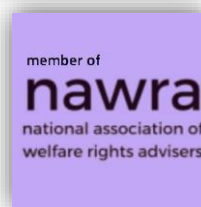


Disability Advice Service (East Suffolk)

Registered Charity, No: 1152772

Trustees' Annual Report & Statement of Financial Activity for the Year Ended 31 December 2023



Contents

1	Reference and Administration Details	3
1.1	Name & Registration.....	3
1.2	Address.....	3
1.3	Names of the Trustees Who Manage the Charity	3
1.4	Names of Senior Members of Staff	3
1.5	Bank	3
2	Structure, Governance & Management	3
2.1	Type of Governing Document	3
2.2	Charitable Object	3
2.3	Trustee Selection Methods	3
3	Activities.....	4
3.1	Statutory Declaration	4
4	Achievements & Performance.....	4
4.1	Outputs and Outcomes for the Charity's Beneficiaries.....	4
4.2	How the Public Have Benefitted.	6
4.3	Contributing to Activities Run by Other Organisations.....	7
4.4	Trustee Development	7
5	Financial Review	7
5.1	Details of Any Funds Materially in Deficit.....	7
5.2	Policy on Reserves.....	7
5.3	Principal Sources of Funding and Outgoings	7
5.4	Remuneration of Trustees	7
5.5	Financial Status.....	7
5.6	Statutory Statements on Liabilities	7
5.7	Signature	8
6	Statement of Financial Activity.....	8
6.1	Independent Examiner's Report on the Accounts	9
6.2	Receipts & Payments Accounts for the FYE 31-Dec-23.....	10
6.3	Notes to the Accounts.....	13

1 Reference and Administration Details

1.1 Name & Registration

The Disability Advice Service (East Suffolk), or "DAS" for short, is a Charitable Incorporated Organisation, registration no: 1152772, registered with the Charity Commission on 08 July 2013. We are registered with HM Revenue & Customs.

1.2 Address

14 The Square, Martlesham Heath, Suffolk, IP5 3SL

e-mail: advice@daseastsuffolk.org telephone: 01394 387070

website: www.daseastsuffolk.org

1.3 Names of the Trustees Who Manage the Charity

	Role	Appointed/Reappointed	Resigned
Graham Walker	Chair	29 November 2022	
<i>Roy Gilmour</i>	<i>Vice Chair</i>	<i>25 January 2022</i>	<i>20 February 2023</i>
Rod Gibson	Secretary	26 January 2023	
Robin Stroud	Treasurer	25 January 2022	
Steve Doe	Vice Treasurer	25 January 2022	
<i>Michelle Eaves</i>	<i>Trustee</i>	<i>12 March 2021</i>	<i>20 February 2023</i>
Claire Hindmarch	Trustee	28 September 2023	
<i>Emily Hook</i>	<i>Trustee</i>	<i>09 April 2021</i>	<i>09 February 2023</i>
<i>Natasha Hook</i>	<i>Trustee</i>	<i>09 April 2021</i>	<i>21 August 2023</i>
Gary Morgan	Trustee	23 November 2023	
<i>Debbie O'Hara</i>	<i>Trustee</i>	<i>11 September 2020</i>	<i>10 September 2023</i>

1.4 Names of Senior Members of Staff

Steve Race, Manager

1.5 Bank

Lloyds Bank, 8 The Thoroughfare, Woodbridge, Suffolk, IP12 1AF

2 Structure, Governance & Management

2.1 Type of Governing Document

The charity's constitution is based on the Charity Commission's Foundation Model for Charitable Incorporated Organisations, where the trustees are the only members of the charity.

2.2 Charitable Object

As defined in Disability Advice Service (East Suffolk)'s constitution (governing document):

The charity's object is: *The relief of children and adults with disabilities and their carers in East Suffolk and nearby areas.*

2.3 Trustee Selection Methods

There must be at least three charity trustees. The maximum number of trustees is 12.

