

SWINDON DOWN'S SYNDROME GROUP

England & Wales · Charity number 1158449

Details

Other names	SWINDON DS GROUP
Status	Registered
Legal form	CIO
Registered	2014-09-04
Register	View on the Charity Commission register

Contact

Address	34 Periwinkle Close Swindon SN2 2QH
Phone	07732064889
Email	chair@swindondownsgroup.org.uk
Website	www.swindondownsgroup.org.uk

Activities

Objects: The objects of the CIO are to relieve the charitable needs of people with Down's Syndrome, and their families, helpers and carers in particular but not exclusively by the provision of support and information and speech and language therapy so that they are able to attain their full potential and to undertake any other charitable activities in connection with the relief of Down's Syndrome in the SN postcode and the surrounding area. (Area of Benefit). "Surrounding area" defined as – post code areas associated to Fairford, Malmesbury, Hungerford, Pewsey, Marlborough, Hullavington, Chippenham, Devizes, Calne, Ashton Keynes, Cirencester, Aldbourne, Bromham, Melksham and Cheltenham.

Activities: The Swindon Down's Syndrome Group is a parent-led charity supporting people with Down's syndrome and their families in Swindon and the surrounding area. We are here to help people with Down's syndrome to have the same opportunities as everyone else and raise awareness of Down's syndrome in the local community.

Classification

- **How:** Provides Buildings/facilities/open Space, Provides Services, Provides Advocacy/advice/information, Other Charitable Activities
- **What:** Education/training, Disability
- **Who:** Children/young People, People With Disabilities

Geography

- Swindon

Finances

Period end	Income	Expenditure	Assets	Employees
2024-12-31	£49,807	£56,212	-	-
2023-12-31	£88,765	£74,067	-	-
2022-12-31	£94,930	£84,286	-	-
2021-12-31	£66,523	£43,791	-	-
2020-12-31	£66,523	£43,791	-	-

Trustees

Name	Role	Appointed
KIM WEST	Chair	2006-12-01
Claire Elizabeth North		2024-05-18
JOANNA MESSENGER		1997-08-08
JOHN STOW		2001-05-24
Samantha Harding		2017-10-01
Victoria McGuire		2020-04-18

SWINDON DOWN'S SYNDROME GROUP

England & Wales - Charity number 1158449

Accounts



ANNUAL REPORT

January - December 2024

www.swindondownsgroup.org.uk

WAYS TO HELP THE GROUP RAISE FUNDS

You may just want to make a donation, if so you can use one of the following platforms to donate to the Group

JustGiving™

PayPal
Giving Fund



Swindon Community Lottery

By buying a £1 ticket you could be in with a chance of winning £25,000 as well as supporting us as a charity. We get 50p from every ticket sold.

<https://www.swindonlottery.co.uk/support/swindon-downs-syndrome-group>

Give as you Live Online



Is a free and easy way to raise money for us, just by shopping online.

Once you've signed up, click 'shop & raise' to go to their website, then continue to shop as normal.

Recycle your print cartridges



You can raise money by recycling your printer cartridges using our dedicated envelopes. We receive £1 for every ink cartridge. Why not ask your friends and family to do this too.

ANNUAL REVIEW 2024

The Swindon Down's Syndrome Group consists of many families, all volunteering our time and experience as parents and carers to make life that bit more fun and ensure our family with Down's syndrome have all the opportunities and support they need from birth to old age.

We started as a small group of parents who met for coffee and provided each other with support. As time passed, more parents connected with the group and in 2003 we became a charity in our own right.

The Swindon Down's Syndrome Group support people with Down's syndrome in Swindon and the surrounding area including Fairford, Malmesbury, Hungerford, Pewsey, Marlborough, Hullavington, Chippenham, Devizes, Calne, Ashton Keynes, Cirencester, Aldbourne, Bromham, Melksham and Cheltenham.

We are a volunteer led charity, meaning everyone has an active role in the Swindon Down's Syndrome Group and gives up their time because of the love of the group.

We are very fortunate to be supported by our fantastic trustees and volunteers.

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MESSAGE FROM OUR CHAIR

As chair of the Group, I am incredibly proud to look back on a year that has been marked by determination, a strong spirit of togetherness and a deep sense of community. Over the past 12 months, our charity has continued to grow, not just in numbers, but in strength, in confidence, and in the positive impact we're making in the lives of children, adults, and families connected to Down's syndrome.

This year, we've continued to see the positive impact of our core services, including our Speech and Language Therapy project and the WorkFit programme. Speech and Language Therapy remains a lifeline for many of our members, offering vital support that empowers communication and builds confidence. Our WorkFit programme has gone from strength to strength, with several of our members now thriving in paid employment at organisations such as Amazon, DoubleTree by Hilton, and Wincanton Logistics, among others. It's been incredibly rewarding to see them enjoying their roles, growing in confidence, and experiencing the many personal and social benefits that meaningful employment brings. Being part of the workforce has had a positive impact on their overall wellbeing and sense of independence.

I would like to express my heartfelt thanks to our incredible volunteers, whose dedication, enthusiasm, and kindness continues to inspire us all. Whether they're supporting events, lending a helping hand at the jumble sale, or working behind the scenes, their generosity of spirit and willingness to give their time makes a meaningful difference to our families and the wider community. Their contribution is truly the backbone of our organisation, and we simply couldn't do what we do without them.

I'm also deeply grateful to my fellow Trustees. Their time, insight, and steadfast commitment are invaluable in shaping the direction of the charity. They each bring unique perspectives and skills, and together they help ensure that we operate with integrity, compassion, and a strong sense of shared purpose. I feel incredibly privileged to work alongside such a dedicated group of individuals who care so deeply about the future of our Group and those we support.

Looking ahead, I am excited about the opportunities to grow, to deepen our support, and to amplify the voices of those we represent. I remain passionate about our mission and more determined than ever to ensure that our members with Down's syndrome, and their families, are empowered, celebrated, and supported every step of the way.

Thank you for being part of our journey.

Kim

Our Achievements

There was a lot to celebrate in 2024 and here are just a few of our achievements

£22,913

was received by the Group through fundraising in 2024

171

people now receive regular information through our mailing list

£1,407

was raised through voluntary membership donations

£20,815

received via donations

12,200

visits to our Facebook page

2,228

followers on Facebook

£4,776

sales through our online shop

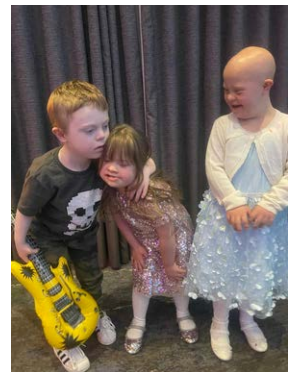
446

online therapy sessions delivered through Mable Therapy

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE YEAR

Happy 21st

We kicked off the year in style with a party to celebrate our 21st birthday! A massive thank you to Steve Lennett, “Wired for Sound” for stepping in at 30 minutes notice with our disco and thank you to DoubleTree by Hilton Swindon for an incredible venue and buffet. It was great to see all our members having fun and celebrating together. Here’s the next 21 years!



We had a Ball

In May some of the trustees and members of the group attended the wonderful Diamond charity Ball. Thank you to the Rotary Club of Swindon for their support throughout the year and what a wonderful way to celebrate their kindness. An excellent evening with 247 for their entertainment and a dancefloor that Oliver, Jane and Lane made full use of.

The group had a trip to see the Wizard of Oz at the Bristol Hippodrome.



The football team had a brilliant morning with Bristol City Robins Foundation celebrating World Down Syndrome Day on March 10th. Some fantastic passing and goals from Swindon. The sportsmanship between the teams is amazing.

Our younger members had a spooktacular time at our Halloween stay and play coffee morning

At Youth Club, we learnt about the Ask Danny charity and the work they do to make hospital visits easier



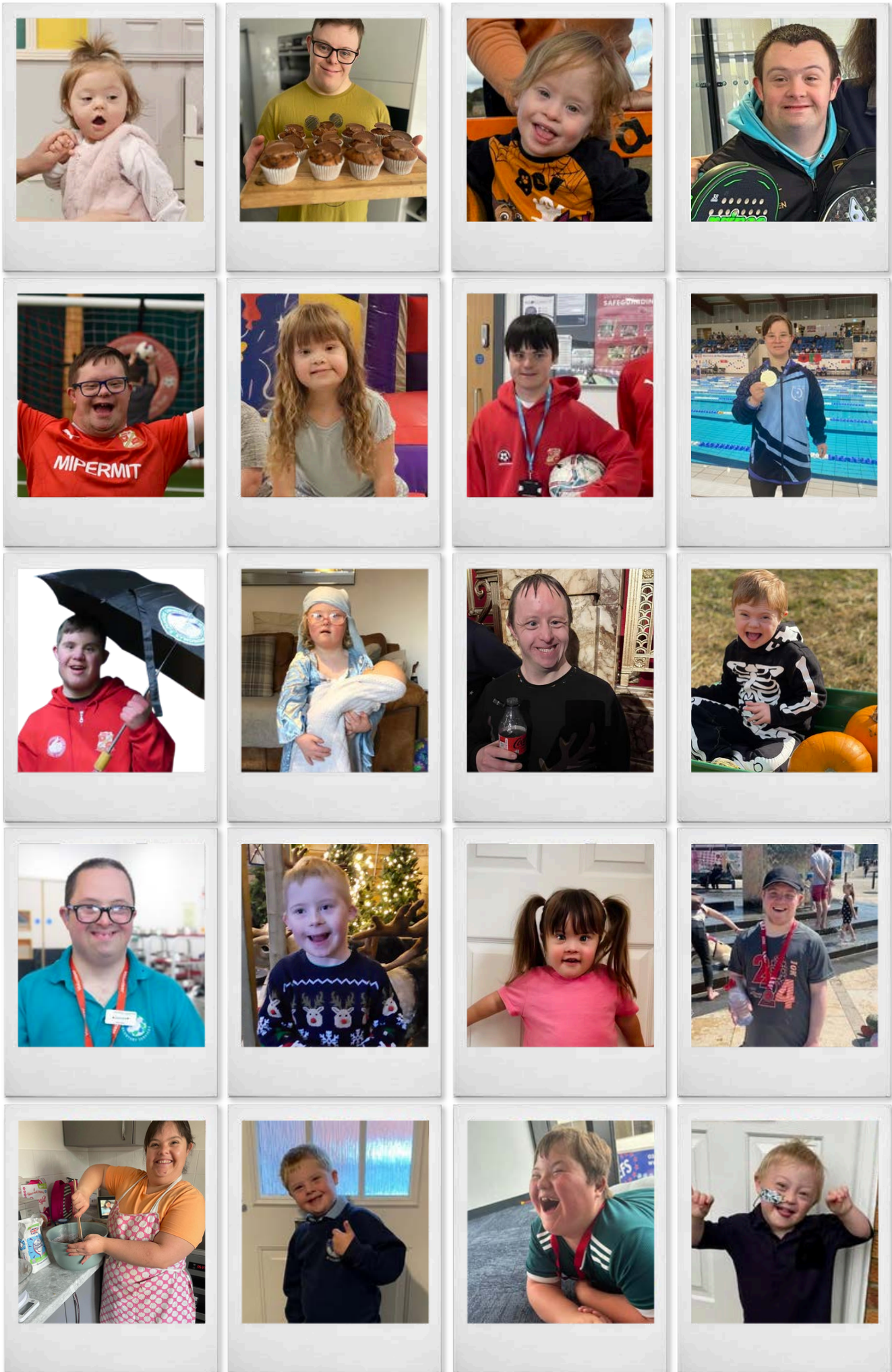
We had a great time at our Christmas parties! Thank you to the bar staff at the Coleview Community Centre, C.H Disco's for top tunes, Pizza 2 Night Gorse Hill for the pizzas, Razamatazz - Professional Entertainer who provided the entertainment (and snow!) for our younger members and Morrisons Devizes and M&S Mannington for their generous donations towards the food!



Congratulations to Jeremy and Sophie for their winning Christmas card designs

We had a fantastic time at the Pantomime....oh yes we did!





SUPPORTING NEW PARENTS

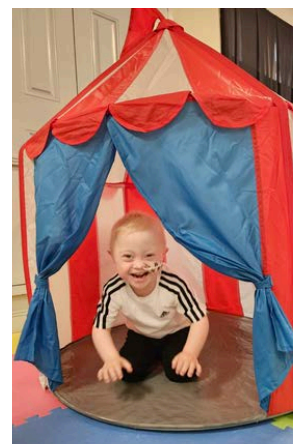
We have an active community of almost 15 families, all who have children aged 0-7. We have been delighted to welcome some new families to the group this year, one even before their child was born! We support each other through the sleepless nights, potty training, selecting nursery and school settings and all the other major milestones. It's lovely to see lifelong friendships already emerging, both for the children and their parents/carers.

We have a WhatsApp group with almost 40 members who regularly share advice, questions, ideas and fears and lots of support for each other. Photographs, links to websites, press announcements and recommended purchases are regularly posted in the chat.

The families are based in Wiltshire and surrounding areas. A coffee morning stay and play runs once a month on the 1st Saturday (except August and December) from 10am to 12pm. It gives the families chance to meet up in a soft play area in Royal Wootton Bassett. The hall is hired exclusively for the group and refreshments are supplied. The session attendance varies as our little ones are young and easily pick bugs up, but also have busy social lives! We usually have on average 6 families per session. The bouncy castle and ball pit are always popular with all the children including siblings. It gives the children a chance to have fun in a safe environment. By regular contact the families and the children become friends. It is always noisy, positive and full of smiles.

We're still keen to explore the option of hosting a similar activity closer to Chippenham for the families who have far to travel. Please let us know if you have any suggestions for us to follow up.

For more information about support for new parents and the early years, contact newparent@swindondownsgroup.org.uk



FUNDRAISING

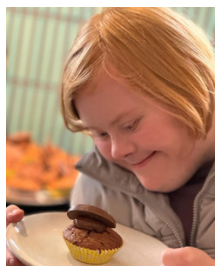
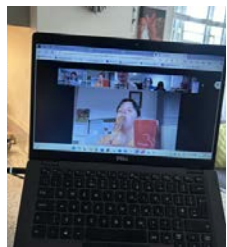
A huge thank you to everyone who raised funds for us in 2024 - here's just some of the highlights of our fundraising heroes!

Running For Speech Therapy

In May, **Shannon Argue** ran 3 half marathons in 4 weeks, raising over £1,000 for Speech and Language Therapy in recognition of her little sister Verity.

Shannon ran 3 half marathons (for the 3 copies of chromosome 21) for the Group. She ran the Great Birmingham Run on the 5th, Great Bristol Run on the 19th and Great Manchester Run on the 26th. We think this is amazing - thank you Shannon!

Martyn Coles also put on his running shoes for the Group by completing the London Marathon in an impressive 5hr, 32min and 48sec! Go Martyn!!



Thank you to our friends at Zurich

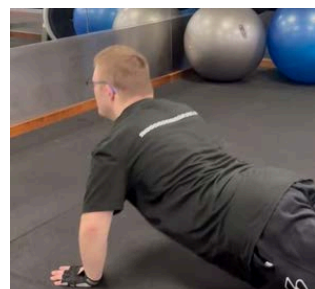
We are very grateful to the Zurich Community Trust for their ongoing generous support of the group including

- donating a number of hampers for our Summer and Christmas raffle - congratulations to all the winners!
- providing the ingredients and running a virtual cooking session for some delicious chocolate orange muffins
- hosting a summer party (indoors thanks to the British summer weather) with lots of fun games and activities

Oliver's 21 challenges

Oliver took part in a number of 21 fitness challenges with support from Snap Fitness Cirencester and Halo Fitness Coach.

He also used his creative skills to make lot of beautiful items to sell at craft fairs! What a star!



We love the Crown Inn

One of our most loyal supporters, the Crown Inn Stratton continued their generosity in 2024 with donations from their raffles, quizzes and the sale of our colourful socks!

A big thank you to all the staff and customers!



Thank you to Arval UK

Each year Arval choose a local charity to support and in 2024, they chose us. We were astonished to receive such a huge amount from Arval..... £5,000.

One of our Trustees (Michael) and his son Myles met with representatives from Arval to collect the donation. We are extremely grateful to Arval for choosing us as one of their beneficiaries.



Let them eat Cake!

A huge thank you to everyone at Kandu Arts for Sustainable Development who organised the Kandu Cake Sale to raise £112.25 for us!

A special thanks to Lorni for her wonderful brownies and inspiration for the cake sale.



Pride

A very big thank you to all those who helped out and supported us at Swindon Pride.

A great event with an amazing £508 raised for the group.

Congratulations to **Andre Klein** who won a VIP day out at Swindon Town FC. Thank you to everyone who entered the raffle to win!

Rotary Club of Swindon North & Thamesdown

The Rotary Club of Swindon North and Thamesdown have been extremely generous to us in 2024 sharing the proceeds from their annual Swimathon.



SPEECH & LANGUAGE THERAPY

We continue to offer regular Speech and Language Therapy to our members. They are split into two groups:- Age 3 to 18 and Age 18+. The younger group is offered weekly sessions and follows the school year. The older group has fortnightly sessions throughout the year. In total these sessions cost us about £40,000 a year. Trustees and members work hard to raise money to pay for them.

All our therapy sessions are delivered via the online Mable Therapy provider. Each pupil is assigned to a therapist who develops an individual plan based on the pupil's needs and ability. Members can choose times for their appointments to fit around other commitments.

The younger group



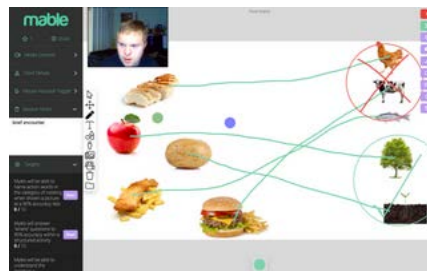
We have eleven members in our younger group. Sessions are twenty minutes long and are based around learning games to ensure maximum participation. Once a target is attained, a new plan and targets is set.

We hope to commence Face to Face sessions again in the future if a suitable therapist can be secured.



The older group

Mable provide on-line sessions to our older group in a similar manner to the younger group. We have ten members in this group. Each session is designed around a task and is very visual and entertaining to ensure participation and motivation. Each session is twenty minutes long.



Mable provides weekly session reports and homework tasks that can be accessed at the click of a button. Long term targets are set and parents/guardians can see progress made to date.



#LotsofSocks



The 21st March 2024 was another hugely successful day for us. We loved seeing all you sock pictures, even from some furry friends!

We were invited to sell socks at Nationwide Building Society, the Amazon fulfilment centre and later in the year, at Swindon Dunelm.

A huge thank you to everyone who bought our socks and all companies that sold them on our behalf including

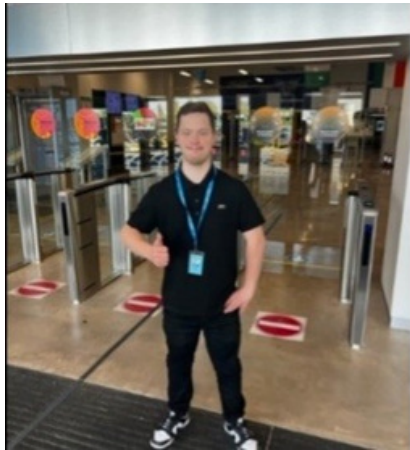
- DoubleTree by Hilton Bath
- Fairfield College
- Cobbs Farm Shop
- Holmes & Hills Solicitors
- Crowdys Hill School
- Market Hair Lambourn
- The Crown Inn, Stratton



A FABULOUS YEAR FOR WORKFIT

Amazon, Swindon

Fabulous news for the Amazon team. Both Louis and Kerry have now been offered a permanent associate contract of 2 paid four-hour shifts per week. Both have worked extremely hard to achieve appropriate performance levels so a huge WELL DONE to Louis and Kerry.



Independence is a fundamental aspect of human dignity and personal growth, and it holds particular significance for individuals with Down's syndrome. Promoting independence can enhance their quality of life, foster self-esteem, and empower them to navigate the world with confidence. Here are several reasons why working independently is essential for people with Down's syndrome.



Our WorkFit Officer Roy Perrett and Saffy attended the Double Tree by Hilton for the Green Leaders event. Saffy told everyone about her role in the Hilton in Bath. An excellent presentation.



Toby at Porton Garden Aquatics Centre, Amesbury

September was an important month for Luke as he celebrates 2 important milestones. Firstly, Luke celebrated his 8-year work anniversary with Wiltshire Police, having a paid role, working as an Administrator in the Crime and Communication Centre in Devizes. Luke's duties see him supporting front-line colleagues in the force operations communication team. He is now wearing the Wiltshire Police staff uniform. Not only does Luke look incredibly smart he also feels and looks like part of his team. Well done, Luke, just brilliant. September also saw Luke's 30th birthday, so a VERY Happy Birthday Luke, keep doing what you're doing, you are such an inspiration to everyone.

In October we held a successful WorkFit information evening at the Stratton Churchway Bowls Club. Families attended the evening where Roy Perrett, our WorkFit Liaison Officer was able to answer questions and discuss the importance of the workplace for our members.



For many individuals with Down's syndrome, working independently opens doors to meaningful employment. Employers increasingly value diverse perspectives, and individuals who demonstrate independence and initiative can thrive in various roles, contributing positively to their teams. We are proud of each and everyone who has become part of a workplace.

KEEPING FIT AND ACTIVE

Padel Tennis

Not many things will get our young people out of bed early on a Saturday morning in the middle of winter (and the rest of the year). However, Padel Tennis bucks that trend. All of the members who attend bring an energy which reflects the enjoyment they get from the sessions. Massive credit to coach Alan who knows how to bring the best out of them. Each week new skills are introduced and practiced in a way that our young people can cope with. It is no surprise that everyone has shown improvement during the year. Thanks also to Luke and everyone at Padel4All for being so supportive.

If you would like to give Padel tennis a try please contact tennis@swindondownsgroup.org.uk.



Cricket

Members of the Group continued to attend the "Super 1's" hubs, run by Wiltshire County Cricket, in both Swindon and Chippenham. These are a combination of skills activities, aimed at improving batting, bowling and throwing, followed by a chance for everyone to take turns batting while everyone else fields. During the Summer months the sessions take place outside, taking advantage of the British summer weather 😊. Although the weather caused the mini-festival arranged in August to be cancelled, it was perfect for WCC's Showcase Game in July. Super 1's players held a skills session before the game against Glamorgan before creating the Guard of Honour as the players took to the pitch.

In October, WCC held their Grassroots Cricket Awards. The Swindon Hub was named 'Hub of the Year' and our member Laura, who attends at Chippenham, was awarded 'Super 1's Participant of 2024'!



Football

Another exciting and successful year for the Swindon DSAActive Football Team. The team enjoyed a visit to Bristol City and hosted Bristol at the Nigel Eady Training Centre. Over the past year, the DSAActive football team has seen progress in their skills. The players have demonstrated great levels of skill and sportsmanship. Their positive attitude and passion for the game have made them a source of pride to the Swindon coaches and parents.



The support system within the team, involving coaches and families, has been crucial to the team's success and well-being. As the team looks to the future, the focus remains on developing players' abilities, promoting the benefits of inclusive sport, and inspiring others to take part.



With continued support and dedication, the DSAActive football team is set to achieve even greater success in the year to come.

If you would like to join our great team then please contact football@swindondownsgroup.org.uk

Swimming



Our fortnightly swimming sessions at Thamesdown Hydrotherapy Pool have continued to run this year. The Pool unfortunately had to pass on inevitable price increases, but we were indebted to the Rotary Club of Swindon North and Thamesdown who chose us as the main recipient for their annual charity Swimathon. The generosity of everyone participating and supporting has allowed us to fund the sessions, including a number during the summer holidays. Vicky Hunt has continued to coach our swimmers both as a group and also with tailored help to individuals.



There are currently spaces available for any members wishing to give it a try. The pool is a brilliant, and safe, environment for learning to swim.

Contact swimming@swindondownsgroup.org.uk for more information about the sessions.

Tennis

The weekly sessions at Delta Tennis Centre continue to be attended by a small number of regular players. The familiarity of having Livio coaching each week continues to be a benefit and all players have progressed during the year.

The Group has also had more representation at LTA Learning Disability competitions this year with Robert also competing alongside regulars Lane and Alex, who again fended off all opposition at the Newport event doubles.

This activity is subsidised by the Group so it would be great to see a few more members at the sessions.

You can find out more information about the sessions by emailing tennis@swindondownsgroup.org.uk.



Perform 4 Dreams (P4D) Dance Group

There are 12 members in P4D dance group which exists as part of Bobbi's Academy of Dance (B.A.D). They meet on Fridays at 5.30pm at Wilkes Academy in Swindon. Their teacher Bobbi has challenged them throughout 2024 with new routines and dance steps. As usual, they performed at the BAD Annual Show in October, and at the 2024 Awards Evening, where Keira Embling won this year's P4D dance award. In August some of the group joined BAD's dance team in Paris and performed at Disneyland Paris! They showcased 2 dances: 'Somewhere Over the Rainbow' and 'Together' from High School Musical. They performed confidently as a team and received a great reception from the audience.

Bobbi has also started a class for preschool and infant aged children who have Down's syndrome. They meet on Saturdays at 11am and would very much welcome new members.

Here are some of the things the P4D members say about dancing with Bobbi:

Elliot says 'It makes me happy. I like dancing, the songs and my friends. Lane says 'I like to take it seriously. I love doing exhibitions and having a good laugh with my friends'



For Evie, coming to dancing is the highlight of her week, and Krystal agrees that it finishes the week on a high note! Kerry loves learning the new routines and is proud of the medal she receives at the Awards night each year. Travis likes seeing his friends and performing his dance moves on stage, especially at Disney. Hattie says 'Bobbi inspires you to learn to dance. Disney made me feel confident and famous.'

