



**Charitable Incorporated Organisation 1158743**

## **Trustees Report and Financial Statements for the year ended 31<sup>st</sup> March 2023**

turning disabilities into **abilities**

## **Constitution**

Social Link was formed on 14<sup>th</sup> August 2014 and registered as a Charitable Incorporated Organisation on 1<sup>st</sup> October 2014 by the Charity Commission. Its purpose is to provide support, practical advice and social and recreational facilities for adults with learning disabilities in Buckinghamshire. A revised constitution featuring the opportunity for Proxy Voting and Virtual meetings was approved by the Board and voting members in July 2021, no further changes have been made to the constitution.

## **Our Vision**

A world where people with learning disabilities are valued equally, listened to, empowered to contribute to, and are included within our society.

## **Our Mission**

To provide a safe, supported and stimulating environment for adults with learning disabilities to work and grow together as individuals, thereby helping them to build confidence, resilience and a sense of self-worth, develop independence and realise their potential.

## **Our Core Values**

### **Putting our beneficiaries first**

By providing a service that is led by the needs, ambitions, passions, interests, hopes and dreams of our beneficiaries.

### **Embracing diversity and individual uniqueness**

By celebrating our differences as well as the similarities that bring us together.

### **Promoting independence and social interaction**

By being committed to developing members' enduring life skills through social experience and community membership.

### **Looking after ourselves and each other**

By acting together in a caring, compassionate, considerate, celebratory, tolerant and respectful manner.

### **Championing equality, inclusion and belonging**

By ensuring integration and involvement in communities, and by breaking down barriers which may cause isolation and exclusion.

### **Aspiring to be better**

By ensuring that as an organisation we are responsive to the needs of our beneficiaries, we set no limits on individual growth and potential, we are ambitious for both the charity and its beneficiaries, and that we strive for continuous improvement.

## **Board of Trustees**

The Trustees are:

James Boylan (Chair)  
Carole Harvey (Treasurer and Vice Chair)  
Glynis Wiseman  
Janet Shuttlewood  
Umair Manir (Resigned 08/09/22)  
Steve Birch (Appointed 26/09/22)  
Claire Wheeler (Co-Opted 09/11/22)

## **Services and Activities**

2022/2023 has been a year of re-establishing our core services whilst giving us the opportunity to reflect on our future provisions ensuring they continue to stem from the needs of the charity's beneficiaries. This included the implementation of member keyworker meetings giving all members and their families/carers the platform to voice their needs, wishes and desires and set some of their own goals and objectives for individual growth and development. This alongside a new Member Forum set up to hear the views of the charity's members based around not only the day-to-day structure of Social Link and all it offers, but also around governance and strategic changes. This has given us the information and knowledge needed to continue applying a person-centred approach, guaranteeing members' voices are at the core of all we do, including driving our strategic direction.

## **Strategic Review**

At the beginning of 2022, the Board of Trustees and the whole Social Link Team spent a day together with the aim of reviewing the purpose of the charity and to collectively plan for its future development. This gave us a valuable opportunity to be together to reaffirm the charity's mission statement, aims and objectives.

In March 2023, a follow-up meeting was arranged to enable the Team to gather together (especially important for new Team Members) to start to formulate a strategic plan for the next few years. This was followed up recently by a Trustee and senior management strategy afternoon thus ensuring everyone within the organisation has had the opportunity to play a part in the charity's strategic direction, growth and development, and that the whole organisation is moving forward with a united approach.

## **Day Projects**

The High Wycombe Day Project continues to run five days a week, something that was temporarily implemented during COVID to enable all members to be able to attend safely. Becoming a permanent change has enabled us to offer our support and activities to a greater number of individuals wanting to access our services, particularly young people who are taking their next steps outside of formal education. The addition of these young adults has reinforced the importance of literacy and numeracy sessions which have continued to feature widely throughout our programme of activities. These are often presented in different guises, through cooking sessions, reading of bus timetables when travel training, and writing articles for the Social Link newspaper, to name but a few. These sessions continue to build on and develop skills already gained in educational settings.



The introduction of keyworker meetings has proven to be hugely successful, with a high proportion of objectives agreed in reviews having already been actioned and, on the way, to being achieved. Reading has been a common request amongst members for their individual learning aspirations, especially as struggling with reading impacts on everyday tasks in their daily lives, therefore impeding independence. This has led to a new partnership being forged with the Read Easy Charity. Tutors join us twice weekly to support members on a 1:1 basis with reading at a pace suited to the individual, and thereby steadily building confidence. The implementation of the keyworker meetings has proven to be so successful that this will now be implemented across all the Social Link services. The success of these sessions has recently led to a request from members for a book club!

