



TRUSTEES' ANNUAL REPORT

for the year 19 February
2019 - 19 February 2021



Wakefield and District
Down's Syndrome Support Group

Registered charity number: 1155866



A welcome from our Chair of Trustees

I am writing this report at what I'm sure everyone will agree is a strange and difficult time for everyone. However, the report looks back positively at the last year and what we have achieved.

Our guiding principles are Support, Fun and Friendship, Making a Difference, and Raising Awareness and, as ever, I think we have been successful, with considerable help from many people, in achieving a lot this year.

The events that we have run throughout the year have been well attended and successful in bringing together many of our families. Our parties and trips continue to be enjoyed by many of our families, giving them the opportunity to meet and share friendships both for the young people and the parents/carers.

Can I once again thank all of our families for helping to make this group the wonderful group it is and for the friendship, support and advice you all willingly offer to each other. Thanks also go to the Trustees for the continuing hard work they put in and all those people who have given their time and effort to organise or support events. To all the people who have helped raise funds for us, thank you for ensuring this group is able to offer the support we do.

The coming year will be challenging but we will continue to support each other and look forward to a time when we can meet together again - that is going to be some party!!

Ann-Marie Sheard

Chair of Trustees

OUR CHARITABLE OBJECTS

We are a small, voluntary-run charity, with big ideas!

We work to raise awareness in the hope of reducing social stigma and discrimination, and maximising opportunities and potential of children and young people with Down's syndrome.

We held our AGM in September this year, delayed due to the pandemic.

Our charity, guided by our trustees, continues to be shaped by the families that are in it – by what they want, by what they are able to set up, and by what they create between them.

We are always limited by time, as all of our volunteers are busy parents and cannot always achieve what they would like to, but we continue to do our best to keep on supporting, creating opportunities for fun and friendship, raising awareness and making a difference.

THE OBJECTS OF OUR CIO ARE:

The promotion of social inclusion among people with Down's syndrome and those with other learning/additional needs including their families and carers within Wakefield and District and its immediately bordering areas who are socially excluded as a result of their condition by preventing them from becoming socially excluded, relieving their needs and assisting them to integrate into society by:-

1. providing information, forums, advocacy and general support; and
2. by providing recreational facilities and opportunities.

We achieve our objects with a mixture of regular and one-off activities and events which enable families to have fun and develop friendships and, ultimately, to support each other.

We aim to make a difference by improving understanding of Down's syndrome in our community in as many ways as we can, and we are steadily increasing the opportunities for children and young people with Down's syndrome in our area.

We also work to raise awareness of Down's syndrome and our charity in our area, and to the wider world on the internet and on social media.

This year...

Supporting each other

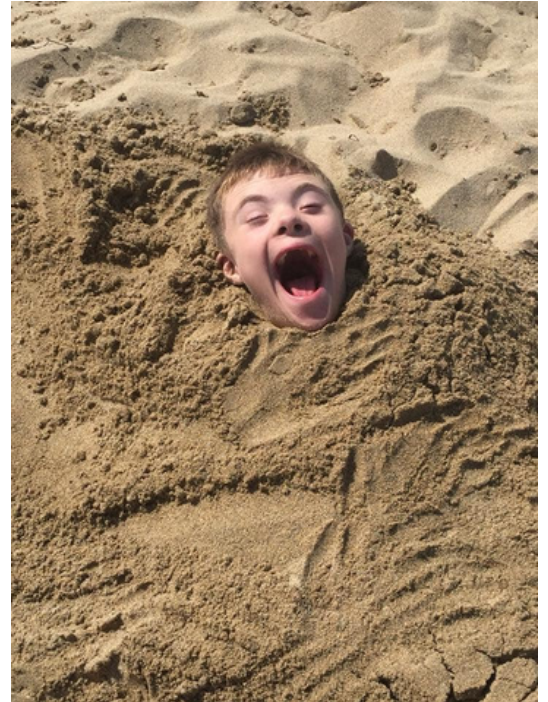
During the pandemic, support has never been more needed.

Despite the many restrictions and additional fears and stresses faced by all of our families, we kept going!!

We were not able to meet, but we sent out little gifts of wooden Superstars to everyone with messages of support, and we held a fantastic virtual Christmas quiz night to offer our families the opportunity to come together in the only way that was possible.