So, if you, or someone you know, wants to be inspired to dance do get in touch: info@swindondownsgroup.org.uk

YOUTH CLUB

We meet every other Monday evening at 18:30 at Toothill Farmhouse facility in Swindon. It is open to all members aged 13 and over. We would love to see new faces. There are around ten regular participants, and we have had as many as fifteen. We have a break in August due to summer holidays etc.



Our young people use the two hours to dance, chat and be sociable with their friends. We have a break for about 30 minutes, have a sit down, drink and snack. If any member has a birthday coming up, we sing happy birthday and often have a cake.

A zoom session is started to allow members who can't get to the venue to join in.

Activities include:- board games, disco, table football to name a few. One of the popular activities is a quiz, usually on a topic chosen by the participants. Subjects include:- Summer, Winter, Harry Potter, Super Heroes, Nature and Halloween.

In the warmer months we went outside to make use of the adjacent green space and played games.

Our final session of 2024 was in December. We wore Christmas hats and Jumpers and sang the Twelve Days of Christmas.



IT'S ALL THANKS TO YOU, OUR SUPPORTERS

We are so grateful to everyone who has supported us over the past year

We owe a huge thank you to every single person, group or business that has helped us support our young people with Down's Syndrome. In particular we'd like to thank the following supporters:

Our Patrons

Cliff Puffett
Julie Thomas

Trustees (2024)

Kim West
John Stow
Sam Harding
Joanna Messenger
Michael Billinge-Jones
Victoria McGuire
Cherylin Hempleman
Claire North

Our fundraisers, donors, supporters & volunteers including

Alan
Amazon
Arval UK
Ashton Keynes Shop
Bobbi's Academy of Dance
Brookfield School
Cailey Witcher
Charities Trust
Clare Stow
Cobbs Farm Shop
Coles Scaffolding
Crowdys Hill School
DoubleTree by Hilton Bath & Swindon
Dunelm
Fairfield College

Fora Coffee
Great Western Hospital
Halo Fitness Coach
Holmes & Hills Solicitors
Justin Tomlinson
Marina Billinge-Jones
Market Hair Lambourn
Martyn Coles
Mrs Rizvana Sheik
National Lottery
Nationwide Building Society
Oliver Messenger
Padel4All
Rae-Marie's Wellbeing Therapies
Ronald Allen May
Rotary Club of Swindon
Roy Perrett
Shahi P Shahimalla
Shannon Argue
Sherry Baffour
Simply Gym Swindon East
Snap Fitness Cirencester
Swindon Town Football Club
Thamesdown Hydro Pool
The Crown Inn, Stratton
The Mead Family
The Openwork Foundation
Toddler Zone
VW Group
Zurich Community Trust

And everyone who has bought socks, played the Swindon Community Lottery, donated to/attended our jumble sales and much more!

GOVERNANCE & MANAGEMENT

Charity name: Swindon Down's Syndrome Group
Charity number: 1158449
Principal office: 34 Periwinkle Close, Swindon, SN2 2QH

Governing document

Swindon Down's Syndrome Group is constituted as a charitable incorporated organisation (CIO) registered with the Charity Commission. It is governed by a constitution last updated in 2018.

Charitable objects:

The objects of the CIO are to relieve the charitable needs of people with Down's syndrome, and their families, helpers and carers in particular but not exclusively by the provision of support and information and speech and language therapy so that they are able to attain their full potential and to undertake any other charitable activities in connection with the relief of Down's syndrome in the SN postcode and the surrounding area. (Area of Benefit)

Surrounding area to be defined as – "post code areas associated to Fairford, Malmesbury, Hungerford, Pewsey, Marlborough, Hullavington, Chippenham, Devizes, Calne, Ashton Keynes, Cirencester, Aldbourne, Bromham, Melksham and Cheltenham."

Activities:

We are a parent-led charity supporting people with Down's syndrome, their families, carers and all those with an interest in Down's syndrome in Swindon and the surrounding area. We are an independent charity, affiliated to the national Down's Syndrome Association.

Organisation structure

The charity trustees are responsible for the general control and management of the charity. The trustees give their time freely and receive no remuneration or other financial benefits.

The trustees meet together as a body monthly and are responsible for all decisions taken in relation to running the charity. The charity can have a maximum of 10 trustees.

Trustee Name	Office (if any)	Dates acted if not for whole year
Kim West	Chair	
Mike Billinge-Jones	Vice Chair	
Sam Harding	Treasurer	
Joanna Messenger	Secretary	
John Stow	Vice Treasurer	
Cherylin Hempleman		
Victoria McGuire		
Claire North		May 2024 - Present

Recruitment and appointment of trustees

The existing trustees are responsible for the recruitment of new trustees. In appointing new trustees we seek people who are part of our local community. Potential trustees are invited to trustees' meetings or to meet with the chairperson to learn more about the charity's aims and objectives. If all trustees agree they are proposed as new trustees. New trustees are required to complete a DBS check and given a three month trial. This process allows due consideration of the person's eligibility, personal competence, specialist knowledge and skills.

Public benefit

The trustees have paid due regard to the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit in deciding what activities the charity should undertake. The trustees consider that they have acted in the public benefit.

Conflicts of Interest

The Trustees have paid due regard to the Charity Commission's guidance on Conflicts of Interest and the Trustees only act in the best interests of the Charity. The Swindon Down's Syndrome Group have strong systems in place to identify conflicts of interest and we ask each Trustee to declare any conflicts at the beginning of every meeting.

Financial review and reserves policy

At 31 December 2024 the charity held total funds of £102,455 of which £93,586 are restricted and £8,869 are unrestricted. Unrestricted funds include designated funds of £5,000 for Speech. Free reserves are £3,869. The charity has minimal overheads as it is run by volunteers and so does not need to build up free reserves. The main commitment and the charity's highest cost is paying for Speech therapy, which will cost approx £40,000 for 2025. Therefore any excess free reserves are designated to the Speech fund. The restricted funds comprise:

Speech	
Donations and grants to provide speech therapy	£65,236
Salamander	
Donations and grants to fund the fire course	£3,620
WorkFit	
Donations and grants to support adults into work	£2,815
Other smaller funds	£21,915
Total restricted funds	£93,586

Approved by the trustees and signed on its behalf by:



Kim West, Chairperson
Swindon Down's Syndrome Group

THE FUTURE

As we move into 2025, it is clear that we must not lose focus on those things which have made the Group successful in the past. Therefore, in the coming year we need to continue ensuring we can be here for you all. We want to continue offering all the support and activities that have enhanced the experience of so many members. To be able to achieve this, and more, our request to you all is unchanged. We need more of our members to give up a small amount of time to make more things happen. Offering just an hour of your time at one of our events, selling some of our merchandise or even sharing one of our fundraising messages can be so beneficial and goes a huge way to helping us continue to do what we do. The priorities of the Group for 2025 are listed below. Nothing on the list can take place if there are no funds to pay for it. So, if you feel that any activity is too low in the list, or you have ideas for something new, we would love you to be involved in setting anything up and fundraising for it.

1. WorkFit
2. Speech and language therapy for under 18's and adults
3. New parent support
4. Keeping active including Football, Tennis, Padel Tennis and Swimming
5. Youth Club
6. Dance
7. Primary support
8. School Resource Packs
9. Support for schools
10. Christmas parties
11. Family events and trips

We remain committed to providing the support needed by all our members but can't do it all alone. We want you to be more involved. We want to hear your thoughts; we want you to be a part of what we do and help us shape the future of the Group. If you'd like to find out more drop us an email to info@swindondownsgroup.org.uk



www.swindondownsgroup.org.uk/shop



Our eBay clothes shop is now open!

MELVYN PAXFORD PRINT & DESIGN

melvynpaxford@yahoo.co.uk | 07707 204749

FOR ALL YOUR PRINT REQUIREMENTS

Labels • Business Cards • Flyers • Booklets
Pull-Up Banners • PVC Banners • Signage

The Swindon Down's Syndrome Group is a parent-led charity supporting people with Down's syndrome and their families in Swindon and the surrounding area.

We are here to help people with Down's syndrome to have the same opportunities as everyone else and raise awareness of Down's syndrome in the local community.

REGISTERED CHARITY

Swindon Down's Syndrome Group is a UK registered charity.

Registered Office
34 Periwinkle Close
Swindon SN2 2QH.

Charity number: 1158449

Copyright ©2024 Swindon Down's Syndrome Group



Registered with
**FUNDRAISING
REGULATOR**

www.swindondownsgroup.org.uk

Charity Name Swindon Downs Syndrome Group		No (if any) 1158449		CC16a
Receipts and payments accounts				
For the period from		Period start date 01.01.24	To Period end date 31.12.24	

Section A Receipts and payments

	Unrestricted funds to the nearest £	Designated funds to the nearest £	Restricted funds to the nearest £	Endowment funds to the nearest £	Total funds to the nearest £	Last year to the nearest £
A1 Receipts						
Donations	3 583	-	17 232	-	20 815	42 421
Outings/Parties/Sports		-	2 893	-	2 893	3 550
Fundraising	1 526	-	21 387	-	22 913	36 822
Speech Therapy		-	820	-	820	4 070
Interest	105	-	855	-	960	690
Membership	1 407	-		-	1 407	1 212
Sub total	6 621	-	43 187	-	49 807	88 765
A2 Asset and investment sales, etc.						
	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total receipts	6 621	-	43 187	-	49 807	88 765
A3 Payments						
Outings/Parties/Sports/Clubs			14 204		14 204	8 153
Fundraising	170		9 109		9 279	11 893
Newsletter/Postage			155		155	-
Speech Therapy			14 720		14 720	36 816
Training			-		-	1 094
Miscellaneous	6 603		783		7 386	6 753
WorkFit			10 468		10 468	9 358
Website			-		-	-
			-		-	-
Sub total	6 773	-	49 439	-	56 212	74 067
A4 Asset and investment purchases, etc.						
	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total payments	6 773	-	49 439	-	56 212	74 067
Net of receipts/(payments)	- 153	-	6 252	-	6 405	14 698
A5 Transfers between funds						
A6 Cash funds last year end	4 022	5 000	99 838	-	108 860	94 162
Cash funds this year end	3 869	5 000	93 586	-	102 455	108 860

Section B Statement of assets and liabilities at the end of the period

Categories	Details	Unrestricted funds to nearest £	Restricted funds to nearest £	Endowment funds to nearest £
B1 Cash funds	Santander	8 869	12 371	-
	CAF		47 227	-
	Teachers Building Society		33 989	-
	Paypal			-
	Total cash funds		8 869	93 586
	(agree balances with receipts and payments account(s))		OK	OK
B2 Other monetary assets	Details			
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
B3 Investment assets	Details			
		Fund to which asset belongs	Cost (optional)	Current value (optional)
			-	-

		-	-
		-	-
		-	-
		-	-

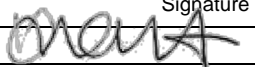
B4 Assets retained for the charity's own use

Details	Fund to which asset belongs	Cost (optional)	Current value (optional)
		-	-
		-	-
		-	-
		-	-
		-	-
		-	-
		-	-
		-	-
		-	-

B5 Liabilities

Details	Fund to which liability relates	Amount due (optional)	When due (optional)
		-	
		-	
		-	
		-	

Signed by one or two trustees on behalf of all the trustees

Signature	Print Name	Date of approval
	Kim West	20/4/2025



Section A

Independent Examiner's Report

**Report to the trustees/
members of**

Charity Name
Swindon Down's Syndrome Group

**On accounts for the year
ended**

31st December 2024

**Charity no
(if any)**

1158449

Set out on pages

1 and 2

(remember to include the page numbers of additional sheets)

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the above charity ("the Trust") for the year ended **31/12/2024**.

**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 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.

Signed:

Date:

22 April 2025

Name:

James Gare

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

FCA

Address:

Monahans, Hermes House, Fire Fly Avenue, Swindon, SN2 2GA

Only complete if the examiner needs to highlight matters of concern (see CC32, Independent examination of charity accounts: directions and guidance for examiners).

Give here brief details of any items that the examiner wishes to disclose.

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		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
B3 Investment assets	Details			
		Fund to which asset belongs	Cost (optional)	Current value (optional)
			-	-

		-	-
		-	-
		-	-
		-	-

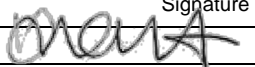
B4 Assets retained for the charity's own use

Details	Fund to which asset belongs	Cost (optional)	Current value (optional)
		-	-
		-	-
		-	-
		-	-
		-	-
		-	-
		-	-
		-	-
		-	-

B5 Liabilities

Details	Fund to which liability relates	Amount due (optional)	When due (optional)
		-	
		-	
		-	
		-	
		-	

Signed by one or two trustees on behalf of all the trustees

Signature	Print Name	Date of approval
	Kim West	20/4/2025

SWINDON DOWN'S SYNDROME GROUP

England & Wales - Charity number 1158449

Accounts



ANNUAL REVIEW 2023

JANUARY - DECEMBER 2023

www.swindondownsgroup.org.uk

WAYS TO HELP THE GROUP RAISE FUNDS

You may just want to make a donation, if so you can use one of the following platforms to donate to the Group

JustGiving™

PayPal
Giving Fund



Swindon Community Lottery

By buying a £1 ticket you could be in with a chance of winning £25,000 as well as supporting us as a charity. We get 50p from every ticket sold.

<https://www.swindonlottery.co.uk/support/swindon-downs-syndrome-group>

Give as you Live Online



Is a free and easy way to raise money for us, just by shopping online.

Once you've signed up, click 'shop & raise' to go to their website, then continue to shop as normal.

Recycle your print cartridges



You can raise money by recycling your printer cartridges using our dedicated envelopes. We receive £1 for every ink cartridge. Why not ask your friends and family to do this too.

ANNUAL REVIEW 2023

The Swindon Down's Syndrome Group consists of many families, all volunteering our time and experience as parents and carers to make life that bit more fun and ensure our family with Down's syndrome have all the opportunities and support they need from birth to old age.

We started as a small group of parents who met for coffee and provided each other with support. As time passed, more parents connected with the group and in 2003 we became a charity in our own right.

The Swindon Down's Syndrome Group support people with Down's syndrome in Swindon and the surrounding area including Fairford, Malmesbury, Hungerford, Pewsey, Marlborough, Hullavington, Chippenham, Devizes, Calne, Ashton Keynes, Cirencester, Aldbourne, Bromham, Melksham and Cheltenham.

We are a volunteer led charity, meaning everyone has an active role in the Swindon Down's Syndrome Group and gives up their time because of the love of the group.

We are very fortunate to be supported by our fantastic trustees and volunteers.

04 | Message from the Chair

05 | Our achievements

10 | Fundraising

20 | Thank yous

21 | Governance

22 | Future



MESSAGE FROM OUR CHAIR

“I am so proud to be part of such an incredible charity”

Once again, I would like to thank all the members and the Swindon community who continue to support us through challenging times. Thank you to anyone who has given time to help us fundraise, be it a jumble sale or an event. Without your support we would not achieve what we have, and our group would not continue to grow from strength to strength.

In the last year we have organised some fantastic events including what we can only describe as the “Greatest Charity Ball” at the Double Tree by Hilton Hotel in Swindon. What a truly rememberable night that was, raising an incredible £12,552.63 for the under 25’s speech and language therapy. The group certainly knows how to party!

In May we were delighted to receive a generous donation from Hillier Funeral Service as part of their 100 year celebration. We received a wonderful £5,000. The group also received a donation from the Amazon Fulfilment Team which helped us fund the Christmas parties.

In June, four wonderful swimmers raised £846.25 swimming 74 lengths between them in the Rotary Club of Swindon & Thamesdown Swimathon. Thank you, Julie, Cathy, Clare and Sophie, for this event. June also saw Sgt Abin Subba and Sgt Kaushal Shahi raise £1,316.16 for under 25’s speech and language therapy by cycling 300 miles each in 3 weeks.

A grant from Wiltshire Community Foundation for under 25’s Speech and Language Therapy helps us keep this service running for the group.

We also continue to thank the National Lottery for their incredible support in funding our adult speech sessions.

Roy Perrett continues to build the WorkFit program for the group supporting our members in their workplace. You will be able to see in Roy’s report how successful this program is and the work placements that have been gained. We are very proud of how successful our WorkFit program is.

Throughout the year the talents of our members have been rewarded with medals. Lane and Alex continue growing their collection of medals in Tennis with wins in the LTA Learning Disability Regional Tennis Event. Holly represented GB in Italy in the European Swimming Championships and returned with several new medals.

We have to thank our friends in the community for the support over the last year. The Crown Inn Stratton has continued to support us throughout the year raising some fantastic amounts in their pub events. The Zurich Community Trust has provided hampers for raffles and a great party for the members with entertainment and refreshments and even a cookathon.

The group has enjoyed visits to Groves Farm, Bristol Hippodrome, Cotswold Forest School, Circus Star and we enjoyed a summer picnic at Coate Water provided by The Rotary Club of Swindon.

We are a small charity achieving great things and we couldn’t do it without you. Thank you for the continued support, it means we can keep providing the help to the families and the support to our members.

Finally, thank you to the hard working trustees that work tirelessly behind the scenes, sometimes late into the night to keep the Swindon Down’s Syndrome the great charity it is.

Kim West ,Chairperson
Swindon Down's Syndrome Group

Our Achievements

There was a lot to celebrate in 2023 and here are just a few of our achievements

£34,770

was received by the Group through fundraising in 2023

164

people now receive regular information through our mailing list

£1,212

was raised through voluntary membership donations

£14,716

raised in donations and grants to support adults in the world of work

£55,286

raised through donations and grants to provide SALT to our members

2,100

people follow us on Facebook

28

members enrolled for Speech and Language Therapy (SALT)

813

online therapy sessions have been delivered through Mable Therapy

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE YEAR



Holly brings home the medals

Holly won Gold and Bronze medals at the British Downs Syndrome Swimming British Championships and three bronze medals at the European Downs Syndrome Swimming Championships in Italy in September.

A Tea Party

The trustees enjoyed amazing cake and tea/coffee laid on by the Perform4Dreams dance team. The performances made our day.



A Day On The Farm

In September our younger members visited Groves Farm where they got up close to the animals.



Christmas Card Competition

Oliver and Barnaby won the design a Christmas card competition and both card went on sale in the on-line shop.



The Great Bake Off

August was our on-line bake off organised by the Zurich Community Trust. Chocolate cookies were the order of the day. A very successful cooking session with 8 budding chefs.



Adventure Plus

In August we visited Adventure Plus for an awesome day of wall climbing, archery and games.

A drive to the riverside for some canoeing on the Thames created a great day.



Fun in the sun!
 A fantastic day in the sunshine. A wonderful picnic with ice cream, cakes and drinks that were kindly donated by Rotary Club of Swindon. with rides on the Coate Water Miniature Railway and Pick "N" Mix Circus



Congratulations Charlie
 A proud moment when Charlie graduated from Aurora Foxes after an amazing 3 years of hard work.

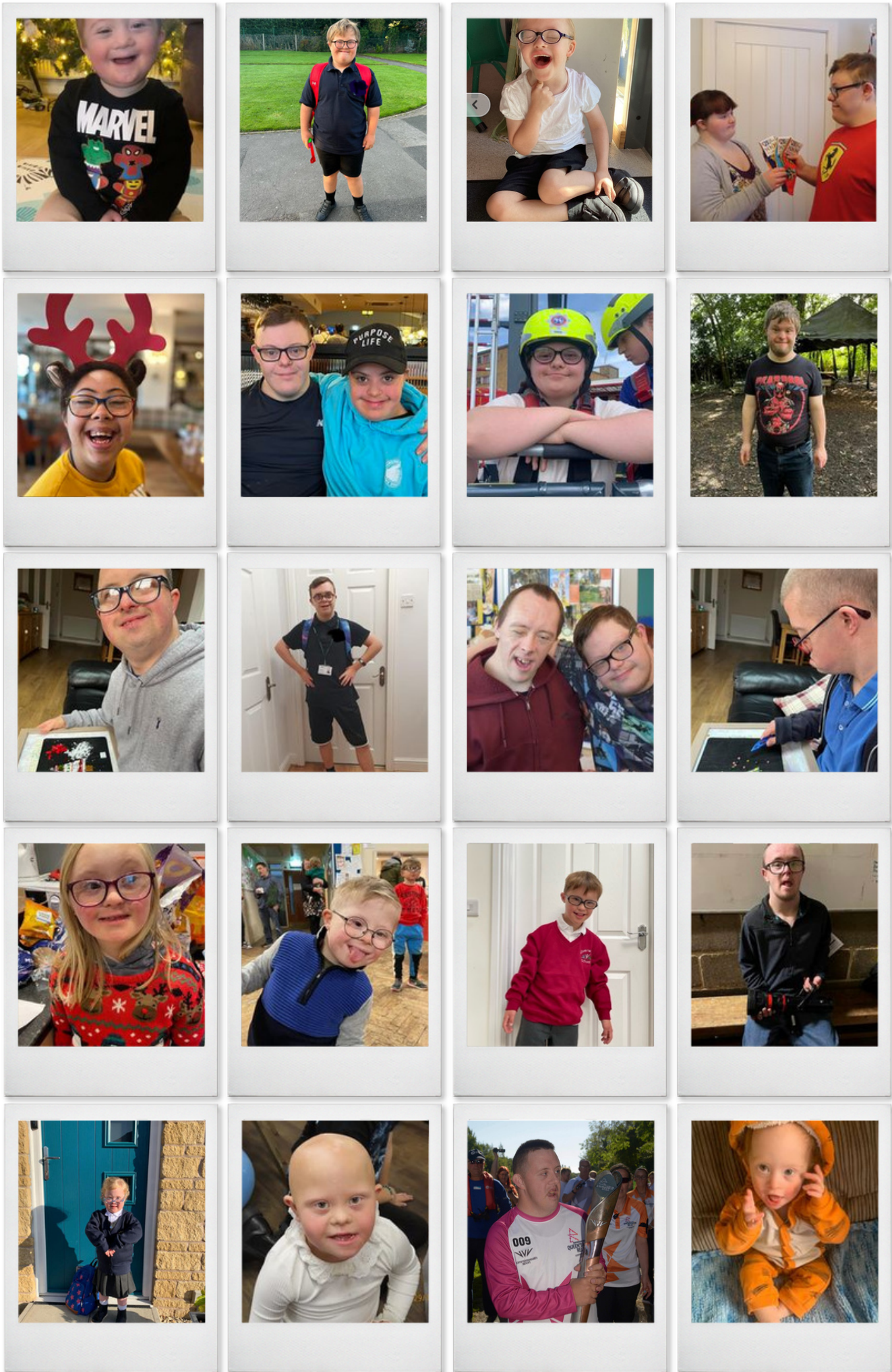
Forest School
 An afternoon at the Cotswold Forest School in July where everyone enjoyed hide and seek and den building and best of all ... marshmallows on the fire !



Gold for the Tennis
 Lane and Alex continue to bring home medals at their tennis tournaments. They played at the LTA Newport Learning Disability Regional Tournament in October winning two gold medals.



A Visit to the Fire Station.
 A visit to Stratton Fire Station for the group on two nights for younger and older members.



SUPPORTING NEW PARENTS



The Swindon Down's Syndrome 0-5 Parents and Carers Group is a WhatsApp group set up to support new parents and carers with young children. Our members age from 0-7. We have 30 members in the group who regularly share advice, questions, ideas and fears and lots of support for each other. Photographs, links to websites, press announcements and recommended purchases are regularly posted in the chat.

The families are based in Wiltshire and surrounding areas. A coffee morning stay and play runs once a month on the 1st Saturday (except December) from 10am to 12pm. It gives the families chance to meet up in a soft play area in Royal Wootton Bassett. The hall is hired exclusively for the group and refreshments are supplied. The session attendance varies as our little ones are young and easily pick bugs up. We usually have on average 5 families per session. The bouncy castle and ball pit are always popular with all the children including siblings. It gives the children a chance to have fun in a safe environment. By regular contact the families and the children become friends. It is always noisy, positive and full of smiles.



In November a volunteer from SEND Families Voice arranged a drop into the coffee morning to meet the families. We hope to arrange for Swindon Borough Council transport to attend in the future. Some families have discussed holding a meeting at a location closer to Chippenham. We have asked those parents to provide the group with more information so that we can support them meeting at another location.



FUNDRAISING

Crown Inn Stratton



The Crown Inn Stratton are long-standing supporters of the Swindon Down's Syndrome Group and throughout the year have organised numerous raffles and quiz nights to raise funds for us. In November they organised a Charity Steak Night and Pub Quiz and raised a phenomenal £1075. Thank you to all the amazing staff and customers for their continued support.

Martyn takes on the Atlas Mountains



Anthony Reape, Les Cavilla, Mel Ralph, Nigel Felton and Martyn Coles climbed Mount Toukbal in Morocco undertaking the Atlas Mountain challenge. The team battled through storms to reach the summit but due to safety reasons were unable to do this. Something that was out of their control. What an incredible team they are and they raised an amazing £4,685 for under 25's Speech and Language Therapy.

Barnaby is a Superhero



After receiving an invitation from Swindon DS committee to take part in a Triathlon the Briscoe family thought 'why not?' – "so it was then we found ourselves on a freezing August day dressed in tights, bright red shorts and super man capes about to take part in a fantastic event!

As is the norm we were prepping last minute – Ian frantically making superman capes and masks until midnight the night before – but the effect was brilliant. We looked the part even if we hadn't done any training!

We all received our medals and had our photos taken by the press – feeling almost like Olympic superstars! We might even do it again – if the weather is any better this August!"

Tiff runs the Marathon



Tiff Hughes ran the London Marathon for the Group raising an amazing £671

Swimathon 2023



A great mornings swim for the sponsored swimathon organised by North Swindon Rotary. Thank you to Julie, Cathy and Clare.