In accordance with the constitution, trustees are appointed or re-appointed for a term of three years by a resolution passed at a properly convened meeting of the Management Committee.

In appointing trustees, due consideration is given to ensuring that the trustees have, between them, the skills and experience necessary to manage the charity effectively and in accordance with charity law.

3 Activities

3.1 Statutory Declaration

The trustees of DAS confirm that they have paid due regard to the guidance issued by the Charity Commission on public benefit in deciding what activities the charity should undertake.

4 Achievements & Performance

4.1 Outputs and Outcomes for the Charity's Beneficiaries

The DAS mission is: "To enable those who live with disabilities to gain the same rights and quality of life opportunities as others."

We provide practical solutions to tackle the short and long-term financial issues underlying or worsening the well-being of our beneficiaries who live in Ipswich and rural East Suffolk. We support children, adults and their carers, who have a disability related problem, with free, independent advice on:

- which benefits individuals are eligible for and how to apply for them;
- help with the arduous form filling for: Attendance Allowance, Disability Living Allowance, Income Support, Personal Independence Payments and Universal Credit;
- advocacy in challenging DWP decisions and representation at tribunal appeals;
- blue parking badges and RADAR keys
- care after discharge from hospital
- council tax, energy and water rates relief schemes
- Industrial Injuries Disablement Benefit and Victims of Crime compensation
- Pensions Credit

We also signpost on many other matters such as housing rights; adaptations to the home; accessible transport and leisure; and the Local Welfare Assistance Scheme.

	2023	2022
Clients engaged	2,242	2,182
Enquiries received	14,857	15,588
Appeals representations	44	40
Success rate on appeals	98%	100%
Benefit Gain (Year One)	£2,337,410	£2,722,472
Benefit Gain (Full)*	£7,339,467	£9,249,794
Crisis clients	185	469
Listening Service contacts	614	2,218
Subsistence grants and food parcels to individuals	£6,286	£50,696

* Some benefits have longevity beyond the first year and the full benefit calculation accounts for this.

As shown in the table below, in 2023 the clients we helped increased by 2.7% compared to the year before, whilst enquiries fell by 4.7%. Work content per client, however, rose as case complexity escalated. A majority of clients now have a crisis element to their enquiry and the number of transactional form-filling only cases are far fewer.

Integral to the operation is a busy Crisis Intervention Service that has helped 926 clients in the four years it has been running. These are clients in the most difficult of circumstances and invariably suffering from mental ill-health, some severely so. Numbers were lower than the

previous year at the peak impact of the cost-of-living crisis but remained more than six times higher than pre-pandemic levels. The availability of hardship funds from the government's Household Support Fund was also much lower.

On appeals, we won all but one case. Over the past four years we have advocated and won for our clients in 219 out of 220 cases.

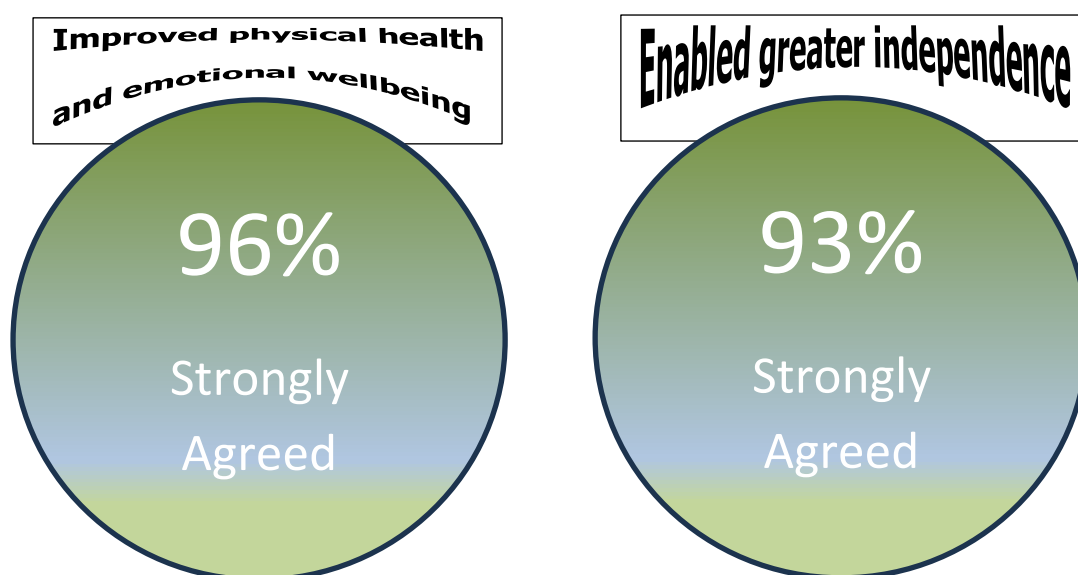
Benefit Gain was somewhat lower than the previous year but over the last four years our clients have received a total of £9,778,694 in the first year of their award (which translates to over £30 million when taking into account the whole term of the award).