Our Facebook group, which facilitates communication between our parents and offers a forum for advice and support whenever it is needed, was the key to keeping our charity going. The group provides a network, reinforced every day by the families within it, where questions are always answered or people are signposted to a service that will help them, people who have concerns are listened to, and people who have things in common come forward and make contact with each other, if they choose to. The Facebook group is a precious resource that didn't disappear regardless of the state of the world around us.

During the pandemic, the volunteers that keep our charity going faced as many difficulties as every other family we support, and we are proud of what they did to keep the support group there to support others when it was needed.

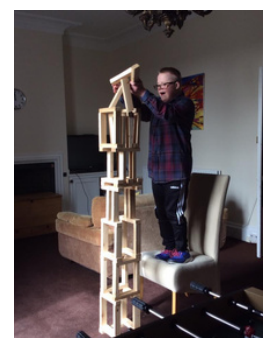


Raising awareness

During the pandemic, we still maintained our annual awareness posts on our public Facebook page. We posted positive and inclusive images every day of October, sharing our group's Superstars with comments from their families.

We post in October, because it is Down's Syndrome Awareness Month - a chance for us at WDDSSG to celebrate everything that people with DS teach us about life, love, ourselves, diversity, inclusion, and the true meaning of awesomeness.

We maintained our engagement with the followers of our public Facebook page through the national lockdown engagement - sharing some of our homeschooling activities while social distancing!



New parent support



What I Wish I'd Known

Our What I Wish I'd Known book continues to be popular. Our decision to spread the positivity of our book far and wide, by selling it at cost price to anyone who wants it, has made it very accessible. We sell it via eBay and direct to other support groups around the country who use it in their own new parent welcome packs. Our families can be very proud of what they have achieved by contributing to this book!

Congratulations!

It is very important to us to support new parents at the start of their journey. We continue to build relationships with local midwives and have provided information and resources as well as being a local point of contact.

Our Congratulations cards are available in the local hospital to be passed on to new families.

Although support during the pandemic has been virtual, we are very much still here for new families.

Our group has a specific named new parent contact volunteer, Jo Elvidge, for people who are in need of someone to talk to after they have received a diagnosis, who is able to signpost to others as well.



Fun and friendship

Singing Hands!!

Our absolute best moment of this year was our fabulous concert from Singing Hands, held shortly before the country went into lockdown. The concert hall was full of families having such a wonderful time and it was a true celebration of the inclusive joy of Makaton signing.

Special thanks go to Ann-Marie Sheard for making this happen for us - a truly special event!



Fundraising

with many thanks...!!!

The Covid pandemic had such an impact on the opportunities for fundraising this year.

We raised money from raffles at our Valentine's Disco and Signing Hands events which happened before the lockdown, and from Amazon Smile, which gives donations when people buy online and name us as their charity.

We received a donation of £250 from Watersheds, and we received £400 from the Barnsley DS support group as they wound their group down, and we are very proud to welcome families from the Barnsley area to WDDSSG while they are without a support group in their area.

Every donation is gratefully received and very much appreciated.

Feedback

We asked for feedback from our members...

We introduced a new membership system, with annual survey, shortly after this financial year, and asked for feedback.

Every single comment was positive - these are some of our favourites:

"The group are always there to advise, direct and support, which is very comforting and reassuring, a lovely group of people".

"Congratulations to the team for keeping going in extraordinary circumstances"

"We would just like to thank everyone for making us feel welcome and including us"

"Thank you so much for all your help and support".

The pandemic has severely limited our possibilities, but the backbone of our charity remains strong - creating opportunities for families to link together to support one another.

OUR ADMINISTRATIVE DETAILS

Charity name: Wakefield and District Down's Syndrome Support Group

Charity registration number: 1155866

Address: c/o 4 Fennel Court, Methley LS26 9LG

OUR TRUSTEES 19 FEB 2020 - 18 FEB 2021

Ann-Marie Sheard - Chair of Trustees

Neil Courtman - Vice Chair of Trustees / Secretary

Sara Beaumont - Secretary (resigned 23 March 2020)

Ruth Noble - Treasurer

Andrea Arnold - Parent Trustee / Communications

Ann Aylward - Parent Trustee

Alison Brown - Parent Trustee

John Crawshaw - Independent Trustee

Paula Rose - Grandparent Trustee

Alexis Sharp - Parent Trustee

STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

Our group has run as a voluntary group since 2000, with a small committee of volunteers, and we became an affiliated local group of the Down's Syndrome Association in 2003. Our charity has been formed as a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO), which is governed by a constitution which was adopted on 20 February 2014.

