SLOW - SUPPORTING BEREAVED PARENTS AND SIBLINGS

England & Wales · Charity number 1161337

Details

Status	Registered
Legal form	Other
Registered	2015-04-20
Register	View on the Charity Commission register

Contact

Address	1 Kenilworth Road London London NW6 7HL
Phone	07532 423 674
Email	admin@slowgroup.co.uk
Website	www.slowgroup.co.uk

Activities

Objects: THE FOLLOWING OBJECTS ARE FOR THE PUBLIC BENEFIT:1. TO PROMOTE THE EMOTIONAL AND PHYSICAL WELL-BEING OF BEREAVED PARENTS, SIBLINGS AND CHILDREN SUFFERING FROM GRIEF THROUGH EXPERT SUPPORT OF BEREAVED FACILITATORS PROMOTING SELF-HELP AND MUTUAL SUPPORT.2. TO PROMOTE AND SUPPORT SOCIAL INCLUSION OF BEREAVED PARENTS, SIBLINGS AND CHILDREN TO FULLY PARTICIPATE IN SOCIETY.3. TO PROMOTE EMOTIONAL AND PHYSICAL WELL-BEING THROUGH THE PROVISION OF EDUCATION AND TRAINING MATERIALS ON GRIEF AND BEREAVEMENT SUPPORT.4. TO PROMOTE THE EMOTIONAL AND PHYSICAL WELL-BEING OF OTHER BEREAVED FAMILY MEMBERS WHERE THIS CONTRIBUTES TO ACHIEVING OBJECTS 1-3.

Activities: SLOW offers emotional and practical support to bereaved families that have lost a child in any circumstances. The charity currently provides support groups for bereaved parents when a child has died in the family; sibling support workshops for bereaved children that have lost a brother or sister and help and advice for professionals working with bereaved families.

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Classification

- **How:** Provides Services
- **What:** The Advancement Of Health Or Saving Of Lives
- **Who:** Other Defined Groups

Geography

- Throughout England And Wales

Finances

Period end	Income	Expenditure	Assets	Employees
2025-01-31	£163,282	£151,624	-	-
2024-01-31	£106,616	£132,239	-	-
2023-01-31	£141,574	£97,818	-	-
2022-01-31	£63,392	£71,624	-	-
2021-01-31	£80,410	£53,221	-	-

Trustees

Name	Role	Appointed
Andrea Katsilfi		2025-12-01
Cicilia Hoi-See Wan		2021-12-01
Elise Marie Soucie		2021-12-01
Hilary Ross		2026-06-09
Jon Grussing		2025-12-01
Laura Skaanild		2025-12-01
Lizette Nolte		2023-06-13
Philippa Grace Murray		2012-09-10
Robin Willard		2024-09-17
Sebastian Michael Lewis		2024-09-17

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SLOW - SUPPORTING BEREAVED PARENTS AND SIBLINGS

England & Wales - Charity number 1161337

Accounts



















ANNUAL REPORT

2024 - 2025

SLOW

Surviving the loss of your world

ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

SLOW - Surviving the Loss of Your World

Charity Registration Details Registered Charity Number 1161337 Registered April 2015
Founded September 2007
Founded By Nic Whitworth and Susie Hanson

TRUSTEES 2024-25

- Chair Pippa Murray
- Treasurer Cicilia Wan
- Secretary Tim Whitworth
- Trustee Paresh Pithiya
- Trustee Elise Soucie
- Trustee Lizette Nolte
- Trustee Sebastian Lewis (appointed September 2024)
- Trustee Robin Willard (appointed September 2024)

PATRONS: Jason Watkins and Clara Francis

Registered Address and correspondence:
SLOW, 1 Kenilworth Avenue, London, NW6 7HL
admin@slowgroup.co.uk
info@slowgroup.co.uk
07532 423674

Website: slowgroup.co.uk
Facebook: slowsupport
Instagram: slowgroup
LinkedIn: linkedin.com/company/slowsupport



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SLOW OBJECTIVES

At SLOW, we have evolved a unique and successful model of bereavement support that is a direct response to what bereaved parents and siblings have told us they need.

SLOW cultivates a stance of 'coming alongside' parents, going at their own pace, within a non-pathologising culture. At SLOW we know that grief cannot be fixed, and do not strive to 'make things better'. Instead, we support and give space to bereaved families, so they may in time harness their own resources in slowly rebuilding their lives. In this way, we believe there is hope to be found in connecting with other bereaved families, relief in sharing the pain of grief, and company in bearing the unbearable, alongside others who are living with the death of their child or sibling.

Our ethos has grown from the roots of a community, facilitated and supported by bereaved families who have experienced first-hand the devastating grief resulting from the death of a child or sibling.



A core feature of SLOW is that all our groups are facilitated by bereaved parents and siblings who have received expert facilitation training which is grounded in group dynamics and grief theories whilst also bringing their own lived experience of grief.

They receive regular, ongoing professional development and support. Many have themselves benefitted from SLOW's support in the past.

Our Charitable Objects

1. To promote the emotional and physical well-being of bereaved parents, siblings and children suffering from grief through expert support of bereaved facilitators promoting self-help and mutual support.

2. To promote and support social inclusion of bereaved parents, siblings and children to fully participate in society.

3. To promote the emotional and physical well-being through the provision of education and training materials on grief and bereavement support.

4. To promote the emotional and physical well-being of other bereaved family members where this contributes to achieving objects 1-3.

SLOW ETHOS

SLOW
Surviving the loss of your world

















WHY SLOW'S WORK MATTERS

The death of a child is an unimaginably traumatic event, leaving parents with overwhelming emotional needs. Equally devastating is the grief experienced by bereaved siblings, an often overlooked and under supported form of mourning - the *'silent grievers'* as they are often referred to.

Although the death of a child is relatively rare, its impact is profound, frequently shattering the fabric of family life and permanently altering a family's worldview. Such a loss can lead to depression, anxiety, substance dependency, and the breakdown of relationships within the family unit. Many members of SLOW (Surviving the Loss of Your World) face the immense challenge of navigating a world that feels unfamiliar and irreparably changed—where deep bonds, daily routines, and social connections are disrupted. In the early stages of grief, many describe an overwhelming sense of isolation and loneliness.

SLOW support groups provide a vital and positive intervention for bereaved families by:

- **Offering a safe, compassionate space for peer support, helping to reduce isolation.**
- **Enabling connection, shared experience, validation, and the normalisation of grief.**
- **Supporting individuals in discovering new ways to manage and live with their grief.**
- **Encouraging parents and siblings to explore meaningful ways of staying connected to their child or sibling.**
- **Creating a transformative community united by shared loss and mutual understanding.**
- **Helping families begin to rebuild a sense of well-being and rediscover purpose in life.**
- **Offering hope for the future and gently building confidence at a time when life can feel overwhelming, hopeless, or without meaning.**

"To have somewhere safe to speak about how I feel and to know that I am not alone"

"This is the first time I've felt 'not alone' in a very long time"

WHY SLOW'S WORK MATTERS

Supporting Healing Through Connection
At SLOW, we understand that healing for bereaved families begins with connection. When families share their grief with others who truly understand, they experience the relief of being heard, seen, and validated. This connection helps them realise they are not alone, and that their feelings—however overwhelming—are normal responses to profound loss.

Within our peer support groups, families gradually begin to explore ways of living with grief. They learn to navigate life after the death of a child or sibling, and to manage the ongoing emotional impact in a supportive and understanding environment.

A key message we share at SLOW is that healing does not mean forgetting. Instead, we support families to remember their loved ones with compassion, and to find meaningful ways to stay connected to them. We encourage members to be gentle and patient with themselves, recognising that grief is not a problem to be solved, but a journey to be supported.

Through this process, bereaved families begin to build a sustainable emotional support system—tools, insights, and resilience that continue to serve them long after they leave SLOW. They come to understand that grief is complex and deeply personal, and they gain the strength to carry it forward in their own unique way.

Creating Space for Grief
At SLOW, we make space for grief—acknowledging its weight, its complexity, and its ongoing presence in the lives of bereaved parents. Many parents tell us that simply being able to express their grief and be truly heard leaves them "*feeling lighter.*"

Through listening, sharing, and reflecting with others who understand, parents begin to find new ways of coping. These moments of connection allow for small but meaningful steps towards rebuilding their lives. Over time, these steps accumulate, helping families to move forward—not by leaving their grief behind, but by learning to live alongside it with greater resilience and hope.

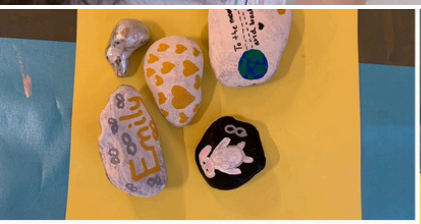
"I honestly don't know what I would have done without Adult Sibs"

"Here is a place I feel seen, understood, and what I want to share is heard and held in a safe space - that feels very good."

ACTIVITIES & ACHIEVEMENTS







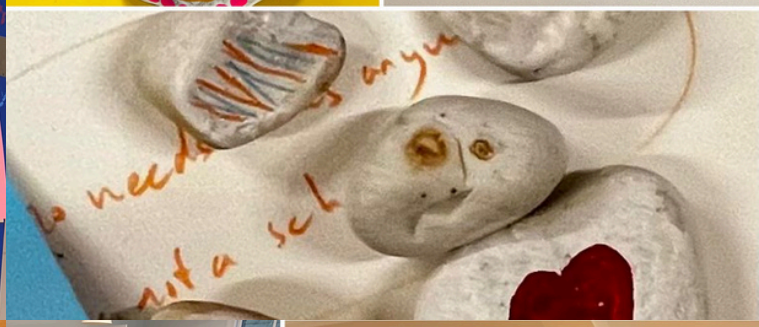






























ACTIVITIES & ACHIEVEMENTS

227
GROUP MEETINGS HELD

1237
ATTENDANCES AT GROUPS

139
NEW REFERRALS

ONLINE, AND IN PERSON SUPPORT GROUPS AVAILABLE

14
SIBLING SUPPORT MEETINGS

5
WEEKLY MEETINGS AVAILABLE

250
INDIVIDUAL MEMBERS SUPPORTED

1855
HOURS OF SUPPORT

181
DAYTIME MEETINGS

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5.4
AVERAGE GROUP ATTENDANCE

42
EVENING MEETINGS

ACTIVITIES & ACHIEVEMENTS

Support overview

Support for Bereaved Parents

At SLOW, our support for bereaved parents is both special and evidence based. The heart of our work lies in the culture and community of our regular weekly support groups — where bereaved parents find connection, company, comfort, and hope following the death of their child.

Each group follows a simple, consistent structure that provides safety through containment and continuity. Sessions begin with an introductory round, offering every parent the time and space to say their child's name, speak about their loss, and reflect on the areas where they need support — forming the basis of that group's shared discussion.
In 2024-25, we saw a significant increase in engagement, with 1,237 individual attendances, up from 1,124 the previous year.

Parents could choose from six groups:

- Five weekly groups (four daytime, one evening)
- One monthly group (in person)

Of these, two groups are held in person (North and South London), while the others run online. In October, we responded to growing demand by transitioning our monthly online evening group into a weekly session, which has been a great success.

Our blended model of in-person and online support has made SLOW more accessible than ever, offering parents meaningful choice in how and when they attend — while remaining rooted in community and care.

Online makes it possible for me to join. I don't have to worry about getting somewhere, which sometimes, when you're grieving, just feels too much."

"I wouldn't be able to come in person because of my health, so having an online option has really helped."

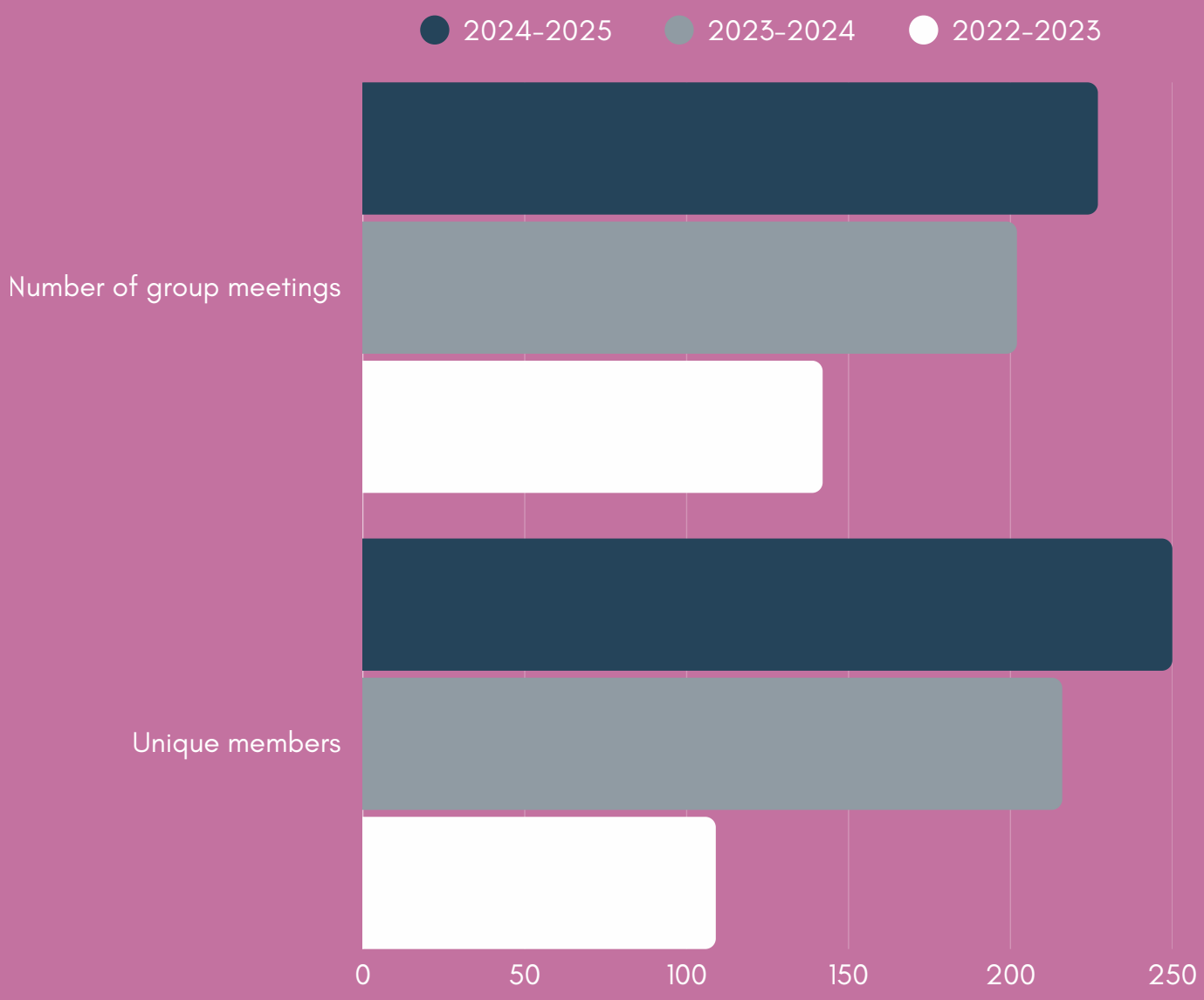
"It's different when you're sitting together, having a cup of tea. It feels easier to talk."

"Everybody cares about each other. A member might say, 'Oh, well, we haven't seen so and so... how are they?' They're very connected." -Facilitator

"I feel like I trust the space. There's genuine listening and connection. I don't feel an expectation to do or say anything—just knowing it's OK to be open about my loss."

ACTIVITIES & ACHIEVEMENTS

Support group meetings



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ACTIVITIES & ACHIEVEMENTS

Support overview and other events

Group Support and workshops overview

Throughout the year, our groups continued to offer a compassionate and inclusive space for bereaved families, with a strong emphasis on developing coping strategies, encouraging self-care practices, and supporting parents in navigating the ongoing challenges of parenting surviving children and maintaining relationships with friends and colleagues.

As new parents joined our groups, long-standing members played a vital role in upholding SLOW's core values and culture. Their presence helped foster an atmosphere of warmth, inclusion, and mutual support, creating a community where all bereaved parents, regardless of the circumstances surrounding their loss, felt safe and supported.

Support for bereaved siblings

Our virtual groups for bereaved adult siblings continued to run monthly for 1.5 hours, facilitated by two trained bereaved sibling facilitators. In addition, our informal sibling meetups offered a more flexible, drop-in format, running for up to three hours, where siblings could join as needed and stay for as long—or as little—as they wished.

We also ran quarterly creative workshops for bereaved siblings aged 6 to 15. These three-hour sessions, attended by 7 to 9 children, provide a safe, nurturing space to connect with peers, explore feelings through creative expression, and begin to rebuild confidence and reduce isolation. Art and creativity remain a core part of our support for children, helping them to process grief and reshape their understanding of loss in a meaningful and age-appropriate way. We have been developing an expanded service to offer support for older teens, which will be fully implemented in 2025-26.

SLOW community non Christmas suppers

In December, SLOW members came together for two *non-Christmas* suppers, creating supportive spaces during what is often an emotionally challenging time of year for bereaved families. Over 30 people attended the North London gathering, which brought together a mix of staff, current group participants, including both parents and siblings and individuals who had not attended a SLOW group in several years. The South London group hosted a lunchtime gathering immediately following one of their regular sessions, offering a similarly warm and inclusive environment.

These community events provide a vital opportunity for connection, understanding, and solidarity beyond the regular group setting. They are especially meaningful during the festive season, providing comfort and companionship to those who may feel isolated or unable to engage with what is typically a joyful time of year.

CHARITY DEVELOPMENT & GROWTH

Marketing outreach

As SLOW continues to receive referrals from a wide range of sources, it remains essential that we actively promote our services and strengthen our connections with bereavement charities and support organisations across London and beyond.

Over the past year, we have presented to, collaborated with, or marketed the SLOW service to the following organisations:

- Shooting Star
- Alder Hey Hospital
- Enable Law
- Gunners Foundation
- Felix Project
- Uni of Oxford,
- Enfield Clinical Psychologists
- Grief in Childhood Research – call for volunteers
- Pan Sussex bereavement conference
- Young Lives v Cancer
- GOSH
- Mind the Chaps Bereavement Group
- SUDC
- End of Life Care Steering Group

These efforts help ensure that more bereaved individuals and families are made aware of the support SLOW can offer, while also building valuable partnerships within the bereavement and wider support sector.

SLOW was approached for comment by Lewis Atkinson MP, a member of the Petitions Committee, to help inform a debate on the petition *"Give parents/guardians a right to access social media accounts of their children."* The debate took place on Monday 13 January at 4:30pm in Westminster Hall, the second debating chamber of the House of Commons.

The petition calls for parents to have the right to access their child's social media accounts in the event of their unexplained death. This issue holds particular significance for bereaved families, as access to such accounts could provide insight, support the grieving process, and help bring understanding or closure.

SLOW was credited and mentioned during the live debate, highlighting our role in representing the voices and experiences of bereaved families.

CHARITY DEVELOPMENT & GROWTH

Evaluation

Throughout the year, we draw on evidence from our service evaluations previously completed with the University of Hertfordshire to support our grant applications and share our impact through social media channels. However, we recognise that there is still much more we can do with the wealth of positive feedback and research we've gathered to further publicise SLOW's story and reach a wider audience.

Making better use of this powerful evidence will help strengthen our voice, raise awareness of the impact of our work, and support future funding and partnership opportunities.

Thanks to our ongoing and successful partnership with the University of Hertfordshire, we currently have two trainee Clinical Psychologists on placement with SLOW. They are contributing to a range of valuable projects, including:

- Evaluation of our SLOWSibs services
- Exploring ways to improve Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) across our groups and staff
- Dissemination of research findings through both technical reports and social media channels

Their work is helping to strengthen and inform our services, and we're grateful for their thoughtful contributions.

We have also supported Dr Shivani Patel with her research into "Bereavement in the Hindu Community."







CHARITY DEVELOPMENT & GROWTH

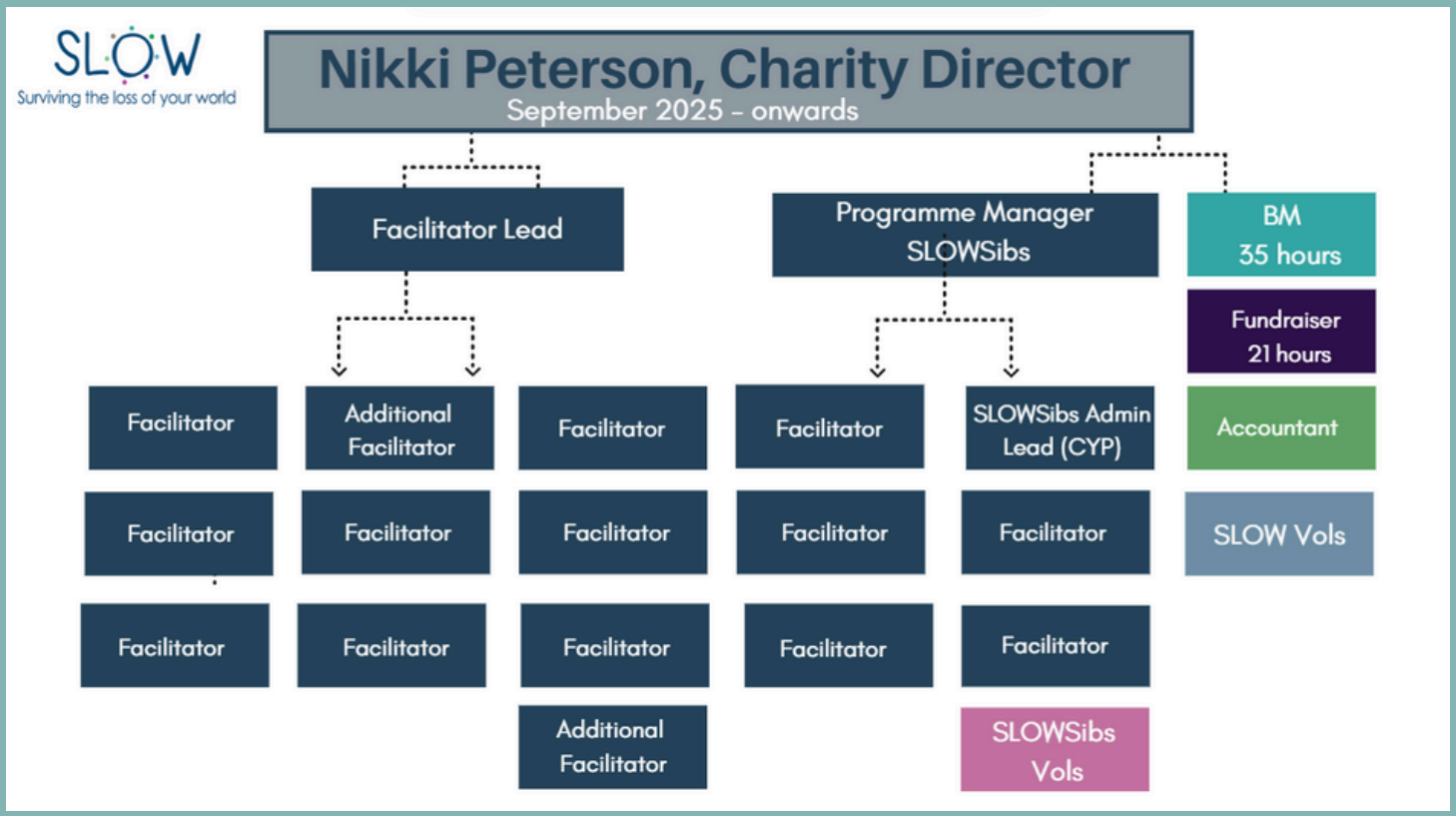
Strategy

In October, we held a strategy session with Trustees, employees, and facilitators to reflect on the past year's achievements, challenges, and future ambitions. A key focus of the session was the need to strengthen SLOW's internal infrastructure to support sustainable and scalable growth, ensuring we can continue to expand our reach while maintaining the organisation's ethos and the high-quality service delivery that defines our work.

Organisational Structure and Leadership Resilience – 2024/25 priorities

During the recent review of our organisational structure, several pinch points and challenges were identified that impact SLOW's resilience and long-term sustainability. In particular, the Director's role was highlighted as a lone leadership position with an extensive span of responsibilities, including the direct management of multiple staff, oversight of grants, business operations, and quality assurance. While the Chair has provided valuable support, it was recognised that the current structure places significant pressure on the Director.

As a result, a decision was made to implement immediate changes to better manage current demands, followed by the development of a longer-term structure to support sustainable organisational growth and a more balanced leadership model. This will be fully implemented in 2025-26.



