that we must communicate with each other in English language. I am so happy".

International Children's Day 1 June 2022

Our Children's Day was attended by an impressive crowd of over 200. We engaged 13 volunteers (3 of them juniors) helping with various activities during the event, plus preparations and set up before and cleaning up afterwards. Their support was simply priceless. We had Polish and British families, as well as from other ethnic minorities. We especially welcomed families of Ukrainian refugees.

We offered perennial favourites like face painting and arts and crafts, led by our dedicated and creative volunteers. With The Queen's Platinum Jubilee approaching, we included some royal elements in the activities. Children were busy decorating their own royal crowns and guard's hats and assembling princess and palace guard puppets as well as frogs and butterflies. Many families enjoyed taking fun photos using colourful selfies frames created by SPS staff.

The section with fun science experiments was surrounded by groups of curious youngsters all the time. The goal of this activity was to show children how to learn the basics of physics and chemistry through play, using products they already have in their homes (such as water, oil, sugar cubes, baking soda etc.). Together with the giant soap bubbles maker it was another successful activity. Two Nottinghamshire Police officers were showing off their patrol car, even allowing a few children to turn on the signal. They were posing for photos and patiently answering questions.

The stall with cosmetics and Polish books for sale was also popular. Tombola, offering attractive prizes for children and adults, proved to be a hit. At the end of the event, we drew the main prize - a large gift hamper. The feedback from the participating families was really positive, proving that such events are very important not only for the Polish community. Many of them expressed interest in other similar events.

Family Event 'Fat Thursday on a Saturday', 4 February 2023

The eighth edition of 'Fat Thursday on a Saturday' took place on the 4th of February. It was organised by The Signpost to Polish Success working together with the gallery the New Art Exchange.

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Trustees' Report

The theme for 2023 was the life and work of the outstanding Polish astronomer Nicolaus Copernicus, who was named the Patron of the Year 2023 by the Senate of the Republic of Poland. The event was very popular, approx. 200 people attended. There were Polish, British and other nationalities/cultures mixing together, actively participating in attractions, such as colourful telescope-making workshops with additional crepe Torun-gingerbread making and solar system colouring activities, a screening of short films about Nicolaus Copernicus and the history of Poland, a virtual tour of Copernicus' family home as well as a tombola and a Polish book fair. There were also traditional Polish doughnuts and Torun gingerbreads for all present.

We also established cooperation with the employees of the Mansfield and Sutton Astronomical Society at Sherwood Observatory, who shared their astronomical knowledge during the event, and provided a professional telescope so that the participants of the event could learn about the way it works.

Wellbeing Yoga Workshops December 2022 - March 2023

We organized a series of free 10 wellbeing workshops, which aimed to improve physical and mental health of the participants in the post-Covid world. During the workshops we delivered 10 yoga classes on chairs, they were adapted to the physical abilities of the participants. In addition, there were numerous conversations about wellbeing with Agnieszka, a radiologist who led the yoga sessions. Participants would dispel their doubts about their health, as well as learn about new exercises that they would continue at home. These workshops were very popular and most of the participants took part in all 10 sessions, evaluating them as very useful not only in improving their physical and mental health, but also enabling them to meet new people.

Case study:

Renata started attending our wellbeing workshops because she thought she should take better care of her physical health. The exercise which she undertook during the yoga sessions and the conversations she had with the yoga coach and other attendees led her to focus on the introduction of a new diet as well as starting to exercise at home. Thanks to this, she has already lost 14 kilograms since December and feels much better with herself. She believes that SPS wellbeing workshops not only improved her wellbeing, but also helped her to improve her daily routine.

Newspaper & webpage

We published 9 issues of 'East Midlands po Polsku' and distributed it across the East Midlands (with main distribution points in Nottingham, Derby, Leicester and Lincoln). The newspaper is also available on our website www.empp.co.uk and a digital publishing platform called www.issuu.com. Thanks to the newspaper we delivered reliable news to the most vulnerable people, increased their knowledge of life in the UK, current local, regional and national affairs as well as creating a sense of community among Polish readers by informing them of life of Polish people in the East Midlands.

