

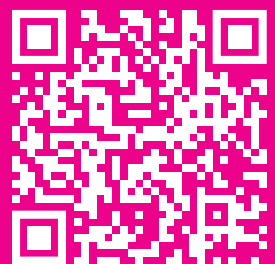
ANNUAL REPORT 2023/24

Help us redesign our image, mission, vision and values

**CROYDON'S MENTAL HEALTH
SERVICE USER GROUP**

CHARITY # 1135535

COMPANY # 06891337

A square QR code located in the bottom right corner of the flyer, which likely links to the group's website or social media pages.

Our Mission: to promote, educate, communicate and empower, for the benefit and interest of people affected by mental health issues

Structure, governance and management

Hear Us developed from a service user run community group established in 1992. Since 4th October 2001 Hear Us has been running as a not for profit organisation in Croydon and on 15th April 2010 the Management Committee registered Hear Us with the Charity Commission for charity status (No. 1135535) to give Hear Us a more independent and stronger voice in the community.

Management

The constitution in the original form was adopted by resolution at the AGM held on the 27th May 2004. Amendments to the constitution were adopted by resolution at the EGM held on 1st July 2008.

The Management Committee are the Board of Trustees. They include a Chairperson, Vice Chairperson, Secretary, Treasurer and the Chief Executive Officer, Tim Oldham. The Committee has the power to co-opt members, as and when they deem it necessary. The Board of Trustees are responsible for the day to day running of Hear Us and have a responsibility to report to the funders, charity commission and other stakeholders whenever the need arises.

Reserves Policy

Hear Us endeavours to maintain reserves equivalent to a minimum of 6 months costs at all times. For the financial year 2023/24 this will be approximately £140,000. This is held in bank accounts with easy withdrawal facilities.

All Hear Us financial statements can be accessed on our website:
www.hear-us.org/annual-report

Statement of compliance

Financial statements have been prepared in compliance with FRS 102, 'The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and the Republic of Ireland', the 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) (Charities SORP (FRS 102)) and the Charities Act 2011.

Objectives and activities

To relieve the needs of people living in the London Borough of Croydon and surrounding areas who have mental health problems by provision of services and advice.

To advance education about mental health for public benefit in the London Borough of Croydon and surrounding areas with the object of creating awareness and reducing the stigma attached to mental health.

HEAR US ANNUAL REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

CHARITY NUMBER 1135535

COMPANY NUMBER 06891337

CONTENTS	Page
Chair of Hear Us Statement	4
Chief Executive Officer Statement	5
Linkworking Project	8
Welfare Rights Advice Project	10
Mental Health Open Forum	13
Reachout Challenge	15
Development & Fundraising	16
Extracts of Hear Us Accounts	18
Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Monitoring	19
Membership - Together We Are Stronger	21
Donate and Support	23



FUNDRAISING
REGULATOR



MINDFUL
EMPLOYER



CHAIR OF HEAR US STATEMENT



Abeline Greene
Chair

As we look back on a year of compassion in action, I am humbled and inspired by the incredible impact our charity has made in the lives of those we serve, thanks to the unwavering support of our donors, funders, volunteers, and dedicated staff. In a world faced with unprecedented challenges, your generosity and commitment have been the driving force behind our mission to create positive change, promote, educate, communicate and empower, for the benefit and interest of people affected by mental health issues.

This past year has been a testament to the power of collective kindness and the resilience of the human spirit. Despite the obstacles we encountered, our organisation not only persevered but thrived, we have been able to expand the workforce of existing projects and start a new Campaigning project, allowing Hear Us to become a more effective, inclusive and sustainable campaigning organisation. Our projects have reached more individuals and communities, continuing to provide practical support and regular activities which help service users to cope better with daily living and help to address their social, emotional and physical needs, which are needed more than ever before.

This year we embarked on a 2-year project to focus on developing our fundraising and income stream generation, trustee recruitment and stronger governance, building on our strengths and addressing the things we do less well but want to do better. Strengthening our board and workforce is enabling us to more effectively represent the mental health community within Croydon and to work in partnership with statutory and voluntary sector organisations to influence the debate and improve the life chances of our beneficiaries and service users.

Thank you to Southwest London Integrated Care Board (SWL ICB), Lloyds Bank Foundation, City Bridge, Trust for London and the National Lottery for continuing to fund us to deliver much needed services.

It has been an honour and pleasure to support Hear Us and the Board of Trustee board for another year as Chair and on behalf of the Board of Trustees, I extend my heartfelt gratitude to members, donors, funders, volunteers and staff whose generosity, commitment and hard work have enabled Hear Us to continue to make sure that the voice of service users is heard loud and proud in Croydon. Your compassion is the cornerstone of our work, and together, we will continue to build a brighter, more equitable future for the most disadvantaged and vulnerable individuals in our community.

Abeline Greene, Chair of the Board of Trustees

CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S STATEMENT



Tim Oldham
CEO

I am incredibly proud of our staff team and volunteers and honoured to work alongside them.

Hear Us is a Croydon charity that is the only project for people with mental ill health that is run by people with lived experience. This gives us a unique insight into the barriers our service users face. We provide specialist peer support for people with complex mental health issues living or working in the London Borough of Croydon. Our practical, regular activities help people cope better with daily living and relieve their

social, emotional and physical needs.

Hear Us has been built by a highly passionate team dedicated to helping people with mental illness access financial, health, and social inclusion support in Croydon. We actively challenge restrictive and coercive healthcare practices and negative perceptions associated with mental illness. This helps to reduce stigma and discrimination.

Our small charity supports people in regaining their confidence and wellbeing so that they can stand on their own feet. Our goal is not to make people dependent upon a service but to make them strong and well. We believe that each person who comes to the project has the potential to recover from their mental health relapse or crisis. Our approach supports them to do this.

Welfare Rights Advice Project (WRAP):

David is the manager of our WRAP, leading a team that includes Shellie and Barbra. They have developed the Welfare Rights Advice Project and delivered the service to support people and inform them how to apply for and maintain their own welfare and disability benefits. This includes understanding what the claim form questions mean and how to answer those questions based on their own ill health, daily needs and struggles.

A significant part of the project involves regular support and reassurance, particularly for those who struggle with anxiety and depression. The majority of claims we support are Personal Independence Payments (PIP). In the coming months, we expect an increased need for support because of the migration to Universal Credit for people on ESA and Housing Benefit. Our Welfare Rights Advice Project aims to coach a person on making and maintaining their benefit claims.

HEAR US CROYDON

We provide support to people with access to immediate support through access to food banks and discretionary payments. We have continued to support people with mobility problems in successfully applying for mobility schemes such as Freedom Passes and Blue Badges.

We would like to thank the National Lottery Community Fund and the City Bridge Foundation for funding the WRAP service. Their funding has enabled us to continue delivering this much-needed project.

Linkworking Project:

We have been running the Linkworking Project since 2007 to engage and support people with mental ill health in Croydon's inpatient wards at the Royal Bethlem Hospital (RBH) and Croydon's mental health community services, Jeanette Wallace House (JWH) and Queens Resource Centre (QRC).

In January, we appointed Betty as the new manager of the Linkworking Project. She has taken over from Barbra, who moved to join our WRAP project to strengthen the team. We appointed Abby as a senior support worker to support our Linkworkers on site.

We enable people in crisis to have their voices heard and express their concerns about the treatment and care they receive. We enable greater access to available services on the wards and improve services to ensure a better chance of recovery from severe mental illness.

Our goal is to support people to develop confidence and self-belief, feel empowered through positive discussion, and reduce stigma and discrimination of mental ill health.

Open Forum:

Amy, our Open Forum Coordinator, invites new guest speakers to our Open Forum, which brings together the mental health community, particularly people who are currently in receipt of SLAM services, to discuss Croydon's mental health and wellbeing services and their accessibility, quality, and development.

They can meet, network, and discover new opportunities that aid positive mental health and well-being, help to prevent dependency on clinical services and support people in regaining self-esteem, confidence, and empowerment. For many, expressing their voice in the forum empowers and aids in raising self-esteem and confidence.

Over the coming year, we will redevelop the Open Forum to enable more people to access this project.

Campaigns Project: A Voice for Change

In January, we were pleased to announce that we have won funding from Trust for London for three years to run a Campaigning Project, and we appointed May as the Campaigns Coordinator. She is building a movement run and led by people with lived experience of mental ill health representing all communities initially in Croydon. This movement will educate, inform and influence change to improve the lives of some of the most disadvantaged and vulnerable in our communities through awareness-raising and campaigning for change in our public services and in the broader community.

Reachout Challenge:

Barbra had been the figurehead of the Reachout Challenge for many years, and has stepped aside to focus on WRAP. May has become the Reachout lead and has taken over this project to help raise awareness of mental ill health and share lived experiences of crisis and relapse with police from the UK and worldwide at Leatherhead Police College on the Negotiation and Crisis Course. Our volunteers gain confidence and improved self-esteem from sharing their experiences. We have also won some new funding, which we will announce in more detail shortly. Please visit our website for updates about this funding and all our projects.

April 2025:

Hear Us will celebrate 15 years of charity status. We believe that people receiving care and treatment for mental health services can help improve services based on their experiences and needs. This conviction can be traced back to 1992 when a small group came together to build a project that would enable them to have their voices heard and included in the design and development of Croydon's Mental Health Services.

Historically, Hear Us has been a voice for people with severe and enduring mental illness who receive care and treatment from secondary mental health services. In recent years, we have been helping people struggling with mental ill health who have been surviving outside of services, including those who have no access to GP surgeries.

We report all our project outcomes to all funders and share our findings with the South West London Integrated Care Board (SWL ICB) and senior stakeholders across Croydon. We have continued to contribute and represent the voice of Croydon's mental health community in the development, planning and commissioning of mental health services.

Tim Oldham, Chief Executive, Email: tim@hear-us.org

DEPUTY CEO'S STATEMENT



Claire Hawkes
Deputy CEO

In my role as Deputy CEO I have the privilege of working across all of the projects that Hear Us deliver, and working with all the teams. I am always struck by the passion and dedication the staff team have, that enables Hear Us to function and provide quality services to our community.

We have been able to recruit three new members of staff this year and are so excited to welcome Abby, Betty and May to Hear Us. They have brought their enthusiasm, ideas and new ways of thinking to Hear Us, and have already made valuable contributions to the projects they work on.

