Skylarks Charity

England & Wales · Charity number 1148114

Details

Other names	ME TOO & CO, Skylarks
Status	Registered
Legal form	Charitable company
Company number	08047350
Registered	2012-07-16
Register	View on the Charity Commission register

Contact

Address	The Cross Way Centre 306 Richmond Road Twickenham TW1 2PD
Phone	07946646033
Email	info@skylarks.charity
Website	www.skylarks.charity

Activities

Objects: THE RELIEF OF CHILDREN WITH ADDITIONAL NEEDS DUE TO PHYSICAL OR LEARNING IMPAIRMENT, EMOTIONAL OR BEHAVIOUR DIFFICULTIES OR ANY PERMANENT OR TEMPORARY ILLNESS, IN THE LONDON BOROUGH OF RICHMOND AND SURROUNDING AREAS, AND THE PROVISION OF INFORMATION, PRACTICAL ADVICE AND SUPPORT TO THEIR FAMILIES, CARERS AND SIBLINGS.

Activities: Skylarks supports children with additional needs across London and the UK through therapeutic activities, play, life skills, and employment training. We empower families via expert advice, training, and carer wellbeing services. Furthermore, we provide training and awareness raising for organisations to foster inclusion. We ensure every child can thrive and every family feels supported.

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Classification

- **How:** Provides Services, Provides Advocacy/advice/information
- **What:** Education/training, Disability, Other Charitable Purposes
- **Who:** Children/young People, People With Disabilities, Other Defined Groups

Geography

- Ealing
- Hammersmith And Fulham
- Hounslow
- Kingston Upon Thames
- Richmond Upon Thames
- Surrey
- Sutton
- Wandsworth

Finances

Period end	Income	Expenditure	Assets	Employees
2025-03-31	£481,397	£424,072	-	-
2024-03-31	£607,493	£532,502	£298,476	10
2023-03-31	£498,572	£470,209	-	-
2022-03-31	£426,901	£436,659	-	-
2021-03-31	£233,344	£225,819	-	-

Trustees

Name	Role	Appointed
Jennifer Dawn Peters	Chair	2016-06-21
Ann-Louise Ward		2024-07-04
Dane Hardie		2024-07-04
Daniel Radley		2026-06-10
Dr MEREILLE NEMH		2012-11-29
Robert Mitchell Pender		2018-10-04

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Skylarks Charity

England & Wales - Charity number 1148114

Accounts



Skylarks Charity (Skylarks)

A company limited by guarantee

Trustees' report and financial statements

for the year ended

31 March 2025

Charity number: 1148114
Company number: 08047350

Skylarks Charity
(A company limited by guarantee)

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Skylarks Charity
(A company limited by guarantee)

Legal and administrative information

Charity number	1148114
Company registration number	08047350
Registered office	Crossway Centre 306 Richmond Road Twickenham London TW1 2PD

The Skylarks Team

Trustees

The directors of the charitable company (the charity) are trustees for the purpose of charity law and, throughout this report, are collectively referred to as the Trustees or Board of Trustees.

The following served as Trustees & Board of Directors for the charitable company during the year.

Chair	Jennifer Peters
Treasurer	Rajan Thevasagayam (resigned Dec 2025)
Trustees	Jennifer Peters Rajan Thevasagayam (resigned Dec 2025) Deirdre Carswell (resigned May 2024) Christopher Key (resigned July 2024) Elissa Metzgen (resigned July 2024) Mireille Nemh Robert Pender Dominic Putt (appointed July 2024) Anne-Louise Ward (appointed July 2024) Dane Hardie (appointed July 2024)

Skylarks is a user-led organisation: of our seven trustees, five have lived experience of our cause.

Volunteers

At Skylarks Charity, we extend our sincere thanks to the volunteers who have played a vital role in supporting our work throughout the year. Their commitment, skills and generosity continue to strengthen our services and enhance the experience of the families we support.

During 2024–25, volunteers contributed 2,351 hours, across service delivery, administrative support and specialist activities. Their involvement has significantly enhanced our capacity to deliver high-quality, accessible support to children and young people.

We are deeply grateful for their time, energy and dedication. Skylarks' work is made stronger by their contributions, and we recognise the invaluable role they play in helping families feel welcomed, supported and connected.

Skylarks Charity
(A company limited by guarantee)

Report of the Trustees (incorporating the Directors' report) for the year ended 31 March 2025

The Trustees present their report and the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2025. The Trustees, who are also directors of Skylarks Charity for the purposes of company law and who served during the year and up to the date of this report, are set out on page 3.

Structure, governance and management

Governance

During 2024-25, Skylarks Charity remained a Charity (Number 1148114) governed by a Constitution and managed by our Board of Trustees, meeting on average seven times a year. The Trustees have complied with their duty in section 17(5) of the Charities Act 2011 to have regard to public benefit guidance published by the Charity Commission.

Our Vision

A world where families living with additional needs thrive.

Our Mission

Our mission is to enable every child and young person with additional needs to live their best life while supporting everyone whose lives they touch.

During 2024–25, Skylarks continued to operate under the strategic aims set out in the 2020–2024 Business Plan, which remained in place throughout the year. These aims guided our work and shaped the development of our services. Our priorities for the period were to:

- Strengthen our programmes and work collaboratively with partners.
- Attract new children and families to the organisation.
- Secure appropriate premises to enable future service expansion.
- Continue developing our online and digital offer.
- Invest in our staff, volunteers and organisational capacity.
- Diversify income streams to ensure long-term stability.

Securing new premises remained a core focus, as additional space is essential to meeting rising demand across Richmond and neighbouring areas. This continues to be a longer-term objective for the charity.

Objectives and Activities

Skylarks' charitable objectives remained unchanged during the year. Our purpose is to provide support and relief for children with additional needs, including physical or learning impairments, emotional or behavioural difficulties, or long-term or temporary illness, and to offer information and guidance to their families, carers and siblings.

We provide opportunities for children and young people aged 0–25 to play and learn in a friendly, supportive environment. Our services aim to increase confidence, improve communication, sensory and physical skills, and help each child reach their potential. By supporting families with emotional guidance, practical advice and clear information, we work to reduce isolation, improve financial resilience and ensure parents and carers have the knowledge they need to make informed decisions for their children.

Skylarks Charity
(A company limited by guarantee)

Report of the Trustees (incorporating the Directors' report)
for the year ended 31 March 2025

Chair of Trustees Report

Dear Supporters and Stakeholders,

I am pleased to present the Chair of Trustees' Report for Skylarks for the year 2024–2025. This has been a year marked by steady growth, continued resilience, and a clear commitment to meeting the rising needs of children and young people with additional needs. Despite significant pressures across the SEND landscape, Skylarks has strengthened its role as a trusted source of support for families, providing high-quality, accessible services throughout the year.

During 2024–25, Skylarks supported 1,195 individual children and 988 families, representing year-on-year growth of 3% and 4% respectively. We also welcomed 654 new families, a 14% increase, further highlighting both the demand for our services and the continued confidence families place in Skylarks. Engagement across the charity remained strong, with 9,487 bookings made during the year—an uplift of 5%, aligned with our operating targets. This consistent level of activity demonstrates the importance of our offer and the effectiveness of our service delivery model.

A significant highlight of the year has been the progress made on our new premises in Hounslow. Following years of planning and careful preparation, building work has now begun on this dedicated space, which is expected to open in September 2025. This development marks a significant milestone for the charity, enabling us to provide a permanent, accessible base for families in Hounslow and the surrounding boroughs. We are tremendously excited about the opportunities this new site will bring, both to expand our reach and to shape services that respond directly to community needs.

The progress of the Hounslow project has only been made possible by the exceptional generosity of our funders, stakeholders and the wider community. Alongside raising the income required to sustain our operational work, supporters also contributed towards the capital costs associated with the refurbishment and development of the new property. This collective effort demonstrates the deep commitment across our community to ensuring Skylarks can grow sustainably and continue offering vital support to families who depend on our services. We are sincerely grateful for the trust placed in us and for every contribution that helped move this major project forward.

Throughout the year, Skylarks continued to work towards the strategic aims set out in our 2020–2024 Business Plan. These priorities guided the refinement of our programmes, strengthened our partnerships and supported improvements across therapeutic services, information and advice, and opportunities for older children and young people. The ongoing enhancement of our digital offer also ensured families could access support in flexible ways, reducing barriers and widening participation.

None of this progress would have been possible without the dedication of our staff team, volunteers and partner organisations. Their professionalism, compassion and unwavering commitment have allowed Skylarks to respond effectively to emerging needs while maintaining a safe, welcoming environment for all who come through our doors. I also want to express our appreciation to the many funders and supporters who have continued to champion our work and ensure our services remain free at the point of access.

As we look ahead, Skylarks is entering a new strategic cycle with optimism and determination. Building on the strong foundations of this year, we remain committed to expanding our reach, deepening our impact, and ensuring that every child, young person, and family accessing Skylarks receives the high-quality support they deserve.

With sincere thanks and warm appreciation.

Jennifer Peters

Jennifer Peters, Chair of Trustees, Skylarks

Our Services in 2024–2025

Skylarks delivers a broad range of high-quality programmes designed to support children and young people with additional needs, alongside their parents and carers. Our services are organised into four key pillars: Activities, Therapies, Information & Advice, and Employment & Life Skills. Together, these pillars provide a holistic offer that enables children to play, learn and thrive, while ensuring families receive the practical and emotional support they need.

1. Activities

Our activities programme continued to provide inclusive and engaging opportunities that promote confidence, social interaction and skill development.

Creative Arts & Drama:

Sessions such as Magical Quests and Knots Arts enabled children to explore dramatic storytelling and artistic expression. These activities nurtured creativity, communication skills and imaginative play within a supportive environment.

Afterschool & Holiday Clubs:

Children took part in a wide variety of weekly sessions, including drama, arts and crafts, sensory play and movement-based clubs. Our holiday programme continued to provide structured, accessible activities for families during school breaks, helping to reduce isolation and maintain routine during challenging periods.

Haircutting Service:

Our sensory-friendly haircutting service remained a valued provision, offering children a calm, supportive environment that accommodated their sensory needs and ensured a positive grooming experience.

2. Therapies

Therapeutic support remains a core component of Skylarks' offer, helping children build emotional resilience, communication skills and physical wellbeing.

Counselling:

Delivered through our partnership with Off The Record, counselling continued to provide essential emotional support to children and parents. Sessions offered a safe, confidential space to explore challenges and develop coping strategies.

Music Therapy:

In collaboration with the Otakar Kraus Music Trust, music therapy helped children express themselves creatively and develop communication and emotional regulation skills.

Osteopathy:

Osteopathy sessions supported children with posture, muscle tone and sensory sensitivities, contributing to improved physical comfort and body awareness.

Equine Therapy:

Our continued partnership with Park Lane Stables enabled children to participate in equine-assisted therapy. These sessions supported balance, coordination, emotional wellbeing and confidence.

Developmental Yoga:

Delivered with experienced physiotherapists, developmental yoga sessions supported physical development, balance and emotional regulation through calm, structured movement.

3. Information & Advice

Skylarks' Information & Advice services support the whole family by offering guidance, practical tools and emotional connection.

Workshops and Training:

Parents and carers attended a range of workshops designed to strengthen understanding of additional needs, improve parenting strategies and support family wellbeing.

Support Groups:

Peer support remained an essential part of our offer. Groups such as Girls Connect (Parents of Autistic Girls), the Home-Schooling Group, Meditative Support Group and our Hounslow Family Support Group provided safe spaces for families to share experiences, seek advice and reduce isolation.

Advice Clinics:

Our benefits advice and family support clinics helped parents navigate complex systems, access entitlements and understand available resources, offering clarity in areas that can be challenging to manage alone.

SEND Advice Service:

Our SEND Advice Service continued to assist families with education-related queries, helping them understand their rights, the EHC plan process and local SEND pathways. Demand for this service remained high, reflecting the ongoing challenges facing families in navigating the SEND system.

4. Employment & Life Skills

This pillar supports young people aged 16–25 as they prepare for adulthood, further education and employment.

Spread Your Wings (Career Coaching):

The programme continued to deliver tailored 1-to-1 and group support focused on confidence, strengths-based exploration and understanding future options. AGM feedback showed that four out of five participants felt more confident after taking part, and the programme maintained a strong Net Promoter Score (NPS) from young people and families.

Money Management Courses (The Money Charity):

In partnership with The Money Charity, Skylarks offered financial education sessions covering budgeting, day-to-day money management, recognising and avoiding scams, and building positive financial habits. These courses equipped young people with essential skills for independent living.

JetLearn Coding Camps:

Our coding camps delivered with JetLearn introduced participants to programming, game and app development, and digital problem-solving. These sessions helped young people build confidence with technology and develop skills increasingly relevant for education and employment.

Report of the Trustees (incorporating the Directors' report) for the year ended 31 March 2025

Highlights of the Year

As we reflect on 2024–25, Skylarks has continued to serve as a vital source of support for families navigating the complexities of additional needs, set against wider pressures across health, education and the cost-of-living landscape. Our commitment to empowering families remains central to our mission, and this year demonstrated both the resilience of our community and the continued importance of our work.

Increasing Demand for Support

Demand for Skylarks' services continued to grow throughout the year. We welcomed 654 new families, a 14% increase on the previous year, reflecting both rising local need and the trust families place in Skylarks as a source of reliable, high-quality support. Families continued to face substantial pressures caused by:

- long waiting times for NHS therapies and assessments
- limited investment in local SEND services
- financial pressures linked to the cost-of-living crisis
- reduced access to early help and community-based support

These factors contributed to ongoing inequalities for children with additional needs and heightened the importance of accessible, community-based services. Skylarks continues to fill gaps in statutory provision and provide families with the guidance, activities and therapeutic support they need.

Empowering Futures Through Employment and Life Skills

A major highlight this year was the continued development of our Employment and Life Skills pillar, including the expansion of the Spread Your Wings programme. This work supports young people aged 16–25 to build confidence, explore career pathways and develop the skills needed for adulthood. Feedback remained strong, with four out of five participants reporting increased confidence, and the programme maintaining a positive Net Promoter Score (NPS) from participants and their families.

Alongside career coaching, Skylarks introduced Money Management workshops in partnership with The Money Charity, providing practical guidance on budgeting, financial decision-making and staying safe from scams. These sessions aimed to build financial confidence and equip young people with essential skills for independent living.

We also delivered JetLearn coding camps, giving young people opportunities to explore digital skills, programming and problem-solving in a structured, accessible format. These additions broadened the range of pathways available to participants and reflect Skylarks' commitment to preparing young people for an increasingly digital future.

Supporting Families Through Activities and Information Services

Skylarks continued to offer a wide range of inclusive afterschool clubs, holiday activities and skills-based sessions, all designed to promote confidence, social interaction and enjoyment. Our Information & Advice services also remained a critical gateway for families seeking SEND guidance, practical support and clarity in areas such as benefits, education and emotional wellbeing.

Our SEND Advice Service supported hundreds of parents navigating educational processes and securing the support their children are entitled to. These services remain essential for families facing increasingly complex and challenging systems.

Hounslow Families in Need: A Strengthening Presence

The needs of families in Hounslow remained a significant focus for Skylarks during 2024–25. For the second consecutive year, Hounslow accounted for the largest proportion of new registrations, demonstrating the growing demand for local SEND support. Many families continue to experience barriers such as limited specialist provision, language challenges and difficulties accessing suitable transport—making regular attendance at our Richmond centre difficult or, for many, impossible.

Following the closure of the Hounslow Toy Library, the lack of local provision became even more visible. Skylarks recognised the urgency of establishing a permanent base within the borough to ensure children and families could access consistent, high-quality support close to home.

Although tenancy negotiations for the former Toy Library building took longer than anticipated, Skylarks ultimately secured the property and commenced the redevelopment during 2024–25. Significant progress was made in preparing the site for its transformation into a fully accessible, purpose-designed centre. Building works began this year, supported by targeted fundraising and outstanding community generosity.

When it opens in September 2025, the Hounslow centre will provide:

- inclusive activities and play sessions
- workshops and parent support groups
- SEND advice and information services
- therapeutic programmes
- space for partner organisations offering specialist support
- extended hours and weekend provision as services grow

The centre will transform accessibility for local families and extend support into neighbouring areas of Richmond, Feltham, Ashford and beyond. This development marks one of the most significant milestones in Skylarks' recent history and reflects our commitment to reducing inequalities in access to SEND support across Southwest London.

The progress achieved this year was made possible by the generosity of funders, donors and supporters who contributed both to operational funding and the capital costs required for redevelopment. Their support reflects a shared commitment to ensuring that children with additional needs in Hounslow have access to high-quality support within their own community.

Recognition: Organisational Achievements

Throughout 2024–25, Skylarks received a number of significant awards and nominations recognising our commitment to inclusion, high-quality support and community impact. These honours reflect the dedication of our staff, volunteers, trustees, funders and partners. Key achievements included:

Awards – Winners
UK Social Inclusion Excellence Awards 2024 – Winner (Best Disabled Children's Charity)
Recognising outstanding inclusion, accessibility and community support.

Non-Profit Organisation Awards 2024 – Winner (Best Disabled Children's Charity)
Celebrating our sustained excellence in delivering impactful services for children and families.

The Extraordinary Achievers Award – Winner
Awarded for exceptional dedication and positive impact on children with additional needs.

Awards – Finalists
British Diversity Awards – Finalist (Charity of the Year)
Recognising Skylarks' leadership in championing equity, inclusion and accessible support

British Diversity Awards – Finalist (Diversity in Tech Award – Coding Camps)
Acknowledging our inclusive practice and the accessibility of our digital skills programmes.

European Diversity Awards – Finalist (Charity of the Year)

Highlighting Skylarks as a leading example of inclusive practice and impactful community support across the European charity sector.

Learning Disability & Autism Awards – Finalist (Positive Behaviour and Support Award)
Reflecting our commitment to promoting positive behavioural support and high-quality interventions.

Children & Young People Awards – Finalist (Community Organisation of the Year)
Celebrating Skylarks' role in building community connections and improving outcomes for families.

These accolades strengthen Skylarks' reputation as a trusted, impactful charity and encourage us to continue expanding opportunities, reducing inequalities and supporting families to thrive.

Completion of the 2021–2024 Strategy
The financial year 2024–25 marked the successful conclusion of Skylarks' 2021–2024 organisational strategy. This period focused on expanding our reach, increasing capacity, and strengthening the charity's long-term sustainability. We are pleased to report that the majority of strategic objectives were fully achieved, demonstrating meaningful progress for children, young people and families.

Expanding Support to Families
A key goal was to deepen engagement with existing families. We achieved this, increasing the average number of bookings per family from 5.5 in 2020 to 9.6 in 2024, a 75% rise, demonstrating the relevance and breadth of our services. Membership also grew beyond expectations, reaching over 5,200 registered families—a 17% over-achievement against the strategy target. An average of 680 new families joined each year, reflecting a 51% growth during the strategy period. Around 40% of families came from outside Richmond, showing Skylarks' expanding regional footprint.

Growing Services for Young People (16–25)
Developing support for older young people was a core objective. This was fully delivered through the establishment of our Employability and Life Skills pillar, including the Spread Your Wings programme, digital skills sessions, money management courses and targeted life-skills workshops. This now forms a permanent and growing area of service delivery.

Strengthening Financial Sustainability
The strategy set a target to grow income to £414,343 by 2024. Skylarks exceeded this in 24-25. This reflects significant diversification of income streams and stronger long-term financial resilience.

Improving Organisational Infrastructure
To support future growth, Skylarks invested in improved systems, governance and workforce wellbeing, including:

- a new HR and telephone system,
- enhanced governance KPIs,
- wellbeing initiatives and an Employee Assistance Programme,
- progress towards improved CRM capability.
- These improvements have strengthened internal capacity and positioned the charity for sustained delivery.

Overall Assessment

The 2021–2024 strategy delivered strong results across all core aims—expanded services, higher engagement, a broader regional footprint, stronger finances, and the acquisition of a second site. Skylarks enters its next strategic cycle with a strengthened foundation and a clear platform for continued growth.

Financial Review

The net financial result for the year ended March 2025 was a surplus of £57,325, with total income of £481,397 and total operating expenditure of £424,072. Income remained strong throughout the year, supported by continued growth in grants, community fundraising, corporate partnerships and individual donations.