Special newspaper edition

The October issue of "East Midlands po Polsku" contained a four-page insert for children. It was dedicated to the Polish Patrons of the Year 2022. This supplement contained short descriptions of the patrons: Ignacy Łukasiewicz, Maria Konopnicka, Józef Wybicki, Wanda Rutkiewicz, Józef Mackiewicz and Maria Grzegorzewska, as well as interesting facts about them, all graphically designed in such a way that it was pleasing to the eye of a child. On the last page there was a crossword puzzle about the patrons, which was prepared by our young volunteer Jagoda, as well as drawn rebuses that offered additional challenges for our youngest readers.

We also included DIY Autumn activities by our volunteers Iwona and Pawel titled: "Mr. and Mrs. fox constellation". They consisted of photographs and instructions showing and explaining how to recycle and upcycle household goods to make beautiful autumn decorations. These activities were a great way for children and parents to work together. There was also a competition for children. Ten children, who solved the crosswords, puzzles and rebuses and sent us their results, received vouchers to Tesco and Asda stores, funded by our sponsor Nexus People employment agency.

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Trustees' Report

Social Media

The estimated reach of the 'East Midlands po Polsku' Facebook page in the period of 1st of March 2022, to 28th of February 2023 was 27,851. This means that almost 28,000 Facebook accounts saw content posted on our profile. We informed our followers about SPS services, EMpP prize competition winners, local and regional events and celebrations, government or local authority announcements, educational and professional opportunities, job offers, foodbank support. We implemented marketing strategies to increase the number of recipients of our posts and as a result, we enlarged our reach as 6,541 people visited our Facebook page. We also received 139 new profile likes.

Volunteering

In 2022-23 we engaged 27 volunteers.

We have a group of volunteers who regularly write texts for the 'East Midlands po Polsku' newspaper - historical, regional, informative about events, places, people, send us recipes, prepare art workshops for children and crossword puzzles, proofread before sending it to the printers as well as help us with the distribution of EMpP. In 2022-23 we gained a few new newspaper volunteers who have been regularly supplying us with informative and innovative texts, photographs and ideas.

We started working with a volunteer who writes historical articles for the EMpP newspaper, we also have a new volunteer who provides us with information and photo reports from nearby sports events among the Polish community.

We also have a group of volunteers who, together with SPS staff, get involved with organizing family events. At our 'International Children's Day' and 'Fat Thursday on a Saturday' event they helped us with marketing and promotion, by leading art and craft workshops, activities for children, by looking after our stalls, registration list and questionnaires.

We can always count on three volunteers who come to our office every month to help us fold freshly printed newspapers before we distribute them to local shops. We also have a volunteer who takes care of the garden in front of our office, which is greatly appreciated by the employees and clients of SPS. When we had a problem with the intercom system at our premises, we had a volunteer who helped us to identify the problem and find the solution.

We also appreciate the support from our trustees who give us their time and expertise.

1-2-1 Information sessions

We helped a large number of people in very difficult situations, preventing them from becoming more vulnerable. However, some of our service users are still highly vulnerable, unable to use other help systems due to language barriers, fear and distrust. These people are often constantly abused and are in desperate need for our attention and advice. We help people with various problems such as translating letters from British institutions, helping to deal with debts, applying for Universal Credit, PIP, LWCRA housing or communicating with DWP.

We continue to work with several organisations and government agencies, such as Nottingham Law Centre, St. Anns Advice Centre, Citizen's Advice, Welfare Rights Advisors at Nottingham City Council, DUWC, Nottinghamshire Police, Action Fraud, HMRC, DWP, ACAS and many more.

In the period from 1st March 2022 to 28th of February 2023 we held 678 support sessions, for 205 people, approx. between 50-80 sessions a month.

Welfare Benefits

We held 153 sessions regarding welfare benefits. We assisted our service users in making Universal Credit claims online, due to lack of IT skills notifying DWP of change of personal circumstances, requesting advance payments, helping with adding notes to UC journals, completing Work Capability Assessments forms, requesting Mandatory Reconsiderations, lodging appeals to the Tribunal Service against DWP decisions. We also provided information and helped with applying for Child Benefit.

