

**Report of the Trustees and  
Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31st December 2023  
for  
Rural Refugee Network**



Sheen Stickland  
Chartered Accountants  
7 East Pallant  
Chichester  
West Sussex  
PO19 1TR

## **Rural Refugee Network**

### **Contents of the Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31st December 2023**

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## Rural Refugee Network

### Report of the Trustees for the Year Ended 31st December 2023

The trustees during the financial year and up to and including the date the report was approved were as follows:

Name	Position	Date of appointment
Anne Tutt	Chair	30/08/22
Anthony Thistleton-Smith		29/02/16
Emily Jonas		15/01/24
Emily Mott		25/01/17
Kay Summerfield		27/04/20
Katherine Lawrence		01/04/22
Richard Ainscow	Treasurer	20/03/23
Andy Crowe		01/04/23 Resigned 04/07/24

New trustees are appointed initially for a period of three years at a properly convened meeting of the charity's trustees.

The Registered Charity Number is 1165796 and the charity is registered in England and Wales. It is a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) and was formed on 29<sup>th</sup> February 2016.

Registered/principal address	Bankers	Independent examiner
Great Holt Lodge Old Lane Dockenfield Farnham GU10 4HQ	The Co-Operative Bank PO Box 101 1 Balloon Street Manchester M60 4EP	Paul Wright FCA DChA Sheen Stickland Chartered Accountants 7 East Pallant Chichester West Sussex PO19 1TR



A day out for the South Downs Youth Discovery Project

## **OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES**

### **Objectives and aims**

RRN was established in 2016 in response to the humanitarian crisis which arose out of the civil war in Syria. Over the years RRN's has evolved and in this financial year RRN assisted refugees recently arrived in the United Kingdom in a variety of different ways, with the overall objective of helping them to resettle into new communities in Hampshire. RRN has a portfolio of activities including providing assistance to refugees by making available suitable accommodation and providing essential household items. IT equipment is also provided where needed as are grants towards education and for other incidental expenses like driving lessons. RRN enables refugees to access ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages) classes and receive employment coaching and training. RRN has a multi-skilled team of community volunteers and this ensures that specific needs can be met when refugees arrive enhancing their chances of settling easily and successfully.

2023 was a year of significant development for RRN. After careful and cautious consideration the Board of Trustees agreed that it was in a position to employ a member of staff for the first time and that there were sound reasons for doing so. The decision to implement this plan was made at the end of the year and was put into effect on 1st January 2024. Up until this point RRN's CEO, Nadia Potts, had been working for RRN on a contractual basis. By becoming a paid, part-time member of staff, RRN was able to consolidate her position as a key member of the team delivering RRN's activities. The Board was delighted to welcome her into her new position as a member of staff.

The other significant development for RRN was the undertaking of a Strategic Review at the end of 2023. This exercise gave the Board a chance to consider the direction of the charity and agree a programme of action for achieving the objectives it set itself. RRN concluded that it should continue to deliver on its core activities but that it would seek to expand its work with young unaccompanied minors by setting up a weekly drop-in centre in Portsmouth. In order to do this it was recognised that RRN would need to amend its objectives in the constitution. RRN resolved that it would concentrate efforts on securing grant funding for its programme of activities and that it would continue to try and raise awareness of issues relating to refugees and asylum seekers.

The conclusions of the Strategic Review can be found on the website at:  
<https://www.ruralrefugeenetwork.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/02/RRN-Final-strategy-2024.pdf>

Towards the end of 2021 RRN operated a pilot project called The South Downs Youth Discovery Project, this involved taking young asylum seekers out into the countryside to learn about the environment and to have a chance to benefit from time spent together in a stimulating setting. This project has been led by Emily Mott, one of our trustees, and Nadia Potts, our CEO, with support from volunteers.

The pilot project was deemed a great success and the programme has continued throughout 2023 and into 2024. It involves monthly activity days and a three-day residential in the South Downs National Park. Funding came from the South Downs National Park Youth Action Fund and the Nordson Corporation with additional practical support from Bedales School.

From the experience gained during these trips and a growing awareness of the issues faced by unaccompanied minors, RRN was able to construct a proposed extension of this project which was presented in the Strategic Review process and approved by the Board. The Board approved a plan to seek funding for this project from the National Lottery Community Fund for commencement in the second half of 2024.