In addition to income detailed above, the charity benefited from substantial volunteer and pro bono support. A total of 2,300 volunteer hours, valued at £78,300, contributed significantly to service delivery and organisational functions throughout the year. Further pro bono support across HR, marketing, gardening, peer support, advice services and professional consultancy represented an additional estimated value of more than £79,000. This combined support allowed Skylarks to maximise its resources and maintain high-quality services while managing operational costs effectively. The monetary value of this pro bono support is not included in these accounts.

Income and Funding

The charity's income profile for the year was diversified across several key income streams:

- 67.3% from trusts and foundations
- 9.9% from events
- 8.9% from corporate supporters
- 5% from other income
- 5% from community fundraising
- 4% from services

We extend our sincere thanks to all funders and supporters who contributed to Skylarks' work this year. Their generosity has enabled the charity to meet rising demand and deliver a wide range of services across our four service pillars.

Reserves

The Trustees review unrestricted reserves regularly to ensure the charity can withstand fluctuations in income and unexpected expenditure. The current reserves policy is to maintain between three and six months of unrestricted income, which is considered appropriate to ensure continuity of services and financial stability.

With the redevelopment of our new Hounslow premises underway, the Trustees agreed to maintain a designated reserve to support future capital and equipment costs for the site. This approach strengthens Skylarks' long-term sustainability while enabling strategic growth.

Plans for the Future (2025/26)

As Skylarks approached the end of its 2021–2024 Growth Strategy, the charity began developing a new organisational plan to guide the next phase of development. This work was completed in May 2025, marking a significant milestone in our evolution. The new 2025–2029 Strategic Plan builds on the progress achieved over the past four years and sets a clear direction for sustainable growth, improved delivery and greater impact for families.

Our Core Values

Developed in consultation with families, staff, volunteers and trustees, Skylarks' refreshed values now sit at the heart of all decision-making and shape how we deliver our services across all four pillars:

- Compassion – We listen, understand and respond with care.
- Inclusion – We welcome every family and remove barriers to participation.
- Empowerment – We give families the tools, skills and confidence to thrive.
- Community – We build strong, connected networks of support around families.

Strategic Priorities 2025–2029
The new strategy outlines five priority areas that will guide Skylarks over the coming four years:

Service Delivery – Expanding capacity across both centres and online to reach more children and families, and ensuring high-quality, needs-led programmes across all age groups.

Financial Sustainability – Strengthening income generation through diversified fundraising, deeper donor relationships and enhanced corporate engagement.

Technology & Infrastructure – Modernising systems, introducing a new CRM, improving digital accessibility, and investing in efficient tools to support staff and enhance user experience.

Community Engagement & Inclusion – Growing our presence across Richmond, Hounslow and neighbouring boroughs; strengthening micro-communities; and positioning Skylarks as a trusted voice within the SEND sector.

Organisational Development – Investing in staff wellbeing, improving internal communication, building a culture of learning and ensuring the charity is structured for future growth.

Focus for 2025/26

The upcoming year will prioritise:

- preparing and launching services at the new Hounslow Centre, due to open in September 2025;
- investing in systems and digital tools to support growth;
- refining and expanding programmes within all four service pillars;
- and ensuring the organisation is structurally equipped to deliver the new strategic plan.

Skylarks Charity
(A company limited by guarantee)

Report of the Trustees (incorporating the Directors' report) for the year ended 31 March 2025

Statement of Trustees' responsibilities

Company and Charity laws require the Trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year, which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charitable company as at the balance sheet date and of its incoming resources and application of resources, including income and expenditure, for the financial year. In preparing those financial statements the Trustees should follow best practice and:

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently:
- make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent:
- state whether the policies adopted are in accordance with the Charities Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP) 2015 and with applicable accounting standards, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements; and
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to assume that the charity will continue in operation.

The Trustees, who are the Directors of the company for the purposes of company law, are responsible for keeping proper accounting records, which disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charitable company and which enable it to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 2006. The Trustees are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charitable company and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud or other irregularities. Trustees who served during the year and up to the date of this report are set out on page 3.

The company's Directors certify that:

- so far as they are aware, there is no relevant accounting information of which the company's accountants are unaware: and
- they have taken all steps that they ought to have taken in order to make themselves aware of any relevant accounting information and to establish that the company's accountant is aware of that information.

On behalf of the board

Jennifer Peters
.....
Jennifer Peters
Chair of Trustees

Skylarks Charity
(A company limited by guarantee)

Report of the Trustees (incorporating the Directors' report)
for the year ended 31 March 2025

Independent examiner's report to the Trustees on the unaudited financial statements of Skylarks Charity.

I report on the financial statements for Skylarks Charity for the year ended 31st March 2025 set out on pages 16 to 24.

Respective responsibilities of Trustees and examiner

The charity's Trustees (who are also the Directors for the purpose of company law) are responsible for the preparation of the accounts. The charity's Trustees consider that an audit is not required for this period (under Section 144(2) of the Charities Act 2011 (the 2011 Act)), and that an independent examination is required.

Having satisfied myself that the charity is not subject to audit under company law and is eligible for independent examination, it is my responsibility:

- to examine the accounts under Section 145 of the 2011 Act
- to follow the procedures laid down in the General Directions given by the Charity Commission (under Section 145(5)(b) of the 2011 Act); and
- to state whether particular matters have come to my attention.

Basis of the independent examiner's report

My examination was carried out in accordance with the General Directions given by the Charity Commission. An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the charity and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts, and seeking explanations from you as Trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit, and consequently no opinion is given as to whether the accounts present a 'true and fair view' and the report is limited to those matters set out in the statements below.

Independent examiner's statement

In connection with my examination, no matter has come to my attention:
(1) which gives me reasonable cause to believe that, in any material respect, the requirements:
- to keep accounting records in accordance with Section 386 and 387 of the Companies Act 2006; and
- to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records, comply with the accounting requirements of Sections 394 and 395 of the Companies Act 2006 and with the methods and principles of the Statement of Recommended Practice: Accounting and Reporting by Charities

have not been met; or

(2) to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

N SC Tait

Charles Tait
Charles Tait Accounting Limited

Date: 22 December 2025

Statement of financial activities (incorporating the income and expenditure account)

Year ended 31 March 2024

	Note	Unrestricted General funds £	Unrestricted Designated funds £	Restricted funds £	2025 Total £	2024 Total £
Incoming resources						*Restated*
Incoming resources from generating funds: Voluntary income	2	199,060	-	232,460	431,520	454,434
Volunteer / pro bono income		-	-	-	-	-
Activities for generating funds	3	42,933	-	-	42,933	54,990
Investment income	4	6,944	-	-	6,944	5,369
Total incoming resources		248,937	-	232,460	481,397	514,793
Resources expended						
Costs of generating funds:						
Generating voluntary income	5	91,913	-	-	91,913	119,299
Charitable activities	6	184,424	-	147,735	332,159	320,503
Total resources expended		276,337	-	147,735	424,072	439,802
Net incoming resources for the year		(27,400)	-	84,725	57,325	74,991
Transfers between funds		58,397	(17,108)	(41,289)		
Total funds brought forward		197,017	73,838	27,621	298,476	223,485
Total funds carried forward		228,014	56,730	71,057	355,801	298,476

The statement of financial activities includes all gains and losses in the year and therefore a separate statement of total recognised gains and losses has not been prepared.

All of the above amounts relate to continuing activities.

Skylarks Charity
(A company limited by guarantee)

Report of the Trustees (incorporating the Directors' report)
for the year ended 31 March 2025

Balance sheet as of March 2025

	Notes	£	2025 £	£	2024 £
Fixed Assets					
Tangible Fixed Assets	10		60,240		-
Current Assets					
Cash at bank and in hand		382,842		368,951	
		382,842		368,951	
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	11	(87,281)		(70,475)	
Net current assets			295,561		298,476
Net assets			355,801		298,476
Funds	12/13/14				
Restricted income funds			71,057		27,621
Designated Fund			56,730		73,838
Unrestricted General Fund			228,014		197,017
Total funds			355,801		298,476

The Balance Sheet continues on the following page.

Balance sheet (continued)

Trustees' statements required by the Companies Act 1985 for the year ended 31 March 2025

The charitable company is entitled to exemption from audit under Section 477 of the Companies Act 2006 for the year ended 31 March 2024.

The members have not required the charitable company to obtain an audit of its financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2024 in accordance with Section 476 of the Companies Act 2006.

The Trustees acknowledge their responsibilities for:

(a) ensuring that the charitable company keeps accounting records that comply with Sections 386 and 387 of the Companies Act 2006 and

(b) preparing financial statements which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charitable company as at the end of each financial year and of its surplus or deficit for each financial year in accordance with the requirements of Sections 394 and 395 which otherwise comply with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006 relating to financial statements, so far as applicable to the charitable company.

These financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the special provisions of Part 15 of the Companies Act 2006 relating to small charitable companies and with the Financial Reporting Standard for Smaller Entities (effective April 2008).

The financial statements were approved by the board on the **16th of December 2025** and signed on its behalf by

Jennifer Peters
.....
Jennifer Peters
Chair of Trustees

1. Accounting policies

The principal accounting policies are summarised below. The accounting policies have been applied consistently throughout the year and the preceding year.

1.1. Basis of accounting

The financial statements have been prepared on a going concern basis under the historic cost convention. The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the Statement of Recommended Practice: Accounting and Reporting by Charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS102) issued on 16 July 2014 and the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the United Kingdom and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102), the Charities Act 2011, the Companies Act 2006 and UK Generally Accepted Practice as it applies from 1 January 2015.

1.2. Cashflow

The charity has taken advantage of the exemption in FRS102 and the Statement of Recommended Practice from the requirement to produce a cashflow statement because it is a small charity.

1.3. Incoming resources

All incoming resources are included in the statement of financial activities when the charity is entitled to the income and the amount can be quantified with reasonable accuracy. The following specific policies are applied to particular categories of income:

Voluntary income is received by way of grants, donations and gifts and is included in full in the statement of financial activities when receivable. Grants where entitlement is not conditional on the delivery of a specific performance by the charity, are recognised when the charity becomes unconditionally entitled to the grant.

The value of donated services provided by volunteers has not been included.

Gifts donated for resale are included as incoming resources within activities for generating funds when they are sold.

Income from investments is included in the year in which it is receivable.

1.4. Resources expended

Expenditure is recognised on an accrual basis as a liability is incurred. Expenditure includes any VAT which cannot be fully recovered, and is reported as part of the expenditure to which it relates.

Costs of generating funds comprise the costs associated with attracting voluntary income and the costs of trading for fundraising purposes including the charity's shop.

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

Support costs are those costs incurred directly in support of expenditure on the objects of the charity and include project management.

2. Voluntary income

	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	2025 Total £	2024 Total £
Grants	95,355	232,460	327,815	192,849
Donations	89,611	-	89,611	231,820
Gift Aid Reclaimed	14,094	-	14,094	29,765
	199,060	232,460	431,520	454,434

3. Activities for generating funds

	Unrestricted funds £	2025 Total £	2024 Total £
Fundraising General/Events	42,046	42,046	43,233
Income from activities	887	887	11,757
	42,933	42,933	54,990

4. Investment income

	Unrestricted funds £	2025 Total £	2024 Total £
Bank interest receivable	6,944	6,944	5,369
	6,944	6,944	5,369

5. Costs of generating voluntary income

	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	2025 Total £	2024 Total £
Marketing and fundraising	91,913	-	91,913	119,299
	91,913	-	91,913	119,299

6. Costs of charitable activities

	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	2025 Total £	2024 Total £
Educational program	184,424	147,735	332,159	320,503
	184,424	147,735	332,159	320,503

7. Analysis of support costs

	2025 Total £	2024 Total £
Staff training	17	1,178
Accountancy and other governance costs	14,289	15,043
	14,306	16,221

8. Employees

Employment costs

	2025 £	2024 £
Wages and salaries	278,098	266,736

No employee received emoluments of more than £60,000 (2024: None).

Number of employees

The average monthly numbers of employees (most of whom are part-time) during the year was as follows:

2025	2024
11	11

9. Taxation

The charity's activities fall within the exemptions afforded by the provisions of the Income and Corporation Taxes Act 1988. Accordingly, there is no taxation charge in these accounts.

10. Tangible Fixed Assets

	Works on leasehold £
Cost	
Brought forward at 1 April 2024	2,164
Additions	60,318
At 31 March 2025	62,482
Depreciation	
Brought forward at 1 April 2024	2,164
Charge in year	78
At 31 March 2025	2,242
Net book values	
At 31 March 2025	60,240
At 31 March 2024	-

11. Creditors: amounts falling due within one year

	2025 £	2024 £
Trade creditors	34,952	7,413
Deferred income	50,000	61,320
Accrued expenditure and other creditors	2,329	1,742
	87,281	70,475

12. Analysis of net assets between funds

	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	Total Funds £
Fund balances at 31 March 2025 as represented by:			
Tangible fixed assets	60,240	-	60,240
Current assets	261,785	121,057	382,842
Current liabilities	(37,281)	(50,000)	(87,281)
	284,744	71,057	355,801

13. Unrestricted funds

	At 1 April 2024 £	Incoming Resources/ transfers £	Outgoing Resources/transfers £	At 31 March 2025 £
General unrestricted funds	197,017	307,334	(276,337)	228,014
Designated fund	73,838	-	(17,108)	56,730
Total unrestricted funds	270,855	307,334	(293,445)	284,744

Purposes of unrestricted funds

General unrestricted funds may be used to meet any of the Charities objectives, as determined by the Trustees.

The Designated fund has been set up to support the Charity with its objective of securing new premises, including the procurement of new equipment to equip the facility.

14. Restricted funds

	At 1 April 2024 £	Incoming resources £	Outgoing resources £	At 31 March 2025 £
Restricted funds	27,621	232,460	(189,024)	71,057

Purposes of restricted funds

Individual donors have stipulated that their funds must be used for specific purposes.

15. Company limited by guarantee

Skylarks Charity is a company limited by guarantee and accordingly does not have a share capital. Every member of the company undertakes to contribute such amount as may be required not exceeding £1 to the assets of the charitable company in the event of its being wound up while he or she is a member, or within one year after he or she ceases to be a member.

Skylarks Charity

England & Wales - Charity number 1148114

Accounts



Skylarks Charity (Skylarks)

A company limited by guarantee

Trustees' report and

financial statements for the

year ended

31 March 2024

Charity number: 1148114
Company number: 08047350

Skylarks Charity
(A company limited by guarantee)

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Skylarks Charity
(A company limited by guarantee)

Legal and administrative information

Charity number	1148114
Company registration number	08047350
Registered office	Crossway Centre 306 Richmond Road Twickenham Middlesex TW1 2PD

The Skylarks Team

Trustees

The directors of the charitable company (the charity) are trustees for the purpose of charity law and, throughout this report, are collectively referred to as the Trustees or Board of Trustees.

The following served as Trustees & Board of Directors for the charity during the year.

Chair	Jennifer Peters
Treasurer	Rajan Thevasagayam
Trustees	Jennifer Peters Rajan Thevasagayam Christopher Key (Resigned July 2024) Elissa Metzgen (Resigned July 2024) Mireille Nemh Robert Pender Telmo Valido (Resigned January 2024) Deirdre Caswell (Appointed December 2023, resigned May 2024) Dominic Putt (Appointed July 2024) Anne-Louise Ward (Appointed July 2024) Dane Hardie (Appointed July 2024)

Skylarks is a user-led organisation: of our eleven trustees, nine are parents with children with additional needs and disabilities.

Volunteers

At Skylarks Charity, we want to express our heartfelt gratitude to the amazing volunteers who have been the lifeblood of our organisation over the past year. Their dedication and boundless enthusiasm in designing and delivering our services have had an immeasurable impact on our families. Without their help, our work would be greatly diminished.

Volunteers enhance our work by bringing valuable skills, experience and energy, as well as their gift of time. This year, 39 incredible volunteers contributed a remarkable total of 1,767 hours (equivalent to 236 full working days) of their time and energy to support and deliver our services. This incredible support is at the heart of what makes Skylarks so special, and we cannot thank our volunteers enough for their contributions. Your passion and commitment have transformed the lives of those we serve, and we are truly blessed to have such a dedicated and caring team.

Skylarks Charity
(A company limited by guarantee)

Report of the Trustees (incorporating the Directors' report) for the year ended 31 March 2024

The Trustees present their report and the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2024. The Trustees, who are also directors of Skylarks Charity for the purposes of company law and who served during the year and up to the date of this report, are set out on page 3.

Structure, governance and management

Governance

During 2023-24, Skylarks Charity remained a Charity (Number 1148114) governed by a Constitution and managed by our Board of Trustees, meeting on average seven times a year. The Trustees have complied with their duty in section 17(5) of the Charities Act 2011 to have regard to public benefit guidance published by the Charity Commission.

Our Vision

A world where families living with additional needs thrive.

Our Mission

Our mission is to enable every child and young person with additional needs to live their best life while supporting everyone whose lives they touch.

To deliver our mission, our Board of Trustees have set out the following strategic aims in line with our 2020-2024 business plan, for the coming year:

- Develop our offering and provide our programmes with our partners.
- Attract new children and families to the organisation.
- Secure the space to expand our services.
- Continue to bring our offering online.
- Develop our talent and the organisation for sustainable growth.
- Diversify our income to ensure the charity is risk-assured for the future.

Securing new premises continues to be a core aim of the charity. The space will enable us to reach more children and families who need access to play and support within Richmond Borough and surrounding areas. This objective is likely a long-term goal for the charity.

Our objectives and activities

To provide support and relief for children with additional needs due to physical or learning impairment, emotional or behavioural difficulties or any permanent or temporary illness in the London Borough of Richmond and surrounding areas, including the provision of information, practical advice and support to their families, carers and siblings.

Skylarks Charity offers opportunities for children and young people aged 0-25 with additional needs to play and learn in a friendly environment. It aims to increase their confidence and self-esteem, improve their communication, sensory and physical skills and help them develop their potential. By offering emotional support and information to families, we work to reduce their isolation, improve their financial situation and give them the knowledge they need to make the best decisions for the future development of their children.

Chair of Trustees Report

Dear Supporters and Stakeholders,

I am pleased to present the Chair of Trustees Report for Skylarks for the year 2023-2024. Over the past year, Skylarks has continued its essential work supporting the Special Educational Needs (SEN) community, adapting and evolving to meet increasing demand. I am proud to share our progress, which has been made possible through the dedication of our staff, volunteers, and partner organisations.

This year, Skylarks welcomed 654 new families, bringing the total membership to 4,670 families, representing 5,810 children and young people aged 0-25 registered to access our services. This marks a 17% increase in new family registrations compared to last year, demonstrating the growing need for our work. We remain committed to engaging our families on a weekly basis through various initiatives, including providing information, signposting to relevant support, offering practical resources, and supporting parents and carers.

Our focus on improving service delivery has been a key priority this year. Following challenges in the previous period, such as staffing limitations and the need to review programming, we are pleased to report a 10% increase in activity bookings, reversing last year's decline. These improvements have been underpinned by targeted efforts to strengthen our team, improve staff retention, and refine our programme delivery to better meet the needs of the families we serve.

A major highlight of the year has been the establishment of a new base in Hounslow, fulfilling a long-standing goal to extend our reach beyond Richmond. This new facility will allow us to better support the significant number of beneficiaries who travel from Hounslow and surrounding areas. Providing services closer to their homes will improve accessibility and enable Skylarks to deepen its connection with this community.

Another significant development has been the progress of our "Spread Your Wings - Career Coaching" initiative. Following the initial pilot in 2022-2023, we recognised the need to refine the programme to maximise its impact. Using feedback from participants, the course was comprehensively redesigned and successfully delivered to its first cohort in September 2023. This revamped programme now provides young people with tailored guidance, practical tools, and opportunities to build confidence and identify future pathways, establishing itself as a cornerstone of our broader support strategy for young people transitioning into adulthood.

These successes would not have been possible without the extraordinary efforts of our staff and volunteers, as well as the invaluable contributions of our partner organisations. Support from Haymarket Media Group has been pivotal in advancing our Career Coaching programme, while partnerships with schools and other SEN-focused charities have greatly enhanced our ability to deliver impactful services. Their collaboration, alongside our committed team, has strengthened Skylarks' capacity to meet the needs of our growing membership.