CHARITY DEVELOPMENT & GROWTH

Strategy

It was agreed that we would also keep the following under review in 2025:
1. Implement the CRM fully to drive growth and efficiency at SLOW.
2. Ensure the continued inclusion of Bereaved Parent Trustees to represent members
3. Operationalise the Quality Assurance framework.
4. EDI - reach those we are currently not serving
5. Quantitative data - collect more data to evidence impact
6. Risk - Mitigating capacity issues
7. Trustee succession planning for leadership roles
8. Continue with existing sub groups:
   - Clinical Sub-Group - with co-opted members Dr Marilyn Relf and Sara Portnoy, both experts in the field of bereavement
   - Risk Register

To support the strategic development of SLOW and ensure informed decision-making, the following Trustee sub-groups will be established:

- Fundraising
- Communications & Marketing
- Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI)
- Risk Register & Policies
- Evaluation

Each sub-group will explore key areas in depth and report back to the full Board of Trustees with recommendations, ahead of any formal decisions being made.

Strategic Priorities

Diversify Funding Streams: Explore and map out the steps needed to develop a corporate fundraising strategy. This includes researching how corporate partnerships work, identifying themes and causes companies typically support, and aligning potential opportunities with SLOW's mission and ethos to find the right fit.
Expand Community Fundraising: Increase the number and variety of community-led fundraising events to boost engagement and broaden our support base.
Grow Service Provision: Explore the launch of a new group, including the development of '*moving on*' groups or workshops tailored to the needs of longer-term members.
Deliver More support groups for Children and Young People
Advance Equity, Diversity & Inclusion (EDI): Continue progressing EDI at SLOW by exploring opportunities to better engage and support Black and Asian parents. This work directly supports SLOW's charitable objectives by making our services more inclusive and accessible.
Share Our Impact: Publish and promote SLOW's story using findings from our research and evaluations to raise awareness, support advocacy, and strengthen our case for support.
Complete CIO Transition: Upon achieving Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) status, finalise the administrative and operational changeover to reflect the new structure.

FINANCIAL REVIEW

Overview

28%
Supporter Fundraising

1%
Group donations

1%
Individual donations

70%
Grants and Trusts

The charity's income in 2024-25 was £163,282 an increase of 5% compared to 2023-24.

The majority of our income (70%) was from grants and trusts, the remainder was mostly generate through supporter fundraising (28%). Our supporter fundraising has increased by 15% to £47,360.

Expenditure increased to £151,624 (up 15%), reflecting the expansion of charitable activities across multiple programmes. Of this, £9,500 was allocated to upgrading IT infrastructure, with full implementation expected in summer 2025. This investment is expected to significantly improve administrative efficiencies, streamline internal processes, and enhance data security and reporting capabilities.

We have doubled our fundraising expenditure this year to £10,500, reflecting our successful efforts in securing four charity places for the 2026 London Marathon. Additionally, we incurred costs for two sets of entry fees for the Royal Parks Half Marathon, further contributing to the increase.

We start the new financial year 2025-26, with £86.6k of funds, this includes carried forward unrestricted funds of £29.6k and £4.1k of restricted funds committed to specific activities. £53k will be ringfenced for reserves during 2025-26 up from £48k last year to reflect the increase in annual costs. The remaining funds are designated to the growth of support activities in 2025-26.

Again, this year, as per advice from the Charity Commission, we have excluded *in kind* income / expenses. The accounts therefore do not reflect the considerable contribution of our many volunteers who freely donate their time.

FINANCIAL REVIEW

Income and expenditure

£163,282

2024-25 income

£155,493

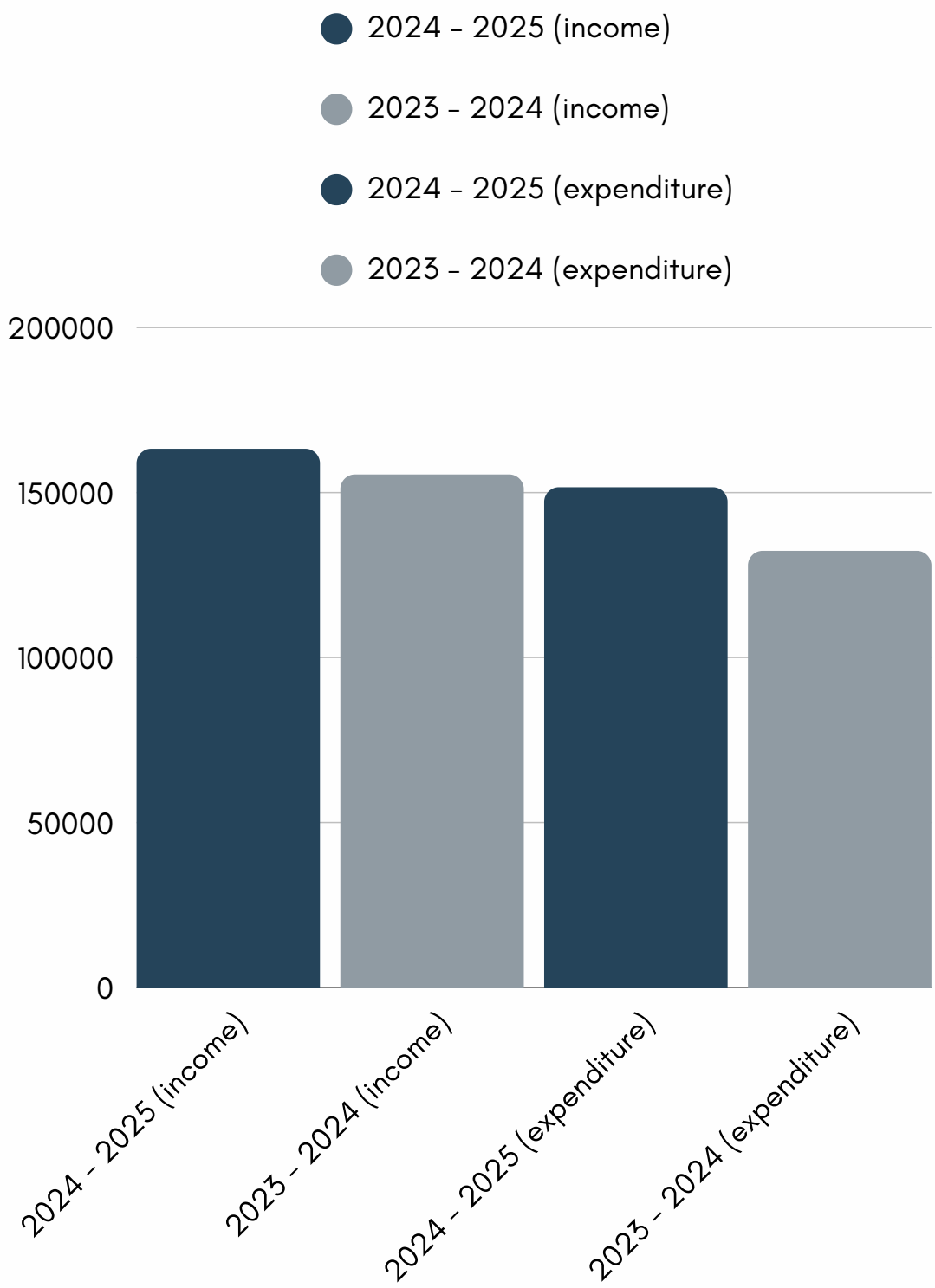
2023-24 income

£151,624

2024-25 expenditure

£132,329

2023-24 expenditure



FINANCIAL REVIEW

Supporter fundraising

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FINANCIAL REVIEW

Supporter Fundraising

We entered a team of 19 runners into the Royal Parks Half Marathon in October. Our team of runners stormed past the initial target of £20,000 raising an impressive £31.700 between them. We would like to give a special thanks to Demi Chase for the number of friends and family she encouraged to run for SLOW and her support on the day made it a very special occasion.

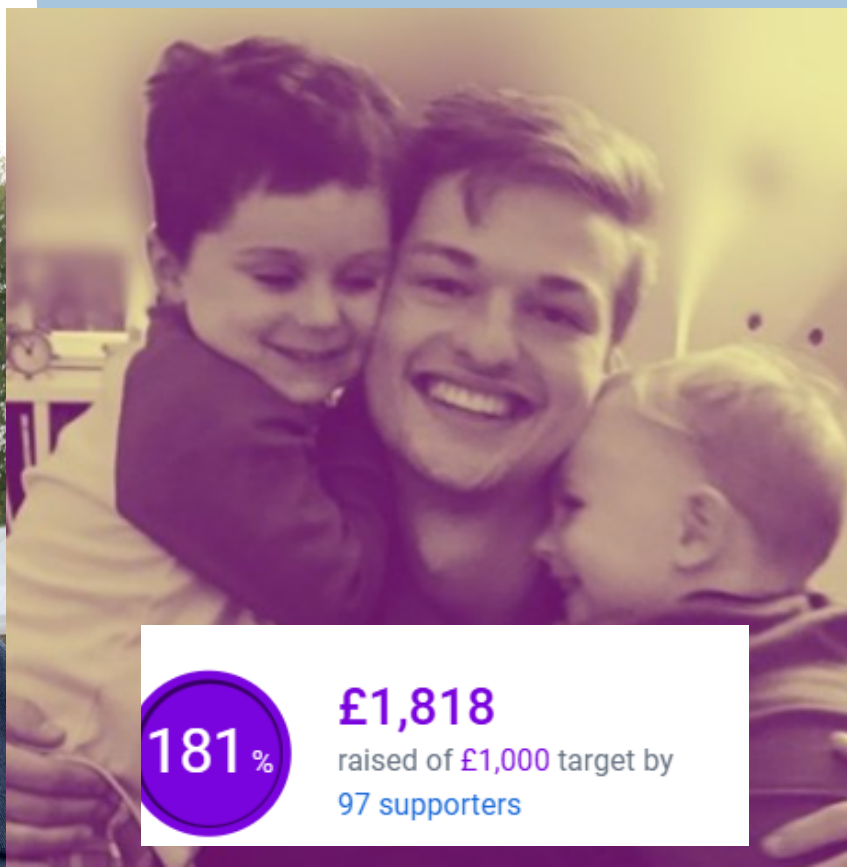
Royal Parks Foundation Half

We did it!

1106 supporters helped us to raise £31,813

Several other individual family members, friends and colleagues of SLOW members organised their own fundraising events. Thanks to Hannah and her team of teachers, Rory Norrington and others who organised fundraisers on behalf of SLOW.





FINANCIAL REVIEW

Trusts and Foundations

After SLOW's grants successes in 2023, we carried forward £18,000 of restricted and unrestricted designated funds into 2024.

The charity continued to benefit from several multiyear grants including those from Garfield Weston, the John Armitage Trust and Mrs Smith & Mount.

We were awarded two new multi-year grants from Reaching Communities (five years) and True Colours Trust (three years). We were also successful in our applications to the Wesleyan Fund and Charity Job.

Reserves Policy

The Trustees' policy is to follow recommended practice and maintain unrestricted reserves to cover at least three months' of operating expenditure. In 2025-26 SLOW will be dependent on approximately £230,000 income to sustain its activities therefore the reserves figure equates to £53,000. At this level, Trustees believe they would be able to continue the current activities of the charity in the event of a significant drop in funding while seeking to replace the funding or alternatively wind the charity down.

The main concerns of the Board are to ensure that the team can continue working to either secure new funding or close the charity and to support members in moving on to other services. The SLOW trustees review this policy annually and review income and expenditure at every board meeting.

THE SLOW TEAM

April 2025

Trustees
Pippa Murray, Chair
Cecilia Wan, Treasurer
Tim Whitworth, Secretary
Sebastian Lewis
Elise Soucie
Lizette Nolte
Paresh Pithiya
Robin Willard

Staff Team
Nikki Peterson, Charity Director & Facilitator
Sian Gill, Business Admin & Facilitator
Amber Dobinson, Facilitator Lead

Facilitator Team
Nic Whitworth, Co-Founder
Susie Hanson, Co-Founder
Christiane Kerr
Erica Stewart
Hattie Deards
Shushma Jain
Neil Cross
Gabriela Aviles
Sarah Gosling

Support Function
CoRe Volunteers x 4
SLOWSibs Volunteers
Social Media Volunteer - Isabel Astley
Accountants

Patrons
Jason Watkins
Clara Francis

Organisational Development and Capacity Building
In February, we implemented a successful organisational restructure and appointed a Charity Director to lead SLOW into its next phase of growth. The focus of this transition was to strengthen our foundations and establish the structures needed to support the charity's continued development across all areas. Following a transparent and successful recruitment process, Nikki Peterson was appointed as SLOW's Charity Director.

Staffing and Team Growth
As part of the restructure, we recruited additional support staff throughout the year to enhance our operational capacity:

- Business Management Assistant
- Fundraiser (short-term contract, six months)
- Facilitator Lead

We also expanded our facilitation team:

- Samina Iqbal joined as a new facilitator after regularly attending SLOW meetings prior to her appointment.
- Christiane Kerr, a previous facilitator, rejoined the team, bringing valuable experience and continuity.

Trustee Recruitment
Through the Big Alliance's Board Match Programme, we successfully recruited two new Trustees:

- Seb Lewis *(S&P Global)*
- Robin Willard *(Financial Conduct Authority)*

We also marked a significant transition as Kelly Carter stepped down from her role as Business and Development Manager in February 2024, after ten years of dedicated service in shaping and leading SLOW's business operations.

THE SLOW TEAM

Volunteer Support:
CoRe - Born out of Macquarie Group's commitment to supporting the local community infrastructure in Islington and beyond, the programme currently sees mixed teams of Macquarie Group, Slaughter and May and Expedia Group employees utilising their skills, knowledge and expertise to transform the capability, capacity and sustainability of charities and social enterprises for a six month period.

University of Hertfordshire, third year Clinical Psychologist trainee placements:

- Olivia Holzhauer-Conti, started in January on a nine month placement.
- Krishtina Gurung, started in October on a six month long placement

Training and Support
To ensure high-quality delivery and a well-supported team, we invested in training and professional development across the organisation:
In-house training:

- Developed and delivered SLOW's bespoke facilitation training
- Trustee induction training
- Training provided to all new staff

Facilitator Support:
Ongoing clinical supervision and reflective practice sessions were held throughout the year, enabling facilitators to share learning and support one another.

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Training courses and webinars attended:

- Data Protection Law for Charities - hosted by Slaughter and May
- Communications Workshop - The Fore
- NCMD Webinar
- Introduction to Reserves Training
- Introduction to Xero Accounting
- Third Sector Finance for 2025
- Monthly Child Bereavement Network Webinars
- Adult Safeguarding (Renewal) - All staff
- Child Safeguarding - Relevant staff
- What Are the Tensions in Seeking to Decolonise Bereavement and Grief?

Our small but mighty team of volunteers
We simply couldn't do the work we do and create the impact we do without our dedicated volunteers who kindly give up their time freely to support our mission and aims. We'd like to give a special mention to the following:

- Our very dedicated trustees, whose work goes far beyond one board meeting every quarter.
- Liz, Maria and Angela for providing weekly support at our North London group
- Susie Hanson, Co-Founder and Facilitator of the Wednesday group
- SLOWSibs volunteers - Krishtina, Lisa, Amber, Pia

University of Hertfordshire:
Dr Lizette Nolte, Shivani, and Olivia

Clinical Sub Group Co-opted members:
Dr Marilyn Relf, Chair, National Bereavement Alliance
Sara Portnoy, Clinical Psychologist

CoRe volunteers: Jamie Holmes, Pratik Bhandari , Emma Nolan, Joanne Doobay
The Big Alliance

GOVERNANCE

SLOW was founded in 2007 by Nic Whitworth and Susie Hanson, and became a registered unincorporated charity in 2015. Following agreement by the Trustees that the charity should change its legal structure, we began our application with the Charity Commission in the autumn to become a Charity Incorporated Organisation. We received confirmation of our new charitable status in April 2025.

Organisational Structure

The Trustee Board meets at least four times a year to agree the charity's strategy and activities, and to review key areas including finance, fundraising, and risk management. All Trustees volunteer their time and receive no remuneration during the year. The day-to-day operations and management of the charity are delegated to the Charity Director, who reports regularly to the Chair of Trustees on performance and operational matters.

"Being a trustee for SLOW is a way to honour and remember my sister, Anli who died in 2003 when she was 36, as well as all those I met in my work in the Pretoria hospice in South Africa and as bereavement researcher at University of Hertfordshire. I am so grateful for my connection with SLOW."

SLOW
Surviving the loss of your world

Recruitment / Appointment of Trustees

SLOW aims to maintain a Trustee Board with a broad range of skills and experience relevant to the charity's activities. When recruiting new Trustees, we assess the current composition of the Board to identify any skills or diversity gaps. Trustees are recruited through a variety of methods:

- By personal approach
- Through advertised vacancies
- Via partnership support, including recruitment through the Big Alliance

All prospective Trustees are interviewed by existing Trustees and senior staff. Appointments are made at Trustee Board meetings throughout the year. All new Trustees undergo induction training and are DBS-checked before formally joining the Board.

SLOW is committed to best practice in the safeguarding of adults and young people. As such, all staff and trustees receive annual training. We have a nominated DSL and safeguarding is a standing agenda item on Trustee Board meetings.

SLOW is proud to have a deeply connected and representative Board – with 50% of our Trustees being either bereaved parents or bereaved siblings, bringing lived experience that informs and strengthens our mission.

GOVERNANCE

Risk Management

SLOW adopts a proactive approach to risk appraisal and mitigation as part of its ongoing development and strategic planning. The charity maintains a risk register, which is formally reviewed by the Trustee Board on a quarterly basis.

In 2024-25, the major risks identified, along with their corresponding mitigating actions are listed below.

This structured approach enables SLOW to manage challenges effectively while remaining focused on our mission to support bereaved families.

Confidentiality and Data

A temporary risk has been identified during the migration of emails and member data to SLOW's new CRM system. While this process is being carefully managed, we recognise the critical importance of maintaining data integrity, confidentiality, and security throughout.

Implementation began in autumn 2024, and we have put in place robust oversight and controls to minimise disruption and mitigate risk, including:

- Controlled data transfer in stages
- Data validation checkpoints
- Close collaboration with the CRM provider and IT support teams

This transition is a key step in strengthening our infrastructure and will ultimately enhance how we manage relationships and communications with our members.

Strengthening Organisational Resilience

To build greater resilience and shared responsibility across our finance, fundraising, and administrative functions, SLOW has agreed on several key actions for implementation:

- Secure additional support for finance, bookkeeping, and general administrative tasks to improve efficiency and reduce operational risk.
- Appoint and implement a CRM system to better manage stakeholder relationships, data, and communications.
- Include policy review as a standing item at all Trustee Board meetings to ensure ongoing compliance and relevance.
- Create and maintain a comprehensive policy inventory, ensuring that all organisational policies are up to date, accessible, and regularly reviewed.

These steps are designed to strengthen our internal infrastructure and support SLOW's continued growth and sustainability

Trustees

With several long-standing Trustees potentially standing down within the next 12 months, the Board recognises the need to implement a trustee succession plan. To ensure continuity, good governance, and a balanced range of expertise, a skills audit will be carried out to identify gaps and inform future recruitment. This process will help ensure the Trustee Board remains diverse, experienced, and well equipped to support SLOW's continued growth and strategic development.

SLOW

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Get in touch



SLOW

Surviving the loss of your world

info@slowgroup.co.uk

Tel:
07532 423 674

Insta:
@slowgroup

Facebook:
slowsupport

LinkedIn:
slowsupport

JustGiving:
slowgroup

Anyone who is a bereaved parent or bereaved sibling can attend our support groups and workshops. Referrals can be made directly, or we can be contacted by a family member or health professional.

Our referrals team will contact the bereaved parent or sibling within a few days to arrange a convenient time for a phone call and to discuss how SLOW groups may be able to help.

SLOW - Surviving the Loss of Your World 1161337

Receipts and payments accounts CC16a

For the period from 01/02/2024 To 31/01/2025

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						
Grants	35,000	77,698	-	112,698	93,042	
Charitable Retail Schemes	-	-	-	-	-	
Fundraising	47,361	-	-	47,361	41,322	
Individual Donations	1,664	-	-	1,664	4,732	
Donations from Organisations	79	-	-	79	14,204	
Group voluntary donations	1,480	-	-	1,480	2,193	
Sub total(Gross income for AR)	85,584	77,698	-	163,282	155,493	
A2 Asset and investment sales, (see table).						
	-	-	-	-	-	
	-	-	-	-	-	
Sub total	-	-	-	-	-	
Total receipts	85,584	77,698	-	163,282	155,493	

A3 Payments	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Endowment funds	Total funds	Last year	
Salaries and NICs	25,807	20,410	-	46,217	62,029	
Sessional workers	15,592	43,225	-	58,817	41,444	
Pensions	1,054			1,054	3,428	
Supervision	3,358	950		4,308	3,020	
Support group workshop refreshments		1,052	-	1,052	1,031	*
Sibs workshop materials		1,612	-	1,612	874	*
Premises rental		5,707	-	5,707	5,619	*
Professional development, events and training	357	15	-	372	385	
Home phone, broadband, and mobile	948	1,057	-	2,005	1,618	
IT expenses	8,676	895		9,571	79	
Marketing - website and publicity	1,249	1,057	-	2,306	2,234	
Volunteer Expenses		827	-	827	1,235	*
Fundraising Expenses	10,596		-	10,596	5,201	
Travel	1,153	100	-	1,253	875	
Stationery, books, postage and equipment	899	100	-	999	603	
Insurance and compliance	2,730	957	-	3,687	899	
Trustee board development and expenses	1,000		-	1,000	1,051	
Meeting expenses and gifts	77		-	77	459	
Recruitment			-	-	245	
Evaluation and Focus Groups	-	-	-	-	-	*
Other	164	-		164	-	
Sub total	73,660	77,964		151,624	132,329	
A4 Asset and investment purchases, (see table)						
	-	-	-	-		
	-	-	-	-		
Sub total	-	-	-	-	-	
Total payments	73,660	77,964	-	151,624	132,329	
Net of receipts/(payments)	11,924	- 266	-	11,658	23,164	
A5 Transfers between funds				-		
A6 Cash funds last year end	66,250	211	-	66,461	92,084	
Cash funds this year end	86,626	-	-	86,626	66,461	

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

Categories	Details	Unrestricted funds to the nearest £	Restricted funds to the nearest £	Endowment funds to the nearest £
B1 Cash funds	Balance at bank	86,626	-	-
	Petty cash	-	-	-
			-	-
	Total cash funds	86,626	-	-
		OK	OK	OK

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

	-	-	-
	-	-	-

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)
Trade creditors	Both	2,956	28 February 2025
PAYE	Both	1,663	25 April 2025
Pension	Both	233	28 February 2025
Deferred Restricted Grants	Restricted	5,802	
		-	

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

Signature	Print Name	Date of approval
	Sebastian Lewis	27-Oct-25

CHARITY COMMISSION FOR ENGLAND AND WALES

Independent examiner's report on the accounts

Section A Independent Examiner's Report

Report to the trustees

Charity Name: SLOW - SUPPORTING BEREAVED PARENTS AND SIBLINGS

On accounts for the year ended	Charity no (if any)
31 January 2025	1161337

Set out on pages: 1-2 (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 / 01 / 2025.

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 [insert name of applicable listed body]]. *Delete* [ ] *if not applicable*.~~

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no material matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination ~~(other than that disclosed below *)~~ 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.

