



SOUNDCAFE LEICESTER

ANNUAL REPORT 2023-24

Registered Charity No. 1162987

November 2024



‘A community where we can meet for music, art & friendship. Without these places we’re on our own – socially isolated . . It means I have a place to go, friendly & helpful people’
SCL Guest.

1. Introduction - Chair of Trustees Report

At the end of the report last year I commented as follows: “We are making significant efforts to be able to continue to offer the welcome and hospitality that Sound Café is known for so we can be there to support our guests as part of the Sound Café family; but there is no escaping the fact that this has become extremely difficult.”

While there is no doubt at all that the environment in which we are operating continues to be very difficult, it is very good to report that the operational model has continued to offer the choir, the creative café and the football due in particular to the efforts of our Director (Rachel Griffiths), our Service Co-Ordinator (Maria O'Brien) and our loyal team of volunteers.

The meetings of the Trustee board have, inevitably, been dominated by detailed consideration of how we could ensure the receipt of adequate funding to enable us to deliver the services which are so important, and so much appreciated, by our guests. This has not been at all easy given the financial climate and a very significant amount of work has been done, by Rachel with the extremely valuable assistance of David Peake, on funding bids; inevitably, there have been some disappointments together with some encouraging positive responses from grant awarding bodies. Some progress has been made this year on securing committed regular donations, although these are still considerably less than is needed to cover core costs.

We were very pleased to be nominated by Jonathan Kerry (CEO of Leicester Diocese) for a Kings Award for Voluntary Service.

We have given considerable thought to whether we should modify the way in which we deliver our services and whether we should work in a formal partnership with another relevant local charity. As the numbers attending football have significantly diminished, we discussed the viability of weekly football as compared to one-off events like the Football Festival planned for May 2024.

Safeguarding reports and a Risk register are also regular items on Trustee Board agendas. In relation to safeguarding there have been various difficult issues which have been well handled by our team with the assistance of the safeguarding specialists employed by the Leicester Diocese.

Julie-Ann Heath and Eileen Coombs stepped down as Trustees during the year. We were delighted that Jenny Barrett became a trustee. With her detailed knowledge of how SoundCafé services need to be delivered and her familiarity with so many of the guests Jenny is a really valuable addition to the Trustee Board.

At the end of January a number of us attended the church of St Philip and St James in Groby for the funeral of Geof Pearce. Geof was a very lovely gentleman who was a tremendously valuable SoundCafé trustee perhaps particularly in the days when a large number of guests attended on a Wednesday afternoon in the Grand Hall of St Martin's House. His calm, respectful and firm relationship with the more difficult guests was both valuable and immensely impressive.

In summary, we remain confident that the various actions being taken in the areas described above will enable us to look after our guests in the way we always have.

Alan Fletcher, Chair of Trustees.

2. Executive Overview

2023/24 was both a wonderful and challenging year not least of which was facing the financial challenges to establish and consolidate the service delivery model established post covid.

A key highlight was the production of our Speaking of Homelessness book building on the film and workshops undertaken with Peter Rumney, Dragon Breath Theatre in 2021/22. Peter worked with the SoundCafe team to produce an amazing legacy through his writing of the book which delivers the final piece of the jigsaw to complete our picture of the overall Speaking of Homelessness project.



May 2023, the Coronation of the King and Queen Consort provided a wonderful opportunity for celebration and a focus on the important role of volunteering. The Big Help Out on Monday 8th May 2023 promoted and championed volunteering and SoundCafe celebrated with a traditional afternoon cream tea for everyone.

Volunteering plays such a vital role in supporting charities like SoundCafe and re-inforces our family ethos and promoting involvement at the heart of our community.

Partnership is at the heart of SoundCafe and our continued support to our guests is only made possible by our team of volunteers and partner organisations.

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In the heart of [the city centre](#), a charity is on a mission to give homeless people and rough sleepers a voice in their local community. SoundCafe Choir uses the power of music and song to instil confidence and purpose in the city's most vulnerable groups.

Leicestershire Live visited the choir to hear about its impact on its members. Barbara said: "I've loved meeting people and coming to the choir and singing. I'd never sung before joining SoundCafe, and initially I was nervous to sing in front of people, but everyone here is so lovely and welcoming, so that puts me at ease. I really look forward to coming to rehearsals every week.