Looking ahead to 2024-2025, Skylarks is eager to build on this year's successes by working closely with current stakeholders and welcoming new partnerships. Together, we will continue to create opportunities for children and young people with additional needs to thrive, while offering vital support to their families.

With sincere gratitude and optimism for the future,

Jennifer Peters

Chair of Trustees, Skylarks

Services and performance

Membership

Skylarks welcomed **654 new families** this year, with a total membership of **4670 families**, representing **5810 children and young people** aged 0-25 registered to use our services. This shows that Skylarks' services continue to be in demand, with the charity seeing a **17% increase** in the number of new families registered with the charity compared to the previous year. We engage our families with weekly through our outreach activities, including information, online and physical resources, help for parents/carers, and signposting services.

Children

We have directly supported **1158 individual children** through activities, therapies and other events. This figure represents unique visits, where a child's attendance is counted only once throughout the financial year, even though they may have attended multiple sessions. This is a **10% increase** on the number of children supported compared to the previous year.

Family Support

We have directly supported **948 families** with a range of support, including advocacy advice, information talks, workshops and counselling. This figure represents unique visits, where a member of the family, whether that be a child or parent's attendance, is counted only once throughout the financial year. This represents a **4% increase** in the number of families supported compared to FY2022-2023

Bookings

The 948 families we have engaged over the last year made over **9050 bookings** across all our services. Compared with the previous year, this represents a **14% increase** on the year prior.

What we offered at Skylarks in 2023-2024

At Skylarks, our mission is to provide an array of activities and therapies and to create tangible, positive outcomes for children with additional needs, their siblings, parents, and carers who engage with our services. The year 2023-2024 was a testament to our commitment, marked by significant growth and expansion, such as our addition of new services and quality provisions, leading to a host of benefits for our community members.

Play Activities:

Our play activities serve as a vital component in fostering a range of life skills and self-confidence in children. This year, Skylarks extended its reach through a diverse array of activities, resulting in a host of positive outcomes for participants:

Inclusive Afterschool Clubs: Skylarks provided inclusive clubs like Karate, Drama, Yoga, Arts and Crafts, and General Play. These clubs not only allowed children to explore their interests but also helped boost their self-esteem and self-confidence. Through these clubs, children developed new skills and forged lasting friendships.

Preschool Activities: Activities such as General Play, Sensory Play, and Makaton Sing & Sign sessions catered to preschool-aged children's needs. These sessions helped stimulate their cognitive and sensory development while providing parents with valuable strategies for supporting their children.

Holiday Programming:

Offsite Adventures: Offsite activities like the "All Aboard Club" and bike riding lessons through the "Pedal Project" provided unique experiences for children. Beyond the fun and excitement, these activities encouraged physical activity, improved coordination, and instilled a sense of accomplishment. The charity provides a range of programming throughout the holidays, including sports camps, computer coding camps, trips to Kew Gardens, and many more. For families of children with additional needs, school holidays can be a difficult time, due to changes in routine, breakdown in support and care services and isolation from peers. It can also increase the already financial burden placed on families. Attending Skylarks' regular planned holiday activities, we aim to reduce the isolation and provide families with a supportive network, while providing fun for the family.

Dramatic Storytelling and Artistic Expression: The "Magical Quests" and "Knots Arts" activities allowed children to engage in dramatic storytelling and artistic expression. These sessions nurtured creativity, self-expression, and communication skills.

Haircutting Service: Our dedicated haircutting service not only helped children maintain personal hygiene but also provided a sensory-friendly experience for those with sensitivities, ensuring a positive and stress-free grooming experience.

Therapies: Our therapy services remained a vital component of Skylarks' offerings, with a particular focus on enhancing well-being and emotional health:

Counselling: Our partnership with Off The Record continued to be a cornerstone of emotional support at Skylarks. These counselling sessions remained an essential resource for children and parents, offering a secure space to navigate emotional hurdles, foster resilience, and enhance their mental well-being.

Music Therapy: Our collaboration with the Otakar Kraus Music Trust continued to resonate with children, allowing them to experience the therapeutic wonders of music. This therapy continued to serve as a conduit for emotional expression, improved communication, and the cultivation of creativity among our Skylarks community.

Osteopathy: These therapies, dedicated to promoting physical well-being, remained a steadfast part of our holistic approach to child development. Osteopathy sessions persisted in addressing issues related to posture, muscle tone, and sensory sensitivities, ensuring that children received comprehensive care for their physical health.

RDA Equine Therapy: Our partnership with Park Lane Stables continued to bring the joys of horse-assisted therapy to Skylarks. RDA therapy remained a cherished avenue for enhancing physical and emotional well-being, allowing children to connect with these gentle animals while improving their coordination and confidence.

Developmental Yoga: Our developmental yoga sessions, in collaboration with experienced physiotherapists, continued to be a cornerstone of our holistic approach to well-being. Children engaged in movements that not only enhanced their physical abilities but also promoted mental clarity and emotional balance, nurturing their overall development.

Play Therapy: In partnership with Picolougue, our play therapy sessions remained a dynamic and creative avenue for children to explore their emotions and express themselves. Play therapy sessions provided a safe and supportive environment for children to work through challenges, build social skills, and develop a deeper understanding of their own emotions. Unfortunately, Pictologue closed as a charity in 2024, and we continue to look for a new partner to carry on this important service.

Information and Advice Services: Skylarks is very much about supporting the whole family. Our information and advice services are designed to empower parents/carers and offer them essential guidance and support. This year, we offered:

Workshops and Training: Our workshops equipped parents with valuable parenting techniques, fostering stronger family bonds and enhancing their ability to support their children.

Support Groups: Weekly and monthly peer-to-peer support groups and coffee mornings, including the Girls Connect for Parents of autistic girls, Home Schooling Group, Meditative Support Group, and Hounslow Family Support Group, provided parents with invaluable opportunities to connect, share experiences, and build supportive networks.

Advice/Support Clinics: Skylarks offered benefits advice clinics and family support services, helping parents navigate complex systems and access necessary resources to support their children. These clinics provided crucial advice on topics such as benefits, family matters, and social support.

SEND Advice Service: Our SEND (Special Educational Needs and Disabilities) Advice Service offers parents educational

advice, empowering them to advocate effectively for their child's education. This service supported over 400 families this year, ensuring that children receive the appropriate support and care in their educational settings.

Employability and Life Skills:

Skylarks continues to develop our services to include employability and life skills development, most specifically our early career development programme, Spread Your Wings; Career Coaching. The charity hired a new position to take on the running and development of its Employability and Life Skills Services.

Spread Your Wings; Career Coaching: After initial testing in 2022-2023, Skylarks felt that the course needed further development. The charity completely redesigned its Career Coaching programme with the feedback from the initial pilot and delivered to our first cohort of young people and their families in September 2023.

Our review of the programme after the first six months showed the following:

Programme Success and Impact:

- The Spread Your Wings (SYW) Career Coaching Pilot effectively addressed the employment gap for young people with additional needs (SEND) through its first online pilot.
- Successful engagement with 90% retention for both young people and parents.
- Positive feedback indicates that the programme fostered early career conversations, increased awareness of career possibilities, and inspired confidence in overcoming barriers.

Programme Design and Delivery:

- The holistic SYW programme, comprising seven online workshops for young people and parents, proved beneficial and well-received.
- Feedback suggests a preference for online delivery due to accessibility and convenience.

Participant Profile:

Six programmes were delivered, comprised of families from various London Local Authorities, with a diverse group of young people aged 12-14, including those attending special schools.

Positive feedback from participants with neurodiverse conditions (e.g., ASD, ADHD, Dyslexia) highlights the programme's inclusivity and ability to support young people with disabilities.

Success Criteria and Impact:

The programme successfully achieved its goals, evidenced by positive responses in fostering early conversations, addressing career barriers, and building supportive networks.

Employability skills, awareness of diverse careers, and the importance of inclusive employers were effectively communicated. Parents and young people were particularly engaged with our speaker.

After the course, parents felt 92% more confident about their children's career journey.

Quotes

It's lovely to be amongst parents experiencing similar issues, and we recognise together that we need to think outside the box a bit more for our respective children's future. *Skylarks Parent*

It's so nice to have built a sense of community between the adults as well as the children. The work on this project is great, and I am so pleased we were able to get a spot on the course. *Skylarks Parent*

Life Skills Courses: Partnering with Role Models, Skylarks offered life skills courses, including confidence-building, collaboration, and leadership training. These courses empower young people to develop essential life skills, enhancing

their self-esteem and employability prospects. Unfortunately in 2024 Role Models closed their doors as a company and Skylarks are currently reviewing its options to continue our life skills programming.

Coding Camps: Skylarks introduced coding camps to nurture children's digital literacy and problem-solving abilities last year. These camps equip young participants with valuable skills for the future job market. Children and young people learn to code and build computer games, as well as other AI-focused programmes. Again, in 2024, Skylarks had to switch providers due to the original company being sold and no longer able to continue. After a thorough tender process, Skylarks have partnered with Jet Learning to deliver its courses and started in 2024.

Highlights of the Year

As we reflect upon the past year, Skylarks has continued as a beacon of unwavering support for families navigating the profound challenges posed by disabilities, alongside the escalating cost-of-living crisis. Our commitment to empowering these families remains at the heart of our mission.

Increased demand for support.
In response to the far-reaching cost-of-living crisis, Skylarks witnessed another year of increasing new member registrations, up by 17%, demonstrating the pressing need for our services and the need of support from our community. This continuing trend is notably influenced by the pressure put on families by extended waiting lists for NHS services, lack of funds invested by local authorities to support young people with additional needs, and the mounting financial pressures on families, which have deepened the economic hardships faced by our community.

A recent report by The Childhood Trust in collaboration with Skylarks back in May 2023, delved into the impact of the cost-of-living crisis on children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities. This crisis disproportionately affects these children, as confirmed by 71% of social workers and 83% of charities. Families raising children with SEND grapple with monthly expenses averaging £93 higher per child, than those without SEND children. These families typically have little savings, with an average balance of less than £1,500, underscoring their profound financial vulnerability.

Moreover, the strain on support systems has intensified. Ninety-five percent of social workers report that their ability to assist children with SEND has been negatively impacted due to diminishing resources and soaring demand. The severity of problems faced by these children is on the rise, with 75% of social workers noting an escalation in the crisis due to the cost-of-living. Many children with SEND feel alienated and disconnected from mainstream society, with 60% expressing a sense of inequality when accessing play, activities or support. Access to support services has become more arduous for 46% of social workers, as waiting lists lengthen and diagnostic criteria tighten.

Empowering Futures with Employability and Life Skills
A significant highlight of the year was the redevelopment of Skylarks' Employability and Life Skills Services. This groundbreaking addition included the development of our Spread Your Wings Programme, designed to empower young people with career coaching and early career development opportunities. Life skills courses provided crucial tools for personal growth.

Skylarks continued to deliver and expand the rest of its programming to cater to the diverse needs of our community:

Activities: Continued to provide inclusive afterschool and holiday activities for young people with additional needs such as Karate, Drama, and Stay and Play. In particular, our holiday programming continues to be extremely popular providing, trips, holiday camps, and online skills courses to

Information and Advice: As expected, Skylarks continues to receive a high level of requests for support through its information and advice-giving services. The charity's SEND Advice Service is a core gateway service for many of our families, with many new to the organisation. Over the last year, Skylarks supported over 400 families, securing the support, and funding they need to ensure children with additional needs receive the support for education.

Employability and Life Skills: As previously mentioned, Skylarks took significant strides in expanding our Employability and Life Skills Services. This expansion catered to the emerging needs of our older children and young adults, equipping

them with the tools and knowledge necessary for successful transitions into adulthood. The successful redevelopment of our Spread Your Wings Career Coaching service and the positive feedback received from our families provide the basis for future expansion of the programme.

Hounslow Families in Need: A Growing Presence

Our data underscored the increasing demand for Skylarks' services among families in Hounslow, where need is high, and specialist services are limited. Families from Hounslow constituted the largest group of new registrants for the second year running. The borough's unique challenges, including language barriers and additional needs among parents, highlight the critical importance of our presence in this community.

Last year saw the closure of Hounslow Toy Library, a charity supporting children with additional needs in the borough. This closure meant families were more inclined to access services at Skylarks through our Centre based in Richmond Upon Thames. However, families were only able to attend through accessing poorly connected public transport between the boroughs or by having access to a car. This meant that many more families who had requested support struggled to attend.

In response to this gap, last year Skylarks started securing the tenancy of the Hounslow Toy Library building. This strategic move would position Skylarks at the heart of Hounslow, allowing us to reach those in need directly.

Negotiations with the landlord did take longer than expected, however by the end of March 2024, Skylarks secured the property. The new fully accessible space will host activities, workshops, SEND advice services, and support for local partner organisations. Skylarks aims to operate throughout the week, extending services into the weekends as partnerships evolve over the coming years.

The new Hounslow location will not only serve the Hounslow community but will also reach areas of Richmond. Skylarks anticipates families from these adjacent regions accessing services from both our Richmond and Hounslow sites, fostering unity and support across communities. We expect the charity to raise the funds needed for the site redevelopment in 2024 and open by 2025.

Recognition: Organisational Achievements

In 2023-2024, Skylarks received a host of well-deserved nominations that underscored our dedication to empowering families and children with additional needs. These honours are a testament to the impact Skylarks has made in our community, acknowledging the tireless efforts of our team and supporters.

Non-Profit Organisation Awards: Skylarks were awarded Best Organisation for Children with Disabilities 2023 in the London category. Despite tough competition, the charity was delighted to be the winner of this award, highlighting the positive support Skylarks provides to its community.

National Diversity Awards: Skylarks achieved recognition in the National Diversity Awards for 2023. This acknowledgement is a testament to our tireless efforts in promoting diversity and inclusivity in our community.

Positive Role Model Award: Skylarks' Managing Director, Aaron Guiver, was shortlisted for the "Positive Role Model Award" in the National Diversity Awards 2023, recognised for his inspirational leadership and dedication to making a difference.

These accolades inspire us to continue our mission to support and empower families in need. We are deeply honoured to receive these acknowledgements and remain committed to creating a brighter future for our community.

Report of the Trustees (incorporating the Directors' report) for the year ended 31 March 2024

Strategic Aims: Charting a Brighter Future

Skylarks' strategic aims for the year 2024/25 revolve around building future infrastructure to handle the increased demand on our charity and develop our ability to help future families. Over the past five years, the charity has seen an overwhelming need for support from our community, and while the charity has significantly grown to meet the demands placed upon the organisation, it has undeniably placed a strain on the charity's ability to maintain its current systems and ways of working. Over the coming year, Skylarks aims to develop our HR support for staff and volunteers, develop increasing lines of communication both internally and externally, develop our website and CRM systems, secure permanent space, enhance online accessibility, nurture talent, and diversify our fundraising initiatives. These aims will pave the way for Skylarks to evolve, ensuring we meet the needs of our service users, present and future, maintaining our place as a central hub of support for our community.

As the need in our community continues to grow, the trustees would like to extend our heartfelt gratitude to all our supporters, old and new, for being a crucial part of this transformative journey. Together, we are creating a brighter future for our community.

Financial review

The net financial result for the year ended March 2024 was a surplus of £74,991 (2023 – surplus of £28,363). Income reported in the year was £607,493 (including probono support), compared with £498,573 in 22/23; this increase was due to an increase in voluntary income, from individual donors, fundraising activities and corporate donors. Cash income received was £514,793, with £92,700 worth of probono support and goods.

Thank you to all our funders over the last year, with whom we would not have been able to deliver a successful year of support. Thank you to; Hampton Fund, Richmond Parish Lands Charity, Haymarket Media Group, Ajaz.org, London Community Fund, The Childhood Trust, The Gosling Foundation and all other wonderful supporters who donated this year. This year we had some exceptional supporters and would like to recognise the following:
- Hampton Fund - £40,000 (£20,000 deferred) - funding supported our Core Costs and SEND Advice;
- Richmond Foundation (Previously Richmond Parish Lands) – £38,500 (£0 deferred) - Funding supported by our Operations Manager, and Spread Your Wings Programme.

The Trustees regularly review the level of available unrestricted reserves (net unrestricted current assets) and consider whether it is sufficient to ensure continuity in the pursuance of core charitable objectives, in the event of downturns in income and unexpected costs arising. The Trustees currently consider that it is appropriate to maintain a level of available reserves of three to six months' unrestricted income. The Charity continues its search for permanent premises, which would be available in the medium term. With that in mind, the Trustees have decided to keep its designated reserves for equipping the premises or any other needs related to securing, or developing a site.

Plans for future period, 2024/25

Skylarks has come to the end of its current business plan and will focus in 2024/25 on developing a new strategy. While the charity works on its new plan for the upcoming years, the charity has identified that it must invest in its infrastructure if the charity is to continue growing at pace. Our strategic focus for the upcoming year revolves around several key pillars:

1. Programme Advancement:
    - Empowering Young Adults: Skylarks is dedicated to evolving and enriching our programme offerings. We're particularly excited about the development of a specialised initiative aimed at teenagers and young adults. This comprehensive programme, known as "Spread Your Wings," will provide crucial guidance and support as these individuals embark on their career journeys. Over the coming year, Skylarks will aim to launch a second pilot programme for older age groups, trialling different delivery models and thoroughly testing the material to ensure scalability.
    - Enhancing SEND Advice: Our SEND Advice Service will remain a focal point. We're committed to refining and expanding this cornerstone service to better serve families seeking guidance and advocacy in the realm of education.
2. Community Engagement:
    - Expanding Our Reach: Skylarks is poised to expand our community presence significantly. Our objective is to ensure that our mission and the invaluable services we provide are recognized and embraced by families, healthcare

professionals, educators, and other key stakeholders. This strategic outreach will enable us to extend our support network to even more families in need.

3. Facilities Assurance:
   - After securing a short-term leave for a property in Hounslow, Skylarks aims to secure its foothold in the borough by increasing the length of its tenure and raising funds to develop the building into a centre of excellence for young people with additional needs and their families. While our decision to secure a long term property in Hounslow will expand the charity's reach, we will continue to focus on supporting the families in Richmond.
4. Digital Accessibility:
   - Digital Infrastructure: Skylarks is committed to making our services accessible to all families, irrespective of geographical constraints or personal circumstances. Skylarks will be investing in a number of internal projects to help improve the journey families have in accessing our services. Implementation of a new CRM, accessible website, and telephone system will ensure families can access the support quickly, and easily.
5. Communication:
   - Internal and external comms: Skylarks understands that in order to deliver services to families who are isolated, that charity must build upon its current communication and marketing strategies in order to reach those who need the most support. Improved visibility will also support Skylarks with reaching out to new donors as part of strengthening our fundraising. Internally, as the team grows, and continues to work remotely, new lines of communication must be created to ensure services can be delivered impactfully, swiftly and in a timely manner. A new HR system will be developed to ensure staff are compliant with training needs and feel connected to the wider organiation.
6. Strengthen Fundraising:
   - Diverse and Sustainable Income Streams: To enhance income to help us meet our community's evolving needs, Skylarks will concentrate on building supporter relationships and diversifying fundraising activities. Our primary fundraising goals include retaining and acquiring supporters while optimising resource allocation for the best long-term returns.

Statement of Trustees' responsibilities

Company and Charity laws require the Trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year, which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charitable company as at the balance sheet date and of its incoming resources and application of resources, including income and expenditure, for the financial year. In preparing those financial statements the Trustees should follow best practice and:

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- state whether the policies adopted are in accordance with the Charities Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP) 2015 and with applicable accounting standards, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements; and
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to assume that the charity will continue in operation.

The Trustees, who are the Directors of the company for the purposes of company law, are responsible for keeping proper accounting records, which disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charitable company and which enable it to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 2006. The Trustees are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charitable company and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud or other irregularities. Trustees who served during the year and up to the date of this report are set out on page 3.

The company's Directors certify that:

- so far as they are aware, there is no relevant accounting information of which the company's accountants are unaware: and
- they have taken all steps that they ought to have taken in order to make themselves aware of any relevant accounting information and to establish that the company's accountant is aware of that information.

On behalf of the board

Jennifer Peters
.....
Jennifer Peters
Chair of Trustees

Skylarks Charity
(A company limited by guarantee)

Independent examiner's report to the Trustees on the unaudited financial statements of Skylarks Charity.