Greatest Charity Ball



The Group held its Greatest Charity Ball on Saturday 25th March at the DoubleTree by Hilton Hotel in Swindon. We had music from the fantastic band 24/7 and the evening was compered by Alison Edgar MBE. The Lawson Group was the main sponsor of the evening, along with other local companies. The evening raised an incredible £12,552.63 for our under 25's Speech and Language Therapy .

Hillier Community Fund



The Swindon Downs Syndrome Group would like to thank all those at Hillier Funeral Service for this incredible donation. Lane & John represented the Group at Hillier Funeral Service's 100 year celebration. The group were invited to the launch of the Hillier Community Fund.

Pimms in the Park



Well done to everyone who came and supported us at Pimms in the Park at Lydiard Park in the Summer. We raised an incredible £350.46.

Pride 2023



A great time was had at Swindon Pride on 12th August at Queens Park. A huge thank you to Cherylin Hempleman and Hannah Stafford for manning the stall all day and raising an incredible £493.45 for the Group.

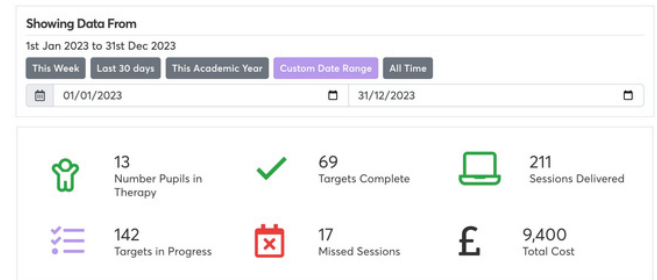
SPEECH & LANGUAGE THERAPY

We continue to offer regular Speech and Language Therapy to our members. They are split into two groups:- Age 3 to 25 and Age 25+. The younger group is offered weekly sessions and follows the school year. The older group has fortnightly sessions throughout the year. In total these sessions cost us about £40,000 a year. Trustees and members work hard to raise money to pay for them.

The younger group

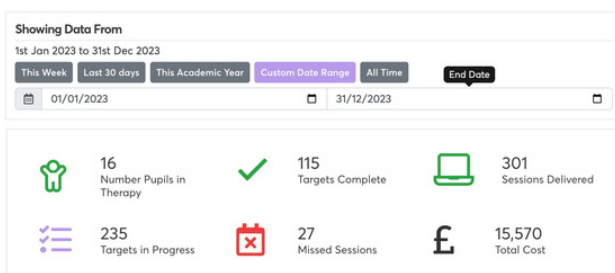
These sessions were held in our speech room with a fully qualified therapist through the company C&D. Unfortunately the therapist left and C and D were not able to fill the vacancy with another therapist.

We have a very good relationship with Mable therapy, who provide our on-line sessions for our older group. We were able to move our younger members over to Mable and fourteen from this group now receive weekly sessions from them. These members continue to have weekly sessions during the school year. Some of our very young members were not able to engage with this on-line approach and sadly have had to cease sessions. We hope to commence Face to Face sessions again in the future if a suitable therapist can be secured.

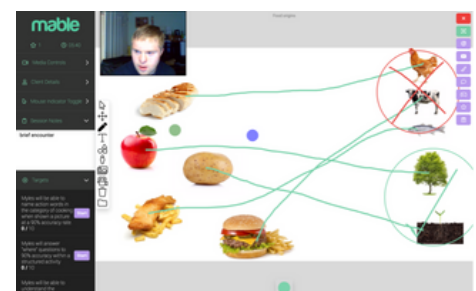
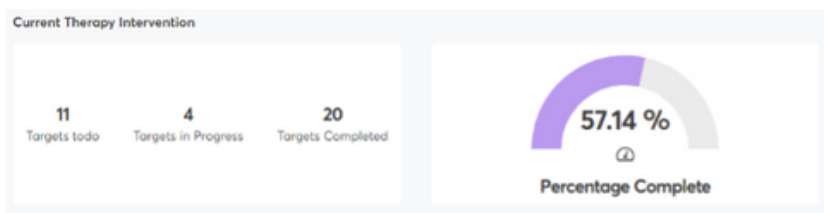


The older group

Mable continue to provide on-line sessions to our older group via their own platform. Each session is designed around a task and designed to be very visual and entertaining to ensure participation and motivation. Each session is twenty minutes long. Members can choose times for their appointments to fit around other commitments.



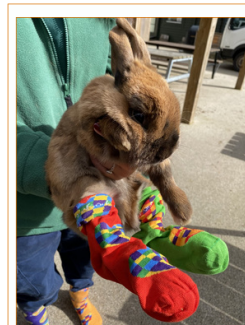
Mable provides weekly session reports and homework tasks that can be accessed at the click of a button. Long term targets are set and parents/guardians can see progress made to date:-



#LotsofSocks

Down's Awareness Week 2023

Once again in 2023, the Group sold **#LotsofSocks** to help fund our local DS WorkFit Officer. The socks had a new "Heart" design for 2023 designed by a person with Down's syndrome. Everyone donned their socks for World Down's Syndrome Day on 21st March, raising a fantastic amount of money for the Group.



A FABULOUS YEAR FOR WORKFIT

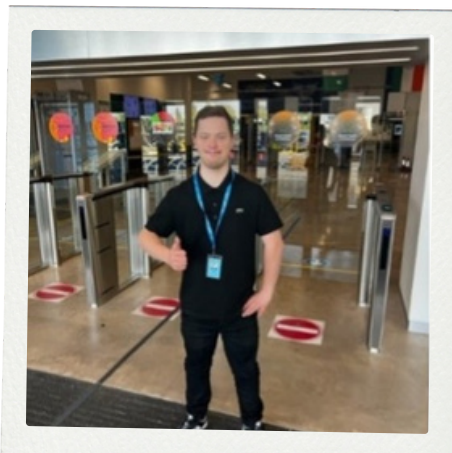
The partnership between the Down Syndrome Association's WorkFit programme and the Swindon Down's syndrome Support Group began in 2015 and since then it has been providing a tailored employment programme for people who have Down's syndrome in Swindon and the surrounding area.

Swindon Down's Syndrome group fund Roy Perrett as our WorkFit Liaison Officer. Roy has been working hard to source and support work opportunities for group members, building important relationships with candidates and employers across Swindon and Wiltshire.

WorkFit takes a person-centred approach when working with people who have Down's syndrome and uses the information gathered about their career ambitions to match them with employers in their local area.

After meeting and completing vocational profiling with our candidates, Roy has placed individuals across a range of industry sectors, including hotels, restaurants, cafes, offices, and retail outlets. Work has many benefits, including learning, new skills, meeting new people and making new friends, improving confidence, earning money, and becoming more independent.

Regular progress reviews are conducted with all candidates and employers during each placement to ensure that everyone is happy and to address any issues that may arise. Overall, we have had excellent reports about our candidates with many receiving positive customer feedback. More importantly, we have had overwhelmingly positive feedback from them about the work they are doing and their pride at being part of a team and earning their own money.



WorkFit provide job-carving, advice, and resources to employers as well as training about how to support someone who has Down's syndrome in the workplace so that they can achieve their goals and enjoy greater independence and enhanced self-esteem.

Work can be anything from permanent paid jobs, volunteering roles, work experience (paid/unpaid) or supported internships/apprenticeships.

In November 2023 the WorkFit team won the 'Small Supported Employment Team of the Year Award' at the British Association of Supported Employment national conference. The team were recognised as a 'small but highly effective team, who have no limits to ambition to deliver inclusive recruitment in their areas'.

2023 certainly turned out to be a very busy year with 11 local employment opportunities secured. 12 training sessions have been delivered to a total of 73 staff, to ensure our candidates receive the best support in their new jobs.

Community engagement has again been a key activity throughout 2023. Roy has presented to students at local colleges and schools, including Fairfield Farm College, Dilton Marsh and Uplands School, Swindon taking the opportunity to discuss future work options and an overview of the WorkFit Employment Programme and the support it can provide.

If you're interested why not give Roy a call 07391 836006 or send him an email workfitswindon@downssyndrome.org.uk. Roy would be very happy to arrange a meeting to discuss with you.



Roy said '2023 has been a wonderfully rewarding year. I am so proud of our brilliant WorkFit candidates who have started their new jobs. They are a credit to their families and to Swindon Downs Syndrome group.'

KEEPING FIT AND ACTIVE

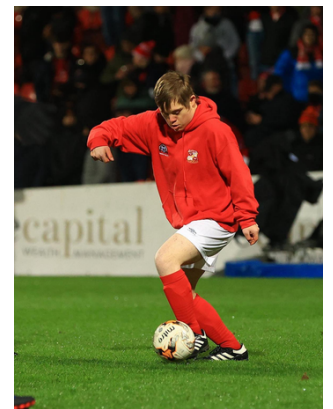
Keeping fit and active is so important that's why we offer regular activities for our members to access

Swindon DS Active Football by Jo Messenger

Another year of smiles, laughter and goal scoring with the best bunch of footballers you could ever watch. The enthusiasm of the players is infectious, and you can't help leaving a session without being proud.

The DSActive football team have had an exciting year with the move from their previous training hall to the new and wonderful "Nigel Eady Training Centre" at the Foundation Park in Swindon. The new training dome is a perfect place for our team to develop their skills in a safe environment.

In September Bristol City came to Swindon for a friendly game showing great football and great sportsmanship by both teams. Friendships are formed each time they meet. Goals were scored and cheers of joy rang out. We are looking forward to seeing Bristol soon in a rematch.



Our football team is a great way to get moving and keep fit as well as learning about being part of a team. Of course, really, it's all about celebrating the goals! You don't need to be a brilliant player to join us, you just need to want to play football and have fun.

Football is available term time from 5pm – 6pm for further details contact football@swindondownsgroup.org.uk





Padel Tennis

by Jo Messenger

"Game, Set, Match: A Parent's Guide to Padel Tennis for our members."

If you've been wondering what all the racket (pun intended) is about when we mention "padel," you're not alone. Padel tennis is still the hottest new sport on the block.

What is Padel Tennis? First things first, let's unravel the mystery behind padel tennis. Picture this: a fusion of tennis and squash, played on a smaller court enclosed by glass walls. It's fast-paced, exciting, and perfect for our members who have energy to burn. The best part? Padel tennis is designed to be easy to pick up.

Team Spirit and Social Skills Padel tennis is not just about hitting the ball; it's a social experience that encourages teamwork and communication. The players learn to strategize with their teammates, celebrate victories, and handle defeats gracefully. The sport fosters a sense of camaraderie. The game promotes agility, coordination, and cardiovascular fitness. Plus, the strategic elements enhance cognitive skills, keeping those minds sharp. It's a win-win for both physical and mental development!

Our Padel4All sessions are enjoyed by our members and Alan brings out the best in each and every one of them.

If you want to join us, contact us for more information at tennis@swindondownsgroup.org.uk

Tennis

by John Stow

The weekly sessions at Delta Tennis Centre are attended by a small number of regular players. They have benefited this year by having the same coach each week and Livio has been working hard to get the best out of each player. The more experienced players have again brought home medals from LTA Learning Disability competitions. Lane and Alex retained doubles gold in their category at the Newport event for the third year running. It would be great to see a few more members at the sessions and you can find out more information about the sessions by emailing tennis@swindondownsgroup.org.uk

Swimming

by John Stow

Our fortnightly swimming sessions at Thamesdown Hydrotherapy Pool ran throughout the year and were again complemented during the summer with some well-attended extra holiday sessions. Vicky Hunt continues to offer coaching to our swimmers and we are always appreciative of the individual attention that she gives them. There are spaces available for any members wishing to give it a try. The pool is a brilliant, and safe, environment for learning to swim. Contact swimming@swindondownsgroup.org.uk for more information about the sessions.



P4D (Perform 4 Dreams) Dance Group

by Cathy Brown

2023 was another great year for the dance group. They have 12 members who meet at 5.30pm on Fridays in Swindon at Wilkes Academy (the temporary home of Bobbi’s Academy of Dance). They are a mixed age group (ranging from Year 3 to adult) who work well as a team. Their teacher is Bobbi Newman, whose enthusiasm, skill and commitment continues to bring out the best in all the dancers. It is great to see the dancers’ confidence and skills growing, and firm friendships being made. They always have lots of fun too! The parents also enjoy the opportunity to socialise.

One of the highlights of the year must be performing at the Wyvern Theatre on 9th September in the B.A.D’s annual show ‘Dance first. Think later’. The group also performed at a charity fete on 2 April; the audience loved their dance and the group were all buzzing afterwards! P4D performed again at B.A.D’s End of Year Awards Evening which had a Great Gatsby theme. Travis and Sophie received dance awards. We are all very proud of all the group has achieved so far and look forward to an exciting future for our dancers!

Rocking around the Christmas Tree

by Victoria McGuire

Our annual traditional Christmas celebrations continued in December 2023 with 2 festive parties.

The under 11s enjoyed an afternoon of entertainment provided by Razamatazz alongside food and drinks, fun and games and even a snow machine - there was also a visit from the big man himself - Santa. The older members of the group danced the night away at North Swindon Club. It was a wonderful evening seeing so many people and their families enjoying the food and drinks and their favourite songs on the dance floor.



Cricket

by John Stow

Members of the Group attended the “Super 1’s” hubs in both Swindon and Chippenham. These continue to work on basic skills of batting, bowling and throwing. Participants then get to showcase these with mini games at the end of the session. The outdoor sessions in the Summer months are enjoyed most, especially when the weather was kind. In February, some of the players joined those from Gloucestershire and Somerset at a skills day in Bristol. Unfortunately, the weather cancelled both mini-festivals during the summer which was just not cricket! The sessions are run by Wiltshire County Cricket although you can speak to us if anyone is interested by emailing info@swindondownsgroup.org.uk.



YOUTH CLUB

Youth Club is open to any members aged 13 and over. We would love to see new faces in 2024.



Youth Club continues to be well attended with up to ten participants at the Toothill Farmhouse facility. We have regular members joining via Zoom as well.

Sessions take place fortnightly on Mondays, with break for August holidays. Activities include, board games, disco, table football to name a few. We have a sit down and refreshments part way through and a zoom session is held for those who can't make it to the farmhouse.

One of the popular activities is a quiz, usually on a topic chosen by the participants. Subjects include:- Summer, Winter, Harry Potter, Super Heroes, Nature and Halloween.

In the warmer months we went outside to make use of the adjacent green space and played games.

In March, to mark World Down Syndrome Week, many of us wore odd socks to Youth Club.

In July we had a trip out to The Cotswold Forest School. We played games and learnt how to build a shelter out of logs and dry grass. The day finished up by toasting marshmallows over a log fire.

Our final session of 2023 was in December and we had Pizza delivered to the Farmhouse and to those who attended via Zoom. We wore Christmas Jumpers and sang the Twelve Days of Christmas.



IT'S ALL THANKS TO YOU, OUR SUPPORTERS

We are so grateful to everyone who has supported us over the past year

We owe a huge thank you to every single person, group or business that has helped us so support our young people with Down's syndrome. In particular we'd like to thank the following supporters:

Our Patrons

Cliff Puffett
Julie Thomas

Trustees (2023)

Kim West
John Stow
Sam Harding
Joanna Messenger
Michael Billinge-Jones
Victoria McGuire
Cherylin Hempleman
Martyn Coles

Alison Edgar
All our Jumble helpers
Amazon
Anthony Reape
Barnaby Briscoe
Blunsdon House Hotel
Bobbi's Dance Academy
Brookfield Primary School
Cailey Witcher
Cathy Brown
Charities Trust
Cheltenham Jockey Club Racecourse
Christopher Morrison
Circus Starr
Clare Stow
Cobbs Farm
Coles Scaffolding
Composite Branch
Coop Limited
Cotswold Forest School
Cotswold Sewing Creations
Deacons
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Hillier Community Fund
Impact Planning Services Ltd
Interprint - Swindon
Jennifer Anne Williams
Justin Tomlinson
Lane Stow
Lawson Demolition
Les Cavilla
Magic Touch

Marina Billinge-Jones
Mary Hodgson
Mel Ralph
Mr & Mrs Nicky Alberry
Mr and Mrs Holt
Mrs Rizvana Sheik
Myles Billinge-Jones
National Lottery
Nationwide
Nigel Felton
North & Thamesdown
North Swindon Club
Nutmeg Design
Oliver Messenger
Oxford Brookes University
Padel4All
Pimms in the Park
Rebecca Baxter
Rt Hon Sir Robert Buckland KC MP
Rotary Club of Swindon
Roy Perrett
Sue Frawley
Samantha Ford
Sgt Abin Subba
Sgt Kaushal Shah
Swindon Old Town Rotary Club Trust
Swindon Pride
Swindon Town Football Club
Terry Williams - Rotary of Swindon
The Crown
The Crown Inn Stratton
Thomas Price
Tiff Hughes
TW & CA Novis
Unite S/W Swindon Area
Usay
Velospeed Electric Bikes
Wiltshire & Dorset Fire & Rescue
Wiltshire Community Foundation
Zurich Community Trust

and anyone who has purchased socks from us.

GOVERNANCE & MANAGEMENT

Charity name: Swindon Down's Syndrome Group
Charity number: 1158449
Principal office: 34 Periwinkle Close, Swindon, SN2 2QH

Governing document

Swindon Down's Syndrome Group is constituted as a charitable incorporated organisation (CIO) registered with the Charity Commission. It is governed by a constitution last updated in 2018.

Charitable objects:

The objects of the CIO are to relieve the charitable needs of people with Down's syndrome, and their families, helpers and carers in particular but not exclusively by the provision of support and information and speech and language therapy so that they are able to attain their full potential and to undertake any other charitable activities in connection with the relief of Down's syndrome in the SN postcode and the surrounding area. (Area of Benefit)

Surrounding area to be defined as – "post code areas associated to Fairford, Malmesbury, Hungerford, Pewsey, Marlborough, Hullavington, Chippenham, Devizes, Calne, Ashton Keynes, Cirencester, Aldbourne, Bromham, Melksham and Cheltenham."

Activities:

We are a parent-led charity supporting people with down's syndrome, their families, carers and all those with an interest in down's syndrome in Swindon and the surrounding area. We are an independent charity, affiliated to the national Down's Syndrome Association.

Organisation structure

The charity trustees are responsible for the general control and management of the charity. The trustees give their time freely and receive no remuneration or other financial benefits.

The trustees meet together as a body monthly and are responsible for all decisions taken in relation to running the charity. The charity can have a maximum of 10 trustees.

Trustee Name	Office (if any)	Dates acted if not for whole year
Kim West	Chair	
Mike Billinge-Jones	Vice Chair	
Sam Harding	Treasurer	
Joanna Messenger	Secretary	
John Stow	Vice Treasurer	
Cherylin Hempleman		
Victoria McGuire		
Martyn Coles		

Recruitment and appointment of trustees

The existing trustees are responsible for the recruitment of new trustees. In appointing new trustees we seek people who are part of our local community. Potential trustees are invited to trustees' meetings or to meet with the chairperson to learn more about the charity's aims and objectives. If all trustees agree they are proposed as new trustees. New trustees are required to complete a DBS check and given a three month trial. This process allows due consideration of the person's eligibility, personal competence, specialist knowledge and skills.

Public benefit

The trustees have paid due regard to the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit in deciding what activities the charity should undertake. The trustees consider that they have acted in the public benefit.

Conflicts of Interest

The Trustees have paid due regard to the Charity Commission's guidance on Conflicts of Interest and the Trustees only act in the best interests of the Charity. The Swindon Down's Syndrome Group have strong systems in place to identify conflicts of interest and we ask each Trustee to declare any conflicts at the beginning of every meeting.

Financial review and reserves policy

At 31 December 2023 the charity held total funds of £108,860 of which £99,838 are restricted and £9,022 are unrestricted. Unrestricted funds include designated funds of £5,000 for Speech. Free reserves are £4,022. The charity has minimal overheads as it is run by volunteers and so does not need to build up free reserves. The main commitment and the charity's highest cost is paying for Speech therapy, which will cost some £40,000 for 2024. Therefore any excess free reserves are designated to the Speech fund. The restricted funds comprise:

Speech	
Donations and grants to provide speech therapy	£65,443
Salamander	
Donations and grants to fund the fire course	£3,620
WorkFit	
Donations and grants to support adults into work	£5,535
Other smaller funds	£25,240
Total restricted funds	£99,838

Approved by the trustees and signed on its behalf by:



Kim West, Chairperson
Swindon Down's Syndrome Group

THE FUTURE

2024 marks our twenty-first year as an official charity. It's great to look back to see how far the Swindon Down's Syndrome Group has come in that time but, as always, we must look to the future. In the coming year we need to continue ensuring we can be here to support you and all the families that have someone with Down's syndrome in our area.

Last year, many of you answered the call to help at our events and fundraise with your own activities. We thank those that did, but we still need more of our members to give up a small amount of time to make more things happen. Offering just an hour of your time at one of our events, selling some of our merchandise or even sharing one of our fundraising messages can be so beneficial and goes a huge way to helping us continue to do what we do.

As with last year, we have decided to share with you how we will prioritise our services this year. It must be remembered that nothing on the list can take place if there are no funds to pay for it:

1. WorkFit
2. Speech and language therapy for under 25s and adults
3. New parent support
4. Keeping active including Football, Tennis, Padel Tennis and Swimming
5. Youth Club
6. Dance
7. Primary support
8. School Resource Packs
9. Support for schools
10. Christmas parties
11. Family events and trips

Our priority for this year is simple. We want you to be more involved. We want to hear your thoughts; we want you to be a part of what we do and help us shape the future of the Group. If you'd like to find out more drop us an email to info@swindondownsgroup.org.uk.



www.swindondownsgroup.org.uk/shop



Our eBay clothes shop is now open!

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and we'll **!ink** it

For all your print, design and marketing needs give us a call on **01793 438400** or email info@espcolour.co.uk

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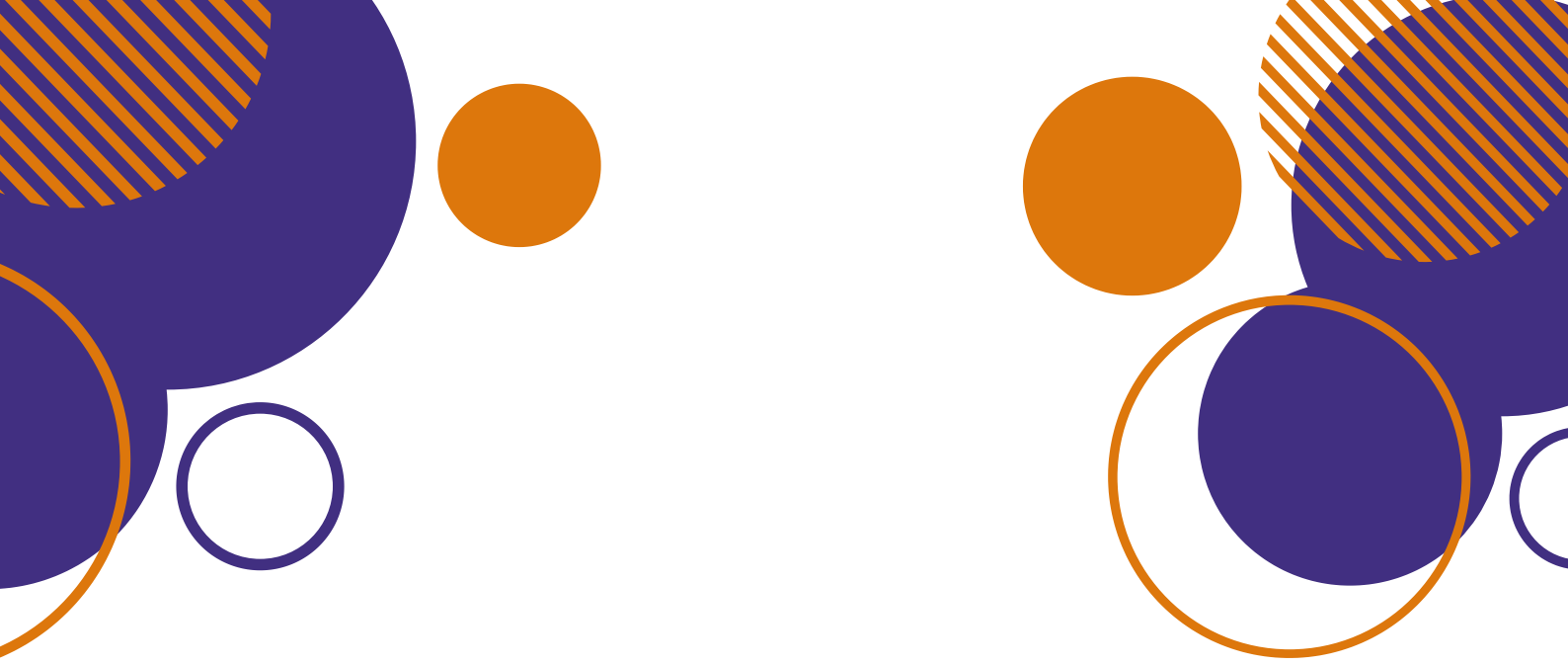
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The Swindon Down's Syndrome Group is a parent-led charity supporting people with Down's syndrome and their families in Swindon and the surrounding area.

We are here to help people with Down's syndrome to have the same opportunities as everyone else and raise awareness of Down's syndrome in the local community.

REGISTERED CHARITY

Swindon Down's Syndrome Group is a UK registered charity. Registered Office 34 Periwinkle Close Swindon SN2 2QH.

Charity number: 1158449

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www.swindondownsgroup.org.uk



SWINDON DOWN'S SYNDROME GROUP

England & Wales - Charity number 1158449

Accounts



ANNUAL REVIEW 2022

January - December 2022

www.swindondownsgroup.org.uk

ANNUAL REVIEW 2022

The Swindon Down's Syndrome Group consists of many families, all volunteering our time and experience as parents and carers to make life that bit more fun and ensure our family with Down's syndrome have all the opportunities and support they need from birth to old age.