The Signpost to Polish Success

Trustees' Report

Universal Credit

Case Study

We helped an SPS service user to apply for Universal Credit due to the lack of work throughout December/January. The client did not have IT skills to do it herself. Every time when she received a message from UC, she came to our organisation asking for help. SPS Integration Support Officer translated messages and any other communications for her. She also provided training for the client on how to log in and use UC so she could do it herself. After the first month of receiving UC SPS, staff found out that the client wasn't paid the housing part of UC, so she made a complaint through the UC journal on behalf of the client. After 2 months of making complaints, the client was paid back for underpayment of the benefit and the payment was adjusted to the correct amount.

Personal Independence Payment

We help with the whole process from initiating PIP claims to organising professional assistance in completing PIP forms. We assisted our clients with every stage of the claim in progress, making enquires for updates with current claims, arranging health assessment/translation and appealing, requesting Mandatory Reconsideration or lodging appeals to the Tribunal if needed.

We noticed increased amount of people applying for PIP due to bad health.

Case study

SPS supported a client that was refused PIP after her first assessment, she received 0 points for both daily living and mobility. The client suffered with bone cancer. She contacted SPS 4 months after she received the Mandatory Reconsideration decision, which was negative. SPS made a Tribunal Appeal for the client, explaining why the appeal was being made outside of the timeframe. SPS appeal was accepted by the Tribunal. SPS officer helped the client to provide evidence to support her claim. After 7 months of waiting, the Tribunal hearing took place and our client won the case awarded the enhanced rate for both daily living and mobility parts. Her claim was backdated to the first day that she made the claim. Her life and wellbeing improved drastically as she was on very low income due to not being able to work.

Debts

In 2022-23 financial year we supported 29 clients with debt problems during 32 sessions. Some people were referred to organisations specialising in legislated debt help. We helped with making an initial contact with debt collection agencies in order for the client to negotiate a repayment plan. We supported clients when they had to respond to liability orders by helping them to collect, organise and scrutinise all relevant documents, we assisted them when an offer of repayment plan was introduced, we explained to them how to follow court procedures when the case was filed to the court.

Case study

SPS client, who had over £6000 debt with Nottingham City Council tax department, was unemployed for a long time, was in bad health and wasn't paying council tax for years. Recently he reached pension age and was awarded Pension Credit. He received a letter from the debt agency asking for repayment of the debt. SPS staff telephoned this company on the client's behalf, explained his situation and helped him to negotiate a £10 a week repayment plan towards this debt. He was also referred to the Nottingham Law Centre for a financial assessment.

Another client received a letter from DWP that his Working Tax Credit was overpaid in the past few years and now he would have to pay it back. SPS staff assisted the client to telephone DWP and arrange a repayment plan that was suitable for the client.

Housing issues

We supported 32 people during 89 sessions focused on housing issues. Most of the interventions required sending applications for council housing, ensuring all relevant documents were delivered to Housing Aid or Nottingham Homelink and providing all relevant translations.

We had many cases concerned with Council Tax bills, debts, single person discount, refunds, change of address, council tax reduction, housing benefit entitlement. SPS worker contacted several landlords and housing associations to request repairs or a move due to bad neighbours' relationships.

The Signpost to Polish Success

Trustees' Report

Case study

SPS helped a family (2 adults and 3 children) that was living in bad conditions. Property was very mouldy, had a hole in the ceiling, electrical problems, overcrowding. The children suffered with asthma due to the poor living conditions. Reported those issues to the health and environmental department at Nottingham City Council as landlord wasn't taking any actions towards repairing the property. After City Council inspections took place, the landlord was advised to fix issues within the property. NCC said that conditions were uninhabitable and steps had to be taken to make sure people live in good conditions. Landlord gave this family eviction notice and started threatening them to move out. SPS reported this issue to Environmental Health Inspector, Housing Aid and Nottingham Law Centre. All of those agencies stated that the eviction was illegal as landlord didn't provide proper documentation for the tenants like section 21c and gas certificate. SPS helped client to complete Housing Application Form for Nottingham Homelink and also through Newark Housing Association, as the client had a connection in Newark through partner's

work. SPS helped client with the whole process, looking for properties, bidding, also liaising with different organisations. The client was given a priority band and within a month was given a council house in Newark. They moved straight away to the new property; happy they could provide for their children better and safer accommodation.

Homelessness

We had a client who was made homeless by his landlord. Our client lost his job, had an outstanding rent balance. SPS advised client to visit Nottingham Housing Aid. In the meantime, we made a referral on the housing jigsaw website for the client and the assessment was made for him. SPS worker translated for the client over the phone as he couldn't speak English and as a result safe accommodation was provided for him.

