



End of year report & Independently Examined Financial statements

For the Year Ended 31st March 2022

Charity number: 1161092

The Pod

Reports and Accounting

For the Year ended 31st March 2022

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Trustees report

This year The Pod emerged from the pandemic stronger as an organisation and is moving into a new phase of development. The Pod staff and volunteers demonstrated amazing flexibility and resilience throughout the extensive periods of lockdown. They were able to adjust their ways of working to maintain many of the essential services. The challenges of providing social support without the possibility of social contact were met with ingenuity and creativity. The input of everyone's contribution to The Pod is greatly appreciated.

These testing times highlighted the significant and important role that the charity plays in the lives of so many young people and their families. The sustained provision of weekly and monthly social support The Pod offers, counters the isolation so often experienced by people with additional needs. The opportunity to meet with others, to have fun and to have a sense of belonging in a group is powerful and life enhancing. The Pod was originally established to offer social connection for teenagers with additional needs. It has progressively built on this through the many ideas and initiatives that come from members, families, and the team around the charity. The original aims are never lost from sight.

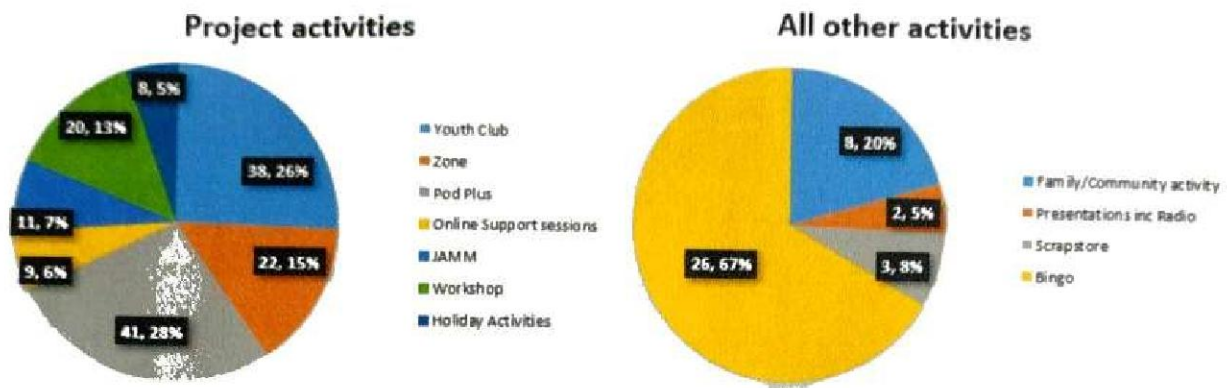
This year has seen the emergence of new activities and ventures. The new projects were being planned pre pandemic and were ready to roll out when the moment was right. It has been important for the trustees and The Pod team that projects were established at a pace that feels manageable and comfortable. Like all small charities the Pod continues to be stretched by demand. Adjustments have been made as the projects have evolved to ensure that they can be accommodated appropriately. The board continues to monitor capacity and look for ways to respond to demand in line with the Pod's objectives and in a way that will ensure sustainability for the community the Pod serves.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Nicola Spence". The script is cursive and fluid, with the first name "Nicola" and last name "Spence" clearly distinguishable.

On behalf of the Board of Trustees

History - The Pod is a grassroots initiative, founded by parent carers in 2013 in response to a lack of services for disabled children in Mendip. Maintaining a service that is member led is essential in ensuring Pod beneficiaries support one another and reach their full potential.

Objectives - (taken from CIO) To promote social inclusion for the public benefit by preventing people from becoming socially excluded, relieving the needs of those people who are socially excluded and assisting them to integrate into society.' The charity achieves this through the following services;



Pod Youth Club

The Youth club welcomes children with additional needs who are aged 10-17 years. The club meets on a Tuesday evening in term time. The ratio is 1:3 and the team are skilled, experienced and understand how to enable the children to reach their full potential. Children learn important life skills and make friends at the youth club, many for the first time. There continues to be a long waiting list; although children may wait about a year before they can join the group they may still access community initiatives with support from the Pod community.

The Zone

The Zone is a youth club for Young Carers aged between 8-16 years old, recognising that children are unlikely to join the group when they turn 16 but nor will they be asked to leave. The children who access the project maybe have parents who are unwell or be a sibling of a disabled brother or sister. Zone sessions run once a fortnight in term time. The Youth team, work hard to balance the needs of children who may attend for respite and nurturing or perhaps to let off steam.