The Social Link Express newspaper thrives and is continuing to increase the skills of all members involved, particularly their IT and media skills as well as communication and social skills. The peer support that has grown from this activity has been incredible. Members meet and discuss stories for the paper based around current national hot topics, personal news and Social Link news. Members then utilise the skills learnt to create articles, puzzles and artwork via the media platform. The role of editor is rotated. Recently this has progressed further to some members being able to access the platform from their home and enjoy working on editing and writing during their evenings and weekends, when they may be otherwise feeling isolated or at a loss for things to do. These sessions have become extremely popular and are always a hive of activity. A new focus for our budding journalists has been looking at what is in the community, visiting places of interest and to feedback and write about accessibility for those with disabilities - something that is of great importance to our members.

The Aylesbury Day Project continues to flourish, seeing an increase in member numbers and more staff too. We would like to welcome Cally and Katie to the Aylesbury Team. They are already making a real contribution to the sessions offered and to the growth of this service. The Team have recently been focusing on travel training - working towards being able to manage short journeys independently within their own community alongside developing coping strategies to deal with anxieties around traveling at busy times when buses are at their fullest which can be a real barrier to members gaining these important life skills. Another recent area of development is 'wellbeing', particularly around healthy living and healthy minds.

This year, both Day Projects have focused on the education and learning of life skills based around hazard awareness in the community, online and physical safety, as well as understanding rights. The drive behind this is to strengthen knowledge and understanding around practical safeguarding matters that members encounter as they lead their daily lives. This has been achieved through partnership working with Buckinghamshire Council's Trading Standards team. This successful arrangement will continue to feature highly on our future programme of activities. In addition, we are now developing an IT suite where members will be able to regularly put into practise all the safety measures learnt and ensuring they are at the forefront of their minds when using computers within their own homes and social media platforms.

The Social Link Team is renowned for its creativity, passion and drive to provide the best service possible for our members. Our Team is always looking to go above and beyond, welcoming new challenges and always thinking creatively to ensure the growth and development of all those who attend our services – it is at the heart of what we do. Everyone, regardless of role, is essential to the delivery of Social Link services and in ensuring that the Charity continues to provide an exceptional

experience for our members. The Board of Trustees and CEO would like to extend a huge thank you to every member of the Social Link Team for their contributions to the work of the charity.

### **Evening Clubs**

This year, the evening clubs have been able to return to members attending in larger groups every week. This was a very welcome change as members were struggling to cope with only attending alternate weeks. The number of new members has increased greatly since the pandemic and the frequency of evening clubs will be reviewed in the coming year. Evening clubs have seen a change in evening club leaders and we are pleased to welcome Roland and Katie to the Team. Also instrumental to the delivery of these evening sessions are our wonderful volunteers Ron, Chris, Lynne, Susan and Eddie. We would like to express our thanks to them for all their ongoing support.

### **Independence Groups**

Due to the success of the current Independence Group, a second group has been established. This is currently a smaller group where the focus is on increasing independence skills and identifying safe places within their local community.

### **Wellbeing**

Wellbeing has continued to feature highly throughout our services, including our Aylesbury Day Project, giving an increased number of members the opportunities to learn simple coping mechanisms/techniques that can be used anywhere and anytime when anxiety levels are increasing. Opportunities have also been provided to develop skills around supporting one another when facing times of difficulty, including outside of our day services. Members continue to update their journals enabling them to share what they have learned with their friends and families.

### **Gardening Service**

The gardening service continues to be a thriving community-based service offering Social Link members the opportunity of gaining work-based skills. This year saw the Gardening Crew secure a regular contract of work with a local care home (Swarthmore) in Gerrards Cross, alongside continuing opportunities at Hill House Stables in Princes Risborough, Sladmore Farm and Nimble Tree Woods in Penn. We would like to thank Sally Warminger, Angela Aldessi, Jim Smith and Michele Gasper for investing in our gardening service and for giving our members the opportunity to practise their newfound gardening skills within such supportive and dynamic environments. The opportunity to work in locations they have become familiar with has increased participants confidence, resilience, and self-belief.

The Gardening Crew have recently initiated a new partnership with the Buckinghamshire Council Reablement Team, with a view to supporting vulnerable individuals returning home after illness who may be in need of assistance with their gardens. We would like to thank consultants Rob Thomas and Karen Atkins for continuing to drive this valuable service forward, as well as all those members involved.



Sadly, back in March we had all our gardening tools and equipment stolen. But the subsequent reporting of the incident on Facebook and in the Bucks Free Press led to many offers of help from the local community including businesses and residents. Local charity Work Aid were speedy in their response and provided our Gardening Crew with an array of refurbished hand-tools to get them back up and running. We would like to thank Ian Dodimead and Mark Andrews from I AM Gardening for replacing much of our lost equipment including tools and safety wear. Mayor Arif Hussain and Councillor Julia Wassell raised £250 with the help of fellow Councillors to buy us a new lawn mower which our gardeners were very pleased to receive. Further thanks to Mr David Evans for his financial donation and Mr Cross for giving us a strimmer. The response to our plight was amazing and for which we are very grateful.



