

Read Easy UK

Annual Report and Financial Statements

For the year ended 30 September 2020

Read Easy UK

Legal and administrative information

Registered charity number: 1151288

Principal address: The Old Post Office
Bell Lane
Blockley
Moreton-in-Marsh
Gloucestershire
GL56 9BB

Trustees: Mr J Hunt
Mr P Gee
Mr J Price – resigned 23 April 2020
Mr P Espinasse
Mrs JE Peerless
Mrs L Aspey
Mr CJ Bale
Mrs H Ayles
Mr PJ Mugford

Chief Executive: Mrs V J Williams-Ellis

Bankers: CAF Bank Limited
25 Kings Hill Avenue
West Malling
Kent
ME19 4JC

Independent examiner: Sophia Maynell FCA
Tayabali Tomlin
Kenton House
Oxford Street
Moreton-in-Marsh
Gloucestershire
GL56 0LA

Annual Report of the Trustees for the year ended 30 September 2020

Charitable activities

The Trustees are pleased to report that during this year, despite the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic, Read Easy UK has been able to consolidate its existing activities and steadily increase its geographic reach to enable an increasing number of adults to learn to read.

At the start of the lockdown in March 2020, all in-person, one-to-one reading coaching stopped, meaning that initially there was very little volunteer activity. There were also indications that Read Easy UK's funding could be seriously impacted as a result of regular funders diverting funds to coronavirus-related causes. In response to these two factors, many staff – particularly those directly responsible for volunteers – were put on furlough for three months, with short returns to work during that period to provide support where needed.

At the same time, the charity quickly recognised the potential for moving at least some of its activities online and began to develop new resources and methods of working to facilitate this, using phones, computers and tablets. As a result, by the end of June, around 100 reading pairs had managed to restart using remote coaching methods, and by the end of September there were nearly 200 active reading pairs across approximately 33 groups.

These developments have been extremely valuable and have provided Read Easy with immediate and longer-term possibilities for offering remote coaching to those who are otherwise unable to access our services. However, many of those adults that Read Easy works with do not have access to computers, tablets and the internet (or even smart phones), either for financial reasons or because of their lack of reading skills and general confidence. It was therefore challenging, if not impossible, for many of those who had earlier been receiving one-to-one, in-person coaching, to move to remote coaching during the pandemic.

In addition, the pandemic made it very difficult for other adults with reading difficulties to come forward and enrol with Read Easy after the lockdown started in March, so enrolment numbers were significantly down during the year. It was therefore encouraging that the overall number of Readers coached during the year, just over 500, was still up from the year before, although not as high as it would have been under normal circumstances.

It can be estimated that Read Easy provided 11,500 hours of volunteer reading coaching during the first half of the year, and – on a very conservative estimate – at least 2,500 hours using remote coaching methods in the second half of the year. In total, this amounts to at least 14,000 hours of reading coaching in what was a very difficult year.

After the initial shock of the lockdown, other aspects of volunteering were also able to restart by moving online, including local group management team meetings and the pioneering of new Read Easy groups. Remarkably, several new Pioneers were recruited after the start of the pandemic, and several were able to conduct remotely the entire process of setting up a new group, from holding online public and other meetings, to recruiting and interviewing all the members of new management teams. As a result, by the end of the year, three new groups were very close to affiliating to Read Easy UK. As four other new groups had affiliated during the first half of the year and two existing groups had expanded their geographic reach, there was remarkable growth overall during the year considering the circumstances.

The Trustees are very grateful to all the staff, local Management Team members, Coordinators and Coaches who have worked so tirelessly and effectively during a particularly difficult year to continue to deliver Read Easy's services.

Diversity and Inclusivity Survey

In April, the Trustees established a Diversity & Inclusivity working group, to explore how the charity could increase diversity amongst both its volunteers and employees. During the summer, Read Easy UK was fortunate to be able to take on a funded-intern from the London School of Economics to conduct a survey on the subject of volunteer diversity and inclusivity. His report was provided at the end of the summer, in time for sharing at Read Easy's conference in October, and will provide a basis for further work on this important topic in the coming year.

Fundraising and finance

Initial concerns about the impact of the pandemic on Read Easy's fundraising were not entirely unfounded, as some existing and potential funders did decide to divert their funds to Covid-related causes. It has therefore been encouraging that Read Easy UK has still been able to attract new funding this year, even since the beginning of the pandemic.

Results: The total incoming resources for the year ended 30 September 2020 amounted to £264,280 (2019: £241,227), all of which has been or will be used in providing for the running and expansion of the charity. Expenditure amounted to £187,117 (2019: £200,070).

