

Trustees' Report for Down's Syndrome Manchester

Note: The members of the charity voted for a name change

From:

South Manchester Down's Syndrome Support Group

To:

Down's Syndrome Manchester

at the AGM held 21/11/2024

Below is the report presented to the members at the AGM

Trustees' Annual Report 1 September 2023 to 31 August 2024

Purpose: The purpose of this report is to provide a summary of the charity's activities, achievements, and financial health during the year.

Administrative information

Charity name: **South Manchester Down's Syndrome Support Group (SMDSSG)** Primary address: Unit 17, 41 Old Birley Street, Manchester, M15 5RF

Structure, governance and management

SMDSSG is an Association CIO (Charitable Incorporated Organisation), established by constitution on 26 August 2015 and registered with Charity Commission on 26 November 2015 (charity number 1164570), in the same name as the previous unincorporated association (charity number 1147397), as mandated by the SMDSSG membership at the 2014 AGM.

A CIO is a legal structure, under the Charities Act 2011, designed specifically and only for charities. The principle of a CIO is that it is a corporate body with limited liability but formed under charity law (rather than company law) and registered solely with the charity regulator, the Charity Commission. The protection afforded by the group's limited liability make it easier to recruit and retain Trustees and to engage in contracts, including directly employing paid workers.

Trustees are appointed and/or reappointed at the Annual General Meeting or by the Board of Trustees during the year, as required and in accordance with the constitution. There is a child protection policy in place, and all Trustees must undergo a DBS check. They are also required to sign the Charity Commission's Trustee eligibility declaration, and a fit and proper persons declaration based on HMRC guidance.

Trustees

	Trustee name	Office	Notes
1	Rick Cowgill	Chair	
2	Steve Ashton	Secretary	
3	Jitka Cowgill	Treasurer	
4	Lydia Burke		
5	Clare Hillyer		
6	Tina Kirwin-McGinley		
7	Sean Farrington		
8	Charlotte Todd		
9	Vacancy		
10	Vacancy		

We are passionate about having a board member with Down's Syndrome in the future and hope that our user-group project will support one of our members moving on to the board.

Employees

Employee name	Role	Notes
Esther Whitaker	CEO	
Claire Reynolds	Events & Volunteer Manager	Started September 2023
Kayleigh Howarth	Admin & Finance Assistant	
John Henry	WorkFit Co-ordinator	Finished in December 2023
Lucy Dyson	WorkFit Co-ordinator	Started in March 2024
Adelisa Yon	Speech & language therapist	Finished in June 2024
Rachel Stevens	Speech & language therapist	Starting in September 2024
Jen Chan	Speech & language therapist	Starting in September 2024
Alison Calow	Speech & language therapist	
Helen Adkins	Speech & language therapist	
Judith Patel	Speech & language therapist	
Jen Ellison	Founder Little Talkers - Baby/Toddler Signing Club Makaton Tutor / Speech & language therapist	
Anita Bartlett	Occupational therapist	

Purpose

We exist to empower children and young people with Down's syndrome to reach their potential and lead fulfilling lives. We do this both directly by facilitating their access to social and educational opportunities and indirectly by helping their family members and carers to provide more effective support.

Values

We are a member-led charity, and we see ourselves as:

Welcoming and inclusive

Caring and supportive

Positive about Down's syndrome

We believe it is our whole-family approach to the empowerment of young people with Down syndrome that marks us out.

Introduction from the Chair

Over the last few years I have spoken of the hard work put in behind the scenes by the board of trustees. This year, I hope that whilst reading this report our members are able to really see the difference we have made to this amazing charity. I am incredibly grateful to all those who have worked so hard over the years to bring us to this point.

As a board we remain committed to our members and the continued development and delivery of our long term strategy to ensure our charity continues to grow and deliver the support our members deserve.

Word from the CEO

What a year it has been for SMDSSG and its members! We have been working hard behind the scenes to make our processes and procedures as efficient as possible which means we can keep our promise to support more members and in meaningful ways.