Throughout 2023 RRN continued to support Ukrainian refugees and in particular by providing access to ESOL classes and careers' support. Making use of a generous grant from the Hampshire and Isle of Wight Community Foundation (HIWCF), RRN was able to provide ESOL classes in Petersfield, over a five month period. To supplement this work the National Careers Service put on complementary workshops. St Laurence's Church generously provided a venue for these classes and the feedback clearly indicated that the classes were considered highly valuable and enjoyable. This project was formally evaluated and the recommendations of that evaluation included a recommendation that this support should continue. With the support of East Hampshire District Council RRN was able to extend the programme. A similarly successful project was run in Havant and was funded by Havant Borough Council.



## Rural Refugee Network

### Report of the Trustees for the Year Ended 31st December 2023

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During this year RRN identified a small but important need for ESOL classes for students hoping to sit IELTS (International English Language Testing System) exams. These are challenging tests for those seeking to enter high skilled employment and with a grant from both Havant Borough Council and East Hampshire District Council, RRN was able to put on classes for a small number of students, thereby supporting the students preparing for these tests.

Towards the end of the year RRN was able to provide practical and bespoke employment advice and support for a small number of individuals under its Education and Employment Programme. With financial support from the Eva Reckett Trust and with the invaluable expertise of one of RRN's ESOL teachers and an experienced volunteer, tailored advice was given to four refugees. One of these was a lady from Syria who was seeking employment in the care industry and the other two were from Ukraine, one an accountant and the other a lawyer.

RRN has a firm commitment to ongoing assessment and evaluation of the programmes it runs in order to ensure that it can best help those it seeks to engage with and to ensure that its valuable resources are utilised efficiently. Consequently, the ESOL classes referred to above and the IELTS classes were evaluated and the reports can be seen on the RRN website.

<https://www.ruralrefugeenetwork.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/09/RRN-ESOL-Report-Havant.pdf>

<https://www.ruralrefugeenetwork.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/01/IELTS-December-2023-Evaluation-.pdf>

The students were quick to praise their tutors and to express satisfaction with the classes that they attended. RRN is proud of the reputation it has developed for high quality, personal ESOL teaching and this has become one of its core areas of activity.

Another area of RRN's core activity, one which makes excellent use of the skills and dedication of the volunteers who donate their time, is the support of families that have recently arrived in the UK and are in the early stages of settling into their new lives. During 2023 RRN helped six Afghan families, working in partnership with Two Saints, another local charity working in a similar field. Volunteers were matched with the families and were able to meet the specific needs that were identified. Similarly, when RRN was able to secure accommodation for a family in the Havant area, thanks to the generosity of a supportive landlord, the volunteer programme provided effective support and guidance for the Afghan family identified by the Home Office as being a suitable match for the property.

As a small charity RRN is able to respond relatively rapidly to new demands and developments and in 2023, having identified that there was a need for Ukrainian refugees to develop ways to manage the trauma that they have experienced, a creative art group was established and ran for six sessions. This was supported by East Hants Ukrainian Team funding and led by a qualified art therapist. Additionally a family Christmas art project was run for Ukrainian families by RRN in conjunction with "Creatful" and was funded by East Hampshire District Council.

RRN continued throughout the year to consider applications for small grants and in so doing was able to meet the modest but pressing needs of the local refugee population. Grants were approved for essential household items, clothing, driving lessons and laptop computers. RRN was also delighted to be able to provide practical help to two Syrian families who welcomed babies into their families in 2023.

RRN has an active Board of Trustees but the main body of work carried out by the charity is delivered by the CEO in conjunction with a dedicated team of community volunteers, without whom the charity could not exist. From employment advice, to language support, to help with sourcing basic equipment the volunteers are meeting individual needs and making a qualitative improvement to those who are new to this country. RRN continues to work in close collaboration with other local charities and organisations. The financial and practical support it received from The HIWCF, East Hants DC, Havant BC, Hampshire CC, Bedales School and St Laurence' Church was central to RRN's ability to provide the extensive range of support detailed above.

In managing the work of the charity the Board of Trustees have had regard to the guidance issued by the Charity Commission on public benefit.

## Rural Refugee Network

### Report of the Trustees for the Year Ended 31st December 2023

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#### ACHIEVEMENT AND PERFORMANCE

##### Charitable activities

RRN's key achievements in this financial year are the effective and popular delivery of ESOL teaching, the development of the South Downs Youth Discovery Project and the continued high level of support of refugee families by the community volunteers.