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

Signed: Rob Young **Date:** 03/09/2025

Name: Rob Young

Relevant professional qualification(s) or body: ICAEW

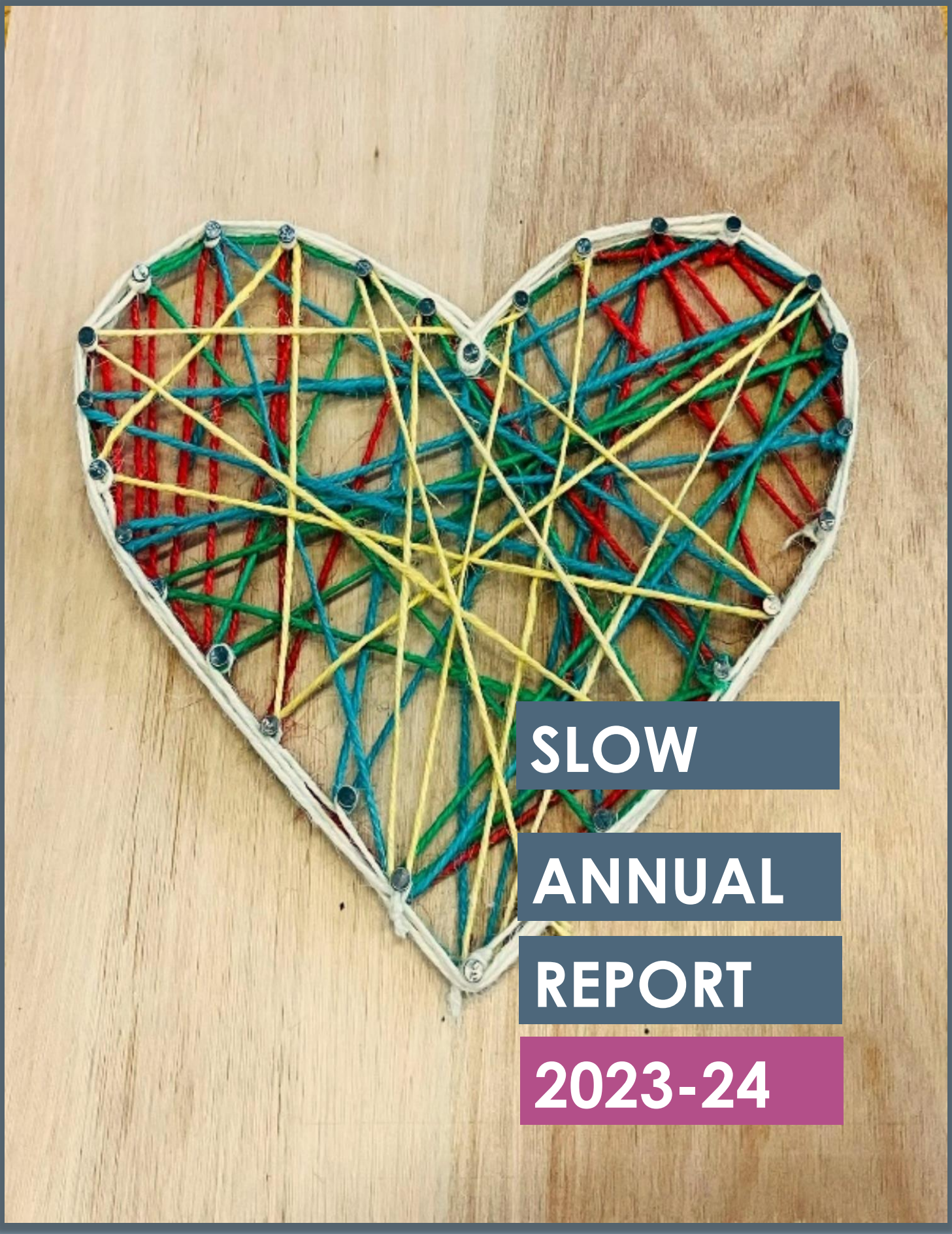
(if any):	
Address:	2A The Quadrant
	Epsom
	Surrey, KT17 4RH

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.	

SLOW - SUPPORTING BEREAVED PARENTS AND SIBLINGS

England & Wales - Charity number 1161337

Accounts



SLOW ANNUAL REPORT 2023-24

ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

SLOW - Surviving the Loss of Your World

Year Ending 31st January 2024

CHARITY REGISTRATION DETAILS	Registered Charity Number 1161337 Registered April 2015
FOUNDED	September 2007
FOUNDED BY	Nic Whitworth and Susie Hanson

TRUSTEES 2023-24

Chair of Trustees	Pippa Murray
Treasurer	Cicilia Wan
Secretary	Tim Whitworth
Trustee	Samara Stevens (term ended December 2023)
Trustee	Dr Lizette Nolte (appointed June 2023)
Trustee	Paresh Pithiya
Trustee	Elise Soucie

PATRONS	Jason Watkins and Clara Francis

CONTACT DETAILS

Registered Address and correspondence:	SLOW, 1 Kenilworth Avenue, London, NW6 7HL admin@slowgroup.co.uk Tel 07532 423674
Referrals:	info@slowgroup.co.uk
Website	https://slowgroup.co.uk/
Facebook	https://www.facebook.com/slowsupport https://www.facebook.com/groups/slowgroup
Instagram	https://www.instagram.com/slowgroup/
Twitter	https://twitter.com/slowsupport
Linked in	https://www.linkedin.com/company/66625688

OBJECTIVES AND ETHOS

At SLOW, we provide a unique and successful model of bereavement support that is a direct response to what bereaved parents and siblings have told us they need.

SLOW cultivates a stance of 'walking alongside' parents, going at their pace, within a non-pathologising culture. We know that grief cannot be fixed, and we do not strive to 'make things better'. Instead, we support and give space to bereaved families, so they may in time harness their own resources in slowly rebuilding their lives. In this way, we believe there is hope to be found in connecting with other bereaved families, relief in sharing the pain of grief, and company in bearing the unbearable, together, with others who are living, following the death of their child or sibling.

Our ethos has grown from the roots of a community, facilitated and supported by bereaved families who have experienced first-hand the devastating grief resulting from the death of a child or sibling.

Every group at SLOW is facilitated by bereaved parents or siblings. Three of our existing facilitators benefitted from SLOW's support before joining the team.

Each facilitator receives expert facilitation training, which is grounded in grief theories and group dynamics.

All of our facilitators receive regular, ongoing professional and development support as well as regular supervision and reflective practice.

Our Charitable Objects were revised in 2022 and SLOW aims to promote: -

1. The emotional and physical well-being of bereaved parents, siblings and children suffering from grief through expert support of bereaved facilitators promoting self-help and mutual support.

2. And support social inclusion of bereaved parents, siblings and children to fully participate in society.

3. Emotional and physical well-being through the provision of education and training materials on grief and bereavement support.

4. The emotional and physical well-being of other bereaved family members where this contributes to achieving objectives 1-3.



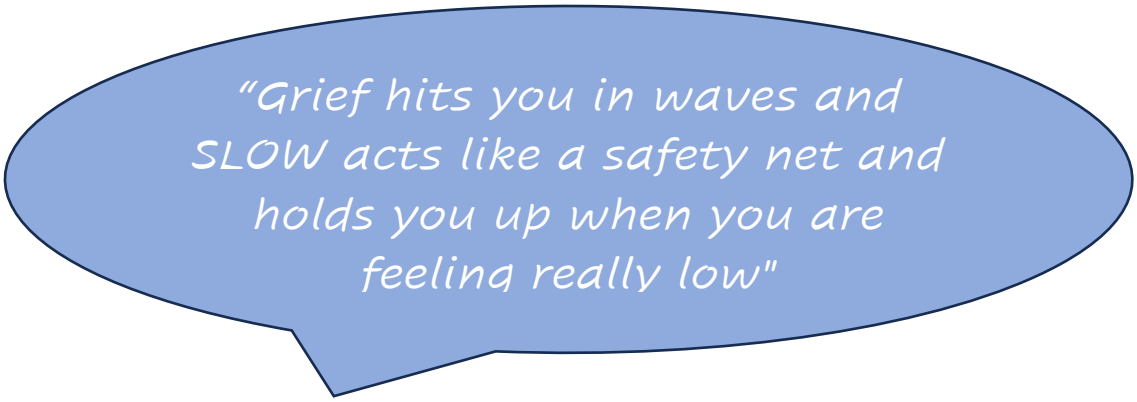
WHY SLOW'S WORK MATTERS

The death of a child is an incredibly traumatic event leaving parents with overwhelming emotional needs. The grief of bereaved siblings is equally devastating, yet this is one of the most neglected types of grief.

A child's death is a relatively rare event, but when it happens it can have a devastating effect on family life, completely altering a family's worldview. Sometimes triggering depression, anxiety, alcohol / drug dependency and family break up. Our members face the challenge of living in a radically different world in which close family ties, routines and friendships are impacted negatively and many of SLOW's members initially report they feel very isolated.

SLOW support groups make a positive intervention by…

- Providing a safe space for peer support and reducing isolation.
- Connecting, sharing, validating and normalising grief.
- Finding new ways to manage grief.
- Encouraging members to find ways to connect with their child or sibling.
- Creating a transforming community connected through the death of their child.
- Encouraging bereaved families to regain their sense of wellbeing and find purpose in life again.
- Offering hope for the future and building confidence at a time when life can feel hopeless and worthless.



Healing for bereaved families can begin as they share their grief with others who validate and acknowledge their experience. They discover they are not alone, their thoughts and feelings are normal, and gradually learn ways of managing their grief and how to live after a child dies. At SLOW, our members come to understand that healing means remembering, not forgetting their child or sibling and we encourage them to be compassionate, gentle and patient with themselves.

In this way bereaved families are building themselves a safety net that will resource them long after they leave SLOW. They begin to recognise the messiness of grief and what a unique experience it is.

By making room for the experience of grief, parents often say that they leave 'feeling lighter'. Listening and sharing experiences of coping with life whilst **managing grief, parents** can slowly make small but significant steps towards rebuilding their lives.

ACTIVITIES AND ACHIEVEMENTS

2023-24 was another successful year for SLOW. We continue to provide support offering both in person and virtual groups for bereaved families as well as other social events.

SLOW offered 1738 hours of support to bereaved parents across the year.

Support for Bereaved Parents

SLOW is special and evidence based. The heart of SLOW lies in its culture and community of the regular weekly support groups for bereaved parents. It is here that parents come to find connection, company, comfort and hope after the death of their child.

Our support groups offer a simple structure that allows safety through containment and continuity. An introductory round gives each parent the time and space to say their child's name, to talk about their child, to reflect and identify areas where they'd like support, and these form the basis of the group discussion.

There were 1124 individual attendances compared to 793 the year before.

In 2023-24 bereaved parents could choose from five weekly groups and two monthly groups. We now offer two weekly groups in North London and a new, weekly group in South London. Which started in response to the growing referral demand and need in this area. This is in addition to the two weekly groups available on zoom. Having a blended approach makes SLOW more accessible and gives members a choice of how and when to attend.

In 2023/24 we delivered 202 groups, up from 142 the previous year.

The Zoom groups particularly appeal to those living outside of London, parents who have returned to work, and, or anyone unable to travel to the groups.

The evening groups, either in person or on zoom, work well for parents who have returned to work, or they may have surviving children without childcare during the day.

In 2023-24 SLOW ran 202 bereaved parent support groups across London attended by 216 parents. Across the year there were 1124 individual attendances at bereaved parent groups.

Offering both zoom and in person groups, either during the daytime or evening, gives parents the choice to attend a regular support group at a time that suits them.

SLOW welcomes all bereaved parents, of differing cultures and faiths, irrespective of what age their child was or the circumstances in which they died. Members can join at any time regardless of how long ago their child died. Some parents join days after their child has died and others find us 15 years later. Longer term members that no longer attend support groups often come to our social events or take on a volunteering role.

We nearly doubled the number of individuals we supported to 216, up from 109.

Regular group conversations include a strong emphasis on developing strategies for coping, the overall messiness of grief, self-care, meeting the demands of surviving children and relationships with friends and work colleagues.

As new parents arrive at the groups, those who have been attending for longer recognise the values and culture of the group, fostering an atmosphere of warmth and inclusion. At every group there is an extremely welcoming, supportive atmosphere from parents, despite the wide range of ages and circumstances in which their child has died.

ACTIVITIES AND ACHIEVEMENTS

Support for Bereaved Siblings

SLOWsibs 18+

Siblings are often referred to as the forgotten grievers, sometimes having to put their own grief aside to support parents or other siblings. Bereaved siblings can feel very misunderstood and unheard. SLOW provides the space to talk about not only the death of their brother or sister but also the huge change in family dynamics and all the secondary losses that come when your brother or sister dies.

SLOW gives bereaved siblings the opportunity to feel understood, heard and validated in their grief. The groups provide an opportunity to talk about their brother or sister without judgement or fear of upsetting others.

Adult sibling attendance is quite different to that of our parents, most siblings come for fewer sessions or less frequently. Similarly to bereaved parents, siblings find SLOW at different times of their grief and the circumstances in which siblings have died can be very different, but their shared experiences create an immediate bond.

Ten groups were held across the year, 7 on zoom and 3 were in person at King's Cross.

16 bereaved siblings attended our groups with 51 different attendances throughout the year at 10 virtual and in person gatherings.



"I feel like I trust the space in the room. There is genuine listening and genuine connection"

ACTIVITIES AND ACHIEVEMENTS

Support for Bereaved Siblings

SLOWSibs

SLOWSibs provides a safe and creative space for young, bereaved siblings to meet each other with the aim of reducing isolation, building confidence through making new friends and exploring their grief in an age-appropriate way.

Our workshops, for children aged 6 to 15 years, are designed to: -

- Help children and young people understand and express their grief and talk openly about their brother or sister who died.
- Support each child living with their grief while building a hopeful future.
- Help restore confidence and self-esteem.
- Commemorate their sibling who died and find positive ways to remember them.
- Express their own unique place in their altered family.



Over the year we held four workshops, Spring Planter, Nail It, Memory Jars and Christmas Wreaths.

Between four and nine siblings attended each workshop. In December, we invite parents to join our Christmas Wreath Workshop, meaning both parents and siblings attend. We had 19 members making their own unique wreaths. Each wreath was as individual as every person's grief and memory of their special person.

Some families told us they place their wreath at the Christmas table in the absence of the child or sibling who died.



The age range of siblings that attend mean that they can be at different places in their development and understanding of death and therefore their expression of grief. Activities are carefully chosen to allow each child to express themselves at different levels of interpretation and engagement.

ACTIVITIES AND ACHIEVEMENTS

Other Events and Support

SLOW operates its groups term time only. However, over the 6-week **summer break** we held two **zoom sessions** for the second year running in response to parent feedback. Six weeks can be a long time without regular support. For some parents, knowing it is an option is enough and for others, the break offers time and space for reflection and an opportunity to see if SLOW is the support they still need. We pride ourselves on saying 'SLOW is a haven and not a home'.

Parents from our North London groups organised a **summer picnic** amongst themselves. For some parents, connecting and speaking with other bereaved parents is enough support over the summer break without a need to attending a zoom group.

There were **two non- Christmas suppers** organised by members, one in South London and one in North London.

Susie Hanson, Co-founder, represented SLOW at the annual LIFE Force Memorial Day in September.

Email and Telephone Support

SLOW recognises that the first steps in reaching out for support is very difficult for many bereaved parents. We offer a prompt telephone, email or social media response to any enquiry (usually within 48 hours). We take care to talk with parents about what has happened and how they would like to be supported. Bereaved parents and siblings are then allocated a group. For most parents, they can be in a group within a week of first speaking to SLOW. If a member hasn't been for a few weeks, we will follow up and check in on them.

SLOW may not meet the needs of every bereaved parent and we will endeavor to signpost them to other organisations that may provide better suited or specific support.

Across the year, all groups had a steady flow of new enquiries.

In 2023-2024 referrals increased by 160%, up from 112 referrals to 180.

SLOW

Surviving the loss of your world

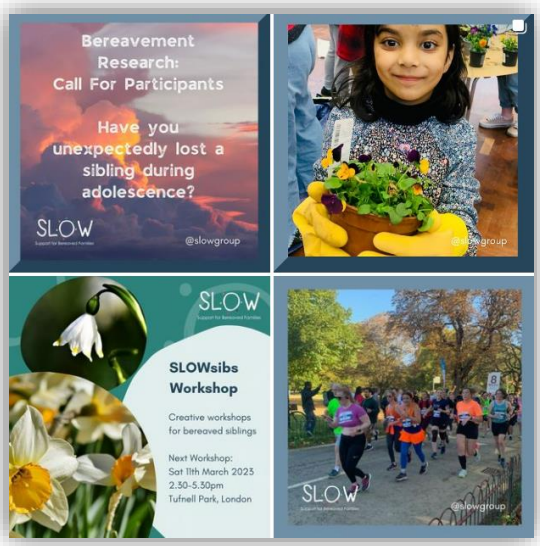
CHARITY DEVELOPMENT & GROWTH

Marketing and Professional Outreach

Referrals come from a wide range of sources in various locations, so our marketing reflects this. We focus on all the touchpoints that bereaved families are likely to encounter including local NHS paediatric teams, palliative care teams, hospitals, specialist service providers, health visitors and local charities.

In 2023-24 we presented to over 15 social prescribers within London and had more than 10 phone calls with social prescribers or GP's who were calling on behalf of someone that would benefit from SLOW's service.

We continued building on both existing and new relationships with referral agencies that share and complement our work. These include the Life Force team (Palliative Care Team in North London), End of Life Services GOSH, Barnet Bereavement Services, Space2Grieve, the Child Death Helpline, Noah's House Hospice, Shooting Stars Hospice, Hebe Foundation, Balm Support, Benedict Blythe Foundation, Enable Law, UK Sepsis Trust, Haven House, Islington Bereavement Services, Norfolk County Council, Brentwood Catholic Children's Services.



ITV Documentary Filming

Our patrons, Clara Francis and Jason Watkins, filmed a documentary about the death of their daughter Maude. The documentary; 'Jason and Clara: in Memory of Maudie' was aired on 30th March. Reviews praised the program for breaking the taboo around child death and highlighting the dangers of sepsis. It also gave hope to bereaved parents. SLOW was mentioned in the documentary and included in the ITV advice link shown at the end.



IT and Operations

Following comprehensive due diligence, we analysed a number of CRM's that would meet SLOW's specific requirements. We are pleased to have selected Beacon which will be implemented in 2024.

We successfully implemented 'Freeagent', a free financial software tool that met our needs.

We purchased sum-up card readers for our in-person groups and external fundraising to make receiving card payment donations possible.

Evaluating the SLOW Service

We continued working with the University of Hertfordshire, to evaluate our support services. We are currently working with trainee clinical psychologists, supervised by Dr Lizette Nolte (Principal Lecturer for the Doctorate in Clinical Psychology), from the university's Psychology Department on two research projects:

- **Two Year Research Project** – "A narrative analysis of parents' journeys with SLOW through parental bereavement" by Molly Parrish. This research project aimed to understand the impact of SLOW on our members' grief and mental health. During the year the SLOW team attended a presentation on the findings (September 2023) and received some interim feedback while we await the full thesis.
- **One Year Research Project (Evaluation #3)** – A one year research study to compare virtual and in person support SLOW support groups, by Shivani Patel. Her report highlighted the pros and cons of both types of support and included recommendations for delivery of services in the future. The report was circulated to trustees, staff and facilitators.

Learnings from the research continue to shape our services and refine our ethos.

Conclusion

Neither method is concluded as better or worse but that each has its own benefits and limitations and that for the most effective overall service fate-to-face and online should continue to be used in conjunction with each other to ensure parents receive the best service possible.

Recommendations

- Facilitators to give zoom training to reduce the impact of technical challenges.
- To provide an information pack for zoom procedures (for those that need it) including on how to join sessions, view the entire group and turn on cameras prior to first meeting.
- The website and social media should highlight that both online and face-to-face options are offered.
- Facilitators should make themselves mindful of the particular skills they need to ensure quality of delivery is consistent across both methods of delivery.
- The charity should liaise with bereaved parents to arrange face-to-face events (particularly for virtual members) to encourage connection and community.

CHARITY DEVELOPMENT & GROWTH

SLOW ran a strategy away day with Trustees, the Senior Leadership Team and facilitators in October to identify previous achievements, challenges and ambitions. Then we looked forward to identifying growth in a sustainable and scalable way that maintains SLOW's ethos and high-quality service delivery.

To support the outcomes of the strategy day, we have the following subgroups and workstreams that meet outside of the quarterly Trustee board meetings:

Clinical Practice subgroup – Trustees, staff and co-opted members Ms Sara Portnoy and Dr Marilyn Relf; both experts in working with bereaved families.

Risk Register – trustees and staff.

Fundraising Strategy – trustees and staff.

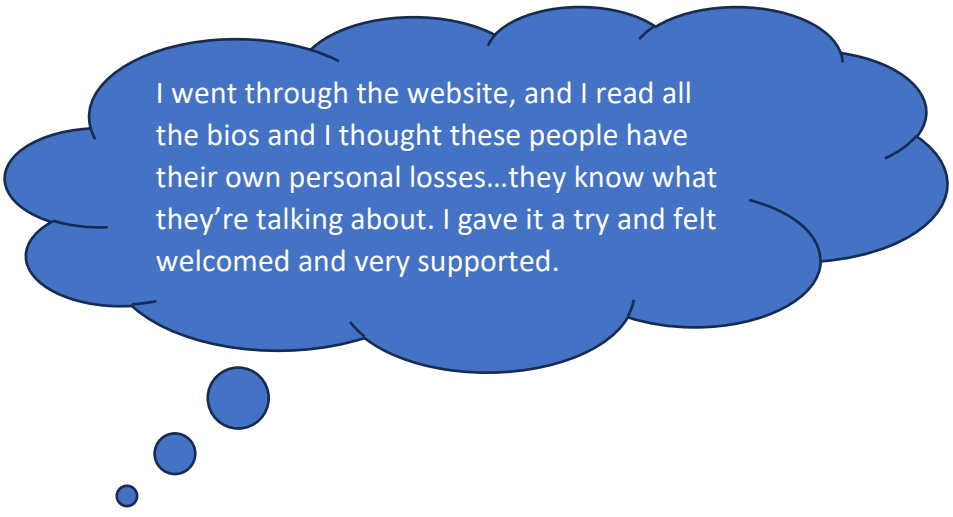
Focus areas 2024-25:

To provide high quality bereavement support, reaching more bereaved families. We plan to:

- Increase **support events** across London and via Zoom for bereaved families
- Launch a **new weekly in person group** in London.
- Increase the frequency of our SLOWSibs young people groups from quarterly to monthly. Introduce a **new age group for teenagers aged 14-18.**
- **Year-round referral** phone support
- Continue building collaborative partnerships with referral agencies and professionals in bereavement.
- **Reach communities** we are currently not serving.

To develop the charity's infrastructure to support this growth of services we plan to:

- **Expand our fundraising sources**, growing sustainable income and inspiring our community to fundraise for SLOW.
- Further evaluate our support services with our partners at the University of Hertfordshire and disseminate the research's findings.
- **Appoint new facilitators** to enable the expansion of our support groups.
- Implement a CRM system.
- Change our **charitable structure** to a CIO
- Collect and analyse regular **quantitative feedback.**



FINANCIAL REVIEW

Overview

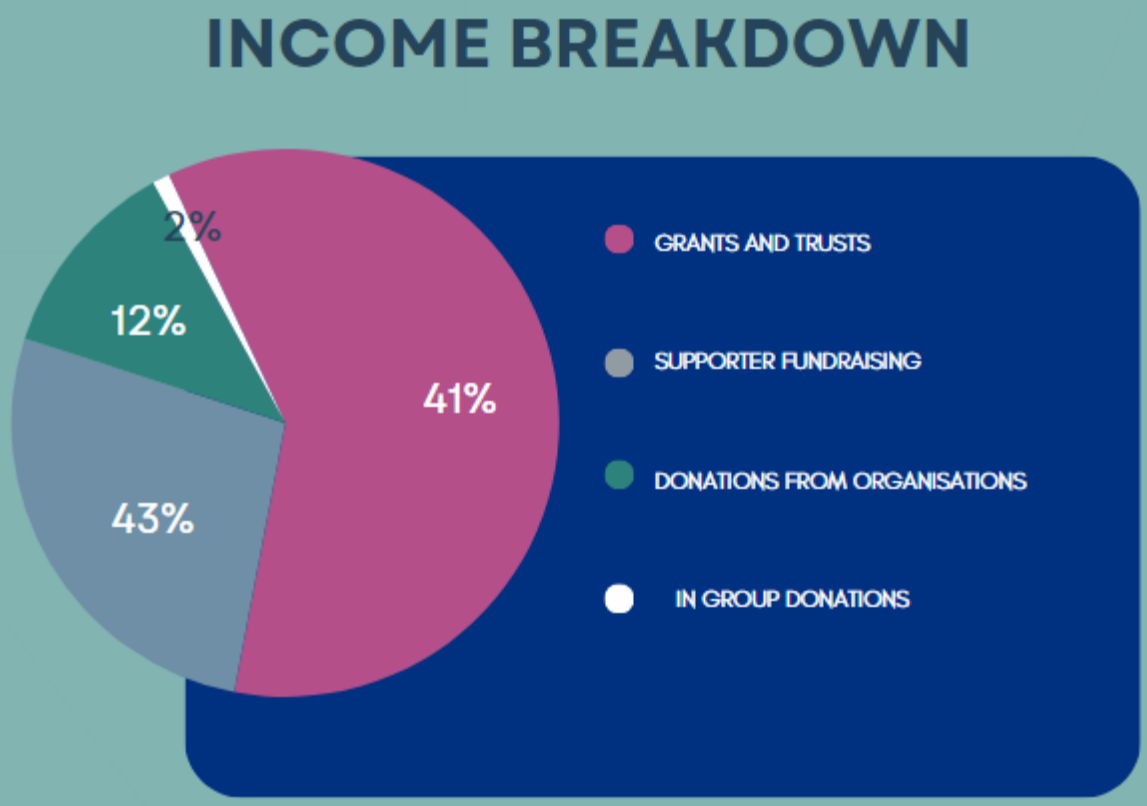
The charity's income in 2023-24 was £106,616 a decrease on last year. Our aim this year was to diversify our income so that we are less reliant on grant and trusts income, (there is increased competition for grant income and in some cases only 14% of applications are successful).