We started as a small group of parents who met for coffee and provided each other with support. As time passed, more parents connected with the group and in 2003 we became a charity in our own right.

The Swindon Down's Syndrome Group support people with Down's syndrome in Swindon and the surrounding area including Fairford, Malmesbury, Hungerford, Pewsey, Marlborough, Hullavington, Chippenham, Devizes, Calne, Ashton Keynes, Cirencester, Aldbourne, Bromham, Melksham and Cheltenham.

We are a volunteer led charity, meaning everyone that has an active role in the Swindon Down's Syndrome Group gives up their time because of their love of the group.

We are very fortunate to be supported by our fantastic trustees and volunteers.

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MESSAGE FROM OUR CHAIR

“WHAT A DIFFERENT YEAR WE’VE HAD!”

2022 has brought smiles back to our faces and life is becoming more like it used to be before the pandemic. In the last year we have achieved many of the goals we set and it’s thanks to our members that this has been possible. We thank you all for your continued support.

Now we are enjoying new activities and social events, fundraising has been back at the top of our list creating awareness in the community and showing people what our members are capable of. The group has been lucky to receive fundraising from some amazing events including quiz nights at The Crown Inn Stratton, boxing matches, Christmas tree sales, a Classical concert and even a Mountain climb in extreme weather.

We launched Adult Speech Therapy with the help of a National Lottery grant, and this has become a great success with several members now accessing the online service.

Roy Perrett continues to be the driving force behind the Swindon Down’s Syndrome group WorkFit project, securing jobs for our young people and supporting them in their workplace. We have had several new placements this year and some have returned to jobs after restrictions were lifted. We saw our own Todd Scanlon be awarded several outstanding awards for his work through WorkFit and Coles Scaffolding.

In January we ran two training days, one for Early Years and one for Primary level education. Both these sessions were successful in building relationships with schools and SENCOs and being able to give advice where needed. We thank Rebecca Baker from LetsGo who led these informative training sessions.

The group took part in the last SPECTRA Fire course over 5 days. The first three days being the hottest we have ever experienced with the yard reaching temperatures over 40 degrees and due to this we decided to return in October to complete activities that were delayed due to the heat. The group would like to thank Mark Evans and his incredible team for all their support over the years and this course will be missed by all.

Now we are looking towards the next 12 months and more social events and celebrating the charity’s twentieth year as an independent charity. Watch your inbox for more details on this soon.

I would like to thank our hard-working trustees that go above and beyond to ensure the Swindon Down’s Syndrome Group is on hand to our members when needed and continues to undertake the vital work that is needed to support our members. We hope that the next twelve months sees the group to continue to grow.

Kim West, Chairperson
Swindon Down’s Syndrome Group

OUR ACHIEVEMENTS

There was a lot to celebrate in 2022 and here are just a few of our achievements.

£37,211

was received by the Group through fundraising in 2022

156

people now receive regular information through our mailing list

£1,399

was raised through voluntary membership donations

£17,069

raised in donations and grants to support adults in the world of work

£44,726

raised through donations and grants to provide speech and language therapy to those under 25

£39,900

received from the National Lottery to fund speech therapy for those aged over 25 with Down's syndrome

2,000

people follow us on Facebook

31

members enrolled for Speech and Language Therapy

533

online therapy sessions have been delivered through Mable Therapy.

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE YEAR



It was lovely to welcome members to our 2022 Open Day at Justin Tomlinson (MP) community offices at The Orbital retail park. Our open days are an opportunity to remind everyone about the services we provide and the support we offer. It's also a great opportunity to pop along for a cup of tea and a piece of cake and a good old catch up with everyone.



Off to the circus

Circus Starr kindly donated tickets for members of the group to attend a SEND performance at Lydiard Park on Friday 9th September. Local companies sponsor the event to allow charities like ours to attend free of charge. It was a fantastic performance and we are so grateful to Circus Starr for giving us the opportunity to experience the circus so close to home.



Milo hits the green

The theme for Learning Disabilities Week was reconnecting through sport. Milo loves golf and playing with his friends. This is a place where they do not see a young man with a disability, they see a young man with a passion for the sport and an ability to do it.



Lorni's new flat

Congratulations to Lorni on getting the keys to her new flat. Lorni proudly shared the photos with us of her new place and keeps us updated on how she is getting on. It looks like she is really at home in this very smart place.



New website and online shop goes live!

Our shiny new website went live at the beginning of February. Its new design and capabilities has been so beneficial to the group. Our favourite

addition is our new online shop. This has allowed us to sell event tickets, promotional products and #lotsofsocks too!



Pop party for WSDS

The fantastic Singing Hands joined us to celebrate World Down's Syndrome Day with two online sessions. Suzanne and Tracy introduced us to the amazing world of signing with Makaton.



Louis enjoys role at Big Yellow Storage

Louis really enjoyed his role at Big Yellow Storage, Swindon thanks to WorkFit. He even sold #lotsofsocks to celebrate World Downs Syndrome Day.



Todd has had a fantastic year



2022 has been a year full of achievements for Todd. In February he was accepted on to apprenticeship course to enable him to become a fully qualified scaffolder! Todd also received the British Association of Supported Employment (BASE) 2022 'David Grainger' award in November for outstanding progress at work. Todd has also taken on a couple of boxing fights this year too!



Pride of Swindon Award

Sam had been nominated for a Pride of Swindon Award and in April this year he went to the County Ground to receive it. An amazing moment for Sam for his fundraising and raising awareness.



Online training for educational professionals

Our annual early years and primary training days were once again a big success this year. The sessions were run by Rebecca Baxter from LetsGo UK training and we received lots of positive feedback.



Leo was rocking his new suit. We think it's one of the best looks of the year. He certainly knows how to make a statement and it looks amazing.

A fund time thanks to Zurich Community Trust

The group was treated to a fantastic party by Zurich Community Trust. With entertainment from Clare's Circus, music, balloons and food, it was great to see everyone having a fabulous time. Thank you to Daniel and his team for putting on a great party. It was a great way to spend a Saturday.



SUPPORTING NEW PARENTS

Our New Parent Group has been fortunate to meet regularly on the first Saturday of each month for a Stay & Play session.

We are very fortunate to have parent volunteers who offer their time to support other parents within the Group. Jodie Morris is our New Parent Contact for Swindon, while Cherylin Hempleman is our Wiltshire New Parent Contact.

It has once again been a busy year welcoming lots of new families to the Group. Cherylin has taken over from Victoria Argue. A big thank you to Victoria for everything you did supporting new families.

“Another year of being a New Parent Contact for the 0-5 age group and what a great year it has been!

Lots of new family's have been welcomed into the group this year. We have had a few hiccups on the way finding the perfect venue to host our monthly coffee mornings but we have finally found a place where we can feel relaxed and watch our children play together whilst enjoying a chat and coffee with the parents.



We have now moved to The Toddler Zone in Royal Wootton Bassett. They were happy to accommodate us and have a fantastic venue with an age appropriate play area for the children as well as tea and coffee facilities for the parents.

We have a good mixture of Swindon and Wiltshire families, so it was great to find somewhere central for everyone to meet.

Our dedicated WhatsApp group we have for families, is used frequently, with parents asking questions or sharing any concerns they have. We also love seeing pictures of what everyone has been up to - like enjoying their holidays and dressing up for World Book Day.

I am very much looking forward to future coffee mornings and hopefully welcoming more new parents along the way.”

by Jodie Morris



“It has been my pleasure to be one of the New Parent Contacts and to pop along to the monthly Stay and Play sessions. My son is now 15 but I remember how much I enjoyed these when Milo was a toddler. Having a teenager with Down's syndrome means that I can answer a lot of the questions new parents have; whether it's about navigating the education system or about health, the support available or medical issues. We all have different experiences and none of our children are the same but talking to each other can be so helpful. Being with other families that understand some of the challenges we may face is supportive and it is lovely to watch friendships blossom between the families.

by Cherylin Hempleman

YOUTH CLUB

Our Youth Club, which meets fortnightly, met for most of the year at Toothill Farmhouse.



The sessions continue to be a hybrid mix of those attending in person along with a few members who join on a virtual Zoom call to have a chat.

In the summer, we again had a trip to The Forest School at Ashton Keynes. Everyone loves learning how to start fires (safely), building a water-tight shelter and then standing under it while it is tested using several buckets.

We continued the outdoor theme, and finished the day with a trip to the local outdoor pizzeria.

There was a disruption towards the end of the year when Swindon Borough Council needed to carry out structural surveys so this meant we went back to Zoom for a while.

It failed to spoil our festive plans though as we finished the year with a Christmas party at The Golfing Hole. Our young adults enjoyed a round of adventure golf accompanied by lots of pizza.

Youth Club is open to any members aged 13 and over. We would love to see new faces in 2023!



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MEMBERS
ACCESS SPEECH
& LANGUAGE
THERAPY



SPEECH & LANGUAGE THERAPY FOR UNDER 25 YEAR OLDS

BY CAILEY WHITCHER



Regular speech and language therapy gives our young people the opportunity to further develop their speech and comprehension skills. This enables them to go on to achieve far more than might otherwise have been possible, and become better integrated into our community.

We work tirelessly to raise money to pay for additional Speech and Language Therapy for our members under the age of 25. We currently have 31 members accessing speech either on-line or face to face. These sessions cost us in excess of £40,000 a year.

Face-to-face sessions

C&D Therapy provide sessions primarily to our younger members. Sessions follow the school calendar year and operate during term time.

We found that younger children interact better with face-to-face therapy. Members are placed in groups of similar abilities and these are held at our dedicated therapy room in Swindon.

The speech room is full of resources to aid the therapist in delivering the classes. Reports are produced each term so progress can be monitored and future goals set.



Online sessions

Online sessions are provided by Mable speech and language therapy. Mable provide a fun and engaging way for members to learn and develop new skills while also supporting opportunities for creativity and problem-solving. Mable sessions are all one-to-one, and their brilliant gamified platform is totally different to Zoom. Each session is twenty minutes long.

It's designed to increase participation in therapy, reduced anxiety, and enhanced motivation and engagement in learning activities. Members can choose the times for their appointments to fit around other commitments.

Mable sessions are offered to our members who are unable to travel to Swindon, or they progress better accessing the online environment. As these sessions are one-to-one, they are more flexible on the day of the week and time.

Mable provides weekly session reports and homework tasks that can be accessed at the click of a button too.



It has been a pleasure continuing our partnership with Swindon Down's Syndrome Group this year. Since September 2022, our Speech and Language Therapy service has provided assessment and intervention for 11 children. Members are seen for fortnightly 45 minute therapy groups wherever possible, with less frequent one-to-one input provided based on the child's needs or practicalities around group session times. Reports are provided following initial assessments, with updated targets sent out as appropriate so parents are in tune with ongoing plans for their child's input. Additional detailed reports are provided upon request and educational settings can access relevant resources used in sessions.

Therapy sessions continue to be a place to support both children and their parents. Sessions have centred around a range of speech, language and communication needs, including: vocabulary development, attention and listening, total communication strategies, speech sounds, sentence building and receptive language support.

Whether a child leaves the session chatting about or signing the word of the week, or a parent comments on a strategy they had success with at home, every win is celebrated so that confidence is built! We are proud of our partnership with the Swindon Down Syndrome group and we look forward to working with more children and families as the year progresses.

C&D Therapy

Having the opportunity to work with children and young people in the Swindon Down's Syndrome Group this year has been a delight! We have seen children engaging and making significant progress towards their communication goals, and we couldn't be more proud!

Since last March, 20 young people have had therapy; between them, they have had 405 sessions and achieved 88 of their communication goals. Children have engaged extraordinarily well with Mable Therapy online; the fun, gamified activities have increased engagement and motivation in

learning activities and improved retention of information through active participation with their specialist therapist. Each of the children has clear personalised goals and targets they are working towards to motivate them to succeed and to work towards specific outcomes. Parents have been amazing, too; they have worked collaboratively with their child's therapist to ensure that the strategies and techniques used in therapy are consistent with those used at home. This is so important to maximise the effectiveness of therapy, so well done, guys.

Mable Therapy

A FABULOUS YEAR FOR WORKFIT

WorkFit brings together employers and jobseekers who have Down's syndrome. It is a tailored service dedicated to training employers about how to support people who have Down's syndrome in the workplace.

As many of you will know, the partnership between the Down's Syndrome Association's WorkFit programme and the Swindon Down's Syndrome Group began in 2015 and since then it has been providing a tailored employment programme for people with Down's syndrome in Swindon and the surrounding area.

The Swindon Down's Syndrome Group fund Roy Perrett as our WorkFit Liaison Officer. Roy has been working hard to source and support work opportunities for group members, building important work relationships with candidates and potential employers across Swindon and Wiltshire.



2022 certainly turned out to be a very busy year with 11 work placements secured (10 paid employment) with 17 training sessions delivered to 60 staff, to ensure our candidates receive the best support in their new jobs.

After meeting and completing vocational profiling with our candidates Roy has placed individuals with a range of employers and in many different industry sectors, including Hospitality (hotels, restaurants, cinema) Administration (including finance), Agriculture and Retail (fashion).

"2022 certainly has been a busy and wonderfully rewarding year. I am so proud of our brilliant WorkFit candidates who have started their new jobs. They are a credit to their families and to Swindon Down's Syndrome Group"



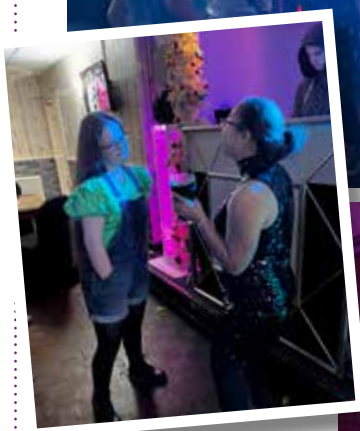
Regular progress reviews are conducted with all our candidates and employers during each placement to ensure that all parties have the support they need. We've had overwhelmingly positive reports on the majority of our candidates with many receiving fantastic customer feedback.

Community engagement has been key activity throughout 2022, with Roy attending a number of local roadshows and conferences to engage with potential employers and also inspire new candidates. These include presenting to Swindon Rotary Club and at the 'Business West' Swindon employers conference. Roy has also attended 'Adult Transitions' roadshows at County Ground, Swindon, Crowdy's School, Swindon and Fairfield Farm College and Dilton Marsh to discuss future options and the support and guidance available to students making the transition to adulthood.

Work has many benefits, including learning new skills, meeting new people and making new friends, improving confidence, earning money and becoming more independent. Roy would be very happy to arrange a meeting to discuss WorkFit with you.

If you're interested please call Roy on 07391 836006 or send him an email at workfitswindon@downs-syndrome.org.uk

CHRISTMAS PARTIES



BY JO MESSENGER

Let's get this party started...

On 9 December 2022 the Group held their Christmas Party for members aged 12+ at the North Swindon Club. With a great disco and lots of food, the party rocked and the dance floor filled. It was fantastic to see so many young people having a great time and families getting together.

The dance floor was packed all night and everyone joined in. It has been too long since we were able to let our hair down. How lovely it was to see new faces and members we haven't seen for a while all having a good time. Everyone is always greeted with smiles from our young people. Thank you to the North Swindon Club for putting on a great evening.

BY VICTORIA MCGUIRE

2022 saw the welcome return of our much-loved Christmas parties. The under 11s gathered for a few hours of entertainment from Razamatazz and food and drinks. The visit from a very special man in a red suit was the highlight of everyone's afternoon as he handed out presents to our young members and their siblings. The children were also lucky enough to go home with chocolate selection boxes donated by Zurich. It was fantastic to have everyone together for a catch up for the first time since 2019 and we definitely filled everyone with the Christmas spirit!

KEEPING FIT AND ACTIVE

Keeping fit and active is so important, that's why we offer regular activities for our members to access.



Swindon DS Active Football

by Jo Messenger

Our DSAActive football team goes from strength to strength and the players continue to learn skills at their weekly sessions. The team meets at The Deanery CE Academy, Swindon from 6 -7pm on a Wednesday during term time.

Each week the team are put through their paces and get to grips with new skills, as well as practicing skills they already use. These skills were put to the test when the team were invited to play on the pitch at Swindon Town FC in January at the biggest game our team had ever experienced.

The atmosphere was electric, and the boys were excited. Swindon were playing Manchester City. Bristol DSAActive joined our team on the pitch at half time and goals were scored in front of an amazing crowd. One of our players was lucky enough while on his lap of honour to get a hug from Kyle Walker! Of course, being part of the Swindon community that day was amazing and the team were proud to be part of this experience.



In March we were invited to go and train with the Bristol DSAActive team and watch a game with them. These two teams have created a real bond and looking forward to playing alongside them on the Swindon pitch again soon.

Our players love being part of such a great team. One of our player's, Barnaby, said **"I love being part of a team and playing football to keep fit. Playing football with my teammates at Swindon FC makes me happy."** His mum says, "he would like to play everyday and looks forward to the session."

Lane said, **"I love training every week and making new friends when we play other team."** While Oliver enjoys being with his friends and scoring goals.



If you would like to join us please contact football@swindondownsgroup.org.uk



Padel Tennis

by John Stow

Our Padel tennis session gained a couple more players during the year. They are all now used to getting up early on Saturday mornings and regularly raise the noise levels at the complex, although not too much that the golfers complain! Padel4All opened a site in Bristol during the year and their hope is to get a similar DS-specific session running there



so that our players can get some matches against them in 2023. You can find out more by emailing tennis@swindondownsgroup.org.uk

Tennis

by John Stow

The weekly sessions at Delta Tennis Centre did suffer from low numbers at times but attendance has now stabilised with the regular players all showing continued improvement during the year. In the LTA Learning Disability competitions, Lane and Alex again travelled to Newport in October and retained doubles gold in their category. It would be great to see a few more members at the sessions and you can find out more information about the sessions by emailing tennis@swindondownsgroup.org.uk

Swimming

by John Stow

Our fortnightly swimming sessions at Thamesdown Hydrotherapy Pool ran throughout the year and were again complemented during the summer with some well-attended extra holiday sessions. Vicky Hunt continues to offer coaching to our swimmers and we are always appreciative of the individual attention that she gives them. There are spaces available for any members wishing to give it a try. Contact swimming@swindondownsgroup.org.uk for more information about the sessions.



11
MEMBERS
CURRENTLY TAKE
PART IN OUR
DANCE CLASSES

Cricket

by John Stow

We continued to have plenty of participants attending the “Super 1’s” hub in Swindon and now also have a member attending the Chippenham hub. There is a now fantastic level of skills on display, showing just how much can be achieved by our teenagers and young adults when they receive regular coaching. The outdoor sessions in the ‘Summer’ took place in almost every type of weather imaginable but it never stopped the enjoyment. There was also an opportunity for the Wiltshire players to meet up with others from Gloucestershire to show off what they had been learning and have some fun games. In the summer, they also had mini-festivals at Marlborough College and Potterne cricket grounds.



P4D (Perform 4 Dreams) Dance Group

by Cathy Brown

Throughout 2022 the dance group has gone from strength to strength. They now have 12 members who meet at 5pm on Fridays at Bobbi’s Academy of Dance (B.A.D) in Swindon. They are a mixed age group (ranging from Year 4 to adult) who work well as a team. Their teacher is Bobbi Newman, whose enthusiasm, skill and commitment continues to bring out the best in all the dancers. It is great to see the dancers’ confidence and skills growing, and firm friendships being made. They always have lots of fun too! The parents also enjoy the opportunity to socialise.

One of the highlights of the year must be performing at the Wyvern Theatre on 19th June in the B.A.D’s annual show ‘You Don’t Need Wings To Fly’. Another highlight was performing at B.A.D’s Awards Evening on 10th December, where Lane Stow received an award for his commitment to dancing. We are all very proud of all the group has achieved so far and look forward to an exciting future for our dancers!

FIRE COURSE

This year brought us temperatures that we had never experienced before!

by Jo Messenger

In August 15 young people embarked on the course after the long break due to lockdown. It was fantastic to see the SPECTRA team and the course members, some new faces, some regulars. With activities such as team building, the smoke house, car cutting and hoses, the group were back in their stride and loving every moment. Day two became the hottest day we had ever seen with the yard at plus 40 degrees at times. This did not stop the participants having fun though.

For the first time ever, we had to call off Nicky's favourite day at Coate Water as the weather had led to green algae and it was not safe to swim in. So, it was off to Westlea Fire Station to abseil down the high tower and crawl through the sewer pipes. Excellent fun! This year we built pools from tarpaulin and filled with lovely cold water. Splashing was so much fun!

Day three the heat continued, and we made the very difficult decision to postpone the Pass Out parade. In that heat pass out would have a whole new meaning. Thanks to the understanding parents we were able to reschedule another two days in October to finish what we missed in August.



October, we returned to the Swindon Fire Station and suited up ready for Coate Water and the water rescue. What a contrast to August! Not that it was freezing, but the dry suits certainly kept us warm. The next day we were able to deliver a fantastic show for family and friends. The young people showed off their skills, wowing their parents as they climbed the ladders and sprayed the hoses from the roof of the smoke house.

Who knew at this point we were to say goodbye to our amazing friends



at the Fire Station? 2022 was the last fire course and we are all so sad that we will not be enjoying it again in 2023. The group thanks Mark Evans, Nicky Parker and the Fire Fighters for their years of hard work in delivering the most incredible experience any of our members have ever had the opportunity to take part in. We hope that we will all be able to join you again one day. Salamander/SPECTRA has brought smiles to our faces, and we will hold it close in our hearts along with the memories.



IT'S ALL THANKS TO YOU, OUR SUPPORTERS

We are so grateful to everyone who has supported us over the past year.

We owe a huge thank you to every single person, group or business that has helped us to support our young people with Down's syndrome. In particular we'd like to thank the following supporters.

OUR PATRONS

Cliff Puffett
Julie Thomas

TRUSTEES (2022)

Kim West
John Stow
Sam Harding
Cailey Whitcher
Jo Messenger
Michael Billinge-Jones
Victoria McGuire
Lauren Craigie
Cherylin Hempleman
Martyn Coles

OUR SUPPORTERS

First City Nursing
G & M Maitland
Mark Brooks
Persimmon Homes
Charities Trust
Titan Crew LTD
Mr Richard William Taylor
Fairfield Farm Trust
Rotary Club of Swindon North & Thamesdown
National Lottery
Leslye Russell-Pierce & Sam's Challenges
PPS Accountants
Lechlade Festival
Pimms In The Park
LTaylor
Syni Musi Ev LTD
Rotary Club of Swindon
Magic Touch
CFWS
Justin Tomlinson
Robert Buckland
The Julia and Hans Rau
Newsquest
WRDEUP Festival
Usay
Amazon
The Crown Inn Stratton
Martyn Coles
Clare Stow
Maurice Stow Family & Friends
Nationwide Building Society
Terry Williams
Zurich Community Trust
All our Jumble helpers
Cobb's Farm
Sophie Villis
Todd Scanlon
Sam Scanlon
Cotswold Forest School
Wiltshire & Dorset Fire & Rescue
Holly Lawson
Myles Billinge-Jones
Marina Billinge-Jones
Cliff Puffett
Padel4All
Delta Tennis
Thamesdown Hydrotherapy Pool
Bobbi's Dance Academy
North Swindon Club
Fairfield Farm College
Big Yellow
Roy Perrett
Asda Walmart
Swindon Town Football Club
Copy Color
Nutmeg Design
Grange Leisure Centre
And... Everyone that purchased a pair of #hotsofsocks from us!

FUNDRAISING



Sophie walks 14 miles for her birthday!

The wonderful Sophie Willis raised funds for the group by walking 14 miles before her 14th birthday. Thank you Sophie and we hope you had a happy birthday!



Swimathon 2022

A great morning swim for the sponsored swimathon organised by the North Swindon Rotary Club. Thank you to Martyn Coles and Myles Billinge-Jones.



Sam completes his 21 challenges on WSDS 2022



Sam has been recognised for his "21 Challenges" where he raised over £6,500 which has been split between two charities, the Swindon Down's Syndrome Group and UET, that have supported him, over the years.

Sam's challenges began on his 30th birthday last year and culminated on World Down's Syndrome Day (21st March) 2022. His challenges have included the fastest sit-down zip wire in the world, flying a plane, falconry, driving a steam train, jet skiing and training with his beloved Swindon Town first team.



Crown Inn Stratton

The Crown Inn Stratton are long-standing supporters of the Swindon Down's Syndrome Group and throughout the year have organised numerous raffles to raise funds for us. In June they organised a charity quiz night and raised a phenomenal £1040. Thank you to all the amazing staff and customers for their continued support.

Lechlade festival raises over £200



We would like to thank all involved with the Lechlade Festival and for inviting us to have a stall. The group had the best time, met some amazing people, listened to some incredible acts, danced, sang and raised a fantastic £267.40



Cobbs Farm Shop open air cinema

Myles and Imogen made themselves comfortable after selling SDSG merchandise at Cobbs Farm Open Air Cinema event. The pair were ready to watch Mama Mia after all their hardwork!



Football shirts raise over £5,000

We are always truly grateful when people offer to fundraise for the Swindon Down's Syndrome Group. Our Patron, Cliff Puffett, has supported the group's fundraising for many, many years and his latest effort raised £5,000.

Cliff donated two original Swindon Town Football Club shirts signed by the legends Don Rogers and John Trollope and organised an auction to take place at the football club.

With the high-profile game between Swindon Town and Manchester City due to take place on 7th January, Cliff made the brilliant decision to auction the shirts at this game.

Charity golf day raises over £1,000 for the Group



MagicTouch Promotions, a local company who offer branded clothing and merchandise, organised a charity golf day at Broome Manor Golf Club in Swindon on 5th August 2022. MagicTouch chose the Swindon Down's Syndrome Group to be the beneficiary from the event.