Pod Plus

Pod Plus is a social club for adults with additional needs aged 18-30 years. The group meet every Monday evening (exc bank holidays) with the team providing a staff ratio of 1:5, currently 2 members attend with their own carer to support their 1:1 needs. The group enjoy trips out and this year were invited to a behind the scenes tour of ASDA and the local theatre. The adults who attend may transition into Pod Plus when they leave the Pod Youth Club, they learn to be more independent and enjoy being in a 'grown-up' space, often chatting and sharing news over a hot drink aswell as adult craft sessions which led to the development of the new Pod Workshop this year. The Pod Plus group, repeatedly request Silent Discos, which were always very well attended, pre pandemic and again in February 2022. The group are requesting that this becomes a more frequent opportunity for them.

JAMM – Just A Monday Meet-Up (Previously named Talking Café)

As the charity returned to a face-to-face provision the relaunch of the parent support group (which did not exist before lockdown) was considered, a less formal approach was taken to encourage people to drop in with no pressure or expectation to talk if they chose not to. JAMM has been running since August 2021, the group meets once a month on a Monday for a 2-hour session. Parent carers are provided with hot drinks and a safe space to chat about difficulties. We provide a mini therapy treatment free and adult craft. This format has been successful with attendance numbers increasing and new friendships developing.

Workshop (NEW)

Developed by Pod Plus members who previously explored making and selling handmade soap products at a local artisan market in 2019. Members really enjoyed the process of design, making, packaging, and selling their products and wanted to expand the project further.

Pod Workshop launched in September 2021 from these ideas. The project team create opportunities for members to explore a broad range of professional skills from needlework through to embossing and printing. Within each craft or production process there can be a role for everyone according to their skills, interests, or support needs.

Workshop successfully piloted 10 weeks and sessions run in blocks of 10 when funding permits. The project runs on Saturdays from 10-3pm. Members enjoy lunch together and are part of a team that are all working towards being able to create items for sale. As numbers are growing it is hoped the project can be sustainable without funding in the future.

Pod Scrapstore (NEW)

A strong partnership with Frome Town Council has facilitated a scrapstore pilot between the Pod and Children's Scrapstore in Bristol, to develop a new scrapstore in Frome. A scrapstore is a national initiative (social enterprise) which collects items, often commercial that would otherwise be thrown away and sells them on to be reused in art and craft projects.

As with all Pod projects the people who access the projects are consulted and supporting the scrapstore development. The charity successfully ran 3 pop up events in 2021, each event built on the success of the last and footfall increased from 56 through to 159, customers included schools, nurseries, home schooling networks and families. Adults with disabilities can take on a wide variety of roles; greeting customers, selling bags, directing the public, cutting fabrics from rolls, through to taking payments and collecting feedback for evaluation. Scrapstore provides the perfect vehicle for work experience, training, and potential employment for adults with disabilities. The Pod leadership team continues to be supported and mentored by Bristol scrapstore to ensure a future Pod scrapstore can be a sustainable and permanent asset to the community. Pod members reflected on the experience as positive, their comments captured after each session reflected that they had enjoyed feeling responsible, being an expert in something - the public response was supportive and encouraging. The Scrapstore project is continuing with a search for local suppliers and storage and ultimately a premises. However, this would need to be at the right time for the charity and sustainable as a business.

Other Activities;

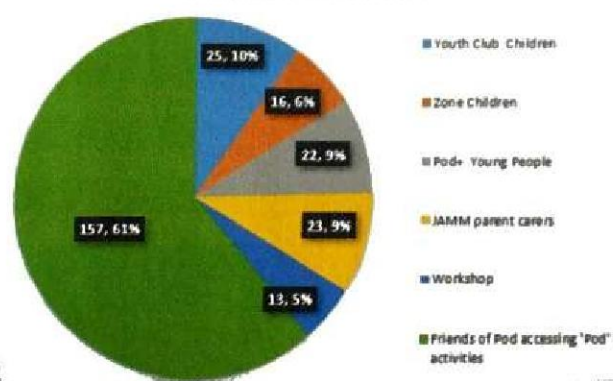
Partnerships are strong, Pod families enjoy taking part, volunteering at community events. Our weekly social groups and families are consulted when local events are being planned and we have led or taken part in numerous initiatives, some of which are listed below;