As a result of the Together for London grant we received from London Community Foundation, we were able to support members of our community by helping to improve financial security, by addressing and resolving immediate financial distress by providing supermarket vouchers and organising supermarket deliveries for those unable to leave their homes. We were able to give out 127 individual grants to clients (including families) for food, fuel and other essential items resulting from the cost of living pressures. The additional resources also enabled us to reach out to our whole community, reaching marginalised groups by promoting our services proactively and more widely. With increased resources, Hear Us were able to attend a number of events over the summer, to reach out to our community including Croydon Pride and Croydon Mela.

Having refreshed our Volunteering Handbook and some of the associated policies, we are looking forward to recruiting some new volunteers this year. We aim to provide a supportive environment for volunteers to grow, develop and contribute in a meaningful way. I started as a volunteer in Hear Us, as did many of our staff, so we truly understand the difference it can make and positive impact this can have. Volunteers are invaluable to us and I would like to thank our existing team of very dedicated volunteers!

Claire Hawkes, Deputy CEO, Email: claire@hear-us.org



WELFARE ADVICE RIGHTS PROJECT



David Ashton
Welfare Manager

This past year, Hear Us's Welfare Rights advice Project has faced contrasting challenges that we have done our best to meet. On one hand, we have had the familiar issues that we have worked hard to support our clients with: people being denied PIP whether as part of a new claim or at review and needing support to follow through the long and difficult process of challenging decisions through to tribunal. Those who are unable to work facing work related obligations when claiming

Universal Credit or people just generally having difficulty navigating a complicated benefits system.

On the other hand, we have had proposed changes to the work capability assessment used in both Universal Credit and Employment Support Allowance. These changes are a cause of considerable concern creating a stricter, harsher work capability assessment that would see many who are too unwell to work, especially those with mental health difficulties, face work related obligations.

Hear Us engaged with a consultation process voicing our concerns about the proposed changes as risky, discriminatory and harmful and especially their impact upon those with mental health conditions. Following the consultation process, some proposed changes were abandoned because of the concerns voiced by Hear Us and many other organisations and individuals but unfortunately, other changes are planned to be implemented in the future. Many consider the procedure taken by the DWP during the consultation process; not giving people enough time to respond and not providing enough information about the changes or the reasons behind them, as unfair and possibly unlawful.

These challenges both new and the more familiar, have shown the need and the value of our Project; our unique understanding of the challenges faced by those with mental health difficulties as a service user run organisation and the hard work of a dedicated and conscientious team. Though we are a small team we have made a huge difference obtaining close to 2 million pounds in benefit arrears and ongoing payments that help our clients to stay in their homes, keep their lights on, put food on their tables and help them not just survive but thrive.

There is no doubt in my mind that the need for our project will continue and likely grow long into the future but I also have no doubt that we will continue to make a huge difference to those living with mental health

difficulties

A Big thank you to my wonderful staff, Shellie and Barbra and to our Senior Management team, Claire, Eleanor and Tim, without all of you this project would not be the success that it is.

Thank you, also to our funders The National Lottery and The City Bridge Foundation who enable us to undertake this valuable work.

David Ashton, Welfare Rights Advice Project Manager



Hi my name is Shellie I have been working for hear us for 11 years and I enjoy my job. Hear Us has been running for a number of years now. We are a small charity who have a big heart towards people suffering from mental health illness in Croydon, who are looking for support and help to navigate the welfare system. This year has been even harder due to all the changes from the DWP, people who suffer from mental health are more isolated, and we support those vulnerable people from the start right to the end. Our aim is to not

only support services users but also encourage and empower them to become more financially independent by giving them the knowledge and understanding to feel more confident about managing their benefits claims and then we can become a more resilient community.

Shellie Wilfred, Senior Welfare Rights Advisor

A DAY IN THE DIARY OF A WELFARE RIGHTS ADVISOR

I arrive at work and turn on my devices; while they are waking up, I make myself a cuppa before trawling through my many emails and forthcoming appointments. It is safe to say no two days are the same and I greet each one with gusto and determination.

I joined the Welfare Rights Advice Project (WRAP) team back in July 2021, but due to my other commitments within Hear Us, initially, it was only for one day a week. Due to the ever-growing demand for the need to support people securing what they are entitle to, in Oct 2023, I moved from Linkwork Management to Welfare Rights Advisor, now covering four days a week.

During the last financial year, I have seen more than 120 people spread over 300+ appointments. Their needs vary from Personal Independence Payment (PIP) related issues through to securing Mobility Cars under the DWP 'run' Mobility Scheme. I have spread my wings into other areas of benefits. Since attending several training sessions around Tribunals, I now feel more confident to take a person

from first application of PIP through to Tribunal, when required. I still need support to manage my own benefits journeys as they scare me as much as they do others.

With the amazing support from both Shellie and David, I have now ventured into the realms of Employment Support Allowance (ESA) and Universal Credit (UC) matters and other areas of benefits but I still need to check-in with one or both of them to make sure I am getting 'it' right.

At Hear Us, we are encouraged in not only 'growing' in our roles but also 'growing' as individuals. During a particularly hard time recently, I felt the outpouring of love, care and support from everyone at Hear Us towards my recovery and got on with the tasks to hand - gaining what people are rightfully entitled to within the realms of benefits.

Navigating through the world of benefits, bureaucracy and red tape is a minefield for anyone to manage but when you have the dream team that is the WRAP Pack, we help towards making these processes more manageable.

THAT'S WHAT A DAY IN THE DIARY OF A WELFARE RIGHTS ADVISOR LOOKS LIKE

Barbra Davison, Welfare Rights Advisor

Come join our little happy family at Hear Us. We have started to take on volunteers to join our WRAP - Welfare Rights Advice Project

We are looking for people who are kind and interested in learning to assist with benefit forms and other benefit issues and who can communicate with people from a wide range of backgrounds including mental health service users and experience of working within an office environment and basic computer skills would be valuable.

We will train you on the benefits system and support you to undertake a rewarding volunteering role where you will make a huge difference in people's lives.

Referrals to the Welfare Rights Advice Project can be made via our website www.hear-us.org/referral or by phone

Telephone: 020 8681 6888 Website: www.hear-us.org/welfare-rights

Email: welfarerights@hear-us.org



Barbra Davison
Welfare Advisor

HEAR US CROYDON

LINKWORKING PROJECT

Before I say little about me, I want to talk about the project itself. The Linkworking project has been going for nearly 20 years (running since 2007). It is unmatched [literally and figuratively] since there is no other project like it in Croydon. It is run by people who have the lived experience of those they are offering support to. To say the project is unique would be an understatement. So first, I would like to say thank you to my predecessors (Barbra and Claire) who have made it what it is today; Tim Oldham who has championed for its funding and everyone and anyone who has poured blood, sweat and tears to keep it going.



Betty Nassiwa
Peer Support
Coordinator

When I initially received the job offer of Peer Support Coordinator (Linkwork project manager) I thought, ‘what have I got myself into?’ Fast forward a couple of months in the role and well...my initial assessment was right – sort of. What I got right was how rewarding and challenging managing the project would be. However, I underestimated the impact that saying to someone ‘I’ve been there’ can have. I underestimated the toll it can take to hold space for some emotionally difficult conversations. And finally, I underestimated the difference the project makes to many people’s lives who then later on are so moved, they also want to become Linkworkers. This is a transformative project and I am glad to be the newest edition to the team!

This year 11 Linkworkers have had conversations with 1546 service users who raised 2063 comments with SLaM. There were 348 Linkworking sessions across five acute wards and two resource centres. Linkworkers were able to signpost to 529 services, as well as allowing time and space for simply sharing and listening. Some service users have had little or no contact with family and friends and found comfort in talking to someone that is not clinical staff.

Many SLaM staff also appreciate the Linkworking Project and can see the value it brings to their service “They are invaluable for our ward! ❤️”
“The team are lovely to work with!”

As well as providing a listening ear and signposting, Linkworkers also help to escalate issues that run across wards and services, affecting

countless service users. They do this by attending meetings with different SLaM management staff and helping to amplify the voice of service users. Linkworkers attend the monthly Croydon Service User Advisory Group along with other service users on the SLaM Involvement Register, and different SLaM staff. Linkworkers have representation at other forums and groups, including the Croydon Reducing Restrictive Practice Forum, where important issues are raised and solutions discussed.

Although not everything changes as quickly as we might like, positive things have been happening, such as a boiler finally being installed on one Bethlem ward, after many years of campaigning and advocating for this. Service users have been saying for years that they would like to be able to make their own drinks, and now they finally can!

Last summer we were sad to say goodbye to Jane Lyons, who retired from her role as Croydon and Lewisham Patient and Public Involvement (PPI) Lead. Jane was a great support to the Linkworking Project, helping us get a seat at many vital SLaM meetings, and facilitating some of the quality improvement changes Linkworkers have championed.

At the end of last year, we welcomed Lucy Hamer to the role and have quickly built a great relationship, as she navigates the complex world of mental health services in Croydon and Lewisham. Linkworkers were asked by Croydon's Head of Nursing, to facilitate Lucy's induction and she came along to a couple of Linkworking sessions in her first week. This demonstrates the confidence that SLaM have in our Linkworkers and the importance of our project.

As we look forward to the year ahead, we are hoping to increase our Linkworking sessions across our existing wards and maybe even start on some new ones. We are planning on returning to Psych Liaison at Croydon University Hospital this summer, after many requests from the staff there. We weren't able to conduct our virtual sessions there, so we are pleased to be going back after a long four years.

Betty Nassiwa
Peer Support Coordinator
Linkworking Project
Email: linkworking@hear-us.org
Website www.hear-us.org/linkworking

HEAR US CROYDON

MENTAL HEALTH OPEN FORUM



The Hear Us Mental Health Open Forum is a place for service users to come together and discuss services that they access and other issues that affect them. The Forum is primarily aimed at service users, but we welcome carers, volunteers, staff and anyone with an interest in mental health to discuss the issues that affect us all. The Open Forum is a place where the mental health community can come together and voice their views and concerns.

We have recently launched a new regular segment on the Open Forum called Voice of Change led by Hear Us Campaigns Coordinator May. Voice of Change is a chance to get involved in the Hear Us campaign project and to hear the latest project updates. As well as the Voice of Change segment we have had guests come talk to us about campaigning such as Citizen's UK and Inclusion Barnet.

The Your Shout segment is a chance for members to share mental health news and events and other relevant information about mental health services. Our members like to share a wealth of information to help others members.

We have been running a Hybrid open forum, currently we are assessing how best to deliver the open forum by consulting our members. We want the Open Forum to be accessible to all.

The Open Forum aims to feature guest speakers to talk about services and topics relevant to mental health service users. Open forum

members have input on topics and mental health services they want to hear about. We strive to cover a range of topics, including some which have not been featured before.