30 golfers took to the course and helped raise over £1000 for the Group. The golfers were treated to 18 holes of golf, followed by a presentation. Each hole was either sponsored or had a prize given for nearest the pin.

Despite the very hot temperatures it was a fantastic day! The ticket sales alone raised £750. Cheryl Hempleman, one of our Trustees, took on collection bucket duty and collected £363.34 in donations too.

MagicTouch Director, Eden Merrylees, presented our Padel Tennis players with a cheque for £1113.34.

The Swindon Down's Syndrome Group would like to say a huge thank you to MagicTouch Promotions for organising such a fantastic event and for supporting our charity.



Christmas Trees raise over £1,000

We would like to send a big thank you to Terry Williams from the Rotary Club of Swindon North & Thamesdown for his amazing tree selling over the Christmas period. He raised an incredible £1,080 for the our speech and language therapy. Thank you Terry and everyone who bought the trees.



Christmas Singalong

December 2022 was the third year that we did a Christmas sing-a-long. This year's song was 'We wish you a Merry Christmas'. Fourteen of our members sent in video contributions. I had a great time splicing the videos together to make the final cut. Some people also sent in their outtakes, which were great fun to watch. The final version was put on Facebook with a donation page as before. We raised £180 for speech therapy for our members.

#LotsofSocks

Down's Awareness Week 2022

▼ Fairfield College have been huge supporters of the Swindon Down's Syndrome Group each year choosing to sell socks for us. This year they raised £549.50!

Once again in 2022, the Group sold #LotsofSocks to help fund our local DS WorkFit officer. The socks had a new 'electric shock' design for 2022, as always designed by a person with Down's Syndrome. Everyone donned their socks for World Down's Syndrome Day on 21st March. The day also marked the end of "Sam's 21 Challenges" which our member Sam Russell-Pierce had undertaken during the previous 12 months, raising a fantastic amount of money for the Group.



GOVERNANCE & MANAGEMENT

Charity name: Swindon Down's Syndrome Group

Charity number: 1158449

Principal office: 34 Periwinkle Close, Swindon SN2 2QH

Governing document

Swindon Down's Syndrome Group is constituted as a charitable incorporated organisation (CIO) registered with the Charity Commission. It is governed by a constitution last updated in 2018.

Charitable objects:

The objects of the CIO are to relieve the charitable needs of people with Down's syndrome, and their families, helpers and carers in particular but not exclusively by the provision of support and information and speech and language therapy so that they are able to attain their full potential and to undertake any other charitable activities in connection with the relief of Down's syndrome in the SN postcode and the surrounding area. (Area of Benefit)

Surrounding area to be defined as – "post code areas associated to Fairford, Malmesbury, Hungerford, Pewsey, Marlborough, Hullavington, Chippenham, Devizes, Calne, Ashton Keynes, Cirencester, Aldbourne, Bromham, Melksham and Cheltenham."

Activities:

We are a parent-led charity supporting people with down's syndrome, their families, carers and all those with an interest in down's syndrome in Swindon and the surrounding area. We are an independent charity, affiliated to the national down's syndrome association.

Organisation structure

The charity trustees are responsible for the general control and management of the charity. The trustees give their time freely and receive no remuneration or other financial benefits.

The trustees meet together as a body monthly and are responsible for all decisions taken in relation to running the charity. The charity can have a maximum of 10 trustees.

Trustee name	Office (if any)	Dates acted if not for whole year
Kim West	Chair	
Michael Billinge-Jones	Vice Chair	
Sam Harding	Treasurer	
Cailey Whitcher	Secretary	
John Stow	Vice Treasurer	
Joanna Messinger		
Victoria McGuire		
Cherylin Hempleman		
Martyn Coles		
Lauren Craigie		24/4/2021 - 7/12/2022

Recruitment and appointment of trustees

The existing trustees are responsible for the recruitment of new trustees. In appointing new trustees we seek people who are part of our local community. Potential trustees are invited to trustees' meetings or to meet with the chairperson to learn more about the charity's aims and objectives. If all trustees agree they are proposed as new trustees. New trustees are required to complete a DBS check and given a three month trial. This process allows due consideration of the person's eligibility, personal competence, specialist knowledge and skills.

Public benefit

The trustees have paid due regard to the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit in deciding what activities the charity should undertake. The trustees consider that they have acted in the public benefit.

Conflicts of Interest

The Trustees have paid due regard to the Charity Commission's guidance on Conflicts of Interest and the Trustees only act in the best interests of the Charity. The Swindon Down's Syndrome Group have strong systems in place to identify conflicts of interest and we ask each Trustee to declare any conflicts at the beginning of every meeting.

Financial review and reserves policy

At 31 December 2022 the charity held total funds of £94,162 of which £84,404 are restricted and £9,758 are unrestricted. Unrestricted funds include designated funds of £5,000 for Speech. Free reserves are £4,758. The charity has minimal overheads as it is run by volunteers and so does not need to build up free reserves. The main commitment and the charity's highest cost is paying for Speech therapy, which will cost some £40,000 for 2023. Therefore any excess free reserves are designated to the Speech fund. The restricted funds comprise:

Speech	
Donations and grants to provide speech therapy	£51,928
Salamander	
Donations and grants to run fund the fire course	£3,620
WorkFit	
Donations and grants to support adults in the world of work	£6,394
Other smaller funds	£22,462
Total restricted funds	£84,404

Approved by the trustees and signed on its behalf by:



Kim West, Chairperson
Swindon Down's Syndrome Group

THE FUTURE

2023 marks our twentieth year as an official charity. It's great to look back to see how far the Swindon Down's Syndrome Group has come in that time but as always we must look to the future.

It's fair to say that the world has changed quite a lot of the past few years and we are now negotiating more challenging times. Our lives have become busier, the cost of everything is increasing and it's getting more challenging to get the support we've been so used to.

We need to future proof our charity so that we can be here to support you and all the families that have someone with Down's syndrome in our area.

Our biggest struggle at the moment is finding volunteers to help us. What makes the Swindon Down's Syndrome Group so unique is that we are run solely by volunteers. People who give up their time to make things happen.

We know how precious everyone's time is but by offering just an hour of your time at one of our events, selling some of our merchandise or even sharing one of our fundraising messages can be so beneficial and goes a huge way to helping us continue to do what we do.

While we would love to say we can to continue offer all the services we currently do, without volunteers that's just not possible. We have decided to share with you how we will prioritise our services this year:

1. Speech and language therapy for under 25s and adults
2. WorkFit
3. New parent support
4. Keeping active including Football, Tennis, Padel Tennis and
5. Dance
6. Youth Club
7. Primary support
8. School Resource Packs
9. Support for schools
10. Family events and trips
11. Christmas parties

Our priority for this year is simple. We want you to be more involved. We want to hear your thoughts, we want you to be a part of what we do and help us shape the future of the Group. If you'd like to find out more drop us an email to info@swindondownsgroup.org.uk

The Swindon Down's Syndrome Group is a parent-led charity supporting people with Down's syndrome and their families in Swindon and the surrounding area.

We are here to help people with Down's syndrome to have the same opportunities as everyone else and raise awareness of Down's syndrome in the local community.

REGISTERED CHARITY

Swindon Down's Syndrome Group is a UK registered charity. Registered Office 34 Periwinkle Close Swindon SN2 2QH.

Charity number: 1158449

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www.swindondownsgroup.org.uk



Registered with
**FUNDRAISING
REGULATOR**





Section A

Independent Examiner's Report

**Report to the trustees/
members of**

Charity Name
Swindon Down's Syndrome Group

**On accounts for the year
ended**

31 December 2022

**Charity no
(if any)**

1158449

Set out on pages

3 to 4

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the above charity ("the Trust") for the year ended 31/12/2022.

**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 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.

Signed:

Date:

18 April 2023

Name:

James Gare

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

FCA

Address:

Monahans, Hermes House, Fire Fly Avenue, Swindon SN2 2GA



Section A

Independent Examiner's Report

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Date:

18 April 2023

Name:

James Gare

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

FCA

Address:

Monahans, Hermes House, Fire Fly Avenue, Swindon SN2 2GA

SWINDON DOWN'S SYNDROME GROUP

England & Wales - Charity number 1158449

Accounts



ANNUAL REVIEW 2021

January - December 2021

www.swindondownsgroup.org.uk

ANNUAL REVIEW 2021

The Swindon Down's Syndrome Group consists of many families, all volunteering our time and experience as parents and carers to make life that bit more fun and ensure our family with Down's syndrome have all the opportunities and support they need from birth to old age.

We started as a small group of parents who met for coffee and provided each other with support. As time passed, more parents connected with the group and in 2003 we became a charity in our own right.

The Swindon Down's Syndrome Group support people with Down's syndrome in Swindon and the surrounding area including Fairford, Malmesbury, Hungerford, Pewsey, Marlborough, Hullavington, Chippenham, Devizes, Calne, Ashton Keynes, Cirencester, Aldbourne, Bromham, Melksham and Cheltenham.

We are a volunteer led charity, meaning everyone that has an active role in the Swindon Down's Syndrome Group gives up their time because of their love of the group.

We are very fortunate to be supported by our fantastic trustees and volunteers.

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19 | [Fundraising](#)

26 | [Governance](#)

27 | [Future](#)





MESSAGE FROM OUR CHAIR

“A SENSE OF DÉJÀ VU”

I am writing this year's report with a sense of déjà vu. We all hoped that 2020 would be a year that would never be repeated, but 2021 felt like we were reliving 2020 all over again.

While restrictions prohibited us from running many of our larger events, wherever and whenever we could we took the opportunity to continue to provide our regular activities and essential services like speech and language therapy.

2021 was by no means a quiet year for the Swindon Down's Syndrome Group. We have been extremely busy fundraising and raising awareness in the community. We were delighted to be asked to be involved with the Reshaping Conversations project run by Swindon SEND Families Voice. The project was about “inspiring change through positive language” and educated professionals who support children with SEND to consider their choice of language.

As you can imagine fundraising has been a challenge once again. Covid has limited our opportunities to get back out into the community. We have been very fortunate to have been awarded grants from organisations such as The Wiltshire Community Foundation, Julia and Hans Trust, Persimmon Homes, The ASDA Foundation and Voluntary Action Swindon. Voluntary Action Swindon enabled us to make updates and modifications to make our speech room “Covid safe”; we replaced the carpet with laminate flooring, so it was easy to clean; we invested in new wipeable furniture, screens and installed a sanitising station for our members to use.

With a room fit for purpose we were able to return to face-to-face speech and language therapy. Due to the pandemic, we have had a significant rise in the number of members who are now accessing speech and language therapy. We now have 36 members accessing this service compared to 17 last year.

We are continuing to work hard to secure a grant to be able to achieve our goal of offering adult speech therapy.

In September, we welcomed Roy Perrett as the Swindon Down's Syndrome Group's WorkFit Liaison Officer. Roy has already hosted an information evening for our members and has hit the ground running, already enlisting one young person into employment and is in discussions with many more companies regarding placing more. Welcome aboard Roy!

When you look back at the year you realise just how much we have been involved in. Over the summer we took part in the Superhero Challenge, held an online “cook-along” with Zurich – making Victoria sponge cakes, supported the Swindon Rotary at their Christmas concert at Christchurch and got our singing voices warmed up with our rendition of Jingle Bells for our Christmas Singalong.

With no Christmas party again, we donned our elf hats and delivered over 120 Christmas boxes to our members, thanks to Swindon Children's Scrapstore.

It is always heart-warming for us to see so many donations coming in to support our Group. We are extremely grateful to everyone that donates and raises money, especially now, when we appreciate that times are getting harder for everyone. So many members and their families have given up their time and skills to help us – so thank you!

My final thank you is to our dedicated trustees. They work hard week in and week out to ensure the Group can undertake its vital work as without them the Swindon Down's Syndrome Group would not be as successful as it is today. So, thank you all.

Kim West, Chairperson
Swindon Down's Syndrome Group

OUR ACHIEVEMENTS

There was a lot to celebrate in 2021 and here are just a few of our achievements.

£11,547

was received by the Group through fundraising in 2021

134

families now receive regular information through our mailing list

£1,280

was raised through voluntary membership donations

£5,109.03

raised in donations and grants to support adults in the world of work

£31,242.28

Raised through donations and grants to provide speech and language therapy

120

Christmas boxes were delivered by our Trustees to all our members

1,803

Follow us on Facebook

36

members enrolled for Speech and Language Therapy with the majority receiving SALT on a weekly basis

483

online therapy sessions have been delivered through Mable Therapy.

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE YEAR

Reshaping conversations



We were invited by Swindon SEND Families Voice to be a part of their Reshaping Conversations project.

Many of our families have experienced poor use of language, their child is a “Down’s baby”, not a person, and new parents encouraged to consider their options because their baby may have Down’s syndrome.

We were extremely proud of parents Simon and Lauren from the Group stepping forward and sharing their personal experiences.

Supporting the Down’s Syndrome Bill

Dr Liam Fox MP introduced a Bill into Parliament which will enhance the lives of everyone with Down’s syndrome in the UK. The Swindon Down’s Syndrome Group are in support of the Bill and will be sharing updates on its progress.



Paralympian Ben Fox meets DSAActive team

Paralympian, Ben Fox, who was part of the Wheelchair Basketball Team, joined our DSAActive team to show us his amazing Bronze medal. The team got to ask questions about the Games this year. Thank you Ben for taking time out to come and see us and Swindon Town FC Community Foundation for organising.



Xmas treats delivered in place of party

After the success of 2020 where we delivered over 100 Christmas boxes to our members, we did the same this year in place of our Christmas parties. Unfortunately due to rising covid cases we decided it was still to soon to host a large event like this.

All our current members received a Santa sack. Thank you to the Swindon Children’s Scrapstore for putting these together for us and to our Trustees for delivering them across Swindon and Wiltshire.



Sam wins award for spreading positivity

Sam has been keeping people smiling by dressing up each week for 'Clap for Heroes'. Sam has now been nominated for his own 'Unsung Hero in the Community' award. Well done Sam! Great work and thanks for keeping everyone smiling!



4 Kingdoms Christmas Event

The fantastic 4 Kingdoms in Newbury donated 12 adult and kids tickets to allow families from the Group to attend their Christmas Experience. It was a truly amazing day for everyone!



Zurich host 'cook-along'

Earlier this year Zurich took on the challenge to provide an online cooking lesson for our members. During half term eight of our members took part in the cook along with Darren Lee from Zurich. Darren led the session and decided that everyone was going to make a Victoria sponge cake and what a great choice that was!



DSActive show off their skills at STFC

Our wonderful DSActive Football team were the stars of the day at Swindon Town FC against Bradford City showing off their amazing skills at half time.



Stay and play returns for our little ones

It was great to get back to meeting face-to-face again this year. We resumed our stay and play coffee mornings for our 0-7-year olds which are hosted at Grange Leisure Centre in Stratton.



Supporting others

Oliver, Zac and Michael put their craft skills to use to raise over £600 for Wiltshire Air Ambulance.

Todd and Martyn

In November award winning Todd Scanlon joined Friends of Old Town for a chat with Martyn Coles talking about why employers should take on people with learning disabilities.



SUPPORTING NEW PARENTS

Within the New Parent Group you will find a wealth of knowledge, experience and an abundance of new friends.



We need to start by saying a huge thank you to Amanda Ager for her work as our dedicated New Parent Contact. Sadly, Amanda stepped down at the start of the year but is still very much a part of the Group. Amanda did a fantastic job supporting new families when they joined and arranging regular catch ups.

With at least half of our families with children under the age of five living in the Wiltshire area the Group made the decision to appoint two New Parent Contacts; one for Swindon and one for Wiltshire.

The two Health Care Trusts that cover Swindon and Wiltshire operate every so slightly differently so having two parents who have experienced both made perfect sense. Jodie Morris now covers the Swindon area while Victoria Argue covers Wiltshire.

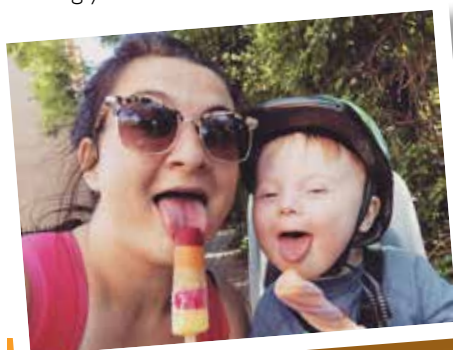
Victoria said, "Our wonderful 'Stay and Play' sessions have started up again, currently at Grange Leisure Centre in Stratton, Swindon. They allow us to use their soft play facilities which are ideal for our little ones, plus there is a coffee shop on site too.

It's been wonderful to meet all the new families that have joined the Group through the pandemic. The WhatsApp group has gone from strength to strength with messages posted most days.

So far I have presented to Wiltshire Portage about what the Swindon Down's Syndrome Group can offer, with plans to tackle the Health Visitors next. We are all looking forward to having more social events where members of all ages can meet in the coming year."



Hi, my name is Victoria and this epic small person is Verity! We knew before she was born that she had cardiac issues, and was teeny tiny and it was suspected that she had Down's syndrome, but we only knew for sure when she popped out the emergency hatch four weeks premature. I'm now a new parent contact here to support other families.



Hello, I'm Jodie and this is my son Kylo who was diagnosed with Down's syndrome at birth. We made contact with the Swindon Down's Syndrome Group a few days after he was born and have had so much support and made some great friendships. Jump ahead a few years and I am now a new parent contact, supporting parents going through the same journey.

YOUTH CLUB

Our Youth Club, which meets fortnightly, continued in virtual form for a large part of 2021.



Everyone enjoyed catching up with their friends and taking part in themed quizzes but couldn't wait to meet again in person.

This finally became a reality in August and regular sessions at Toothill Farmhouse resumed the following month. The difference with these was that, to involve members unable to get there in person, we now include a short Zoom call for everyone to chat together.

This has been a hit and it allows everyone to break away from their other activities to chat while enjoying a drink and snack, which is sometimes birthday cake, and we are grateful to the parents and carers who supply these for everyone to share.

Over the summer we did manage to organise a trip to the Cotswold Forest

School in South Cerney. Johno and his team treated us to an afternoon of fuel foraging, fire starting, shelter building, a game or two of hide and seek and the chance to enjoy a toasted marshmallow at the end of the day. We finished the day with a meal at The Crown Inn in Stratton.

One activity that, sadly, didn't happen this year was the Christmas Meal. However, the festivities were still celebrated by enjoying takeaway pizzas at the Farmhouse. We even managed to coordinate deliveries to those dialling in remotely. It's amazing how much pizza our young people can get through!

Youth Club is open to any members aged 13 and over. We would love to see new faces join us in 2022!



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MEMBERS

ACCESS SPEECH
& LANGUAGE
THERAPY



SPEECH & LANGUAGE THERAPY

Since the pandemic began speech therapy has been through some significant changes. The pandemic created an even bigger demand for this service and encouraged us to adapt the way we offer therapy.

BY MICHAEL BILLINGE-JONES

Speech and Language Therapy (SALT) is so vital for our children and young people. It needs to become part of their everyday routine and be brought into everyday situations. It's about making it fun and normal, not different.

Regular speech and language therapy gives our young people the opportunity to further develop their speech and comprehension skills. This enables them to go on to achieve far more than might otherwise have been possible, and become better integrated into our community.

The Swindon Down's Syndrome Group recognises the need for this service and we work tirelessly to raise money to pay for additional Speech and Language Therapy for our members. We currently have 36 members accessing speech either on-line or face to face. These weekly sessions cost us in excess of £40,000 a year.

Face-to-face sessions

We have contracted C&D Therapy to provide weekly sessions to primarily our younger members. Sessions follow the school calendar, so there are about forty a year.



We found that younger children interact better with face-to-face speech therapy. Members are assessed and are placed in groups of a similar learning ability. The sessions are held at our dedicated therapy room in Swindon. The speech room is full of resources to aid the therapist in delivering the classes. Reports are produced each term so progress can be monitored and future goals set. Thirteen of our members have accessed speech therapy face-to-face since September.

Online sessions

Online sessions are provided by Mable Therapy and are on a one-to-one basis. Each session is twenty minutes long. We started using Mable during lockdown as all face-to-face sessions were suspended. We saw the need to continue speech therapy and this was the solution.

With lockdowns easing many of our members have returned to the face-to-face classroom setting. Mable sessions are offered to our members who are unable to travel to Swindon, or they progress better accessing the online environment. As these sessions are one-to-one, they are more flexible on the day of the week and time. The Mable sessions also follow the school calendar with end of term progress reports produced. 28 of our members have received sessions from Mable in 2021.

'It has been a pleasure working with the Swindon Down's Syndrome Group since the start of this academic year (September 2021). Thus far our Speech and Language Therapy service has provided assessment and intervention for 13 children, with more children due to be assessed in the coming weeks. Members are seen in groups or one-to-one depending on their needs and they all receive termly reports (up to 3 a year) to summarise progress and ongoing plans for their input. Sessions have centred around a range of speech, language and communication needs, including vocabulary development, attention and listening, total communication

strategies and speech sound support. Supporting and equipping parents and associated educational staff with strategies and resources has also been a central aspect of the service provided to support the children's consolidation of skills outside of sessions.

It has been hugely rewarding knowing that the children in this local area are able to access more support through our partnership with the Swindon Down's Syndrome Group and that we can play a part in helping them connect with those around them and to reach their potential. We look forward to working with more children, families and schools as part of our continued partnership.'

C&D Therapy

It's been a busy year for our young people who've been accessing online speech and language therapy through Mable Therapy. Since last March, 28 young people have had therapy - between them they've had 483 therapy sessions and met 167 of their communication targets! The group members have worked on their social communication skills including initiating and maintaining conversations, generating

questions and developing self-advocacy skills. Some group members have developed their language skills by increasing the lengths of their sentences, increasing their vocabulary and developing narrative skills. They've also worked on understanding of concepts and sentence structures. The group members have worked really hard this year and should be so proud of themselves.

Mable Therapy

We currently provide SALT for our members who are under 25. We are looking to start offering this service to all our members, including adults as we have seen that during the recent lockdowns some of our members speech skills have deteriorated.

KEEPING FIT AND ACTIVE



Our regular sporting activities were finally able to return following the pandemic.

Swindon DS Active Football

by Jo Messenger

The magic is back and our team was reunited! In May DSActive Football returned to face-to-face (or foot-to-foot) playing after a very long 14 months. Even though they were not able to hug each other you could feel the excitement in the hall as they kicked a ball to their teammates. It was amazing to see them back playing. It was as if they had never been apart.

The team returned to a new venue at The Deanery CE Academy at a new time 6-7pm and what a great venue it is. A secure hall with a viewing gallery for the parents. The team have really developed in this new environment.

The one thing we all noticed after a 14-month break was the fact the lads had grown, and their football kit was a little on the snug side. The need for new kit was now at the top of our list and the group started to look for grants that could help us out.



Thank you to the Swindon Bus Company who in August gave us a grant and we were able to purchase new football shirts and kit the team out.

In September the team had a wonderful surprise when Swindon Town FC Community Foundation organised a visit from Ben Fox, the Paralympian Wheelchair Basketball Bronze medallist, who brought his medal to show the team. It was a real privilege to meet him and have photos taken.



In October, Swindon Town FC were playing at home to Bradford City and the team were invited to play on the pitch at half time. A great opportunity to show off their skills in front of a crowd. A great time was had by all and a celebration run around to the cheers of the fans were in order.



Padel Tennis

by John Stow

The Group have teamed up with Padel4All, who built a new 3 court centre at nearby Bassett Down Golf Complex. Padel tennis is played on a smaller court than normal tennis and only in doubles format, which makes it more suitable for any members with restricted mobility. Our players have been learning how the rules differ and the type of shots they need to

use to outwit their opponents. We are grateful to manager Steve who has created a DS-specific session in his weekly coaching calendar. You can find out more by emailing tennis@swindondownsgroup.org.uk

Tennis

by John Stow

We had to wait until after Easter before tennis resumed at Delta Tennis Centre. The sessions moving to a weekday has impacted attendance, but a few regulars continue to enjoy the various games and challenges created by the coaches to help learn the skills of the game.

There were also a reduced number of LTA Learning Disability competitions during the year. However, we were really pleased that we now have two players from the Group involved in some of the competitions. More so, when Lane and Alex ventured to Newport in October and returned with doubles gold in their category, leading to them naming themselves 'Welsh Champions'. They also managed silver and bronze in the singles. There is a full programme planned for 2022 so we hope to send more members to one this year. You can find out more information about the sessions by emailing tennis@swindondownsgroup.org.uk



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MEMBERS
CURRENTLY TAKE
PART IN OUR
DANCE CLASSES

Cricket

by John Stow

Wiltshire County Cricket's disability programme created a "Super 1's" hub in Swindon and a number of our members attend each week to learn basic cricket skills. These were held at Swindon CC during the summer months and have moved indoors until the lighter evenings return in the Spring. As well as the sporting aspect these sessions occasionally workshop specific life skills, such as safety on the railways and healthy eating, by integrating learning with practicing cricket skills.

Swimming

by John Stow

Our fortnightly swimming sessions at Thamesdown Hydrotherapy Pool had to wait until April before restrictions were lifted. Initially the 10 person maximum was still in place but 'normality' resumed in the summer, when we were able to offer some extra holiday sessions. Vicky Hunt continues to offer coaching to our swimmers at the sessions and everyone benefits from the individual attention that she can give them.



Dance

by Kim West

As a Group we now offer Dance classes on a Friday evening 5-6pm. This is something that we have been looking at running for a few years. Thanks to our Trustee, Martyn Coles, this has been made possible. Martyn introduced us to Bobbi Newman who owns Bobbi's Academy of Dance.

When I spoke to Bobbi about starting the Dance classes, she burst into tears as it had been a lifelong dream of

hers to work with children and young people with Down's syndrome and thanked me for making this happen.