Health issues

We helped 28 clients with health-related matters during 95 sessions. We helped by making appointments and translating documents from GP practices and hospitals, asking for patient records and medical evidence, completing Capacity for Work Assessment, PIP forms, requesting sick notes, making referrals to other available health services like OT, psychiatrists, physiotherapy.

Case Study

A client suffering with mental health problems due to personal, family, debt, alcohol problems was referred by SPS worker to the Let's Talk Wellbeing services. As a result, he received professional help /counselling so he could cope with his problems better. He waited a long time for the physio appointment due to not being able to speak English and wasn't able to book an appointment himself. SPS telephoned the physiotherapy department, booked an appointment, requesting a Polish translator.

Another client needed to see a GP but wasn't able to book an appointment on the app due to lack of IT skills. SPS officer telephoned the medical centre and booked an appointment in advance, requesting a Polish interpreter.

A different client received a letter from hospital to book an appointment for an MRI scan, but he couldn't do that himself due to poor English skills. SPS telephoned the hospital and booked him an appointment and requested a translator.

Employment issues

We held 21 sessions for 14 people with employment issues. We contacted employers to discuss contract terminations and statutory sick pay. We referred people to ACAS for detailed advice in very difficult cases. We offered further support by assisting, for example, with translation. SPS clients can attend free English lessons to improve their English language skills to enhance their employment prospects.

Had a client that was made redundant by employer without proper notice. He wasn't paid his sick leave before being made redundant. He was referred to ACAS for more support and advice, SPS supported the process by completing forms and translating for him. He won the case against the employer and was awarded compensation in addition to the money he was owed.

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Trustees' Report

Hate crime

We had 3 sessions with 3 different people. The 4th one was helped outside of the SPS 1-2-1 Information Sessions. We helped to report Hate Crime on True Vision website.

Case study

SPS client was signposted to professional help. SPS contacted the police on client's behalf and helped with translation. Later we informed the client about steps that would be taken by the police in the aftermath. We reassured the client about the importance of reporting incidents that are classed as a hate crime, in this way acting to prevent racist behaviour against them in the future.

Cases that SPS assisted with were hate crime cases presenting problems with neighbours (racial abuse and discrimination).

Settled Status

Held 49 sessions with 35 different people. We are still helping people with applying for Settled Status, even though the process was supposed to be finalised at the end of June 2021. We help our clients to check progress of their applications made some time ago. We also updated their details stored by the Home Office such as passport numbers, contact and log in details, we helped them to generate share codes for different purposes, for example work, housing, benefits.

Case study

We had a client that wanted to check the progress of his ESSUS application. After logging to his account on the Home Office website, we found out that his application had been refused a few months earlier. We telephoned the Resolution Centre to find out the reason for refusal and were told that the client didn't send them his passport as requested to verify his identity. The client was advised to submit a new application which we helped him with and advised how to send his passport for verification.

Pension Credit /State pension

We held several sessions with regards to checking eligibility and applying for both of those benefits. Our service users were supported with the whole process of making initial claims and checking progress and updating changes. Some of them were not aware of the existence of Pension Credit.

Case Study

SPS client that was of pension age came to our office and asked for help with applying for UC. His health was getting worse, and he could not work anymore. SPS informed him that he was not entitled to UC as he was of pension age and could apply for a state pension if qualified, if not, then for a pension credit. Our client wasn't aware of any of those benefits. We telephoned DWP and made an enquiry about state pension, but the client didn't have 10 years of working in the UK, qualifying for State pension. We applied for Pension Credit instead. As a result, our client was awarded Pension Credit after a month. DWP paid him money that was underpaid. We also applied for housing benefit and council tax reduction for him.

Foodbank

We have observed a presence of persistent impoverishment among our users and a continuous need for SPS support with foodbank referrals and/or foodbank parcels. Our clients depend on our foodbank support to make ends meet, coming to us regularly and asking for referrals. We work closely with Himmah and Trussell Trust. SPS issued approx. 500 food bank referrals, 15 people received our special gift vouchers. Approx. 80 people received food parcels - mainly bakery products that SPS acquired from local Tesco stores thanks to the FareShare scheme. Himmah parcels are being delivered to the service users so are helpful to the most vulnerable, who are often too sick to be able to pick them up.