We are pleased with our income breakdown this year, grants and trust is now 40% of our income (50% last year) and supporter fundraising is now 43% of our income (27% last year).

Expenditure increased to £132k, up 35% on 2022-23, reflecting the expansion of charitable activities.

We started the new financial year 2024-25 with £66k of funds, this includes carried forward unrestricted funds of £18.1k and £211 of restricted funds committed to specific activity. £48k was ringfenced for reserves during 2023-24 up from £38k (26% increase) last year to reflect the increase in quarterly costs. The remaining funds were designated to the growth of support activities in 2024-25.

Again, this year, as per advice from the Charity Commission, we have excluded in kind income / expenses. The accounts therefore do not reflect the considerable contribution of our many volunteers who freely donate their time.



FINANCIAL REVIEW

Supporter Fundraising – our amazing team of 30 **Royal Parks Half Marathon** runners raised more than £20k. **Demi Chase** raised over £7k and **Sarah Brennikmeijer** raised over £1k from their inspiring and phenomenal fundraising efforts.

Expenditure

Expenses increased by 35% (£34.5k) year on year. Most of this cost (+£18.6k year on year increase) is due to the rise in sessional costs as a result of the increase in number of support groups (202 vs 142) we now offer. The cost of employee salaries and related HMRC / NICs and Pension expenses also increased by 20% (+£9.8k yoy) reflecting a rise in the contracted hours worked due to growth within the charity.

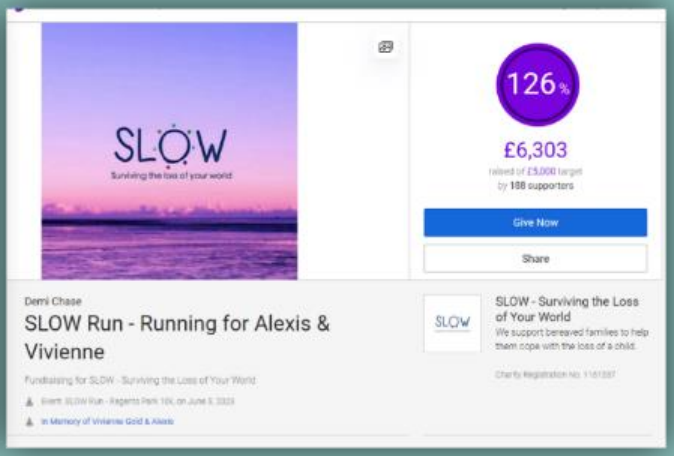
Reserves Policy

The Trustees' policy is to follow recommended practice and maintain unrestricted reserves to cover at least three months' operating expenditure. In 2024-25 SLOW will be dependent on approximately £193K income to sustain its activities therefore the reserves figure equates to £48K. At this level, Trustees believe they would be able to continue the current activities of the charity in the event of a significant drop in funding while seeking to replace the funding or alternatively wind the charity down. The main concerns of the boards are to ensure that the team can continue working to either secure new funding or close the charity and to support members move onto other services. The SLOW trustees review this policy annually and review income and expenditure at every board meeting.









THE SLOW TEAM 2023-24

Personnel

Support services in 2023-24 were delivered by a team of 11 facilitators and many volunteers.

Neil Cross, Gabriela Aviles, Sian Gill and Sarah Gosling joined the SLOW facilitator team. Both Neil and Gabriela used SLOW's services before joining as facilitators. Sian found SLOW through her work with the Child Death Helpline.

People changes

After 10 years of running SLOW's business operations, Kelly Carter stood down from the Business and Development Manager's role in February 2024.

Nikki Peterson was appointed to the new role of Director at SLOW in February 2024 following an open competition.

After nearly 10 years of supporting bereaved parents, Nic and Tim ran their final monthly evening support group on April 20.

We recruited a new trustee, Dr Lizette Nolte, from the University of Hertfordshire.



Training and Support

Our in-house facilitation and trustee induction training was further developed. The team also attended training courses provided from a variety of organisations for example Child Bereavement UK, The Big Alliance, Charity Digital and NICABM, Place2Be.

We comprehensively support our facilitators with frequent clinical supervision and monthly Reflective Practice Groups (RPG). RPG provides a space to self-reflect, share best practice, discuss group working, co-facilitation, peer support and ideas. RPG is facilitated by Steve Dilworth.

We ran a well-received taster day for potential new facilitators in September.

Our Volunteers

21 committed volunteers help SLOW by offering their time and skills. Special mentions should be given to the following volunteers who have dedicated their time in 2023-24: -

- **Susie Hanson** facilitated our Wednesday, and monthly zoom support group.
- **Nic Whitworth** and **Tim Whitworth** facilitators at the in person monthly groups.
- **Liz Cancea, Maria Wojszwillo, Angela Costello** provide weekly support at the North London groups.
- **Laura Hall**, **Lisa Barnett**, **Mandi Tolga**, **Sarah Shaw, Valentine Guilliford** and **Pia Guilliford** have all assisted at the sibling workshops.
- **Sara Portnoy, Consultant Clinical Psychologist,** provided clinical supervision for facilitators and shared her expertise at the Clinical Practice Subgroups.
- **Dr Marilyn Relf,** Chair, National Bereavement Alliance also shared her experience at the Clinical Practice Subgroups
- **Dr Lizette Nolte, Mollie Parrish and Shivani Patel** from the University of Herts evaluated SLOW support.
- And finally, **our Trustees** who continued to donate their time voluntarily to sustain SLOW at a governance level with passion and commitment for the work we do.

THE SLOW TEAM 2023-24



Kelly Carter - Business and Development Manager



Nikki Peterson – Bereavement Support Services Manager and Facilitator



Nicola Whitworth – Founder and Support Group Facilitator



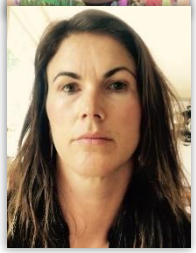
Susie Hanson - Founder and Support Group Facilitator



Tim Whitworth – Trustee and Support Group Facilitator



Erica Stewart – Support Group facilitator



Hattie Deards – Support group Facilitator

THE SLOW TEAM 2023-24



Shushma Jain– Support Group Facilitator



Amber Dobinson – Support Group Facilitator



Kate Walsh – Support Group Facilitator



Neil Cross – Support Group Facilitator



Sian Gill – Support Group facilitator



Gabriela Aviles – Support Group Facilitator



Sarah Gosling – Support Group Facilitator

THE SLOW TRUSTEE TEAM 2023-24



Pippa Murray - Chair of Trustees
Pippa joined SLOW as a Trustee in 2012. She has a background in central government, having held a number of senior posts in HM Treasury and HM Revenue and Customs. Pippa was a member of Great Ormond Street Hospital's Transformation Board between 2008-2012. She is an Emeritus Trustee at the Brain Tumour Charity having served as a Trustee between 2008-2022. She is also a non-executive director of Dasic Marine Limited, a marine engineering business. Pippa's 15-month old son, Lawrence, was diagnosed with a brain tumour and she cared for him until he passed away in September 2007 aged 3 years 9 months. She was an early member of SLOW.



Tim Whitworth - Secretary
Tim has many years' experience working with the public sector and supporting and advising new and small enterprises. A qualified training practitioner and executive coach, he worked with the Office for Public Management for over 9 years and now has his own consultancy and training practice. Tim has used his personal experience of the diagnosis and loss of his daughter Naomi in running a bereaved dads support group, dads.care since 2011.



Cicilia Wan - Treasurer
Cicilia has worked as a Human Resources Executive in the Financial Services industry for over 20 years. Her career has taken her all around the world, but she is now based in London. She was introduced to SLOW through The East London Business Alliance, which connects local charities with workers at major institutions with an interest in volunteering. As a mother, Cicilia has deep appreciation for the lifeline that SLOW extends to bereaved parents and is proud to support the work they do.



Samara Stevens – Trustee (until December 2023)
Samara is a chartered accountant with a 12-year career spanning financial services, transport and the NHS. She also brings a diversity lens to the charity's operational and strategic goals. She was drawn to SLOW due to the loss of her best friend at a young age and her continued relationship with his bereaved parents. She was matched with SLOW through The Big Alliance.



Dr Lizette Nolte – Trustee (June 2023)
Lizette is a Clinical Psychologist, lecturer and researcher who connected with SLOW initially when University of Hertfordshire became their research partner. She has worked clinically and in her research in areas of loss, bereavement, parenting and family wellbeing all her career and is proud to be involved with SLOW. Lizette is a bereaved sibling, and bears witness to the impact on her parents and wider family since her sister, Anli, died in 2003.



Paresh Pithiya – Trustee
Paresh was looking to get involved with a charity where he could make a long-lasting difference. He was drawn to the lifeline SLOW provides when parents and siblings cannot see how to move forward with life. Paresh understands the trauma of losing a child having lost his daughter in 2014. Paresh joined SLOW as a Trustee in December 2021 to help the charity grow and reach more people who are suffering from their loss of their child or sibling.



Elise Soucie – Trustee
Elise is an Associate Director at the Association for Financial Markets in Europe (AFME) in their Technology and Operations Division leading on Digital Assets and Data Strategy. She has a background in technology, policy, and finance, has also previously held roles in other charitable organisations, and aims to utilise this experience as a SLOW trustee. Throughout her life she experienced loss of her cousins as a child, nearly losing her own brother to cancer, and loss of a close friend to overdose while in university. These experiences with bereavement drew her to SLOW who she was introduced to SLOW through The Big Alliance.

GOVERNANCE

SLOW was founded in 2007 by Nic Whitworth and Susie Hanson and became a registered unincorporated charity in 2015. The trustees agreed the charity should change its charitable structure so we will become a Charitable Incorporated Organisation, CIO, in 2024.

Organisational Structure

The trustee board meets at least four times per year to agree the strategy and activities of the charity and to review the finances, fundraising and risks. All Trustees give their time voluntarily and no trustee remuneration was paid in the year. Day-to-day operations and management are delegated to the Business and Development Manager and the Bereavement Support Services Manager who report regularly report to Chair of Trustees on performance and operations.

Recruitment / Appointment of Trustees

The objective is to have a range of Trustees with skillsets relevant to the activities of the charity. The skills of the existing Trustees are taken into consideration when recruiting new Trustees and skills / diversity gaps identified. SLOW recruits Trustees through a variety of means, either they are approached personally, the positions are advertised, or they are recruited with thanks via the Big Alliance.

New applicants are interviewed by staff and existing Trustees and are appointed at one of the trustee board meetings throughout the year. All new Trustees are given induction training and are DBS checked.

Risk Management

Trustees adopt a risk appraisal and mitigation approach as part of future development. The SLOW risk register is reviewed quarterly. The major risks for the charity in and mitigating actions in 2023-24 were:

Finance and Fundraising

In order to ensure that there is back up for the Business and Development Manager in terms of finance and fundraising responsibilities, actions were agreed including: implementation of accounting software, developing a customer relationship strategy and securing assistance with finance and book-keeping duties.

Confidentiality and Data

There has been a temporary risk highlighted while the migration of data – emails and member data – is transferred to a new CRM system. Following comprehensive due diligence, the CRM will be rolled out in 2024.

THANK YOU TO OUR SUPPORTERS

SLOW would like to thank its employees, contractors, volunteers and trustees for their hard work and dedication. Our work wouldn't be possible without the support of our new and continuing funders listed below.

ST. JAMES'S PLACE
WEALTH MANAGEMENT

The Mrs Smith & Mount Trust

The Edward Gostling Foundation
Enhancing Quality of Life for People in Need

Garfield Weston
FOUNDATION

The John Armitage Charitable Trust

We are especially proud of the fundraising events organised by our members and are extremely grateful for all the donations from our members, their friends and families.








GET IN TOUCH

Anyone who is a bereaved parent, bereaved adult sibling (18+) or young bereaved sibling (6-15 years) can attend our support groups and workshops. Referrals can be made directly, or we can be contacted by a family member or health professional. Our referrals team aim to reply to all enquiries within two working days to discuss SLOW and what to expect at a group and how SLOW may be able to help.

Get in Touch

slowgroup.co.uk

@slowsupport

https://www.facebook.com/slowsupport

https://www.facebook.com/groups/slowgroup/

@slowgroup

Bereaved Parents and Young Siblings Referrals

07532 423 674

info@slowgroup.co.uk

Bereaved Adult Siblings Referrals

07506 272 309

adultsibs@slowgroup.co.uk

Any Other Enquiries

admin@slowgroup.co.uk

https://www.justgiving.com/slowgroup

SLOW - Surviving the Loss of Your World 1161337

Receipts and payments accounts CC16a

For the period from 01/02/2023 To 31/01/2024

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					
Grants	37,408	6,757	-	44,165	70,429
Charitable Retail Schemes	-	-	-	-	1,000
Fundraising	41,322	-	-	41,322	40,063
Individual Donations	4,732	-	-	4,732	1,014
Donations from Organisations	14,204	-	-	14,204	28,064
Group voluntary donations	2,193	-	-	2,193	1,004
Sub total(Gross income for AR)	99,859	6,757	-	106,616	141,574
A2 Asset and investment sales, (see table).					
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
Sub total	-	-	-	-	-
Total receipts	99,859	6,757	-	106,616	141,574

A3 Payments	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Endowment funds	Total funds	Last year
Salaries and NICs	61,974	55	-	62,029	52,186
Sessional workers	35,581	5,773	-	41,354	22,843
Pensions	3,428	-		3,428	2,827
Supervision	3,020	-		3,020	1,948
Support group workshop refreshments	1,031	-	-	1,031	666
Sibs workshop materials	718	156	-	874	702
Premises rental	5,010	609	-	5,619	2,176
Professional development, events and training	385		-	385	523
Home phone, broadband, and mobile	1,618		-	1,618	1,511
IT expenses	79			79	130
Marketing - website and publicity	2,234		-	2,234	2,443
Volunteer Expenses	1,126	109	-	1,235	1,103
Fundraising Expenses	5,201		-	5,201	4,344
Travel	875		-	875	192
Stationery, books, postage and equipment	603		-	603	466
Insurance and compliance	899		-	899	1,029
Trustee board development and expenses	1,051		-	1,051	1,439
Meeting expenses and gifts	459		-	459	221
Recruitment	245		-	245	-
Evaluation and Focus Groups	-		-	-	370
Events - Anniversary	-	-		-	699
Sub total	125,537	6,702		132,239	97,818
A4 Asset and investment purchases, (see table)					
	-	-	-	-	
	-	-	-	-	
Sub total	-	-	-	-	-
Total payments	125,627	6,702	-	132,239	97,818
Net of receipts/(payments)	23,109	55	-	(25,623)	-
A5 Transfers between funds				-	
A6 Cash funds last year end	91,873	211		92,084	
Cash funds this year end	66,250	266	-	66,461	

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	Balance at bank	66,163	211	-
	Petty cash	87	-	-
			-	-
	Total cash funds	66,250	211	-

B2 Other monetary assets

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

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)
Dell Inspiron 15 3000 laptop	Restricted	429	-
		-	-
		-	-
		-	-
		-	-
		-	-
		-	-
		-	-
		-	-

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

Independent examiner's report to the trustees of SLOW - SUPPORTING BEREAVED PARENTS AND SIBLINGS

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the SLOW - SUPPORTING BEREAVED PARENTS AND SIBLINGS (SLOW) for the year ended 31 January 2023.

The accounts have been prepared on a receipts and payments basis and are set out in the standard Charity Commission format.

Responsibilities and basis of report

As the charity trustees of SLOW 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 SLOWs 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.

Basis of independent examiner's report

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 you as 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.

Independent examiner's statement

In connection with my examination, no matter has come to my attention:

(1) which gives me reasonable cause to believe that in any material respect:

• accounting records were not kept in respect of SLOW as required by section 130 of the Act;

or

• the accounts do not accord with those records; or

(2) to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Signed: 

Name: Andrew Mildner

Relevant professional qualification: Chartered Institute of Management Accountants

Address: Love Your Accountants Ltd 2a The Quadrant Epsom KT17 4RH

Date: 23 October 2024

SLOW - SUPPORTING BEREAVED PARENTS AND SIBLINGS

England & Wales - Charity number 1161337

Accounts









SLOW ANNUAL REPORT 2022-23

ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

SLOW - Surviving the Loss of Your World

Year Ending 31st January 2023

CHARITY REGISTRATION DETAILS	Registered Charity Number 1161337 Registered April 2015
FOUNDED	September 2007
FOUNDED BY	Nic Whitworth and Susie Hanson

TRUSTEES 2022-23

Chair of Trustees	Pippa Murray
Treasurer	Kieran Hull (resigned 20th June 2022) Cicilia Wan (appointed Treasurer) 20th June 2022)
Secretary	Tim Whitworth
Trustee	Samara Stevens
Trustee	Cicilia Wan
Trustee	Paresh Pithiya
Trustee	Elise Soucie

PATRONS Jason Watkins and Clara Francis

CONTACT DETAILS

Registered Address and correspondence:	SLOW, 11 Donovan Avenue, London, N10 2JU admin@slowgroup.co.uk Tel 07734 577407
Referrals:	info@slowgroup.co.uk Tel 07532 423 674
Website	https://slowgroup.co.uk/
Facebook	https://www.facebook.com/slowsupport https://www.facebook.com/groups/slowgroup
Instagram	https://www.instagram.com/slowgroup/
Twitter	https://twitter.com/slowsupport
Linked in	https://www.linkedin.com/company/66625688

OBJECTIVES AND ETHOS

At SLOW, we have evolved a unique and successful model of bereavement support that is a direct response to what bereaved parents and siblings have told us they need.

SLOW cultivates a stance of 'coming alongside' parents, going at their own pace, within a non-pathologising culture. At SLOW we know that grief cannot be fixed, and do not strive to 'make things better'. Instead, we support and give space to bereaved families, so they may in time harness their own resources in slowly rebuilding their lives. In this way, we believe there is **hope** to be found in connecting with other bereaved families, **relief** in sharing the pain of grief, and **company** in bearing the unbearable, alongside others who are living with the death of their child or sibling.

Our ethos has grown from the roots of a community, facilitated and supported by bereaved families who have experienced first-hand the devastating grief resulting from the death of a child or sibling.

A core feature of SLOW is that all our groups are facilitated by bereaved parents and siblings who have received comprehensive facilitation training with ongoing professional and development support. Many have themselves benefitted from SLOW's support in the past.

Our Charitable Objects were revised in 2022 and SLOW aims to promote: -

1. The emotional and physical well-being of bereaved parents, siblings and children suffering from grief through expert support of bereaved facilitators promoting self-help and mutual support.
2. And support social inclusion of bereaved parents, siblings and children to fully participate in society.
3. Emotional and physical well-being through the provision of education and training materials on grief and bereavement support.
4. The emotional and physical well-being of other bereaved family members where this contributes to achieving objects 1-3.



WHY SLOW'S WORK MATTERS

The death of a child is an incredibly traumatic event leaving parents with overwhelming emotional needs. The grief of bereaved siblings is also devastating, yet this is one of the most neglected types of grief.

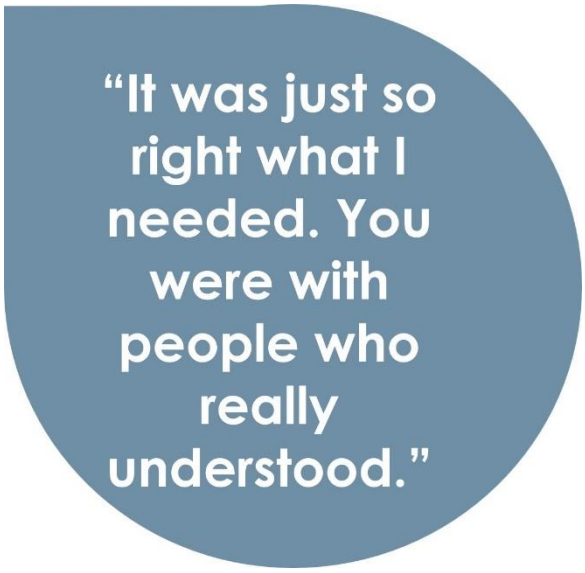
A child's death is a relatively rare event, but when it happens it can have a devastating effect on family life, sometimes triggering depression, anxiety, alcohol / drug dependency and family break up. Our members face the challenge of living in a radically altered world in which close family ties, routines and friendships are impacted and many of SLOW's members initially report that they feel very socially isolated.

SLOW support groups make a positive intervention by…

- Providing a safe space for peer support and reducing isolation.
- Connecting, sharing, validating and normalising grief.
- Finding new ways to manage grief.
- Encouraging members to find ways in which to connect with their child or sibling.
- Creating a transforming community connected through their loss.
- Encouraging bereaved families to regain their sense of wellbeing so that they find purpose in life again.
- Offering hope for the future and building confidence at a time when life can feel hopeless.

Healing for bereaved families can begin as they share their grief with others who validate their experience. They discover they are not alone, and gradually learn ways of managing their grief and coping with their loss. At SLOW, our members come to understand that healing means remembering, not forgetting their child or sibling and we encourage them to be compassionate, gentle and patient with themselves. In this way bereaved families are building themselves a safety net that will resource them long after they cease to attend the group.





By making room for the experience of grief, parents often say that they leave 'feeling lighter'. By listening and sharing experiences of coping with life whilst managing grief, parents can slowly make small but significant steps towards rebuilding their lives.

ACTIVITIES AND ACHIEVEMENTS

2022-23 was a successful year of expansion for SLOW. In response to member feedback, we continued to provide a blended support service offering of both in person and virtual groups for bereaved families, as well as other social events.

Support for Bereaved Parents

The heart of SLOW lies in the culture and the community of its support groups for bereaved parents. It is here that parents come to find connection, company, comfort and hope after the death of their child.

Our support groups continue to offer a simple structure that allows safety through containment and continuity. An introductory round gives each parent space to reflect and identify areas where they'd like support and these form the basis of the discussion.

In 2022-23 SLOW ran 142 bereaved parent support groups across London attended by 109 parents. Across the year there were 793 individual attendances at bereaved parent groups.

In 2022-23 our members could choose from a range of monthly and weekly face-to-face groups in North London as well as monthly and weekly virtual groups for members living across the UK. Our Zoom groups particularly appeal to those with young children, those living further away from London and those who are unable to travel to the groups.

We launched two new weekly groups over the year in response to demand: a new weekly Zoom group for bereaved parents (introduced in May) and a new weekly face-to-face support group in North London (introduced in November). By the end of the year, we were running four weekly daytime groups and two monthly evening groups for bereaved parents.

We also introduced two summer Zoom groups, in response to member feedback, to bridge the six-week summer holiday.

By offering daytime and evening groups, we enable parents who are working or have other commitments to attend a regular support group outside of their normal working day. Each of our groups last one and a half hours and are run by two trained bereaved parent facilitators.

Attendance at our groups is flexible with regular core members attending each week / month while others choose to attend less frequently as and when they need support.

We welcome all bereaved parents (mothers and fathers), of differing cultures and faiths, irrespective of whether their child was an adult or a baby or the varying circumstances in which they died. Members can join at any point regardless of how long ago their child died. Longer term members that no longer require regular support at the meetings often come to our social events or take on active volunteering roles.

Lively discussions characterised all our groups across the year with a strong emphasis on developing strategies for coping, self-care and meeting the demands of surviving children and relationships with friends and work colleagues.

As new parents arrived at the groups, those who had been attending for longer maintained the core values and culture of the group, fostering an atmosphere of warmth and inclusion. In all our groups there is an extremely supportive atmosphere despite the wide range of circumstances in which parents have lost their children.

By the end of 2023 the SLOW membership base was over 700, which grows as new people contact us.

ACTIVITIES AND ACHIEVEMENTS

Support for Bereaved Siblings

SLOWsibs 18+

Our SLOWsibs 18+ support group for bereaved adult siblings has now been running for over a year, having launched in April 2021.

In 2022-23 this group was facilitated by two trained bereaved siblings – Shushma Jain and Michael Ward.