Dance is a fantastic way of keeping our young people fit, and brilliant for their physical and mental wellbeing. These sessions are attended by 11 of our young people and they are all practising a routine that will be shown to friends and family at The Wyvern Theatre in June 2022.

In addition to what we have been able to provide, we have remained in contact with the local clubs who previously ran basketball and athletics sessions for the Group so we hope that 2022 will be less disrupted and that all our members can have the chance to enjoy some physical activities.

NEW WORKFIT LIAISON OFFICER

We are really pleased to tell you that we have now successfully employed our new WorkFit Liaison Officer for the Swindon Down's Syndrome Group.

As many of you will know, the partnership between the DSA's WorkFit programme and the Swindon Down's syndrome Support Group began in 2015 and since then it has been providing a tailored employment programme for people with Down's syndrome in Swindon and Wiltshire.

WorkFit brings together employers and jobseekers who have Down's syndrome. It is a tailored service dedicated to training employers about the learning profile of people who have Down's syndrome so that they can be supported



in the workplace. Work can be anything from paid jobs, volunteering roles, work experience (paid/unpaid) or supported internships/apprenticeships.

In October of last year, Roy Perrett joined the WorkFit team, working two days a week and he has already had success in placing a candidate in Swindon and has a number of other opportunities in development. Roy has first-hand knowledge of the WorkFit programme and supported Luke to secure permanent paid work at Wiltshire Police. You can hear from them both via the WorkFit YouTube channel.

In November Roy was involved in supporting a pilot project with HSBC in their Chippenham and Swindon branches and also hosted a Candidate and Parent online event for the Swindon Down's Syndrome Group members in November. Roy was interviewed by BBC Radio Wiltshire and BBC Points West, and the Swindon Advertiser following a DSA press release about his new role.

Roy has been getting to know candidates and their families and working with them to create Vocational Profiles and CVs. He is currently developing an exciting opportunity with a major brand in Marlborough.

As we emerge from the Covid-19 Coronavirus pandemic it is encouraging



to see the number of employers who are keen to work with us.

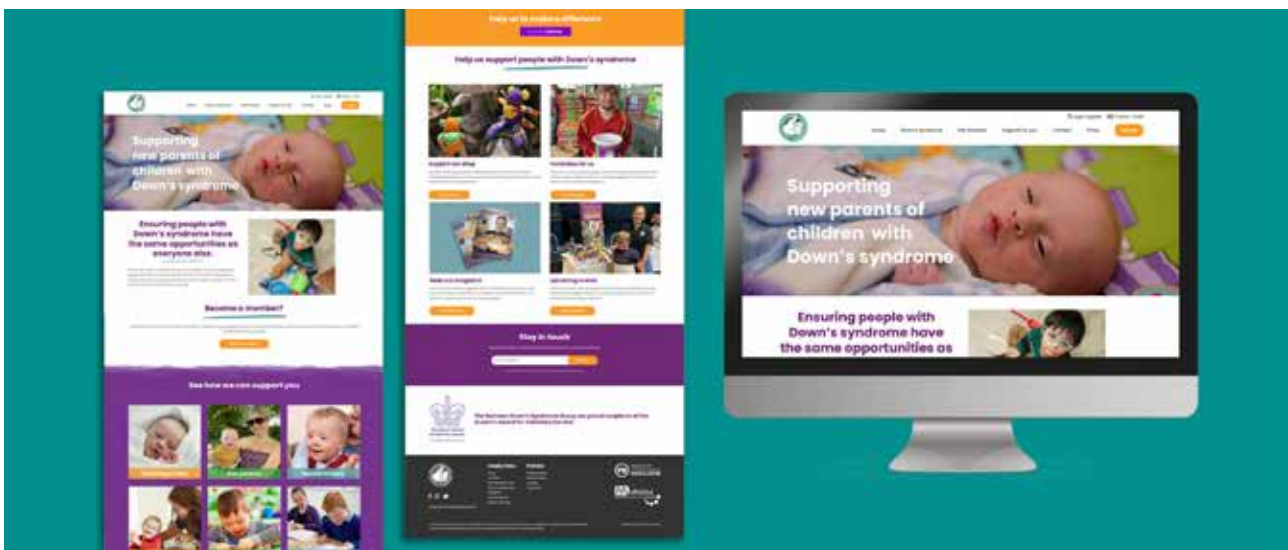
Last year WorkFit had some fabulous achievements including presenting a keynote speech at the World Down's syndrome Congress on 20/11/21. Two WorkFit members won awards (one candidate and one employer) at the British Association of Supported Employment Conference 2021

Overall the WorkFit programme is going from strength to strength and Roy is committed to supporting Swindon Down's Syndrome Group members and their employers in the Swindon area.

NEW WEBSITE AND ONLINE SHOP LAUNCH

We are really pleased to announce the launch of our newly designed website.

BY CAILEY WHITCHER



Our old website was starting to look a little outdated and we wanted it to be able to do more! Thanks to a donation from the late Penelope Clanchy this was made possible.

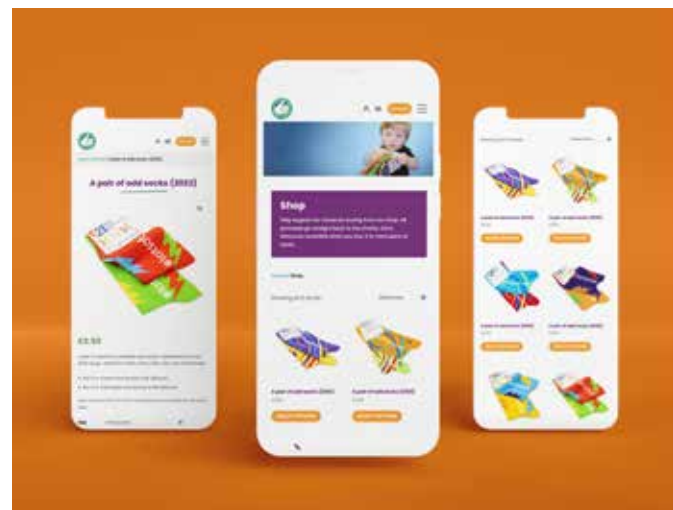
We teamed up with local web development agency Pink Fish Associates, to create a modern, fully functioning responsive website which includes a brand new online shop!

Our new website has been designed to make it easier to

get advice, find information about Down's syndrome and the support that we can offer.

With information now broken down into age-related categories and dedicated pages for the many avenues of support we offer.

Our website will now be home to blogs and articles on a range of topics and to help you keep up to date with the Group's activities we have a dedicated events page.



CHRISTMAS BOXES

We've even added our membership form to the website which will make renewing your annual membership even easier.

“It’s fantastic to see our new website in all its glory! We have worked incredibly hard to get it ready for launch and we are excited for all the opportunities it is going to give us, especially with the new online shop.”

We hope the website is filled with everything families need to know and helps us support more people in our community.”

Our new online shop is going to open up a world of opportunities for the Group. We've uploaded all the products we offer so everything is available online.



BY CAILEY WHITCHER

Unfortunately a rise in covid cases meant that holding our infamous Christmas party was once again not an option this year so we decided to spread some Christmas cheer in a different way...

As per last year we couldn't end the year without doing something for the families we support so the Trustees with the help of Swindon Children's Scrapstore, Zurich Community Foundation, Tesco's Ocotol Way and Morrison's Dorcan Way.



We delivered Christmas sacks filled with wonderful activities, gifts and treats. Zurich Community Foundation kindly donated selection boxes for all our members.

The Trustees and their helpers, once again, filled their cars and headed across Swindon and Wiltshire to spread to some festive cheer.

While the Christmas sacks will never replace the traditional fun and games of our Christmas party it was great that we could do something to bring a bit of festive cheer again. Let's hope that we can get back to celebrating properly in 2022!

IT'S ALL THANKS TO YOU, OUR SUPPORTERS

We are so grateful to everyone who has supported us over the past year.

We owe a huge thank you to every single person, group or business that has helped us to support our young people with Down's syndrome. In particular we'd like to thank the following supporters.

OUR PATRONS

Cliff Puffett
Julie Thomas

OUR TRUSTEES

Kim West
John Stow
Sam Harding
Cailey Whitcher
Jo Messenger
Michael Billinge-Jones
Victoria McGuire
Lauren Craigie
Cherylin Hempleman
Martyn Coles

OUR SUPPORTERS

The Julia & Hans Trustees
Wiltshire Community Foundation
Voluntary Action Swindon
The Crown Inn
Tracy Blackler friends & family
RWE Generation UK Plc
Swindon Rotary
The Care Forum
Marina Billinge-Jones
Hilliers Funeral Services
Claire's birthday fundraiser
Lydia's birthday fundraiser
Layla's birthday fundraiser
Little Pioneers Pre-School
Moredon Primary School
VW Group Specialist Ltd
Stephen McGuire
C4S Search Ltd
Fairfield Farm College
Zurich Insurance Swindon
Clare North
Mr & Mrs Novis
Price Thomas
Samantha Ford
Diana Rowlands
Amanda Hancock
Jake Hancock
Verity & Victoria Argue
Emma Firman
Lynne Hayward
Rhoda Lewis
UK Online Giving Foundation
Mr & Mrs Sheik
Fast Link Data Cables Ltd
Marlborough College
ASDA Foundation
Penelope Clanchy
Bro-vember
Karen & Pete Jackson
Swindon Town Football Club

Groundworks UK
Imogen Dick
Mandy McKinley
Kim Poulton
Clare Peters
Hannah Dias
Barbara Leonard
Rose Leonard
Gemma Thompson
Ian Tuckwell
Swindon Bus Company
Arnold Clark Swindon
Sherry Baffour
Clare Stow
Judi McKendrick
Pink Fish Associates
Nutmeg Design
Coles Scaffolding Ltd
Whitehall Garden Centre
Wiltshire Police
HSBC
Padel4all Basset Down
Bobbi's Academy of Dance
DSActive
Thamesdown Hydro Pool
Wiltshire County Cricket SuperI Hub
Toothill Farmhouse
Copy Color
Grange Leisure Centre
Don Rogers
John Trollope
Phil King
Mark Brooks
Stephen Trowbridge
Geoff Maitland

And... Everyone that purchased a pair of #lotsofsocks from us!

FUNDRAISING



Green tokens helps us to raise money for Adult Speech Therapy

We were pleased to announce that thanks to all your voting efforts that we were awarded £500 from The Asda Foundation through it's Green Token Giving scheme. This money will be used towards our fundraising goal of £20,000 so that we can start to offer adult speech therapy to our members.



We would like to say a massive thank you to everyone that took part in the Healthwatch Swindon COVID-19 Survey. 47 people completed this for us and in doing so raised £235 for the Group.

Swindon Bus Company buys us a new football strip



It was fantastic news for our DSActive team to find out that The Swindon Bus Company had thrown its support behind us - by providing us with a new kit as part of it's community fund.

Joanna Messenger added, "This is a wonderful gesture. Our players will wear their shirts with pride, and I'm sure they will have added confidence when they play. We can't thank the Bus Company enough for this fantastic grant."



The Swindon Down's Syndrome Group were delighted to have been selected to receive £1,000 through the Persimmon Homes Community Champions scheme. This money went towards funding Speech and Language Therapy.

Christmas prize draw raises over £1400



Thank you to Zurich Community Trust for making four beautiful hampers for our Christmas prize draws! We were also kindly donated a photoshoot experience day by Imagine Photography as a prize. The raffle raised raised over £1400!



Snooker legend plaque auction

We were kindly donated a signed Ronnie O'Sullivan plaque by Snooker Legends to auction on Ebay to help raise funds for the Group.

Jake's head shave helps support new parents



Jake Hancock is the brother of Charlie. He shaved his head to raise funds for our New Parent Congratulations Packs. The packs are given to new parents shortly after the birth of their baby and include a congratulations card, information about Group, support books, a toy, clothes, baby hat and blanket plus milestone cards.

Here's his fundraising story..

"It was the morning of 24th February 2021 when Alex Hamilton, Head of IT pointed out on a Teams call how long my hair was getting. He light-heartedly mentioned how I should shave my head for charity to which I replied, "No chance". Now, if anyone knows me they know how precious I am about my hair (I've only let one barber touch my hair for the past 10 years), that said the offer dawned on me. I took the morning to think and decided what better way to raise awareness of World Down's Syndrome Day than a work fundraiser.

I set a target of £150 which would be given to the Swindon Down's Syndrome Group – as my brother, Charlie, has Down's syndrome. Unsurprisingly the target of £150 was smashed and the total sum raised by the team equates to £350, but it does not stop there. Ryan O'Hara, Managing Director & Co-Founder and Ben Rutter, Director and Co-Founder decided as a collective that if C4S hit our monthly target then C4S Search would double the total money raised!"

With the support of everyone at C4S Search a total of £700 was raised. A massive thank you and well done to everyone at C4S Search as well as Ryan and Ben for their great efforts in this fundraising event.



Steve's Big Double Marathon Devon coast Trek

While most of us were preparing to get the kids back to school, last September, Steve McGuire was planning to walk a double marathon!

Steve, is father to 9 year old Harry. Steve and his family have been a part of the Group since Harry was a baby. It was Harry who kept Steve going during the gruelling trek.

Steve walked 50 miles around the Devon coast to raise money for the Brain Trust and the Swindon Down's Syndrome Group. Up and down cliffs, across fields and along beaches, this stretch of South West Coastal Path is one of the toughest walks in the UK.

"When the hills were getting steeper and the blisters were getting bigger, I remembered all the challenges Harry faces every day of his life and how, despite this, he always has a smile on his face. I would walk to the end of the Earth for him."

Steve raised an incredible £1554 for the Swindon Down's Syndrome Group and a similar amount for the Brain Trust. Thank you and well done Steve!



Mini auction raises over £800

To celebrate World Down Syndrome Day, VW-Group Specialist Ltd decided to auction off one of their cars and donate the proceeds to the Swindon Down's Syndrome Group.

Chris Fry who owns VW-Group Specialist Ltd added, "This is a cause close to our hearts as many of you know our little boy Oscar has Down's syndrome. It has been a very difficult year for charities so we want to show our appreciation to the group."

The auction for the Mini Cooper took place on Ebay and ended on World Down Syndrome Day. The car came with a service and 12 months MOT.



As part of our World Down Syndrome Day celebrations the Group held an online quiz night for our members and their families. Thanks to our quiz master Ian Tuckwell for hosting!

Quiz, curry nights and raffles raise over £1,000 for the Group



The Crown Inn and it's fantastic customers have been huge supporters of the Swindon Down's Syndrome Group for many years. They've given us so many opportunities to hold fundraising events and raffles at their pub.

In a time when pubs have had as equally hard time to recover from the pandemic, The Crown Inn were back supporting us as a charity. This year they held Halloween and Christmas raffles at their Sunday night pub quiz. Andrew and Lane from the Group were on hand to draw the tickets! The two raffles rased over £250.



Our favourite event has to be the Quiz and Curry Night held in November. We've never seen an event fully booked within just a couple of weeks of advertising it. While numbers had to be kept to a sensible level to ensure everyone's safety, it was fantastic to see so many people out on a Saturday night, enjoying themselves and raising money at the same time.

We were truly astounded when the pub announced they had raised £1,050 for us! Thank you to all the staff and customers for continuing to support us!



#LotsOfSocks

Down's Awareness Week 2021

The #LotsOfSocks campaign was initiated in 2013 to help raise awareness of Down's syndrome and celebrate World Downs Syndrome Day on 21st March each year.

The idea of using socks is that the shape represents the chromosomes we each have, and the bright colours and patterns draw people's attention and raises awareness.

Despite Covid putting a stop to most things, we rallied the troops and had overwhelming support from our members, families, and friends for our #LotsOfSocks sales for World Downs Syndrome Day 2021. Our socks and sock monkeys went far and wide to raise awareness of both Down's syndrome and the work of the group. Whilst some sock sale opportunities are still out of reach, we are hoping to smash last years sales of socks in 2022!



▼ Sock monkeys and #LotsOfSocks for our lovely members

▼ Decorating cakes for WDS... and what a great smile!



▼ Little Pioneers Nursery getting involved for WDS



▲ Roy Perrett showing off his socks for WDS



► Alex and his classmates from Nursery wearing odd socks



**World
Down
Syndrome
Day**

▼ Fairfield college have been huge supporters of the Swindon Down's Syndrome Group for a number of years - each year choosing to sell socks for us - thank you!



▲ The amazing students at Fairfield college showing of their socks



▲ Our Patron Julie showing off her #LotsOfSocks and WSD window sticker



Indoor market raises over £100

Our stall at the MECA indoor market helped raise over £130. A huge thank you to Victoria and Harry McGuire and Martyn Coles for running our stall.



Festive market stall helps support us

Thanks to Clare and Lane Stow who ran a stall at the Christ Church Christmas Market in Old Town raising money for the Group.



In July we unveiled eight members of the Swindon Down's Syndrome Group who signed up to take part in Superheroes on Vacation, the summer's Marvel Superhero Challenge set up for us by Zurich Community Trust.

Our team of Superheroes named themselves The Incredible T2 I s.

The aim of the virtual challenge is to help a wider team travel the virtual equivalent of around the globe. It's 55,000 km but each Superhero did

what they could during the 4 weeks that the challenge was running. They ran, walked, cycled and played sports to cover the distance.

Monies raised will be used towards trips and outings suitable for all of our members and their families.

We set ourselves the target of raising £500. The Incredible T2 I s smashed this target raising an incredible £825! Thank you to everyone who donated.



Christmas Sing-Along is back for a second year!

Our Christmas Sing-Along returned for a second year and was just as popular as ever! This years chosen song was Rudolph the Red Nose Reindeer. We had a fantastic response with over 300 views and lots of likes. A huge thank you for all those made a clip and to those generous people who donated.



Sam takes on 21 challenges to raise money for two local charities

Throughout 2021, Sam Pierce supported by his mum Leslye, has been raising funds for two charities that have supported him, over the years, the Swindon Down's Syndrome Group and Uplands Educational Trust. Sam has set himself twenty-one personal challenges that he will aim to complete by World Down's Syndrome Day, 21st March 2022.

The challenges are either sports related, adventures or motivational. Sam and Leslye have been raising money through sponsorship, raffles and tombolas. Leslye commented, "Both charities are close to my heart for different reasons and we all know how smaller charities have struggled throughout the pandemic."

Sam has been very fortunate to have been supported by some fantastic companies who have helped make his challenges happen. So far Sam has completed over half his challenges, from making friends with snakes, riding 21 different rides at Thorpe Park in one day, flying a plane and completing the Phoenix Rotary Santa Run

Not only that members of the Swindon Down's Syndrome Group have rallied around donating raffle prizes, helping to arrange challenges or simply cheering Sam on. Congratulations to Sam on all his achievements so far. We can't wait to hear what you raise when your challenges come to an end in 2022!



Christmas carol concert raises over £500

In December The Swindon Rotary organised a Christmas Carol Concert in Old Town. We were asked to come along and help, with several of our members volunteering. The concert was a fundraising event with proceeds being shared between The Swindon Food Collective and our Group. Sue Frawley from The Swindon Rotary presented us with a cheque for £655.16. We would like to say a huge thank you to the Swindon Rotary for all their hard work organising such a fantastic event and for this amazing donation.

GOVERNANCE & MANAGEMENT

Charity name: Swindon Down's Syndrome Group
Charity number: 1158449
Principal office: 34 Periwinkle Close, Swindon SN2 2QH

Governing document

Swindon Down's Syndrome Group is constituted as a charitable incorporated organisation (CIO) registered with the Charity Commission. It is governed by a constitution last updated in 2018.

Charitable objects:

The objects of the CIO are to relieve the charitable needs of people with Down's syndrome, and their families, helpers and carers in particular but not exclusively by the provision of support and information and speech and language therapy so that they are able to attain their full potential and to undertake any other charitable activities in connection with the relief of Down's syndrome in the SN postcode and the surrounding area. (Area of Benefit)

Surrounding area to be defined as – "post code areas associated to Fairford, Malmesbury, Hungerford, Pewsey, Marlborough, Hullavington, Chippenham, Devizes, Calne, Ashton Keynes, Cirencester, Aldbourne, Bromham, Melksham and Cheltenham."

Activities:

We are a parent-led charity supporting people with down's syndrome, their families, carers and all those with an interest in down's syndrome in Swindon and the surrounding area. We are an independent charity, affiliated to the national down's syndrome association.

Organisation structure

The charity trustees are responsible for the general control and management of the charity. The trustees give their time freely and receive no remuneration or other financial benefits.

The trustees meet together as a body monthly and are responsible for all decisions taken in relation to running the charity. The charity can have a maximum of 10 trustees.

Trustee name	Office (if any)	Dates acted if not for whole year
Kim West	Chair	
John Stow	Vice Chair	
Sam Harding	Treasurer	
Cailey Whitcher	Secretary	
Michael Billinge-Jones	Vice Treasurer	
Joanna Messenger		
Victoria McGuire		
Amanda Ager		Resigned 15/2/2021
Royden Perrett		Resigned 24/4/2021
Ian Tuckwell	Vice Treasurer	Resigned 24/4/2021
Lauren Craigie		24/4/2021 - Present
Cherylin Hempleman		24/4/2021 - Present
Martyn Coles		24/4/2021 - Present

Recruitment and appointment of trustees

The existing trustees are responsible for the recruitment of new trustees. In appointing new trustees we seek people who are part of our local community. Potential trustees are invited to trustees' meetings or to meet with the chairperson to learn more about the charity's aims and objectives. If all trustees agree they are proposed as new trustees. New trustees are required to complete a DBS check and given a three month trial. This process allows due consideration of the person's eligibility, personal competence, specialist knowledge and skills.

Public benefit

The trustees have paid due regard to the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit in deciding what activities the charity should undertake. The trustees consider that they have acted in the public benefit.

Conflicts of Interest

The Trustees have paid due regard to the Charity Commission's guidance on Conflicts of Interest and the Trustees only act in the best interests of the Charity. The Swindon Down's Syndrome Group have strong systems in place to identify conflicts of interest and we ask each Trustee to declare any conflicts at the beginning of every meeting.

Financial review and reserves policy

At 31 December 2021 the charity held total funds of £83,518 of which £75,158 are restricted and £8,360 are unrestricted. Unrestricted funds include designated funds of £906 for the website and £5,000 for Speech. Free reserves are £2,454. The charity has minimal overheads as it is run by volunteers and so does not need to build up free reserves. The main commitment and the charity's highest cost is paying for Speech therapy, which will cost some £40,000 for 2022. Therefore any excess free reserves are designated to the Speech fund. The restricted funds comprise:

Speech	
Donations and grants to provide speech therapy	£33,409
Salamander	
Donations and grants to run fund the fire course	£8,620
WorkFit	
Donations and grants to support adults in the world of work	£5,555
Other smaller funds	£27,574
Total restricted funds	£75,158

Approved by the trustees and signed on its behalf by:



Kim West, Chairperson
Swindon Down's Syndrome Group

THE FUTURE

Our mission continues to help people with Down's syndrome to have the same opportunities as everyone else and raise awareness of Down's syndrome in the local community.

Our ambition in 2021 was to build on our speech therapy provision by offering speech therapy to our adult members (over 25). We have been working hard behind the scenes to make this happen and are confident that we should be in a position to launch this in 2022. Finding the money for projects like this has become more challenging since the pandemic but we are committed to making it happen!

We had hoped 2021 would allow us to get back out into the community but Covid had different ideas. While we were bound by restrictions for a large part of the year it limited our ability to fundraise in the same way. We hope that in 2022 we can actually get back out into the community again, bringing in much needed funds.

Our biggest aim for 2022 is to get back to holding social events again and having some fun! Our group is all about families sharing experiences and it is so important for our younger members to meet our older ones and be able to support each other.

We want to continue to develop our relationships have relationships with local schools. In 2021 we delivered a talk to the Early Years SENCo team and hope to offer events like this going into 2022.

We hosted our first Royal College of Midwives accredited training scheme Tell it Right event in 2018 where it was all about changing perceptions of Down's syndrome. Over 60 midwives from Swindon and the surrounding area took part and we feel after four years (and a pandemic) it would be valuable to do it again.

We always welcome the ideas and support of our parents and carers, we would love for more of you to be involved in shaping what do. Together we can do great things.

The Swindon Down's Syndrome Group is a parent-led charity supporting people with Down's syndrome and their families in Swindon and the surrounding area.

We are here to help people with Down's syndrome to have the same opportunities as everyone else and raise awareness of Down's syndrome in the local community.

REGISTERED CHARITY

Swindon Down's Syndrome Group is a UK registered charity. Registered Office 34 Periwinkle Close Swindon SN2 2QH.

Charity number: 1158449

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www.swindondownsgroup.org.uk



Section B Statement of assets and liabilities at the

Categories

Details

B1 Cash funds

Santander
Teachers Building Society
Paypal

Total cash funds

(agree balances with receipts and payments account(s))

B2 Other monetary assets

Details

B3 Investment assets

Details

B4 Assets retained for the charity's own use


Details

B5 Liabilities

Details

Signed by one or two trustees on behalf of all the trustees

Signature

 _____

end of the period

Unrestricted funds to nearest £	Restricted funds to nearest £	Endowment funds to nearest £
3,421	48,986	-
-	29,788	-
-	734	-
3,421	79,508	-
OK	OK	OK

Unrestricted funds to nearest £	Restricted funds to nearest £	Endowment funds to nearest £
-	-	-
-	-	-
-	-	-
-	-	-
-	-	-
-	-	-

Fund to which asset belongs	Cost (optional)	Current value (optional)
	-	-
	-	-
	-	-
	-	-
	-	-

Fund to which asset belongs	Cost (optional)	Current value (optional)
	-	-
	-	-
	-	-
	-	-
	-	-
	-	-
	-	-
	-	-
	-	-

Fund to which liability relates	Amount due (optional)	When due (optional)
	-	
	-	
	-	
	-	
	-	

Print Name	Date of approval
Kim West	03/18/2021



Section A

Independent Examiner's Report

**Report to the trustees/
members of**

Charity Name
Swindon Down's Syndrome Group

**On accounts for the year
ended**

31 December 2021

**Charity no
(if any)**

1158449

Set out on pages

(remember to include the page numbers of additional sheets)

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the above charity ("the Trust") for the year ended 31/12/2021.