I report on the financial statements for Skylarks Charity for the year ended 31st March 2024 set out on pages 14 to 21.

Respective responsibilities of Trustees and examiner

The charity's Trustees (who are also the Directors for the purpose of company law) are responsible for the preparation of the accounts. The charity's Trustees consider that an audit is not required for this period (under Section 144(2) of the Charities Act 2011 (the 2011 Act)), and that an independent examination is required.

Having satisfied myself that the charity is not subject to audit under company law and is eligible for independent examination, it is my responsibility:

- to examine the accounts under Section 145 of the 2011 Act
- to follow the procedures laid down in the General Directions given by the Charity Commission (under Section 145(5)(b) of the 2011 Act); and
- to state whether particular matters have come to my attention.

Basis of the independent examiner's report

My examination was carried out in accordance with the General Directions given by the Charity Commission. An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the charity and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts, and seeking explanations from you as Trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit, and consequently no opinion is given as to whether the accounts present a 'true and fair view' and the report is limited to those matters set out in the statements below.

Independent examiner's statement

In connection with my examination, no matter has come to my attention:
(1) which gives me reasonable cause to believe that, in any material respect, the requirements:
- to keep accounting records in accordance with Section 386 and 387 of the Companies Act 2006; and
- to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records, comply with the accounting requirements of Sections 394 and 395 of the Companies Act 2006 and with the methods and principles of the Statement of Recommended Practice: Accounting and Reporting by Charities

have not been met; or

(2) to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Charles Tait
Charles Tait Accounting Limited

.....WSC Tait.....

Date: 18 DECEMBER 2024

Skylarks Charity
(A company limited by guarantee)

Statement of financial activities (incorporating the income and expenditure account)

For the year ended 31 March 2024

	Notes	Unrestricted General funds £	Unrestricted Designated funds £	Restricted funds £	2024 Total £	2023 Total £
Incoming resources						
Incoming resources from generating funds: Voluntary income	2	300,685	-	153,749	454,434	333,860
Volunteer / pro bono income		92,700	-	-	92,700	93,610
Activities for generating funds	3	54,990	-	-	54,990	69,757
Investment income	4	5,369	-	-	5,369	1,345
Total incoming resources		453,744	-	153,749	607,493	498,572
Resources expended						
Costs of generating funds:						
Generating voluntary income	5	122,186	-	26,713	148,899	128,735
Charitable activities	6	200,150	10,022	173,431	383,603	341,474
Total resources expended		322,336	10,022	200,144	532,502	470,209
Net incoming resources for the year		131,408	(10,022)	(46,395)	74,991	28,363
Transfers between funds		(35,000)	35,000			
Total funds brought forward		100,609	48,860	74,016	223,485	195,122
Total funds carried forward		197,017	73,838	27,621	298,476	223,485

The statement of financial activities includes all gains and losses in the year and therefore a separate statement of total recognised gains and losses has not been prepared.

All of the above amounts relate to continuing activities.

Skylarks Charity
(A company limited by guarantee)

Balance sheet
as at 31 March 2024

	Notes	2024 £	2024 £	2023 £	2023 £
Fixed Assets					
Tangible Fixed Assets	10		-		-
Current Assets					
Cash at bank and in hand		368,951		308,112	
				308,112	
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	11	368,951 (70,475)		(84,627)	
Net current assets			298,476		223,485
Net assets			298,476		223,485
Funds	12/13/14				
Restricted income funds			27,621		74,016
Designated Fund			73,838		48,860
Unrestricted General Fund			197,017		100,609
Total funds			298,476		223,485

The Balance Sheet continues on the following page.

Skylarks Charity
(A company limited by guarantee)

Balance sheet (continued)

Trustees' statements required by the Companies Act 1985 for the year ended 31 March 2024

The charitable company is entitled to exemption from audit under Section 477 of the Companies Act 2006 for the year ended 31 March 2024.

The members have not required the charitable company to obtain an audit of its financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2024 in accordance with Section 476 of the Companies Act 2006.

The Trustees acknowledge their responsibilities for:

(a) ensuring that the charitable company keeps accounting records that comply with Sections 386 and 387 of the Companies Act 2006 and

(b) preparing financial statements which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charitable company as at the end of each financial year and of its surplus or deficit for each financial year in accordance with the requirements of Sections 394 and 395 which otherwise comply with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006 relating to financial statements, so far as applicable to the charitable company.

These financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the special provisions of Part 15 of the Companies Act 2006 relating to small charitable companies and with the Financial Reporting Standard for Smaller Entities (effective April 2008).

The financial statements were approved by the board on the **3rd of October 2024** and signed on its behalf by

Jennifer Peters
.....
Jennifer Peters
Chair of Trustees

Notes to financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2024

1. Accounting policies

The principal accounting policies are summarised below. The accounting policies have been applied consistently throughout the year and the preceding year.

1.1. Basis of accounting

The financial statements have been prepared on a going concern basis under the historic cost convention. The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the Statement of Recommended Practice: Accounting and Reporting by Charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS102) issued on 16 July 2014 and the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the United Kingdom and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102), the Charities Act 2011, the Companies Act 2006 and UK Generally Accepted Practice as it applies from 1 January 2015.

1.2. Cashflow

The charity has taken advantage of the exemption in FRS102 and the Statement of Recommended Practice from the requirement to produce a cashflow statement because it is a small charity.

1.3. Incoming resources

All incoming resources are included in the statement of financial activities when the charity is entitled to the income and the amount can be quantified with reasonable accuracy. The following specific policies are applied to particular categories of income:

Voluntary income is received by way of grants, donations and gifts and is included in full in the statement of financial activities when receivable. Grants where entitlement is not conditional on the delivery of a specific performance by the charity, are recognised when the charity becomes unconditionally entitled to the grant.

Donated services and facilities are included at the value to the charity where this can be quantified. The value of services provided by volunteers has not been included.

Gifts donated for resale are included as incoming resources within activities for generating funds when they are sold.

Income from investments is included in the year in which it is receivable.

1.4. Resources expended

Expenditure is recognised on an accrual basis as a liability is incurred. Expenditure includes any VAT which cannot be fully recovered, and is reported as part of the expenditure to which it relates.

Costs of generating funds comprise the costs associated with attracting voluntary income and the costs of trading for fundraising purposes including the charity's shop.

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

Support costs are those costs incurred directly in support of expenditure on the objects of the charity and include project management.

2. Voluntary income

	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	2024 Total £	2023 Total £
Grants	41,075	151,774	192,849	199,538
Donations	229,845	1,975	231,820	131,497
Gift Aid Reclaimed	29,765	-	29,765	2,825
	300,685	153,749	454,434	333,860

3. Activities for generating funds

	Unrestricted funds £	2024 Total £	2023 Total £
Fundraising General/Events	43,233	43,233	63,995
Income from activities	11,757	11,757	5,762
	54,990	54,990	69,757

4. Investment income

	Unrestricted funds £	2024 Total £	2023 Total £
Bank interest receivable	5,369	5,369	1,345
	5,369	5,369	1,345

5. Costs of generating voluntary income

	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	2024 Total £	2023 Total £
Marketing and fundraising	122,186	26,713	148,899	128,735
	122,186	26,713	148,899	128,735

These figures include pro bono costs of 29,600.

6. Costs of charitable activities

	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	2024 Total £	2023 Total £
Educational program	210,172	173,431	383,603	341,474
	210,172	173,431	383,603	341,474

These figures include pro bono costs of £63,100.

7. Analysis of support costs

	2024 Total £	2023 Total £
Staff training	1,178	1,303
Accountancy	15,043	14,703
	16,221	16,006

8. Employees

Employment costs

	2024 £	2023 £
Wages and salaries	266,736	221,807

No employee received emoluments of more than £60,000 (2023: None).

Number of employees

The average monthly numbers of employees (most of whom are part-time) during the year was as follows:

2024	2023
11	11

9. Taxation

The charity's activities fall within the exemptions afforded by the provisions of the Income and Corporation Taxes Act 1988. Accordingly, there is no taxation charge in these accounts.

10. Tangible Fixed Assets

	Equipment £
Cost	
Brought forward at 1 April 2023	2,164
At 31 March 2024	2,164
Depreciation	
Brought forward at 1 April 2023	2,164
At 31 March 2024	2,164
Net book values	
At 31 March 2024	-
At 31 March 2023	-

11. Creditors: amounts falling due within one year

	2024 £	2023 £
Trade creditors	7,413	4,464
Deferred income	61,320	78,334
Accrued expenditure and other creditors	1,742	1,829
	70,475	84,627

12. Analysis of net assets between funds

	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	Total funds £
Fund balances at 31 March 2024 as represented by:			
Current assets	280,010	88,941	368,951
Current liabilities	(9,155)	(61,320)	(70,475)
	270,855	27,621	298,476

13. Unrestricted funds

	At 1 April 2023 £	Incoming Resources /transfers £	Outgoing Resources /transfers £	At 31 March 2024 £
General unrestricted funds	100,609	453,744	(357,336)	197,017
Designated fund	48,860	35,000	(10,022)	73,838
Total unrestricted funds	149,469	488,744	(367,358)	270,855

Purposes of unrestricted funds

General unrestricted funds may be used to meet any of the Charities objectives, as determined by the Trustees.
The Designated fund has been set up to support the Charity with its objective of securing new premises, including the procurement of new equipment to equip the facility.

14. Restricted funds

	At 1 April 2023 £	Incoming resources £	Outgoing resources £	At 31 March 2024 £
Restricted funds	74,016	153,749	(200,144)	27,621

Purposes of restricted funds

Individual donors have stipulated that their funds must be used for specific purposes.

Notes to financial statements
for the year ended 31 March 2024

15. Company limited by guarantee

Skylarks Charity is a company limited by guarantee and accordingly does not have a share capital. Every member of the company undertakes to contribute such amount as may be required not exceeding £1 to the assets of the charitable company in the event of its being wound up while he or she is a member, or within one year after he or she ceases to be a member.

Skylarks Charity

England & Wales - Charity number 1148114

Accounts



Skylarks Charity (Skylarks)

A company limited by guarantee

Trustees' report and

financial statements for the

year ended

31 March 2023

Charity number: 1148114
Company number: 08047350

Skylarks Charity
(A company limited by guarantee)

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Skylarks Charity
(A company limited by guarantee)

Legal and administrative information

Charity number	1148114
Company registration number	08047350
Registered office	Crossway Centre 306 Richmond Road Twickenham Middlesex TW1 2PD

The Skylarks Team

Trustees

The directors of the charitable company (the charity) are trustees for the purpose of charity law and throughout this report are collectively referred to as the Trustees or Board of Trustees.

The following served as Trustees & Board of Directors for the charity during the year.

Chair	Jennifer Peters
Company Secretary	Gale Davies (Resigned February 2023)
Treasurer	Rajan Thevasagayam
Trustees	Jennifer Peters Gale Davies - Secretary (Resigned February 2023) Rajan Thevasagayam Shirley Hickman (Resigned February 2023) Christopher Key Andrea Legrand (Resigned February 2023) Elissa Metzgen Mireille Nemh Robert Pender Michelle Tempest-Mitchell (Resigned June 2023) Telmo Valido

Skylarks is a user-led organisation; of our 11 trustees this year, 9 are parents with children with additional needs and disabilities.

Volunteers

At Skylarks Charity, we want to take a moment to express our heartfelt gratitude to the amazing volunteers who have been the lifeblood of our organisation over the past year. Their dedication and boundless enthusiasm in designing and delivering our services have had an immeasurable impact on our families.Without their help, our work would be greatly diminished.

Volunteers enhance our work by bringing valuable skills, experience and energy, as well as their gift of time. This year, 42 incredible volunteers contributed a remarkable total of 1,262 hours (equivalent to 168 full working days) of their time and energy to support and deliver our services. This incredible support is at the heart of what makes Skylarks so special, and we cannot thank our volunteers enough for their contributions. Your passion and commitment have transformed the lives of those we serve, and we are truly blessed to have such a dedicated and caring team.

Skylarks Charity
(A company limited by guarantee)

Report of the Trustees (incorporating the Directors' report) for the year ended 31 March 2023

The Trustees present their report and the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2023. The Trustees, who are also directors of Skylarks Charity for the purposes of company law and who served during the year and up to the date of this report are set out on page 3.

Structure, governance and management

Governance

During 2022-23, Skylarks Charity remained a Charity (Number 1148114) governed by a Constitution and managed by our Board of Trustees, meeting on average seven times a year. The Trustees have complied with their duty in section 17(5) of the Charities Act 2011 to have regard to public benefit guidance published by the Charity Commission.

Our Vision

A world where families living with additional needs thrive.

Our Mission

Our mission is to enable every child and young person with additional needs to live their best life while supporting everyone whose lives they touch.

To deliver our mission, our Board of Trustees have set out the following strategic aims for the coming year:

- Develop our offering and deliver our programmes with our partners.
- Attract new children and families to the organisation.
- Secure the space to expand our services.
- Continue to bring our offering online.
- Develop our talent and the organisation for sustainable growth.
- Diversify our income to ensure the charity is risk assured for the future.

Securing a new premises continues to be our main aim for the charity. The space will enable us to reach more children and families to access play and support within the Richmond Borough and surrounding areas. This objective is likely to be a long-term goal for the charity.

Our objective and activities

To provide support and relief for children with additional needs due to physical or learning impairment, emotional or behaviour difficulties or any permanent or temporary illness in the London Borough of Richmond and surrounding areas, including the provision of information, practical advice and support to their families, carers and siblings.

Skylarks Charity offers opportunities for children and young people aged 0-25 with additional needs to play and learn in a friendly environment. It aims to increase their confidence and self-esteem, improve their communication, sensory and physical skills and help them develop their potential. By offering emotional support and information to families, we work to reduce their isolation, improve their financial situation and give them the knowledge they need to make the best decisions for the future development of their children.

Skylarks Charity
(A company limited by guarantee)

Report of the Trustees (incorporating the Directors' report)
for the year ended 31 March 2023

Chair of Trustees Report

Dear Supporters and Stakeholders,

I am pleased to present the Chair of Trustees Report for Skylarks for the year 2022-2023. Over the past year, Skylarks has proudly continued its critical mission to support the Special Educational Needs (SEN) community, adapting and expanding its services to meet an ever-growing demand. We are proud to share our achievements and developments, made possible through the hard work and dedication of our staff and volunteers.

2022-23 continued to be a year of growth from both a fundraising standpoint, as well as in terms of new membership growth (an increase of 21% from the previous year). It is vital that the Charity can keep pace with this demand and we recognise that unfortunately our service delivery and activity bookings dropped back this year by 6%. This was due to several factors including staffing capacity, staff retention issues as well as the need to conduct a full review of our programming and its resourcing. Service delivery is a top priority of the Charity and is currently being addressed to ensure we reverse this trend in 2023-24.

The highlight of the year is the realisation of our dream to have our own facility. We've achieved a major milestone in our journey to expand our services and increase our physical presence. We're excited to announce that we aim to go beyond Richmond and are working towards securing a tenancy in neighbouring Hounslow. Many of our beneficiaries currently commute from Hounslow, and the opportunity to offer our services closer to their homes promises to make a significant difference. It will not only enrich the lives of these families but also provide us with a valuable chance to further extend our outreach within this community.

We have continued to hone and develop our "Spread Your Wings - Career Coaching" programme which will be a pivotal product within a larger category of programming for our young people as they transition into adulthood and is a key element of our long-term strategy. Thanks to our generous corporate partner, Haymarket Media Group, it will be possible to continue to evolve and expand this programme.

These achievements would not be possible without the unwavering commitment of our dedicated staff and volunteers. The passion and hard work they invest in our mission are truly remarkable. We, as trustees, take immense pride in the work Skylarks does and are deeply grateful for the dedication and tireless effort of everyone involved. Skylarks has consistently demonstrated its ability to adapt to the ever-changing and challenging environment.. Our strength comes from our collective understanding of the community's needs, stemming from our staff and volunteers' own connections to the SEN community, which remains a source of strength. We recognize the importance of staying responsive to the evolving needs of our beneficiaries.

We will continue to work closely with our current stakeholders while welcoming new partners and supporters who share in our mission to help young people with additional needs thrive.

With heartfelt gratitude,

Jennifer Peters

Jennifer Peters

Chair of Trustees, Skylarks

Report of the Trustees (incorporating the Directors' report) for the year ended 31 March 2023

Services and performance

Membership

Skylarks welcomed 654 new families this year, with a total membership of **3986 families**, representing **5052 children and young people** aged 0-25 registered to use our services. This meant that Skylarks saw a 21% increase in the number of families registered with the charity compared to the previous year. We engage with them weekly through our outreach activities, including information, online and physical resources, help for parents/carers, and signposting services.

Children

We have directly supported **1048 individual children** through activities, therapies and other events. This figure represents unique visits, where a child's attendance is counted only once throughout the financial year, even though they may have attended multiple sessions.

Family Support

We have directly supported **909 families** with a range of support, including advocacy advice, information talks, workshops and counselling. This figure represents unique visits, where a member of the family, whether that be a child or parent's attendance, is counted only once throughout the financial year.

Bookings

The 909 families we have engaged over the last year made over **8311 bookings** across all our services. Compared with the previous year, this represents a 6% decrease on the year prior.

Professionals

We have engaged with **803 associated professionals, and stakeholders** who contribute to helping us build strong community networks and connections.

What we offered at Skylarks in 2022-2023

Skylarks Services Offered in 2022-2023: A Comprehensive Overview

At Skylarks, our mission is to provide an array of activities and therapies and to create tangible, positive outcomes for children with additional needs, their siblings, parents, and carers who engage with our services. The year 2022-2023 was a testament to our commitment, marked by significant growth and expansion, such as our addition of new services and quality provisions, leading to a host of benefits for our community members.

Play Activities:

Our play activities serve as a vital component in fostering a range of life skills and self-confidence in children. This year, Skylarks extended its reach through a diverse array of activities, resulting in a host of positive outcomes for participants:

Inclusive Afterschool Clubs: Skylarks provided inclusive clubs like Karate, Drama, Yoga, Arts and Crafts, and General Play. These clubs not only allowed children to explore their interests but also helped boost their self-esteem and self-confidence. Through these clubs, children developed new skills and forged lasting friendships.

Preschool Activities: Activities such as General Play, Sensory Play, and Makaton Sing & Sign sessions catered to preschool-aged children's needs. These sessions helped stimulate their cognitive and sensory development while providing parents with valuable strategies for supporting their children.

Holiday Programming:

Offsite Adventures: Offsite activities like the "All Aboard Club" and bike riding lessons through the "Pedal Project" provided unique experiences for children. Beyond the fun and excitement, these activities encouraged physical activity, improved coordination, and instilled a sense of accomplishment.

Dramatic Storytelling and Artistic Expression: The "Magical Quests" and "Singing Hands" activities allowed children to engage in dramatic storytelling and artistic expression. These sessions nurtured creativity, self-expression, and communication skills.

Haircutting Service: Our dedicated haircutting service not only helped children maintain personal hygiene but also provided a sensory-friendly experience for those with sensitivities, ensuring a positive and stress-free grooming experience.

Therapies:

Our therapy services remained a vital component of Skylarks' offerings, with a particular focus on enhancing well-being and emotional health:

Counselling: Our partnership with Off The Record continued to be a cornerstone of emotional support at Skylarks. These counselling sessions remained an essential resource for children and parents, offering a secure space to navigate emotional hurdles, foster resilience, and enhance their mental well-being.

Music Therapy: Our collaboration with the Otakar Kraus Music Trust continued to resonate with children, allowing them to experience the therapeutic wonders of music. This therapy continued to serve as a conduit for emotional expression, improved communication, and the cultivation of creativity among our Skylarks community.

Osteopathy: These therapies, dedicated to promoting physical well-being, remained a steadfast part of our holistic approach to child development. Osteopathy sessions persisted in addressing issues related to posture, muscle tone, and sensory sensitivities, ensuring that children received comprehensive care for their physical health.

RDA Therapy: Our partnership with Park Lane Stables continued to bring the joys of horse-assisted therapy to Skylarks. RDA therapy remained a cherished avenue for enhancing physical and emotional well-being, allowing children to connect with these gentle animals while improving their coordination and confidence.