During the year the Board of Trustees continued to review and update core policies and procedures and undertook a comprehensive Strategic Review.

#### FINANCIAL REVIEW

##### Financial position

The charitable work of the Rural Refugee Network has always been based on generous donations and volunteering of mainly local supporters together with a large biennial Art Show to boost funds. An Art Show had been held in 2022 and this provided funds to continue with our charitable work through 2023.

As RRN has matured there has been a move to focus on institutional grant applications to supplement fundraising and donations. This movement was formalised in the conclusions of the Strategic Review, mentioned above. To be successful in these applications RRN has to be underpinned by a framework of good governance thus ensuring RRN has proper procedures and controls in place for all activities.

Income for 2023 was £58,627 less than in 2022 (which had included the Art Show fundraising) but we were able to increase grants and other support to refugees and asylum seekers from £18,728 in 2022 to £47,066 in 2023. This has been achieved whilst meeting our newly established reserves policy that is set out below.

The Trustees have reviewed the level of reserves necessary to keep the Charity in a sustainable position and have agreed to set the Reserve Level at £12,000, representing the net of 6 months recurring income less outgoings plus any contingent liabilities.

The financial forecast for 2024 anticipates that RRN will continue to meet the Reserve Level whilst increasing the scope of its support to refugees and asylum seekers locally.

Approved by the Board of Trustees on 7/10/24 and signed on its behalf by:



Anne Tutt (Chair)

## **Independent Examiner's Report to the Trustees of Rural Refugee Network**

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### **Independent examiner's report to the trustees of Rural Refugee Network**

I report to the charity trustees on my examination of the accounts of Rural Refugee Network (the Trust) for the year ended 31st December 2023.

### **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 Act and in carrying out my examination I have followed all 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 giving me cause to believe that in any material respect:

1. accounting records were not kept in respect of the Trust as required by Section 130 of the Act; or
2. the accounts do not accord with those records; or
3. the accounts do 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.



Paul Wright FCA DChA

Sheen Stickland  
Chartered Accountants  
7 East Pallant  
Chichester  
West Sussex  
PO19 1TR

Date: 21/2/24



## Rural Refugee Network

### Statement of Financial Activities for the Year Ended 31st December 2023

		Unrestricted fund £	Restricted funds £	2023 Total funds £	2022 Total funds £
	Notes				
<b>INCOME AND ENDOWMENTS FROM</b>					
Donations and grants	2	5,707	14,380	20,087	26,425
Other trading activities	3	<u>1,315</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>1,315</u>	<u>48,219</u>
<b>Total</b>		<u>7,022</u>	<u>14,380</u>	<u>21,402</u>	<u>74,644</u>
<b>EXPENDITURE ON</b>					
Raising funds	4	153	509	662	12,149
<b>Charitable activities</b>	5				
Charitable activities		<u>31,224</u>	<u>15,842</u>	<u>47,066</u>	<u>18,728</u>
<b>Total</b>		<u>31,377</u>	<u>16,351</u>	<u>47,728</u>	<u>30,877</u>
<b>NET INCOME/(EXPENDITURE)</b>		(24,355)	(1,971)	(26,326)	43,767
<b>RECONCILIATION OF FUNDS</b>					
Total funds brought forward		<u>53,858</u>	<u>7,660</u>	<u>61,518</u>	<u>17,751</u>
<b>TOTAL FUNDS CARRIED FORWARD</b>		<u>29,503</u>	<u>5,689</u>	<u>35,192</u>	<u>61,518</u>

The notes form part of these financial statements

# Rural Refugee Network

## Balance Sheet 31st December 2023

	Notes	Unrestricted fund £	Restricted funds £	2023 Total funds £	2022 Total funds £
<b>CURRENT ASSETS</b>					
Debtors	8	-	5,384	5,384	-
Cash at bank		<u>30,103</u>	<u>305</u>	<u>30,408</u>	<u>62,598</u>
		30,103	5,689	35,792	62,598
<b>CREDITORS</b>					
Amounts falling due within one year	9	(600)	-	(600)	(1,080)
		<u>29,503</u>	<u>5,689</u>	<u>35,192</u>	<u>61,518</u>
<b>NET CURRENT ASSETS</b>					
		<u>29,503</u>	<u>5,689</u>	<u>35,192</u>	<u>61,518</u>
<b>TOTAL ASSETS LESS CURRENT LIABILITIES</b>					
		<u>29,503</u>	<u>5,689</u>	<u>35,192</u>	<u>61,518</u>
<b>NET ASSETS</b>					
		<u>29,503</u>	<u>5,689</u>	<u>35,192</u>	<u>61,518</u>
<b>FUNDS</b>	10				
Unrestricted funds				29,503	53,858
Restricted funds				<u>5,689</u>	<u>7,660</u>
<b>TOTAL FUNDS</b>				<u>35,192</u>	<u>61,518</u>