- Pod facilitated an accessible marquee at a local drone show which saw 5000+ spectators, enabling 38 family members to access an event they would otherwise have felt excluded from. 8 Pod volunteers collected for Frome Town Council and received a share of the donations; however, the primary focus is always to build confidence, self-esteem and enable our community to feel part of their community.
- Pod Youth Club & Pod Plus members ran a stall at the annual Children's Festival, supporting 100+ children to decorate cakes.
- Pod Plus & Pod Youth Club took part in a shared trip to see the Christmas Lights at Longleat during the school holidays.
- Window Wanderland (WW) a firm favourite with all the projects – this year the groups welcomed visitors from WW and helped produce a mural in the town hall.
- Pod families were delighted to access a collaborative Silent Disco with Purple Elephant and Mojo Moves – a firm favourite with members pre pandemic.
- Many of the seasonal activities were still on hold. However, the charity organised a family picnic at a local ice cream parlour, 48 family members from the groups and Friends of Pod came together.
- Pod squad took part in the Frome Marathon with runners placed in 5/10K races.
- Free Circus Starr tickets from a national SEN Circus troupe enabled Pod to send 100 children and family members to the circus, plus 2 minibuses for Pod Plus and Pod Youth club members who enjoyed a fun filled journey at this annual event.
- The Young Carers and Pod Youth club children were fortunate to access holiday activity funding this year, the charity arranged trips out to Bath City Farm, Trampolining, Bowling, visiting Magicians and picnics in the park.

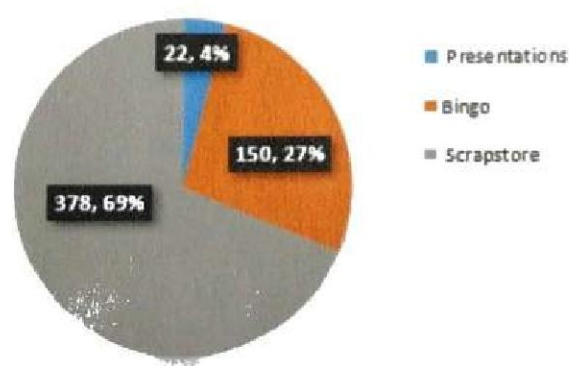
The weekly bingo run by Pod (partnership: Cheese and Grain) reopened in August 2021. The event would not be possible without a growing group of volunteers who attend (including learning disabled adults – not included in volunteer data) We are also now running a small café, providing the players with affordable snacks and drinks, including healthy options requested by them. The bingo continues to promote community partnership, reduces isolation, and supports some of the most vulnerable members of our community who may not access anything else in the town and look forward to sharing their news with the team.

Presentations this year; to the local Masonic Lodge who kindly nominated the Pod as their charity of the year. We were also invited to talk at the YWAF AGM, following a grant received prior to the pandemic supporting the growth of a new social enterprise for Pod.

Direct Beneficiaries



Community accessing core activities



Impact

Several adults from supported living provisions in the town have joined the Workshop and are now regular attendees. They have since become Pod Members and access other activities run by the charity.

Workshop members have expressed that having somewhere on a Saturday when many services they can access are closed has really helped them to ease their sense of isolation and increased their friendship group. The project has provided them with opportunities to widen their skillset and take on new hobbies outside of the regular Saturday session.

"I like that it is inclusive to everyone regardless of their experience or anxiety"

"Really nice meeting new people"

"It is a place to relax and be creative outside of work"

"A good place to sew and meet new people"

'C has lots of difficulties at school relating to other people and managing her behaviour. She has lots of additional responsibilities and worries at home. When she is at club she is able to be herself. She feels listened to and doesn't have to worry about things. It is nice seeing familiar people to chat to. She likes doing quieter activities but also enjoyed the walk around the community with the group to get hot chocolate.'

A small selection of testimonials from young people and families. The success of the projects is founded on strong relationships with families and young people who are happier, healthier, and more confident as they form friendships and learn to be independent where many struggle to be accepted and understood.

The project teams capture and record the gems from the sessions. Each statement acknowledges the huge progress made by an individual that may to an outsider appear to be a small thing;

"A joined in with the other children tonight – it was the first time in over a year they did something other than craft on their own"

"B tried pancakes tonight – he was able to talk about the smell and feel of them and then said they were disgusting!"

"C suggested a leaving party for A"

"D telling his mum to go – he was fine on his own"

"Everyone giving E a spontaneous round of applause for the money raised for the NHS"

The charity has an excellent reputation and strong partnerships, other groups consult Pod when planning events, ensuring they are accessible for all families.