Eleven groups were held across the year, attracting a wide range of newly bereaved siblings of different ages whose brothers and sisters had died in different circumstances.

These meetings, usually held via Zoom, are consistently well attended by core of regular members, while others attend more sporadically and return around the time of significant events such as birthdays and anniversaries.

The members met in Kings Cross in July 2022 for their first face-to- face gathering and in 2023 there have been more frequent in person meetings to complement the monthly Zoom groups.

15 bereaved siblings attended our groups with 40 different attendances throughout the year at 11 virtual and in person gatherings.



"Thank you so much, to be in a group where we all have experienced the loss of a sibling was so helpful whilst also so very sad."

ACTIVITIES AND ACHIEVEMENTS

Support for Bereaved Siblings

SLOWsibs

The 'SLOWsibs' workshops provide a safe place for bereaved siblings to meet each other and develop their creative skills, with the aim of reducing isolation, building confidence through making new friends and exploring feelings.

Our workshops, for children aged 6 to 15 years, are designed to: -

- Help children and young people understand and express their grief and talk openly about their grief.
- Support each child living with their grief while building a hopeful future.
- Help restore confidence and self-esteem.
- Commemorate their sibling who died and find positive ways to remember them.
- Express their own unique place in their altered family.



Our siblings are at different places in their development and understanding of death and therefore their expression of grief. Activities are chosen to reflect this variety of experience and allow each child to express themselves at different levels of interpretation and engagement.



Over the year we held four workshops, Clay Modelling, the SLOW Totem of Hope, Memory Lanterns and Christmas Wreathes.

Between three and six siblings attended each workshop. We always welcome bereaved parents and adult siblings to join our popular Christmas Wreath Workshop, so an additional nine parents / adult siblings attended this event in December.



ACTIVITIES AND ACHIEVEMENTS

Other Events and Support

Our parents and siblings have created a transforming community connected through loss that extends outside of the groups. They have created various WhatsApp groups and regularly check in on each other and meet up.

At times, parents may be unable to attend the group for a period of time due to work or family commitments. In these situations, the feedback that we have received is that parents value maintaining contact via email, the website blog, across our social channels and by attending our social events.

We celebrated our **15th Anniversary** with an **afternoon tea party** at the Islington Ecology Centre in June funded by a donation from Waitrose Community Matters.





Our bereaved parents and sibs organised a **summer picnic** in Regent's Park.



We also held a **non-Christmas Supper** in December in Tufnell Park.

Email and Telephone Support

SLOW recognises that the first steps in reaching out for support are difficult to take for many bereaved parents. We offer a prompt telephone, email or social media response to any enquiry, and take care to talk with parents about what has happened and how they would like to be supported. Bereaved parents and siblings are then allocated the most suitable group. If a member hasn't been for a few weeks, we will follow up by email to check in on them.

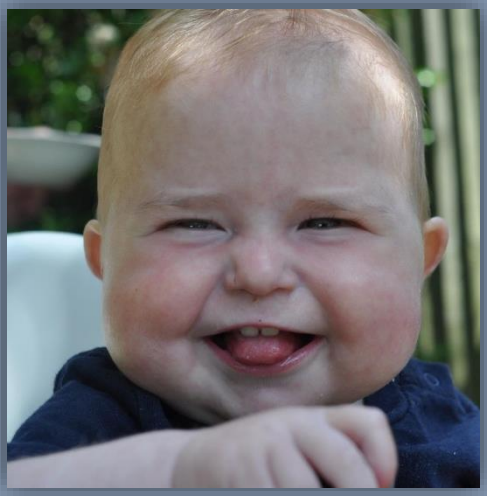
SLOW may not meet the needs of every bereaved parent and we will endeavour to signpost them on to other organisations that may provide specific support.

Across the year there was been a steady flow of new enquiries for all our groups.

Our new referrals increased from 65 in 2021-22 to 112 in 2022-23.

OUR IMPACT: A FAMILY'S EXPERIENCE

When Rory died suddenly in February 2016, we weren't prepared for the impact it would have on his brothers. Mike spent the entire day talking to counsellors to get advice on how to tell his big brother, Barnaby, who had only 2 years prior donated his bone marrow in the hope of saving him. We will never forget the look on his face when we told him.



There is not much help out there.

The help we needed came in the form of Nic and her amazing team at SLOWsibs.

SLOW - Surviving the Loss of Your World - is a London based charity run by bereaved parents and siblings providing support for bereaved families. For many, it is a lifeline, giving them the chance to connect and share their experiences with other bereaved families.

Barnaby has taken part in many of the ingenious workshops planned perfectly to allow the children to remember their siblings, create something to remember them by but also to connect with other children who are navigating life without their brother or sister. Barnaby has baked focaccia, planted stunning pots, created Christmas wreaths, designed memory boxes and much, much more.

Barnaby has had the opportunity to keep the memories of his brother alive, remember his experiences and talk about how he feels with people who understand from first-hand experience.

This is just one aspect of SLOW's work and they run many other mightily impactful projects.

Thank you from us both.

Bereaved Parents Lisa and Michael Spinks



CHARITY DEVELOPMENT & GROWTH

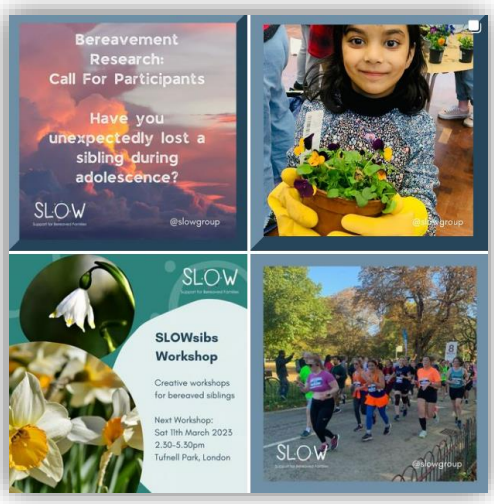
Marketing and Professional Outreach

Referrals come from a wide range of sources, so our marketing focuses on all the touchpoints that bereaved families come into contact with including local NHS paediatric teams, palliative care teams, hospitals, specialist service providers, health visitors and local charities.

In 2022-23 we marketed the SLOW service extensively with bereavement charities and organisations across London including Suicide and Co, Widowed and Young, Teddy's Wish, Mind, the Coroner's Support Service, Child Death Overview Panels and many more.

We continued to build close working relationships with referral agencies and professionals that share and complement our work including the Life Force team (Palliative Care Team in North London), End of Life Services GOSH, Barnet Bereavement Services, Space2Grieve, the Child Death Helpline and Noah's House Hospice.

We expanded our programme of social media activity and further developed our website with new fundraising and donations pages, resources and updated content.



ITV Documentary Filming

Our patrons, Clara Francis and Jason Watkins, filmed a documentary in the summer of 2022 highlighting Sepsis, breaking down the taboo of child loss and giving hope to bereaved parents. The heartfelt documentary, which aired in March 2023, raised awareness of SLOW and had a significant impact on new referrals.



IT and Operations

In the summer of 2022, we developed a new **Operating Model**, analysing all areas of the business and recommending new processes and procedures.

In the Autumn of 2022, we developed a comprehensive **Digital Strategy**, mapping our current digital solutions across the charity, analysing gaps and prioritising our IT goals.

Our main priorities in 2023 were to implement new financial software, a CRM and move our emails to Microsoft. We have already implemented new financial software and we have identified a new CRM system for implementation in the Autumn of 2023.

CHARITY DEVELOPMENT & GROWTH

Evaluating the SLOW Service

In 2022-23 we continued to work with our partners, the University of Hertfordshire, to evaluate our support services. We are currently working with trainee clinical psychologists, supervised by Dr Lizette Nolte (Principle Lecturer for the Doctorate in Clinical Psychology), from the university's Psychology Department on two research projects:

- A 2-year research study looking at *"A narrative analysis of parents' journeys with SLOW through parental bereavement".* With this research project we hope to understand the impact of SLOW on our members' grief and mental health.
- A 1-year research study that will look at a comparison of virtual vs in person support.

Learnings from the research conducted in 2021 continue to shape our services and refine our ethos.

SLOW also monitors and track attendance as well as gathering feedback on an ongoing basis.

"When it first happened to me, it was like this great big boulder between me and the world and the only time I felt that boulder was removed was when I was with other bereaved parents."

"The thing that's helped me the most is going to SLOW. To walk into the room, that feeling of relief and thank goodness I've come home, I'm with people who understand."

"I've got that dedicated time slot in which I'm totally focused on my child. You're there in the meetings and she's flooding through you head and you're remembering."

CHARITY DEVELOPMENT & GROWTH

SLOW ran two strategy meetings with Trustees, senior managers and facilitators to prioritise plans for the charity's future at the start of 2022. We continue to implement the strategic aims prioritised at those meetings and plan for a further strategy day in 2023.

Our key areas of focus for 2023-24 will be to:

To provide high quality bereavement support, reaching more bereaved families. We plan to:

- Run over **226 support events** across London and via Zoom for bereaved families – including both parents and siblings (up from 159 in 2022-23).
- Launch a **new South London weekly group** and a further support group later in 2023 dependent on demand.
- Run **two virtual support groups** for bereaved parents across the six-week summer holiday.
- Devise **a new strategy for SLOWsibs** - increasing the number of workshops and meetings and introducing support for teenage siblings.
- Continue to **build collaborative partnerships** with referral agencies and professionals in the field of bereavement.

To develop the charity's infrastructure to support this growth of services we plan to:

- **Expand our fundraising sources**, growing sustainable income and inspiring our community to fundraise for SLOW.
- Further **evaluate our support services** with our partners the University of Hertfordshire and disseminate the findings of the research.
- **Appoint new facilitators** to enable the expansion of our support groups.
- Implement the priorities of our **digital strategy** including new financial software and a CRM system.
- Change our **charitable structure** to a CIO and widen our charity's objectes.
- **Recruit a trustee** with a clinical background to complement our existing board

FINANCIAL REVIEW

Overview

The charity's income in 2022-23 was £141,574, rising 123% on the previous year (£63,392). This increase was primarily due to our grant success in 2022 and our phenomenal supporter fundraising. Expenditure increased to £97.8k from £71.6k in 2021-22, reflecting the expansion of charitable activities.

We start the new financial year 2023-24 with £91.9k of funds. This includes carried forward restricted funds of £211 committed to specific activity, as well as £91.7K of unrestricted funds, of which £38K is ringfenced for free reserves and the remainder is designated to the growth of support activities in 2023.

Again, this year, as per advice from the Charity Commission, we have excluded in kind income / expenses. The accounts therefore do not reflect the considerable contribution of our many volunteers who freely donate their time.

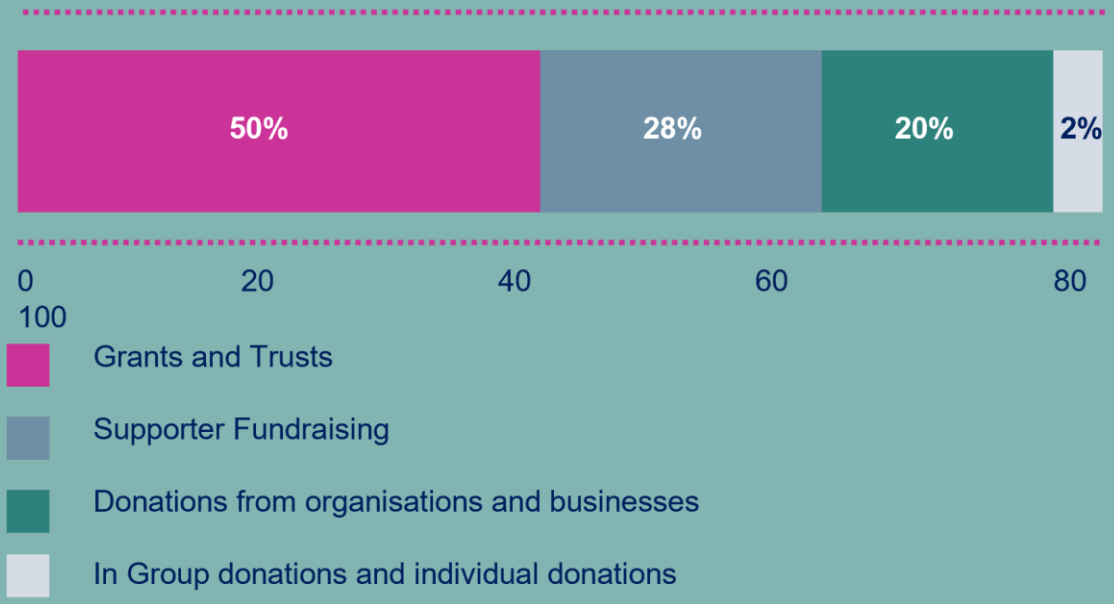
Income

SLOW's funding in 2022-23 came from diversified sources. We were particularly successful with grant applications and community fundraising picked up after the pandemic. Unrestricted income accounted for 80% of our revenue, while 20% was restricted.

Grants - SLOW received multiyear support from **the Lotteries Reaching Communities**, **Garfield Weston**, the **John Armitage Trust** and **Mrs Smith and Mount Trust**. We also received one-year funding from **Islington Council's Community Chest** and **Islington's Local Borough Initiatives Fund**, **The Postcode Lottery**, **The Leathersellers Company** and **Tesco's Community Grants**.

Donations - A special mention should be made to t**he ICCM** for their generous donations and also to **Waitrose Community Matters**. We would also like to thank the following supporters for their very generous donations which have enabled the charity to carry out its essential work supporting bereaved families: Andrew Wright, Carolyn Doy and Angela Costello, Jill Hagland and Roger and Gordana Fox.

INCOME BREAKDOWN



FINANCIAL REVIEW

Supporter Fundraising – our amazing team of 20 **Royal Parks Half Marathon** runners raised more than £35k, over double the amount raised last year. Huge thanks are also due to the **Yoga Society, Michelle May** and **Sarah Brennikmeijer** for their inspiring and phenomenal fundraising efforts.

Expenditure

Expenses increased by £26.1K year on year primarily due to the cost of employee salaries and related HMRC / NICs and Pension expenses (SLOW's first full year with employees). Our contractors' sessional expenses decreased as we employed two members of staff (midway through 2021). Our expenditure on fundraising costs, supervision, compliance and events (15th Anniversary Party) all increased.

Reserves Policy

The Trustees' policy is to follow recommended practice and maintain unrestricted reserves to cover at least three months' operating expenditure. In 2023-24 SLOW will be dependent on approximately £173K income to sustain its activities therefore the reserves figure equates to £38K. At this level the Trustees believe that they would be able to continue the current activities of the charity in the event of a significant drop in funding while seeking to replace the funding or alternatively wind the charity down. The main concerns of the boards are to ensure that the team can continue working to either secure new funding or close the charity and to support members move onto other services. The SLOW trustees review this policy annually.



THE SLOW TEAM 2022-23

Personnel

Our support services in 2022-23 were delivered by a team of ten facilitators and an army of volunteers.

We recruited Kate Walsh and Amber Dobinson to facilitate bereaved parent support groups and Michael Ward stepped down from his role as SLOWsibs 18+ facilitator.

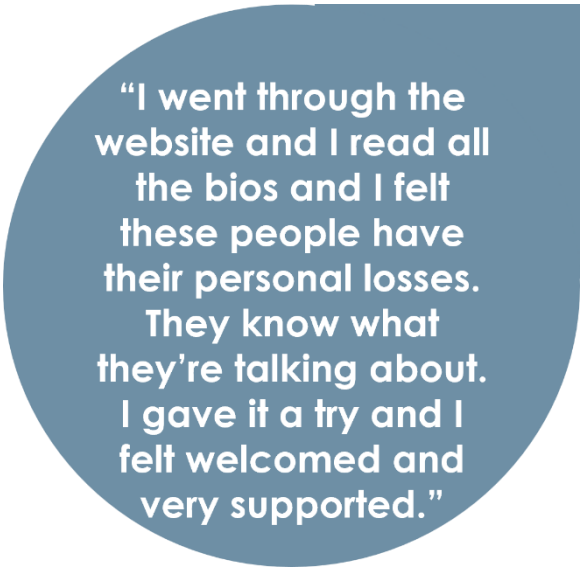
Our Volunteers

21 committed volunteers helped SLOW's work by offering their time and skills. Special mentions should be given to the following volunteers who have dedicated their time in 2022-23: -

- **Susie Hanson** facilitated our Wednesday, and monthly evening support groups.
- **Nic Whitworth** and **Tim Whitworth** volunteered as facilitators at the monthly support groups.
- **Michael Ward** facilitated at the adult sibling support groups.
- **Liz Cancea** and **Maria Wojszwillo** assisted the facilitators at the North London weekly group.
- **Laura Anderson**, **Lisa Barnett**, **Mandi Tolga**, F**atima Fofanah** and **Sarah Shaw** have all assisted at the sibling workshops.



- **Sara Portnoy** provided clinical supervision for the facilitators.
- **Lizette, Mollie and Shivani** from the University of Herts evaluated SLOW support.
- And finally, **our Trustees** who continued to donate their time voluntarily to sustain SLOW at a governance level with passion and commitment for the work we do.



Training and Support

Across the year we further developed our own **in-house facilitation and trustee induction training**. The team also attended external **training courses** provided from a variety of organisations for example Child Bereavement UK, The Big Alliance, Charity Digital and NICABM.

11 **Reflective Practice Groups**, ran throughout the year, attended by the growing team of support group facilitators. Meetings are structured to facilitate reflective feedback on group working, co-facilitation and peer support, sharing of ideas, presentation of material and training. These sessions are held in addition to facilitators' clinical supervision.

THE SLOW TEAM 2022-23



Kelly Carter - Business and Development Manager



Nikki Peterson - Bereavement Support Services Manager and Facilitator



Nicola Whitworth - Founder and Support Group Facilitator



Susie Hanson - Founder and Support Group Facilitator



Tim Whitworth - Trustee and Support Group Facilitator



Erica Stewart - Support Group Facilitator



Hattie Deards - Support Group Facilitator



Shushma Jain - Support Group Facilitator



Amber Dobinson - Support Group Facilitator



Kate Walsh - Support Group Facilitator

THE SLOW TRUSTEE TEAM 2022-23



Pippa Murray - Chair of Trustees

Pippa joined SLOW as a Trustee in 2012. She has a background in central government, having held a number of senior posts in HM Treasury and HM Revenue and Customs. Pippa was also a member of Great Ormond Street Hospital's Transformation Board between 2008-2012. She was a Trustee of the Brain Tumour Charity between 2008-2022. She is also a non-executive director of Dasic Marine Limited, a marine engineering business. Pippa's 15-month old son, Lawrence, was diagnosed with a brain tumour and she cared for him until he passed away in September 2007 aged 3 years 9 months. She was an early member of SLOW.



Tim Whitworth - Secretary

Tim has many years' experience working with the public sector and supporting and advising new and small enterprises. A qualified training practitioner and executive coach, he worked with the Office for Public Management for over 9 years and now has his own consultancy and training practice. Tim has used his personal experience of the diagnosis and loss of his daughter Naomi in running a bereaved dads support group, dads.care since 2011.



Cicilia Wan - Treasurer (from June 2022)

Cicilia works for a bank in the City of London as a Human Resources Executive. She was introduced to SLOW through The East London Business Alliance, which connects local charities with workers at major institutions with an interest in volunteering.
Cicilia has a background in Human Resources, and her career has taken her all around the world. As a mother, Cicilia has deep appreciation for the lifeline that SLOW extends to bereaved parents and is proud to support the work they do.



Kieran Hull – Treasurer (until June 2022)

Kieran works at MUFG, a Japanese bank in the City of London. He was introduced to SLOW through The Big Alliance. Kieran has a background in finance and is keen to get involved in treasury work for charities. As a child, he regularly attended Cruse events, where he gained an interest for organisations helping those with bereavement.



Samara Stevens – Trustee

Samara is a chartered accountant with a 12-year career spanning financial services, transport and the NHS. She also brings a diversity lens to the charity's operational and strategic goals. She was drawn to SLOW due to the loss of her best friend at a young age and her continued relationship with his bereaved parents. She was matched with SLOW through The Big Alliance.



Paresh Pithiya – Trustee

Paresh was looking to get involved with a charity where he could make a long-lasting difference. He was drawn to the lifeline SLOW provides when parents and siblings cannot see how to move forward with life. Paresh understands the trauma of losing a child having lost his daughter in 2014. Paresh joined SLOW as a Trustee in December 2021 to help the charity grow and reach more people who are suffering from their loss of their child or sibling.



Elise Soucie – Trustee

Elise is an Associate Director at the Association for Financial Markets in Europe (AFME) in their Technology and Operations Division leading on Digital Assets and Data Strategy. She has a background in technology, policy, and finance, has also previously held roles in other charitable organisations, and aims to utilise this experience as a SLOW trustee.
Throughout her life she experienced loss of her cousins as a child, nearly losing her own brother to cancer, and loss of a close friend to overdose while in university. These experiences with bereavement drew her to SLOW who she was introduced to SLOW through The Big Alliance.

GOVERNANCE

SLOW was founded in 2007 by Nic Whitworth and Susie Hanson and became a registered unincorporated charity in 2015. The trustees agreed that the charity should change its charitable structure in 2021 and we are in the process of becoming a CIO in 2023.

Organisational Structure

The trustee board meets at least four times per year to agree the strategy and activities of the charity and to review the finances, fundraising and risks. All Trustees give their time voluntarily and no trustee remuneration was paid in the year. Day-to-day operations and management are delegated to the Business and Development Manager and the Bereavement Support Services Manager who both regularly report to Chair of Trustees on performance and operations.



Recruitment / Appointment of Trustees

The objective is to have a range of Trustees with skillsets relevant to the activities of the charity. The skills of the existing Trustees are taken into consideration when recruiting new Trustees and skills / diversity gaps identified. SLOW recruits Trustees through a variety of means, either they are approached personally, the positions are advertised, or they are recruited via the Big Alliance.



New applicants are interviewed by existing Trustees and appointed at one of the trustee board meetings throughout the year. All new Trustees are given induction training and are DBS checked.

Risk Management

Trustees adopt a risk appraisal and mitigation approach as part of future development. The SLOW risk register is reviewed annually. The major risks for the charity in and mitigating actions in 2023-24 are:

Finance and Fundraising

In order to ensure that there is back up for the Business and Development Manager in terms of finance and fundraising responsibilities, actions were agreed including: implementation of accounting software, developing a customer relationship strategy and securing assistance with finance and book-keeping duties.

Confidentiality and Data

In 2023 SLOW plans to implement a new CRM. This risk has been temporarily highlighted while the migration of data – emails and member data – is transferred to a new system.

THANK YOU TO OUR SUPPORTERS

SLOW would like to thank its employees, contractors, volunteers, trustees and our patrons for their hard work and dedication. None of our work would be possible without the support of our new and continuing funders listed below.

We are especially proud of the fundraising events organised by our members and are extremely grateful for donations from our members, their friends and families.

Thank you

GET IN TOUCH

Anyone who is a bereaved parent, bereaved adult sibling (18+) or young bereaved sibling (6-15 years) can attend our support groups and workshops. Referrals can be made directly, or we can be contacted by a family member or health professional. Our Bereavement Support Services Manager will contact the bereaved parent / sibling within a few days to arrange a convenient time to phone and discuss how the SLOW groups may be able to help.

