

Literacy Volunteers
(Registered charity, number 1167357)
Financial statements
for the year ended 31 March 2024

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**Literacy Volunteers
Trustees' annual report
for the year ended 31 March 2024**

Full name Literacy Volunteers

Organisation type Charitable incorporated organisation

Registered charity number 1167357

Principal address Woodthorpe Grange, Woodthorpe Drive, Nottingham, NG5 4HA

Trustees

Michael Collis, Chair

Paul Hughes

Charlotte Stafford, Treasurer, appointed 6 June 2023

Melanie Cope, appointed 14 April 2023

Mary Steiner, appointed 14 April 2023

Graham Stamper, appointed 14 April 2023

Amita Rehal, appointed 14 April 2023

Bethan Eddy, appointed 6 June 2023

Michael Berrington, appointed 24 January 2024

Patricia Harman, resigned 2 October 2023

Phillip Hoy, resigned 10 September 2023

Independent examiner

John O'Brien, employee of Community Accounting Plus, Units 1 & 2 North West, 41 Talbot Street, Nottingham, NG1 5GL

Governance and management

The charity is operated under the rules of the CIO – Association constitution registered 25 May 2016.

New trustees are drawn from existing volunteers, member organisations and external candidates with an interest in the work and objectives of Literacy Volunteers. The Board of Trustees must have a minimum of five trustees and a maximum of twelve trustees at any one time.

Prospective trustees must preferably have a skill which will support the Charity. Once they have indicated their interest in the role of trustee, a discussion is arranged with one of the team/trustees.

Following this discussion they complete a Fit and Proper form and are invited to attend a scheduled board of trustees' meeting after which, if they are a suitable/eligible appointment they will be invited to join the Board but neither party is under any obligation at this stage. Induction and training for the role is provided. An enhanced DBS check is carried out and their eligibility is checked against Charity Commission guidance.

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At the AGM one third of existing trustees must step down in rotation and the trustees who have been appointed for the longest period since their last appointment/reappointment must stand down. Following this the vacancies created on the Board of Trustees are then filled at the AGM. Trustees can stand for re-election and other members can be nominated and elected. We operate under the guidance of our constitution adopted on 25th May 2016 when we became a Charitable Incorporated Organisation, and also in the spirit of our original constitution adopted in May 1996 when we came into existence as Literacy Volunteers in Nottinghamshire Schools.

Objectives and activities

To advance the education of children, adults and families by helping those experiencing difficulties in acquiring literacy, communication and social skills.

Summary of the main activities undertaken for the public benefit

Literacy Volunteers aims to develop and promote speech, language, communication, confidence, self-esteem, literacy, strategies for learning in the home and a genuine interest in reading for pleasure. We seek to advance the education of children in particular, by helping those experiencing difficulties in acquiring literacy skills. We do this in primary schools and early years' settings and we use a number of evidence based programmes and projects.

In our primary schools' volunteers programme, we recruit, train, vet and enable volunteers to support the development of reading confidence of children. We also deliver our Learning to Love Books programme - our unique storytelling, songs and rhymes sessions - in libraries, schools and early years' settings such as nurseries and children's centres. This programme has grown considerably during the year with continued support from the Small Steps Big Changes, A Better Start Initiative.

Literacy Volunteers has continued to plan and deliver sessions, both in primary schools and the community, to help tackle the social disadvantage and lack of opportunities often caused by poor literacy skills.

The Schools Team

In primary schools throughout Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire we have engaged with children who may be at risk of disengaging with education, have found it difficult to stay fully involved in the classroom environment, may have English as a second language, may be lacking in confidence and communication skills, and be experiencing low levels of home support. Our aim is to deliver support in a creative and fun way to help all the children we work with to enjoy reading and learning from books whilst improving their confidence and self-esteem. We have received feedback from teachers noting the increase in confidence and increase in vocabulary the sessions have given the children involved.

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The Early Years Team

Our Early Years programme, Learning to Love Books, has moved into its seventh year of delivery. Early reading interventions have had consistently large impacts, as is clear from the results from the impact evaluations from 13 countries that have that accrued over the past ten years (World Bank).

Early literacy is the foundation for a successful education and a fulfilling life.

Developing strong literacy skills in the early years has numerous benefits that can positively impact individuals and communities.