To achieve our charity aims it is important that the children, young people, and adults that access the projects have a say in their clubs, they help plan the timetable of activities, run their own tuck shop and help to design new projects. Various activities run by the charity enable children, adults, and their carers to be stronger, more confident and to provide peer to peer support.

Structure, Governance and Administration

The Charity Managers report to the board at every trustee meeting; this report provides up to date information on each project, community activities, safeguarding, finance, and anything pertinent at the time. Board meetings generally take place in March, June, September & December - this year all meetings took place face to face however Zoom continues to provide a useful tool for remote access. Trustees liaise and individually meet with the charity managers to discuss actions specific to their area of responsibility. The Charity Managers line manage the administrator and their designated Project Lead workers who in turn provide supervision to the project teams.

The membership forum which would normally take place biannually has not taken place during lockdown in a traditional face-to-face format. The charity has maintained connections with its members, sought views and gathered feedback through events, projects, surveys and direct communication.

Staff and Volunteers

Until Autumn 2021 the Pod employed a Part time Founder Charity Manager (18 hrs week) Trustees increased these core hours from 18 to 30 in November 2021 and now employs a Co-Charity Manager who works alongside the existing charity manager. Additionally, the team around the projects include;

Administrator	5 hours per week
Pod Youth Club	1 Youth Leader / 4 Youth Workers - 1 volunteer
The Zone	1 Youth Leader / 1 Youth Worker - 2 volunteers
Pod Plus	1 Project Lead / 1 Assistant - 4 volunteers
Workshop	1 Project Lead / 1 Assistant - 1 volunteer

The trustees ensure that key policies are in place, reviewed and adhered to, with safeguarding at the top of the agenda. Service delivery is in the skilled hands of employed sessional workers.

We are fortunate to employ a flexible team, who may work across other Pod projects or provide cover support; ensuring that no projects are cancelled due to unforeseen staff absences. Day-to-day management, project development and fundraising are undertaken by the charity managers.

We continue to value our team of volunteers and are very grateful for the hours they donate. This year volunteer hours totalled 392. This is the first time these hours have been calculated and reported on, these hours do not include the charity bingo or pop up scrapstore events which employed a further 28 volunteers and hundreds of additional hours. Without the invaluable contribution of time and energy we would not be able to support as many families as we do. However, the charity is unable to run its projects without paid sessional staff who provide consistency and stability for vulnerable children adults, families, and training for volunteers. This year salaries represent 68% of our annual expenditure. (2020/21 - 84%)

Administration

Charity Registered address:

C/O Openstorytellers, RISE, Whittox Lane, Frome, BA11 3BY

Banking:

Co-operative bank, Po Box 250, Delf House, Southway, Skelmersdale, WN8 6WT

Payroll:

In-house using Brightpay software.

Insurance:

Zurich Insurance – Policy renewal date 25th February 2023.

Finance & Independent Examination:

Exeter Community Accounting, Unit 89792, PO Box 7169, Poole, BH15 9EL.

Although the charity has always arranged an independent audit this is the first year the charity has outsourced its accounts.

Governance

Governing Document:

The charity formed as a community group on the 1st May 2013 and became a registered charity (CIO) with voting members on the 27th March 2015. If the CIO is wound up; the members of the CIO have no liability to contribute to its assets and no personal responsibility for settling its debts and liabilities. Members must be aged 18+ and membership is an annual renewal costing £12 for family membership and £6 for individual adults. The number of members in the year ending 2022 is 52 (2021 – 23)

Trustee Appointments:

The trustee's skillset is regularly reviewed. The members or the charity trustees may at any time appoint a new charity trustee when there is an identified need. An interested trustee is provided with an 'essential guidance on being a trustee' They will attend a trustee meeting before their first appointment; receive a copy of the constitution, latest annual report and statement of accounts.

One-third of the charity trustees retire from office at the AGM. If the number of charity trustees is not three or a multiple of three, then the number nearest to one-third shall retire from office. Charity trustees to retire by rotation shall be those who have been longest in office since their last appointment or reappointment. All trustees give their time voluntarily and receive no remuneration or benefits.