Get in Touch


slowgroup.co.uk


@slowsupport


https://www.facebook.com/slowsupport


https://www.facebook.com/groups/slowgroup/


@slowgroup

Bereaved Parents and Young Siblings Referrals


07532 423 674


info@slowgroup.co.uk

Bereaved Adult Siblings Referrals


07506 272 309


adultsibs@slowgroup.co.uk

Any Other Enquiries (including Fundraising and Donations)


07734 577407


admin@slowgroup.co.uk


https://www.justgiving.com/slowgroup

SLOW - Surviving the Loss of Your World 1161337

Receipts and payments accounts

CC16a

For the period from 01/02/2022 To 31/01/2023

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					
Grants	41,500	28,929	-	70,429	28,429
Charitable Retail Schemes	1,000	-	-	1,000	333
Fundraising	40,063	-	-	40,063	17,498
Individual Donations	1,014	-	-	1,014	1,724
Donations from Organisations	28,064	-	-	28,064	15,005
Group voluntary donations	1,004	-	-	1,004	402
Sub total(Gross income for AR)	112,645	28,929	-	141,574	63,392
A2 Asset and investment sales, (see table).					
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
Sub total	-	-	-	-	-
Total receipts	112,645	28,929	-	141,574	63,392

A3 Payments	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Endowment funds	Total funds	Last year
Salaries and NICs	42,257	9,929	-	52,186	21,428
Sessional workers	11,579	11,264	-	22,843	36,958
Pensions	2,827	-		2,827	1,211
Supervision	-	1,948		1,948	1,720
Support group workshop refreshments	646	20	-	666	248
Sibs workshop materials	536	167	-	702	324
Premises rental	596	1,580	-	2,176	993
Professional development, events and training	-	523	-	523	571
Home phone, broadband, and mobile	1,002	508	-	1,511	1,424
IT expenses	130	-		130	216
Marketing - website and publicity	1,610	833	-	2,443	2,602
Volunteer Expenses	328	775	-	1,103	742
Fundraising Expenses	4,344	-	-	4,344	736
Travel	-	192	-	192	210
Stationery, books, postage and equipment	53	413	-	466	288
Insurance and compliance	762	267	-	1,029	474
Trustee board development and expenses	439	1,000	-	1,439	-
Meeting expenses and gifts	201	20	-	221	309
Recruitment	-	-	-	-	345
Evaluation and Focus Groups	-	370	-	370	826
Events - Anniversary	699	-		699	-
Sub total	68,008	29,810		97,818	71,624
A4 Asset and investment purchases, (see table)					
	-	-	-	-	
	-	-	-	-	
Sub total	-	-	-	-	-
Total payments	68,008	29,810	-	97,818	71,624
Net of receipts/(payments)	44,637	- 881	-	43,757	
A5 Transfers between funds				-	
A6 Cash funds last year end	47,236	1,092		48,328	
Cash funds this year end	91,873	211	-	92,084	

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	Balance at bank	91,785	211	-
	Petty cash	87	-	-
			-	-
	Total cash funds	91,872	211	-
		OK	OK	OK

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

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

	Details	Fund to which asset belongs	Cost (optional)	Current value (optional)
B4 Assets retained for the charity's own use	Dell Inspiron 15 3000 Laptop	Restricted	429	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-

	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
	CWan	CICILIA WAN	10/10/23

Independent examiner's report to the trustees of SLOW - SUPPORTING BEREAVED PARENTS AND SIBLINGS

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the SLOW - SUPPORTING BEREAVED PARENTS AND SIBLINGS (**SLOW**) for the year ended 31 January 2023.The accounts have been prepared on a receipts and payments basis and are set out in the standard Charity Commission format.

Responsibilities and basis of report

As the charity trustees of SLOW 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 SLOW'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.

Basis of independent examiner's report

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 you as 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.

Independent examiner's statement

In connection with my examination, no matter has come to my attention:

(1) which gives me reasonable cause to believe that in any material respect:

- accounting records were not kept in respect of SLOW as required by section 130 of the Act; or
- the accounts do not accord with those records; or

(2) to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Signed: 

Name: Matthew Emmerson

Relevant professional qualification: Association of Chartered Certified Accountants (ACCA)

Address: 35 Cranborne Crescent, Potters Bar, Herts, EN6 3AD, UK

Date: 29 September 2023

SLOW - SUPPORTING BEREAVED PARENTS AND SIBLINGS

England & Wales - Charity number 1161337

Accounts










SLOW ANNUAL REPORT

Feb 2021 - Jan 2022

SLOW

Surviving the loss of your world

ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

SLOW - Surviving the Loss of Your World

Year Ending 31st January 2022

CHARITY REGISTRATION DETAILS	Registered Charity Number 1161337 Registered April 2015
FOUNDED	September 2007

TRUSTEES 2021-22

Chair of Trustees	Pippa Murray
Treasurer	Kieran Hull
Secretary	Tim Whitworth
Trustee	Samara Stevens
Trustee	Andrew Wright (resigned 23rd June 2021)
Trustee	Sara Portnoy (resigned 23rd June 2021)
Trustee	Finella Craig (resigned 1st December 2021)
Trustee	Cicilia Wan (appointed 1st December 2021)
Trustee	Paresh Pithiya (appointed 1st December 2021)
Trustee	Elise Soucie (appointed 1st December 2021)

PATRONS	Jason Watkins and Clara Francis

CONTACT DETAILS

Registered Address and correspondence:	SLOW, 11 Donovan Avenue, London, N10 2JU admin@slowgroup.co.uk Tel 07734 577407
Referrals:	info@slowgroup.co.uk Tel 07532 423 674
Website	https://slowgroup.co.uk/
Facebook	https://www.facebook.com/slowsupport https://www.facebook.com/groups/slowgroup
Instagram	https://www.instagram.com/slowgroup/
Twitter	https://twitter.com/slowsupport
Linked in	https://www.linkedin.com/company/66625688

OBJECTIVES AND ETHOS

The objectives of the charity are to: -

- To promote and protect the good health of bereaved parents suffering as a result of the death of their child through the provision of self-help and mutual support
- The promotion of social inclusion by offering a sanctuary for bereaved parents to relieve the needs of those people and assist them to integrate back into society

At SLOW, we have evolved a unique and successful model of bereavement support that is a direct response to what bereaved parents and siblings have told us they need:-

- A core feature of SLOW is that all our groups are facilitated by bereaved parents and siblings who have received comprehensive facilitation training with ongoing professional and development support. Many have themselves benefitted from SLOW's support in the past.
- Our ethos has grown from the roots of a community, facilitated and supported by bereaved families who have experienced first-hand the devastating grief resulting from the death of a child or sibling.
- SLOW cultivates a stance of 'coming alongside' parents, going at their own pace, within a non-pathologising culture.

At SLOW we know that grief cannot be fixed, and do not strive to 'make things better'. Instead, we support and give space to bereaved families, so they may in time harness their own resources in slowly rebuilding their lives. In this way, we believe there is **hope** to be found in connecting with other bereaved families, **relief** in sharing the pain of grief, and **company** in bearing the unbearable, alongside others who are living with the death of their child or sibling.

THE SLOW ETHOS



WHY SLOW'S WORK MATTERS

The death of a child is an incredibly traumatic event leaving parents with overwhelming emotional needs. The grief of bereaved siblings is also devastating, yet this is one of the most neglected types of grief.

A child's death is a relatively rare event, but when it happens it can have a devastating effect on family life, sometimes triggering depression, anxiety, alcohol and drug dependency and family break up. Our members face the challenge of living in a radically altered world in which close family ties, routines and friendships are impacted and many of SLOW's members initially report that they feel very socially isolated.

SLOW support groups make a positive intervention by:

- Connecting, sharing, validating and normalising grief.
- Finding new ways to manage grief.
- Encouraging members to find ways in which to connect with their child or sibling.
- Offering hope for the future and building confidence at a time when life can feel hopeless.
- Providing a safe space for peer support and reducing isolation.
- Creating a transforming community connected through their loss.
- Encouraging bereaved families to regain their sense of wellbeing so that they find purpose in life again.







ACTIVITIES AND ACHIEVEMENTS

The continued global COVID-19 pandemic and the related lockdown in the early part of the year, made 2021-22 another challenging year for SLOW. However, the charity responded by listening to our members' needs and shaping our support services accordingly.

Support for Bereaved Parents

The heart of SLOW lies in the culture and the community of its support groups for bereaved parents. It is here that parents come to find connection, company, comfort and hope after the death of their child.

Healing for bereaved parents can begin as they share their grief with others who validate their experience. They discover they are not alone, and gradually learn ways of managing their grief and coping with their loss. At SLOW, parents come to understand that healing means remembering, not forgetting their child and we encourage them to be compassionate, gentle and patient with themselves. In this way bereaved parents are building themselves a safety net that will resource them long after they cease to attend the group.

By making room for the experience of grief, parents often say that they leave 'feeling lighter'. By listening and sharing experiences of coping with life whilst managing grief, parents are often slowly able to make small but significant steps towards rebuilding their lives.

The support groups continued to offer a simple structure that allows safety through containment and continuity. An introductory round gives each parent space to reflect and identify areas that they'd like support with and these form the basis of the discussion.

In 2021-22 SLOW ran **118 bereaved parent support groups across London**, each lasting one and a half hours, supporting over a 100 bereaved parent members. By January 2022 the SLOW **membership base was over 550**, which grows as new people contact us.

Attendance at our groups is flexible with regular core members attending each week / month while others choose to attend less frequently as and when they need support. We welcome all bereaved parents irrespective of whether their child was an adult or a baby or the varying circumstances in which they died. Our parents are a mix of very recently to more long-term bereaved and members can join at any point regardless of how long ago their child died. The death of a child cuts across all communities and a diverse range of families. Our support groups welcome bereaved mothers and fathers, of differing cultures and faiths. Longer term members that no longer require regular support at the meetings often come to our social events or take on active volunteering roles.

Due to the continuing pandemic and the related government guidelines, all our groups were offered virtually in the Spring of 2021. In April 2021 we gathered feedback from each group as to whether they wanted to remain running virtually or return to face-to-face settings.

Some members expressed a wish to connect with other parents via face-to-face groups, while others appreciated and even embraced Zoom. Decisions to return to face-to-face groups were made on a group-by-group basis.

In 2022, SLOW now offers a range of monthly and weekly face-to-face and virtual meetings that bereaved parents can choose from. Our Zoom groups particularly appeal to those with young children, those living further away from Islington and for those who are unable to travel to the groups. We offer daytime and evening groups, enabling parents who are working or have other commitments to attend a regular support group outside of their normal work day.

ACTIVITIES AND ACHIEVEMENTS

The Islington Support Groups

We ran 62 weekly daytime groups and 17 monthly evening groups across the year in Islington / via Zoom (due to the Spring lockdown).

Our **Wednesday weekly daytime group** continued to flourish and strengthen in numbers with a core group attending regularly. Susie Hanson and Clara Francis co-facilitated this group throughout the year with strong support from volunteers Maria Wojszwillo and Liz Cancea. Attendees ranged between 7 and 18 including facilitators.

This group was held virtually until May 2021 when, after a comprehensive COVID secure risk assessment, we returned to face-to-face meetings. The group has continued on a face-to-face basis, barring three meetings in January 2022 when Omicron infections were rising.

Our **Monday weekly daytime group** was held via Zoom from May until December. Susie Hanson and Erica Stewart co-facilitated this virtual group across the year with attendees ranging from 3 to 8 including facilitators.

This group was launched to give our members a virtual option if they felt uneasy about returning to the face-to-face meetings given COVID infection concerns. However, in December a decision was made to pause these groups due to the low numbers of attendees. The members that had previously used this group were instead given the option of attending our other weekly Zoom group on Tuesdays.

This year our **monthly evening group,** facilitated by Nic and Tim Whitworth has been regularly attended with numbers ranging between 4 and 12 including facilitators. There is a good balance of couples and individuals attending.

This support group was held virtually until July 2021 when relaxed COVID guidance enabled this group to return to face-to-face meetings.

In July 2021 we introduced a **new monthly evening virtual support group**, facilitated by Erica Stewart and Susie Hanson. The decision to launch this group was prompted by feedback from the members attending the existing monthly evening group which returned in person in July. Attendees ranged from 3 to 7 including facilitators.

The 'Streatham' Support Groups

We ran 39 **weekly daytime groups on Tuesdays** across the year via Zoom. Hattie Deards and Erica Stewart co-facilitated this group with attendees ranging between 4 to 11 including facilitators.

As COVID regulations relaxed members, in this now well-established group, were asked if they wanted to continue via Zoom or return to the South London setting. Overwhelmingly the members wanted to remain on Zoom. As a result, we have welcomed new members to this group from the wider area of London and beyond.



Lively discussions characterised all our groups across the year with a strong emphasis on developing strategies for coping, taking care of ourselves and meeting the demands of surviving children and relationships with friends and work colleagues.

As new parents arrived at the groups, those who had been attending for longer maintained the core values and culture of the group, fostering an atmosphere of warmth and inclusion. In all our groups there is an extremely supportive atmosphere despite the wide range of circumstances in which parents have lost their children.

ACTIVITIES AND ACHIEVEMENTS

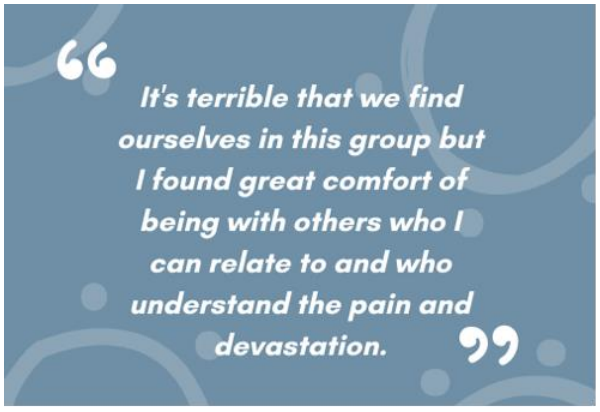
Support for Bereaved Siblings

SLOWsibs 18+

In April 2021 SLOW launched its first virtual adult sibling support group, initially taking place every other month and facilitated by two bereaved adult siblings, Shushma Jain and Michael Ward. Twenty-one new referrals were received before the first group alone and due to ongoing demand, the group frequency was increased to monthly. Eight groups were held across the year, attracting a wide range of often newly bereaved siblings of different ages whose brothers and sisters had died in different circumstances.

The meetings are consistently well attended by a core of regular members, while others attend more sporadically and return around the time of significant events such as birthdays or anniversaries.

Discussions have centred around how relationships with families and friends have changed, significant milestones, changes in themselves, the demands of university, the pain of grief as well as practical matters such as wills and advice about funerals.

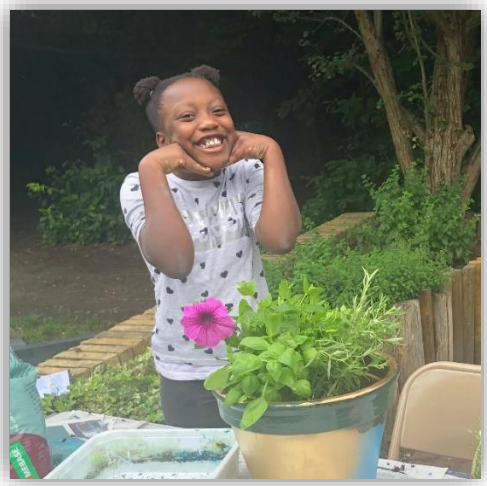








SLOWsibs



The 'SLOWsibs' workshops provide a safe place for bereaved siblings to meet each other and develop their creative skills, with the aim of reducing isolation, building self-esteem and confidence through making new friends and exploring feelings.

Our workshops, for children aged 6 to 15 years are designed to: -

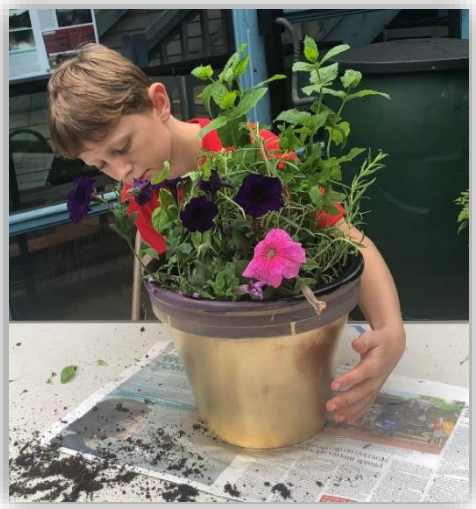
- Help children and young people understand and express their grief and talk openly about their bereavement;
- support each child living with their grief while building a hopeful future;
- commemorate their sibling who died and find positive ways to remember them;
- to express their own unique place in their altered family.

SLOWsib members are at different places in their development and understanding of death and therefore their expression of grief. Activities are chosen to reflect this variety of experience and allow each child to express themselves at different levels of interpretation and engagement. Unfortunately, due to COVID restrictions we were only able to hold one workshop across the year. Our Christmas wreath workshop was cancelled at the last minute after considerable planning due to rising Omicron infections.

Healing Herb Pots Workshop - 10th July 2021



The summer sibs' workshop was held outside in the wonderful surroundings of the Ecology Centre, observing COVID Guidelines. Four children attended and unfortunately a number children had to withdraw at the last moment because of isolation. This was the first time in over a year the sibs had met face-to-face, and it was a lively and successful meeting. The theme was **Healing Herb Pots** and each young person



decorated their terracotta pot with images and colours of their choice. There were herbs and flowers provided with symbolic meanings and these were explored in the group, with each child creating a personal pot of remembrance.

This workshop was run by Nic Whitworth with the assistance of Laura Anderson and Hamish Whitworth. Our SLOWsibs workshops are now back running regularly in 2022 now COVID guidelines have been relaxed.

ACTIVITIES AND ACHIEVEMENTS

Email and Telephone Support

SLOW recognises that the first steps in reaching out for support are difficult to take for many bereaved parents. We offer a prompt telephone, email or social media response to any enquiry, and take care to talk with parents about what has happened and how they would like to be supported. Parents are then allocated the most suitable group. If we recognise that a parent hasn't been for a few weeks we will follow up by email to check in on them.

At times, parents may be unable to attend the group for a period of time due to work or family commitments for various reasons. In these situations, the feedback that we have received is that parents value maintaining contact via email, the website blog and across our social channels.

SLOW may not meet the needs of every bereaved parent and we will endeavour to signpost them on to other organisations that may provide specific support.

Across the year there has been a steady flow of new enquiries for all our groups and our referrals doubled in the second half of the year. Referrals continue to come from various channels including GOSH, Lifeforce, social prescribers, our own social channels and word of mouth.

Marketing and Professional Outreach

SLOW promotes access to the groups through local NHS paediatric teams, palliative care teams, hospitals, specialist service providers, health visitors, local charities, as well as via the SLOW website, the media and word of mouth.

In 2021-22 we marketed the SLOW service extensively with bereavement charities and organisations across London. Continuing to take advantage of virtual team meetings, we presented to Noah's Ark Children's Hospice, CRUSE Counsellors, Islington Social Prescribers, City and Hackney Social Prescribers, The Coroners' Court Support Service and CARIS Islington.

We researched the organisations contracted with social prescribing in boroughs across London and made contact with many adjacent to our current group settings.



We continued to build close working relationships with referral agencies and professionals that share and complement our work including the Life Force team (Palliative Care Team in North London), End of Life Services GOSH, UCH, The Compassionate Friends, Grief Encounter, CARIS, Islington Bereavement Service, the Child Death Helpline and Haven House.

Designed templates were developed for an expanded programme of social media activity in 2022 and we developed our website with new Cloud imagery, additional webpages, resources and updated content.

IT and Operations

Over the year we refined many of our operational processes, digitalising them wherever possible and continued to build up a shared repository of files held on OneDrive, allowing charity staff to share and save files in secure cloud-based storage.

We researched a number of financial packages for implementation next year and implemented payroll software to process payroll for our new employees.

We consolidated and cleaned data and are making plans for a newsletter with a designed template coherent with our new social media templates.

Evaluating the SLOW Service

In the summer of 2021, working with two trainee Clinical Psychologists from the University of Hertfordshire, we ran three focus groups as well as in-depth interviews with a selection of our current and past members. The aims of the research were to understand how our support services impact our members' health and wellbeing and to explore and assess the introduction of new services.

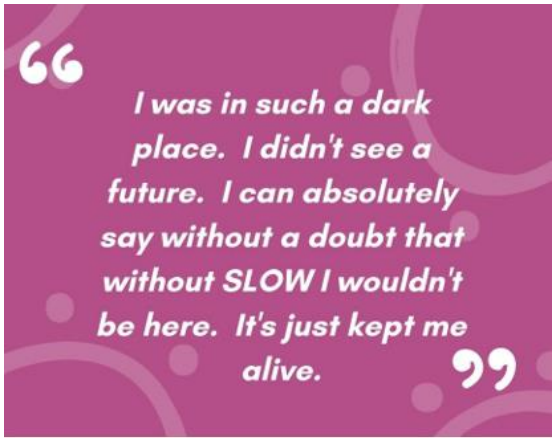
The feedback was a resounding endorsement of the SLOW ethos and model:

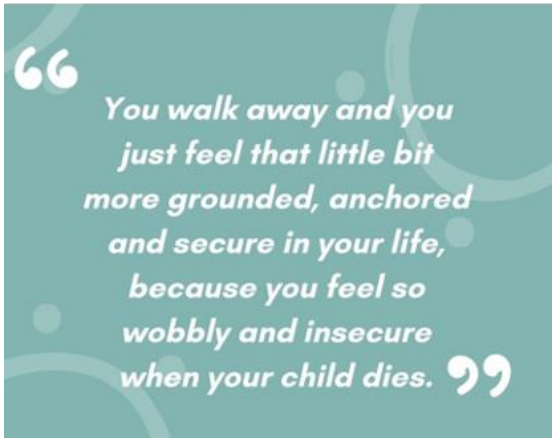
- SLOW support was seen by members as being safe and restorative.
- Many felt SLOW was a unique special place with a model that worked for our members in terms of the regularity and flexibility of the groups (drop in and open ended) and the peer support.
- There was a huge sense of loyalty to other member and to SLOW and each group had a real community and bond.
- They were very vocal about the expertise of the facilitators; their lived experience was seen as essential and they felt 'held' by the facilitators and that they really cared.
- The overarching theme was that SLOW was a lifeline - SLOW had figuratively saved their lives.

We are currently assessing the recommendations from the focus group and analysing the logistics of delivering these services e.g., a dads' group.

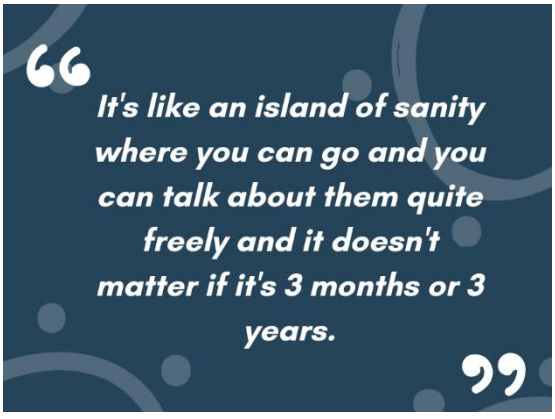
At the end of 2021 we embarked on two further research projects with the University of Hertfordshire:

- A 2-year research study looking at *"A narrative analysis of parents' journeys with SLOW through parental bereavement".* Again, with this research project we hope to further understand the impact of SLOW on our members' grief and mental health.
- A 1-year research study that will look at a comparison of virtual vs in person support.









PLANS FOR 2022-23

SLOW ran two strategy meetings with Trustees, senior managers and facilitators to prioritise plans for SLOW's future.

Our key areas of focus for 2022-23 will be to:

To provide high quality bereavement support, reaching more bereaved families. We plan to:

- Run over **180 support events** across London and via Zoom for bereaved families – including both parents and siblings.
- Launch a **new weekly Zoom group** and a further **North London face-to-face group**.
- Plan for the **expansion of face-to-face bereaved parent support groups,** assessing the need for and the location of further London based groups.
- Run **two virtual support groups** for bereaved parents across the six-week summer holiday.
- Celebrate our **15th Year Anniversary** with a party for past and present members at the Ecology Centre.
- Expand **SLOWsibs** – marketing the service to bereaved siblings outside of SLOW.
- Plan for the introduction of **teenage SLOWsibs support**.
- Develop a newsletter for **more structured engagement** with our members and improve our social media presence.
- Continue to **build collaborative partnerships** with referral agencies and professionals in the field of bereavement.

To develop the charity's infrastructure to support this growth of services we plan to:

- Continue to **expand our fundraising sources**, growing sustainable income and inspiring our community to fundraise for SLOW.
- Define and develop our **operating model** to guide the growth of SLOW.
- Further **evaluate our support services** with our partners the University of Hertfordshire and disseminate the findings of the first research project.
- Develop a **pipeline of facilitators** to enable the expansion of our support groups.
- Devise a **digital strategy**, map our existing IT services and plan for the implementation of new financial software and a CRM system.
- Change our **charitable structure** to a CIO and widen our charity's objectives.
- **Recruit a trustee** with a clinical background to complement our existing board.

FINANCIAL REVIEW

Overview

The charity's income in 2021-22 was £63,392, down on the previous year by around £17,000. This decrease was primarily due to our grant success in 2020 and carrying forward these funds for designated activities. Expenditure was up from £53,221 to £71,624.