This means that every £1 granted/donated to DAS is multiplied 10 times into financial improvement for our beneficiaries, or 30 times when considering the full length of their award.

Early in the year we organised a programme of "Community Warm Space" events which meant that 60 crisis clients could enjoy some unaccustomed creature comforts in a warm, safe space and receive tips on keeping warm economically and cooking healthy food inexpensively.

Our Listening Service, also established four years ago, during the pandemic, has had 3,872 interactions with non-active clients in that time. Many of them live in rural isolation and our calls bring some unexpected light relief to their circumstances. It was not as active in 2023 as we would have liked due to the difficulty we have experienced, like many third sector organisations, in recruiting and retaining the volunteers who operate our telephones.

In addition to the financial improvements enumerated, our clients also benefit from an uplift in their well-being as a result of their interaction with the service. We measure this through our *Questions of Future Well-Being Survey*, this is focused on two key areas: "Improved physical health and emotional wellbeing" and "Enabled greater independence". In both cases the results are overwhelmingly positive:



In 2023, we were delighted to be awarded the Advice Quality Service accreditation, the gold standard Pride In Practice mark and to become a registered Real Living Wage Employer.

As a new venture, we operated an 8mth long full outreach service for ex-offenders (over 70% of whom have at least two mental health diagnoses.) in conjunction with the East of England Probation Service in its Ipswich office. The scheme was very successful but could not continue for technical reasons.

Five trustees resigned during the year, one due to ill-health and the others, all appointed within the previous three years, citing their difficulty in fitting in trustee duties with managing family life and their jobs. Our strategy to diversify the Management Committee both in terms of age

and gender therefore had limited success. We appointed two new trustees who both have highly relevant lived experience they can bring to bear in helping to take the charity forward.

Our strategic projects continue to be progressed in accordance with our annually updated Business Plan and Fundraising Strategy. Our operational priorities for the coming year are:

- Outreach: Bringing the service closer to our communities by establishing triage outreach centres in appropriate locations; pursuing opportunities to extend our geographic reach to areas not well provided for; and reviewing the case for reintroducing home visits on a selected basis.
- Awareness: Building on the progress made to get our message out through a better social media presence; increasing our leadership presence on networks and developing partnerships; and using non-digital forms of communication via parish councils, benefice organisations, town magazines and targeted leafleting.
- Partnerships: Building on our success in engaging with “hard to reach” groups e.g. ex-offenders and LGBTQ+, where feasible developing into e.g. ethnic minority groups, refugees and food bank users, and capitalising on our efforts to get closer to NHS agencies.
- Clients and Operational Excellence: Building on our advice accreditation success by encouraging staff and volunteers to obtain recognised individual qualifications for the work they do; exploiting our IT investment in digitising all remaining processes to become as close as possible to a paperless office; and adding to the expression of our positive impact on our beneficiaries’ well-being by introducing further industry standard qualitative measures e.g. Warwick-Edinburgh.