The Signpost to Polish Success

Trustees' Report

Financial review

Policy on reserves

The money which we still have on our account is allocated to different activities, according to the funding application forms we submitted. We have some general income which we will use for the activities for which we have not obtained funding. We also have enough money in our accounts to make sure that SPS can provide its services for 3 months in case we fail to obtain any future funding. Our financial situation is reasonably stable at the moment because we still have 1 more year of our National Lottery Community Fund project to run. We will still need to fundraise to cover all our costs, however, we feel relieved because most of our costs for the next year is covered.

Small companies provision statement

This report has been prepared in accordance with the small companies regime under the Companies Act 2006.

Statement of trustees responsibilities

The trustees (who are also the directors of The Signpost to Polish Success for the purposes of company law) are responsible for preparing the trustees' report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice), including FRS 102 "The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland". The report and accounts have been prepared in accordance with the provisions in the Companies Act 2006 relating to small companies.

Company law requires the trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year. Under company law the trustees must not approve the financial statements unless they are satisfied that they give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charitable company and of the incoming resources and application of resources, including its income and expenditure, of the charitable company for that period. In preparing these financial statements, the trustees are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and apply them consistently;
- observe the methods and principles in the Charities SORP;
- make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- state whether applicable accounting standards, comprising FRS 102 have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements; and
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charitable company will continue in business.

The trustees are responsible for keeping proper accounting records that can disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charitable company and enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 2006. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charitable company and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

The trustees are responsible for the maintenance and integrity of the corporate and financial information included on the charitable company's website. Legislation governing the preparation and dissemination of financial statements may differ from legislation in other jurisdictions.

The Signpost to Polish Success

Trustees' Report

The annual report was approved by the trustees of the charity on and signed on its behalf by:

.....
Monika Savage
Trustee

The Signpost to Polish Success

Independent Examiner's Report to the trustees of The Signpost to Polish Success ('the Company')

Independent examiner's report to the trustees of The Signpost to Polish Success ('the Company')

I report to the charity trustees on my examination of the accounts of the company for the year ended 28 February 2023.

Responsibilities and basis of report

As the charity's 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 as carried out under section 145 of the Charities Act 2011 ('the 2011 Act'). In carrying out my examination I have followed the Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the 2011 Act.

Independent examiner's statement

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

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

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

.....
John O'Brien MSc, FAIA, FCCA, FCIE, employee of Community Accounting Plus
Fellow of the Association of Charity Independent Examiners

Units 1 & 2 North West
41 Talbot Street
Nottingham
NG1 5GL

Date:.....

The Signpost to Polish Success

Statement of Financial Activities for the Year Ended 28 February 2023 (Including Income and Expenditure Account and Statement of Total Recognised Gains and Losses)

	Note	Unrestricted £	Restricted £	Total 2023 £	Total 2022 £
Income and Endowments from:					
Donations and legacies	2	-	-	-	2,000
Charitable activities	3	9,720	36,720	46,440	122,459
Investment income	4	71	-	71	19
Total Income		<u>9,791</u>	<u>36,720</u>	<u>46,511</u>	<u>124,478</u>
Expenditure on:					
Charitable activities	5	-	(90,734)	(90,734)	(112,470)
Total Expenditure		<u>-</u>	<u>(90,734)</u>	<u>(90,734)</u>	<u>(112,470)</u>
Net income/(expenditure)		9,791	(54,014)	(44,223)	12,008
Transfers between funds		<u>14,688</u>	<u>(14,688)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>
Net movement in funds		24,479	(68,702)	(44,223)	12,008
Reconciliation of funds					
Total funds brought forward		<u>148,847</u>	<u>69,142</u>	<u>217,989</u>	<u>205,981</u>
Total funds carried forward	10	<u><u>173,326</u></u>	<u><u>440</u></u>	<u><u>173,766</u></u>	<u><u>217,989</u></u>

All of the charity's activities derive from continuing operations during the above two periods.

The funds breakdown for 2023 is shown in note 10.

The notes on pages 20 to 26 form an integral part of these financial statements.