This year we have heard from organisations and charities to give awareness talks on topics such on domestic abuse and brain injury. We have highlighted the work of different organisations such as a forum focusing on activities and the benefits keeping active can have on your mental health. We were also joined by Croydon Council



Amy Kirksmith
Open Forum
Coordinator

to talk about free Mental Health First Aid Training.

Part of the Open Forum aims to enable service users to improve and shape mental health services. We have had a number of SLaM services and departments come to talk to us such as Croydon's Borderline Personality Disorder Service. Some SLaM services SLaM lead discussions to get service user feedback and experiences on their services and projects. This has included SLaM's Mental Health Act Reduction Project and Slam's Patient and Public Involvement lead.

Amy Kirksmith, Open Forum Coordinator

Email: forum@hear-us.org

Webpage: www.hear-us.org/forum/

Help us redesign our image, mission, vision and values

During 2025 we will be seeking support from our members to help us redesign our image, mission, vision and values. It is important to us to have involvement from people that use our services.

We will be holding creative workshops during 2025 - please do get involved as your views are important to us.



HEAR US CROYDON

THE REACHOUT CHALLENGE



May Elroubi
Reachout Lead

The Reachout Challenge Project raises awareness about living with mental ‘ill’ health for staff in organisations and institutions who might interact with people in crisis or who need support. ROC volunteers challenge stigmas around mental health by sharing their personal accounts of being in crisis and providing a safe space for participants to share their own personal experiences with mental health. This year, we held quarterly sessions with members of police forces from the UK and all over the world at the Police Federation in Leatherhead on the

esteemed Hostage and Crisis Negotiation Course. After supervising countless sessions, one course leader has applied to become a Hear Us Trustee! We would like to thank our volunteers who extend their time, energy, and vulnerability to make this project possible, and we hope they will continue with us as we re-expand the project to other services in 2024-25.



Decrease Stigma

To fight stigma, prejudice and discrimination about mental illness: More than half of people with mental illness do not receive help for their mental health. Social stigma and discrimination can make mental health problems worse and stop a person from getting the help they need.



Raise Awareness

To raise awareness about Mental Health through education and sharing lived experiences. Raise awareness about the negative use of language and its effect on mental health; judging, labelling or discriminating can have devastating effects on people with mental ill health. Treating people with respect and dignity supports people in their recovery, positively affecting their own self-worth, self-esteem and confidence.



To Encourage

To encourage the staff in the organisations we work with

to have a more 'open policy' towards mental health that enables them to be able to talk about their own mental wellbeing without shame, embarrassment or stigma. People avoid seeking treatment due to concerns about being stigmatised, fears of losing their jobs and fear of being shunned by friends, colleagues and family.

Anyone interested in learning more about getting involved, or would like us to deliver a training session to your organisation, please contact me.

May Elroubi, Project Lead

Mobile: 07743931871

Email: reachout.challenge@hear-us.org

Webpage: <https://www.hear-us.org/reachout/donate-support-reachout-challenge/>



THANK YOU

HEAR US CROYDON



May Elroubi
Campaigns
Coordinator

CAMPAIGNING PROJECT

The Campaigns project was awarded funding from Trust for London's Disability Justice Fund in November 2023.

The proposal for this project was the result of several working groups involving Hear Us Staff, trustees, and volunteers. Trust for London provided support and guidance to construct a learning framework for the project duration of three years. The aims that came out of this co-produced theory of change are:

1. Build Hear Us capacity to transform our campaigning capacity to achieve strategic, systemic change in services
2. Co-produce campaigning activity with people with lived experience
3. Improve diversity of staff, volunteers and members
4. Work in partnership with other groups/organisations to produce campaigning activity
5. Use monitoring and evaluation to learn and improve

The first year will be focused on constructing a detailed project plan, identifying potential partnerships, connecting to other voluntary organisations, and understanding how we can support our members to lead campaigns. I was recruited by Hear Us as the Campaigns Coordinator in February 2023 as part of the Year 1 aims. In 2024-25, I will oversee the project planning and development and work with Hear Us staff, volunteers, trustees, members, and the Croydon Community to devise a campaigns strategy that meets our community's needs.

In Quarter 4 of the 2023 financial year, I attended a learning session with the funder to connect to representatives of other Deaf and Disabled Peoples Organisations. I made valuable connections there, as well as in the local working group meetings I attended. From these, I could gauge which issues were more frequently discussed within the voluntary sector, and what work was already being done around them. Along with Betty, the Linkwork Manager, we began analysing the Linkworking data for common issues. This process will continue into 2024-25, as we identify collate themes and patterns in service users'

comments that can be used as evidence for changes people want to see in statutory mental health services.

In 2024-25, the project aims to:

- Collaborate with Inclusion London on Free Our People Now campaign activities
- Expand the Voice of Change campaigns segment into a concept for a co-led campaigns forum
- Co-produce a communications strategy for campaigns
- Develop training for our Linkworkers and volunteers that incorporates campaigns capacity building
- Hear from our community about what they want our campaigns to look like, and how they want to be involved in making them, and how we can support them to feel confident doing so.

May Elroubi

Campaigns Coordinator

Mobile: 07743931871

Website: www.hear-us.org/campaigning-project

Email: campaignsproject@hear-us.org



HEAR US CROYDON

DEVELOPMENT & FUNDRAISING

Fundraising has been focused on attaining grants from grant funders for three main areas: 1) funding for the Welfare Rights Advice Project (WRAP) to meet increasing demands 2) obtaining funding for a new Campaigns Project and 3) Funding the development and fundraising activities in the medium term. The table below shows the grant funders who have enabled us to continue to support our service users during 2023-2024. We are very grateful to all our grant funders who make it possible for us to support people with mental health challenges in Croydon. This included funding for a 3rd advisor for the WRAP project from National Lottery until March 2024, funding for the Campaigns Project from Trust for London Disability Justice Fund until October 2026 and funding for the Development and Fundraising Manager from Lloyds Foundation until December 2026.

We received some regular and one-off donations from the public. We would like to encourage more donations and will be working to increase our visibility to expand our income which can be used to support growth of the charity and meet the needs of our members more effectively.

We have received free consultancy and training through our grant funders to improve the services we provide and develop our staff skills and expertise. Notable are support from Cranfield Trust via City Bridge Foundation to develop our Vision, Mission and Values and training and coaching opportunities through Lloyds Foundation.

Alongside the development support we have received via our funders, we will be reviewing the most effective ways to work to ensure our service users have the right support at the right time in the right way. More development work is planned during 2024-2025 to undertake an organisation health check, develop our vision, mission and values, obtain funding to develop a sustainability strategy and continue the employment of the 3rd WRAP advisor and obtain continuation funding from City Bridge for part funding of the WRAP project.

AQS accreditation continues to act as a catalyst to improve the way we work and the services we provide making them more effective for people who use our services. We were focused on maintaining our AQS accreditation through quarterly and annual reviews of our WRAP. This continues to be a significant overhead but we believe it is worth

it as it ensures that we continually learn lessons from monitoring and feedback from our service users and implement changes where appropriate to make our services more effective for those using them.

We have continued to develop our relationship with Inclusion London, London's pan-disability forum, to address issues around disability equality, equity and inclusion, and a campaign to inform and encourage voting at the recent general election. We will be working with Inclusion London to ensure that we are in practice a disability friendly organisation, accessible to all, rooted in the mental health community, providing a mechanism for all those with mental health challenges to have their say and change services for the better.

Our work in 2024-2025 will focus on maintaining our AQS accreditation, developing our vision for the future and partnership working and identifying and obtaining funding sources to support Hear Us in the next phase of our development.

Eleanor Yates, Development and Fundraising Manager



Funder	Service	Grant Period
South West London ICB	Core & Linkworking	Apr 2022-Mar 2027
City Bridge Connecting Capital	Welfare Rights Advice Project	April 2021-March 2024 extended to March 2026
National Lottery Reaching Communities	Welfare Rights Advice Project	Jan 2022-Mar 2025
Lloyds Bank Foundation for England & Wales.	Development and Fundraising	Dec 2023-Dec 2026
The London Community Foundation	Welfare Rights Advice Project	Apr 2023-Mar 2024
Trust for London	Campaigns	Apr 2023-Mar 2026

Extracts of Hear Us Annual Accounts 23-24

Current assets	2024	2023
Debtors	£244	£244
Cash at bank and in hand	£281,079	£219,889
Creditors: Amounts falling due within one year	£1,796	£1,796
Net assets	£279,527	£218,337
Restricted funds	£63,519	£34,686
Unrestricted funds	£216,008	£183,651
Total Charity funds	£279,527	£218,337

HEAR US Croydon FUNDERS 2023/24

**The London
Community
Foundation**



**LLOYDS BANK
FOUNDATION**
England & Wales



**CITY BRIDGE
FOUNDATION**



**South West
London
Integrated
Care System**

EQUALITY & DIVERSITY MONITORING

These tables show the number of people that Hear Us have supported over period April 2023 to March 2024

The sections marked 'Linkwork Project & Open Forum' were not asked to provide us with data. We are currently looking at a number of options to gather this data

ETHNICITY	Total	%
African	157	3.7%
Any other Asian background	58	1.3%
Any other Black background	9	0.2%
Any other Black, African or Caribbean background	36	0.8%
Any Other Ethnic Group	23	0.5%
Any other Mixed or Multiple ethnic background	53	1.2%
Any other White background	102	2.4%
Arab	3	0.1%
Asian	3	0.1%
Asian British	35	0.8%
Bangladeshi	2	0.0%
Black British	318	7.4%
Caribbean	215	5.0%
Chinese	34	0.8%
White English, Welsh, Scottish, Northern Irish or British	796	18.5%
Gypsy or Irish Traveller	4	0.1%
Indian	46	1.1%
Irish	22	0.5%
Pakistani	32	0.7%
White & Asian	24	0.6%
White & Black African	10	0.2%
White & Black Caribbean	81	1.9%
Not Disclosed	360	8.4%
Linkwork Project	1546	36.0%
Open Forum	331	7.7%
Grand Total	4300	100%

Age Goup	Total	%
- 16	6	0.1%
16 - 20	36	0.8%
21 - 30	277	6.4%
31 - 40	447	10.4%
41 - 50	428	10.0%
51 - 60	552	12.8%
61 - 70	303	7.0%
71 - 80	35	0.8%
80+	25	0.6%
Not Disclosed	314	7.3%
Linkwork Project	1546	36.0%
Open Forum	331	7.7%
Grand Total	4300	100%