The financial statements were approved by the Board of Trustees and authorised for issue on 7/10/24 and were signed on its behalf by:



A H Tutt - Trustee

## 1. ACCOUNTING POLICIES

### Basis of preparing the financial statements

The financial statements of the charity, which is a public benefit entity under FRS 102, have been prepared in accordance with the Charities SORP (FRS 102) 'Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (effective 1 January 2019)', Financial Reporting Standard 102 'The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland' and the Charities Act 2011. The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention.

### Income

All income is recognised in the Statement of Financial Activities once the charity has entitlement to the funds, it is probable that the income will be received and the amount can be measured reliably.

### Expenditure

Liabilities are recognised as expenditure as soon as there is a legal or constructive obligation committing the charity to that expenditure, it is probable that a transfer of economic benefits will be required in settlement and the amount of the obligation can be measured reliably. Expenditure is accounted for on an accruals basis and has been classified under headings that aggregate all cost related to the category. Where costs cannot be directly attributed to particular headings they have been allocated to activities on a basis consistent with the use of resources.

Grants offered subject to conditions which have not been met at the year end date are noted as a commitment but not accrued as expenditure.

### Taxation

The charity is exempt from tax on its charitable activities.

### Fund accounting

Unrestricted funds can be used in accordance with the charitable objectives at the discretion of the trustees.

Restricted funds can only be used for particular restricted purposes within the objects of the charity. Restrictions arise when specified by the donor or when funds are raised for particular restricted purposes.

Further explanation of the nature and purpose of each fund is included in the notes to the financial statements.

## 2. DONATIONS AND GRANTS

	2023	2022
	£	£
Donations	19,927	24,957
Other income	<u>160</u>	<u>1,468</u>
	<u>20,087</u>	<u>26,425</u>

## Rural Refugee Network

### Notes to the Financial Statements - continued for the Year Ended 31st December 2023

#### 3. OTHER TRADING ACTIVITIES

	2023	2022
	£	£
Fundraising events	<u>1,315</u>	<u>48,219</u>

#### 4. RAISING FUNDS

##### Other trading activities

	2023	2022
	£	£
Purchases	<u>662</u>	<u>12,149</u>

#### 5. CHARITABLE ACTIVITIES COSTS

	Direct Costs £	Grant funding of activities (see note 6) £	Totals £
Charitable activities	<u>42,508</u>	<u>4,558</u>	<u>47,066</u>

#### 6. GRANTS PAYABLE

	2023	2022
	£	£
Charitable activities	<u>4,558</u>	<u>4,673</u>

#### 7. TRUSTEES' REMUNERATION AND BENEFITS

There were no trustees' remuneration or other benefits for the year ended 31st December 2023 nor for the year ended 31st December 2022.

##### Trustees' expenses

There were no trustees' expenses paid for the year ended 31st December 2023 nor for the year ended 31st December 2022.

#### 8. DEBTORS: AMOUNTS FALLING DUE WITHIN ONE YEAR

	2023	2022
	£	£
Other debtors	<u>5,384</u>	<u>-</u>

## Rural Refugee Network

### Notes to the Financial Statements - continued for the Year Ended 31st December 2023

#### 9. CREDITORS: AMOUNTS FALLING DUE WITHIN ONE YEAR

	2023	2022
	£	£
Other creditors	<u>600</u>	<u>1,080</u>

#### 10. MOVEMENT IN FUNDS

	At 1.1.23	Net movement in funds	At 31.12.23
	£	£	£
<b>Unrestricted funds</b>			
General fund	53,858	(24,355)	29,503
<b>Restricted funds</b>			
Asda	1,160	(1,160)	-
Eva Reckitt Trust	-	1,000	1,000
Hants & IOW Community Fund	6,500	(6,500)	-
South Down Park Youth Action	-	1,419	1,419
Havant Borough Council	-	1,078	1,078
East Hants District Council	-	2,192	2,192
	<u>7,660</u>	<u>(1,971)</u>	<u>5,689</u>
<b>TOTAL FUNDS</b>	<u>61,518</u>	<u>(26,326)</u>	<u>35,192</u>