We have delivered our programme to over 100 children across Nottingham City, with weekly Storytelling sessions in St Ann's and Hyson Green libraries every week. This project has helped to build the confidence of parents/carers so they can more fully support their child's development at home. During the sessions they have learned more effective ways to communicate with others, developed new language and literacy skills and enjoyed lots of fun time too.

Approximately 95% of the families attending rated the groups as 'excellent' or 'good' in the July 2023 Family Survey and 100% said the sessions have made them feel more confident about sharing a story with their children. Families reported that they like the individual support that the sessions can offer them and their children. We have received feedback including "It really helps children's speech and social skills", "my kids love the stories and repeat them at home too" and that "it has helped especially being in a bilingual household".

Public benefit statement

The Trustees confirm that they have complied with the duty in section 17 of the Charities Act 2011 to have due regard to the Charity Commission's general guidance on public benefit, 'Charities and Public Benefit'.

Summary of the main achievements during the period

The Schools team supported Literacy Volunteers to continue to grow the number of volunteers (112 volunteers at March 2024) to support face to face sessions with children in primary schools. This enabled us to deliver around 10,000 volunteer hours in school over the past 12 months, supporting over 110 children and working with 84 schools.

The Early Years team delivered 86 face to face Learning to Love Books storytelling and craft sessions to 103 children living in the communities of Hyson Green and St Anns.

The Early Years team delivered over 300 book boxes to 50 children and their families.

The charity sent representatives to attend an early literacy event at the Houses of Parliament to talk to MPs about the work we do in the community and the Rushcliffe Borough Council Councillor meeting and Mayor inauguration event to raise awareness of our work.

The redesigned website went live, offering a better and more intuitive user experience to make information and opportunities with the charity more accessible.

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We have reviewed and brought up to date our employee handbook and all our policies covering data protection, safeguarding, finance policy etc.

Financial review

The Charity has made significant progress in the period to 31 March 2024 following the challenges in the previous years. The focus for the year was to grow a stable balance sheet to support the work we do by focusing on growing funds and controlling costs.

Income has increased year on year with significant increases in fundraising and grants & donations. School subscriptions increased to £41,235, a modest increase compared to the previous year. Overall costs were stable year on year as the cost reductions implemented in the previous year were retained through careful management. Cash assets at the end of the year totalled £143,380 as a result of the focus on establishing a strong balance sheet to support the work at Literacy Volunteers.

For the period to March 2025, the budget has been approved and focus will be on implementing the volunteer management software, of which the first payment was made during the period and included in volunteer resources payments, and recruiting a new staff member to boost our fundraising activities to aid the and grow the projects we deliver.

The charity's policy on reserves

The Board recognises its responsibility in maintaining its reserves to include the required redundancy payments due to staff in the event of an unforeseen closure of the Charity and to cover the costs incurred in any closure period. Reserves are maintained to cover a quarter's running costs in addition to a sum held for one term's salary expenditure and a small amount to finance expenditure during a closure period. This is regarded by the board to be prudent and in line with the best practice.

Following the review for this financial year, the trustees have designated the sum of £34,500 as a reserve to cover our liabilities should closure become necessary. The trustees will always strike a balance between trying to retain some level of reserves and the need to invest in the delivery of our objectives. To address this, the trustees intend to focus on increasing fundraising receipts as part of their strategic goals for the current financial year.

Finally, it is important to note that the trustees review their reserves annually (following a review of the charity's position and the external environment) in order to account for changes in either area.

Financial risks

We have decided that the following risks are worth noting:

- Small Steps Big Changes 3-year funding came to an end in July 2023 for Early Years. The costs for this project are salaries to run the story sessions and support families, and books and materials for the Storyboxes
-

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that are mailed out. We have secured alternative funding to support the project from St James Place, Jones Trust, Winifred Eileen Kemp, Nottingham Freemasons, Co-Op Sherwood, the Wesleyan Foundation and the National Lottery and are on track to raise sufficient funds for the project to July 2025. We have also secured funding from the National Lottery towards the 2025/2026 academic year.

- We have previously concluded that we cannot pass on the full costs of recruiting and training volunteers to the schools we support. The evidence we have shows that although schools tolerate some small increases in the subscriptions they pay, school budgets will not cover the charge we would have to make to fully recover our costs, even though the service is highly valued. We have secured funding from Nottinghamshire County Council for the next 2 years to support these services. As such we have, for the last twenty years, worked to keep our overheads as low as we possibly can. Focus on fundraising and donations will be key in order to continue to bridge this shortfall. To support this, a fundraising pack has been developed and we are advertising for a new team member to support with fundraising activities.
- Nottingham City Council provide us with grace and favour offices and facilities at Woodthorpe Grange. If they were in future unable to continue with this arrangement, we would have to find alternative premises and source our own facilities. This could significantly add to our cost base.
- If there was a resurgence of Covid-19, or other public health emergency, that were to force the shutdown or closure of primary schools, we would be seriously impacted. Without significant intervention, e.g. through government funding, we would be unable to cover our central costs following a loss of subscription income.