HEAR US CROYDON

Ward	Total	%
Addiscombe East	62	1.4%
Addiscombe West	132	3.1%
Bensham Manor	62	1.4%
Broad Green	104	2.4%
Coulsdon Town	90	2.1%
Croydon	83	1.9%
Crystal Palace & Upper Norwood	60	1.4%
Fairfield	112	2.6%
Homeless	1	0.0%
Kenley	43	1.0%
London	1	0.0%
Mitcham	13	0.3%
New Addington North	59	1.4%
New Addington South	71	1.7%
Norbury & Pollards Hill	54	1.3%
Norbury Park	22	0.5%
Old Coulsdon	62	1.4%
Park Hill & Whitgift	17	0.4%
Purley & Woodcote	91	2.1%
Purley Oaks & Riddlesdown	54	1.3%
Sanderstead	24	0.6%
Selhurst	69	1.6%
Selsdon & Addington Village	21	0.5%
Selsdon Vale & Forestdale	35	0.8%
Shirley North	82	1.9%
Shirley South	38	0.9%
South Croydon	88	2.0%
South Norwood	87	2.0%
Thornton Heath	125	2.9%
Waddon	141	3.3%
West Thornton	179	4.2%
Woodside	79	1.8%
Out of Area	100	2.3%
Not Disclosed	162	3.8%
Linkworking Project	1546	36.0%
Open Forum	331	7.7%
Grand Total	4300	100%

GENDER	Total	%
Female	1315	30.6%
Male	964	22.4%
Non-binary	8	0.2%
Transgender	6	0.1%
Not Disclosed	130	3.0%
Linkwork Project	1546	36.0%
Open Forum	331	7.7%
Grand Total	4300	100%

Age Group	Total	%
- 16	6	0.1%
16 - 20	36	0.8%
21 - 30	277	6.4%
31 - 40	447	10.4%
41 - 50	428	10.0%
51 - 60	552	12.8%
61 - 70	303	7.0%
71 - 80	35	0.8%
80+	25	0.6%
Not Disclosed	314	7.3%
Linkwork Project	1546	36.0%
Open Forum	331	7.7%
Grand Total	4300	100%

SEXUALITY	Total	%
Asexual	17	0.4%
Bisexual	54	1.3%
Gay	54	1.3%
Heterosexual	1686	39.2%
Lesbian	17	0.4%
Other	17	0.4%
Not Disclosed	578	13.4%
Linkwork Project	1546	36.0%
Open Forum	331	7.7%
Grand Total	4300	100%



BECOME A MEMBER OF HEAR US

We represent the views of people that use mental health services in Croydon to service providers and commissioners.

We contribute to the local mental health promotion agenda, and promote positive mental health within the local community.

We promote mutual respect and equality of rights and opportunities, regardless of disability, with particular reference to local mental health service users and service survivors.

We actively campaign with users on issues raised by users themselves and actively oppose discrimination against service users in Croydon for improvements in local mental health services.

We reach out to all service users to encourage and support participation in the Open Forum.

We offer service users a communication platform for the constructive exchange of ideas on issues affecting them.

We provide a wide range of information about local and national services and up and coming issues that concern users of mental health services in Croydon. Support Hear Us and get involved in the work Hear Us does in all sorts of ways. There's no pressure to do anything, but if you are keen to take action we'll support you every step of the way. Potential opportunities include:

Becoming a Peer Support Worker with the Linkworking Project and supporting other service users whilst helping to improve our mental health services.

Coming along to our monthly Open Forums to join our campaigns to have your voice heard.

Joining our Reachout Challenge Volunteers and help fight stigma and discrimination.

Helping to fundraise to support the work of Hear Us.

Supporting Hear Us is suitable for people with a mental illness, parents or carers and professionals living or working in the London Borough of Croydon. You'll receive regular invites to our events exactly how you wish to receive them, either through regular mail or email.... You choose.

HEAR US CROYDON

BECOME A MEMBER OF HEAR US

I am a resident in London Borough of Croydon

Have a recognisable interest in mental health service user issues in Croydon

Have had emotional, or psychological problems, or, some form of mental illness

Name:

Address:

Tel:

Email:

Age & DOB:

Gender:

Marital Status:

Sexuality:

Ethnicity:

Religion:

Disability:

Please tick how you wish to receive correspondence

Post

Email

Phone

Mobile

Text

Hear Us will not use the information you provide for anything other than distribution of invitations to meetings.

I would like to become a member of Hear Us, and to receive information about local mental health services Please read the form thoroughly and check that the information you have provided is correct before signing.

Signature:



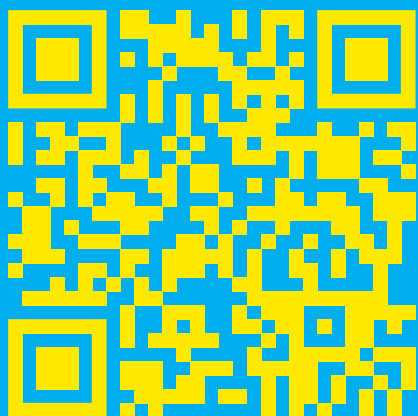
SUPPORT THE
GOOD WORK HEAR US
DOES BY DONATING AS
LITTLE AS

£5 OR MORE!
A MONTH
AND HELP US PROVIDE
ACCESS TO FINANCIAL,
HEALTH AND SOCIAL
INCLUSION SUPPORT



HEAR US
CROYDON

www.hear-us.org/donate



**SCAN QR CODE
TO DONATE &
SUPPORT**

Our Mission: to promote, educate, communicate and empower, for the benefit and interest of people affected by mental health issues



**Hear Us
Orchard House,
15a Purley Road
South Croydon
CR2 6EZ**



020 8681 6888



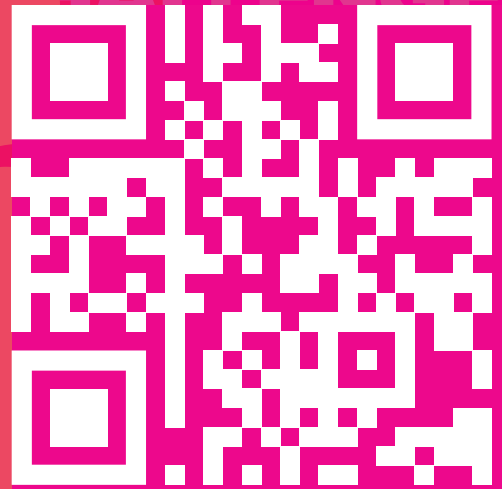
info@hear-us.org



www.hear-us.org



www.guide-hear-us.org



Hear Us supports adults with mental ill health to access financial, health and social inclusion support in Croydon. We challenge restrictive and coercive healthcare practices, and negative perceptions associated with mental illness, helping to reduce stigma and discrimination.

Hear Us
Company Limited by Guarantee
Unaudited Financial Statements
31 March 2024

Hear Us
Company Limited by Guarantee
Financial Statements
Year ended 31 March 2024

	Page
Trustees' annual report (incorporating the director's report)	1
Independent examiner's report to the trustees	4
Statement of financial activities (including income and expenditure account)	6
Statement of financial position	7
Notes to the financial statements	9

Hear Us
Company Limited by Guarantee
Trustees' Annual Report (Incorporating the Director's Report)
Year ended 31 March 2024

The trustees, who are also the directors for the purposes of company law, present their report and the unaudited financial statements of the charity for the year ended 31 March 2024.

Reference and administrative details

Registered charity name	Hear Us
Charity registration number	1135535
Company registration number	06891337
Principal office and registered office	Orchard House, 15a Purley Road, South Croydon CR2 6EZ

The trustees

Cassandra Austin	
Abeline Greene	
Josh Baker-Mendoza	
Niall Eugene McVeigh	
Jacqueline Ashton	
Millicent Isola Reid	
Tesfaalem Rodway	(Appointed 9 June 2023)

Company secretary	Abeline Greene
--------------------------	----------------

Accountants	Axis Accountants Ltd T/as Mitchell Rodrigues & Co Chartered accountant Suite 14, Zeal House, 8, Deer Park Road London SW19 3GY
--------------------	---

Hear Us
Company Limited by Guarantee
Trustees' Annual Report (Incorporating the Director's Report) *(continued)*
Year ended 31 March 2024

Structure, governance and management

Formation

Hear Us has been running since 4th October 2001 as a not for profit organisation in Croydon and on 15th April 2010 the Management Committee registered Hear Us with the Charity Commission for charity status (No. 1135535) to give Hear Us a more independent and stronger voice in the community.

Management

The constitution in the original form was adopted by resolution at the AGM held on the 27th May 2004. Amendments to the constitution were adopted by resolution at the EGM held on 1st July 2008.

The Management Committee are the Board of Trustees and are listed above. They include a Chairperson, Vice Chairperson, Secretary, Treasurer and the Chief Executive Officer, Tim Oldham. The Committee has the power to co-opt members as and when they deem it necessary. The Board of Trustees are responsible for the day-to-day running of Hear Us and has a responsibility to report to the funders, charity commission and other stakeholders whenever the need arises.

Objectives and activities

The objectives of Hear Us are:

To relieve the needs of people living in the London Borough of Croydon and surrounding areas who have mental health problems by provision of services and advice.

To advance education about mental health for public benefit in the London Borough of Croydon and surrounding areas with the object of creating awareness and reducing the stigma attached to mental health.

Achievements and performance

Hear Us is a Croydon charity that is the only project for people with mental ill health that is run by people with lived experience. This gives us a unique insight into the barriers our service users face. We provide specialist peer support for people with complex mental health issues living or working in the London Borough of Croydon. Our practical, regular activities help people cope better with daily living and relieve their social, emotional and physical needs.

Hear Us has been built by a highly passionate team dedicated to helping people with mental illness access financial, health, and social inclusion support in Croydon. We actively challenge restrictive and coercive healthcare practices and negative perceptions associated with mental illness. This helps to reduce stigma and discrimination.

Our small charity supports people in regaining their confidence and wellbeing so that they can stand on their own feet. Our goal is not to make people dependent upon a service but to make them strong and well. We believe that each person who comes to the project has the potential to recover from their mental health relapse or crisis. Our approach supports them to do this.

Welfare Rights Advice Project (WRAP):

David is the manager of our WRAP, leading a team that includes Shellie and Barbra. They have developed the Welfare Rights Advice Project and delivered the service to support people and inform them how to apply for and maintain their own welfare and disability benefits. This includes understanding what the claim form questions mean and how to answer those

questions based on their own ill health, daily needs and struggles.