Last year, our aim for this service was to raise enough funds to secure a gardening vehicle to enable this innovative service to expand and allow greater numbers of members to access it. We are thrilled to say that we secured the funding from various grants and incredible donations, taking receipt of a wonderful six-seater gardening vehicle in March. This will now enable us to grow the gardening service from two days a week to a five-day service over the next 12 months. Moreover, young people leaving horticulture courses and wanting to take their next steps into the world of employment will greatly benefit from this being a steppingstone towards their future goals.

### **Football Teams**

The Social Link football teams continue to go from strength to strength. They compete in the BOBI League and are currently second place in both their divisions. The growth and development of the Teams has been incredible and a real joy to witness. The football teams started as an idea from a very tenacious Social Link member (Tom) who, alongside a member of the Social Link Team (Andy), began running weekly training sessions. Not only have Andy and Tom flourished in the management of the football teams but they have also attained a recognised coaching qualification. As a result of this, another one of the players (Tim) has also taken the decision to train for his coaching qualification. This is something Tim would never have entertained previously, but having gained in confidence and developed new leadership skills when stepping up to manage a team, he now feels ready.

For the rest of the players, the opportunities that have arisen for them have been many: the development of social skills, communication, and teamwork skills, along with development of technical football skills. We are grateful to one parent – *you know who you are* - who continues to attend every game and has been so delighted by her son's involvement and development that she sends Social Link a monthly donation to assist with any costs associated with running these teams. Thank you!



## **Leadership and Management Structure**

The last 12 months have seen a considerable Board of Trustees focus on the leadership and management arrangements within the Charity to ensure both its growth and development and in the services provided for members, as well as the sustainability of Social Link into the future. We are certain that with the appointment of two new wonderful Co-ordinators and a Chief Operating Officer (COO) that the charity now has an organisational structure which will serve it well in the future.

### **Co-ordinators**

During the last year the Board of Trustees worked with the CEO to review the leadership and management structure of Social Link to ensure that the right people in the right roles are available to support the work of the charity. This has led to the appointment of the Co-ordinators, Jacci and Hannah, who have been instrumental in the enhancement and expansion of the day provision. Benefits of their appointment have been the re-introduction of services removed during the pandemic and improved communication within the Team through regular meetings. Jacci and Hannah have both been leading on member development as well as team development. They have spent time getting to know the Team well and have developed a clear understanding of their strengths and how to apply them for the benefit of the Charity and its members. They have both made an impressive start in their new roles.

### **Chief Operating Officer (COO)**

The Board of Trustees has been conscious for some time about the need to ensure that the CEO has appropriate strategic and operational support to enable her to fulfil her leadership and management functions. We were delighted that Victoria Fallon was appointed to the role of Chief Operating Officer (COO). In her new role, Victoria supports the CEO to jointly provide strategic leadership of Social Link services and to deputise for her in her absence. Victoria also jointly oversees the successful development and delivery of new and existing Social Link projects and services. In her new role, she has already made a significant impact to the life of a charity in a short space of time.

### **Partnerships**

#### **Action 4 Youth**

An enthusiastic group of teenagers from Action 4 Youth joined our day project and created, planned and implemented activities for our members. This proved to be a very successful day, with both the young people and our members benefiting from this wonderful collaboration. Following on from this, the group went on to raise funds for us, but in addition, one of the individual students went a step further and took the initiative to complete a run in his own time raising a wonderful £50 for Social Link.

#### **Red Kite Housing**

This year we welcomed a team of staff from Red Kite Community Housing who accompanied us for a day as part of their charitable activity. The Red Kite staff supported our Team and members with the tidying up of a community garden and the building of bird boxes. Again, this has been a really positive piece of collaborative working and networking opportunities enjoyed by all involved.

### **Berkshire College of Agriculture (BCA)**

Through a partnership with the Berkshire College of Agriculture, Social Link was lucky enough to gain a workplace student for five months. Adam flourished during his time at Social Link and was a real asset to our members and Team during this time. Adam is going on to complete his training in Health and Social Care and due to the success of his placement is keen to continue attending Social Link as a volunteer, with the aim of becoming a support worker in future. This has been a real success, which will hopefully lead to further student placements.

### **Multiply**

This year saw the development of yet another amazing partnership between the Buckinghamshire Council's Education Department and Social Link. Social Link won a bid to run a new government funded programme to help adults improve their numeracy skills. The sessions included cooking sessions with a difference. Members were split into two groups, one group going a supermarket to purchase ingredients and the other group being sent out to other supermarkets to compare prices. The groups then reviewed their findings and compared prices to find out which supermarket was the most cost effective. These sessions occurred over a series of weeks and proved to be very popular among members. This partnership is set to continue, with a tutor and our Team working together. Thank you to Sarah for implementing and creating these sessions so quickly and for making them so enjoyable.