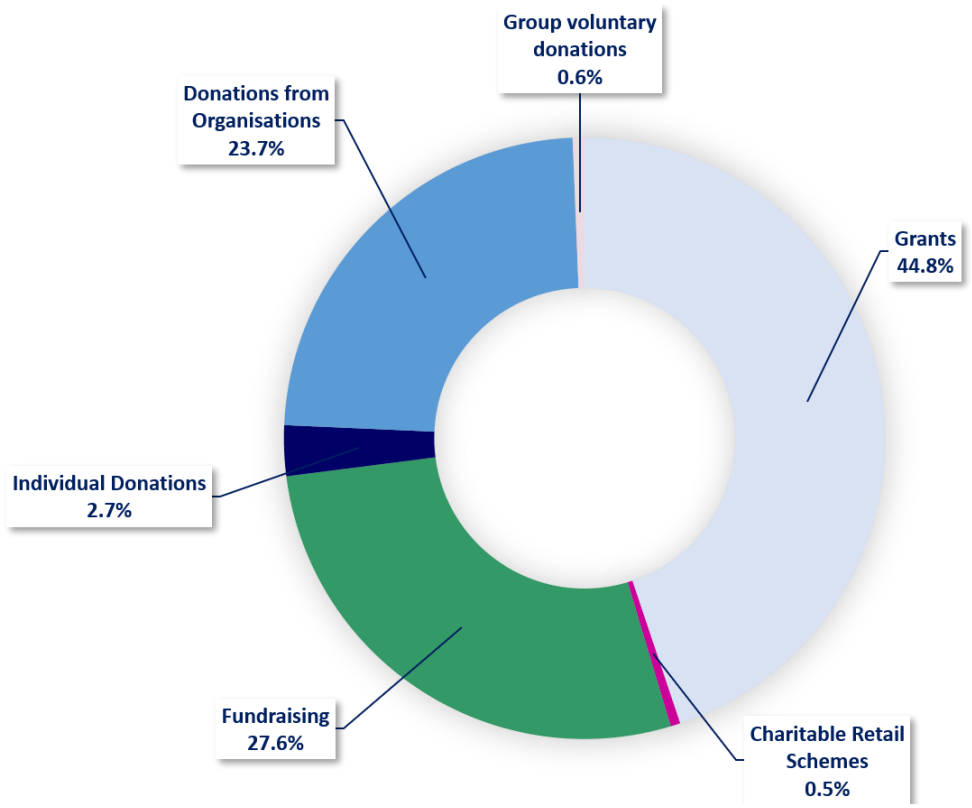
We start the new financial year 2022-23 with £48,328. This includes carried forward restricted funds of £1,092 committed to specific activity, as well as £47,236 of unrestricted funds, of which £28,000 is ringfenced for reserves and the remainder is designated to the growth of support activities in 2022.

Again, this year, as per advice from the Charity Commission, we have excluded in kind income / expenses. The accounts therefore do not reflect the considerable contribution of our many volunteers.

Income

SLOW's funding in 2021-22 came from a variety of income streams and again, as per the previous year, supporter and community fundraising was challenging due to the ongoing pandemic. Unrestricted income accounted for 63% of our revenue, and 37% was restricted.

Grants - SLOW received continued multiyear support from **the Lotteries Reaching Communities** (three-year funding), **Islington Council's Community Chest** (two-year funding)**,** and the **John Armitage Trust** (three-year funding). We successfully applied for a number of new grants (for 2022) including Garfield Weston, Foyle Foundation, John Armitage Trust, Islington Local Initiatives Fund and Tesco's Community Grants.

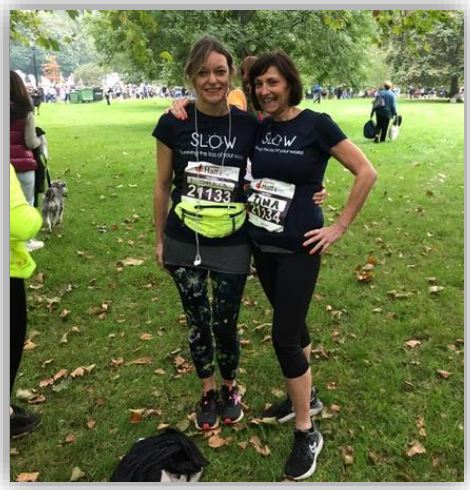


FINANCIAL REVIEW

Donations - A special mention should be made to t**he ICCM** for their generous donation and also to **Waitrose Community Matters**. We would also like to thank the following supporters for their very generous donations which have enabled the charity to carry out its essential work supporting bereaved families: Andrew Wright, Callie Doy and Adrian Kirby.



Supporter Fundraising – After being postponed twice, the **Royal Parks Half Marathon** finally went ahead in October 2021. Our amazing team of 12 runners together raised over £16,000!





Expenditure

Expenditure increased by £18,400 year on year primarily due to the new cost of salaries and pensions. SLOW recruited a new Bereavement Support Services Manager, Nikki Peterson, and also employed Kelly Carter, the Business and Development Manager. Our expenditure on supervision, marketing and the evaluation also increased.

Reserves Policy

The Trustees' policy is to follow recommended practice and maintain unrestricted reserves to cover at least three months' operational expenditure. In 2021-22 SLOW will be dependent on approximately £112,000 income per year to sustain its activities therefore the reserves figure equates to £28,000. At this level the Trustees believe that they would be able to continue the current activities of the charity in the event of a significant drop in funding while seeking to replace the funding or alternatively wind the charity down. The main concerns of the board are to ensure that the team can continue working to either secure new funding or close the charity, and to support members to move onto other services. The SLOW Trustees review this policy annually.

THE SLOW 2021-22 TEAM

Personnel



Our support services in 2021-22 were delivered by a team of eight facilitators and an army of volunteers. **Nic Whitworth**, SLOW's co-founder, stepped back from her role as Bereavement Support Services Manager in the Spring and was replaced by **Nikki Peterson**. Nic continues to facilitate groups and SLOWsibs workshops.

We recruited **Shushma Jain** and **Michael Ward** to facilitate our new adult sibling support groups and at the end of the year Clara Francis stepped down from her role as a facilitator.

For the first time in SLOW's history we employed staff – our newly recruited Bereavement Support Services Manager and our Business and Development Manager. We worked with the law firm Mishcon de Reya to develop policies and employment contracts and registered with HMRC for PAYE, the Pensions Regulator and selected a charity pension scheme for employees.

We recruited three new trustees at the Big Alliance Board Match event and we said goodbye to trustees **Andrew Wright, Sara Portnoy** and **Fin Craig** after many years of dedicated service.

Training and Support

> *The people leading the group are doing an amazing job, you know that every session has that element of support and unconditional time.*

Across the year we further developed our own **in-house facilitation and trustee induction training**. The team also attended external **training courses** provided from a variety of organisations for example The Compassionate Friends, SAFE CIC and CBUK.

Eleven **Reflective Practice Groups**, ran throughout the year, attended by the growing team of support group facilitators. Meetings are structured to facilitate reflective feedback on group working, co-facilitation and peer support, sharing of ideas, presentation of material and training. These sessions are held in addition to facilitators' clinical supervision.

Our Volunteers

Nineteen committed volunteers helped SLOW's work by offering their time and skills in 2021-22. Special mentions should be given to the following volunteers who have dedicated their time this year: -

- **Susie Hanson**, facilitated our Wednesday, Monday and monthly evening support groups.
- **Nic Whitworth** and **Tim Whitworth** volunteered as facilitators at the monthly support groups.
- **Michael Ward** volunteered as a facilitator each month at the adult sibling support groups.
- **Liz Cancea** and **Maria Wojszwillo** assisted the facilitators at the North London weekly group.
- **Laura Anderson**, **Mandi Tolga**, **Hamish Whitworth** and **Fatima Fofanah** have all assisted at the sibling workshops.
- **Yiran Guo** offered her services as an independent examiner of the SLOW accounts.
- **Sara Portnoy** provided clinical supervision for the facilitators.
- And finally, **our Trustees** who continued to donate their time voluntarily to sustain SLOW at a governance level with passion and commitment for the work we do.

THE SLOW 2021-22 TEAM



Kelly Carter
Business and Development Manager



Nikki Peterson
Bereavement Support Services Manager



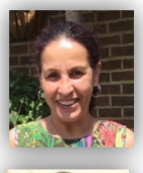
Nicola Whitworth
Founder and Support Group Facilitator
North London Monthly Evening Group and SLOWsibs



Susie Hanson
Founder and Support Group Facilitator
North London Wednesday Daytime Group / Monthly Evening Zoom Group



Tim Whitworth
Trustee and Support Group Facilitator
North London Monthly Evening Group



Erica Stewart
Support Group Facilitator
Zoom Weekly Daytime and Monthly Evening Groups



Hattie Deards
Support Group Facilitator
Zoom Weekly Daytime Groups



Shushma Jain
Support Group Facilitator
Zoom Adult Sibling Groups

GOVERNANCE

Organisational Structure

The trustee board meets at least four times per year to agree the strategy and activities of the charity and to review the finances, fundraising and risks. All Trustees give their time voluntarily and no trustee remuneration was paid in the year. Day-to-day operations and management are delegated to the Business and Development Manager and the Bereavement Support Services Manager who both regularly report to Chair of Trustees on performance and operations.

Recruitment and Appointment of Trustees

The objective is to have a range of Trustees with skillsets relevant to the activities of the charity. The skills of the existing Trustees are taken into consideration when recruiting new Trustees and skills / diversity gaps identified. SLOW recruits Trustees through a variety of means, either they are approached personally, the positions are advertised, or they are recruited via the Big Alliance.

New applicants are interviewed by existing Trustees and appointed at one of the trustee board meetings throughout the year. All new Trustees are given induction training and are DBS checked.

Risk Management

Trustees adopt a risk appraisal and mitigation approach as part of future development. The SLOW risk register is reviewed annually. The major risks for the charity in 2021 and mitigating actions were:

Strategic Direction

We held two strategic away days and developed our operating model; this will provide the framework for future growth. A number of trustees with strategic experience were recruited to the board.

Personnel

Throughout the year we developed our performance review framework and took the necessary steps to employ key members of staff. Volunteers and sessional workers also now have increased involvement in trustee and strategy meetings.

Finance and Fundraising

In order to ensure that there is back up for the Business and Development Manager in terms of finance and fundraising responsibilities, actions were agreed including: reviews of Finance Policy and procedures, the acquisition of accounting software, developing a customer relationship strategy and securing assistance with finance and book-keeping duties.

THANK YOU TO OUR SUPPORTERS

SLOW would like to thank its sessional workers, volunteers, Trustees and our Patrons for their hard work and dedication. None of our work would be possible without the support of our new and continuing funders listed below.

ISLINGTON

ICCS
Islington and Camden Cemetery Service

The John Armitage Charitable Trust

Waitrose
Community Matters
We support good causes.
You decide who gets what.



COMMUNITY FUND

We are especially proud of the fundraising events organised by our members and are extremely grateful for donations from our members, their friends and families. Thank you.

GET IN TOUCH

Bereaved Parents and Siblings

Anyone who is a bereaved parent, bereaved adult sibling (18+) or young bereaved sibling (6-15 years) can attend our support groups and workshops. Referrals can be made directly or we can be contacted by a family member or health professional. A facilitator will contact the bereaved parent / sibling within a few days to arrange a convenient time to phone and discuss whether the SLOW groups will be able to help.

Get in touch

Bereaved Parents and Young Siblings



07532 423 674



info@slowgroup.co.uk

Bereaved Adult Siblings



07506 272 309



adultsibs@slowgroup.co.uk



slowgroup.co.uk



@slowsupport



https://www.facebook.com/slowsupport



https://www.facebook.com/groups/slowgroup/



@slowgroup

Any other enquiries including fundraising and donations



07734 577407



admin@slowgroup.co.uk



https://www.justgiving.com/slowgroup

SLOW - Surviving the Loss of Your World	1161337

Receipts and payments accounts

For the period from	01/02/2021	To	31/01/2022

CC16a

Section A Receipts and payments

	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Endowment funds	Total funds	Last year
	to the nearest £	to the nearest £	to the nearest £	to the nearest £	to the nearest £
A1 Receipts					
Grants	5,000	23,429	-	28,429	59,429
Charitable Retail Schemes	333	-	-	333	1,506
Fundraising	17,498	-	-	17,498	4,932
Individual Donations	1,724	-	-	1,724	4,463
Donations from Organisations	15,005	-	-	15,005	10,005
Group voluntary donations	402	-	-	402	74
Sub total(Gross income for AR)	39,962	23,429	-	63,392	80,410
A2 Asset and investment sales, (see table).					
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
Sub total	-	-	-	-	-
Total receipts	39,962	23,429	-	63,392	80,410

A3 Payments	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Endowment funds	Total funds	Last year
Salaries and NICs	18,602	2,826	-	21,428	-
Sessional workers	16,704	20,254	-	36,958	42,179
Pensions	1,211	-		1,211	-
Supervision	-	1,720		1,720	1,115
Support group workshop refreshments	248	-	-	248	60
Creche costs	-	-	-	-	26
Sibs workshop materials	324		-	324	663
Premises rental	193	800	-	993	570
Professional outreach	-	-	-	-	284
Professional development, events and training	-	571	-	571	804
Home phone, broadband, and mobile	659	765	-	1,424	1,170
IT expenses	156	59		216	741
Marketing - website and publicity	930	1,672	-	2,602	2,158
Volunteer Expenses	142	600	-	742	667
Fundraising Expenses	736	-	-	736	376
Travel	-	210	-	210	76
Stationery, books, postage and equipment	-	288	-	288	797
Insurance and compliance	207	267	-	474	490
Trustee board development and expenses	-	-	-	-	516
Meeting expenses and gifts	289	20	-	309	53
Recruitment	345	-	-	345	230
Evaluation and Focus Groups	-	826	-	826	246
Sub total	40,745	30,879		71,624	53,221
A4 Asset and investment purchases, (see table)					
	-	-	-	-	
	-	-	-	-	
Sub total	-	-	-	-	-
Total payments	40,745	30,879	-	71,624	53,221
Net of receipts/(payments)	- 783	- 7,449	-	- 8,232	
A5 Transfers between funds				-	
A6 Cash funds last year end	48,019	8,541			
Cash funds this year end	47,236	1,092	-	- 8,232	56,560

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	Balance at bank	47,149	1,092	-
	Petty Cash	87		-
			-	-
	Total cash funds	47,236	1,092	-

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

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

	Details	Fund to which asset belongs	Cost (optional)	Current value (optional)
B4 Assets retained for the charity's own use	Dell Inspiron 15 3000 Laptop	Restricted	429	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-

	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
	CWan	CICILIA WAN	23/10/22

Independent examiner's report to the trustees of SLOW - SUPPORTING BEREAVED PARENTS AND SIBLINGS

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the SLOW - SUPPORTING BEREAVED PARENTS AND SIBLINGS (**SLOW**) for the year ended 31 January 2022.The accounts have been prepared on a receipts and payments basis and are set out in the standard Charity Commission format.

Responsibilities and basis of report

As the charity trustees of SLOW 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 SLOW'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.

Basis of independent examiner's report

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 you as 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.

Independent examiner's statement

In connection with my examination, no matter has come to my attention:

(1) which gives me reasonable cause to believe that in any material respect:

- accounting records were not kept in respect of SLOW as required by section 130 of the Act; or
- the accounts do not accord with those records; or

(2) to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Signed: 

Name: Matthew Emmerson

Relevant professional qualification: Association of Chartered Certified Accountants (ACCA)

Address: 35 Cranborne Crescent, Potters Bar, Herts, EN6 3AD, UK

Date: 19 October 2022

SLOW - SUPPORTING BEREAVED PARENTS AND SIBLINGS

England & Wales - Charity number 1161337

Accounts



SLOW Annual Report

Feb 2020 - Jan 2021

SLOW

Surviving the loss of your world

CHARITY GOVERNANCE

SLOW - Surviving the Loss of Your World

CHARITY REGISTRATION DETAILS	Registered Charity Number 1161337 Registered April 2015
FOUNDED	September 2007

TRUSTEES

Chair of Trustees	Andrew Wright resigned June 2020
	Pippa Murray from June 2020
Treasurer	Kieran Hull
Secretary	Tim Whitworth
Trustee	Andrew Wright
Trustee	Finella Craig
Trustee	Pippa Murray
Trustee	Sara Portnoy
Trustee	Helen McDonough resigned June 2020
Trustee	Samara Stevens from Dec 2020
PATRONS	Jason Watkins and Clara Francis

CONTACT DETAILS

Member Correspondence:	SLOW, St George and All Saints Church, Crayford Road, London, N7 0ND info@slowgroup.co.uk Tel 07532 423 674
Registered Address and all other correspondence:	SLOW, 11 Donovan Avenue, London, N10 2JU admin@slowgroup.co.uk Tel 07734 577407 www.slowgroup.co.uk

OBJECTIVES AND ETHOS

The objectives of the charity are to: -

- To promote and protect the good health of bereaved parents suffering as a result of the death of their child through the provision of self-help and mutual support
- The promotion of social inclusion by offering a sanctuary for bereaved parents to relieve the needs of those people and assist them to integrate back into society

At SLOW, we have evolved a unique and successful model of bereavement support that is a direct response to what bereaved parents and siblings have told us they need. Our ethos has grown from the roots of a community, facilitated and supported by bereaved families who have experienced first-hand the devastating grief resulting from the death of a child or sibling. SLOW cultivates a stance of 'coming alongside' parents, going at their own pace, within a non-pathologising culture.

At SLOW we know that grief cannot be fixed, and do not strive to 'make things better'. Instead, we support and give space to bereaved families, so they may in time harness their own resources in slowly rebuilding their lives. In this way, we believe there is **hope** to be found in connecting with other bereaved families, **relief** in sharing the pain of grief, and **company** in bearing the unbearable, alongside others who are living with the death of their child and sibling.



WHY SLOW'S WORK MATTERS

The death of a child is an incredibly traumatic event leaving parents with overwhelming emotional needs. The grief of bereaved siblings is also devastating, yet this is one of the most neglected types of grief.

Our members face the challenge of living in a radically altered world in which close family ties, routines and friendships are impacted and many of SLOW's members initially report that they feel very socially isolated.

SLOW support groups make a positive intervention by:

- Connecting, sharing, validating and normalising grief.
- Finding new ways to manage grief.
- Encouraging members to find ways in which to connect with their child or sibling.
- Offering hope for the future and building confidence at a time when life can feel hopeless.
- Providing a safe space for peer support and reducing isolation.
- Creating a transforming community connected through their loss.
- Encouraging bereaved families to regain their sense of wellbeing so that they find purpose in life again.



"My husband and I started going to SLOW meeting shortly after the funeral of our son, in 2019. It's a warm and understanding place for us to share our love and memories of our son. A place where our everyday stresses and loss are shared with the only people that can possibly understand. I have continued to use the support over COVID via Zoom. It's been invaluable, I cannot imagine how I would have coped with stress, loss, anxiety and the pressure of trying to support his siblings through their own loss and anxieties, without SLOW. Many thanks to the whole team."



"I haven't been able to get to the group because of my mobility, it's brilliant to be able to join via zoom now and speak about my daughter. again. I hope it continues after lockdown is eased"



"I really don't know what I would do without the SLOW support meetings"



"You have provided some light and comfort through the overwhelming sadness"

ACTIVITIES AND ACHIEVEMENTS

With the global COVID-19 pandemic, 2020 was a challenging year for SLOW and its members. Nevertheless, the pandemic also provided the charity with opportunities that were explored during the year and will inform our future service delivery in 2021.

Support for Bereaved Parents

The heart of SLOW lies in the culture and the community of its support groups for bereaved parents. It is here that parents come to find connection, company, comfort and hope after the death of their child.

Healing for bereaved parents can begin as they share their grief with others who validate their experience. They discover they are not alone, and gradually learn ways of managing their grief and coping with their loss. At SLOW, parents come to understand that healing means remembering, not forgetting their child and we encourage them to be compassionate, gentle and patient with themselves. In this way bereaved parents are building themselves a safety net that will resource them long after they cease to attend the group.

By making room for the experience of grief, parents often say that they leave 'feeling lighter'. By listening and sharing experiences of coping with life whilst managing grief, parents are often slowly able to make small but significant steps towards rebuilding their lives.

The support groups continued to offer a simple structure that allows safety through containment and continuity. An introductory round gives each parent space to reflect and identify areas that they'd like support with and these form the basis of the discussion.

In 2020-21 SLOW ran **120 support groups across London,** each lasting one and a half hours, supporting over 70 bereaved parent members. By January 2021 the SLOW **membership base was over 470,** which grows as new people contact us.

Attendance at our groups is flexible with regular core members attending each week / month while others choose to attend less frequently as and when they need support. We welcome all bereaved parents irrespective of whether their child was an adult or a baby or the varying circumstances in which they died. Our parents are a mix of very recently to more long-term bereaved and members can join at any point regardless of how long ago their child died. The death of a child cuts across all communities and a diverse range of families. Our support groups welcome bereaved mothers and fathers, of differing cultures and faiths. Longer term members that no longer require regular support at the meetings often come to our social events or take on active volunteering roles.

When the UK entered lock down in March 2020, we quickly transferred all our support groups to virtual groups run via Zoom video conferencing. Despite the limitations of Zoom to provide a full group experience 'in the room', the members gave extremely positive feedback.

While the access to meetings via Zoom has provided much needed support during this time, there have been many challenges including technical issues, a variety of devices used which increase sound disturbances, and lack of privacy. Overall, however the groups have been very successful, and there are mixed views about returning to face-to-face groups in 2021.

Some members have expressed a wish to connect with other parents via face-to-face groups, while others have appreciate being able to attend via Zoom especially those with mobility problems or very young children. **SLOW has responded with a decision to provide both virtual and face-to-face groups moving forwards.**

ACTIVITIES AND ACHIEVEMENTS

The Pandemic's Impact on Grief

The support groups flourished with rich discussion about the impact of the lockdown, enforced isolation and uncertainty. How the virus has impacted grief has been explored in a number of ways:

- that global grief of the pandemic had eclipsed some parents' grief;
- that the isolation provided a welcome withdrawal from the pressure of social interactions;
- how their children would have managed, especially those with long term health conditions requiring regular admissions into hospital;
- and a sense of congruence - that global isolation and uncertainty reflected the grief experienced by bereaved parents.

The Islington Support Groups

We ran 66 weekly daytime groups and 17 monthly evening groups across the year in Islington / via Zoom.

Our **Wednesday weekly daytime group** continued to flourish and strengthen in numbers with a core group attending regularly. Susie Hanson and Clara Francis co-facilitated this group throughout the year with strong support from volunteers Maria Wojszwillo and Liz Cancea. Attendees ranged between 6 and 14 including facilitators. This group, like our other groups, was held virtually after lockdown was implemented in March 2020.

In February our new **Monday weekly daytime group** was launched so that pressure could be reduced on the Wednesday weekly group.

Susie Hanson and Erica Stewart co-facilitated the Monday weekly daytime group from February 2020 until a decision was made to 'pause' this group in mid November 2020 due to low numbers as the COVID pandemic affected the number of new referrals. This group has been relaunched in 2021 as a virtual weekly meeting held via Zoom as our other groups slowly return to in person meetings.

Lively discussions characterised the groups across the year with a strong emphasis on developing strategies for coping, taking care of ourselves and meeting the demands of surviving children, family members and relationships with friends and work colleagues. As new parents arrived at the groups, those who had been attending for longer maintained the core values and culture of the group, fostering an atmosphere of welcome, warmth and inclusion.

This year our **Monthly evening group** has been regularly attended with numbers ranging between 6 and 16 over the year including facilitators. There is a good balance of couples and individuals attending. Many parents have found the Zoom groups to be a welcome support during COVID, and in response to demand, the frequency of the groups was increased to fortnightly for the first six months of the pandemic to add an increased layer of support for isolated bereaved parents.

There is an extremely supportive atmosphere despite the wide range of circumstances in which parents have lost their children. There are now several parents attending who have lost children during COVID and the restrictions have impacted their grief in a multitude of ways. Some parents have found the restrictions have given them a chance to grieve privately without the pressure of the social expectations of the outside world, and other have desperately missed the physical comfort and contact of others with whom to share their grief.

The group enables parents who are working or have other commitments to attend a regular support group and build new relationships with those who understand grief. All members, including those who attend as a couple, are encouraged to speak about their individual experience of grief and their bond with their child.

Seventeen groups ran in 2020-21 in Islington / via Zoom, facilitated by Nicola Whitworth and Tim Whitworth.

ACTIVITIES AND ACHIEVEMENTS

The Streatham Support Groups

We ran 37 weekly daytime groups across the year in Streatham / via Zoom. Hattie Deards and Erica Stewart co-facilitated this group with attendees ranging between 3 and 12 including facilitators.

Across the year there has been a steady flow of new referrals for this group. The meetings are consistently well attended, underpinned by a core of long-term members who attend regularly, while other members attend more sporadically. This doesn't seem to affect the atmosphere of great cohesion; the members know each other well and are at ease with each other, even if they do not attend regularly. Within the group, the facilitators are able to see the powerful sense of understanding between members.