Donations: Income over the last year has been made up of grants from a number of trusts, individual donations and the annual subscriptions and training income from Read Easy UK's affiliated groups. We are particularly grateful to the following:

- The 29th May 1961 Charitable Trust
- Alta Advisers
- CHK Charities Ltd.
- The Dovedale Foundation
- EJ Thompson Memorial Fund
- Ecclesiastical Movement for Good Awards
- The Esmée Fairbairn Foundation
- The Garfield Weston Foundation
- John Laing Charitable Trust
- The Patrick & Helena Frost Foundation
- Ros and Alan Haigh
- Schroder Charity Trust
- The Sobell Foundation
- Souter Charitable Trust
- Susanna Peake Charitable Trust
- Swire Charitable Trust (discretionary grant fund)
- Tesco Bags of Help
- TS Eliot Foundation
- Unwin Charitable Trust
- The Valentine Charitable Trust
- Vandervell Foundation

Reserves policy: Funds are held to meet the projected costs of the charity for a period of six to nine months. This policy is reviewed annually by the Trustees.

Investment policy: The charity funds activities on a regular basis and as such is not involved with investment activities. Reserves are invested in interest bearing accounts to provide maximum income but with short-term access.

Risk review: The Trustees have conducted their own review of the major risks to which the charity is exposed and systems have been established to mitigate these risks. These procedures are reviewed annually to ensure they still meet the needs of the charity.

Looking ahead

The Trustees are encouraged by how much has been achieved in the first year of this strategic plan, especially given the challenges presented by the pandemic, and by the fact that the charity has finished the year in a strong financial position. Based on this, and on the fact that new methods of working remotely have now been developed, they are confident that Read Easy can continue to operate and expand successfully in the year ahead, even if the impact of the virus continues to some extent to limit activities.

Plans for the year October 2020 – September 2021 include:

- appointing two part-time Regional Advisers to allow Read Easy to expand its services into London and the South East;
- increasing the combined number of affiliated and Pioneer groups around the country from 42 to 55;
- further developing methods for delivering remote coaching in the future to adults who live in parts of the country where there are no Read Easy groups;
- appointing a Head of Administration & Finance to strengthen central support for our volunteers;
- developing a new website that will attract more volunteers and potential new readers (including a facility for those who cannot read);
- raising public awareness of the extent of adult illiteracy and reducing the stigma of not being able to read, and
- contributing to the ongoing national conversation about how to improve adult basic skills.

Statement of Trustees' responsibilities

The Trustees are responsible for preparing the Trustees' Annual Report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

Law applicable to charities in England and Wales requires the trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year, which give a true and fair view of the charity and of the incoming resources and application of resources of the charity for that year. In preparing these financial statements the trustees are required to:

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

The Trustees are responsible for keeping proper accounting records which disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charity and enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Charities Act 2016 and the Charity (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 and the provisions of the trust deed. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charity and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

The charity's Trustees consider that an audit is not required for this year (under Section 144(2) of the Charities Act 2016) and that an independent examination is required.

This report has been prepared in accordance with the Statement of Recommended Practice – Accounting and Reporting by Charities.

Signed on behalf of the trustees:



Mr J Hunt
Trustee



Mr P Gee
Trustee

21 May 2021

Read Easy UK

Independent Examiner's Report to the Trustees of Read Easy UK

We report on the financial statements of the charity for the year ended 30 September 2020 which are set out on pages 7 to 12.

This report is made solely to the charity's trustees, as a body, in accordance with the terms of our engagement. Our work has been undertaken so that we might compile the financial statements that we have been engaged to compile, report to the charity's trustees that we have done so, and state those matters we have agreed to state to them in this report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the charity and the charity's trustees as a body, for our work or for this report.

Respective responsibilities of the council members and reporting Accountants

The charity's trustees are responsible for the preparation of the accounts. The charity's trustees consider that an audit is not required for this year (under section 144 of the Charities Act 2011 (the Act), and that an independent examination is needed.

It is our responsibility to:

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

Basis of opinion

Our examination was carried out in accordance with 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 the trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required for an audit, and consequently we do not express an audit opinion on the accounts.

Independent examiner's statement

In connection with our examination, no matter has come to our attention:

- 1 which gives us reasonable cause to believe that in, any material respect, the trustees have not met the requirements to ensure that:
 - proper accounting records are kept (in accordance with section 130 of the Act); and
 - accounts are prepared which agree with the accounting records and comply with the requirements of the Act; or
- 2 to which, in our opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.