Developmental Yoga: Our developmental yoga sessions, in collaboration with experienced physiotherapists, continued to be a cornerstone of our holistic approach to well-being. Children engaged in movements that not only enhanced their physical abilities but also promoted mental clarity and emotional balance, nurturing their overall development.

Play Therapy: In partnership with Picolougue, our play therapy sessions remained a dynamic and creative avenue for children to explore their emotions and express themselves. Play therapy sessions provided a safe and supportive environment for children to work through challenges, build social skills, and develop a deeper understanding of their own emotions.

Information and Advice Services:

Skylarks is very much about supporting the whole family. Our information and advice services are designed to empower parents/carers and offer them essential guidance and support. Last year, we offered:

Workshops and Training: Our workshops equipped parents with valuable parenting techniques, fostering stronger family bonds and enhancing their ability to support their children.

Support Groups: Weekly and monthly peer-to-peer support groups and coffee mornings, including the Girls Connect for Parents of Girls with ASD, Home Schooling Group, Meditative Support Group, and Hounslow Family Support Group, provided parents with invaluable opportunities to connect, share experiences, and build supportive networks.

Advice/Support Clinics: Skylarks offered benefits advice clinics and family support services, helping parents navigate complex systems and access necessary resources to support their children. These clinics provided crucial advice on topics such as benefits, family matters, and social support.

SEND Advice Service: Our SEND (Special Educational Needs and Disabilities) Advice Service offered parents educational advice, empowering them to advocate effectively for their child's education. This service supported over 400 families last year, ensuring that children receive the appropriate support and care in their educational settings.

Employability and Life Skills:

This year, Skylarks expanded its services to include employability and life skills development, most specifically our new early career development programme, Spread Your Wings:

Spread Your Wings: Skylarks researched, developed and launched the "Spread Your Wings" programme, focusing on early career development. This initiative aims to inspire the next generation of workers, providing them with valuable skills and insights to prepare for their future careers. The programme's long term aim is to help reduce the employment gap between people with and without disabilities accessing employment.

Life Skills Courses: Partnering with Role Models, Skylarks offered life skills courses, including confidence-building, collaboration, and leadership training. These courses empower young people to develop essential life skills, enhancing their self-esteem and employability prospects.

Coding Camps: Skylarks introduced coding camps, nurturing children's digital literacy and problem-solving abilities. These camps equip young participants with valuable skills for the future job market. Children and young people learn to code and build computer games, and other AI-focused programmes.

Highlights of the Year

As we reflect upon the past year, Skylarks has continued as a beacon of unwavering support for families navigating the profound challenges posed by disabilities, alongside the escalating cost-of-living crisis. Our commitment to empowering these families remains at the heart of our mission.

Fulfilling Demand Amidst Unprecedented Challenges
In response to the far-reaching cost-of-living crisis, Skylarks witnessed a staggering 78% increase in new member registrations, demonstrating the pressing need for our services. This emerging trend is notably influenced by the reverberations of the pandemic, which have deepened the economic hardships faced by countless families.

A recent report by The Childhood Trust, conducted in collaboration with Skylarks, delved into the cost-of-living crisis' impact on children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND). This crisis disproportionately affects these children, as confirmed by 71% of social workers and 83% of charities. Families raising children with SEND grapple with monthly expenses averaging £93 higher per child, than those without SEND children. These families typically have little savings, with an average balance of less than £1,500, underscoring their profound financial vulnerability.

Moreover, the strain on support systems has intensified. Ninety-five percent of social workers report that their ability to assist children with SEND has been negatively impacted due to diminishing resources and soaring demand. The severity of problems faced by these children is on the rise, with 75% of social workers noting an escalation in the crisis due to the cost-of-living. Many children with SEND feel alienated and disconnected from mainstream society, with 60% expressing a sense of inequality when accessing play, activities or support. Access to support services has become more arduous for 46% of social workers, as waiting lists lengthen and diagnostic criteria tighten.

Empowering Futures with Employability and Life Skills
A significant highlight of the year was the introduction of Skylarks' Employability and Life Skills Services. This groundbreaking addition included the development of our Spread Your Wings Programme, designed to empower teenagers and young adults with career coaching and early career development opportunities. Life skills courses in collaboration with Role Models provided crucial tools for personal growth.

Skylarks continued to deliver and expand the rest of its programming to cater to the diverse needs of our community:

Activities: Continued to provide inclusive afterschool and holiday activities for young people with additional needs such as Karate, Drama, and Stay and Play. In particular our holiday programming continues to be extremely popular providing, trips, holiday camps, and online skills courses to

Therapies: The charity continues to provide an array of therapies to support the emotional and physical wellbeing of the families it supports. New Play Therapy services were introduced into the charity to help support the emotional wellbeing of younger children who were not yet able to be supported by our counselling service.

Information and Advice: Skylarks continues to receive a high level of requests for support through its information and advice giving services. The charity's SEND Advice Service is a core gateway service for many of our families, with many new to the organisation. However many existing Skylarks families continue to access this service, with over 40 percent of all families supported by the charity in 22/23 using this service at least once.

Employability and Life Skills: As previously mentioned, Skylarks took significant strides in the development of our Employability and Life Skills Services. This expansion catered to the emerging needs of our older children and young adults, equipping them with the tools and knowledge necessary for successful transitions into adulthood.

Hounslow Families in Need: A Growing Presence
Our data underscored the increasing demand for Skylarks' services among families in Hounslow, where need is high, and specialist services are limited. Families from Hounslow constituted the largest group of new registrants. Their unique challenges, including language barriers and additional needs among parents, highlight the critical importance of our presence in this community.

The closure of the Hounslow Toy Library, a longstanding pillar of support for families with additional needs in Hounslow, left a significant gap in the community. Skylarks diligently engaged with the Toy Library's trustees in an effort to sustain this essential resource. Unfortunately, despite our collaboration, the Toy Library dissolved, leaving families vulnerable.

In response to this gap, Skylarks have started securing the tenancy of the Hounslow Toy Library building. This strategic potential move would position Skylarks at the heart of Hounslow, allowing us to reach those in need directly. The new space will host activities, workshops, SEND advice services, and support for local partner organisations. Skylarks aims to operate throughout the week, extending services into the weekends as partnerships evolve over the coming years.

The new Hounslow location will not only serve the Hounslow community but will also reach areas of Richmond. Skylarks anticipates families from these adjacent regions accessing services from both our Richmond and Hounslow sites, fostering unity and support across communities.

Recognition: Organisational Achievements

In 2022-2023, Skylarks received a host of well-deserved nominations that underscored our dedication to empowering families and children with additional needs. These honours are a testament to the impact Skylarks has made in our community, acknowledging the tireless efforts of our team and supporters.

Children and Young People Awards: Skylarks stood out as a finalist in the prestigious Children and Young People Awards. We were shortlisted as an organisation for the "The Children with Disabilities Award," recognising our exceptional commitment to supporting children facing additional needs.

Outstanding Contribution Award: Our Operations Manager, Fiona Morgan, was honoured as a finalist in the "Outstanding Contribution Award" category at The Children and Young People Awards. This recognition reflects her remarkable dedication and contributions to Skylarks' mission.

National Diversity Awards: Skylarks achieved recognition in the National Diversity Awards for 2022. This acknowledgement is a testament to our tireless efforts in promoting diversity and inclusivity in our community.

Positive Role Model Award: Skylarks' Managing Director, Aaron Guiver, was shortlisted for the "Positive Role Model Award" in the National Diversity Awards 2022, recognised for his inspirational leadership and dedication to making a difference.

These accolades inspire us to continue our mission to support and empower families in need. We are deeply honoured to receive these acknowledgements and remain committed to creating a brighter future for our community.

Resilience Amidst Challenges: A Year of Growth

While Skylarks experienced a surge in demand and growth, we faced our share of challenges. Staff turnover increased, creating a 33% reduction in staff capacity during the third quarter of the year. Through exit interviews, Skylarks learned that none of the departures were of Skylarks' doing and all for their own individual reasons. Despite these hurdles, Skylarks proactively improved its onboarding processes, staff training, and an employee assistance programme to reduce future turnover.

Strategic Aims: Charting a Brighter Future

Skylarks' strategic aims for the year 2023/24 revolve around further developing our programmes, expanding our reach, securing permanent spaces, enhancing online accessibility, nurturing talent, and diversifying fundraising initiatives. These aims will pave the way for Skylarks to evolve, ensuring we meet the needs of our services users, present and future, maintaining our place as a central hub of support for our community.

As we continue to expand, the trustees would like to extend our heartfelt gratitude to all our supporters, old and new, for being a crucial part of this transformative journey. Together, we are creating a brighter future for our community.

Report of the Trustees (incorporating the Directors' report) for the year ended 31 March 2023

Financial review

The net financial result for the year ended March 2023 was a surplus of £28,363 (2022 – deficit of £9,758). Income reported in the year was £498, 572 (including probono support), compared with £426,901 in 22/23; this increase was due to an increase in voluntary income, from individual donors, school fundraising activities and corporate donors. Cash income received was £404,962, with £93,610 worth of probono support and goods.

Thank you to all our funders over the last year, with whom we would not have been able to deliver a successful year of support. Thank you to; Hampton Fund, Richmond Parish Lands, Haymarket Media Group, Ajaz.org, Global Make Some Noise, London Community Fund, The Childhood Trust, The Gosling Foundation and all the other wonderful supporters who donated this year.

This year we had some exceptional supporters and would like to recognise the following;

Hampton Fund - £40,000 (£20,000 deferred) - funding supported our Development Manager, Core Costs and SEND Advice.
Richmond Parish Lands – £38,500 (£0 deferred) - Funding supported our Operations Manager, and Spread Your Wings Programme.

The Trustees regularly review the level of available unrestricted reserves (net unrestricted current assets) and consider whether it is sufficient to ensure continuity in the pursuance of core charitable objectives, in the event of downturns in income and unexpected costs arising. The Trustees currently consider that it is appropriate to maintain a level of available reserves of three(3) to six(6) months unrestricted income. The Charity continues its search for permanent premises, which would be available in the medium term. With that in mind the Trustees designated £50,000 of reserves for equipping a premises or any other needs related to securing the site, of which £1,140 was used in the year, leaving a balance of £48,860.

Plans for future period, 2023/24

Our strategic focus for the upcoming year revolves around several key pillars:

1. Programme Advancement:
    - Empowering Young Adults: Skylarks is dedicated to evolving and enriching our programme offerings. We're particularly excited about the development of a specialised initiative aimed at teenagers and young adults. This comprehensive programme, known as "Spread Your Wings - Career Coaching," will provide crucial guidance and support as these individuals embark on their career journeys. Over the coming year, Skylarks will aim to launch a second pilot programme, trialing different delivery models, and thorough testing of the material to ensure scalability.
    - Enhancing SEND Advice: Our SEND Advice Service will remain a focal point. We're committed to refining and expanding this cornerstone service to better serve families seeking guidance and advocacy in the realm of education.

2. Community Engagement:
    - Expanding Our Reach: Skylarks is poised to expand our community presence significantly. Our objective is to ensure that our mission and the invaluable services we provide are recognized and embraced by families, healthcare professionals, educators, and other key stakeholders. This strategic outreach will enable us to extend our support network to even more families in need.

3. Facilities Assurance:
    - Securing Our Centers: Skylarks' long term aim to secure a premises continues. Recognising the critical role of our physical location, we're actively working to secure these facilities, reducing the risk of the charity, while expanding our reach to those in need. Our strategic vision also explores the possibility of expanding our footprint into areas where our support is in high demand.
4. Digital Accessibility:
    - Online Service Excellence: Skylarks is committed to making our services accessible to all families, irrespective of geographical constraints or personal circumstances. Our investment in online programming will continue, ensuring that families facing barriers to in-person attendance can benefit from our offerings.

5. Talent and Organisational Growth:

- Nurturing Our Team: Skylarks acknowledges the invaluable contributions of our dedicated and purpose-driven team. The development and growth of our staff will remain a paramount focus, as these exceptional individuals are integral to our ongoing success.

6. Strengthen Fundraising:

- Diverse and Sustainable Income Streams: To enhance income to help us meet our community's evolving needs, Skylarks will concentrate on building supporter relationships and diversifying fundraising activities. Our primary fundraising goals include retaining and acquiring supporters while optimising resource allocation for the best long-term returns. Data-driven decisions and effective CRM utilisation will be central to this strategy.

Skylarks' forward strategy reflects our unwavering commitment to enhancing services, broadening our footprint, and securing the resources necessary to empower families and individuals with additional needs. These strategic pillars will guide our endeavours as we continue to make a transformative difference in our communities.

Statement of Trustees' responsibilities

Company and Charity laws require the Trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year, which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charitable company as at the balance sheet date and of its incoming resources and application of resources, including income and expenditure, for the financial year. In preparing those financial statements the Trustees should follow best practice and:

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- state whether the policies adopted are in accordance with the Charities Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP) 2015 and with applicable accounting standards, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements; and
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to assume that the charity will continue in operation.

The Trustees, who are the Directors of the company for the purposes of company law, are responsible for keeping proper accounting records, which disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charitable company and which enable it to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 2006. The Trustees are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charitable company and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud or other irregularities. Trustees who served during the year and up to the date of this report are set out on page 3.

The company's Directors certify that:

- so far as they are aware, there is no relevant accounting information of which the company's accountants are unaware: and
- they have taken all steps that they ought to have taken in order to make themselves aware of any relevant accounting information and to establish that the company's accountant is aware of that information.

On behalf of the board

Jennifer Peters
.....
Jennifer Peters
Chair of Trustees

Skylarks Charity
(A company limited by guarantee)

Independent examiner's report to the Trustees on the unaudited financial statements of Skylarks Charity.

I report on the financial statements for Skylarks Charity for the year ended 31st March 2023 set out on pages 14 to 21.

Respective responsibilities of Trustees and examiner

The charity's Trustees (who are also the Directors for the purpose of company law) are responsible for the preparation of the accounts. The charity's Trustees consider that an audit is not required for this period (under Section 144(2) of the Charities Act 2011 (the 2011 Act)), and that an independent examination is required.

Having satisfied myself that the charity is not subject to audit under company law and is eligible for independent examination, it is my responsibility:

- to examine the accounts under Section 145 of the 2011 Act
- to follow the procedures laid down in the General Directions given by the Charity Commission (under Section 145(5)(b) of the 2011 Act); and
- to state whether particular matters have come to my attention.

Basis of the independent examiner's report

My examination was carried out in accordance with the General Directions given by the Charity Commission. An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the charity and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts, and seeking explanations from you as Trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit, and consequently no opinion is given as to whether the accounts present a 'true and fair view' and the report is limited to those matters set out in the statements below.

Independent examiner's statement

In connection with my examination, no matter has come to my attention:
(1) which gives me reasonable cause to believe that, in any material respect, the requirements:
- to keep accounting records in accordance with Section 386 and 387 of the Companies Act 2006; and
- to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records, comply with the accounting requirements of Sections 394 and 395 of the Companies Act 2006 and with the methods and principles of the Statement of Recommended Practice: Accounting and Reporting by Charities

have not been met; or

(2) to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Charles Tait
Charles Tait Accounting Limited

N.S.C Tait

Date: 6 DECEMBER 2023

Skylarks Charity
(A company limited by guarantee)

Statement of financial activities (incorporating the income and expenditure account)

For the year ended 31 March 2023

	Notes	Unrestricted General funds £	Unrestricted Designated funds £	Restricted funds £	2023 Total £	2022 Total £
Incoming resources						
Incoming resources from generating funds: Voluntary income	2	143,002	-	190,858	333,860	296,445
Volunteer / pro bono income		93,610	-	-	93,610	113,440
Activities for generating funds	3	69,757	-	-	69,757	16,979
Investment income	4	1,345	-	-	1,345	37
Total incoming resources		307,714	-	190,858	498,572	426,901
Resources expended						
Costs of generating funds:						
Generating voluntary income	5	116,021	-	12,714	128,735	110,138
Charitable activities	6	189,900	1,140	150,434	341,474	326,521
Total resources expended		305,921	1,140	163,148	470,209	436,659
Net incoming resources for the year / Net income for the year		1,793	(1,140)	27,710	28,363	(9,758)
Transfers between funds		-	-			
Total funds brought forward		98,816	50,000	46,306	195,122	204,880
Total funds carried forward		100,609	48,860	74,016	223,485	195,122

The statement of financial activities includes all gains and losses in the year and therefore a separate statement of total recognised gains and losses has not been prepared.

All of the above amounts relate to continuing activities.

Skylarks Charity
(A company limited by guarantee)

Balance sheet
as at 31 March 2023

	Notes	2023 £	2023 £	2022 £	2022 £
Fixed Assets					
Tangible Fixed Assets	10		-		-
Current Assets					
Cash at bank and in hand		308,112		252,914	
		308,112		252,914	
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	11	(84,627)		(57,792)	
Net current assets			223,485		195,122
Net assets			223,485		195,122
Funds	12/13/14				
Restricted income funds			74,016		46,306
Designated Fund			48,860		50,000
Unrestricted General Fund			100,609		98,816
Total funds			223,485		195,122

The Balance Sheet continues on the following page.

Skylarks Charity
(A company limited by guarantee)

Balance sheet (continued)

Trustees' statements required by the Companies Act 1985 for the year ended 31 March 2023

The charitable company is entitled to exemption from audit under Section 477 of the Companies Act 2006 for the year ended 31 March 2023.

The members have not required the charitable company to obtain an audit of its financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2022 in accordance with Section 476 of the Companies Act 2006.

The Trustees acknowledge their responsibilities for:

(a) ensuring that the charitable company keeps accounting records that comply with Sections 386 and 387 of the Companies Act 2006 and

(b) preparing financial statements which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charitable company as at the end of each financial year and of its surplus or deficit for each financial year in accordance with the requirements of Sections 394 and 395 which otherwise comply with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006 relating to financial statements, so far as applicable to the charitable company.

These financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the special provisions of Part 15 of the Companies Act 2006 relating to small charitable companies and with the Financial Reporting Standard for Smaller Entities (effective April 2008).

The financial statements were approved by the board on 30 NOVEMBER 2023 and signed on its behalf by

Jennifer Peters
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Jennifer Peters
Chair of Trustees

Notes to financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2023

1. Accounting policies

The principal accounting policies are summarised below. The accounting policies have been applied consistently throughout the year and the preceding year.

1.1. Basis of accounting

The financial statements have been prepared on a going concern basis under the historic cost convention. The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the Statement of Recommended Practice: Accounting and Reporting by Charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS102) issued on 16 July 2014 and the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the United Kingdom and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102), the Charities Act 2011, the Companies Act 2006 and UK Generally Accepted Practice as it applies from 1 January 2015.

1.2. Cashflow

The charity has taken advantage of the exemption in FRS102 and the Statement of Recommended Practice from the requirement to produce a cashflow statement because it is a small charity. .

1.3. Incoming resources

All incoming resources are included in the statement of financial activities when the charity is entitled to the income and the amount can be quantified with reasonable accuracy. The following specific policies are applied to particular categories of income:

Voluntary income is received by way of grants, donations and gifts and is included in full in the statement of financial activities when receivable. Grants where entitlement is not conditional on the delivery of a specific performance by the charity, are recognised when the charity becomes unconditionally entitled to the grant.

Donated services and facilities are included at the value to the charity where this can be quantified. The value of services provided by volunteers has not been included.

Gifts donated for resale are included as incoming resources within activities for generating funds when they are sold.

Income from investments is included in the year in which it is receivable.

1.4. Resources expended

Expenditure is recognised on an accrual basis as a liability is incurred. Expenditure includes any VAT which cannot be fully recovered, and is reported as part of the expenditure to which it relates.

Costs of generating funds comprise the costs associated with attracting voluntary income and the costs of trading for fundraising purposes including the charity's shop.

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

Support costs are those costs incurred directly in support of expenditure on the objects of the charity and include project management.

2. Voluntary income

	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	2023 Total £	2022 Total £
Grants	19,680	179,858	199,538	184,931
Donations	120,497	11,000	131,497	100,329
Gift Aid Reclaimed	2,825	-	2,825	11,185
	143,002	190,858	333,860	296,445

3. Activities for generating funds

	Unrestricted funds £	2023 Total £	2022 Total £
Fundraising General/Events	63,995	63,995	16,847
Income from activities	5,762	5,762	132
	69,757	69,757	16,979

4. Investment income

	Unrestricted funds £	2023 Total £	2022 Total £
Bank interest receivable	1,345	1,345	37
	1,345	1,345	37

5. Costs of generating voluntary income

	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	2023 Total £	2022 Total £
Marketing and fundraising	116,021	12,714	128,735	110,138
	116,021	12,714	128,735	110,138

These figures include pro bono costs of £36,600.