4.2 How the Public Have Benefitted

The charity has a preference for providing paid work and volunteering opportunities to the disabled community. In addition to beneficial impact of our work directly on our clients, the service also benefits other related groups indirectly as illustrated in the chart below:



4.3 Contributing to Activities Run by Other Organisations

The charity provides a gateway assessment service for other organisations that provide hardship funds for crisis intervention and poverty relief.

4.4 Trustee Development

Trustees are encouraged to participate in development opportunities as and when appropriate.

5 Financial Review

5.1 Details of Any Funds Materially in Deficit

The Charity has no funds which are materially in deficit.

5.2 Financial Reserves Policy

The Charity's policy on reserves is determined by Charity Commission guidance in that having no fixed assets it maintains an amount of cash which is sufficient to discharge its obligations in the event that the Management Committee deems it necessary to close the charity plus sufficient to ensure continuity of the operations equivalent to 6-12mths operating costs.

5.3 Principal Sources of Funding and Outgoings

The principal sources of funding are grants made to the charity by small and large charitable foundations, all levels of local government and individual donations. The charity is a member of the Chartered Institute of Fundraising and adheres to its Code of Conduct.

In compliance with the Charities (Protection and Social Investment) Act 2016 all fundraising is carried out in a safe way which protects the public. We do not cold call or appeal to the public to sign up to long-term giving commitments other than providing options to do so on our website. The charity does not make payments for fundraising activity of any kind and it has never received a complaint related to fundraising activity.

5.4 Remuneration of Trustees

All trustees act in a voluntary capacity and receive no remuneration or other material benefits from their services to the Charity.

Out-of-pocket expenses necessarily and reasonably incurred by trustees in promoting the purposes of the Charity are reimbursed at cost.

5.5 Financial Status

Though modest, the charity's current resources are sufficient to meet its outgoings in accordance with its Financial Reserves Policy and all the indications are that this will remain the case for the foreseeable future.

Total net assets at the end of the financial year were £309,639 representing less than 12 months of operating costs based on our 2024 budget.

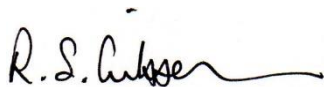
5.6 Statutory Statements on Liabilities

The trustees declare that:

- ✓ The charity has given no guarantees where potential liability under the guarantee is outstanding at the date of this statement; and
- ✓ The charity has no debt outstanding at the date of this statement which is owed by the CIO and which is secured by an express charge on any assets of the CIO.

5.7 **Signature**

Signed on behalf of the trustees

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'R. S. Gibson', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Name & Role Rod Gibson
Secretary to the Management Committee

Date: 28 March 2024

6 Statement of Financial Activity

6.1 Independent Examiner's Report on the Accounts



CHARITY COMMISSION
FOR ENGLAND AND WALES

Independent examiner's
report on the accounts

Section A

Independent Examiner's Report

Report to the trustees/
members of

Disability Advice Service (East Suffolk)

On accounts for the year
ended

31st December

2023

Charity no
(if any)

1152772

Set out on pages

1

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the above charity ("the Trust") for the year ended 31/12/2023.

Responsibilities and
basis of report

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

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

Independent
examiner's statement

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

- accounting records were not kept in accordance with section 130 of the Act or
- the accounts do not accord with the accounting records

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

* Please delete the words in the brackets if they do not apply.