The Signpost to Polish Success

Statement of Financial Activities for the Year Ended 28 February 2023 (Including Income and Expenditure Account and Statement of Total Recognised Gains and Losses)

These are the figures for the previous accounting period and are included for comparative purposes

	Note	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	Total 2022 £
Income and Endowments from:				
Donations and legacies	2	2,000	-	2,000
Charitable activities	3	10,877	111,582	122,459
Investment income	4	19	-	19
Total income		<u>12,896</u>	<u>111,582</u>	<u>124,478</u>
Expenditure on:				
Charitable activities	5	<u>(1,200)</u>	<u>(111,270)</u>	<u>(112,470)</u>
Total expenditure		<u>(1,200)</u>	<u>(111,270)</u>	<u>(112,470)</u>
Net income		<u>11,696</u>	<u>312</u>	<u>12,008</u>
Net movement in funds		11,696	312	12,008
Reconciliation of funds				
Total funds brought forward		<u>137,151</u>	<u>68,830</u>	<u>205,981</u>
Total funds carried forward	10	<u><u>148,847</u></u>	<u><u>69,142</u></u>	<u><u>217,989</u></u>

The notes on pages 20 to 26 form an integral part of these financial statements.

The Signpost to Polish Success
(Registration number: 06693843)
Balance Sheet as at 28 February 2023

	Note	2023 £	2022 £
Current assets			
Debtors	7	810	8,898
Cash at bank and in hand		<u>178,989</u>	<u>216,025</u>
		179,799	224,923
Creditors: Amounts falling due within one year	8	<u>(6,033)</u>	<u>(6,934)</u>
Net assets		<u>173,766</u>	<u>217,989</u>
Funds of the charity:			
Restricted income funds			
Restricted funds	10	440	69,142
Unrestricted income funds			
Unrestricted funds		<u>173,326</u>	<u>148,847</u>
Total funds	10	<u>173,766</u>	<u>217,989</u>

For the financial year ending 28 February 2023 the charity was entitled to exemption from audit under section 477 of the Companies Act 2006 relating to small companies.

Directors' responsibilities:

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

These financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the special provisions relating to companies subject to the small companies regime within Part 15 of the Companies Act 2006.

The financial statements on pages 17 to 26 were approved by the trustees, and authorised for issue on and signed on their behalf by:

.....
Pawel Chrostowski
Trustee

The notes on pages 20 to 26 form an integral part of these financial statements.

The Signpost to Polish Success

Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year Ended 28 February 2023

1 Accounting policies

Summary of significant accounting policies and key accounting estimates

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

Statement of compliance

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with 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)) (issued in October 2019) - (Charities SORP (FRS 102)), the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) and the Companies Act 2006.

Basis of preparation

The Signpost to Polish Success meets the definition of a public benefit entity under FRS 102. Assets and liabilities are initially recognised at historical cost or transaction value unless otherwise stated in the relevant accounting policy notes.

Going concern

The financial statements have been prepared on a going concern basis.

The trustees assess whether the use of going concern is appropriate i.e. whether there are any material uncertainties related to events or conditions that may cast significant doubt on the ability of the charity to continue as a going concern. The trustees make this assessment in respect of a period of one year from the date of approval of the financial statements.

Exemption from preparing a cash flow statement

The charity opted to early adopt Bulletin 1 published on 2 February 2016 and have therefore not included a cash flow statement in these financial statements.

Income and endowments

Voluntary income including donations, gifts, legacies and grants that provide core funding or are of a general nature is recognised when the charity has entitlement to the income, it is probable that the income will be received and the amount can be measured with sufficient reliability.

Donations and legacies

Donations are recognised when the charity has been notified in writing of both the amount and settlement date. In the event that a donation is subject to conditions that require a level of performance by the charity before the charity is entitled to the funds, the income is deferred and not recognised until either those conditions are fully met, or the fulfilment of those conditions is wholly within the control of the charity and it is probable that these conditions will be fulfilled in the reporting period.

The Signpost to Polish Success

Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year Ended 28 February 2023

Expenditure

All expenditure is recognised once there is a legal or constructive obligation to that expenditure, it is probable settlement is required and the amount can be measured reliably. All costs are allocated to the applicable expenditure heading that aggregate similar costs to that category. Where costs cannot be directly attributed to particular headings they have been allocated on a basis consistent with the use of resources, with central staff costs allocated on the basis of time spent, and depreciation charges allocated on the portion of the asset's use. Other support costs are allocated based on the spread of staff costs.