6. Costs of charitable activities

	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	2023 Total £	2022 Total £
Educational program	191,040	150,434	341,474	326,521
	191,040	150,434	341,474	326,521

These figures include pro bono costs of £57,010.

7. Analysis of support costs

	2023 Total £	2022 Total £
Staff training	1,303	485
Accountancy	14,703	9,734
	16,006	10,219

8. Employees

Employment costs

	2023 £	2022 £
Wages and salaries	221,807	188,794

No employee received emoluments of more than £60,000 (2022: None).

Number of employees

The average monthly numbers of employees (most of whom are part-time) during the year was as follows:

	2023 Number	2022 Number
	11	9

9. Taxation

The charity's activities fall within the exemptions afforded by the provisions of the Income and Corporation Taxes Act 1988. Accordingly, there is no taxation charge in these accounts.

10. Tangible Fixed Assets

	Equipment £
Cost	
Brought forward at 1 April 2022	2,164
At 31 March 2023	2,164
Depreciation	
Brought forward at 1 April 2022	2,164
At 31 March 2023	2,164
Net book values	
At 31 March 2023	-
At 31 March 2022	-

11. Creditors: amounts falling due within one year

	2023 £	2022 £
Trade creditors	4,464	8,113
Deferred income	78,334	47,862
Accrued expenditure	1,829	1,817
	84,627	57,792

12. Analysis of net assets between funds

	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	Total funds £
Fund balances at 31 March 2023 as represented by:			
Current assets	155,763	152,349	308,112
Current liabilities	(6,294)	(78,333)	(84,627)
	149,469	74,016	223,485

13. Unrestricted funds

	At 1 April 2022 £	Incoming Resources / transfers £	Outgoing Resources / transfers £	At 31 March 2023 £
General unrestricted funds	98,816	307,714	(305,921)	100,609
Designated fund	50,000	-	(1,140)	48,860
Total unrestricted funds	148,816	307,714	(307,061)	149,469

Purposes of unrestricted funds

General unrestricted funds may be used to meet any of the Charities objectives, as determined by the Trustees.

The Designated fund has been set up to support the Charity with its objective of securing new premises, including the procurement of new equipment to equip the facility.

14. Restricted funds

	At 1 April 2022 £	Incoming resources £	Outgoing resources £	At 31 March 2023 £
Restricted funds	46,306	190,858	(163,148)	74,016

Purposes of restricted funds

Individual donors have stipulated that their funds must be used for specific purposes.

15. Company limited by guarantee

Skylarks Charity is a company limited by guarantee and accordingly does not have a share capital. Every member of the company undertakes to contribute such amount as may be required not exceeding £1 to the assets of the charitable company in the event of its being wound up while he or she is a member, or within one year after he or she ceases to be a member.

Skylarks Charity

England & Wales - Charity number 1148114

Accounts



Skylarks Charity

(Skylarks)

A company limited by guarantee

Trustees' report and financial

statements for the year ended

31 March 2022

Charity number: 1148114
Company number: 08047350

Skylarks Charity
(A company limited by guarantee)

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Skylarks Charity
(A company limited by guarantee)

Legal and administrative information

Charity number	1148114
Company registration number	08047350
Registered office	Crossway Centre 306 Richmond Road Twickenham Middlesex TW1 2PD

The Skylarks Team

Trustees

The directors of the charitable company (the charity) are trustees for the purpose of charity law and throughout this report are collectively referred to as the Trustees or Board of Trustees.

The following served as Trustees & Board of Directors for the charity during the year.

Chair	Jennifer Peters
Company Secretary	Gale Davies
Treasurer	Rajan Thevasagayam
Trustees	Jennifer Peters Gale Davies Rajan Thevasagayam Shirley Hickman Christopher Key Andrea Legrand Elissa Metzgen Mireille Nemeh Robert Pender Michelle Tempest-Mitchell Telmo Valido Zoe Spinks (Joined April 2021, Resigned March 2022)

Skylarks is a user-led organisation; of our 12 trustees this year, 10 are parents with children with additional needs and disabilities.

Staff

Managing Director	Aaron Guiver
Operations Manager	Fiona Morgan
Development Manager	Amy Crichton
Partnerships Manager	Sona Sharma
SEND Advice Service Manager	Michaela Eggleston
Programme Co-ordinator	Mia Patterson
Operations Assistant	Gabriella Stiles
Bookeeper	Sylvie Harding
Play Session Leader	Susie O'Kelly
Play Session Worker	Siobhan Burn
Communications Officer	Sophie-Lia White

Volunteers

We would like to acknowledge the work of our fantastic volunteers who give so much of their time and energy to designing and delivering our services.

Skylarks Charity
(A company limited by guarantee)

Report of the Trustees (incorporating the Directors' report) for the year ended 31 March 2022

The Trustees present their report and the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2022. The Trustees, who are also directors of Skylarks Charity for the purposes of company law and who served during the year and up to the date of this report are set out on page 3.

Structure, governance and management

Governance

During 2021-22, Skylarks Charity remained a Charity (Number 1148114) governed by a Constitution and managed by our Board of Trustees, meeting on average seven times a year. The Trustees have complied with their duty in section 17(5) of the Charities Act 2011 to have regard to public benefit guidance published by the Charity Commission.

Our Vision

A world where families living with additional needs thrive.

Our Mission

Our mission is to enable every child and young person with additional needs to live their best life while supporting everyone whose lives they touch.

To deliver our mission, our Board of Trustees have set out the following strategic aims for the coming year:

- Develop our offering and deliver our programmes with our partners.
- Attract new children and families to the organisation.
- Secure the space to expand our services.
- Continue to bring our offering online.
- Develop our talent and the organisation for sustainable growth.
- Diversify our income to ensure the charity is risk assured for the future.

Securing a new premises continues to be our main aim for the charity. The space will enable us to reach more children and families to access play and support within the Richmond Borough and surrounding areas. This objective is likely to be a long-term goal for the charity.

Our objective and activities

To provide support and relief for children with additional needs due to physical or learning impairment, emotional or behaviour difficulties or any permanent or temporary illness in the London Borough of Richmond and surrounding areas, including the provision of information, practical advice and support to their families, carers and siblings.

Skylarks Charity offers opportunities for children and young people aged 0-25 with additional needs to play and learn in a friendly environment. It aims to increase their confidence and self-esteem, improve their communication, sensory and physical skills and help them develop their potential. By offering emotional support and information to families, we work to reduce their isolation, improve their financial situation and give them the knowledge they need to make the best decisions for the future development of their children.

Skylarks Charity
(A company limited by guarantee)

Report of the Trustees (incorporating the Directors' report)
for the year ended 31 March 2022

Chair of Trustees Report

On behalf of the Board of Trustees, I am both proud and delighted to share the Charity's results for the last financial year 2021-2022. Skylarks continue to adapt, evolve and grow its services both in person and online in line with the growing population of the SEN community. By doing this, we continue to be recognised as one of the pillar charities for SEN family support in Richmond borough and beyond. We are fortunate to be an employer of choice within the local charity sector and have a dedicated workforce of both staff and volunteers who are responsible for delivering high-quality programming and support, witnessed through clear and measured results.

Highlights include:

- Continuing to steadily grow our income in line with our operational output needed to support the growing demand. This year we saw an overall 28% increase in income which we were then able to deploy in a very operationally prudent way to reach the 30% more families that joined the Skylarks community this year.
- For the first time, the Charity has had a comprehensive summer holiday programme offer consisting of both in-person and online products. This is a significant game changer for the SEN community as we are fully aware of the increased demands on parents and carers that school holiday breaks place on them.
- The research and development of our access to work product, "Spread your Wings- Career Coaching". Our corporate partner Haymarket Media Group and their fundraising effort made this programme possible. The Spread Your Wings programme will be piloted in 2022-23. The programme will serve as a key product and has been on our strategic roadmap for some time. The charity will finally start to expand its support to our older beneficiaries (Year 7 and beyond) as they start building a foundation to transition from education into the world of work.

The above achievements would not be possible without the continued passion, dedication and support that both the Skylarks staff and volunteers put forward. On behalf of the trustees, I would like to convey the sense of pride and accomplishment we, as trustees, feel about what the Charity does. The wider world outside of Skylarks post-pandemic has been filled with the need and requirement to be everchanging and adaptive. Skylarks continues to demonstrate that it can keep pace in this environment and rise to this challenge. We intimately understand the community's needs because the staff and volunteers are also part of the SEN community. This is a tremendous strength that should not be overlooked.

We look forward to the year ahead as we continue to work with our current stakeholders and welcome new ones to share in our mission to help young people thrive.



Sincerely,
Jennifer Peters

Skylarks Charity
(A company limited by guarantee)

Report of the Trustees (incorporating the Directors' report)
for the year ended 31 March 2022

Services and performance

Membership

Our membership figures increased by 30% with **3298 families** aged 0-25, representing **4101 children and young people** aged 0-25 registered to use our services. This meant that Skylarks saw an average of 78% more families register with the charity each month than they did the year previous. We engage with them weekly through our outreach activities, including information, resources, help for parents/carers and signposting service.

Children

We have directly supported **1085 individual children** through activities, therapies and other events. This is an **increase of 111 percent on the previous year**. This figure represents unique visits, where a child's attendance is counted only once even though they may for example have attended a termly therapy course of one session per week.

Family Support

We have directly supported **996 families** with a range of support including advocacy advice, information talks, workshops and counselling. This is an **increase of 68 percent on the previous year**.

Bookings

The 996 families we have engaged over the last year made over **8311 bookings** across all our services over the past year. Compared with the previous year, this represents an **increase of 68 percent on the number of service bookings being delivered.**

Professionals

We have engaged with **588 associated professionals and stakeholders** who contribute to helping us build strong community networks and connections.

What we have offered at Skylarks in 2021-2022

Our sessions enable children with disabilities and additional needs, their siblings, parents and carers to take up an opportunity to be supported in a caring and fully inclusive environment. Children can play, learn and develop with a wide range of activities and therapies designed to support their needs. Here is a breakdown of our services;

1. Activities

Play Activities
Skylarks have provided activities for children to play and engage with other children, families, staff and volunteers to help build their confidence, social skills and self-esteem. Over the year, a range of activities has taken place through various media, including in-person, online, pre-recorded on-demand content and live streaming services. We continued to build upon our online activities, despite face-to-face services reopening. Activities included:

Inclusive afterschool clubs such as Karate, Drama, Yoga, Arts and Crafts and General Play. Preschool activities such as General Play, Sensory Play, Makaton Sing & Sign sessions. We have also delivered many offsite activities such as building and playing with trains (All Aboard Club), bike riding lessons (Pedal Project), Magical Quests drama, Singing Hands and a haircutting service.

Skylarks Charity
(A company limited by guarantee)

Report of the Trustees (incorporating the Directors' report)
for the year ended 31 March 2022

Holiday Activities

Skylarks was a predominantly term time only organisation until 2020 when it launched its official Holiday Programming. However, due to covid restrictions, this was limited. This year Skylarks delivered essential holiday services to over 500 children, many of whom had previously not used our services. As with all our services, these activities were provided at no additional cost to our families. Services included;

Visits to Kew Gardens, Coding Camps, Multisport Camps with St Mary's University, Holly Lodge nature trails, Yoga (Integral Harmony), All Aboard Club, Ice Skating, Picnics in the Park, visits to Father Christmas and many more.

Online Activities

We continue to build upon our online programming and to work towards delivering over 40% of all services online. Our online services are free and accessible to anyone, from anywhere. Online services enable families to access services who would otherwise be unable to attend our face-to-face services due to transport, time of day, or disability. Services were delivered through live online sessions and a variety of pre-recorded on-demand content. This included;

Online Yoga, Coding Camps, Magical Quest (interactive drama), Sing and Sign, Story Time, and a variety of on demand content.

2. Therapies

A range of therapies have been delivered over the course of the year to children with additional needs and their families. Unfortunately, we were unable to offer our Hydrotherapy sessions this year due to continued ongoing restrictions Richmond Council who manage the Hydrotherapy pool. Our therapy services this year included:

Counselling (Off The Record), Music Therapy (Otakar Kraus Music Trust), Osteopathy, Occupational Therapy sessions, and the provision of a pop-up sensory room.

Skylarks have also offered Counselling sessions to parents and staff to support their mental health needs. An Online Meditative Support Group was also created to improve the mental resilience and wellbeing for some of our families.

3. Information and Advice

Skylarks is very much about supporting the whole family. To do this we have a range of services to support parent-carers and their needs, designed to increase their ability to support their own children. Last year we offered:

Workshops

Parenting techniques, Welcare strengthening families courses, Specialist Training Workshops, Local Information Workshops,

Support Groups

Weekly peer-to-peer support groups and coffee mornings including: National Autistic Society, Girls Connect for Parents of Girls with ASD, Phyz Support Group, Home Schooling Group, Meditative Support Group, Hounslow Family Support Group.

Advice/Support Clinics

Benefits Advice Clinic (KIDS), Family Matters Richmond (RUILS), Family Matters Hounslow (RUILS), Social Support (Welcare).

SEND Advice Service

Educational 1:1 Advice and Support, SEND Advice Workshops, SEND Advice Professional Subcontractor Support, SEND Support Workshops (RUILS, KIDS, SOS!SEN, IPSEA). This service supported over 400 families last year. It has become a corner stone service for the charity. Recruitment to expand the service started and in 2022 we expect to see more families to have free access to this specialist advice.

Skylarks Charity
(A company limited by guarantee)

Report of the Trustees (incorporating the Directors' report)
for the year ended 31 March 2022

Highlights of the Year

This year, Skylarks had an increased demand for its services, witnessing a 78% increase in the number of new members registering to use our services when compared to the previous year. This emerging trend of the increasing number of families, we believe, is due to the impact Covid had earlier in the year. As statutory services and other local organisations could not open or support children and families in the capacity they needed, they turned to charities, such as Skylarks, for support.

In 2021/22, Skylarks had an extreme period of growth throughout the organisation. With the increase in registrations, Skylarks ensured that there were enough programmes and services available for families. As activities started to resume in person, the charity ensured that it maintained its online programming, with 40% of all services in 2021/22 delivered online. The charity has seen a continued increase in the number of children and families attending our services too, with the charity delivering a 111% increase in the number of children and a 68% increase in the number of families accessing services. The charity delivered programming to over 1000 children for the first time in the charity's history. This is a monumental achievement for the organisation and one that has not been without its challenges.

In order to deliver on the influx of families requesting services, Skylarks not only increased its level of programming, but also needed to ensure back end processes were sufficient and staffing levels were expanded. At Skylarks, we feel the greatest asset is our team of staff and volunteers. Without their hard work and dedication, we would have been unable to make a difference in our local community. Skylarks continues to invest wisely in its team of staff, helping us to gain the skillsets and capacity needed to support our growing community continually. This year we invested in an additional post of a Programme Co-ordinator to support us in the creation, delivery and marketing of our services. We also interviewed for an additional post towards the end of the financial year to grow our SEND Advice Service, which has become inundated as word spreads of our success. This member of staff started at the beginning of May 2022.

Skylarks divided its vast array of services on offer into four main categories for the charity to focus on and build upon over the year.

1) Activities - including pre school, afterschool, school holidays and trips
2) Therapies - including Music Therapy, Counselling, Osteopathy and RDA
3) Information and Advice - SEND Educational Advice, Peer Support Groups, Signposting and Benefits Advice.
4) Employment and Life Skills - Confidence building and other life skills, and the development of a Carers Programme.

Over the course of 2021 and 2022, the charity proceeded to map the landscape for what support is available and still needed in the field of career building for young people with additional needs. The charity commissioned a piece of market research which involved interviewing a range of young people, corporate organisations, and community groups to find out what young people needed in order to access the world of work. Currently only 22% of people with Autism are in employment, which is significantly lower than the national average of 81% for non disabled individuals. The charity has started work on development of a new programme and launched its first Pilot in June 2022. We expect this area of programming to be of significance to many of our families as their children and young people grow into adulthood.

In order to maintain the new recruitment posts and the additional level of programming, Skylarks created its first fundraising strategy and updated its marketing plan. The organisation went about diversifying its income streams and focused our marketing on key groups of individuals and organisations who Skylarks felt could support the charity moving forward. The charity would like to thank the many individuals and organisations who supported Skylarks over the year, and while we continued to work closely with long standing supporters such as Hampton Fund, Richmond Parish Lands and Haymarket Media Group, Skylarks welcomed with open arms new supporters such as Ajaz.org into its family of supporters. The Charity hopes to continue its growing bond with these organisations to ensure the longevity and continued development of the organisation to ensure a brighter future for its community.

Unfortunately, not all progress went as planned over the last year. In the charity's continued search for a new location to call its home, the Marble Hill Project has been significantly delayed due to complications post pandemic and planning; such as new reports needed and changes in the leadership of one of the three charities: Marble Hill Playcentres. After

many years of planning, fundraising and a community of support behind the project, Marble Hill Playcentres is currently reviewing the project plans. We remain cautiously optimistic that the project can be unlocked and that planning for this once in a generation opportunity can be realised for the sake of the beneficiaries.

In recollection of all the charity's hard work and achievements over the last year, Skylarks received, and was nominated for a number of honours. Most notably, in 2021, Skylarks was awarded The National Diversity Award 2020 for the Community Organisation for Age category. Due to Covid, the award ceremony for 2020 did not take place until September 2021. Skylarks were selected from seven others in the Community Organisation for Age Award shortlisting, while 60,000 nominees were put forward for the awards. Skylarks' Chair of Trustees Jennifer Peters proudly collected the award on behalf of the charity, paying homage to the amazing work of its staff and founder, Anne-Marie Asgari in her acceptance speech. In 2021 Skylarks were also nominated for the National Diversity Award 2021 - Community Awards for Disability category, alongside our Managing Director, who himself was nominated for an award. In recollection for our work, Aaron was elected as a Fellow of the Royal Society of Arts, known more formally as the Royal Society of Arts, Manufactures and Commerce (RSA).

The Managing Director and Trustees are extremely proud of all the hard work and dedication everyone at the charity has put in over the course of the year and proud of the results showcased in this report. More than ever, families of children with additional needs found support, friendships and guidance that many in the community needed.

Financial review

The net financial result for the year ended March 2022 was a deficit of £9,758 (2021 – surplus of £7,525). Income reported in the year was £426,901, compared with £332,594 in 20/21; this increase was due to an increase in voluntary income, from individual donors, school fundraising activities and corporate donors.

Thank you to all our funders over the last year, with whom we would not have been able to deliver a successful year of support. Thank you to; Hampton Fund, Richmond Parish Lands, Haymarket Media Group, Ajaz.org, Global Make Some Noise, Tommy Hollis Children's Fund, London Community Fund, The Childhood Trust, City Bridge Trust and all the other wonderful supporters who donated this year.

This year we had some exceptional supporters and would like to recognise the following supporters.;

Hampton Fund - £25,000 (£14,582 deferred) - funding supported our Development Manager and Core Costs.
Richmond Parish Lands – £54,832 (£23,333 deferred) - Funding supported our Operations Manager, SEND Advice Service and Spread Your Wings Programme.

The Trustees regularly review the level of available unrestricted reserves (net unrestricted current assets) and consider whether it is sufficient to ensure continuity in the pursuance of core charitable objectives, in the event of downturns in income and unexpected costs arising. The Trustees currently consider that it is appropriate to maintain a level of available reserves of three(3) to six(6) months unrestricted income. The Charity continues its search for a permanent premises, which would be available in the medium term. With that in mind the Trustees have decided to keep its designated £50,000 of reserves for equipping the premises or any other needs related to securing the site.