There is a long list of highlights – notably our holiday club pilot and our user-group. Chatterbox continues to be the flagship event that is developing month on month to meet need. Our events are well attended and support a huge range of ages and interests. Our training offer went well with both parents and professionals benefitting from our relationships with industry leader.

We also launched our Instagram Page which has brought us so many new members and supporters!

As our events are now at an all time high, we have needed to develop newer ways of working to support them to be the best they can be. Bringing in lead Sessional Workers has been one way of doing that and is working well.

We are excited for the future – notably focusing on formulating our Family Advocacy / Support Work and expertise, watch this space! There is so much to celebrate, and we know so much more to be done to support our members with Down's syndrome and their families.

Membership

SMDSSG currently has over 235 members

Membership is free and members are entitled to:

- vote at General Meetings of the group
- stand for election as Trustees / committee members
- attend members' events such as soft play, SLT sessions at Chatterbox and Christmas parties as well as all open events
- receive priority booking and discounts for training and events organised by SMDSSG

Communication

We communicate to our members and partners via a monthly newsletter to keep members and friends up to date with the group's activities, provide useful information and signposting. We have social media accounts, and our activities are advertised via email and private messaging groups. Over the next year you will see a significant increase in our online presence in line with our strategy.

General information can be found via our website which also contains links to resources and support. We have a presence on the local offer pages of local authorities across Manchester.

Key Achievements

Programs & Services	
Chatterbox	Average of 50 families per Chatterbox Average of 220 people at each Chatterbox 220 Speech Sessions carried out 9 Occupational Therapy advice mornings 30 Sing & Sign Makaton Sessions
Pre-School	104 touch points for children through pre-school 21 sessions Speech Therapy sessions with handouts at ten of the sessions Occupational Therapy sessions at two of the sessions Adventure Babies session offered
10-16 Socials	This was a new project – three sessions Bowling and Karaoke Average of 12 members at each event
Over 17's Social	11 socials 98 touch points Activities included bowling, Photography, Cooking, Speed Dating, Dancing, NQ Music Studio and Christmas Party
Singing Hands	180 Tickets sold
Family Advocacy Work	Over 500 hours of family advocacy work carried out including the areas of Toileting School inclusion Literacy Differentiation Well-being Sleep Parents / carer well-being and support School residentials Education Benefits EHCP SLT / OT / Physio Behaviour
Training	6 sessions delivered 40 attendees Literacy, Language & Communication, Early Year Maths, Differentiation & Transition, Positive Behaviour, Developing Social Strengths, Working with Children with Down's syndrome

New Initiatives	
Project Smile Outreach Project	Working with Michael Ekpechue, SMDSSG is supporting a legacy outreach project in memory of his son Jeffrey.
Mum's socials	We hosted a pottery night for mums to get together This was incredibly popular with 20 people attending
User-group	We got funding to start a monthly user-group
Volunteer processes	Free thank you event hosted by Flight Club collaboration NSPCC Safer Recruitment procedure applied to recruiting all volunteers
Holiday Club	11 children with Down's syndrome attended our first holiday club pilot 9am – midday for one week Impact on families and individuals with Down's syndrome was hugely positive as reported in full evaluation
10-16 Socials	New project started for this age range to socialise and build friendships
MailChimp	We moved newsletter and communications to MailChimp. They look more professional and engaging, and we can monitor engagement data so that we can plan the most effective way to get information to members
Easy Read	We have embedded a culture of easy read versions of documents for members