Discussions revolve around how bereaved parents navigate their place in the world and society, and family relations and friendships and how to sustain them.

Email and Telephone Contact

SLOW recognises that the first steps in reaching out for support are difficult to take for many bereaved parents. We offer a prompt telephone response to any enquiry about SLOW, and take care to talk with parents about what has happened and how they would like to be supported. Parents' enquiries are then followed up by email or text after their first visit to the group.

At times, parents may be unable to attend the group for a period of time due to work or family commitments. In these situations, the feedback that we have received is that parents value maintaining contact via email or via the website blog where they may read articles and news about SLOW.

SLOW may not meet the needs of every bereaved parent and we will endeavour to signpost them on to other organisations that may provide specific support.



ACTIVITIES AND ACHIEVEMENTS

SLOWsibs

The 'SLOWsibs' workshops provide a safe place for bereaved siblings to meet each other and develop their creative skills, with the aim of reducing isolation, building confidence through making new friends and exploring feelings. Our creative activities are designed to: -

- support each child living with their grief while building a hopeful future;
- commemorate their sibling who died and
- to express their own unique place in their altered family.

SLOWsib members are at different places in their development and understanding of death and therefore their expression of grief. Activities are chosen to reflect this variety of experience and allow each child to express themselves at different levels of interpretation and engagement.

We held three workshops over the year, each session held via Zoom. Unfortunately, our March 21st in person workshop was cancelled at short notice as the UK entered the first COVID lockdown.

Running the workshops virtually required careful planning and risk assessments including Zoom safety. Materials and guidance for Zoom was sent prior to each workshop and parents confirmed by email that they would be present in the home during the session. Parents were encouraged to give their children space and privacy in the workshops, though some parents helped out or maintained a background presence. There has been lots of positive feedback from parents who really appreciated SLOW maintaining SLOWsibs through the pandemic.

This year the workshops included 5 to 7 siblings (and their parents) and were run by Nic Whitworth with the assistance of Laura Anderson and Lisa Barnett.

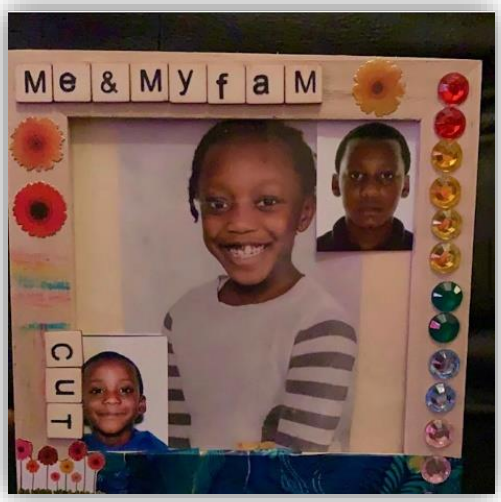
Baking it Better with Focaccia Art
June 2020

Parcels of materials were posted to SLOWsibs' homes ahead of the workshop. Focaccia bread was made from scratch and decorated with siblings' names, etc using vegetables provided by families.



Treasure Memory Boxes
October 2020

Children were sent boxes of craft materials for the workshop in advance. It was a great success and a highly interactive session, with every child producing a personalised memory box.



ACTIVITIES AND ACHIEVEMENTS

Magical Winter Village
December 2020

The SLOWsibs' children and families enthusiastically created wonderful work in our festive workshop exploring the themes of Christmas, family, and winter imagery using paper cuts to create an atmospheric village luminary. Special messages were written to siblings and placed inside decorations. The children were willing to share these with others in the closing circle, demonstrating the safety and trust that has grown between the members in the group.







"Schoolmates don't get it, but I can talk to us in here"

Bereaved sibling quote

"I like sibs because you do fun thing and I make new friends with people I've never met before who have also lost siblings"

Bereaved sibling quote

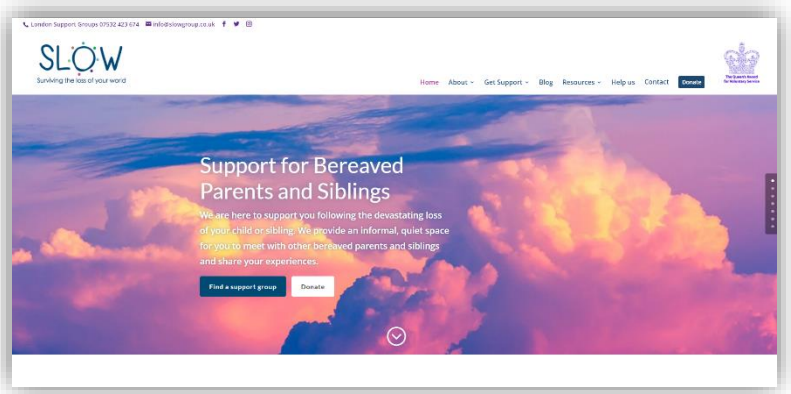
CHARITY DEVELOPMENT & GROWTH

Marketing and Professional Outreach

SLOW promotes access to the groups through local NHS paediatric teams, palliative care teams, hospitals, specialist service providers, health visitors, local charities, as well as via the SLOW website, the media and word of mouth.

Throughout the year we marketed the SLOW service extensively with bereavement charities and organisations, initially in South London and then also in North London. Taking advantage of virtual team meetings, we presented to Ruils and Improving Health (both social prescribing organisations in South London) as well as the South London CRUSE team and Noah's Ark Children's Hospice North London. We researched the organisations contracted with social prescribing in boroughs across London and made contact with many adjacent to our current group settings. We also extensively marketed GP surgeries and Medical Practices across London, mailshotting over 450 practices.

In 2020-21 we continued to build close working relationships with referral agencies and professionals that share and complement our work including the Life Force team (Palliative Care Team in North London), End of Life Services GOSH, UCH, The Compassionate Friends, Grief Encounter, CARIS, Islington Bereavement Service, the Child Death Helpline and Haven House.



The SLOW website continues to be an important resource and referral channel for new members and we continued to develop our website with additional webpages, resources and content.

IT and Operations

Substantial progress was made with the business operations of the charity and we registered for a number of non-profit, discounted or free versions of software. The charity has moved to Cloud based storage so that our growing team can share and save files securely.

Evaluating the SLOW Service

2020 was a year for planning SLOW's Evaluation and we connected with the University of Hertfordshire, scoping research with two Trainee Clinical Psychologists. The data collection for this research will take place in the Spring of 2021. We hope that this exercise will help us understand how our support services impact our members' health and wellbeing and further develop and adapt our existing services as well as exploring and assessing the introduction of new services.

OUR IMPACT: A MEMBER'S EXPERIENCE

We were approached in April 2019 by a bereaved mother who had tragically lost her child unexpectedly to SIDS. She has been attending our support groups, sometimes with her partner, since May 2019. She also comes to our SLOW lunches and now volunteers at our SLOWsibs workshops. Here she recalls her experience of losing her son and what SLOW means to her:

"I am a bereaved parent. I became a mum for the first time when my beautiful son Evan was born on the 17th of February, 2019.



Laura and Evan

Evan was absolutely perfect, and healthy but tragically at the age of 6 weeks old Evan passed away unexpectantly from SIDs. This has been an absolutely devastating and traumatic thing to happen to myself, my husband and our families and the effect it has had on our lives has at times felt completely overwhelming.

I can say with 100% belief that without the support of SLOW that I would not be here today.



Evan

After I lost Evan, I had days I couldn't even get out of bed or feed myself and I was completely isolated. SLOW gave me somewhere to go, to get up and dressed for, and gave me the support I needed to slowly start to rebuild my life.

SLOW is a charity that means so much to me."

PLANS FOR 2021-22

SLOW ran two strategy meetings with Trustees and senior managers to assess charity risks and prioritise plans for SLOW's future.

Our key areas of focus for 2021-22 will be to:

To provide high quality bereavement support, reaching more bereaved families

- Continue to provide **high-quality support** for our new and existing bereaved community and run over **150 support events** across London.
- Return our virtual Islington and Streatham groups to in person meetings when the lockdown restrictions have ended and it is safe to do so.
- Launch **two new virtual groups** – a weekly daytime and a monthly evening bereaved parent support run via Zoom.
- Plan for the **expansion of face-to-face bereaved parent support groups** across London in 2022.
- Expand **SLOWsibs** offering the service to more bereaved siblings 6-15 years.
- Launch and run an **Adult Sibling Support group**.
- Develop a newsletter for **more structured engagement** with our members.
- Continue to **build collaborative partnerships** with referral agencies and professionals in the field of bereavement.

To develop the charity's infrastructure to support this growth of services

- Continue to **expand our fundraising sources**, growing income and inspiring our community to fundraise for SLOW.
- Recruit a new **Bereavement Support Services Manager**.
- Develop an **appraisal system** and to support **our volunteers**.
- Collaborate with the University of Hertfordshire, running **three focus groups** in the Spring of 2021 and **planning a three-year evaluation project**.
- Recruit a number of new Trustees after conducting a skills / capacity audit.
- Employ sessional workers at senior management level.
- Research and plan for the implementation of new financial software and a CRM system.

FINANCIAL REVIEW

Overview

The charity's income in 2020-21, £80,410, increased by approximately £30,800 from the previous year. This increase was primarily from grant funding secured during the year. Expenditure was marginally down from £53,649 to £53,221.

We start the new financial year 2021-22 with £56,560. This includes carried forward restricted funds of £8,541, committed to specific activity, as well as nearly £48,019 of unrestricted funds, of which £18,500 are ringfenced for reserves.

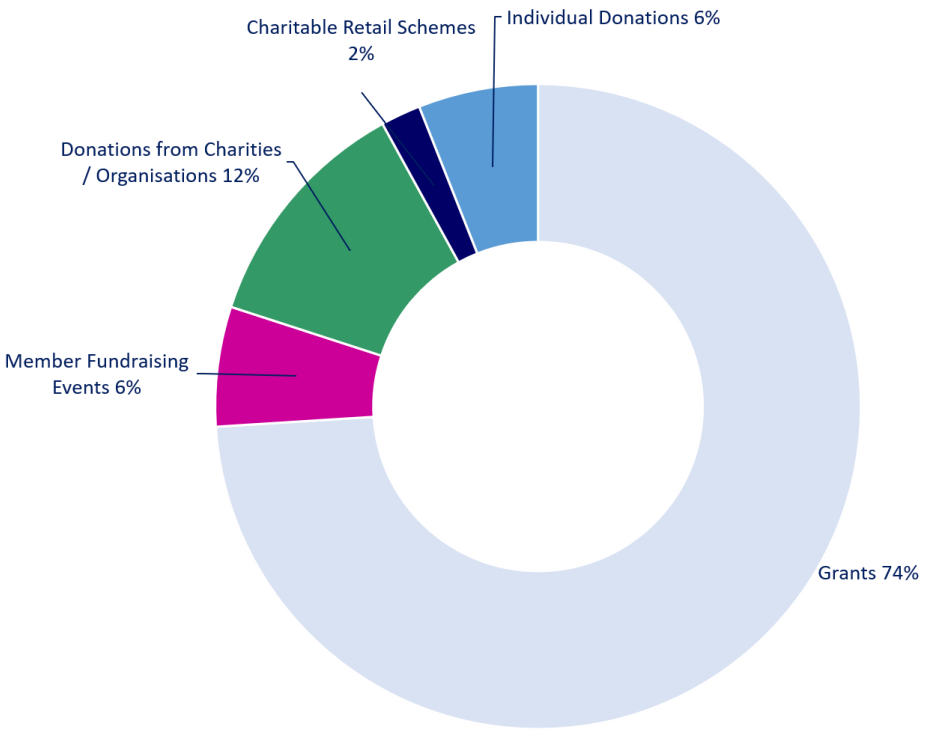
Again, this year, as per advice from the Charity Commission, we have excluded in kind income / expenses for supervision provided by volunteers and free premise hire for the monthly evening group at the Peabody Community Rooms. The accounts therefore do not reflect the considerable contribution of our many volunteers as well as the generosity of the Peabody Estate.

The Impact of the Pandemic on Finances

At the beginning of lockdown in March 2020, cash flow and revenue projections were remodelled. We forecast lower projected income than previously budgeted due to loss of potential revenue from supporter fundraising events such as the Royal Parks Half Marathon and in group donations. Projected lines of expenditure such as premise hire, creche and refreshments etc were reduced as support group meetings could no longer take place face to face. A number of COVID crisis grants were applied for, with great success and both new and existing funders were flexible and generous.

Income

SLOW's funding in 2020-21 came from a variety of income streams however the proportion of grant income rose substantially as a result of the challenges of supporter and community fundraising during the pandemic. Unrestricted income accounted for 41% of our revenue, and 59% was restricted, reflecting the increase in revenue from grants.



FINANCIAL REVIEW

Grants - SLOW received continued support from Islington Council's **Local Initiatives Fund,** as well as multiyear funding from **Islington Council's Community Chest** (two-year funding)**, the Lotteries Reaching Communities** (three-year funding) and the **John Armitage Trust** (three-year funding). New funding was received from a number of COVID Crisis Funds including the **London Community Response Fund**, **Coronavirus CAF Fund** and the **HMRC COVID Response**.

Donations - A special mention should be made to **The ICCM** for their generous donation received via **Islington Crematorium** and also to **Waitrose Community Matters**, the **Chapel of Life**, **Central Tickets**, and **St James Place**.

We would like to also thank the following supporters for their very generous donations which have enabled the charity to carry out its essential work supporting bereaved families: **Louise** and **Richard Taylor, Rebecca Lenkiewicz, Roger and Gordana Fox** and **Andrew Wright**.

Supporter Fundraising – With the lockdown and the cancellation and postponement of fundraising events, supporter fundraising was challenging. Our Royal Parks Half Marathon team started fundraising, raising over £500, only for the event to postponed not once but twice! A number of supporter fundraisers took part in the 2.6 Challenge – a virtual fundraising challenge taking place in lockdown. Tom and Carla ran their socks off and Laura flipped 26 pancakes live on Instagram, together raising over £800.





Expenditure

Expenditure decreased marginally by £428 year on year. Our expenditure on sessional workers and their supervision increased as we recruited additional facilitators and expanded our groups. The majority of these additional costs were offset by the reduced expenditure on premise hire, refreshment and creche costs as our groups were held virtually from March 2020.

Reserves Policy

The Trustees' policy is to follow recommended practice and maintain unrestricted reserves to cover at least three months' operational expenditure. In 2021-22 SLOW will be dependent on approximately £74,000 of income per year to sustain its activities therefore the reserves figure equates to £18,500. At this level the Trustees believe that they would be able to continue the current activities of the charity in the event of a significant drop in funding while seeking to replace the funding or alternatively wind the charity down. The main concerns of the board are to ensure that the team can continue working to either secure new funding or close the charity, and to support members to move onto other services. The SLOW Trustees review this policy annually.

THE SLOW 2020-21 TEAM

Our support services in 2020-21 were delivered by five part time sessional workers and an army of volunteers. At the start of 2020 three new bereaved parent facilitators were recruited – Hattie Deards, Erica Stewart and Clara Francis.

Training and Support

Across the year we further developed our own in-house facilitation and trustee induction training. The team also attended external training courses provided from a variety of organisations including The Compassionate Friends, Slaughter and May, and the Institute for Voluntary Action.

Fifteen **Reflective Practice Groups**, facilitated by the Bereavement Support Services Manager, ran throughout the year, attended by the growing team of support group facilitators. Meetings are structured to facilitate reflective feedback on group working, co-facilitation and peer support, sharing of ideas, presentation of material and updating training. These sessions are held in addition to facilitators' clinical supervision.

Our Volunteers

Over 20 committed volunteers agreed to help SLOW's work by offering their time and skills in 2020-21. Special mentions should be given to the following volunteers who have dedicated their time to SLOW this year: -

- **Susie Hanson**, SLOW's Co-founder, returned to facilitate the weekly Wednesday group.
- **Tim Whitworth** volunteered as a facilitator at the monthly support groups.
- **Liz Cancea** and **Maria Wojszwillo** assisted the facilitators at the North London weekly group.
- **Lisa Barnett**, **Shushma Jain,** and **Fatima Fofanah** have all assisted at the sibling workshops.
- **Ben Wright** offered his services as an independent examiner of the SLOW accounts.
- **Sara Portnoy** and **Steve Dilworth** provided clinical supervision for the facilitators.
- And finally, **our Trustees** who continued to donate their time voluntarily to sustain SLOW at a governance level with passion and commitment for the work we do.

THE SLOW 2020-21 TEAM



Nicola Whitworth
Founder and Bereavement Support Services Manager
North London Monthly Evening Group and SLOWsibs



Susie Hanson
Founder and Support Group Facilitator
North London Monday / North London Wednesday Groups



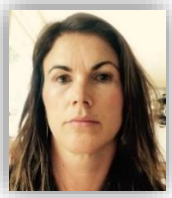
Tim Whitworth
Trustee and Support Group Facilitator
North London Monthly Evening Group



Kelly Carter
Business and Development Manager



Erica Stewart
Support Group Facilitator
North London Monday / South London Tuesday Groups



Hattie Deards
Support Group Facilitator
South London Tuesday Group



Clara Francis
Support Group Facilitator
North London Wednesday

GOVERNANCE

Organisational Structure

The trustee board meets at least four times per year to agree the strategy and activities of the charity and to review the finances, fundraising and risks. All Trustees give their time voluntarily and no trustee remuneration was paid in the year. Day-to-day operations and management are delegated to the Business and Development Manager and the Bereavement Support Services Manager who both regularly report to Chair of Trustees on performance and operations.

Recruitment and appointment of Trustees

The objective is to have a range of Trustees with skillsets relevant to the activities of the charity. The skills of the existing Trustees are taken into consideration when recruiting new Trustees and skills / diversity gaps identified. SLOW recruits Trustees through a variety of means, either they are approached personally, the positions are advertised, or they are recruited via the Big Alliance.

New applicants are interviewed by existing Trustees and appointed at one of the trustee board meetings throughout the year. All new Trustees are given induction training and are DBS checked.

Risk Management

Trustees agreed to adopt a risk appraisal and mitigation approach as part of future development, and a Strategy subgroup was established in March 2020 to, among other things, work with the Business and Development Manager in producing a comprehensive risk register. This culminated in a series of Strategy Away Days in December 2020/January 2021 taking into account the new uncertainties and opportunities presented by the Covid pandemic. The major risks for the charity and mitigating actions include:

Strategic Direction

A number of options for expansion are being explored and are currently being prioritised by the Strategic subgroup with some options already taken forward.
A review of the overarching statement of purpose (vision, mission etc) will be formulated and agreed.

Personnel

Actions were agreed including appraisals and reviews of scope of roles and terms and conditions for those working for the charity, and increased involvement of volunteers and sessional workers in trustee meetings and one-off events.

Finance and Fundraising

In order to ensure that there is back up for the Business and Development Manager in terms of finance and fundraising responsibilities, actions were agreed including: reviews of Finance Policy and procedures, the acquisition of accounting software, developing a customer relationship strategy and securing assistance with finance and book-keeping duties

THANK YOU TO OUR SUPPORTERS

SLOW would like to thank its sessional workers, volunteers, Trustees and our Patrons for their hard work and dedication. None of our work would be possible without the support of our new and continuing funders listed below.

ISLINGTON

ICCS
Islington and Camden Cemetery Service

The John Armitage Charitable Trust

Waitrose
Community Matters
We support good causes.
You decide who gets what.



COMMUNITY FUND

CAF
Charities Aid Foundation

LONDON COMMUNITY RESPONSE FUND

We are especially proud of the fundraising events organised by our members and are extremely grateful for donations from our members, their friends and families. Thank you.

GET IN TOUCH

Bereaved Parents and Siblings

Anyone who is a bereaved parent, bereaved adult sibling (18+) or young bereaved sibling (6-15 years) can attend our support groups and workshops. Referrals can be made directly or we can be contacted by a family member or health professional. A facilitator will contact the bereaved parent / sibling within a few days to arrange a convenient time to phone and discuss whether the SLOW groups will be able to help.

Get in touch

Bereaved Parents and Young Siblings



07532 423 674



info@slowgroup.co.uk

Bereaved Adult Siblings



07506 272 309



adultsibs@slowgroup.co.uk



slowgroup.co.uk



@slowsupport



https://www.facebook.com/slowsupport



https://www.facebook.com/groups/slowgroup/



@slowgroup

Any other enquiries including fundraising and donations



07734 577407



admin@slowgroup.co.uk



https://www.justgiving.com/slowgroup

SLOW - Surviving the Loss of Your World	1161337

Receipts and payments accounts

CC16a

For the period from	01/02/2020	To	31/01/2021

Section A Receipts and payments

	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Endowment funds	Total funds	Last year
	to the nearest £	to the nearest £	to the nearest £	to the nearest £	to the nearest £
A1 Receipts					
Grants	12,500	46,929	-	59,429	19,250
Charitable Retail Schemes	1,506	-	-	1,506	2,580
Member fundraising events	4,432	500	-	4,932	15,262
SLOW fundraising events	-	-	-	-	1,413
Individual Donations	4,463	-	-	4,463	1,884
Donations from Charities / Organisations	10,005	-	-	10,005	8,225
Charitable Services		-	-	-	
Group voluntary donations	74	-	-	74	912
Sub total(Gross income for AR)	32,981	47,429	-	80,410	49,526
A2 Asset and investment sales, (see table).					
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
Sub total	-	-	-	-	-
Total receipts	32,981	47,429	-	80,410	49,526

A3 Payments	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Endowment funds	Total funds	Last year
Support group / workshop sessional workers costs	-	25,563	-	25,563	20,391
Support group workshop refreshments	10	50	-	60	491
Creche costs	26	-	-	26	554
Sibs workshop materials and refreshments	1	662	-	663	769
Supervision	-	1,115		1,115	-
Premises rental	-	570	-	570	2,840
Business development and administration	12,116	4,500	-	16,616	18,525
Professional outreach	98	186	-	284	289
Professional development, events and training	-	804	-	804	981
Home phone, broadband, and mobile	-	1,170	-	1,170	689
IT expenses	-	741		741	-
Marketing - website and publicity	-	2,158	-	2,158	2,383
Volunteer Expenses	67	600	-	667	1,077
Fundraising Expenses	376	-	-	376	2,498
Travel	-	76	-	76	473
Stationery, books, postage and equipment	78	719	-	797	566
Insurance and compliance	73	417	-	490	289
Trustee board development and expenses	16	500	-	516	242
Meeting expenses	53	-	-	53	186
Recruitment	40	190	-	230	405
Evaluation and Focus Groups	-	246	-	246	-
Sub total	12,954	40,267		53,221	53,649
A4 Asset and investment purchases, (see table)					
	-	-	-	-	
	-	-	-	-	
Sub total	-	-	-	-	-
Total payments	12,954	40,267	-	53,221	53,649
Net of receipts/(payments)	20,027	7,162	-	27,190	
A5 Transfers between funds				-	
A6 Cash funds last year end	27,992	1,378		29,370	
Cash funds this year end	48,019	8,541	-	56,560	29,370

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

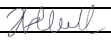
Categories	Details	Unrestricted funds to nearest £	Restricted funds to nearest £	Endowment funds to nearest £
B1 Cash funds	Balance at bank	47,932	8,541	-
	Petty Cash	87		-
		-	-	-
	Total cash funds	48,019	8,541	-
		OK	OK	OK

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

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

	Details	Fund to which asset belongs	Cost (optional)	Current value (optional)
B4 Assets retained for the charity's own use	Dell Inspiron 15 3000 Laptop	Restricted	429	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-

	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
		Kieran Hull	30/9/2021

Independent examiner's report to the trustees of SLOW - SUPPORTING BEREAVED PARENTS AND SIBLINGS

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the SLOW - SUPPORTING BEREAVED PARENTS AND SIBLINGS (**SLOW**) for the year ended 31 January 2021.The accounts have been prepared on a receipts and payments basis and are set out in the standard Charity Commission format.

Responsibilities and basis of report

As the charity trustees of SLOW 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 SLOW'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.

Basis of independent examiner's report

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 you as 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.

Independent examiner's statement

In connection with my examination, no matter has come to my attention:

(1) which gives me reasonable cause to believe that in any material respect:

- accounting records were not kept in respect of SLOW as required by section 130 of the Act; or
- the accounts do not accord with those records; or

(2) to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.



Signed:

Name: Yiran Guo

Relevant professional qualification: Chartered Accountant of Australia and New Zealand

Address: Ropemaker Place, 25 Ropemaker Street, London EC2Y 9AN, United Kingdom

Date: 30 September 2021