Signed:

Dan Jennings

Date:

16/02/2024

Name:

Daniel Jennings

Relevant professional
qualification(s) or body
(if any):

ICAEW - 3924877

Address:

9 CAULDWELL AVENUE
IPSWICH
IP4 4EB

IER

1

October 2018

6.2 Receipts & Payments Accounts for the FYE 31 December 2023

6.2.1 Balance Sheet

Disability Advice Service (East Suffolk)
Registered CIO Charity 1152772

Balance sheet as at 31st December 2023(2)
for the period Jan-Dec 2023

2022		2023		2022		2023
Opening		Opening	Closing			Closing
Jan-Dec	Activity	Jan-Dec	Jan-Dec	Assets		Jan-Dec
£		£	£			£
311	Cash	204	204	Cash		382
12,311	Current Ac	-41,185	-41,185	Current Ac		7,233
29,579	CCLA	29,944	29,944	CCLA		0
154,690	Deposit	247,798	247,798	Deposit		38,909
				Invest'nts		263,115
						309,639
147,145	b/fwd	196,986	196,986	b/fwd		236,761
196,986	c/fwd	236,761	236,761	c/fwd		309,639
				50,000	Reserves	50,000
				39,450	Restricted	150,039
				147,311	Unrestrt'd	109,600
				236,761	Total	309,639

Note. As the £ 2,018 held in the current account for the Coastal Forum are not DAS funds, it has been removed from the balance sheet.

It is accounted for on the current account bank reconciliation statement.

Agreed to be a true record and accurate statement of our accounts, which have been duly examined.

Robin Stroud

Hon. Treasurer

Date 8/12/23

Graham Walker

Chairman

Date 19/2/24

Daniel Jennings. Chartered Accountant

Independent Examiner

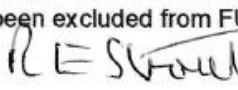
Date 16/02/2024

6.2.2 Statement of Financial Activities

Disability Advice Service (East Suffolk) CIO no. 1152772
ANNUAL ACCOUNTS 2023
Statement of financial activities for the year ending 31st December 2023 (3)

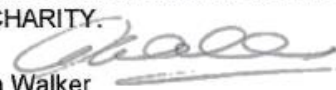
INCOMING	Unrestricted	Restricted	Total
	£	£	£
Donations	4,564	0	4,564
Grants	44,762	300,039	344,801
Fund raising	99		99
Interest	9,282		9,282
Client	1,400		1,400
TOTAL	60,107	300,039	360,146
EXPENDED			
Events	600		600
Advice Services	90,949	191,473	282,422
Client	2,123		2,123
		2,123	2,123
TOTAL	93,672	193,596	287,268
NET			
GAINS/LOSSES	-33,565	106,443	72,878
NET MOVEMENT			
IN FUNDS	-33,565	106,443	72,878
RECONCILIATION			
OF FUNDS			
Funds brought forward	197,311	39,450	236,761
Funds carried forward	159,600	150,039	309,639
		150,039	
FUNDS OF THE CHARITY			
Cash	382		
Current account	7,233		
CCLA	0		
Deposit account	38,909		
Investments	263,115		
Total	309,639		

Note. As the £2,018 held in the current account for the Coastal Forum are not DAS funds these have been excluded from FUNDS OF THE CHARITY.