Collaborations	
Gregg's	Corporate supporter offering rooms, refreshments at Chatterbox, donation of funds
Greystone	Providing pro-bono IT support
Cadishead Payroll	Providing pro-bono payroll services
HCB Solicitors	Donations for Chatterbox
DS Cheshire	Education Advisors worked with our staff and members
NQ Legacy / ThisisNQ	Provided a music evening for over 15's
Venture Arts	Employed to provide arts & crafts at Chatterbox
Tesco Handforth Dean	Provided Christmas gifts and refreshment donations
Morrison's Cheadle Heath	Provided Christmas hamper and refreshments for events
Hill biscuits	Provided donation and a supply of biscuits for pre-school group
Manchester United Foundation	Friday night sessions
Flight Club	Provided subsidised events for dads and volunteers
Reasons to be Cheerful	Provided subsidised pottery evening

Financial Overview



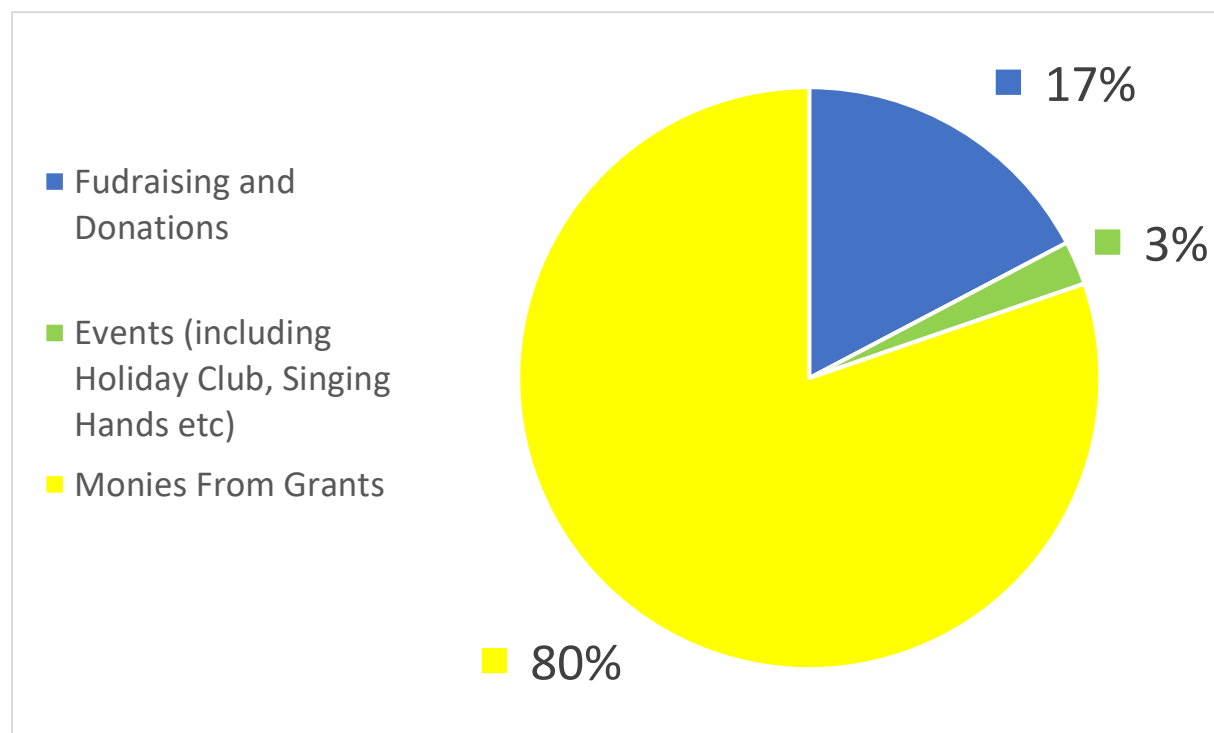
Income

£152, 395.05

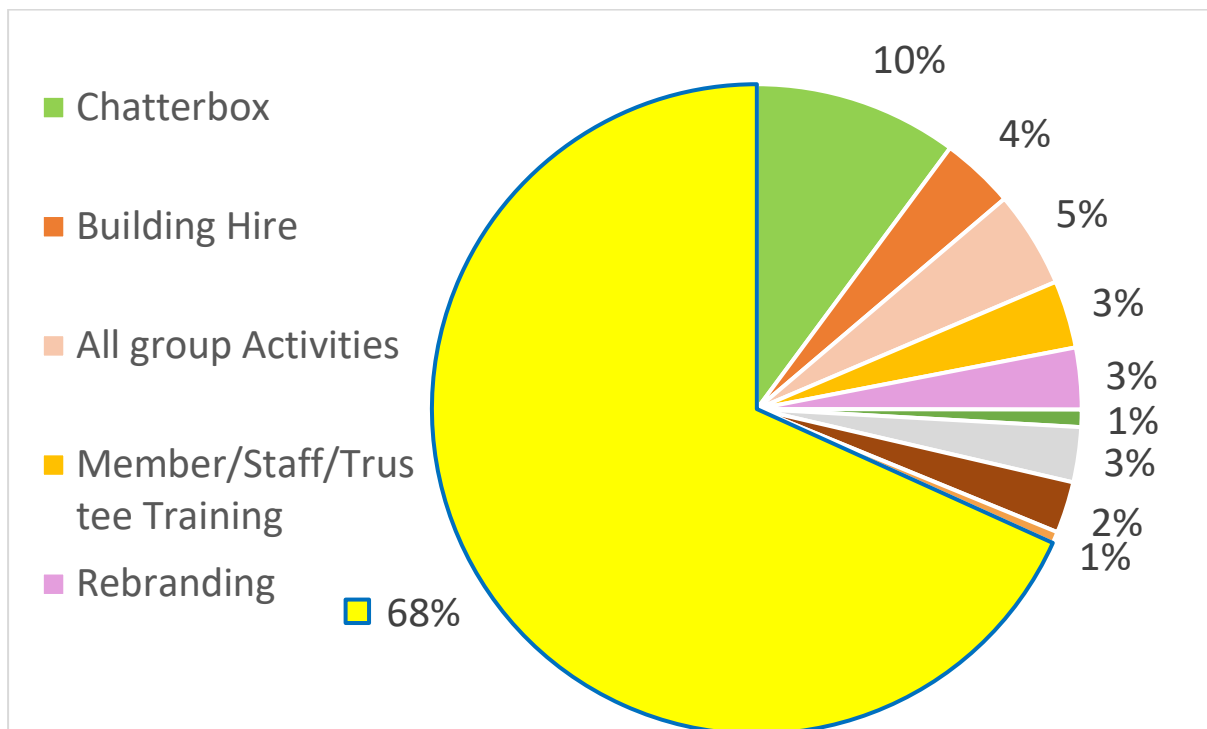
Expenditure

£128, 135.27

Where did the money come from?



What did the Charity spend the money on?



Future plans and priorities

The current strategy runs until April 2026 and has the following aims / focus:

Aim 1 Get Everyone

Aim 2 Stabilise the Group

Aim 3 Childcare provision

Aim 4 Events for all groups

We continually review and update our results and objectives around the strategic goals and welcome member input and feedback.

Acknowledgments

The Trustees would like to take the chance to thank all Trustees, Staff, and Volunteers for their hard work and dedication

Funding

We would also like to thank the following supporters:

Greggs

The National Lottery Community Fund

The Cheadle Royal Hospital Fund (£5,500 year two of a three-year grant)

Children in Need

Steve Morgan Foundation

Zochonis

UKH Foundation

Poynton Round Table

Garfield Weston

HCB Solicitors

Hospital Saturday Fund

Young Manchester

Morrison's Foundation

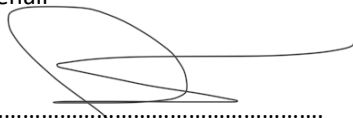
Forever Manchester

We would also like to thank members for their fundraising efforts this past year through challenges and events.

Declaration

The trustees declare that they have approved this trustees' report.