Sophia Maynell FCA
Tayabali Tomlin
Kenton House
Oxford Street
Moreton-in-Marsh
GL56 0LA

21 May 2021

Read Easy UK

Statement of Financial Activities

For the year ended 30 September 2020

	2020 £	2019 £
Incoming resources		
<i>Incoming resources from generated funds:</i>		
Voluntary income	250,309	226,266
Affiliation fees and subscriptions	7,792	5,369
Investment income	19	42
Training income	6,160	9,550
Total incoming resources	264,280	241,227
Resources expended		
<i>Cost of generating funds:</i>		
Fundraising activities	(442)	(1,084)
Governance	(1,795)	(1,795)
<i>Charitable activities:</i>		
Volunteer support costs	(176,309)	(191,135)
Administration costs	(8,571)	(6,056)
	(185,060)	(197,191)
Total resources expended	(187,117)	(200,070)
Net incoming resources before other recognised gains	77,163	41,157
General fund brought forward	112,265	71,108
Transfer to organisation development fund	(50,000)	-
General fund carried forward	139,428	112,265
Organisation development fund		
Transfer from general fund	50,000	-
Organisation development fund carried forward	50,000	-
Total funds carried forward	189,428	112,265

Read Easy UK

Balance Sheet

At 30 September 2020

	Note	2020		2019	
		£	£	£	£
Tangible assets	2		2,909		3,335
Current assets					
Debtors	3	4,578		-	
Cash at bank		188,490		115,050	
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	4	<u>(6,549)</u>		<u>(6,120)</u>	
Net current assets			186,519		108,930
Total assets less current liabilities			<u>189,428</u>		<u>112,265</u>

Represented by:

General reserve

Balance brought forward		112,265		71,108
Surplus for the year		77,163		41,157
Balance carried forward	5,6	<u>189,428</u>		<u>112,265</u>

Signed on behalf of the trustees by:



Mr J Hunt
Trustee



Mr P Gee
Trustee

21 May 2021

Read Easy UK

Notes to the Financial Statements

1 Accounting policies

Basis of preparation

The financial statements of the charity, which is a public benefit entity under FRS 102, have been prepared in accordance with the Charities SORP (FRS 102) 'Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (effective 1 January 2015)', Financial Reporting Standard 102 'The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland' and the Charities Act 2011. The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention.

Incoming resources

All incoming resources are included in the statement of financial activities when they are receivable and the amount can be quantified with reasonable accuracy.

Resources expended

Resources expended are recognised in the period in which they are incurred. 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 and those of an indirect nature necessary to support them.

Investments

Investments are valued annually at market value. Gains or losses are taken to the Statement of Financial Activities. Investment income has been taken into account on an accruals basis.

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Notes to the Financial Statements (continued)

For the year ended 30 September 2020

	£	£
2 Tangible fixed assets		
	Computer Equipment	Total
Cost		
At 1 October 2019	8,202	8,202
Additions	544	544
Disposals	-	-
At 30 September 2020	<u>8,746</u>	<u>8,746</u>
Depreciation		
At 1 October 2019	4,867	4,867
Charge for year	970	970
Eliminated on disposal	-	-
At 30 September 2020	<u>5,837</u>	<u>5,837</u>
Net book values		
At 30 September 2020	<u>2,909</u>	<u>2,909</u>
At 30 September 2019	<u>3,335</u>	<u>3,335</u>
3 Debtors: amounts falling due within one year		
	2020	2019
	£	£
Other debtors	4,578	-
	<u>4,578</u>	<u>-</u>

Read Easy UK

Notes to the Financial Statements (continued)

For the year ended 30 September 2020

4 Creditors: amounts falling due within one year

	2020 £	2019 £
Other creditors	6,549	6,120
	<u>6,549</u>	<u>6,120</u>

5 Unrestricted Funds

General fund

	£
At 1 October 2019	<u>112,265</u>
Incoming resources	187,780
Outgoing resources	(131,039)
Transfer to organisation development fund	(50,000)
At 30 September 2020	<u>119,006</u>

Organisation development fund

	£
At 1 October 2019	<u>-</u>
Transfer from general fund	50,000
At 30 September 2020	<u>50,000</u>

6 Restricted Funds

South West Region

	£
At 1 October 2019	<u>-</u>
Incoming resources	5,000
Outgoing resources	(5,000)
At 30 September 2020	<u>-</u>

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Notes to the Financial Statements (continued)

For the year ended 30 September 2020

6 Restricted Funds (continued)

<i>North West Region</i>	£
At 1 October 2019	-
Incoming resources	41,500
Outgoing resources	(21,078)
At 30 September 2020	20,422
<i>Central West Region</i>	£
At 1 October 2019	-
Incoming resources	22,500
Outgoing resources	(22,500)
At 30 September 2020	-
<i>South Region</i>	£
At 1 October 2019	-
Incoming resources	7,500
Outgoing resources	(7,500)
At 30 September 2020	-

7 Trustees' expenses

During the year no payments were made to trustees except in respect of direct reimbursement of expenses for which vouchers were provided.

8 Related party transactions

During the year office rent in the sum of £2,500 (2019: £3,333) was paid to Mrs V J Williams-Ellis, the Chief Executive of Read Easy.