Deborah has been a member of the choir since its inception "I've made a lot of friends since coming here. We'd really love to see more and more volunteers coming to help us out."

Helen joined the choir four years ago. She said: "It's all about building friendships and coming together to sing and put on concerts. I enjoy singing solo parts because it enables me to make my voice heard".

Jason was first introduced to the choir in 2014 whilst he was living on the streets. He said: "I heard about the choir through some of my friends who had already joined. They brought me along to one of the sessions, and I've not looked back since".

In February and March, we ran a six week pilot with Centre Project delivering community singing sessions at the Centre project facilities. This provided the opportunity for SCL guests and Centre project service users to enjoy the benefits of singing together.

Rachel Griffiths, Director.

3. Strategic & Operational Highlights

3.1. Football

In May 2023 SoundCafe held its' second Homeless Football Health and Well-Being tournament at St Margaret's Pastures. Fourteen teams participated, including SoundCafe Foxes, as well as teams from other homeless providers in the City.



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The players continued to improve not only their playing skills but also how they worked as a team, and we are looking forward to hosting our next tournament in the Spring of 2024.

Football is more than just a sport, it is a universal language that brings people together and this is evident with SoundCafe players through teamwork, discipline, and a shared passion and a willingness to unite communities.

Maria O'Brien, Service Co-ordinator

3.2. Choir

It's been another amazing year for the SoundCafe Choir finishing the Summer term 2023 on a high after a concert of songs from film and musical theatre entitled 'The Greatest Show'.



In the Autumn the group recorded the Disney song 'Beauty and the beast' and an extract was played on BBC Radio Leicester. The choir love performing live, and their Disney-themed Christmas concert was a real hit.



The choir have grown in confidence in front of an audience and this was no more evident than in the Spring where they excelled themselves in a Cantamici concert in the beautiful surroundings and acoustics of our home: St Mary de Castro. The audience couldn't believe that the quality was as good as it was and that is down in no small part to the guests' hard work and attentiveness in rehearsals, encouraged by our growing volunteer base.

This year the choir have improved their pitch, tuning and they watch carefully to ensure their rhythm is as accurate as possible. The key aspect which has improved the most is their ability to sing in harmony.

'I am so proud of all of their achievements this year. This choir is so fortunate to have Andrew Green who continues to accompany both choir rehearsals and performances, we are very grateful to him for his invaluable support. I would also like to personally thank the SoundCafé staff, trustees and volunteers who enable the choir to run so smoothly.'

Emma Trounson, SoundCafé Choir Lead

4. Keeping Everyone safe – Safeguarding & Pastoral Care

At SoundCafé Leicester we understand the importance of actively listening to our guests, many of whom continue to struggle in their daily lives.

We are fortunate that we have Samaritans attending our weekly craft sessions. This offers guests the opportunity to express their concerns and worries and to receive emotional support.

The safeguarding of guests, volunteers and employees is a matter that we take seriously and we ensure that everyone receives training and follows the guidelines at all times.

If necessary, we are able to receive support from the Leicester Diocese Safeguarding Team. Their expertise and guidance help us to determine the next steps with any issues that arise.

Sandie Sobieraj, SoundCafé Trustee Safeguarding Lead

5. Financial Summary

In total, our income in the financial year to 31 March 2024 was £39,853 (2023 - £27,936). This was around 43% higher than the previous financial year.

We are tremendously grateful to the Friends of SoundCafé Leicester; those who have donated through the Parish Giving Scheme; those organisations which have given us grants; and those organisations and individuals who have donated money.

- The Leicester, Leicestershire & Rutland community Foundation;
- The Anchor Foundation;
- The George Ernest Ellis Foundation;
- The Mary Robertson Foundation;
- The National Lottery- Awards for All.

Our expenditure for the year was £60,024 (2023 - £67,487). Included in our expenditure was associated with the delivery of Speaking of Homelessness, funded by the Arts Council, in which we spent £3,200 (2023 - £12,261). We also spent more money on Football totalling £2,897 (2023 - £1,955). Fundraising and Media costs were carefully managed in the year totalling £1,931 (2023 - £9,523). Overall, the costs were more than the income for the year and resulted in a net deficit of £20,171 (2023 – deficit of £39,551). The funds carried over from the previous year, the total assets brought forward on 10 March 2023 were £52,470. Of these funds, £9,475 is classified as restricted and £42,995 is classified as unrestricted. At the 31 March 2024 we hold total funds of £32,299, of which £24,228 is classified as unrestricted and £8,071 as restricted.