### **Public Benefit**

The Trustees confirm that they have due regard to the Charity Commission's general guidance on public benefit when meeting the organisation's charitable objectives. The Charity is providing valuable advice and support and social, recreational, educational, and work-based experiences for adults with learning disabilities and difficulties in the local area.

The activities of the Charity are made available to all who are in need and are affordable to all who qualify. The Trustees regularly review the circumstances of the Charity's beneficiaries and provide the financial support that is needed with appropriately lower charges in cases of financial hardship.

### **Fundraising**

Social Link's fundraising activities have not yet reached pre-pandemic levels but are well on their way to doing so. The Social Link quiz held in Aylesbury was well attended and raised just under £600. We would like to thank Paul Giles for hosting a very entertaining and competitive evening. The Christmas Cracker got all our members into the festive spirit while also raising £1700 through raffle ticket sales as well as food and craft stall sales.

### **Donations**

Throughout the year we have been very fortunate to receive the following donations. Without these donations we wouldn't have been able to purchase the little extras that really do make all the difference to the Social Link members. We can't thank these organisations and individuals enough:

- Owen White Solicitors donated second-hand laptops and desktop computers which will be used to create an IT suite for our members to learn IT skills and access online courses
- Deanfield Homes donated money to enable the purchase of Easter gifts for all of our members
- Country Financial donated £250



- Masonic Charitable Foundation / Mr T Mitchell donated £300
- Suez donated £500 to purchase Christmas gifts for all our members
- The sale of a drum kit donated by Mr P Bevins raised £550
- Tylers Green Middle School donated £100 in return for Karen Marrinan, our Financial Controller, auditing their accounts
- KIWA International in Princes Risborough donated a pool table for Wycombe Day Project
- Camaraderie's donation of catering supplies.

Personal:

- Mrs M Hodgson donated £25 raised selling items on Facebook
- £100 personal donation from Mrs O Bruni
- Laura and John Ripley raised £75 for Social Link at a personal celebration
- Mr & Mrs Baldwin £50 donation
- Mrs J Stevenson £50 donation
- Mrs R Lydon £25 donation
- £100 monthly donation from Mrs H Pettifer for the Social Link football teams

### Grants

Social Link recognises the need for grants to ensure it can fulfil its day-to-day activities and to support the sustainability and growth of the services it provides. The provision of new services and creative activities incur additional costs but we have applied for and been awarded several grants which provided a financial boost during the year. The Board of Trustees and CEO would like to thank all the wonderful grant providers, without whom we would not be able to provide our members with such a colourful and creative array of skill-developing activities. Thank you to Persimmon Homes, the Tesco Community Fund, Asda Green Token scheme, Mid-Counties Co-op Community Fund, The Bailey Thomas Foundation, The Roland Callingham Foundation, Edward Gostling Fund, Leeds Building Society and Arnold Clark.

A couple of years ago we introduced a fabulous new gardening service enabling Social Link members to gain certificated skills in utilising gardening equipment which they would then go on to use in horticultural activities within the community. This has been incredibly successful for all involved. In order to further develop this innovative service, it was recognised that having our own vehicle would enable this to become a five day-a-week service. We are thrilled to inform you that we were successful in gaining grants and with a fabulous and unexpected donation, this enabled us to take receipt of a wonderful six-seater gardening vehicle in March this year. This really will make such a difference to the development of this service and will enable more members to partake and gain the necessary skills for them to possibly progress to paid employment in the horticulture world. We would like to say a huge thank you to Mobbs Memorial Trust, Amersham and Chesham Branch Mencap, The Percy Bilton Charity, The Shanly Foundation, and Heart of Bucks.

We would like to say a special thank you to Claire and Colin Wheeler for their immense kindness and generosity in enabling the purchase of the additional gardening vehicle.

### **Future Plans**

Social Link is constantly reflecting on, adapting and increasing its offer to ensure the continuing growth and development of its members. Our most recent Member Forum, Team Day and Board of Trustees and Senior Leadership Team strategy afternoon have highlighted the following priorities for the future:

1. To further develop the Gardening Service into a five-day a week service giving it the opportunity to become a standalone income generating entity.
2. To review Social Link's current premises to enable the security and sustainability of the charity's provision.
3. To establish a café to build and develop work experience skills and accredited training in a real-life commercial environment.
4. To implement a transitional age service so that young people leaving education are aware of Social Link and the options available to them. A focus to be placed on building relationships with specialist schools within Buckinghamshire.
5. To continue to develop the Member Forum where members' voices are able to shape the work of the charity and the activities and experiences that are available.
6. To increase the Aylesbury Day provision to two days per week to include an Independence group.
7. To develop a Gaming Club separate to the current evening clubs with a focus on transitional age youngsters and building on their social skills.
8. To build an IT suite to enable the Team to work with groups and individuals to learn and practise online safety, social media platform safety, basic use of a computer etc.
9. To introduce a service to cater for those individuals who require slightly smaller groups and a higher ratio of staff to ensure they are able to participate in and contribute fully to the Social Link activities.
10. The introduction of a book club where members can improve their reading skills, share books with friends and develop a love of reading.