Plans for future periods

- Strategic aims Our Board of Trustees is very proud of the work achieved by the Charity. They have discussed and agreed that the plans over the next year will focus on:

- Develop our offering and deliver our programmes with our partners: in particular, develop a programme for teenagers and young adults around Spread Your Wings - Career Coaching, and additional provisions for our SEND Advice Service;

- Attract new members: increase our presence in our communities and make sure that families, medical doctors, schools and others recognise our mission and our services;

- Secure the space: ensure we continue to have space at The Crossway Centre to provide our services, and consider expanding or finding other suitable locations in areas we support;

- Continue to bring our offering online; Continue to develop our online programming to ensure our services are available to families who would otherwise be unable to access our services.

- Develop our talent and the organisation: we have exceptional purpose-driven talent in the organisation and we need to ensure this continues to be a critical pillar of success as we grow

- Raise the funds: we need to continue to develop and implement initiatives that support our fundraising goals. We aim to diversify our income over the coming years to ensure our growth is sustainable.

Skylarks Charity
(A company limited by guarantee)

Report of the Trustees (incorporating the Directors' report) for the year ended 31 March 2022

Statement of Trustees' responsibilities

Company and Charity laws require the Trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year, which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charitable company as at the balance sheet date and of its incoming resources and application of resources, including income and expenditure, for the financial year. In preparing those financial statements the Trustees should follow best practice and:

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- state whether the policies adopted are in accordance with the Charities Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP) 2015 and with applicable accounting standards, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements; and
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to assume that the charity will continue in operation.

The Trustees, who are the Directors of the company for the purposes of company law, are responsible for keeping proper accounting records, which disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charitable company and which enable it to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 2006. The Trustees are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charitable company and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud or other irregularities. Trustees who served during the year and up to the date of this report are set out on page 3.

The company's Directors certify that:

- so far as they are aware, there is no relevant accounting information of which the company's accountants are unaware: and
- they have taken all steps that they ought to have taken in order to make themselves aware of any relevant accounting information and to establish that the company's accountant is aware of that information.

On behalf of the board



.....

Jennifer Peters
Chair of Trustees

Skylarks Charity
(A company limited by guarantee)

Independent examiner's report to the Trustees on the unaudited financial statements of Skylarks Charity.

I report on the financial statements for Skylarks Charity for the year ended 31st March 2022 set out on pages 13 to 21.

Respective responsibilities of Trustees and examiner

The charity's Trustees (who are also the Directors for the purpose of company law) are responsible for the preparation of the accounts. The charity's Trustees consider that an audit is not required for this period (under Section 144(2) of the Charities Act 2011 (the 2011 Act)), and that an independent examination is required.

Having satisfied myself that the charity is not subject to audit under company law and is eligible for independent examination, it is my responsibility:

- to examine the accounts under Section 145 of the 2011 Act
- to follow the procedures laid down in the General Directions given by the Charity Commission (under Section 145(5)(b) of the 2011 Act); and
- to state whether particular matters have come to my attention.

Basis of the independent examiner's report

My examination was carried out in accordance with the General Directions given by the Charity Commission. An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the charity and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts, and seeking explanations from you as Trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit, and consequently no opinion is given as to whether the accounts present a 'true and fair view' and the report is limited to those matters set out in the statements below.

Independent examiner's statement

In connection with my examination, no matter has come to my attention:
(1) which gives me reasonable cause to believe that, in any material respect, the requirements:
- to keep accounting records in accordance with Section 386 and 387 of the Companies Act 2006; and
- to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records, comply with the accounting requirements of Sections 394 and 395 of the Companies Act 2006 and with the methods and principles of the Statement of Recommended Practice: Accounting and Reporting by Charities

have not been met; or

(2) to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Charles Tait
Charles Tait Accounting Limited

N S C Tait

Date: 8 November 2022

Skylarks Charity
(A company limited by guarantee)

Statement of financial activities (incorporating the income and expenditure account)

For the year ended 31 March 2022

	Notes	Unrestricted General funds £	Unrestricted Designated funds £	Restricted funds £	2022 Total £	2021 Total £
Incoming resources						
Incoming resources from generating funds: Voluntary income	2	135,813	-	160,632	296,445	200,192
Volunteer / pro bono income		113,440	-	-	113,440	99,250
Activities for generating funds	3	16,979	-	-	16,979	33,072
Investment income	4	37	-	-	37	80
Total incoming resources		266,269	-	160,632	426,901	332,594
Resources expended						
Costs of generating funds:						
Generating voluntary income	5	93,123	-	17,015	110,138	57,592
Charitable activities	6	226,641	-	99,880	326,521	267,477
Total resources expended		319,764	-	116,895	436,659	325,069
Net incoming resources for the year / Net income for the year		(53,495)	-	43,737	(9,758)	7,525
Transfers between funds		-	-			
Total funds brought forward		152,311	50,000	2,569	204,880	197,355
Total funds carried forward		98,816	50,000	46,306	195,122	204,880

The statement of financial activities includes all gains and losses in the year and therefore a separate statement of total recognised gains and losses has not been prepared.

All of the above amounts relate to continuing activities.

Skylarks Charity
(A company limited by guarantee)

Balance sheet
as at 31 March 2022

	Notes	2022 £	2022 £	2021 £	2021 £
Fixed Assets					
Tangible Fixed Assets	10		-		-
Current Assets					
Cash at bank and in hand		252,914		241,692	
		252,914		241,692	
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	11	(57,792)		(36,812)	
Net current assets			195,122		204,880
Net assets			195,122		204,880
Funds	12/13/14				
Restricted income funds			46,306		2,569
Designated Fund			50,000		50,000
Unrestricted General Fund			98,816		152,311
Total funds			195,122		204,880

The Balance Sheet continues on the following page.

Skylarks Charity
(A company limited by guarantee)

Balance sheet (continued)

Trustees' statements required by the Companies Act 1985 for the year ended 31 March 2022

The charitable company is entitled to exemption from audit under Section 477 of the Companies Act 2006 for the year ended 31 March 2022.

The members have not required the charitable company to obtain an audit of its financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2022 in accordance with Section 476 of the Companies Act 2006.

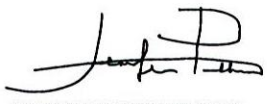
The Trustees acknowledge their responsibilities for:

(a) ensuring that the charitable company keeps accounting records that comply with Sections 386 and 387 of the Companies Act 2006 and

(b) preparing financial statements which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charitable company as at the end of each financial year and of its surplus or deficit for each financial year in accordance with the requirements of Sections 394 and 395 which otherwise comply with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006 relating to financial statements, so far as applicable to the charitable company.

These financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the special provisions of Part 15 of the Companies Act 2006 relating to small charitable companies and with the Financial Reporting Standard for Smaller Entities (effective April 2008).

The financial statements were approved by the board on ..... 22 September 2022 ..... and signed on its behalf by



.....

Jennifer Peters
Chair of Trustees

Skylarks Charity
(A company limited by guarantee)

Notes to the Financial Statements

1. Accounting policies

The principal accounting policies are summarised below. The accounting policies have been applied consistently throughout the year and the preceding year.

1.1. Basis of accounting

The financial statements have been prepared on a going concern basis under the historic cost convention. The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the Statement of Recommended Practice: Accounting and Reporting by Charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS102) issued on 16 July 2014 and the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the United Kingdom and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102), the Charities Act 2011, the Companies Act 2006 and UK Generally Accepted Practice as it applies from 1 January 2015.

1.2. Cashflow

The charity has taken advantage of the exemption in FRS102 and the Statement of Recommended Practice from the requirement to produce a cashflow statement because it is a small charity.

1.3. Incoming resources

All incoming resources are included in the statement of financial activities when the charity is entitled to the income and the amount can be quantified with reasonable accuracy. The following specific policies are applied to particular categories of income:

Voluntary income is received by way of grants, donations and gifts and is included in full in the statement of financial activities when receivable. Grants where entitlement is not conditional on the delivery of a specific performance by the charity, are recognised when the charity becomes unconditionally entitled to the grant.

Donated services and facilities are included at the value to the charity where this can be quantified. The value of services provided by volunteers has not been included.

Gifts donated for resale are included as incoming resources within activities for generating funds when they are sold.

Income from investments is included in the year in which it is receivable.

1.4. Resources expended

Expenditure is recognised on an accrual basis as a liability is incurred. Expenditure includes any VAT which cannot be fully recovered, and is reported as part of the expenditure to which it relates.

Costs of generating funds comprise the costs associated with attracting voluntary income and the costs of trading for fundraising purposes including the charity's shop.

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

Support costs are those costs incurred directly in support of expenditure on the objects of the charity and include project management.

Skylarks Charity
(A company limited by guarantee)

2. Voluntary income

	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	2022 Total £	2021 Total £
Grants	24,299	160,632	184,931	148,528
Donations	100,329	-	100,329	49,524
Gift Aid Reclaimed	11,185	-	11,185	2,140
	135,813	160,632	296,445	200,192

3. Activities for generating funds

	Unrestricted funds £	2022 Total £	2021 Total £
Fundraising General/Events	16,847	16,847	31,646
Income from activities	132	132	1,426
	16,979	16,979	33,072

4. Investment income

	Unrestricted funds £	2022 Total £	2021 Total £
Bank interest receivable	37	37	80
	37	37	80

5. Costs of generating voluntary income

	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	2022 Total £	2021 Total £
Marketing and fundraising	93,123	17,015	110,138	57,592
	93,123	17,015	110,138	57,592

Skylarks Charity
(A company limited by guarantee)

6. Costs of charitable activities

	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	2022 Total £	2021 Total £
Educational program	226,641	99,880	326,521	267,477
	226,641	99,880	326,521	267,477

7. Analysis of support costs

	2022 Total £	2021 Total £
Staff training	485	744
Accountancy	9,734	5,467
	10,219	6,211

8. Employees

Employment costs

	2022 £	2021 £
Wages and salaries	188,794	129,668

No employee received emoluments of more than £60,000 (2021: None).

Number of employees

The average monthly numbers of employees (most of whom are part-time) during the year was as follows:

2022 Number	2021 Number
9	8

Skylarks Charity
(A company limited by guarantee)

9. Taxation

The charity's activities fall within the exemptions afforded by the provisions of the Income and Corporation Taxes Act 1988. Accordingly, there is no taxation charge in these accounts.

10. Tangible Fixed Assets

	Equipment £
Cost	
Brought forward at 1 April 2021	2,164
At 31 March 2022	2,164
Depreciation	
Brought forward at 1 April 2021	2,164
At 31 March 2022	2,164
Net book values	
At 31 March 2022	-
At 31 March 2021	-

11. Creditors: amounts falling due within one year

	2022 £	2021 £
Trade creditors	8,113	4,396
Deferred income	47,862	31,200
Other taxes and social security	-	-
Accrued expenditure	1,817	1,216
	57,792	36,812

Skylarks Charity
(A company limited by guarantee)

12. Analysis of net assets between funds

	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	Total funds £
Fund balances at 31 March 2022 as represented by:			
Current assets	157,100	95,814	252,914
Current liabilities	(8,284)	(49,508)	(57,792)
	148,816	46,306	195,122

13. Unrestricted funds

	At 1 April 2021 £	Incoming Resources / transfers £	Outgoing Resources / transfers £	At 31 March 2022 £
General unrestricted funds	152,311	266,269	(319,764)	98,816
Designated fund	50,000	-	-	50,000
Total unrestricted funds	202,311	266,269	(319 764)	148,816

Purposes of unrestricted funds

General unrestricted funds may be used to meet any of the Charities objectives, as determined by the Trustees.

The Designated fund has been set up to support the Charity with its objective of securing new premises, including the procurement of new equipment to equip the facility.

14. Restricted funds

	At 1 April 2021 £	Incoming resources £	Outgoing resources £	At 31 March 2022 £
Restricted funds	2,569	160,632	(116,895)	46,306

Purposes of restricted funds

Individual donors have stipulated that their funds must be used for specific purposes.

Skylarks Charity
(A company limited by guarantee)

15. Company limited by guarantee

Skylarks Charity is a company limited by guarantee and accordingly does not have a share capital. Every member of the company undertakes to contribute such amount as may be required not exceeding £1 to the assets of the charitable company in the event of its being wound up while he or she is a member, or within one year after he or she ceases to be a member.

Skylarks Charity

England & Wales - Charity number 1148114

Accounts

Charity number: 1148114
Company number: 08047350



Skylarks Charity
(A company limited by guarantee) Trustees'

report and financial statements for the year

ended 31 March 2021

Skylarks Charity
(A company limited by guarantee)

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Skylarks Charity
(A company limited by guarantee)

Legal and administrative information

Charity number	1148114
Company registration number	08047350
Registered office	The Crossway Centre 306 Richmond Road Twickenham Middlesex TW1 2PD

The Skylarks Team
Trustees
The directors of the charitable company (the charity) are trustees for the purpose of charity law and throughout this report are collectively referred to as the Trustees or Board of Trustees.

The following served as Trustees & Board of Directors for the charity during the year.

Chair Jennifer Peters
Company Secretary Gale Davies
Treasurer Rajan Thevasagayam

Trustees
Jennifer Peters
Gale Davies
Rajan Thevasagayam
Shirley Hickman
Christopher Key
Andrea Legrand
Elissa Metzgen
Mereille Nemh
Robert Pender
Michelle Tempest-Mitchell
Telmo Valido

Skylarks is a user-led organization; of our 11 trustees, 9 are parents with children with additional needs and/or disabilities.

Staff
Managing Director - Aaron Guiver
Operations Manager - Fiona Morgan
Development Manager - Amy Crichton
Communications Officer - Sophie-Lia White
Partnership & Fundraising Manager - Sona Sharma
SEND Advice Service Manager - Michaela Eggleston
Operations Assistant - Gabriella Stiles
Bookkeeper - Sylvie Harding
Play Session Leader - Susie O'Kelly
Play Session Worker - Siobhan Burn

Volunteers
We would like to acknowledge the work of our fantastic volunteers who give so much of their time and energy to designing and delivering our services. This year our volunteers and pro bono service providers dedicated themselves to 662 days or 2,228 hours of service delivery at a value of £73,670 worth of support to the charity.

Combined with in-kind and pro bono company donations, Skylarks received £119,845 worth of support gifts and services to the charity.

Skylarks Charity
(A company limited by guarantee)

Report of the Trustees (incorporating the Directors' report) for the year ended 31 March 2021

The Trustees present their report and the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2021. The Trustees, who are also directors of Skylarks Charity for the purposes of company law and who served during the year and up to the date of this report are set out on page 3.

Structure, governance and management

Governance

During 2020-21 Skylarks Charity remained a Charity (Number 1148114) governed by a Constitution and managed by our Board of Trustees who meet on average 6 times a year. The Trustees have complied with their duty in section 17(5) of the Charities Act 2011 to have regard to public benefit guidance published by the Charity Commission.

Our Vision

A world where families living with additional needs thrive.

Our Mission

Our mission is to enable every child and young person with additional needs to live their best life while supporting everyone whose lives they touch.

To deliver our mission our Board of Trustees have set out the following strategic aims for the coming year:

Develop our offering and deliver our programmes with our partners:

- SEND Advice Service;
- Access to Work

Attract new members:

- Increase number of registered beneficiaries
- Increase the number of children and families supported

Secure the space:

- Look at additional space located in Hampton and Barnes.
- Continue to explore the Marble Hill Play Centre project as a permanent location for the Charity in the future

Continue to bring offering online:

- Continue Online service delivery in conjunction with face to face services.

Securing new premises such as the Marble Hill Community Project continues to be our main aim for the charity. The space will enable us to reach more children and families to access play and support within the Richmond Borough and its surrounding areas. This objective is likely to be a long term goal for the charity.

Our Committees

This year the board split into individual committees to be held between board meetings. This allows staff, trustees and consultants to focus their time on individualised areas of the charity. In 2020/21 the following committees met;

- Strategy Committee
- Operations Committee
- Safeguarding Committee
- Finance & Governance Committee
- Fundraising & Marketing Committee

Skylarks Charity
(A company limited by guarantee)

Report of the Trustees (incorporating the (Directors' report) for the year ended 31 March 2021 *continued*

Our objective and activities

To provide support and relief for children with additional needs due to physical or learning impairment, emotional or behaviour difficulties or any permanent or temporary illness, in the London Borough of Richmond and surrounding areas, including the provision of information, practical advice and support to their families, carers and siblings.

Skylarks Charity offers opportunities for children and young people aged 0-25 with additional needs to play and learn in a friendly environment. It aims to increase their confidence and self-esteem, improve their communication, sensory and physical skills and help them develop their potential. By offering emotional support and information to families, we work to reduce their isolation, improve their financial situation and give them the knowledge they need to make the best decisions for the future development of their children.

Chair of Trustees' Report

On behalf of the Board of Trustees, I am delighted to share the Charity's last year results. In an unprecedented year in the midst of a global pandemic, the Skylarks model of physical programming was tested resulting in us quickly pivoting to online programming in order to continue to deliver services to our community. None of this would have been remotely possible without the resilience of our staff, the dedication of our strong volunteer base, the steadfast commitment of our core funders as well as the support and guidance provided by our Board of Trustees.

Highlights include:

- The pivotal roll-out of a comprehensive online offer to the community including parent/carer support groups, SEND advice sessions, therapies and programs for our SEN children as well as their siblings. In 2020/21, online programming rapidly grew to represent 70% of all delivered services. The Charity is committed to the ongoing development of this offer in line with our business plan. By 2023/24, we envision online programming to settle to roughly 40% of our total offer.
- The appointment of our first full-time Managing Director to oversee all functions. Beyond strengthening the Charity's infrastructure, this appointment will allow the Charity and its Board to further pursue our ambition to grow and develop the offer and its funding for the Community.
- The development of an in-house offer to address SEND Advice Service. This allowed us to connect and support over 400 families, a 260% increase versus the previous year. The SEND Advice Service is now truly a core and gateway product to Skylarks. Special thanks to Haymarket Group whose financial support was instrumental in making this happen.

Words cannot fully express the gratitude that both myself and the Board have for the entire team at Skylarks. The Charity is in a very solid position, both financially and structurally, and is emerging from the pandemic stronger than ever. We fully recognise that the years ahead will be challenging for everyone, but especially so for Skylarks where we need to support an ever-growing SEND population whilst (currently) competing for less available funding due to the pandemic. In order to ensure Skylarks continues to be optimally-positioned financially to support the community, we have appointed a Development Manager whose sole focus and responsibility is the generation of income.

We look forward to continuing to work with all our stakeholders in 2021-22 to support our families to thrive.

Sincerely,
Jennifer Peters

Skylarks Charity
(A company limited by guarantee)

Report of the Trustees (incorporating the (Directors' report) for the year ended 31 March 2021 *continued*

Services and performance

Membership

Our membership figures are 3232 children and young people aged 0-25, representing 2540 families. This is an increase of 33 percent on the previous year. We engage with them weekly through our outreach activities including information, resources, help for parents/carers and signposting service.

Children

We have directly supported 515 different children through activities, therapies and other events. This is an increase of 6 percent on the previous year. This figure represents unique visits, where a child's attendance is counted only once even though they may for example have attended a termly therapy course of one session per week.

Family Support

We have directly supported 592 families with a range of support including advocacy advice, information talks, workshops and counselling. This is an increase of 2.5 percent on the previous year.

Professionals

We have engaged with several associated professionals and stakeholders who contribute to helping us build strong community networks and connections. We currently have 634 registered professionals who can regularly gain access to information and content relevant to their fields.

Bookings

The 592 families we have engaged with made over 4936 bookings across all our services over the past year. That's an average of 8.3 bookings per family. Compared with the previous year, this represents a slight decrease of 6 percent on the number of service bookings being delivered. This decrease is attributed to the continual changes and restrictions in our service delivery due to covid. In total 70% of all bookings this year were delivered online.

What we have offered at Skylarks in 2020-2021

Our sessions enable children with disabilities and additional needs, their siblings, parents and carers to take up an opportunity to be supported in a caring and fully inclusive environment. Children can play, learn and develop with a wide range of activities and therapies designed to support their needs. Skylarks recently developed an online offering. Many services moved between Online and face to face, while others are now a strictly online service only. Here is a breakdown of our services;

Children's Activities

1. Therapies

Skylarks have provided a range of therapies over the year to children with additional needs. We looked to increase our services over 2020-21 by increasing expenditure on our counselling for children with additional needs. The charity felt that during the pandemic this service needed to be a priority. Many of our therapies were delivered online however, we were unable to offer Hydrotherapy this year due to government restrictions. Our therapy services this year included:

Developmental Yoga (Integral Harmony), Counselling (Off The Record), Music Therapy (OKMT), Osteopathy (volunteer paediatric osteopaths), Occupational Therapy sessions, Wellies and Wellbeing (Park Lane Stables), Online Life Skills training and the provision of a pop up sensory room.