A significant part of the project involves regular support and reassurance, particularly for those who struggle with anxiety and depression. The majority of claims we support are Personal Independence Payments (PIP). In the coming months, we expect an increased need for support because of the migration to Universal Credit for people on ESA and Housing Benefit. Our Welfare Rights Advice Project aims to coach a person on making and maintaining their benefit claims.

We provide support to people with access to immediate support through access to Foodbanks and discretionary payments. We have continued to support people with mobility problems in successfully applying for mobility schemes such as Freedom Passes and Blue Badges.

We would like to thank the National Lottery Community Fund and the City Bridge Foundation for funding the WRAP service. Their funding has enabled us to continue delivering this much-needed project.

Linkworking Project:

We have been running the Linkworking Project since 2007 to engage and support people with mental ill health in Croydon's inpatient wards at the Royal Bethlem Hospital (RBH) and Croydon's mental health community services, Jeanette Wallace House (JWH) and Queens Resource Centre (QRC).

In January, we appointed Betty as the new manager of the Linkworking Project. She has taken over from Barbra, who moved to join our WRAP project to strengthen the team. We appointed Abby as a senior support worker to support our Linkworkers onsite.

We enable people in crisis to have their voices heard and express their concerns about the treatment and care they receive. We enable greater access to available services on the wards and improve services to ensure a better chance of recovery from severe mental illness.

Our goal is to support people to develop confidence and self-belief, feel empowered through positive discussion, and reduce stigma and discrimination of mental ill health.

Open Forum:

Amy, our Open Forum Coordinator, invites new guest speakers to our Open Forum, which brings together the mental health community, particularly people who are currently in receipt of SLAM services, to discuss Croydon's mental health and wellbeing services and their accessibility, quality, and development.

They can meet, network, and discover new opportunities that aid positive mental health and well-being, help to prevent dependency on clinical services and support people in regaining self-esteem, confidence, and empowerment. For many, expressing their voice in the forum empowers and aids in raising self-esteem and confidence.

Over the coming year, we will redevelop the Open Forum to enable more people to access this project.

Campaigns Project: A Voice for Change

In January, we were pleased to announce that we have won funding from Trust for London for three years to run a Campaigning Project, and we appointed May as the Campaigns Coordinator. She is building a movement run and led by people with lived experience of mental ill health representing all communities initially in Croydon. This movement will educate, inform and influence change to improve the lives of some of the most disadvantaged and vulnerable in our communities through awareness-raising and campaigning for change in our public services and in the broader community.

Reachout Challenge:

Barbra had been the figurehead of the Reachout Challenge for many years, has stepped aside

to focus on WRAP. May has become the Reachout lead and has taken over this project to help raise awareness of mental ill health and share lived experiences of crisis and relapse with police from the UK and worldwide at Leatherhead Police College on the Negotiation and Crisis Course. Our volunteers gain confidence and improved self-esteem from sharing their experiences. We have also won some new funding, which we will announce in more detail shortly. Please visit our website for updates about this funding and all our projects.

April 2025:

Hear Us will celebrate 15 years of charity status. We believe that people receiving care and treatment for mental health services can help improve services based on their experiences and needs. This conviction can be traced back to 1992 when a small group came together to build a project that would enable them to have their voices heard and included in the design and development of Croydon's Mental Health Services.

Historically, Hear Us has been a voice for people with severe and enduring mental illness who receive care and treatment from secondary mental health services. In recent years, we have been helping people struggling with mental ill health who have been surviving outside of services, including those who have no access to GP surgeries.

We report all our project outcomes to all funders and share our findings with the South West London Integrated Care Board (SWL ICB) and senior stakeholders across Croydon. We have continued to contribute and represent the voice of Croydon's mental health community in the development, planning and commissioning of mental health services.

Hear Us
Company Limited by Guarantee
Trustees' Annual Report (Incorporating the Director's Report) *(continued)*
Year ended 31 March 2024

Financial review

Reserves Policy

Hear Us endeavours to maintain reserves equivalent to a minimum of 6 months costs at all times. For the financial year 2024/25 this will be approximately £180,000. These should be held in bank accounts with easy withdrawal facilities.

Risk Management

The Board of Trustees have identified and reviewed the major risks facing Hear Us and systems have been established to mitigate them. Lack of financial resources to cover expenditure is recognised as the main concern, together with the need to protect our reputation and ensure that all regulatory requirements are adhered to. Measures to reduce risk in these areas include:

Review of the Service Level Agreement with South West London Integrated Care Board (SWL ICB). Annual Review of events. Regular Committee meetings including Financial Report (current & projected), Charity Chief Executive Officer Reports and a review of fundraising activities. Formation of a fundraising committee who are required to report on all plans and activities to the Board of Trustees. Regular liaison with officers of the Croydon Clinical Commissioning Group. Continuation of staff training programmes.

Small company provisions

This report has been prepared in accordance with the provisions applicable to companies entitled to the small companies exemption.

The trustees' annual report was approved on 15th October 2024 and signed on behalf of the board of trustees by:



Jacqueline Ashton
Trustee



Abeline Greene
Charity Secretary

Hear Us
Company Limited by Guarantee
Independent Examiner's Report to the Trustees of Hear Us
Year ended 31 March 2024

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the above charity ("the Trust") for the year ended 31 March 2024, which comprise the statement of financial activities, statement of financial position and the related notes.

Respective and basis of report

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

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

Independent examiner's statement

The charity's gross income exceeded £250,000 and I am qualified to undertake the examination by being a qualified member of Association of Chartered Certified Accountants.

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no material matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination (other than that disclosed below) which gives me cause to believe that in, any material respect:

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

Hear Us

Company Limited by Guarantee

Independent Examiner's Report to the Trustees of Hear Us *(continued)*

Year ended 31 March 2024

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.

AXIS ACCOUNTANTS LTD
Chartered Certified Accountants

Suite 14, Zeal House,
8, Deer Park Road
London
SW19 3GY

Hear Us
Company Limited by Guarantee
Statement of Financial Activities
(including income and expenditure account)

31 March 2024

			2024		2023
	Note	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	Total funds £	Total funds £
Income and endowments					
Donations and legacies	5	166,382	195,307	361,689	260,933
Total income		<u>166,382</u>	<u>195,307</u>	<u>361,689</u>	<u>260,933</u>
Expenditure					
Expenditure on charitable activities	6,7	(132,868)	(166,314)	(299,182)	(240,893)
Other expenditure	8	(1,157)	(160)	(1,317)	(1,468)
Total expenditure		<u>(134,025)</u>	<u>(166,474)</u>	<u>(300,499)</u>	<u>(242,361)</u>
Net income and net movement in funds		<u>32,357</u>	<u>28,833</u>	<u>61,190</u>	<u>18,572</u>
Reconciliation of funds					
Total funds brought forward		183,651	34,686	218,337	200,312
Total funds carried forward		<u>216,008</u>	<u>63,519</u>	<u>279,527</u>	<u>214,338</u>

The statement of financial activities includes all gains and losses recognised in the year.
All income and expenditure derive from continuing activities.

The notes on pages 13 to 19 form part of these financial statements.

Hear Us
Company Limited by Guarantee
Statement of Financial Position
31 March 2024

		2024		2023
		£	£	£
Current assets				
Debtors	14	244		244
Cash at bank and in hand		281,079		219,889
		<u>281,323</u>		<u>220,133</u>
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	15	<u>1,796</u>		<u>1,796</u>
Net current assets			<u>279,527</u>	<u>218,337</u>
Total assets less current liabilities			<u>279,527</u>	<u>218,337</u>
Net assets			<u>279,527</u>	<u>218,337</u>
Funds of the charity				
Restricted funds			63,519	34,686
Unrestricted funds			<u>216,008</u>	<u>183,651</u>
Total unrestricted funds		<u>216,008</u>		<u>183,651</u>
Total charity funds	16		<u>279,527</u>	<u>218,337</u>

For the year ending 31 March 2024 the charity was entitled to exemption from audit under section 477 of the Companies Act 2006 relating to small companies.

Trustees responsibilities:

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

These financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the provisions applicable to companies subject to the small companies' regime.

These financial statements were approved by the board of trustees and authorised for issue on 15th October 2024, and are signed on behalf of the board by:



Jacqueline Ashton
Trustee

The notes on pages 13 to 19 form part of these financial statements.

Hear Us
Company Limited by Guarantee
Statement of Cash Flows
Year ended 31 March 2024

	2024	2023
	£	£
Cash flows from operating activities		
Net income	61,190	18,572
<i>Adjustments for:</i>		
Interest payable and similar charges	<u>515</u>	<u>739</u>
Cash generated from operations	61,705	19,311
Interest paid	<u>(515)</u>	<u>(739)</u>
Net cash from operating activities	<u>61,190</u>	<u>18,572</u>
Net increase in cash and cash equivalents	61,190	18,572
Cash and cash equivalents at beginning of year	<u>219,889</u>	<u>201,864</u>
Cash and cash equivalents at end of year	<u>281,079</u>	<u>220,436</u>

The notes on pages 13 to 19 form part of these financial statements.

Hear Us
Company Limited by Guarantee
Notes to the Financial Statements
Year ended 31 March 2024

1. General information

The charity is a private company limited by guarantee, registered in England and Wales and a registered charity in England and Wales. The address of the registered office is Orchard House,, 15a Purley Road,, South Croydon, CR2 6EZ.

2. Statement of compliance

These financial statements have been prepared in compliance with FRS 102, 'The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and the Republic of Ireland', the 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) (Charities SORP (FRS 102)) and the Charities Act 2011.

3. Accounting policies

Hear Us was commissioned to contribute to the fulfilment of the Sustainable Community Strategy aim of the London Borough of Croydon, to involve service users in the assessment of need, planning, selection of providers and monitoring of services. All material incoming resources from this service level agreement between Hear Us as the provider and South West London Integrated Care Board (SWL ICB) as the Commissioner have been included in the Statement of Financial Activities when the charity is entitled to the income and the amount can be quantified with reasonable accuracy.

Basis of preparation

The financial statements have been prepared on the historical cost basis, as modified by the revaluation of certain financial assets and liabilities and investment properties measured at fair value through income or expenditure.

The financial statements are prepared in sterling, which is the functional currency of the entity.

Going concern

There are no material uncertainties about the charity's ability to continue.

Foreign currencies

Foreign currency transactions are initially recorded in the functional currency, by applying the spot exchange rate as at the date of the transaction. Monetary assets and liabilities denominated in foreign currencies are translated at the exchange rate ruling at the reporting date, with any gains or losses being taken to the statement of financial activities.