### **Board Membership**

The Board of Trustees has approved a new Recruitment of Trustees policy and procedure. The Board continues to be committed to ensuring it provides high quality governance of the charity. Recently, Claire Wheeler was co-opted as a new board member. Claire is a business psychologist, management consultant, coach and Fellow of Higher Education with more than 20 years of international experience in developing leaders and organisational performance. She is a company director and lecturer at the University of Herts on the MSc course in Business and Occupational Psychology. We are delighted that Claire has agreed to join the Board of Trustees and she has already made a significant contribution to governance activities and the day-to-day work of the charity in the short time she has been with us.

### **Voting Membership**

Voting membership of the charity continues to be open to parents, carers and friends who would like to support our aims. Membership is available for an annual subscription of £25, which entitles the member to vote at the AGM and receive regular newsletters and enables the charity to claim 25% tax rebate under gift aid, where the subscriber is a UK taxpayer.



### **Financial Update and Risk Review**

The Trustees meet regularly to monitor and review the Charity's income, expenditure and cash position. As a Charity which operates services for vulnerable adults, we are very conscious of the potential risks arising from our activities. We have established policies for the operation of our activities which are reviewed and monitored by the Trustees. The charity maintains a risk register which is regularly reviewed and procedures are in place to protect the organisation from financial fraud.

The COVID pandemic was extremely difficult for everyone and presented the Charity and our members with many challenges, which we saw as an opportunity to find different ways to support our members. We followed best practice and regulations to ensure the safety of our member, staff and consultants and this continues to be of paramount importance in our day-to-day work. During the pandemic, we provided enhanced and expanded services including the development of our gardening and our football services. These services have become very popular with our members, who enjoy all the additional opportunities they provide. Our gardening service is now increasing to five days per week to boost opportunities for more members to take part. Our footballers are loving the sport, the exercise, the fun, building a strong fan base of supporters and are doing well in the leagues.

All of these activities have incurred additional costs, but we have applied for and been awarded several grants which provided financial support during the year and will provide further support going forward. Thank you to all those wonderful people who have donated or awarded grants to us. We received £67k of grants during the year, £32k of which has supported our services during the 12 months and £35k which was awarded to enable us to purchase a minibus to support the Gardening Services.

As of 31st March 2023, the charity reported a deficit for the year of £12,988, which reduced our total funds being carried forward to 2023-2024 to £98,721.

### **Reserves Policy**

The finances of the charity and the need for secure future funding are reflected in our Reserves Policy. We understand the challenges in these economic times and the charity works hard to promote our services to minimise risk and to supplement our income through grant funding. The charity has ongoing commitments to run its day and evening sessions, which are a very valuable part of our members' lives. As the charity has grown, it has widened its services to include football and work-based activities within the community. The Trustees recognise that risks may arise and if that should occur that the services might have to be reviewed. The Trustees consider that the current reserves of £98,721 of Unrestricted Funds in the Financial Statements are sufficient. As the charity continues to expand, the Trustees will continue to review the Reserves Policy.

### **Governance of the Charity**

The Trustees take policy decisions on behalf of the Charity at their regular bi-monthly Board meetings. Operational decisions are delegated to our wonderful CEO, Wendy Dunn, who leads all aspects of the Charity's provision. The Chair and CEO meet either virtually or in-person to discuss strategic and



operational matters. The CEO also has an advisory role at Board meetings. The Board would like to thank Wendy for her continuing passionate, determined and exemplary leadership of Social Link. We are very fortunate to have such a dynamic and talented leader.

Trustees are appointed in accordance with the terms of the charity's constitution and the recently reviewed Trustee Appointment Policy. When appointing new Trustees, the charity looks for individuals who have an interest in supporting the work of a charity for adults with learning disabilities, are appreciative of diversity and difference in the world and have the personal qualities to contribute to ensuring the charity is as good as it can be. In addition, in appointing Trustees, the Board is conscious of creating a sustainable Board with a broad skills base to ensure governance of the highest standards. As part of this, all trustees are required to commit to regular training.

### **Appreciation**

This year saw the departure of our creative drama and singing leader Hannah Ash. Hannah successfully gained a teaching support role within a school closer to her home allowing her to spend more precious time with her young family. On a positive note, Hannah continues to run our Aylesbury evening club so it is not quite goodbye. The Day Project members have worked their magic to entice Hannah back in the holidays to run some drama workshops (Sorry Hannah, no escape!). In addition, our very own inspirational music and media Leader Richard Byron sadly retired. Richard has been with Social Link since it began, joining the board of Trustees in its first year, supporting us to shape the fantastic organisation we have today. Richard went on to become an integral part of the Day Project Team providing members with the opportunity to gain media skills, explore their music creativity alongside bringing a sense of fun and vibrancy. The Board of Trustees, Team and members of Social Link would like to express their sincere thanks to both Hannah and Richard and we wish them well in the future. We are pleased to say that both Hannah and Richard have not severed their ties completely and both continue to be regular visitors to Social Link providing additional support and cover when needed.