It has been another year of great change, but we remain extremely thankful to all those who have helped us to support many of the most vulnerable in our society.

Lisa Parkes
Treasurer

6. Financial Statements

Statement of Financial Activities

Receipts	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Fund	Year End 31 March 2024 rounded to nearest £	Year End 9 March 2023 rounded to nearest £
Donations	10,956	-	10,956	4,778
Parish Giving Scheme	2,683	-	2,683	2,296
Friends of SoundCafe	340	-	340	471
Legacy	-	-	-	10,000
Grants	4,500	19,459	23,959	7,752
HMRC Gift Aid	-	-	-	221
SoundCafe Events	1,792	-	1,792	2,368
Other - bank interest	123	-	123	50
Total Income	£ 20,394	£ 19,459	£ 39,853	£ 27,936
Payments	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Fund	Year End 31 March 2024 rounded to nearest £	Year End 9 March 2023 rounded to nearest £
Manager Salary, NIC, Payroll	28,889	-	28,889	21,344
Service Co-Ordinator Salary, NIC, Payroll	6,304	4,917	11,221	6,352
Activity Co-ordinator Salary, NIC, Payroll	-	4,731	4,731	2,786
Professional fees and pension	998	-	998	-
Parking	197	293	490	377
Room Hire and Refreshments at Session	739	968	1,707	8,165
Choir	-	1,667	1,667	2,029
Football	1,034	1,863	2,897	1,955
ICT, stationery & postage	520	-	520	1,718
Equipment	26	-	26	128
Insurance	583	-	583	541
Fundraising, Media	1,225	706	1,931	9,523
Sundries	1,064	-	1,064	233
Bank charges	101	-	101	75
Arts Council Project	-	3,200	3,200	12,261
Total Expenditure	£ 41,679	£ 18,345	£ 60,024	£ 67,487
Net (expenditure)/income	(£ 21,285)	£ 1,114	(£ 20,171)	(£ 39,551)

Balance Sheet – as at 31 March 2024

Details	Amount
Income 2023-2024	39,853
Less Expenditure 2023-2024	60,024
Net deficit for the year 2023-2024	(20,171)
Funds brought forward at 10 March 2023	52,470
Total Funds carried forward at 31 March 2024	£ 32,299
Details	Amount
CAF Bank Balance at 31 March 2024	31,457
Co-op Bank Balance at 31 March 2024	638
Petty Cash, held by Trustee at 31 March 2024	63
Petty Cash, held by Director at 31 March 2024	141
Total Bank and Cash held at 31 March 2024	£ 32,299
Details	Amount
Restricted Funds Brought Forward	9,475
Restricted Income received	19,459
Restricted Expenditure	(18,345)
Transfer to Unrestricted Funds	(2,518)
Restricted Funds at 31 March 2024	£ 8,071
Details	Amount
Unrestricted Funds Brought Forward	42,995
Unrestricted Income received	20,394
Unrestricted Expenditure	(41,679)
Transfer to Restricted Funds	2,518
Unrestricted Funds at 31 March 2024	£ 24,228
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Total Funds at 31 March 2024	£ 32,299

7. SCL Governance Framework

7.1. SoundCafe is governed through a Trustee Board, the members and roles are outlined below

Role	Scope of Role
<p>Chair</p> <p>Alan Fletcher</p> <p>Appointed March 2021</p>	<p>Lead the Trustee Board in ensuring the effective performance of its' governance, ensuring there is an effective relationship between the Board and SCL staff, volunteers and stakeholders. Lead on the assessment of SCL's corporate and operational risks; and ensuring risk is appropriately assessed and mitigated where appropriate.</p> <p>Chair Trustee meetings so that the Board functions effectively and carries out its duties; and the finances of SCL are systematically accounted for, audited, independently examined and publicly available.</p>
<p>Treasurer</p> <p>Lisa Parkes</p> <p>Appointed September 2022</p>	<p>Overseeing SCL's financial reporting; planning and management; agreeing targets and evaluating performance against them. Exercise financial controls in order to ensure the financial stability of the Charity and to scrutinise and challenge the trustees in planning, advising on financial matters, overseeing strategy on development matters.</p>
<p>Business Management/Risk</p> <p>Pete Miller</p> <p>Appointed March 2019</p>	<p>Providing a business perspective to the board, networking with local businesses to encourage further support – both financial and practical. Promoting SCL's use of social media to actively engage with its public and the business community.</p>
<p>Pastoral/Safeguarding</p> <p>Sandie Sobieraj</p>	<p>Lead on SCL's guest pastoral support, specifically addressing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An awareness and appreciation of guests needs • Supporting volunteers in their pastoral care of guests • Nurturing by empowering guests to seek assistance and achieve their potential