We hold regular trustee meetings as well as any additional sub-group meetings where necessary. Our trustees have remained mostly the same from the previous year, we have one independent trustee and have actively sought to appoint another one to strengthen our board. We provide a named trustee to support events organised by volunteers outside of the trustee board.

The Trustees have taken the Charity Commission's public benefit guidance into account when making all decisions and will continue to do so.

FINANCIAL STATEMENT

The net receipts for this year were £7,705.23, and net expenditure was £4,119.38. The Treasurer's full report was presented at our AGM. It was noted that the Covid pandemic has had a significant impact on both our income and our opportunities to use our donations.

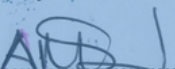
RESERVES

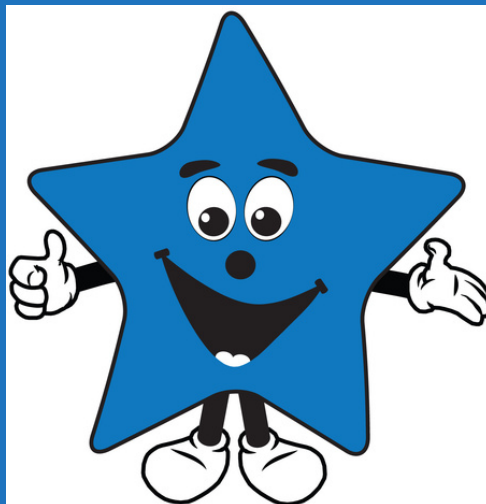
The charity's balance at the end of this year were £28,644.62. Of that balance, £17,820.14 is funds restricted for specific purposes by the donors, leaving free cash reserves of £10,824.48.

There is no formal reserves policy, as the charity's ongoing core costs are minimal due to being fully volunteer-led. The majority of our income and reserves is available to be allocated to maintaining current projects for the future, and to creating new projects.

DECLARATION

Signed by the Chair on behalf of all trustees:


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Ann-Marie Sheard, Chair of Trustees for WDDSSG



Wakefield & District Downs Syndrome Support Group

Accounts

17 February 2021

Wakefield & District Downs Syndrome Support Group

**Accountants' report on the unaudited accounts
to Wakefield & District Downs Syndrome Support Group**

You have approved the accounts for the year ended 17 February 2021 which comprises the Profit and Loss Account and the related notes. In accordance with your instructions, we have compiled these unaudited accounts from the accounting records and information and explanations supplied to us.

**Stephens Accountants Ltd
Accountants**

Southgate Business Centre
32 Gillygate
Pontefract
West Yorkshire
WF8 1PQ

22 June 2021

Wakefield & District Downs Syndrome Support Group
Notes to the Accounts
for the year ended 17 February 2021

1 Accounting basis

The accounts have been compiled on a basis that enables profits to be calculated in accordance with UK Generally Accepted Accounting Practice.

2 Profit and loss account analysis

	2021 £	2020 £
Income	<u>2,303</u>	<u>17,595</u>
Cost of Sales		
Purchases	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
Wages, salaries and other staff costs		
Staff training and welfare	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
Rent, rates, power and insurance costs		
Room Hire	90	1,149
Storage	<u>764</u>	<u>764</u>
	<u>854</u>	<u>1,913</u>
Expenditure		
Activities	1,875	10,575
Coach Hire		540
Website Maintenance	24	11
Postage and stationery	240	93
Family Fun Day		
Repairs and maintenance		
Workwear	<u>2,139</u>	<u>11,219</u>
Accountancy, legal and other professional fees		
Accountants fees	<u>240</u>	<u>240</u>
Other business expenses		
Refreshments		138
Sundry expenses	<u>-</u>	<u>122</u>
		<u>260</u>