Fund accounting

Unrestricted funds are available for use at the discretion of the trustees to further any of the charity's purposes.

Designated funds are unrestricted funds earmarked by the trustees for particular future project or commitment.

Restricted funds are subjected to restrictions on their expenditure declared by the donor or through the terms of an appeal, and fall into one of two sub-classes: restricted income funds or endowment funds.

Hear Us
Company Limited by Guarantee
Notes to the Financial Statements *(continued)*
Year ended 31 March 2024

3. Accounting policies *(continued)*

Incoming resources

All incoming resources are included in the statement of financial activities when entitlement has passed to the charity; it is probable that the economic benefits associated with the transaction will flow to the charity and the amount can be reliably measured. The following specific policies are applied to particular categories of income:

- income from donations or grants is recognised when there is evidence of entitlement to the gift, receipt is probable and its amount can be measured reliably.
- legacy income is recognised when receipt is probable and entitlement is established.
- income from donated goods is measured at the fair value of the goods unless this is impractical to measure reliably, in which case the value is derived from the cost to the donor or the estimated resale value. Donated facilities and services are recognised in the accounts when received if the value can be reliably measured. No amounts are included for the contribution of general volunteers.
- income from contracts for the supply of services is recognised with the delivery of the contracted service. This is classified as unrestricted funds unless there is a contractual requirement for it to be spent on a particular purpose and returned if unspent, in which case it may be regarded as restricted.

Resources expended

Expenditure is recognised on an accruals basis as a liability is incurred. Expenditure includes any VAT which cannot be fully recovered, and is classified under headings of the statement of financial activities to which it relates:

- expenditure on raising funds includes the costs of all fundraising activities, events, non-charitable trading activities, and the sale of donated goods.
- expenditure on charitable activities includes all costs incurred by a charity in undertaking activities that further its charitable aims for the benefit of its beneficiaries, including those support costs and costs relating to the governance of the charity apportioned to charitable activities.
- other expenditure includes all expenditure that is neither related to raising funds for the charity nor part of its expenditure on charitable activities.

All costs are allocated to expenditure categories reflecting the use of the resource. Direct costs attributable to a single activity are allocated directly to that activity. Shared costs are apportioned between the activities they contribute to on a reasonable, justifiable and consistent basis.

Depreciation

Depreciation is calculated so as to write off the cost or valuation of an asset, less its residual value, over the useful economic life of that asset as follows:

- 25% reducing balance

Hear Us

Company Limited by Guarantee

Notes to the Financial Statements *(continued)*

Year ended 31 March 2024

4. Limited by guarantee

The charity is also registered with Companies House as a private company limited by Guarantee without share capital

5. Donations and legacies

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total Funds 2024 £
Donations			
Donations	2,283	–	2,283
Grants			
Reachout Challenge	–	1,200	1,200
Trust for London - Campaigning	–	19,400	19,400
South West London Integrated Care Board (SWL ICB) SLA	139,099	–	139,099
London Community Foundation	–	10,000	10,000
City Bridge	–	69,670	69,670
Access to Work	–	428	428
The National Lottery	–	94,609	94,609
Lloyds Foundation	25,000	–	25,000
	<u>166,382</u>	<u>195,307</u>	<u>361,689</u>
	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total Funds 2023 £
Donations			
Donations	1,335	–	1,335
Grants			
Reachout Challenge	–	1,050	1,050
Trust for London - Campaigning	–	–	–
South West London Integrated Care Board (SWL ICB) SLA	106,999	–	106,999
London Community Foundation	–	–	–
City Bridge	–	54,431	54,431
Access to Work	–	–	–
The National Lottery	–	69,368	69,368
Lloyds Foundation	27,750	–	27,750
	<u>136,084</u>	<u>124,849</u>	<u>260,933</u>

Hear Us

Company Limited by Guarantee

Notes to the Financial Statements *(continued)*

Year ended 31 March 2024

6. Expenditure on charitable activities by fund type

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total Funds 2024 £
Reachout Challenge	–	1,139	1,139
Deputy CEO Costs	–	34,943	34,944
Travel & Subsistence	–	–	–
Charity Development and Fundraising	30,565	–	30,565
Linkworking	24,452	–	24,452
Hear Us Guide	–	–	–
Croydon Eagles	–	787	787
Campaigns Project and Access to Work	–	7,402	7,402
Open Forum Meetings	–	197	197
Welfare Rights Advice Project	–	121,846	121,844
Support costs	77,582	–	77,852
	<u>132,868</u>	<u>166,314</u>	<u>299,182</u>

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total Funds 2023 £
Reachout Challenge	–	147	147
Deputy CEO Costs	–	32,985	32,985
Travel & Subsistence	–	–	–
Charity Development and Fundraising	–	–	–
Linkworking	24,035	–	24,035
Hear Us Guide	–	6,739	6,739
Croydon Eagles	–	2,778	2,778
Campaigns Project and Access to Work	–	–	–
Open Forum Meetings	–	5,448	5,448
Welfare Rights Advice Project	–	73,579	73,432
Support costs	99,729	(1)	95,329
	<u>123,764</u>	<u>121,675</u>	<u>240,893</u>

Hear Us

Company Limited by Guarantee

Notes to the Financial Statements *(continued)*

Year ended 31 March 2024

7. Expenditure on charitable activities by activity type

	Activities undertaken directly	Support costs	Total funds 2024	Total fund 2023
	£	£	£	£
Reachout Challenge	1,139	–	1,139	147
Deputy CEO Costs	34,944	–	34,944	32,985
Charity Development and Fundraising	30,565	–	30,565	–
Linkworking	24,452	–	24,452	24,035
Hear Us Guide	–	–	–	6,739
Croydon Eagles	787	–	787	2,778
Campaigns Project and Access to Work	7,402	–	7,402	–
Open Forum Meetings	197	–	197	6,055
Welfare Rights Advice Project	121,844	–	121,844	73,432
Governance costs	–	77,582	77,582	95,329
	<u>221,330</u>	<u>77,582</u>	<u>299,182</u>	<u>240,893</u>

8. Other expenditure

	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Total Funds 2024
	£	£	£
Christmas Social	970	–	970
Staff Welfare	–	–	–
Subscriptions	187	160	347
	<u>1,157</u>	<u>160</u>	<u>1,317</u>

	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Total Funds 2023
	£	£	£
Christmas Social	870	–	870
Staff Welfare	190	–	190
Subscriptions	408	–	408
	<u>1,468</u>	<u>–</u>	<u>1,468</u>

9. Net income

Net income is stated after charging/(crediting):

	2024	2023
	£	£
Operating lease rentals	<u>2,103</u>	<u>2,776</u>

Hear Us
Company Limited by Guarantee
Notes to the Financial Statements *(continued)*
Year ended 31 March 2024

10. Independent examination fees

	2024	2023
	£	£
Fees payable to the independent examiner for: Independent examination of the financial statements	<u>—</u>	<u>1,494</u>

11. Staff costs

The total staff costs and employee benefits for the reporting period are analysed as follows:

	2024	2023
	£	£
Wages and salaries	207,696	159,466
Social security costs	1,569	2,338
Employer contributions to pension plans	4,866	1,987
Other employee benefits	4,430	6,864
	<u>218,561</u>	<u>170,655</u>

The average head count of employees during the year was 9 (2023: 8).

No employee received employee benefits of more than £60,000 during the year (2023: Nil).

12. Trustee remuneration and expenses

No remuneration or other benefits from employment with the charity or a related entity were received by the trustees.

13. Tangible fixed assets

	Equipment
	£
Cost	
At 1 Apr 2023 and 31 Mar 2024	<u>663</u>
Depreciation	
At 1 Apr 2023 and 31 Mar 2024	<u>663</u>
Carrying amount	
At 31 March 2024	<u>—</u>

14. Debtors

	2024	2023
	£	£
Trade debtors	79	79
Other debtors	165	165
	<u>244</u>	<u>244</u>

Hear Us
Company Limited by Guarantee
Notes to the Financial Statements *(continued)*
Year ended 31 March 2024

15. Creditors: amounts falling due within one year

	2024	2023
	£	£
Other creditors	<u>1,796</u>	<u>1,796</u>

16. Analysis of charitable funds

Unrestricted funds

	At 1 April 2023	Income £	Expenditure £	At 31 March 2024
Unrestricted Fund	<u>183,651</u>	<u>166,382</u>	<u>(134,025)</u>	<u>216,008</u>

Restricted funds

	At 1 April 2023	Income £	Expenditure £	At 31 March 2024
Welfare Rights Advice Project	<u>34,686</u>	<u>195,307</u>	<u>(166,474)</u>	<u>63,519</u>

COMPANY REGISTRATION NUMBER: 06891337
CHARITY REGISTRATION NUMBER: 1135535

Hear Us
Company Limited by Guarantee
Unaudited Financial Statements
31 March 2024

Hear Us
Company Limited by Guarantee
Financial Statements
Year ended 31 March 2024

	Page
Trustees' annual report (incorporating the director's report)	1
Independent examiner's report to the trustees	4
Statement of financial activities (including income and expenditure account)	6
Statement of financial position	7
Notes to the financial statements	9

Hear Us
Company Limited by Guarantee
Trustees' Annual Report (Incorporating the Director's Report)
Year ended 31 March 2024

The trustees, who are also the directors for the purposes of company law, present their report and the unaudited financial statements of the charity for the year ended 31 March 2024.

Reference and administrative details

Registered charity name	Hear Us
Charity registration number	1135535
Company registration number	06891337
Principal office and registered office	Orchard House, 15a Purley Road, South Croydon CR2 6EZ

The trustees

Cassandra Austin	
Abeline Greene	
Josh Baker-Mendoza	
Niall Eugene McVeigh	
Jacqueline Ashton	
Millicent Isola Reid	
Tesfaalem Rodway	(Appointed 9 June 2023)

Company secretary	Abeline Greene
--------------------------	----------------

Accountants	Axis Accountants Ltd T/as Mitchell Rodrigues & Co Chartered accountant Suite 14, Zeal House, 8, Deer Park Road London SW19 3GY
--------------------	---

Hear Us
Company Limited by Guarantee
Trustees' Annual Report (Incorporating the Director's Report) *(continued)*
Year ended 31 March 2024

Structure, governance and management

Formation

Hear Us has been running since 4th October 2001 as a not for profit organisation in Croydon and on 15th April 2010 the Management Committee registered Hear Us with the Charity Commission for charity status (No. 1135535) to give Hear Us a more independent and stronger voice in the community.

Management

The constitution in the original form was adopted by resolution at the AGM held on the 27th May 2004. Amendments to the constitution were adopted by resolution at the EGM held on 1st July 2008.