Charitable activities

Charitable expenditure comprises those costs incurred by the charity in the delivery of its activities and services for its beneficiaries. It includes both costs that can be allocated directly to such activities and those costs of an indirect nature necessary to support them.

Taxation

The charity is considered to pass the tests set out in Paragraph 1 Schedule 6 of the Finance Act 2010 and therefore it meets the definition of a charitable company for UK corporation tax purposes. Accordingly, the charity is potentially exempt from taxation in respect of income or capital gains received within categories covered by Chapter 3 Part 11 of the Corporation Tax Act 2010 or Section 256 of the Taxation of Chargeable Gains Act 1992, to the extent that such income or gains are applied exclusively to charitable purposes.

Trade debtors

Trade debtors are amounts due from customers for merchandise sold or services performed in the ordinary course of business.

Trade debtors are recognised initially at the transaction price. They are subsequently measured at amortised cost using the effective interest method, less provision for impairment. A provision for the impairment of trade debtors is established when there is objective evidence that the charity will not be able to collect all amounts due according to the original terms of the receivables.

Cash and cash equivalents

Cash and cash equivalents comprise cash on hand and call deposits, and other short-term highly liquid investments that are readily convertible to a known amount of cash and are subject to an insignificant risk of change in value.

Fund structure

Unrestricted income funds are general funds that are available for use at the trustees' discretion in furtherance of the objectives of the charity.

Restricted income funds are those grants for use in a particular area or for specific purposes, the use of which is restricted to that area or purpose.

Pensions and other post retirement obligations

The charity operates a defined contribution pension scheme for employees. The assets of the scheme are held separately from those of the charity. Pension costs charges in the Statement of Financial Activities represent the contributions payable by the charity during the year.

The Signpost to Polish Success

Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year Ended 28 February 2023

2 Income from donations and legacies

	Total 2023 £	Total 2022 £
Donations and legacies;		
Donations from companies, trusts and similar proceeds	-	2,000
	-	2,000

3 Income from charitable activities

	Unrestricted funds General £	Restricted funds £	Total 2023 £	Total 2022 £
Grants & donations	-	36,720	36,720	111,582
Activities	1,566	-	1,566	900
Advertising	8,022	-	8,022	9,840
Fundraising	132	-	132	137
	9,720	36,720	46,440	122,459

4 Investment income

	Unrestricted funds General £	Total 2023 £	Total 2022 £
Interest receivable and similar income;			
Interest receivable on bank deposits	71	71	19

The Signpost to Polish Success

Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year Ended 28 February 2023

5 Expenditure on charitable activities

	Restricted funds £	Total 2023 £	Total 2022 £
Telephone & communications	2,459	2,459	1,961
Equipment, repairs & renewals	40	40	300
Events & activities	488	488	101
Hospitality & foodbank	167	167	3,425
Legal & professional	3,455	3,455	2,065
Wages, NI & pension	65,650	65,650	73,795
Insurance	1,081	1,081	959
Office supplies	5,543	5,543	5,090
Rent & room hire	4,396	4,396	17,723
Recruitment	10	10	-
Training & conference	9	9	25
Travel & networking	4,002	4,002	4,386
Tutor fees	3,434	3,434	2,640
	<u>90,734</u>	<u>90,734</u>	<u>112,470</u>

6 Staff costs

The aggregate payroll costs were as follows:

	2023 £	2022 £
Staff costs during the year were:		
Wages and salaries	64,531	71,409
Social security costs	-	1,002
Pension costs	1,119	1,384
	<u>65,650</u>	<u>73,795</u>

The monthly average number of persons (including senior management team) employed by the charity during the year was as follows:

	2023 No	2022 No
The average number of employees during the year was	<u>6</u>	<u>4</u>

5 (2022 - 5) of the above employees participated in the Defined Contribution Pension Schemes.

Contributions to the employee pension schemes for the year totalled £1,119 (2022 - £1,384).

The Signpost to Polish Success

Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year Ended 28 February 2023

No employee received emoluments of more than £60,000 during the year.

The total employee benefits of the key management personnel of the charity were £34,338 (2022 - £34,216).