Role	Scope of Role
Appointed March 2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensuring the Trustee Board are aware of the key issues and how SCL can develop to address the needs of guests. Trustee Board lead for Safeguarding across SCL. Member of the Operational Management Group.
Social Media Lucy Collins Appointed January 2023	Advising on the social media format and communications for the charity.
Operational Delivery Jenny Barrett Appointed December 2023	Ensuring SCL meets the health & well-being needs of guests and appropriately measures the outcome of its services and projects. Advise on specific operational issues and policies that may affect SCL service delivery. Member of the Operational Management Group.



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Role	Scope of Role
<p>Chair</p> <p>Alan Fletcher</p> <p>Appointed March 2021</p>	<p>Lead the Trustee Board in ensuring the effective performance of its' governance, ensuring there is an effective relationship between the Board and SCL staff, volunteers and stakeholders. Lead on the assessment of SCL's corporate and operational risks; and ensuring risk is appropriately assessed and mitigated where appropriate.</p> <p>Chair Trustee meetings so that the Board functions effectively and carries out its duties; and the finances of SCL are systematically accounted for, audited, independently examined and publicly available.</p>
<p>Treasurer</p> <p>Lisa Parkes</p> <p>Appointed September 2022</p>	<p>Overseeing SCL's financial reporting; planning and management; agreeing targets and evaluating performance against them. Exercise financial controls in order to ensure the financial stability of the Charity and to scrutinise and challenge the trustees in planning, advising on financial matters, overseeing strategy on development matters.</p>
<p>Business Management/Risk</p> <p>Pete Miller</p> <p>Appointed March 2019</p>	<p>Providing a business perspective to the board, networking with local businesses to encourage further support – both financial and practical. Promoting SCL's use of social media to actively engage with its public and the business community.</p>
<p>Pastoral/Safeguarding</p> <p>Sandie Sobieraj</p>	<p>Lead on SCL's guest pastoral support, specifically addressing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An awareness and appreciation of guests needs • Supporting volunteers in their pastoral care of guests • Nurturing by empowering guests to seek assistance and achieve their potential

Role	Scope of Role
Appointed March 2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensuring the Trustee Board are aware of the key issues and how SCL can develop to address the needs of guests. <p>Trustee Board lead for Safeguarding across SCL. Member of the Operational Management Group.</p>
<p>Social Media</p> <p>Lucy Collins</p> <p>Appointed January 2023</p>	<p>Advising on the social media format and communications for the charity.</p>
<p>Operational Delivery</p> <p>Jenny Barrett</p> <p>Appointed December 2023</p>	<p>Ensuring SCL meets the health & well-being needs of guests and appropriately measures the outcome of its services and projects. Advise on specific operational issues and policies that may affect SCL service delivery. Member of the Operational Management Group.</p>



CHARITY COMMISSION FOR ENGLAND AND WALES

Independent examiner's report on the accounts

Section A

Independent Examiner's Report

Report to the trustees/
members of

Charity Name
SoundCafe Leicester

On accounts for the year
ended

31 March 2024

Charity no
(if any)

1162987

Set out on pages

1 to 12

(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 March 2024.

Responsibilities and
basis of report

As the charity trustees of the Trust, you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 ("the Act").

I report in respect of my examination of the Trust's accounts carried out under section 145 of the 2011 Act and in carrying out my examination, I have followed the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the Act.

Independent
examiner's statement

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no material matters have come to my attention (~~other than that disclosed below~~*) in connection with the examination which gives me cause to believe that in, any material respect:

- accounting records were not kept in accordance with section 130 of the Act or
- the accounts do not accord with the accounting records

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

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

Signed:

S. Wilson

Date:

21/2025

Name:

SIMON WILSON.

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

CIMA.

Address:

GOLDEN FLAT 1 19A PELHAM CRESCENT
NOTTINGHAM.
NG7 1AR.

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

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