The Management Committee are the Board of Trustees and are listed above. They include a Chairperson, Vice Chairperson, Secretary, Treasurer and the Chief Executive Officer, Tim Oldham. The Committee has the power to co-opt members as and when they deem it necessary. The Board of Trustees are responsible for the day-to-day running of Hear Us and has a responsibility to report to the funders, charity commission and other stakeholders whenever the need arises.

Objectives and activities

The objectives of Hear Us are:

To relieve the needs of people living in the London Borough of Croydon and surrounding areas who have mental health problems by provision of services and advice.

To advance education about mental health for public benefit in the London Borough of Croydon and surrounding areas with the object of creating awareness and reducing the stigma attached to mental health.

Achievements and performance

Hear Us is a Croydon charity that is the only project for people with mental ill health that is run by people with lived experience. This gives us a unique insight into the barriers our service users face. We provide specialist peer support for people with complex mental health issues living or working in the London Borough of Croydon. Our practical, regular activities help people cope better with daily living and relieve their social, emotional and physical needs.

Hear Us has been built by a highly passionate team dedicated to helping people with mental illness access financial, health, and social inclusion support in Croydon. We actively challenge restrictive and coercive healthcare practices and negative perceptions associated with mental illness. This helps to reduce stigma and discrimination.

Our small charity supports people in regaining their confidence and wellbeing so that they can stand on their own feet. Our goal is not to make people dependent upon a service but to make them strong and well. We believe that each person who comes to the project has the potential to recover from their mental health relapse or crisis. Our approach supports them to do this.

Welfare Rights Advice Project (WRAP):

David is the manager of our WRAP, leading a team that includes Shellie and Barbra. They have developed the Welfare Rights Advice Project and delivered the service to support people and inform them how to apply for and maintain their own welfare and disability benefits. This includes understanding what the claim form questions mean and how to answer those

questions based on their own ill health, daily needs and struggles.

A significant part of the project involves regular support and reassurance, particularly for those who struggle with anxiety and depression. The majority of claims we support are Personal Independence Payments (PIP). In the coming months, we expect an increased need for support because of the migration to Universal Credit for people on ESA and Housing Benefit. Our Welfare Rights Advice Project aims to coach a person on making and maintaining their benefit claims.

We provide support to people with access to immediate support through access to Foodbanks and discretionary payments. We have continued to support people with mobility problems in successfully applying for mobility schemes such as Freedom Passes and Blue Badges.

We would like to thank the National Lottery Community Fund and the City Bridge Foundation for funding the WRAP service. Their funding has enabled us to continue delivering this much-needed project.

Linkworking Project:

We have been running the Linkworking Project since 2007 to engage and support people with mental ill health in Croydon's inpatient wards at the Royal Bethlem Hospital (RBH) and Croydon's mental health community services, Jeanette Wallace House (JWH) and Queens Resource Centre (QRC).

In January, we appointed Betty as the new manager of the Linkworking Project. She has taken over from Barbra, who moved to join our WRAP project to strengthen the team. We appointed Abby as a senior support worker to support our Linkworkers onsite.

We enable people in crisis to have their voices heard and express their concerns about the treatment and care they receive. We enable greater access to available services on the wards and improve services to ensure a better chance of recovery from severe mental illness.

Our goal is to support people to develop confidence and self-belief, feel empowered through positive discussion, and reduce stigma and discrimination of mental ill health.

Open Forum:

Amy, our Open Forum Coordinator, invites new guest speakers to our Open Forum, which brings together the mental health community, particularly people who are currently in receipt of SLAM services, to discuss Croydon's mental health and wellbeing services and their accessibility, quality, and development.

They can meet, network, and discover new opportunities that aid positive mental health and well-being, help to prevent dependency on clinical services and support people in regaining self-esteem, confidence, and empowerment. For many, expressing their voice in the forum empowers and aids in raising self-esteem and confidence.

Over the coming year, we will redevelop the Open Forum to enable more people to access this project.

Campaigns Project: A Voice for Change

In January, we were pleased to announce that we have won funding from Trust for London for three years to run a Campaigning Project, and we appointed May as the Campaigns Coordinator. She is building a movement run and led by people with lived experience of mental ill health representing all communities initially in Croydon. This movement will educate, inform and influence change to improve the lives of some of the most disadvantaged and vulnerable in our communities through awareness-raising and campaigning for change in our public services and in the broader community.

Reachout Challenge:

Barbra had been the figurehead of the Reachout Challenge for many years, has stepped aside

to focus on WRAP. May has become the Reachout lead and has taken over this project to help raise awareness of mental ill health and share lived experiences of crisis and relapse with police from the UK and worldwide at Leatherhead Police College on the Negotiation and Crisis Course. Our volunteers gain confidence and improved self-esteem from sharing their experiences. We have also won some new funding, which we will announce in more detail shortly. Please visit our website for updates about this funding and all our projects.

April 2025:

Hear Us will celebrate 15 years of charity status. We believe that people receiving care and treatment for mental health services can help improve services based on their experiences and needs. This conviction can be traced back to 1992 when a small group came together to build a project that would enable them to have their voices heard and included in the design and development of Croydon's Mental Health Services.

Historically, Hear Us has been a voice for people with severe and enduring mental illness who receive care and treatment from secondary mental health services. In recent years, we have been helping people struggling with mental ill health who have been surviving outside of services, including those who have no access to GP surgeries.

We report all our project outcomes to all funders and share our findings with the South West London Integrated Care Board (SWL ICB) and senior stakeholders across Croydon. We have continued to contribute and represent the voice of Croydon's mental health community in the development, planning and commissioning of mental health services.

Hear Us
Company Limited by Guarantee
Trustees' Annual Report (Incorporating the Director's Report) *(continued)*
Year ended 31 March 2024

Financial review

Reserves Policy

Hear Us endeavours to maintain reserves equivalent to a minimum of 6 months costs at all times. For the financial year 2024/25 this will be approximately £180,000. These should be held in bank accounts with easy withdrawal facilities.

Risk Management

The Board of Trustees have identified and reviewed the major risks facing Hear Us and systems have been established to mitigate them. Lack of financial resources to cover expenditure is recognised as the main concern, together with the need to protect our reputation and ensure that all regulatory requirements are adhered to. Measures to reduce risk in these areas include:

Review of the Service Level Agreement with South West London Integrated Care Board (SWL ICB). Annual Review of events. Regular Committee meetings including Financial Report (current & projected), Charity Chief Executive Officer Reports and a review of fundraising activities. Formation of a fundraising committee who are required to report on all plans and activities to the Board of Trustees. Regular liaison with officers of the Croydon Clinical Commissioning Group. Continuation of staff training programmes.

Small company provisions

This report has been prepared in accordance with the provisions applicable to companies entitled to the small companies exemption.

The trustees' annual report was approved on 15th October 2024 and signed on behalf of the board of trustees by:



Jacqueline Ashton
Trustee



Abeline Greene
Charity Secretary

Hear Us
Company Limited by Guarantee
Independent Examiner's Report to the Trustees of Hear Us
Year ended 31 March 2024

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the above charity ("the Trust") for the year ended 31 March 2024, which comprise the statement of financial activities, statement of financial position and the related notes.

Respective and basis of report

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

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

Independent examiner's statement

The charity's gross income exceeded £250,000 and I am qualified to undertake the examination by being a qualified member of Association of Chartered Certified Accountants.

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no material matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination (other than that disclosed below) which gives me cause to believe that in, any material respect:

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

Hear Us

Company Limited by Guarantee

Independent Examiner's Report to the Trustees of Hear Us *(continued)*

Year ended 31 March 2024

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.

AXIS ACCOUNTANTS LTD
Chartered Certified Accountants

Suite 14, Zeal House,
8, Deer Park Road
London
SW19 3GY

Hear Us
Company Limited by Guarantee
Statement of Financial Activities
(including income and expenditure account)

31 March 2024

			2024		2023
	Note	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	Total funds £	Total funds £
Income and endowments					
Donations and legacies	5	166,382	195,307	361,689	260,933
Total income		<u>166,382</u>	<u>195,307</u>	<u>361,689</u>	<u>260,933</u>
Expenditure					
Expenditure on charitable activities	6,7	(132,868)	(166,314)	(299,182)	(240,893)
Other expenditure	8	(1,157)	(160)	(1,317)	(1,468)
Total expenditure		<u>(134,025)</u>	<u>(166,474)</u>	<u>(300,499)</u>	<u>(242,361)</u>
Net income and net movement in funds		<u>32,357</u>	<u>28,833</u>	<u>61,190</u>	<u>18,572</u>
Reconciliation of funds					
Total funds brought forward		183,651	34,686	218,337	200,312
Total funds carried forward		<u>216,008</u>	<u>63,519</u>	<u>279,527</u>	<u>214,338</u>

The statement of financial activities includes all gains and losses recognised in the year.
All income and expenditure derive from continuing activities.

The notes on pages 13 to 19 form part of these financial statements.

Hear Us
Company Limited by Guarantee
Statement of Financial Position
31 March 2024

		2024		2023
		£	£	£
Current assets				
Debtors	14	244		244
Cash at bank and in hand		281,079		219,889
		<u>281,323</u>		<u>220,133</u>
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	15	<u>1,796</u>		<u>1,796</u>
Net current assets			<u>279,527</u>	<u>218,337</u>
Total assets less current liabilities			<u>279,527</u>	<u>218,337</u>
Net assets			<u>279,527</u>	<u>218,337</u>
Funds of the charity				
Restricted funds			63,519	34,686
Unrestricted funds			<u>216,008</u>	<u>183,651</u>
Total unrestricted funds		<u>216,008</u>		<u>183,651</u>
Total charity funds	16		<u>279,527</u>	<u>218,337</u>

For the year ending 31 March 2024 the charity was entitled to exemption from audit under section 477 of the Companies Act 2006 relating to small companies.

Trustees responsibilities:

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

These financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the provisions applicable to companies subject to the small companies' regime.

These financial statements were approved by the board of trustees and authorised for issue on 15th October 2024, and are signed on behalf of the board by:



Jacqueline Ashton
Trustee

The notes on pages 13 to 19 form part of these financial statements.