Trustee	Position	Dates acted if not whole year
M Melton		
S Drake	Treasurer	
S Bennett	Chair	
A Tuffnell	Secretary	
M Spence		
Z O'Gorman		

Summary of Financial Activities

We always aim to minimize the cost of our services to disadvantaged families however we do acknowledge an income made up of voluntary contributions (weekly 'subs') in the financial reports. Charitable activity income (including fundraising activity income) significantly reduced during the pandemic however we are delighted to have exceeded our pre covid levels with thanks to trading income (a new social enterprise being developed by the charity) In 2021/22 charitable activity income generated £15,017 (2020/21 £2,296)

The team around Pod maintains excellent relations with its funders and has a good track record with fundraising. Charitable donations and grants given by individuals, groups and grant making bodies totaled £56,561 (2020/21 £43,204)

The trustees would like to thank all our funders and donors both large and small for their support which has enabled us to develop and expand our services during another unprecedented year. A full list of donors is presented on page 14 of this report.

The income for the year ending 31 March 2022 totaled £71,579 (2021: £51,058) against expenditure of £59,658 (2021: £32,201)

Reserves

The trustees acknowledge the challenges of the current funding climate; increased competition and the unknown implications of Covid-19. The Trustees will continue to monitor the level of unrestricted reserves which should be between £19,750 and £32,917. This represents 3-5 months of the charities annual operating costs in the year ending 2022/23.

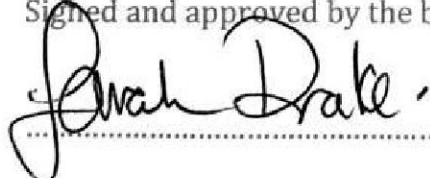
The unrestricted reserves at the end of 2021/22 are £28,294 In addition to a further £24,510 of restricted reserves associated to five out of six projects and some core costs.

The projected charity costs in 2022/2023 are £79,000. The charity has secured a multi-year grant from Children in Need and the Masonic Charitable Trust in addition to other one-off grants and donations. There is currently a shortfall and fundraising target of at least £35,000 if we are to continue providing and developing essential services for vulnerable children, adults and families.

The Trustees will continue to monitor the fundraising policy and reserves level during the next financial year.

Declaration

Signed and approved by the board on 7th June 2022.

..... (Trustee)

The Pod CIO

Independent examiner's report on the accounts for the year ending 31 March 2022

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

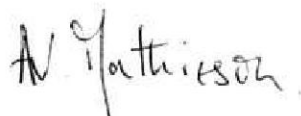
It is my responsibility to:

examine the accounts under section 145 of the Charities Act,
to follow the procedures laid down in the general Directions given by the Charity Commission (under section 145(5)(b) of the Charities Act, and
to state whether particular matters have come to my attention.

My examination was carried out in accordance with general directions given by the Charity Commission. An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the charity and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts, and seeking explanations from the trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit, and consequently no opinion is given as to whether the accounts present a 'true and fair' view and the report is limited to those matters set out in the statement below.

In connection with my examination, no matter has come to my attention which gives me reasonable cause to believe that in, any material respect, the requirements:
to keep accounting records in accordance with section 130 of the Charities Act; and
to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and comply with the accounting requirements of the Charities Act
have not been met.

Signed:



Dated: 28 April 2022

Exeter Community Accounting

The Pod CIO

Balance Sheet

as at 31st March 2022

	Notes	Total Funds 2022 £	Total Funds 2021 £
Current Assets			
Cash at Bank and in Hand	5	54,794	40,884
Sundry Debtors	6	<u>57</u>	<u>40,884</u>
		54,851	
Creditors	7		
Liabilities Falling Due Within One Year		2,047	0
		<u>52,804</u>	<u>40,884</u>
Net Assets		<u>52,804</u>	<u>40,884</u>
Funds of the charity			
Unrestricted funds		28,294	17,573
Restricted funds		24,510	23,311
Total Funds		<u>52,804</u>	<u>40,884</u>

These financial statements were approved by the board of trustees and

authorised for issue on 7-6-22 and are signed on behalf of the board by:

Name Arch Drake
Position
TREASURER

The Pod CIO

Statement of Financial Activities for the year ending 31st March 2022

	Notes	Unrestricted Funds 2021/2022	Restricted Funds 2021/2022	Total Funds 2021/2022	Total Funds 2020/2021
Income	2				
Grants Received		11,780	36,300	48,080	37,726
Furlough Grant			-	-	5,559
Donations		5,293	3,188	8,481	5,478
Voluntary Contributions		4,290	-	4,290	799
Membership		295	-	295	132
Tuck		769	-	769	-
Fundraising		9,663	-	9,663	1,365
					-
Total Income		32,090	39,488	71,579	51,058
Expenditure on:	3				
Charitable activities (including Governance and support costs)		21,369	38,289	59,658	32,201
Total Expenditure		21,369	38,289	59,658	32,201
Net Income/(expenditure)		10,721	1,199	11,921	18,858
Reconciliation of funds					
Total funds brought forward		17,573	23,311	40,884	22,027
Total funds carried forward		28,294	24,510	52,804	40,884

THE POD CIO
NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
For the year ended 31st March 2022

1. Accounting policies

1.1 These accounts have been prepared under the historical cost convention with items recognised at cost or transaction value.