**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 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.

Signed:

Date:

21-3-2022

Name:

Steve Fraser

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

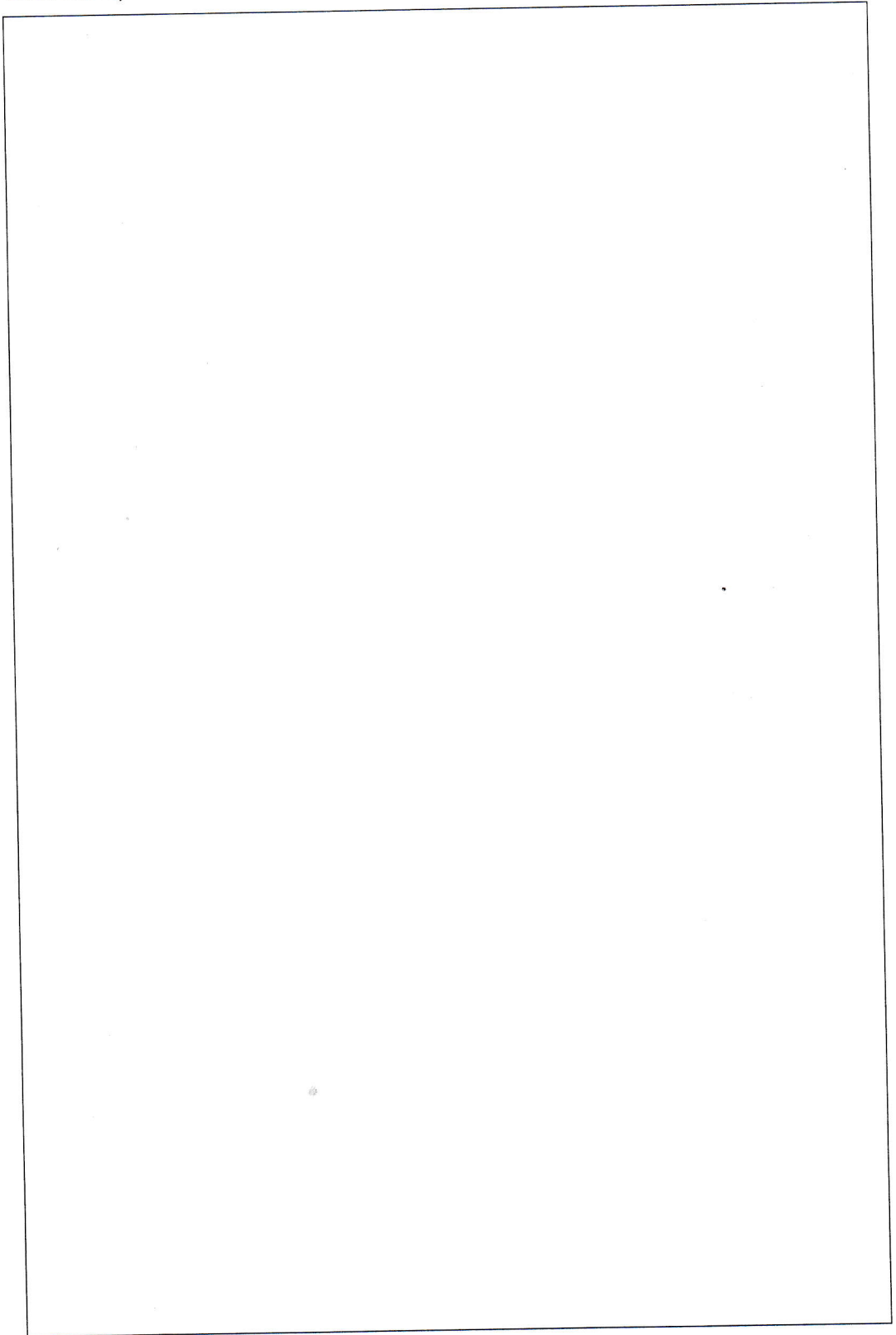
FCA

Address:

MHA Monahans, 38-42 Newport Street, Swindon, SN1 3DR

Only complete if the examiner needs to highlight matters of concern (see CC32, Independent examination of charity accounts: directions and guidance for examiners).

Give here brief details of any items that the examiner wishes to disclose.





Charity Name Swindon Downs Syndrome Group	No (if any) 1158449
--	------------------------

CC16a

Receipts and payments accounts

For the period from	Period start date 01.01.19	To	Period end date 31.12.19
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Section A Receipts and payments

	Unrestricted funds to the nearest £	Restricted funds to the nearest £	Endowment funds to the nearest £	Total funds to the nearest £	Last year to the nearest £
A1 Receipts					
Donations	3,851	45,403	-	49,254	27,928
Outings/Parties/Sports		985	-	985	5,631
Fundraising	388	14,190	-	14,578	23,522
Miscellaneous			-	-	-
Training		536	-	536	2,096
Speech Therapy			-	-	-
Interest		90	-	90	127
Membership	1,080		-	1,080	905
Sub total	5,319	61,204	-	66,523	60,209
A2 Asset and investment sales, etc.	-	-	-	-	-
Total receipts	5,319	61,204	-	66,523	60,209
A3 Payments					
Outings/Parties/Sports/Clubs		6,252	-	6,252	20,557
Fundraising	40	9,326	-	9,366	6,871
Newsletter/Postage	4	985	-	989	1,969
Speech Therapy	1,000	21,728	-	22,728	16,705
Training		400	-	400	1,512
Miscellaneous	3,776	280	-	4,056	3,945
WorkFit			-	-	530
			-	-	-
			-	-	-
Sub total	4,820	38,971	-	43,791	52,089
A4 Asset and investment purchases, etc.	-	-	-	-	-
Total payments	4,820	38,971	-	43,791	52,089
Net of receipts/(payments)	499	22,233	-	22,732	8,121
A5 Transfers between funds			-	-	-
A6 Cash funds last year end	2,922	57,275	-	60,197	52,076
Cash funds this year end	3,421	79,508	-	82,929	60,197

Section B Statement of assets and liabilities at the end of the period

Categories	Details	Unrestricted funds to nearest £	Restricted funds to nearest £	Endowment funds to nearest £
B1 Cash funds	Santander	3,421	48,986	-
	Teachers Building Society	-	29,788	-
	Paypal	-	734	-
	Total cash funds <small>(agree balances with receipts and payments account(s))</small>	3,421	79,508	-
		OK	OK	OK

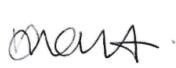
Categories	Details	Unrestricted funds to nearest £	Restricted funds to nearest £	Endowment funds to nearest £
B2 Other monetary assets		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-

Categories	Details	Fund to which asset belongs	Cost (optional)	Current value (optional)
B3 Investment assets			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-

Categories	Details	Fund to which asset belongs	Cost (optional)	Current value (optional)
B4 Assets retained for the charity's own use			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-

Categories	Details	Fund to which liability relates	Amount due (optional)	When due (optional)
B5 Liabilities			-	
			-	
			-	
			-	
			-	

Signed by one or two trustees on behalf of all the trustees

Signature	Print Name	Date of approval
 _____ _____	Kim West _____ _____	18/03/2021 _____ _____

SWINDON DOWN'S SYNDROME GROUP

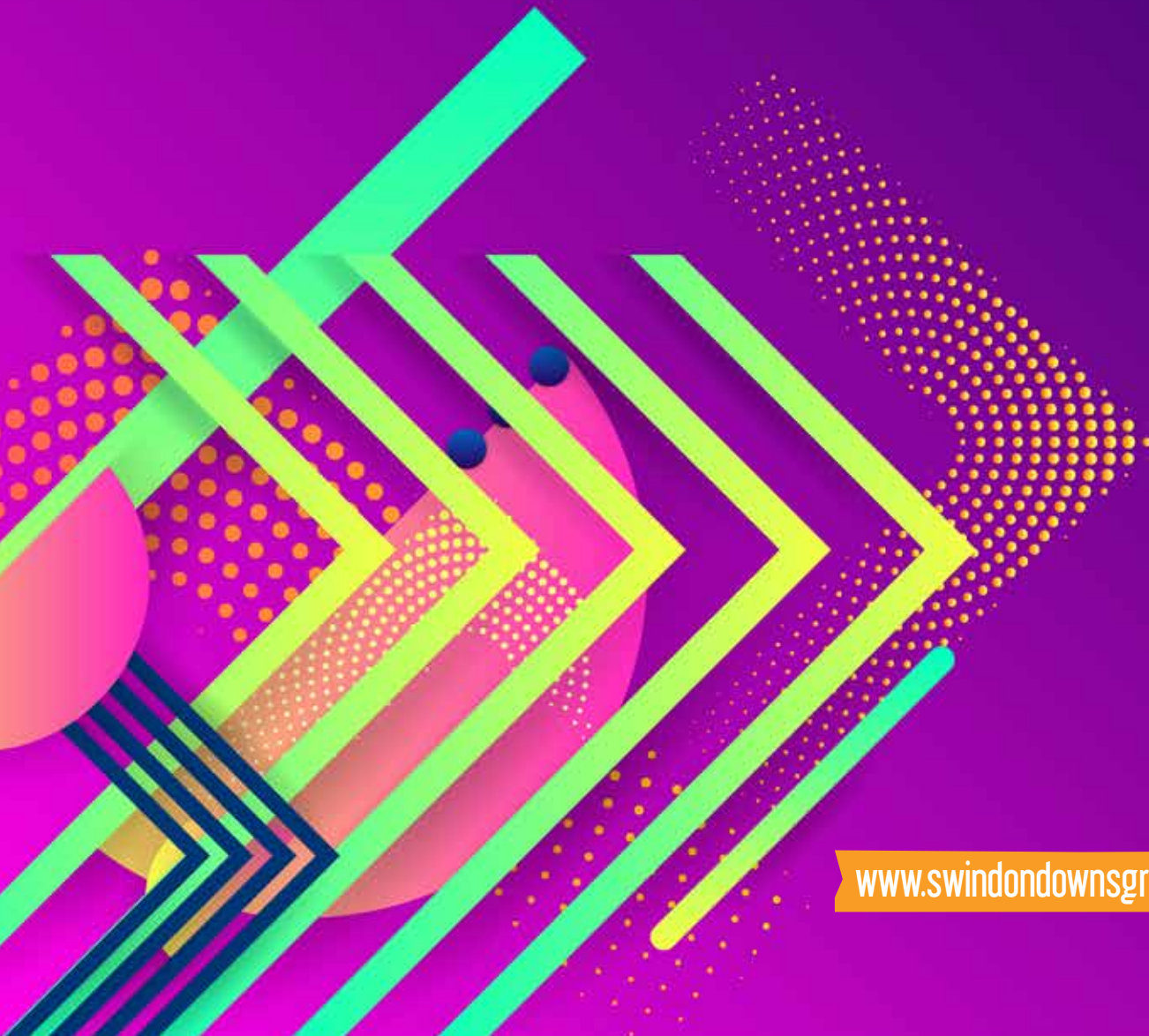
England & Wales - Charity number 1158449

Accounts



ANNUAL REVIEW 2020

January - December 2020



www.swindondownsgroup.org.uk

ANNUAL REVIEW 2020



Families are what make the world a fun place to be. They make us laugh, they make us cry, they give us opportunities and they are by our side when we need them.

We are a family.

Actually, we are many families, all volunteering our time and experience as parents, carers and siblings to make life that bit more fun and ensure our family with Down's have all the opportunities and support they need from birth to old age. As a volunteer-family led charity we have seen it all - from newborns to adults and beyond - and can positively say that where there is a desire to be better; to have all the same opportunities as everyone else it can not only be achieved but surpassed.

We are proud of what we offer to our members and we are equally proud to say that through the hard-work and energy of our family, we have had another outstanding year.

With that we would like to offer our thanks to everyone who has helped and supported our Group, through membership, donations or volunteering - you've helped us to achieve more than we could imagine.



04 | [Message from the Chair](#)

05 | [Our achievements](#)

20 | [Thank yous](#)

21 | [Fundraising](#)

26 | [Governance](#)

27 | [Future](#)



MESSAGE FROM OUR CHAIR

“A YEAR LIKE NO OTHER”

At the end of what can only be described as the strangest of years, I wanted to write a more personal message to all our members and supporters.

For all of us this has been the most unusual year imaginable. We all owe a huge debt of gratitude to all the key workers out there, whether they be nurses, doctors, carers, teachers or retail workers.

I want to say a huge thank you to you all for showing true spirit - not only have you been parents/carers, but teachers as well, along with some of us having to work from home and holding everything else together for our loved ones, so well done everyone, you should be so proud.

The Coronavirus pandemic has meant we have entered a new world for us as a charity. While it has had a major impact on our fundraising abilities and finances, it has meant we have had to change the way we provide our services to you.

With most of our members having access to online platforms we have been able to adapt our speech and language therapy, youth club, 0-5 coffee mornings and primary support groups to virtual sessions.

In place of our summer trip, we sent out Summer Activity Boxes. At Christmas we sent out boxes full of goodies and activities for you and your families to enjoy. As Trustees it has meant we have had to 'think outside the box'. It was a challenge we accepted to continue the support of our members.

Another consequence of the pandemic was our long-standing relationship with Swindon Borough Council, our service provider for speech and language therapy, came to an end. Due to circumstances beyond our control, Swindon Borough Council were no longer able to provide the Group with weekly speech and language therapy which they have provided us for over 20 years. Erica has worked with so many of our young people over the years and we would like to take this opportunity to thank her

for all the amazing work she has done and let her know that we will miss her very much.

Being able to communicate is such a fundamental part of our ability to be a part of our communities, workplaces and families. For us as Trustees, we had to look at how we could continue to provide this vital service to our members during this time.

We have found a way to make it possible to deliver speech and language therapy virtually and early indications show this is working well. Changing to a virtual platform made it difficult to continue with the language groups that we had worked in previously so we had to look at ways to fund individual sessions for everyone that accessed SALT.

We worked hard to apply for grants and we were lucky to receive support from The National Lottery, The Julia and Hans Rausing Trust and Wiltshire Community Foundation. Our Patron, Cliff Puffett, has been a great advocate for SALT and with his support we received further donations from him and the members of his Rotary Club. Thank you so much for making this happen!

We have all missed so many events in 2020, some of which we had looked forward to for a long time. I will be so pleased when life can get back to some normality and we see our weekly sporting events, drama project, Salamander and so much more back on the calendar.

I must thank our board of Trustees for everything they have contributed over the last year. They too have had to juggle their own lives while supporting the Group. We are a small local charity, run by ten very dedicated volunteers who give up their time for you.

Thank you to everyone for your support during these difficult times. Take care, stay safe and we look forward to seeing you very soon.

Kim West, Chairperson
Swindon Down's Syndrome Group

OUR ACHIEVEMENTS

Despite the pandemic we still had many achievements in 2020, here are just some of them:

£14,578

was received by the Group through fundraising in 2020

119

families now receive regular information through our mailing list

£1,080

was raised through voluntary membership donations

27

educational professionals attended our annual pre-school and primary training day

300

copies of our magazine Downtime, were distributed to members and our local community

96

Summer activity boxes sent out to our members

£40,663

Raised through donations and grants to provide speech and language therapy

100

members received a Christmas gift box from the Group in place of our usual Christmas party and pantomime trip

17

members enrolled for Speech and Language Therapy with the majority receiving SALT on a weekly basis

£4,466

raised in donations and grants to support adults in the world of work

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE YEAR



Singing Hands

We were delighted to be able to offer members a couple of fun filled sessions from the amazing Singing Hands during Lockdown. They focus on learning language in a way that it is motivating, engaging and most of all, fun!

Lord-Lieutenant of Wiltshire



We were truly honoured to receive this lovely thank you card from HM Lord-Lieutenant of Wiltshire to everyone at the The Swindon Down's Syndrome Group. It really means a lot to be recognised for all the work we do as #volunteers especially in challenging times like we are in now. So thank you so much and well done to everyone



We get welcomed to Foundation Park

The Swindon DSAActive went to visit the new Swindon Foundation Park ground to have a look around. Thank you to Phil for showing us around, it really is a fantastic place. We look forward to playing there when things return to normal.



Downtime magazine

Our self-published magazine Downtime is now in its fourth year of production.



Tiverton players pantomime

It was fantastic to be given the opportunity to watch the final dress rehearsal before opening night. Thank you for a wonderful evening - what a brilliant performance.



Declutter and Donate 2020

Virgin Money Giving and World of Books Group asked the public to #DeclutterandDonate unwanted books, games, DVDs and CDs to help support charities like us.



2020 was the year where everything went virtual, including our AGM. Unfortunately our Open Day had to be cancelled. We were very much looking forward to showcasing what we do. Our Open Day will be back as soon as it's safe to do so.



Kerry celebrates 20 years service

Kerry Montague started working at Sainsbury's part time when she was just 19. Kerry has recently celebrated her 20 year milestone. Kerry works 16 hours a week as a Grocery Assistant at the Stratton St. Margaret store.



Practicing football skills in lockdown

The DSAActive Football team were hard at work practicing their skills during lockdown. Thanks to Cheryl they were able to pass the ball into each other in a fantastic video.



Clucking 19 drama project

During lockdown the Rubber Chicken Inc. Group were hard at work creating a lockdown medley of entertainment.



Lottery funds new parent packs

A ticket for Swindon Community Lottery costs £1 per week and 50p go directly to us if selected as your chosen charity! We use this money to provide congratulations packs for new parents.



Celebrations for VE Day were a little different this year, it was great to see how our members marked the 75th anniversary.



SUPPORTING NEW PARENTS

Our support for new parents has gone from strength-to-strength.

BY AMANDA AGER

This year has thrown many challenges at us all, and we have had to adapt and find new ways to continue to support new parents, whilst not being able to meet face-to-face at our usual monthly stay and play sessions.

Firstly, we set up a New Parents WhatsApp group, so we could always be on-hand if anyone wanted any advice, or just to chat. We now have twelve members in the group. If anyone else would like to join, please contact me on the details below.

We have also held virtual coffee mornings over Zoom. These have given us the opportunity to 'see' each other, (and our gorgeous little ones!) have a catch-up, and discuss any issues we are having, so we can mutually support each other.

During the first lockdown, as many of us were unable to access the support we would usually have, we arranged a Zoom Speech and Language session, where Erica Ford spoke to us about ways to encourage communication in children under five with Down's syndrome.

In December, we had our first Zoom Speech and Language Therapy session



"Been totally rubbish not being able to meet up but the pre-school parent WhatsApp group has been amazing. Everything from pick your brain stuff, to I need to rant to get it off my chest stuff, to look at what my little one just did stuff"

VICTORIA ARGUE, PARENT

Please send me an email (amanda@swindondowns.org.uk) or my contact number is 07825 718691, if you need anything.

with Martha Currie, from Mable Therapy. This was Christmas themed, and we had lots of fun singing and signing, and making Christmas pictures.

This year has seen us giving out our first Prenatal support packs, which contain a book entitled Wouldn't Change A Thing, very kindly donated by the charity WCAT.

Even though we are still unable to meet face-to-face at present, I am still very much here for support.



13 FAMILIES WITH CHILDREN 7-11 YEARS OLD

PRIMARY SUPPORT

BY MICHELLE JAMES

This time last year, I was looking forward to developing my new role as the groups Primary age contact.

Cailey and I had plans to launch a coffee and catch-up session for Primary school parents as well as re-launching the half term soft play sessions. Unfortunately, Covid has meant that these plans were not able to happen.

Despite this, we do have a closed Facebook group, SDSG Primary Support, where we can share information and advice for parents.

We also have a WhatsApp group where parents can keep in touch with each other and ask for help or advice and I have organised some virtual catch-up sessions on Zoom.

Victoria is one of the parents who accesses the WhatsApp group.

"Whilst 2020 saw most of our energy focussed on home schooling and helping our children adapt to the constant changes, we still managed to find the time to establish a What's App group and stay connected with Zoom calls. Some of us have known each other since our children were born. Some have never met. We now have 10 members of our group – if you have a child of Primary School age and want to join the chat – which has covered everything from grommets to Christmas present ideas- do get in touch. It can be a useful forum to ask for help and advice or just a good old fashioned moan or brag!"

I have worked with Kim, Cailey and Victoria to revamp the school packs and I was able to attend the virtual training day which was very informative. Fingers crossed that by the time I write my next annual report, I will have been able to go into schools and work with staff in schools to support them with helping our children to learn and flourish in a mainstream setting.



17
MEMBERS
ENROLLED FOR
SPEECH & LANGUAGE
THERAPY

SPEECH & LANGUAGE THERAPY

The national lockdown has brought many challenges, particularly when it comes to accessing support services for our young people. That's why we are thrilled to talk about the success of our collaboration with Mable Therapy.

BY KIM WEST & MARTHA CURRIE

When Swindon Borough Council could no longer provide Speech and Language Therapy to our Group we had to look for an alternative provider.

Mable Therapy provides specialist online speech and language support and they have been working with many of our families offering weekly virtual speech and language sessions since October 2020.

Online speech therapy means we have continued to provide this vital service to all of our members enrolled. Our children and young people access this from home on a laptop or tablet and meet their therapist once a week for one-to-one support. Sometimes this can be direct work just with the young person, and for younger children, this is collaborative family work.

"I was very impressed with the set up, I wasn't sure it was going to work and thought it maybe too babyish, but it was good and set at the right level!"



Being on the computer means the therapy is embedded in fun games and activities, designed to reduce anxiety and encourage engagement.

Virtual speech and language therapy means Swindon Downs Syndrome Group together with Mable can bring you experts in their field from across the world, for example, Julie also works as a consultant for a charity called Voices for Down's Syndrome in Ireland and alongside her Mable sessions, she runs the speech and Language service for the Down Syndrome Centre in the Midlands. Another Mable Therapist Emanuela recently won ESLPS Star award for extraordinary contributions to the field of Speech and Language Pathology in the Emirates.

"We are delighted to be collaborating with Swindon Down Syndrome Group to offer our online clinical services. We hope a continued collaboration with the group which means many more children are able to access essential speech and language support and show the world what they are capable of through communication"

Martha Currie, Mable Therapy

YOUTH CLUB

Like many of our services Youth Club had to stop due to the pandemic and move to an online platform.



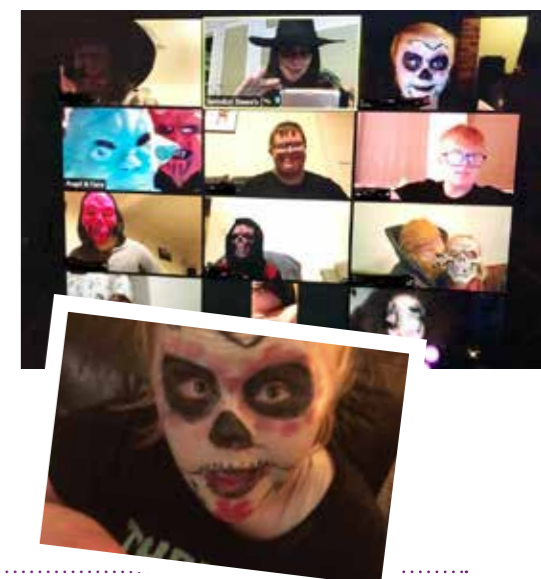
If there is one good thing to come out of the pandemic it's that our Youth Club has been able to reach more members from much further afield.

Every fortnight we welcome lots of our teenage and adult members to our virtual youth club. As you can imagine it was no easy task to try and emulate what we had when we used to meet at Toothill Farmhouse on Zoom. With a bit of thought and imagination we did just that.

Virtual bingo, quizzes, play your cards right, 'go-fetch', heads and tails are just some of the regular activities we do and not to mention the odd singalong!

It was lovely to get some feedback from one of the parents who said, "She is particularly enjoying the virtual youth club and the ingenious games that are played."

Cailey who with the help of Michael Billinge-Jones and John Stow said, "I have thoroughly enjoyed the challenge of bringing youth club online. It's wonderful just to just watch everyone chat and catch up on what they have been up to. We have some avid soap fans at youth club so can guarantee a conversation about Eastenders."



KEEPING FIT AND ACTIVE



To all my football friends
 I miss seeing you at football and hope we can be back soon.
 I hope you are all keeping safe.
 Lots of

Our regular sporting activities were massively impacted by the various lockdowns and restrictions during the year.

Swindon DS Active Football

by Brad Carter
 STFC Community Foundation

The year started off with the weekly football sessions taking place at the Haydon Centre every Wednesday evening, up until the lockdown caused indoor sporting activities to stop in March. In this short period at the start of the year it was great to see up to 12 players regularly attending and improving their football skills!



During the lockdown period, the Foundation looked for ways to stay in touch with the DS Active players. Some of the Foundation staff made home visits to deliver Swindon Town snoods to the DS Active players, who lived locally, which offered a chance to have a socially distanced catch up. In addition, a number of Zoom calls with the DS Active team were arranged, initially on a fortnightly basis, with various activities such as a scavenger hunt, charades, and a Christmas themed quiz.

Before Christmas, the DS Active players received a goodie bag of Premier League and Swindon Town gifts as a present. The Foundation worked alongside the DS Active group to distribute the gifts to the players, which were well received.

It has been great to be able to remain connected with our DS Active players during the difficult period and we hope it's not long before we are able to return to the weekly football sessions.

by Sammy Hiscocks
 STFC Community Foundation

It has been an absolute honour to be a part of the Swindon Town FC Community Foundation's Zoom calls with members of our DS Active team. What a fantastic bunch of young players we have.