Hear Us
Company Limited by Guarantee
Statement of Cash Flows
Year ended 31 March 2024

	2024	2023
	£	£
Cash flows from operating activities		
Net income	61,190	18,572
<i>Adjustments for:</i>		
Interest payable and similar charges	<u>515</u>	<u>739</u>
Cash generated from operations	61,705	19,311
Interest paid	<u>(515)</u>	<u>(739)</u>
Net cash from operating activities	<u>61,190</u>	<u>18,572</u>
Net increase in cash and cash equivalents	61,190	18,572
Cash and cash equivalents at beginning of year	<u>219,889</u>	<u>201,864</u>
Cash and cash equivalents at end of year	<u>281,079</u>	<u>220,436</u>

The notes on pages 13 to 19 form part of these financial statements.

Hear Us
Company Limited by Guarantee
Notes to the Financial Statements
Year ended 31 March 2024

1. General information

The charity is a private company limited by guarantee, registered in England and Wales and a registered charity in England and Wales. The address of the registered office is Orchard House,, 15a Purley Road,, South Croydon, CR2 6EZ.

2. Statement of compliance

These financial statements have been prepared in compliance with FRS 102, 'The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and the Republic of Ireland', the 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) (Charities SORP (FRS 102)) and the Charities Act 2011.

3. Accounting policies

Hear Us was commissioned to contribute to the fulfilment of the Sustainable Community Strategy aim of the London Borough of Croydon, to involve service users in the assessment of need, planning, selection of providers and monitoring of services. All material incoming resources from this service level agreement between Hear Us as the provider and South West London Integrated Care Board (SWL ICB) as the Commissioner have been included in the Statement of Financial Activities when the charity is entitled to the income and the amount can be quantified with reasonable accuracy.

Basis of preparation

The financial statements have been prepared on the historical cost basis, as modified by the revaluation of certain financial assets and liabilities and investment properties measured at fair value through income or expenditure.

The financial statements are prepared in sterling, which is the functional currency of the entity.

Going concern

There are no material uncertainties about the charity's ability to continue.

Foreign currencies

Foreign currency transactions are initially recorded in the functional currency, by applying the spot exchange rate as at the date of the transaction. Monetary assets and liabilities denominated in foreign currencies are translated at the exchange rate ruling at the reporting date, with any gains or losses being taken to the statement of financial activities.

Fund accounting

Unrestricted funds are available for use at the discretion of the trustees to further any of the charity's purposes.

Designated funds are unrestricted funds earmarked by the trustees for particular future project or commitment.

Restricted funds are subjected to restrictions on their expenditure declared by the donor or through the terms of an appeal, and fall into one of two sub-classes: restricted income funds or endowment funds.

Hear Us
Company Limited by Guarantee
Notes to the Financial Statements *(continued)*
Year ended 31 March 2024

3. Accounting policies *(continued)*

Incoming resources

All incoming resources are included in the statement of financial activities when entitlement has passed to the charity; it is probable that the economic benefits associated with the transaction will flow to the charity and the amount can be reliably measured. The following specific policies are applied to particular categories of income:

- income from donations or grants is recognised when there is evidence of entitlement to the gift, receipt is probable and its amount can be measured reliably.
- legacy income is recognised when receipt is probable and entitlement is established.
- income from donated goods is measured at the fair value of the goods unless this is impractical to measure reliably, in which case the value is derived from the cost to the donor or the estimated resale value. Donated facilities and services are recognised in the accounts when received if the value can be reliably measured. No amounts are included for the contribution of general volunteers.
- income from contracts for the supply of services is recognised with the delivery of the contracted service. This is classified as unrestricted funds unless there is a contractual requirement for it to be spent on a particular purpose and returned if unspent, in which case it may be regarded as restricted.

Resources expended

Expenditure is recognised on an accruals basis as a liability is incurred. Expenditure includes any VAT which cannot be fully recovered, and is classified under headings of the statement of financial activities to which it relates:

- expenditure on raising funds includes the costs of all fundraising activities, events, non-charitable trading activities, and the sale of donated goods.
- expenditure on charitable activities includes all costs incurred by a charity in undertaking activities that further its charitable aims for the benefit of its beneficiaries, including those support costs and costs relating to the governance of the charity apportioned to charitable activities.
- other expenditure includes all expenditure that is neither related to raising funds for the charity nor part of its expenditure on charitable activities.

All costs are allocated to expenditure categories reflecting the use of the resource. Direct costs attributable to a single activity are allocated directly to that activity. Shared costs are apportioned between the activities they contribute to on a reasonable, justifiable and consistent basis.

Depreciation

Depreciation is calculated so as to write off the cost or valuation of an asset, less its residual value, over the useful economic life of that asset as follows:

- 25% reducing balance

Hear Us

Company Limited by Guarantee

Notes to the Financial Statements *(continued)*

Year ended 31 March 2024

4. Limited by guarantee

The charity is also registered with Companies House as a private company limited by Guarantee without share capital

5. Donations and legacies

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total Funds 2024 £
Donations			
Donations	2,283	–	2,283
Grants			
Reachout Challenge	–	1,200	1,200
Trust for London - Campaigning	–	19,400	19,400
South West London Integrated Care Board (SWL ICB) SLA	139,099	–	139,099
London Community Foundation	–	10,000	10,000
City Bridge	–	69,670	69,670
Access to Work	–	428	428
The National Lottery	–	94,609	94,609
Lloyds Foundation	25,000	–	25,000
	<u>166,382</u>	<u>195,307</u>	<u>361,689</u>
	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total Funds 2023 £
Donations			
Donations	1,335	–	1,335
Grants			
Reachout Challenge	–	1,050	1,050
Trust for London - Campaigning	–	–	–
South West London Integrated Care Board (SWL ICB) SLA	106,999	–	106,999
London Community Foundation	–	–	–
City Bridge	–	54,431	54,431
Access to Work	–	–	–
The National Lottery	–	69,368	69,368
Lloyds Foundation	27,750	–	27,750
	<u>136,084</u>	<u>124,849</u>	<u>260,933</u>

Hear Us

Company Limited by Guarantee

Notes to the Financial Statements *(continued)*

Year ended 31 March 2024

6. Expenditure on charitable activities by fund type

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total Funds 2024 £
Reachout Challenge	–	1,139	1,139
Deputy CEO Costs	–	34,943	34,944
Travel & Subsistence	–	–	–
Charity Development and Fundraising	30,565	–	30,565
Linkworking	24,452	–	24,452
Hear Us Guide	–	–	–
Croydon Eagles	–	787	787
Campaigns Project and Access to Work	–	7,402	7,402
Open Forum Meetings	–	197	197
Welfare Rights Advice Project	–	121,846	121,844
Support costs	77,582	–	77,852
	<u>132,868</u>	<u>166,314</u>	<u>299,182</u>

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total Funds 2023 £
Reachout Challenge	–	147	147
Deputy CEO Costs	–	32,985	32,985
Travel & Subsistence	–	–	–
Charity Development and Fundraising	–	–	–
Linkworking	24,035	–	24,035
Hear Us Guide	–	6,739	6,739
Croydon Eagles	–	2,778	2,778
Campaigns Project and Access to Work	–	–	–
Open Forum Meetings	–	5,448	5,448
Welfare Rights Advice Project	–	73,579	73,432
Support costs	99,729	(1)	95,329
	<u>123,764</u>	<u>121,675</u>	<u>240,893</u>

Hear Us

Company Limited by Guarantee

Notes to the Financial Statements *(continued)*

Year ended 31 March 2024

7. Expenditure on charitable activities by activity type

	Activities undertaken directly	Support costs	Total funds 2024	Total fund 2023
	£	£	£	£
Reachout Challenge	1,139	–	1,139	147
Deputy CEO Costs	34,944	–	34,944	32,985
Charity Development and Fundraising	30,565	–	30,565	–
Linkworking	24,452	–	24,452	24,035
Hear Us Guide	–	–	–	6,739
Croydon Eagles	787	–	787	2,778
Campaigns Project and Access to Work	7,402	–	7,402	–
Open Forum Meetings	197	–	197	6,055
Welfare Rights Advice Project	121,844	–	121,844	73,432
Governance costs	–	77,582	77,582	95,329
	<u>221,330</u>	<u>77,582</u>	<u>299,182</u>	<u>240,893</u>

8. Other expenditure

	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Total Funds 2024
	£	£	£
Christmas Social	970	–	970
Staff Welfare	–	–	–
Subscriptions	187	160	347
	<u>1,157</u>	<u>160</u>	<u>1,317</u>

	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Total Funds 2023
	£	£	£
Christmas Social	870	–	870
Staff Welfare	190	–	190
Subscriptions	408	–	408
	<u>1,468</u>	<u>–</u>	<u>1,468</u>

9. Net income

Net income is stated after charging/(crediting):

	2024	2023
	£	£
Operating lease rentals	<u>2,103</u>	<u>2,776</u>

Hear Us
Company Limited by Guarantee
Notes to the Financial Statements *(continued)*
Year ended 31 March 2024

10. Independent examination fees

	2024	2023
	£	£
Fees payable to the independent examiner for: Independent examination of the financial statements	—	1,494
	<u>—</u>	<u>1,494</u>

11. Staff costs

The total staff costs and employee benefits for the reporting period are analysed as follows:

	2024	2023
	£	£
Wages and salaries	207,696	159,466
Social security costs	1,569	2,338
Employer contributions to pension plans	4,866	1,987
Other employee benefits	4,430	6,864
	<u>218,561</u>	<u>170,655</u>

The average head count of employees during the year was 9 (2023: 8).

No employee received employee benefits of more than £60,000 during the year (2023: Nil).

12. Trustee remuneration and expenses

No remuneration or other benefits from employment with the charity or a related entity were received by the trustees.

13. Tangible fixed assets

	Equipment
	£
Cost	
At 1 Apr 2023 and 31 Mar 2024	663
Depreciation	
At 1 Apr 2023 and 31 Mar 2024	663
Carrying amount	
At 31 March 2024	—
	<u>—</u>

14. Debtors

	2024	2023
	£	£
Trade debtors	79	79
Other debtors	165	165
	<u>244</u>	<u>244</u>

Hear Us
Company Limited by Guarantee
Notes to the Financial Statements *(continued)*
Year ended 31 March 2024

15. Creditors: amounts falling due within one year

	2024	2023
	£	£
Other creditors	<u>1,796</u>	<u>1,796</u>

16. Analysis of charitable funds

Unrestricted funds

	At 1 April 2023	Income £	Expenditure £	At 31 March 2024
Unrestricted Fund	<u>183,651</u>	<u>166,382</u>	<u>(134,025)</u>	<u>216,008</u>

Restricted funds

	At 1 April 2023	Income £	Expenditure £	At 31 March 2024
Welfare Rights Advice Project	<u>34,686</u>	<u>195,307</u>	<u>(166,474)</u>	<u>63,519</u>