The accounts have been prepared in accordance with the Statement of Recommended Practice: Accounting and Reporting by Charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK (FRS102) issued on 16 July 2014

1.2 All Income is included in the Statement of Financial Activities

2 Analysis of Income	Unrestricted Funds 2021/2022 £	Restricted Funds 2021/2022 £	Total Funds 2021/2022 £	Total Funds 2020/2021 £
Grants Receivable	11,780	36,300	48,080	43,285
	11,780	36,300	48,080	43,285
Donations & Gifts				
Donations	5,293	3,188	8,481	5,478
Voluntary contributions	4,290	-	4,290	799
Membership	295	-	295	132
Fundraising	9,663	-	9,663	1,365
Tuck	769	-	769	-
	20,310	3,188	23,499	7,774
Total Income	32,090	39,488	71,579	51,058

THE POD
NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
For the year ended 31st March 2022

3 Analysis of Expenditure

	Unrestricted Funds 2021/2022 £	Restricted Funds 2021/2022 £	Total Funds 2021/2022 £	Total Funds 2020/2021 £
Salaries	12,909	27,711	40,620	27,239
Insurance	635	112	747	494
Telephone	274	96	370	288
Admin	504	470	973	676
DBS checks	100	214	314	-
Equipment	671	608	1,279	1,071
Venue Hire	1,945	3,925	5,870	1,138
Session Costs	2,192	3,492	5,684	509
Tuck	490	-	490	45
Advertising & Marketing	283	211	494	-
Transport	10	473	483	-
Training	150	0	150	391
Fundraising	610	0	610	350
Contingency	297	78	375	-
Business Planning	-	900	900	-
Total Expenditure	21,069	38,289	59,358	32,201

4 Accountancy Services

Independent Examination of the financial statements	100
Other Accountancy Services	200
	300

5 Cash at bank & in hand at 31 March 2022

Cooperative Bank Account	52,370
Cash in hand	2,424
	£54,794

6 Sundry Debtors

Atlantic Data	£57
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7 Creditors: amounts falling due within one year

Trade Creditors	803
Accruals and deferred income	1,244
	2,047

THE POD CIO
NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
For the year ended 31st March 2022

Funds	Balance at 01/04/2021	Incoming resources	Resources expended	Balance at 31/03/2022
Unrestricted Funds				
General Donations		5,293.00	(5,293.00)	-
Other Income	17,573.00	26,797.09	(16,076.09)	28,294.00
TOTAL	17,573.00	32,090.09	(21,369.09)	28,294.00

In addition to general donations and income from charitable activities, unrestricted funding has been received from the following funders to support core activities and charity growth;

Sobell Foundation 5,000	£	5,000
Foyle Foundation 4,000	£	4,000
29th May 1961 1,000	£	1,000
Masonic Charitable Trust 1,000	£	1,000

Restricted Funds

True Colour Trust	3,490.66	-	2,361.01	1,129.65
Children In Need	9,000.62	10,000.00	11,661.78	7,338.84
SCF Discovery	2,741.54	-	2,741.54	0.00
Bailey Thomas	1,000.00	-	1,000.00	0.00
Gosling Foundaton	2,500.00	-	0.00	2,500.00
Selwood Rotary	1,000.00	-	1,000.00	0.00
Frome Town Council	2,000.00	-	1,120.36	879.64
Hartfield Trust	300.00	-	0.00	300.00
Sherborne	437.08	-	437.08	0.00
Rotary shop income	266.56	-	266.56	0.00
LocalGiving	575.00	-	75.00	500.00
Somerset Community Foundation		5,000.00	5,000.00	0.00
Frome Town Council		8,000.00	3,000.00	5,000.00
Awards for all		10,000.00	8,826.00	1,174.00
David Solomon		1,500.00	0.00	1,500.00
3H fund		1,800.00	1,334.41	465.59
Frome Rotary		1,000.00	-	1,000.00
Frome Town Rotary		1,500.00	-	1,500.00
MASG		688.44	93.25	595.19
Unallocated			(627.09)	627.09
	23,311.46	39,488	38,289.90	24,510.00