As with any change, this also brings opportunity. In this case, changes have led to the addition of a new music activity within the Day Project run by Katrina. Kat has started the Singing Star Choir where members are getting the opportunity to learn new material and sing together as a group. Thank you Kat. We look forward to some wonderful future performances. These changes have also led to a new drama group being started, with one of the driving forces being the creation of a performance at our next AGM! This has become a very popular session. Although its content has been kept under wraps, enjoyment from these sessions can be felt around the centre. A special thank you goes to Freedom and Bobby for the delivery of these sessions. Social Link has also gained a new member of the Wycombe Day Project Team. We look forward to utilising Mandy's floristry skills in the future, particularly alongside our gardening project. Welcome to you, Mandy!

The Board of Trustees and CEO would like to express their thanks to all those who have contributed to the work of the Charity during the course of the year. In particular, we would like to highlight the amazing work of the Social Link Team who go above and beyond every day.

All Board members are volunteers and give their time freely to the Charity. Throughout the year, the Board have been ever mindful of the uncertain and stressful environment in which Social Link was operating and so endeavoured to be as supportive as possible of the CEO and the Social Link operational team. The Chair of Trustees and CEO would like to express their appreciation again to past Chairs of the Board of Trustees and previous Board members for their continuing interest in the Charity



and acknowledges that the work of the current Board merely builds on the work of previous Boards. A huge thank you to current Board members for all they do and for their wisdom, energy, support, resilience, commitment, good sense and unfailing good humour at all times. Like the Social Link operational team, Board members have gone above and beyond to provide exemplary governance to ensure that Social Link has emerged as a strengthened organisation during the most challenging of times. A special thank you too to Umair Manir for his contribution to the work of the Board during his time as Trustee.

### **Chief Executive Officer**

Wendy Dunn continues to be the heart and soul of Social Link. The Board of Trustees would like to express its appreciation for all that Wendy has done and continues to do to ensure that some of Buckinghamshire's most vulnerable residents enjoy happy, meaningful, social, educational and fun times in all the ways they are able to experience Social Link. Wendy is relentless in ensuring the best for members within and beyond Social Link. She embodies the values of Social Link and all that the charity strives to be for its members. We are proud to have Wendy as our CEO.

### **Employees, Leaders, Support Workers, Volunteers and Supporters**

Organisations are only as good as the people within them. Social Link has great people. The Board of Trustees and the CEO would like to say thank you to all employees, leaders, support workers, volunteers and supporters for all they contribute. Much of the work of these appreciated colleagues is unseen but the Board recognises their passionate commitment, relentless enthusiasm, resourcefulness, joyfulness, creativity and imagination, compassion and love that everyone brings to work every day. We are proud of all those who contribute to ensuring that members have the best possible experiences every day.

The Board of Trustees and CEO would also like to thank our donors and all the volunteers who have made the successes of the last year possible. Also, thanks to those local businesses who have supported the charity during this very challenging year.

Finally, the Board of Trustees and CEO would like to say a particular thank you to those behind the scenes who ensure that every day runs smoothly and that the financial management of the charity is as good as it can be. So, thank you to Victoria Fallon, Karen Marrinan and Laura Ripley for all you do.

Approved by the Trustees and signed on their behalf on 23/06/23 by:



James Boylan, Chair of Board of Trustees

Address: Social Link, 84 Bookerhill Road, High Wycombe, BUCKS, HP12 4EX

## Social Link

Statement of Financial Activities for the 12 months ended 31st March 2023 with comparison to the period ended 31st March 2022.

	2023	2022
	12 months	12 months
<b>Income from:</b>		
Donations (Note 2)	£11,971	£8,066
Charitable activities (Note 3)	£390,199	£319,269
Other trading activities (Note 4)	£3,228	£7,454
Income from Grants (prior year included Infection Control and Furlough)	£31,746	£35,136
Interest (Note 5)	£214	£13
<b>Total income</b>	<b>£437,358</b>	<b>£369,938</b>
<b>Expenditure on:</b>		
Raising funds (Note 6)	£399	£1,177
Charitable activities (Note 7)	£449,942	£386,722
<b>Total expenditure</b>	<b>£450,341</b>	<b>£387,899</b>
<b>Net income and movement in funds</b>	<b>-£12,983</b>	<b>-£17,961</b>
Total funds brought forward	£111,704	£129,665
Movement in designated funds	£35,098	
<b>Total funds carried forward</b>	<b>£133,819</b>	<b>£111,704</b>

The notes on pages 17 to 20 form part of these financial statements.