Signed on their behalf



Richard Cowgill

Signed

Full name

Position ...Chair.....

Date ...07 Jun 2025.....

Receipts and payments accounts

For the period
from

01/09/2023

To

31/08/2024

Section A Receipts and payments

	Unrestricted to the nearest £	Restricted to the nearest £	Endowment to the nearest £	Total funds to the nearest £	Last year to the nearest £
A1 Receipts					
Bank interest					-
Fundraising events	3,237			3,237	1,693
Donations and grants (incl. gift aid)	33,601	62,993		96,594	92,793
Fees for charitable services	3,720			3,720	1,767
Fees for training courses				-	-
the National Lottery Community Fund "RC North West Region"		49,401		49,401	43,092
Members' subscriptions				-	-
					-
Sub total (Gross income for AR)	40,557	112,394		152,951	139,345

A2 Asset and investment sales, (see table).

	-	-	-	-	-
Sub total	-	-	-	-	-
Total receipts	40,557	112,394		152,951	139,345

A3 Payments

Arts and crafts supplies	-	848		848	965
Bank charges				-	-
Building hire	3,097	1,556		4,653	558
Christmas activities	296			296	217
Fundraising costs	730			730	640
Group activities	5,677	5,005		10,683	8,583
Insurance	-	100		100	
IT & software & consumables	-	3,248		3,248	
Misc expenses incl travel	193	42		235	86
Pre-school group		870		870	1,348
Professional costs	683	420		1,103	1,138
Refreshments (meetings and Chatterbox)	41	619		661	-
Rent and utilities	-	1,770		1,770	1,740
Rebranding	1,932	2,000		3,932	
Resources		32		32	20
Sing and sign	-	1,170		1,170	1,300
Speech and language therapists		6,800		6,800	6,395
Staffing	22,839	18,770		41,609	22,608
Stationery. Printing & postage costs	-	130		130	43
Subscriptions	-	867		867	
the National Lottery Community Fund "RC North West Region"		48,667		48,667	40,533
Training	3,346			3,346	450
Transaction charges	189			189	
Yoga		280		280	80
Volunteer expenses		331		331	557
Sub total	39,023	93,526		132,549	87,260

A4 Asset and investment purchases, (see table)

Deposit for Office	-	-	-	-	-
Learning resources	-	-	-	-	-
Sub total	-	-	-	-	-

Total payments	39,023	93,526	-	132,549	87,260
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Net of receipts/(payments)	1,534	18,868		20,402	52,085
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A5 Transfers between funds

	43,596	35,605		79,201	27,116
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A6 Cash funds last year end

Cash funds this year end	45,130	54,473		99,603	79,201
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Section B Statement of assets and liabilities at the end of the period

Categories	Details	Unrestricted to nearest £	Restricted to nearest £	Endowment to nearest £
B1 Cash funds	Current account	45,130	54,473	-
	Cash in hand			-
				-
	Total cash funds	45,130	54,473	-
	(agree balances with receipts and payments account(s))	OK	OK	OK
B2 Other monetary assets	Details	Unrestricted funds to nearest £	Restricted funds to nearest £	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)
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
B5 Liabilities	Details	Fund to which	Amount due	When due
			-	
			-	
			-	
			-	
Signed by one or two trustees on behalf of		Signature	Print Name	Date of
			Jitka Cowgill	08/11/2024



Section A

Independent Examiner's Report

Report to the trustees

Charity Name

Down's Syndrome Manchester (formerly known as South Manchester Down's Syndrome Support Group)

On accounts for the year
ended

31 August 2024

Charity no
(if any)

1164570

Set out on pages

1 and 2 of form CC16a

(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 **31/08/2024**.

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

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no material matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination which gives me cause to believe that in, any material respect:

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

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

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

Signed:

Date:

05/06/25

Name:

Andy Pickford

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

ICAEW

Address:	5 Cedar Avenue
Altrincham	Altrincham
	WA14 2QR

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.

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