It's been so lovely to keep in touch with you all, seeing you smiling and laughing in these uncertain times.

I have really enjoyed the activities that we have shared together during our time on zoom. We have taken part in quizzes, had a go at karaoke (thank goodness for the mute button), a guess the animal describing game and have laughed our socks off during our scavenger hunts. That's the last time I use keys during a scavenger hunt. I didn't realise keys sounded like peas... I'll leave that one to your imagination. We have had so much fun together.

It has been a pleasure. Thank you for putting a smile on my face and keeping me company during these lockdowns. I hope we will be able to continue our fun and games face to face really soon.



Swimming

by John Stow

Our fortnightly swimming sessions at Thamesdown Hydrotherapy Pool were unable to run between April and October. When the pool did reopen, COVID restrictions meant that a maximum of only ten people could be at any session. The few that did return relished the chance of some exercise and being able to see friends

again, obviously keeping at a distance. As 2020 ended, we again entered a lockdown and swimming was again put on hold. We intend returning to the water as soon as allowed in 2021 so, if anyone wants more information please email swimming@swindondownsgroup.org.uk.

Tennis

by John Stow

Tennis sessions were impacted more and have not resumed at Delta Tennis Centre since being suspended during the first lockdown. When restrictions were eased during the summer, some players managed to get on court outdoors within the LTA guidelines but Delta have not yet resumed their disability programme. The LTA competitions were also badly affected this year meaning that the players from our Group were unable to compete against others from around the country.

Other sports

In previous years we have been able to offer occasional sessions in other sports to our members. Sadly, these were also unable to happen once we went into lockdown. With different sports having to follow their own specific guidelines, running bespoke disability sessions was off the agenda. However, we did manage to team up again with Swindon Shock Wheelchair Basketball back in February. This gave our members a chance to try a mixture of basketball and wheelchair basketball and concentrated on basic skills such as dribbling, shooting and, of course, chair control. We aim to try and offer the chance to try out more sports in 2021, when situations allow. These will hopefully include cricket and athletics sessions.

SALAMANDER FIRE COURSE

WRITTEN BY NICKY PARKER

August should have been one of the highlights of the DWFRS Swindon Salamander year with Swindon Down's Syndrome Group's annual Salamander course... and this would have been year 12!

Those members of the group booked on this year's course have been guaranteed a place on the next SDSG course but due to Covid-19 that could be a long way off and our learners, firefighter instructors and support staff were all extremely disappointed.

So, we launched a series of five challenges for the SDSG Salamander learners past, present and future with a certificate of participation for those completing all five.

Instructors joined in with the Observational Challenge and Swindon Police with the Creative Challenge.

All those that participated sent in photo or video evidence that we posted on our Salamander Facebook page and the Swindon Down's Syndrome Group shared on their Facebook page too.



The challenges:

- 1. Problem-Solving Challenge** – a firefighter must make his way across a course with fire, water and fuel but carrying one item at a time. Fuel and fire could not be left together, and neither could water and fire.
- 2. Creative Challenge** – create a firefighter.
- 3. Observation Challenge** – emergency equipment scavenger hunt in their local community.
- 4. Fitness Challenge** – climb the equivalent of the aerial ladder platform (32m!), crawl through a homemade tunnel equivalent to a smokehouse tunnel, hop or jump the length of a fire hose.

- 5. Fire Safety Challenge** – make an escape plan and practise it and also to test their smoke detector.

This was an opportunity for us to embed some important home fire safety messages, an opportunity to engage and celebrate the achievements of our learners and just to have some fun when life was pretty difficult for all.

We were just amazed at the creativity and enthusiasm as well as delighted by the sheer joy as they saw themselves on social media, counted their 'likes' and revelled in the positive comments.

It was an opportunity to showcase skill, enthusiasm, engagement and artistry – well done, all!



Since 2015, the partnership between the DSA's WorkFit programme and the Swindon Down's syndrome Support Group has been providing a tailored employment programme for people with Down's syndrome in Swindon and Wiltshire.

We are pleased to announce that the partnership will be continuing into 2021 and beyond.

WorkFit brings together employers and jobseekers who have Down's syndrome. It is a tailored service dedicated to training employers about the learning profile of people who have Down's syndrome so that they can be supported in the workplace. Work can be anything from paid jobs, volunteering roles, work experience or supported internships/apprenticeships.

The arrival of the Covid-19 Coronavirus pandemic has significantly impacted delivery of the WorkFit programme in all areas, with almost all opportunities being suspended. Throughout the last year, WorkFit has been supporting candidates and their families with any support needs relating to the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme (CJRS), benefits, mental health and well-being etc. with the support of the Down's Syndrome Association's Information Team and Helpline service. This support will continue and we are ready to assist candidates

who may be returning to work after the end of the CJRS.

Our new WorkFit Liaison Officer was scheduled to begin in post last summer (2020), providing local knowledge and on the spot support to employers and candidates seeking work, however due to the Covid-19 pandemic, this has been deferred for now and we hope that the successful applicant will be able to take up the post in the Spring/Summer of 2021.

We are looking forward to engaging with local businesses later this year as circumstances allow and will be welcoming employers to planned events to let them know about WorkFit and what support we can offer them to develop an opportunity for someone who has Down's syndrome. These networking events will be the perfect opportunity to ask questions and hear from local businesses. Feedback from the WorkFit Employment Development Manager, is that employers are continuing to enquire about and register for the WorkFit programme and there is a lot of optimism around developing future opportunities.

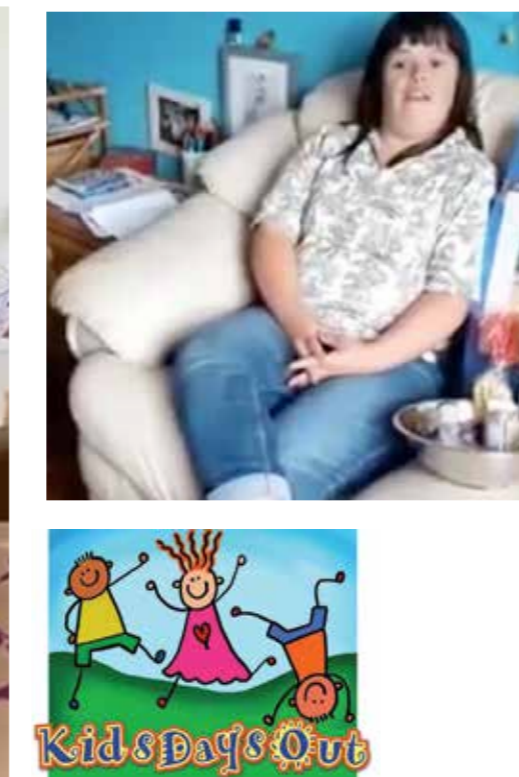
SUMMER ACTIVITY BOXES

Every summer, the Group arranges a family day-out, usually to a theme park.

BY JOHN STOW

This was not possible in 2020 so we had to look at how we could help our members stay active and engaged over the long summer break, especially as many had been stuck at home for a long period prior to summer.

What we came up with was the SUMMER BOX. The boxes were age-group specific and contained a mix of arts, crafts and sporty items. We were fortunate to receive grant funding from Wiltshire and Swindon Sport (WASP) and we worked with Swindon Children's Scrapstore to source the contents. When the boxes were delivered by Trustees to the families there were lots of happy faces and the Group received an amazing amount of positive feedback.



CHRISTMAS BOXES



100
FAMILIES
RECIEVED A
CHRISTMAS
ACTIVITY BOX

BY CAILEY WHITCHER

The Group's Christmas party and trip to the pantomime are two of the biggest events in the Group's calendar. As with all our other events, they too had to be cancelled.

We know how much our members look forward to these two events and it's almost unheard of for them not to go ahead.

We couldn't end the year without doing something for the families we support so the Trustees came up with the idea of giving everyone a Christmas box.

KidsDaysOut had planned to give us a donation towards the Pantomime trip so we approached them with our idea and they were more than happy to help us fund our Christmas Boxes.

We once again enlisted the help of Swindon Children's Scrapstore to help us fill the boxes with wonderful Christmas activities, gifts and treats. ASDA West Swindon kindly donated some chocolates and mince pies too.

The Trustees once again, filled their cars and headed across Swindon and Wiltshire to spread to some festive cheer. We recieved so many kind letters, cards and emails thanking us for the boxes.

While the boxes can never replace the traditional fun and games of our Christmas party it was just great that we could do something to bring a bit of festive cheer.

CHRISTMAS SIGN-A-LONG

BY MICHAEL BILLINGE-JONES

The trustees knew it would be unlikely that we would be able to have Christmas parties and get-togethers during December.

We decided to create a virtual sing-a-long for a bit of fun, entertainment and hopefully raise some funds for the Group.

A carol was chosen (Jingle Bells) as it is familiar to most of us. An email was sent out asking for participants to sing a few lines and the chorus. We had sixteen responses from people willing to take part.

Over the next few weeks I had 56 video clips emailed to me. I spent a few hours cutting and pasting various clips together to make the final version. It was great to see some of you dressed up and singing the carol for us.

The final video was put on Facebook with a link to a donation page. We had a fantastic response with 2,500 views, lots of likes and raised a fantastic £820 for our Group.

A huge thank you for all those who sent a clip in and also to those generous people who donated.



PRIMARY & PRE-SCHOOL TRAINING DAYS

We offer dedicated training days to support educational professionals who work closely with a child with Down's syndrome - something which is not currently provided by our Local Authority.



Children with Down's syndrome are all unique individuals, however we know they share a common learning profile. This means we have a good understanding of how to support a pupil with Down's syndrome in a learning setting and how to maximise their potential to acquire new skills and be included in the classroom with their peers.

This year our training day took place virtually over Zoom. It was once again, led by Gillian Bird, Services Director at The Down's Syndrome

Association and attended was as popular as previous years with 27 delegates in attendance.

Based on feedback from the previous year we split the sessions to focus on different age categories and give those attending a broad overview of the learning profile of children with Down's syndrome and how best to support their learning needs.

IT'S ALL THANKS TO YOU, OUR SUPPORTERS

We are so grateful to everyone who has supported us over the past year.

We owe a huge thank you to every single person, group or business that has helped us to support our young people with Down's syndrome. In particular we'd like to thank the following supporters.

OUR PATRONS

Cliff Puffett
Julie Thomas

OUR TRUSTEES

Kim West
John Stow
Sam Harding
Cailey Whitcher
Jo Messenger
Ian Tuckwell
Amanda Ager
Michael Billinge-Jones
Roy Perrett
Victoria McGuire

OUR SUPPORTERS

Riz Sheik
Zurich Community Trust
Nationwide
Wiltshire Police
Down's Syndrome International
Rubber Chicken
DS Active
Swindon Phoenix Rotary
Swindon Town Football Club
Fairfield College
Justin Tomlinson MP
Wiltshire and Dorset
Fire and Rescue
CAT's Solutions
Nutmeg Design
Wiltshire Community Foundation
Greensquare Group
National Lottery
The Julia and Hans Trustees
Wiltshire and Swindon Sport (WASPS)
Kids Days Out
Midcounties Coop
Swindon Children's Scrap Store
TD Williamson
Morris Owen
ASDA West Swindon
ASDA Orbital
Mable Speech Therapy
Clair & Carol Hill
Paddy Brennan
Swindon Rotary TST
Cliff Puffett
Angela Ruck
Sue Frawley
Dignity
Holdcroft Enterprises
M Hillier
Honda trading
Martyn Coles
Jodie Morris

Mrs L S Parry
Copy Color
Marina Billinge-Jones
Nicki Denver
Mandy McAlpine
Nationwide
APD Communications
Jockey Club
The Crown Inn, Stratton
Simon & Lauren Craige
CJ Scahill
Waitrose Swindon
Fairfield Farm College
Swindon Phoenix Rotary
Swindon North Rotary
USAY Compare
Dawn's birthday fundraiser
D Leinster
Swindon Lions

FUNDRAISING

ASDA
foundation
presents us
with £1000 cheque

We were chosen to be part of the ASDA Walmart quarterly green token customers vote. We were delighted to be chosen as the winners and were presented in February with a cheque for £1000 which will be split between WorkFit, Salamander and Speech and Language Therapy.



The Crown Inn in Stratton hosted a charity fundraiser in aid of the Group during Down's Awareness week. The pub raised a fantastic £277.73 from the quiz night which included Rock and Roll Bingo and a raffle.



Brave supporters get the chop for Salamander

Courageous family members, friends and supporters waxed and shaved various parts of their bodies in November 2019 in a bid to raising funds for our Salamander project. They raised over £3000. A massive thank you to everyone who took part and to Nicki for organising the event.



Wine tasting is a winner

Thank you to Mandy McAlpine and Nicki Denver for organising a fantastic fundraising evening at Magnum Wines in Swindon. Everyone was treated to eight different wines as well as enjoying delicious cheeses and nibbles throughout the night. The event raised £536 for Salamander.

the
2.6
challenge



We dance our socks off for 2.6 challenge

The Covid-19 pandemic has had a catastrophic effect with the cancellation of thousands of events and the loss of in income through fundraising events.

The country joined together on 26 April to do the 2.6 Challenge.

As a group we chose to 'fund-rave' and ask our members to dance for 2.6 minutes. All the videos were shared on our social media. Family, friends and supporters were encouraged to donate through our dedicated Virgin Money Giving page.

So far we have raised over £400 with the possibility of more to come. Thank you to everyone who took part and donated.

Martyn takes on three peaks

Martyn Coles runs local scaffolding company Coles Scaffolding. In September Martyn took on the three peaks challenge to raise funds for the Group.


“At Coles we pride ourselves on being an inclusive employer, giving opportunities to young people and disadvantaged adults who may find it challenging to get an opportunity to prove what they can do in the workplace.”

In September 2020, I took on the challenge of climbing the three peaks (Ben Nevis, Scafell Pike and Snowdon) in 24 hours.

Out of ten of us who took part, only four of us completed the full challenge and I am proud to be one of them.



“I knew the challenge would be tough physically but I think I underestimated the emotional strain”



What is the Three Peaks Challenge?

The National Three Peaks Challenge involves climbing the three highest peaks of Scotland, England and Wales, often within 24 hours. The total walking distance is 23 miles (37km) and the total ascent is 3064 metres (10,052ft) - twice the ascent of the Yorkshire Three Peaks, over a similar total walking distance.

My driving force behind my willingness to finish was that I had committed to spreading my mum's ashes, who passed away last year, at the top of each mountain peak. There was no way I was going to stop and let her down!

I knew the challenge would be tough physically but I think I underestimated the emotional strain that came from spreading my mum's ashes. I miss my mum every day, she was mine and my daughters' world. Completing this challenge and putting my mum "on top of the

world" (or at least, at the highest points in the UK!) meant a lot to me.

The Swindon Down's Syndrome Group has been close to mine (and my mum's) hearts for a number of years so it was only right that any donations I was able to support a charity that means so much to us."

Martyn employs Todd, who has Down's syndrome, as a part-time scaffolder.

"Todd is not only a colleague but also a close friend, his disability

doesn't get in the way of any aspect of his life - so why should it stand in the way of him being able to work? Todd works just as hard as the rest of the team and we can't imagine the Christmas party without him!

I signed up to the WorkFit scheme as Todd was a friend seeking an opportunity. I'm fortunate to have a growing business so would support any of my friends who needed an opportunity.

Martyn set himself a target of £300 but due to the generous nature of his friends, colleagues and network, he has been able to raise an amazing £2,330.

I've never seen the fact that Todd has Down's syndrome as a barrier and so it was only right to welcome him into the team, as I would with anyone else."



National Sock Day
4 December 2020

On 4th December, National Sock Day, we decided to use this as an opportunity to raise awareness and promote the sales of our #lotsofsocks stock left over from WDS. The pandemic had stopped us being able to go out in to our community and sell socks and with the help of Zurich Community Foundation we launched a campaign 'Sock it to them' to boost sales.

New design Christmas cards



Our Christmas cards were back for 2020 and included two new designs! Local artist Aradhna from Aradhna's Art created the new birds and hedgehog designs for us to sell this year. We were very grateful that CATs Solutions were able to print the cards for us too.

#LotsOfSocks

Down's Awareness Week 2020

It was amazing to see so many of our members and supporters taking part in WDSO 2020.

Thank you to everyone who wore, bought or sold socks for us including Nationwide HQ, Nationwide Optimus House, Wiltshire Police HQ, The Crown Inn in Stratton, Swindon Police, Fairfield Farm College, Aster Housing, APD Communications, Devizes Fire Station, Peel House Residential Care Home - Melksham, Avon Tyres, Marlborough College, Uplands School, Mercedes-Benz, Ridgeway Medi Spa, Waitrose, Spec Savers and Great Western Hospital.



▼ Jeremy selling #LotsOfSocks and Sock Monkeys with Wiltshire Police



► Kylo and his bear showing off their #LotsOfSocks



▼ Alex helped us promote #LotsOfSocks



▲ Issac showing off his #LotsOfSocks and big smiles



▲ Lane did a tremendous job selling #LotsOfSocks at Nationwide Headquarters



▲ Our baby sock monkey enjoying the spring sunshine



◀▲ The staff and students at Fairfield Farm Trust



▲ Lane and John Stow with the help of Sophie and Kim West from the Group gave up their evening to sell socks at the game between Swindon and Scunthorpe United. It was fantastic to meet so many Swindon Town fans and with their support we raised an amazing £775.96.

GOVERNANCE & MANAGEMENT

Charity name: Swindon Down's Syndrome Group

Charity number: 1158449

Principal office: 34 Periwinkle Close, Swindon SN2 2QH

Governing document

Swindon Down's Syndrome Group is constituted as a charitable incorporated organisation (CIO) registered with the Charity Commission. It is governed by a constitution last updated in 2018.

Charitable objects:

The objects of the CIO are to relieve the charitable needs of people with Down's syndrome, and their families, helpers and carers in particular but not exclusively by the provision of support and information and speech and language therapy so that they are able to attain their full potential and to undertake any other charitable activities in connection with the relief of Down's syndrome in the SN postcode and the surrounding area. (Area of Benefit)

Surrounding area to be defined as – "post code areas associated to Fairford, Malmesbury, Hungerford, Pewsey, Marlborough, Hullavington, Chippenham, Devizes, Calne, Ashton Keynes, Cirencester, Aldbourne, Bromham, Melksham and Cheltenham."

Activities:

We are a parent-led charity supporting people with down's syndrome, their families, carers and all those with an interest in down's syndrome in Swindon and the surrounding area. We are an independent charity, affiliated to the national down's syndrome association.

Organisation structure

The charity trustees are responsible for the general control and management of the charity. The trustees give their time freely and receive no remuneration or other financial benefits.

The trustees meet together as a body monthly and are responsible for all decisions taken in relation to running the charity. The charity can have a maximum of 10 trustees.

Trustee name	Office (if any)	Dates acted if not for whole year
Kim West	Chair	
John Stow	Vice Chair	
Sam Harding	Treasurer	
Cailey Whitcher	Secretary	
Ian Tuckwell	Vice Treasurer	
Michael Billinge-Jones		
Joanna Messenger		
Amanda Ager		
Victoria McGuire		18/4/2020-present
Royden Perrett		18/4/2020-present
Nicki Denver		Resigned 18/4/2020
Leslye Russell-Pierce		Resigned 18/4/2020

Recruitment and appointment of trustees

The existing trustees are responsible for the recruitment of new trustees. In appointing new trustees we seek people who are part of our local community. Potential trustees are invited to trustees' meetings or to meet with the chairperson to learn more about the charity's aims and objectives. If all trustees agree they are proposed as new trustees. New trustees are required to complete a DBS check and given a three month trial. This process allows due consideration of the person's eligibility, personal competence, specialist knowledge and skills.

Public benefit

The trustees have paid due regard to the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit in deciding what activities the charity should undertake. The trustees consider that they have acted in the public benefit.

Financial review and reserves policy

At 31 December 2020 the charity held total funds of £82,929, of which £79,508 were restricted and £3,421 were unrestricted. The charity has minimal overheads as it is run by volunteers and so it does not need to build up reserves. The restricted funds comprise:

Speech	Donations and grants to provide speech therapy	£40,663
Salamander	Donations and grants to run fund the fire course	£8,620
WorkFit	Donations and grants to support adults in the world of work	£4,466
Other smaller funds		£25,759
Total restricted funds		£79,508

Approved by the trustees and signed on its behalf by:



Kim West, Chairperson
Swindon Down's Syndrome Group

THE FUTURE

Our plans for 2021 onwards is to continue on our mission to help people with Down's syndrome to have the same opportunities as everyone else and raise awareness of Down's syndrome in the local community.

In 2021 we aim to build on our speech therapy provision by offering Adult Speech. Up to now we have only been able to support people until they are 25 but we recognise the value this will bring to our adult members as well. We are looking to raise £20,000 and hope to have the service in place by the end of the year.

The Covid pandemic limited our fundraising abilities, but hopefully 2021 will allow us to be out in the community more, organising events, bringing in much needed funds.

Some of our plans to offer additional support for those in the primary age bracket had to be put on hold. While we delivered what we could virtually, our hope is to be able to hold more information evenings, drop-in parent chats and some soft-play sessions too.

We have made great progress in developing our relationships with local schools and in 2021 we want to build on this further. We already have plans to deliver a talk to the Early Years SENCo team and hope to offer more talks throughout the year.

After talking with parents we have found that there isn't a clear pathway for a child born with Down's syndrome and an inconsistency in the services they are offered. We are working on a pathway document with the support of health and educational professionals in Swindon and Wiltshire so that parents can see what care they should be receiving at the different points in their child's life.

By the end of 2021 our new WorkFit Liaison Officer should be in place and if safe to do so our young people back into work places.

We always welcome the ideas and support of our parents and carers, we would love for more of you to be involved in shaping what do. Together we can do great things.

The Swindon Down's Syndrome Group is a parent-led charity supporting people with Down's syndrome and their families in Swindon and the surrounding area.

We are here to help people with Down's syndrome to have the same opportunities as everyone else and raise awareness of Down's syndrome in the local community.

REGISTERED CHARITY

Swindon Down's Syndrome Group is a UK registered charity. Registered Office 34 Periwinkle Close Swindon SN2 2QH.

Charity number: 1158449

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Designed and produced by Cailey Whitcher www.nutmegdesign.co.uk

www.swindondownsgroup.org.uk



Registered with
**FUNDRAISING
REGULATOR**





Charity Name Swindon Downs Syndrome Group	No (if any) 1158449
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CC16a

Receipts and payments accounts

For the period from	Period start date 01.01.20	To	Period end date 31.12.20
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Section A Receipts and payments

	Unrestricted funds to the nearest £	Restricted funds to the nearest £	Endowment funds to the nearest £	Total funds to the nearest £	Last year to the nearest £
A1 Receipts					
Donations	3,851	45,403	-	49,254	27,928
Outings/Parties/Sports		985	-	985	5,631
Fundraising	388	14,190	-	14,578	23,522
Miscellaneous			-	-	-
Training		536	-	536	2,096
Speech Therapy			-	-	-
Interest		90	-	90	127
Membership	1,080		-	1,080	905
Sub total	5,319	61,204	-	66,523	60,209
A2 Asset and investment sales, etc.					
	-	-	-	-	-
Total receipts	5,319	61,204	-	66,523	60,209
A3 Payments					
Outings/Parties/Sports/Clubs		6,252	-	6,252	20,557
Fundraising	40	9,326	-	9,366	6,871
Newsletter/Postage	4	985	-	989	1,969
Speech Therapy	1,000	21,728	-	22,728	16,705
Training		400	-	400	1,512
Miscellaneous	3,776	280	-	4,056	3,945
WorkFit			-	-	530
			-	-	-
			-	-	-
Sub total	4,820	38,971	-	43,791	52,089
A4 Asset and investment purchases, etc.					
	-	-	-	-	-
Total payments	4,820	38,971	-	43,791	52,089
Net of receipts/(payments)	499	22,233	-	22,732	8,121
A5 Transfers between funds					
			-	-	-
A6 Cash funds last year end	2,922	57,275	-	60,197	52,076
Cash funds this year end	3,421	79,508	-	82,929	60,197

Section B Statement of assets and liabilities at the end of the period

Categories	Details	Unrestricted funds to nearest £	Restricted funds to nearest £	Endowment funds to nearest £
B1 Cash funds	Santander	3,421	48,986	-
	Teachers Building Society	-	29,788	-
	Paypal	-	734	-
	Total cash funds	3,421	79,508	-
	(eg: balance sheet receipts and payments account(s))	OK	OK	OK

Categories	Details	Unrestricted funds to nearest £	Restricted funds to nearest £	Endowment funds to nearest £
B2 Other monetary assets		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-

Categories	Details	Fund to which asset belongs	Cost (optional)	Current value (optional)
B3 Investment assets			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-

Categories	Details	Fund to which asset belongs	Cost (optional)	Current value (optional)
B4 Assets retained for the charity's own use			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-

Categories	Details	Fund to which liability relates	Amount due (optional)	When due (optional)
B5 Liabilities			-	
			-	
			-	
			-	

Signed by one or two trustees on behalf of all the trustees

Signature 	Print Name Kim West	Date of approval 18/03/2021
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Section A

Independent Examiner's Report

**Report to the trustees/
members of**

Charity Name
Swindon Down's Syndrome Group

**On accounts for the year
ended**

31 December 2020

**Charity no
(if any)**

1158449

Set out on pages

29 and 30

(remember to include the page numbers of additional sheets)

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the above charity ("the Trust") for the year ended 31/12/2020.

**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 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.

Signed:

Date:

18th March 2021

Name:

Steve Fraser

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

FCA

Address:

MHA Monahans, 38-42 Newport Street, Swindon, SN1 3DR