Signed 
Robin Stroud

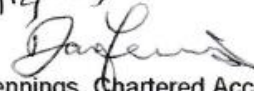
Hon. Treasurer

Date 8/12/23

Signed 
Graham Walker

Chair of Trustees

Date 19/2/24

Signed 
Daniel Jennings. Chartered Accountant
Independent Examiner

Date 16/02/2024

6.2.3 General Account

Disability Advice Service (East Suffolk) Accounts for the period Jan- Dec 2023 GENERAL ACCOUNT							
2022			2023		2022		2023
			JAN-DEC		JAN - DEC		JAN - DEC
EXPENDITURE				INCOME			
165,601	Salaries/HMRC/pension		195,093		40,090	SCC	50,140
6,083	Recruitment		394		3,996	MS Society	1,998
18,999	Premises Maintenance		588				
28,536	Rent & service charges		34,146		7,539	Donations	4,564
582	Travel		132		363	CCLA interest	702
3,102	Training		3,661			Equity in Mind	24,882
2,767	Telephone & internet		3,424		26,500	Household support	6,000
965	Postage		869		108	Lloyds interest	465
943	Stationery		675			Grants restricted)	100,233
3,383	Insurance		2,311		99,897	Grants unrestricted)	
3,495	Publicity/Advertising		4,870		37,985	Local Government	28,470
418	Refreshments		648		112,063	National Lottery	105,678
1,532	Gifts		3,289				
2,053	Books/Publications/Subs		1,896		12,000	Rope rent support	12,000
2,077	Prof. Fees		7,447		1,488	Events	99
20,608	Office equipment		10,449		1,010	Rope emergency fund	400
1,523	Cleaning		1,727		2,000	Tudor well being	15,000
31,566	Household support		5,886			Investment interest	8,115
252	Legal/DBS/Licenses		126				
6,203	Utilities		6,302		345,039	Sub total	358,746
300	Hardship/emergency payments						
219	Warm places project		1				
2,158	Rope crisis		400				
	Christmas party		600				
	Sundries		211				
2,000	Tudor well being						
305,365	Sub total		285,145				
3,703	Client grants		2,123		3,712	Client grants	1,400
309,068	SUB TOTAL		287,268				
39,683	SURPLUS		72,878				
348,751	TOTAL EXPENDITURE		360,146		348,751	TOTAL INCOME	360,146

6.2.4 Approval of the Board of Trustees

The trustees declare that they have approved the above Annual Report & Statement of Financial Activity.

Signed on behalf of the trustees



Name & Role Rod Gibson
Secretary to the Management Committee

Date: 28 March 2024

6.3 Notes to the Accounts

a) Accounting Policies

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the Charities Act 2011 Section 133, using the Receipts and Payments basis available to small charities and the charity's own simple accounts spreadsheet.

b) Cost of Fundraising

No payment was made for costs related to raising funds.

c) Reimbursement of Out-of-Pocket Expenses

Out-of-pocket expenses incurred necessarily, reasonably and incidentally in the course the charity's activities are reimbursed at cost.

No trustees received any reimbursement of out-of-pocket expenses in the financial year.

d) Salaries & Professional Fees

No trustee receives any payments for the services they provide to the charity.

In the current financial year, the charity employed staff but no paid external contractors.

e) Fixed Assets

The charity has not purchased or disposed of any fixed assets in the current financial year.

f) Creditors & Debtors

Cheques for goods or services purchased, or invoices for goods or services delivered, which are issued prior to the end of the financial year but not appearing in the end of financial year bank statement are reported as outstanding creditors or debtors respectively.

g) Rounding Discrepancies

All amounts are recorded to the penny, but in these accounts are shown as digitally rounded to the nearest pound. This can occasionally result in a total apparently not being the sum of its constituent amounts. All individual amounts, and their totals, are nevertheless correct.

h) Grants Received

We are grateful for all donations and grants upon which we are almost entirely dependent to enable us to continue to deliver our services for our beneficiaries and the public benefit. This includes many tier 1&2 councils and councillors, but we are particularly grateful for the grants and other long term support we receive from East Suffolk Council and Suffolk County Council. We would also like to acknowledge the great support of the Suffolk Community Foundation.

Of the charitable organisations that provided financial support this year the following are recognised below for grants of £2,000 or more for which we are enormously grateful:

David & Jill Simpson Fund £2,000	Nationwide Building Society £12,346
David Family Foundation £5,000	Pargiter Fund £3,130
Equity In Mind Fund £23,697	People's Postcode Trust £18,054
Garfield Weston Foundation £15,000	Port Community Fund £2,000
Hughes-Hallett Fund £2,000	Suffolk Giving Fund £2,000
John Horseman Trust £5,000	The Forrester Family Trust £14,098
Lord Belstead Char Settlement £2,000	Tudor Trust £15,000
Mrs L D Rope Third Char Set £14,011	Tudwick Foundation £2,000
National Lottery Comm Fund £105,679	Woodroffe Benton Foundation £2,000