2. Activities

Skylarks have provided activities for children to play and engage with other children, families, staff and volunteers to help build their confidence, social skills and self-esteem. Over the year a range of activities has taken place through a range of media, including in-person, online, pre-recorded on-demand content and live streaming services. Some of our usual activities such as cooking or our pedal project were unable to operate due to government restrictions. Activities included:

Toy playroom, arts and crafts, Makaton Sing & Sign sessions, drama workshops and clubs, Online Karate workshops and clubs, building and playing with trains (The Engine Shed), trips and outings, STEM Coding Sessions, Magical Quest Online Drama, Singing Hands and a haircutting service.

3. Holiday Activities

Skylarks is a predominantly term time only organisation. To support families during school holiday periods, Skylarks has been growing its services available to families during these times. Some of the activities available during holiday periods last year include:

Holly Lodge nature trails, Yoga (Integral Harmony), All Aboard Club, Ice Skating, Kew Gardens, Coding Camps, Magical Quest Drama

Adult Parent/Carer Support

Skylarks are very much about supporting the whole family. To do this we have a range of services to support parent-carers and their needs, designed to increase their ability to support their children. During the pandemic, Skylarks decided to provide counselling therapies to parents for the first time. Skylarks offered:

1. Therapies & Activities

Family yoga and relaxation sessions, Relax and Recharge events (Massages and alternative therapies; Facials, Pedicures and Manicures), One to One Counselling, Time to Share Group Therapy, On-Demand Yoga Nidra, On-Demand Yoga Courses.

2. Workshops

Parenting techniques, Online Welcare Parenting Programme, Specialist Training Workshops inc; Sleep Therapy, SEND Transport, Emotional Regulation, First Aid and more.

3. Support Groups

Weekly peer-to-peer support groups and coffee mornings. This included two new support groups with an emphasis on parental mental health. Groups included: National Autistic Society, Girls Connect for Parents of Girls with ASD, Phyz Support Group, Home Schooling Group, Post 16 Maze, Listening Group, Meditative Support Group

4. Advice/Support clinics

Benefits Advice Clinic (KIDS), Family Matters Richmond (RUILS), Family Matters Hounslow (RUILS), social support (Welcare)

5. SEND Advice Service

Skylarks invested in its Send Advice Service and hired its first staff member to support the running of the programme. The service supports families with or to receive an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP), which is a legal document that is drawn up between the Local Education Authority, Health and Social Care and a child's family, or a young person between 16 and 25 to support the young person to access an education. The support Skylarks provided includes:

The new service included building a custom database and delivering regular online workshops. This was alongside its regular specialists' case support. The service completed over 400 individual cases and took around 250 bookings for its Online webinars. The Programmes services included: 1:1 Educational Advice & Support, Online SEND Advice Workshops/Webinars, Send Advice Professional Subcontractor Support,

We try to provide all our services free of charge where possible, or for a suggested donation at a highly subsidised rate. We are indebted to the many professionals who give their time and skills so generously to support our families.

Highlights of the Year

Over the past 15 years, Skylarks has continued to grow its list of beneficiaries and services, moving from a supportive playgroup to delivering programming such as counselling, therapies, support groups and activities to a membership of over 3000 children compiled of 2500 families. The charity has seen a continual growth of its membership of around 30% year on year within the last 4 years. The charity continues to support new families along their journey of discovery.

This year was unlike any the charity had faced in 15 years since its conception. Towards the end of March 2020, the Covid 19 pandemic halted the charity's usual activities. Shortly before the lockdown, the trustees of Skylarks made the hard decision that we needed to close our drop-in sessions due to the Coronavirus outbreak. We have many vulnerable children, families and volunteers and could not take risks with their health.

We appreciate that it has been a difficult time for our families and that they still needed support. Staff worked hard behind the scenes to get as many of our services as possible to be available online, via telephone, video calls, blogs, social media and other technology within the first two weeks after closure. Skylarks delivered services in a new way of working.

Over the past year, Skylarks supported hundreds of children and their families online with activities such as Drama, Karate, Yoga, Peer Support Groups, Arts and Crafts, Counselling and more. Skylarks also provided a personalised service, calling the most vulnerable of our families in isolation weekly, offering support, advice and services to ensure the physical and emotional wellbeing of our beneficiaries were supported.

Our Send Advice Service was overhauled to increase capacity and provide a better quality of service to our beneficiaries who regularly foresaw waiting times of over four weeks. A new staff member was on-boarded and a new case management database created. In 2020/21 the SEND Advice service managed over 400 individual cases, supporting families to receive advice, guidance and support they need for their child to access an education. That is a 260% increase in the number of cases being managed compared to the year previous. Building upon its success Skylarks will be recruiting additional staff to support the growing service.

With the continual growth of the organisation, the trustees decided to hire the charities first Managing Director. This role would allow the daily running of the charity and its decisions away from the trustees, allowing them to govern effectively. A new three-year business plan was drawn together and separate relevant strategies have developed. By 2024 Skylarks hopes to achieve;

- Growing our user base to 3,500 registered families by FY'24/25

- Take the total number of bookings to 13,600 in FY'24/25

- We envision that by FY'24/25 40% of all the bookings will be online

Covid 19 will most likely have an impact on our ongoing operations and fundraising efforts in the year 2020-21. Trustees and senior staff members are already taking proactive steps to ensure the financial long-term stability and longevity of the charity. They will be reviewing the charity's budgets and forecasts regularly throughout the coming year as it adapts to the ever-changing needs of our beneficiaries during this unprecedented time.

Services are currently running online and face to face in conjunction with one another however, we foresee our operations are likely to change and adapt as we have already seen a growing need for services such as our counselling programme and a reduction in the use of other services.

Skylarks Charity
(A company limited by guarantee)

Report of the Trustees (incorporating the (Directors' report) for the year ended 31 March 2021 *continued*

This year Skylarks has;

- Delivered close to 5000 individual bookings with 70% being delivered online.
- Supported over 500 children to receive free therapies and inclusive activities
- Helped around 600 families to access support, advice, therapies and other services.
- Offered weekly individualised phone calls to the most vulnerable families, signposting and offering additional guidance.
- Created an On-Demand Library of free programming content from our providers
- Delivered free webinars and on-demand video content for parents to seek advice and information
- Developed our Send Advice Service to increase delivery by 260%
- Increased expenditure on our counselling support to children with additional needs
- Offered one to one counselling support and small counselling group work to parents for the first time.
- Submitted planning permission for Marble Hill Community Project, our long term goal.

Financial review

The net financial result for the year ended March 2021 was a surplus of **£7,525** (2020 – **£65,680**). Income reported in the year was £233,345, compared with £265,071 in 19/20; this decrease was due to the impact that covid had on our events, individual donors, school fundraising activities and corporate donors. At the beginning of the Covid 19 pandemic, Skylarks forecast a reduction of 40% of its income and managed to overcome many of the challenges it faced. Trustees used a proportion of the charity's reserves early on in the year to ensure services were not impacted by lack of funding.

The Trustees regularly review the level of available unrestricted reserves (net unrestricted current assets) and consider whether it is sufficient to ensure continuity in the pursuance of core charitable objectives, in the event of downturns in income and unexpected costs arising. The Trustees currently consider that it is appropriate to maintain a level of available reserves of at least 3 months unrestricted income. The Charity has identified potential permanent premises, which would be available in the medium term. With that in mind the Trustees have decided to continue holding designated funds of £50,000 reserves for equipping the premises (the expectation is that the build of the new premises would be funded by an independent charity).

Thank you to all our funders over the last year, with whom we would not have been able to deliver a successful year of support. Thank you to; Hampton Fund, Richmond Parish Lands, Haymarket Media Group, Global Make Some Noise, Tommy Hollis Childrens Fund, London Community Fund, The Childhood Trust, City Bridge Trust and all the other wonderful supporters who donated this year.

Plans for future periods

Strategic aims

Our Board of Trustees is very proud of the work achieved by the Charity. They have discussed and agreed that the plans over the next year will focus on:

- Develop our offering and deliver our programmes with our partners: in particular, develop a programme for teenagers and young adults around Access to Work and additional provisions for our SEND Advice Service;
- Attract new members: increase our presence in our communities and make sure that families, medical doctors, schools and others recognise our mission and our services;
- Secure the space: ensure we continue to have space at The Crossway Centre to provide our services, and consider expanding or finding other suitable locations across the borough; finally, continue to explore the Marble Hill Play Centre project as a permanent location for the Charity in the future
- Continue to bring offering online: the special circumstances of the last year have shown that having an online offering is critical to our development and we believe that our members will appreciate having the option. An online offering will also help us expand geographically
- Develop our talent and the organisation: we have exceptional purpose-driven talent in the organisation and we need to ensure this continues to be a critical pillar of success as we grow
- Raise the funds: we need to continue to develop and implement initiatives that support our fundraising goals.

Skylarks Charity
(A company limited by guarantee)

Report of the Trustees (incorporating the (Directors' report) for the year ended 31 March 2021 *continued*

Statement of Trustees' responsibilities

Company and Charity laws require the Trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year, which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charitable company as at the balance sheet date and of its incoming resources and application of resources, including income and expenditure, for the financial year. In preparing those financial statements the Trustees should follow best practices and:

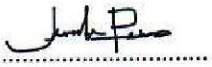
- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- state, whether the policies adopted, are in accordance with the Charities Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP) 2015 and with applicable accounting standards, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements; and
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to assume that the charity will continue in operation.

The Trustees, who are the Directors of the company for the purposes of company law, are responsible for keeping proper accounting records, which disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charitable company and which enable it to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 2006. The Trustees are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charitable company and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud or other irregularities. Trustees who served during the year and up to the date of this report are set out on page 3.

The company's Directors certify that:

- so far as they are aware, there is no relevant accounting information of which the company's accountants are unaware: and
- they have taken all steps that they ought to have taken in order to make themselves aware of any relevant accounting information and to establish that the company's accountant is aware of that information.

On behalf of the board



Jennifer Peters
Chair of Trustees

Skylarks Charity
(A company limited by guarantee)

Independent examiner's report to the Trustees on the unaudited financial statements of Skylarks Charity.

I report on the financial statements for Skylarks Charity for the year ended 31st March 2021 set out on pages 10 to 18.

Respective responsibilities of Trustees and examiner

The charity's Trustees (who are also the Directors for the purpose of company law) are responsible for the preparation of the accounts. The charity's Trustees consider that an audit is not required for this period (under Section 144(2) of the Charities Act 2011 (the 2011 Act)), and that an independent examination is required.

Having satisfied myself that the charity is not subject to audit under company law and is eligible for independent examination, it is my responsibility:

- to examine the accounts under Section 145 of the 2011 Act
- to follow the procedures laid down in the General Directions given by the Charity Commission (under Section 145(5)(b) of the 2011 Act); and
- to state whether particular matters have come to my attention.

Basis of the independent examiner's report

My examination was carried out in accordance with the General Directions given by the Charity Commission. An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the charity and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts, and seeking explanations from you as Trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit, and consequently no opinion is given as to whether the accounts present a 'true and fair view' and the report is limited to those matters set out in the statements below.

Independent examiner's statement

In connection with my examination, no matter has come to my attention:
(1) which gives me reasonable cause to believe that, in any material respect, the requirements:
- to keep accounting records in accordance with Section 386 and 387 of the Companies Act 2006; and
- to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records, comply with the accounting requirements of Sections 394 and 395 of the Companies Act 2006 and with the methods and principles of the Statement of Recommended Practice: Accounting and Reporting by Charities

have not been met; or

(2) to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

N.S.C. Tait

.....
Charles Tait
Charles Tait Accounting Limited

Skylarks Charity
(A company limited by guarantee)

Statement of financial activities (incorporating the income and expenditure account)

For the year ended 31 March 2021

	Notes	Unrestricted General funds £	Unrestricted Designated funds £	Restricted funds £	2021 Total £	2020 Total £
Incoming resources						
Incoming resources from generating funds: Voluntary income	2	53,164	-	147,028	200,192	198,56
Activities for generating funds	3	33,072	-	-	33,072	66,31
Investment income	4	80	-	-	80	19
Total incoming resources		86,316	-	147,028	233,344	265,07
Resources expended						
Costs of generating funds:						
Generating voluntary income	5	39,042	-	-	39,042	51,30
Charitable activities	6	28,193	-	158,584	186,777	148,18
Total resources expended		67,235	-	158,584	225,819	199,49
Net incoming resources for the year / Net income for the year		19,081	-	(11,556)	7,525	65,58
Transfers between funds		-	-			
Total funds brought forward		133,230	50,000	14,125	197,355	131,77
Total funds carried forward		152,311	50,000	2,569	204,880	197,35

The statement of financial activities includes all gains and losses in the year and therefore a separate statement of total recognised gains and losses has not been prepared.

All of the above amounts relate to continuing activities.

Skylarks Charity
(A company limited by guarantee)

Balance sheet
as at 31 March 2021

	Notes	2021 £	2021 £	2020 £	2020 £
Fixed Assets					
Tangible Fixed Assets	10		-		-
Current Assets					
Cash at bank and in hand		241,692		207,062	
		241,692		207,062	
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	11	(36,812)		(9,707)	
Net current assets			204,880		197,335
Net assets			204,880		197,355
Funds	12/13/14				
Restricted income funds			2,569		14,125
Designated Fund			50,000		50,000
Unrestricted General Fund			152,311		133,230
Total funds			204,880		197,355

The Balance Sheet continues on the following page.

Skylarks Charity
(A company limited by guarantee)

Balance sheet *continued*

Trustees' statements required by the Companies Act 1985 for the year ended 31 March 2021

The charitable company is entitled to exemption from audit under Section 477 of the Companies Act 2006 for the year ended 31 March 2021.

The members have not required the charitable company to obtain an audit of its financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2021 in accordance with Section 476 of the Companies Act 2006.

The Trustees acknowledge their responsibilities for:

(a) ensuring that the charitable company keeps accounting records that comply with Sections 386 and 387 of the Companies Act 2006 and

(b) preparing financial statements which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charitable company as at the end of each financial year and of its surplus or deficit for each financial year in accordance with the requirements of Sections 394 and 395 which otherwise comply with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006 relating to financial statements, so far as applicable to the charitable company.

These financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the special provisions of Part 15 of the Companies Act 2006 relating to small charitable companies and with the Financial Reporting Standard for Smaller Entities (effective April 2008).

The financial statements were approved by the board on ..14.. AUGUST 2021..... and signed on its behalf by

.....

Jennifer Peters
Chair of Trustees

Skylarks Charity
(A company limited by guarantee)
Notes to the financial statements
For the year ended 31 March 2021

1. Accounting policies

The principal accounting policies are summarised below. The accounting policies have been applied consistently throughout the year and the preceding year.

1.1. Basis of accounting

The financial statements have been prepared on a going concern basis under the historic cost convention. The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the Statement of Recommended Practice: Accounting and Reporting by Charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS102) issued on 16 July 2014 and the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the United Kingdom and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102), the Charities Act 2011, the Companies Act 2006 and UK Generally Accepted Practice as it applies from 1 January 2015.

1.2. Cashflow

The charity has taken advantage of the exemption in FRS102 and the Statement of Recommended Practice from the requirement to produce a cashflow statement because it is a small charity.

1.3. Incoming resources

All incoming resources are included in the statement of financial activities when the charity is entitled to the income and the amount can be quantified with reasonable accuracy. The following specific policies are applied to particular categories of income:

Voluntary income is received by way of grants, donations and gifts and is included in full in the statement of financial activities when receivable. Grants where entitlement is not conditional on the delivery of a specific performance by the charity, are recognised when the charity becomes unconditionally entitled to the grant.

Gifts donated for resale are included as incoming resources within activities for generating funds when they are sold.

Income from investments is included in the year in which it is receivable.

1.4. Resources expended

Expenditure is recognised on an accrual basis as a liability is incurred. Expenditure includes any VAT which cannot be fully recovered, and is reported as part of the expenditure to which it relates.

Costs of generating funds comprise the costs associated with attracting voluntary income and the costs of trading for fundraising purposes including the charity's shop.

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

Support costs are those costs incurred directly in support of expenditure on the objects of the charity and include project management.

Skylarks Charity
(A company limited by guarantee)
Notes to the financial statements
For the year ended 31 March 2021

2. Voluntary income

	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	2021 Total £	2020 Total £
Grants	1,500	147,028	148.528	48,121
Donations	49,524	-	49,524	141,039
Gift Aid Reclaimed	2,140	-	2,140	9,401
	53,164	147,028	200,192	198,561

3. Activities for generating funds

	Unrestricted funds £	2021 Total £	2020 Total £
Fundraising General/Events	31,646	31,646	65,378
Income from activities	1,426	1,426	940
	33,072	33,072	66,318

4. Investment income

	Unrestricted funds £	2021 Total £	2020 Total £
Bank interest receivable	80	80	192
	80	80	192

5. Costs of generating voluntary income

	Unrestricted funds £	2021 Total £	2020 Total £
Marketing and fundraising	39,042	39,042	51,303
	39,042	39,042	51,303

Skylarks Charity
(A company limited by guarantee)
Notes to the financial statements
For the year ended 31 March 2021

6. Costs of charitable activities

	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	2021 Total £	2020 Total £
Educational program	28,193	158,584	186,777	148,188
	28,193	158,584	186,777	148,188

7. Analysis of support costs

	2021 Total £	2020 Total £
Staff training	744	147
Accountancy	5,467	4,500
	6,211	4,647

8. Employees

Employment costs

	2021 £	2020 £
Wages and salaries	129,668	96,777

No employee received emoluments of more than £60,000 (2020: None).

Number of employees

The average monthly numbers of employees (all of whom are part-time) during the year was as follows:

2021 Number	2020 Number
8	6

Skylarks Charity
(A company limited by guarantee)
Notes to the financial statements
For the year ended 31 March 2021

9. Taxation

The charity's activities fall within the exemptions afforded by the provisions of the Income and Corporation Taxes Act 1988. Accordingly, there is no taxation charge in these accounts.

10. Tangible Fixed Assets

	Equipment £
Cost	
Brought forward at 1 April 2020	2,164
At 31 March 2021	2,164
Depreciation	
Brought forward at 1 April 2020	2,164
At 31 March 2021	2,164
Net book values	
At 31 March 2021	-
At 31 March 2020	-

11. Creditors: amounts falling due within one year

	2021 £	2020 £
Trade creditors	4,396	-
Deferred income	31,200	-
Other taxes and social security	-	1,405
Accrued expenditure	1,216	8,302
	36,812	9,707

Skylarks Charity
(A company limited by guarantee)
Notes to the financial statements
For the year ended 31 March 2021

12. Analysis of net assets between funds

	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	Total funds £
Fund balances at 31 March 2021 as represented by:			
Current assets	207,923	33,769	241,692
Current liabilities	(5,612)	(31,200)	(36,812)
	202,311	2,569	204,880

13. Unrestricted funds

	At 1 April 2020 £	Incoming Resources / transfers £	Outgoing Resources / transfers £	At 31 March 2021 £
General unrestricted funds	133,230	86,316	(67,235)	152,311
Designated fund	50,000	-	-	50,000
Total unrestricted funds	183,230	86,316	(67,235)	202,311

Purposes of unrestricted funds

General unrestricted funds may be used to meet any of the Charities objectives, as determined by the Trustees.

The Designated fund has been set up to support the Charity with its objective of securing new premises, including the procurement of new equipment to equip the facility.

14. Restricted funds

	At 1 April 2020 £	Incoming resources £	Outgoing resources £	At 31 March 2021 £
Restricted funds	14,125	147,028	(158,584)	2,569

Purposes of restricted funds

Individual donors have stipulated that their funds must be used for specific purposes.

Skylarks Charity
(A company limited by guarantee)
Notes to the financial statements
For the year ended 31 March 2021

15. Company limited by guarantee

Skylarks Charity is a company limited by guarantee and accordingly does not have a share capital.

Every member of the company undertakes to contribute such amount as may be required not exceeding £1 to the assets of the charitable company in the event of its being wound up while he or she is a member, or within one year after he or she ceases to be a member.