Net movement in funds, included in the above are as follows:

	Incoming resources	Resources expended	Movement in funds
	£	£	£
<b>Unrestricted funds</b>			
General fund	7,022	(31,377)	(24,355)
<b>Restricted funds</b>			
Asda	-	(1,160)	(1,160)
Eva Reckitt Trust	1,000	-	1,000
Hants & IOW Community Fund	-	(6,500)	(6,500)
South Down Park Youth Action	2,000	(581)	1,419
Havant Borough Council	5,232	(4,154)	1,078
East Hants District Council	<u>6,148</u>	<u>(3,956)</u>	<u>2,192</u>
	<u>14,380</u>	<u>(16,351)</u>	<u>(1,971)</u>
<b>TOTAL FUNDS</b>	<u>21,402</u>	<u>(47,728)</u>	<u>(26,326)</u>

## Rural Refugee Network

### Notes to the Financial Statements - continued for the Year Ended 31st December 2023

#### 10. MOVEMENT IN FUNDS - continued

##### Comparatives for movement in funds

	At 1.1.22 £	Net movement in funds £	At 31.12.22 £
<b>Unrestricted funds</b>			
General fund	17,751	36,107	53,858
<b>Restricted funds</b>			
Asda	-	1,160	1,160
Hants & IOW Community Fund	-	<u>6,500</u>	<u>6,500</u>
	-	<u>7,660</u>	<u>7,660</u>
<b>TOTAL FUNDS</b>	<u>17,751</u>	<u>43,767</u>	<u>61,518</u>

Comparative net movement in funds, included in the above are as follows:

	Incoming resources £	Resources expended £	Movement in funds £
<b>Unrestricted funds</b>			
General fund	62,657	(26,550)	36,107
<b>Restricted funds</b>			
Asda	1,500	(340)	1,160
Eva Reckitt Trust	1,000	(1,000)	-
East Hants District Council	2,657	(2,657)	-
Hants County Council	330	(330)	-
Hants & IOW Community Fund	<u>6,500</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>6,500</u>
	<u>11,987</u>	<u>(4,327)</u>	<u>7,660</u>
<b>TOTAL FUNDS</b>	<u>74,644</u>	<u>(30,877)</u>	<u>43,767</u>

The Asda fund represents a grant received towards venue hire, food, clothing and basic IT equipment for newly arriving refugees in the UK.

The Eva Reckitt Trust fund relates to a grant towards the Rural Refugee Network tailored 1:1 Employment Programme.

The East Hampshire District Council fund represents grants received to fund English language support to Ukrainian refugees through a series of ESOL classes and creative art courses.

The Havant Borough Council fund represents grants received for English language and employment preparation support for Ukrainian refugees through a series of ESOL and IELTS classes.

The Hampshire & Isle of Wight Community fund represents a grant received for English language teaching to Ukrainian refugees through a series of ESOL classes run in 2023.

**11. RELATED PARTY DISCLOSURES**

There were no related party transactions for the year ended 31st December 2023.



**Rural Refugee Network****Detailed Statement of Financial Activities  
for the Year Ended 31st December 2023**

	2023 £	2022 £
<b>INCOME AND ENDOWMENTS</b>		
<b>Donations and grants</b>		
Donations	19,927	24,957
Other income	<u>160</u>	<u>1,468</u>
	20,087	26,425
<b>Other trading activities</b>		
Fundraising events	<u>1,315</u>	<u>48,219</u>
<b>Total incoming resources</b>	21,402	74,644
<b>EXPENDITURE</b>		
<b>Other trading activities</b>		
Support costs	662	12,149
<b>Charitable activities</b>		
Support costs	23,131	12,149
Teaching english, sewing and creative art courses	14,610	1,906
Youth discovery project	4,767	-
Grants to individuals	<u>4,558</u>	<u>4,673</u>
	<u>47,066</u>	<u>18,728</u>
Total resources expended	<u>47,728</u>	<u>30,877</u>
<b>Net (expenditure)/income</b>	<u>(26,326)</u>	<u>43,767</u>

This page does not form part of the statutory financial statements