## Social Link

### Balance Sheet as at 31st March 2023

	2023	2022
Intangible fixed assets	£250	£250
Tangible fixed assets	£40,464	£0
<b>Fixed Assets (Note 8)</b>	<b>£40,714</b>	<b>£250</b>
<b>Current assets</b>		
Cash at bank and in hand (Note 9)	£110,609	£126,583
Prepayments	£4,590	£785
Debtors (Note 10)	£11,206	£15,363
	<b>£126,405</b>	<b>£142,731</b>
<b>Current liabilities</b>		
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year (Note 11)	£33,300	£31,277
<b>Net current assets</b>	<b>£93,105</b>	<b>£111,454</b>
<b>Net assets</b>	<b>£133,819</b>	<b>£111,704</b>
Unrestricted income fund	£98,721	£111,704
Restricted Grants	£35,098	
<b>Total funds</b>	<b>£133,819</b>	<b>£111,704</b>

The notes on pages 17 to 20 form part of these financial statements.

## Social Link

Statement of cash flows for the 12 months ended 31st March 2023 with comparison to the period ended 31st March 2022

	2023	2022
<b>Net cash flow from operating activities</b>		
Net income/deficit	-£12,983	-£17,961
Movement in debtors and prepayments	£352	-£5,785
Movement in liabilities	£2,023	-£16,044
Capital expenditure	-£5,366	£0
<b>Net cash movement from operating activities</b>	<b>-£15,974</b>	<b>-£39,790</b>
<b>Cash at the beginning of the year</b>	<b>£126,583</b>	<b>£166,373</b>
<b>Cash at the end of the year</b>	<b>£110,609</b>	<b>£126,583</b>

The notes on pages 17 to 20 form part of these financial statements.



## Notes forming part of the Financial Statements for the 12 months ended 31st March 2023

### 1. Statement of accounting policies

#### a) Basis of preparation

The financial statements are prepared under the historical cost convention and the accounting policies have been consistently applied. The financial statements also comply with the requirements of the Statement of Recommended Practice: Accounting and Reporting by Charities SORP (FRS 102) and with the Charities Act 2011, subject to the following amendment prepared by the Charities SORP-making body in its discussion document which would bring it in line with FRS102 for other organisations. The charity constitutes a public benefit entity as defined by FRS 102.

At its meeting it was noted that the SORP Committee had considered the accruals model for grant accounting as a good option. The ability to use the accrual model could help those more familiar with the concept of profit and loss in a commercial entity, including charity trustees and funders, to better understand a charities financial performance. The recognition of income in advance of related expenditure being incurred can give the impression that the charity's financial position is better than it is and this may impact on funding applications. Conversely, the recognition of related expenditure in future years, creating a deficit position, may be interpreted as the charity being in a less favourable financial position than is the case.

Specifically in the case of Social Link, we have deferred the grant income for our new van and copier to be released to match and offset the depreciation of those assets, thereby not creating an income surplus this year and deficits during the following years.

#### b) Incoming resources

All incoming resources are recorded in the Statement of Financial Activities when the charity is entitled to the income, the amount can be quantified with reasonable accuracy and it is probable that the amount will be received. Donations under gift aid together with income tax recoverable are recognised when the donation is receivable.

#### c) Resources expended

All expenditure is accounted for on an accruals basis and has been classified under headings that aggregate all costs relating to that activity.

The cost of small items of equipment is written off in the year it is incurred.

#### d) Liabilities

Liabilities are recognised where it is more likely than not that there is a legal or constructive obligation committing the charity to pay out resources and the amount of the obligations can be measured with reasonable certainty.

## 2. Donations

Donations include subscriptions for membership of the charity, gift aid rebates for the new football services and the gardening services. Donations were also received from our many kind supporters.

## 3. Charitable activities

	2023	2022
Evening club revenues	£14,723	£7,992
Gardening services	£15,429	
Football services	£240	
Day sessions revenues	£359,807	£311,277
	£390,199	£319,269

## 4. Other trading activities

Whilst our fund raising activities have been impacted by the pandemic we have been able to hold some very successful events including quiz night, Walk for the Ones We Love and a Musical Christmas Cracker.

## 5. Interest

This comprises income from the charity's bank deposit accounts.

## 6. Expenditure on raising funds

This represents direct expenditure on fund raising events which have been limited due to the pandemic.

## 7. Charitable expenditure

	2023			2022		
	Direct Costs	Support Costs	Total	Direct Costs	Support Costs	Total
Evening Clubs	£12,059	£4,933	£16,992	£6,900	£3,042	£9,942
Gardening Services	£12,637	£5,169	£17,807			
Football	£197	£80	£277			
Day Sessions	£294,714	£120,551	£415,265	£262,322	£115,635	£377,957
Total	£319,608	£130,733	£450,341	£269,222	£118,677	£387,899

Support costs, which are mainly the employment and related costs of the charity's employees, are allocated in proportion to the direct costs of the evening clubs and the day sessions respectively.