7 Debtors

	2023 £	2022 £
Prepayments	810	898
Other debtors	-	8,000
	<u>810</u>	<u>8,898</u>

8 Creditors: amounts falling due within one year

	2023 £	2022 £
Other creditors	<u>6,033</u>	<u>6,934</u>

9 Charity status

The charity is a charity limited by guarantee and consequently does not have share capital. Each of the trustees is liable to contribute an amount not exceeding £10 towards the assets of the charity in the event of liquidation.

10 Funds

	Balance at 1 March 2022 £	Incoming resources £	Resources expended £	Transfers £	Balance at 28 February 2023 £
Unrestricted funds					
<i>General</i>					
General fund	148,847	9,791	-	14,688	173,326
Restricted funds					
The National Lottery					
Community Fund	43,010	20,000	(59,304)	(3,706)	-
Training & skills	8,000	6,450	(14,450)	-	-
Salaries	10,132	-	(1,967)	(8,165)	-
Health engagement	2,000	-	(2,000)	-	-
Events	-	2,270	(1,830)	-	440
The Home Office	6,000	8,000	(11,183)	(2,817)	-
Total restricted funds	<u>69,142</u>	<u>36,720</u>	<u>(90,734)</u>	<u>(14,688)</u>	<u>440</u>
Total funds	<u>217,989</u>	<u>46,511</u>	<u>(90,734)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>173,766</u>

The Signpost to Polish Success

Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year Ended 28 February 2023

	Balance at 1 March 2021 £	Incoming resources £	Resources expended £	Balance at 28 February 2022 £
Unrestricted funds				
<i>General</i>				
General fund	137,151	12,896	(1,200)	148,847
Restricted				
The National Lottery Community Fund	49,518	83,382	(89,890)	43,010
Training & skills	4,201	12,000	(8,201)	8,000
Communities of Identity	720	-	(720)	-
Salaries	10,132	-	-	10,132
Health engagement	1,585	7,100	(6,685)	2,000
Events	2,674	3,100	(5,774)	-
The Home Office	-	6,000	-	6,000
Total restricted funds	<u>68,830</u>	<u>111,582</u>	<u>(111,270)</u>	<u>69,142</u>
Total funds	<u><u>205,981</u></u>	<u><u>124,478</u></u>	<u><u>(112,470)</u></u>	<u><u>217,989</u></u>

The specific purposes for which the funds are to be applied are as follows:

The National Lottery Community Fund contributes towards the running costs and salaries.

The Training and skills fund contributes to the costs of courses and skills development for our users.

Salaries contributes towards the salary costs of staff working on the settled status applications and support.

Health engagement supports health inequalities.

Events provide important cultural and awareness sessions, thanks to the New Art Exchange & The Polish Consulate.

The Home Office supports the work of Signpost to Polish Success.

The transfer from the Salaries fund to the General fund reflects the release of any restrictions on the use of these funds.

The transfer from the Home office fund to the General fund relates to activities which have ceased, and the release of any restrictions on the use of these funds.

The transfer from the National Lottery fund to the General fund relates to activities which had not been accounted for historically within the National Lottery Fund in the accounting records,

The Signpost to Polish Success

Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year Ended 28 February 2023

11 Analysis of net assets between funds

	Unrestricted funds Designated £	Restricted funds £	Total funds at 28 February 2023 £
Current assets	173,326	6,473	179,799
Current liabilities	-	(6,033)	(6,033)
Total net assets	<u>173,326</u>	<u>440</u>	<u>173,766</u>
	Unrestricted funds General £	Restricted funds £	Total funds at 28 February 2022 £
Current assets	148,847	76,076	224,923
Current liabilities	-	(6,934)	(6,934)
Total net assets	<u>148,847</u>	<u>69,142</u>	<u>217,989</u>

12 Fees payable to independent examiner

During the period, the fees payable (excluding VAT) to the charity's independent examiner Community Accounting Plus are analysed as follows:

	2023 £	2022 £
Independent examination	755	720
Other financial services	547	580
	<u>1,302</u>	<u>1,300</u>

13 Taxation

The charity is a registered charity and is therefore exempt from taxation.

14 Trustees remuneration and expenses

No trustees, nor any persons connected with them, have received any remuneration from the charity during the year.

No trustees have received any reimbursed expenses or any other benefits from the charity during the year.

15 Related party transactions

There were no related party transactions in the year.