## 8. Assets at cost

### Intangible Assets

The trademark "Social Link" is held at cost on the balance sheet

	2023	2022
At the beginning of the year	£250	£250
Additions	£0	£0
Disposals	£0	£0
At the end of the year	£250	£250



#### Tangible Assets

	2023	2022
At the beginning of the year	£0	£0
Addition of a Photocopier	£2,634	£0
Addition of a Van for the Services	£37,830	£0
Disposals	£0	£0
At the end of the year	£40,464	£0

### 9. Cash at bank and in hand

This comprises bank current and deposit accounts plus petty cash. These are all liquid funds available for immediate use by the charity.

### 10. Debtors

Debtors comprise outstanding invoices in respect of day session beneficiaries and donations receivable.

### 11. Creditors: amounts falling due within one year

- a) These provisions represent liabilities for services provided but not yet invoiced and accrued costs, all of which have been settled since the year end.

	2023	2022
Trade creditors and accruals	£18,102	£20,544
Consultants	£10,641	£6,978
HMRC	£4,558	£2,971
Pensions	£0	£784
	£33,300	£31,277

- b) Grants

	2022	Grants received in the year	Grants released in the year	2023
Grants for Van (depreciated/grant released over 5 years)	£0	£30,464		£30,464
Grants for Café		£2,000		£2,000
Grant for photocopier (depreciated/grant released over 5 years)		£2,800	-£166	£2,634
Grants for Gardening and Football		£14,080	-£14,080	£0
Grants for IT and Core Costs		£17,500	-£17,500	£0
	£0	£66,844	-£31,746	£35,098

### 12. Trustees and Governance costs

No remuneration was paid to Trustees neither did they receive re-imbursement of out of pocket expenses but they were reimbursed for purchases made from time to time on behalf of the charity. There were no Governance costs.

### 13. Staff costs and volunteers

#### 13.1 Staff Costs

	12 months 2023	12 months 2022
Salaries and wages	£192,625	£140,149
Social security costs	£12,976	£8,579
Pension costs (defined contribution scheme)	£7,464	£5,355
Other employee benefits		
Total staff costs	£213,065	£154,083

There are no staff working for the charity whose contracts are with and are paid by a related party

No employees received employee benefits (excluding employer pension costs) for the reporting period of more than £60,000 TRUE

The total amount paid to key management personnel (includes trustees and senior management) for their services to the charity.

Key management includes the appointment of a Chief Operating Officer.

12 months 2023	12 months 2022
£65,429	£47,277

#### 13.2 Average head count in the year

Parts of the charity in which the employees work

	2023 Number	2022 Number
Fundraising		
Charitable Activities	8	6
Governance		
Total	8	6

13.3 There were no ex-gratia payments to employees and others (excluding trustees).

13.4 There were no redundancy payments.

13.5 The charity relies on the generous contribution of time from unpaid volunteers in carrying out its activities. Volunteers provide substantial support to the beneficiaries at the evening clubs, day sessions and trips away. The value of this contribution, which is difficult to measure, is not included as income.

### 14. Taxation

Social Link is registered as a charity with both the Charity Commission and HM Revenue & Customs and is thus exempt from corporation tax on its income which is applied for charitable purposes.

### 15. Related party transactions

There were no related party transactions.

Approved by the Trustees and signed on their behalf on 23/06/23 by:

*James Boylan*

James Boylan, Chair of Board of Trustees

Address: Social Link, 84 Bookerhill Road, High Wycombe, BUCKS, HP12 4EX

[20]

Registered office: Social Link, 84 Bookerhill Road, High Wycombe, BUCKS, HP12 4EX  
Social-link.co.uk

Charitable Incorporated Organisation: 1158743



## Independent examiner's report on the accounts

### Section A Independent Examiner's Report

Report to the trustees	SOCIAL LINK		
On accounts for the year ended	31 <sup>ST</sup> MARCH 2023	Charity no (if any)	1158743
Set out on pages	1-2		

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the above charity ("the Trust") for the year ended 31 03 2023

**Responsibilities and basis of report**

As the charity's trustees, 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 all the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the Act.

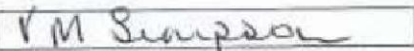
#### Independent examiner's statement

The charity's gross income exceeded £250,000 and I am qualified to undertake the examination by being a qualified member of the Association of Chartered Certified Accountants applicable listed body.

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:

- the accounting records were not kept in accordance with section 130 of the Charities Act; or
- the accounts did not accord with the accounting records; or
- the accounts did not comply with the applicable requirements concerning the form and content of accounts set out in the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 other than any requirement that the accounts give a 'true and fair' view which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination.

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

Signed:		Date:	2 <sup>nd</sup> JUNE 2023
Name:	VERONICA MARY SIMPSON		
Relevant professional qualification(s) or body (if any):	FCCA		

IER

1

Oct 2018

**Address:** CLACKS COTTAGE BLACKTHORNE LANE  
BALLINGER  
HP16 9LN

**Section B Disclosure**

Only complete if the examiner needs to highlight material 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.