Acknowledgements

Here at Literacy Volunteers we are very grateful for generous support from many organisations and individuals. These include:


Nottingham City Council
Notts County Council
Bassetlaw Community and Voluntary Service
Sir John Eastwood Foundation
Charles Littlewood Hill Trust
Small Steps Big Changes
Mary Robertson Trust
Co-op Community Fund
Wesleyan Foundation
National Literacy Trust Nottingham Hub
Grand Provincial Lodge of Nottinghamshire Masons
Forman Hardy
East Midlands Airport Community Fund
Cumberland Trust

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J N Derbyshire Trust
Thomas Farr Charity
Winifred Eileen Kemp Trust
Amita Rehal
Sandra White
Jasmine Trowbridge
Brian O'Neill
Alison Fowler
Emma Marriott
Mr A Fearn
David Burnell Financial Services
Mark Snoad
Nottinghamshire Community Foundation
Judith Swann
Carol Smith
Literacy Capital PLC
Clearwater Corporate Finance LLP
Reed Foundation
Maven Capital Partners UK LLP
UAP Limited
Whitaker Charitable Trust
The Bookcase at Lowdham
Daphne White
Kate Scott

Thank you to everyone who donated to Mike Collis' Park Run, The Big Give Campaign, through Give as You Live, and to anyone else who has supported us!

Signed on behalf of the charity's trustees:

Signed  _____ Date 18/9/24
Michael Collis, Trustee

**Independent examiner's report to the trustees of
Literacy Volunteers
for the year ended 31 March 2024**

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of Literacy Volunteers (the charity) for the year ended 31 March 2024.

Responsibilities and basis of report

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

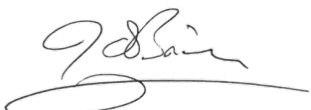
I report in respect of my examination of the charity's accounts carried out under section 145 of the 2011 Act and in carrying out my examination I have followed all the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the Act.

Independent examiner's statement

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no 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 charity as required by section 130 of the Act; or
2. the accounts do not accord with those records.

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.

Signed  Date 19/09/24
John O'Brien MSc, FCCA, FCIE
Employee of Community Accounting Plus

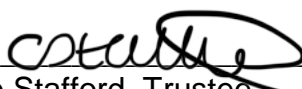
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Receipts & payments account
for the year ended 31 March 2024

2023				2024
Total		Unrestricted	Restricted	Total
Funds		Funds	Funds	Funds
£	Note	£	£	£
	Receipts			
39976	Grants & donations	43326	34582	77908
38779	Subscriptions	41235	-	41235
4914	Fundraising	2973	-	2973
-	Bank interest	1166	-	1166
<u>83669</u>	Total receipts	<u>88700</u>	<u>34582</u>	<u>123282</u>
	Payments			
14674	Activities & materials	1173	5667	6840
85	Advertising	585	-	585
54	DBS fees	103	-	103
150	Equipment, repairs & renewals	60	-	60
696	Independent examination fee	732	-	732
1385	Insurance	1200	-	1200
720	Payroll services	360	-	360
354	Professional fees	1601	-	1601
343	Publications & subscriptions	144	-	144
53801	Salaries, NI & pension	41926	14480	56406
117	Staff training	168	-	168
385	Stationery & office supplies	277	-	277
-	Sundry payments	712	-	712
401	Telephone, internet & postage	39	-	39
171	Training & support	-	-	-
3412	Travel & subsistence	4605	34	4639
657	Volunteer resources	4071	-	4071
<u>77405</u>	Total payments	<u>57756</u>	<u>20181</u>	<u>77937</u>
6264	Net receipts	30944	14401	45345
91771	Cash funds at start of this period	85443	12592	98035
-	Transfers between funds	729	(729)	-
<u>98035</u>	Cash funds at end of this period	<u>117116</u>	<u>26264</u>	<u>143380</u>

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Statement of assets and liabilities
at 31 March 2024

2023			2024
£	Cash assets	Note	£
97972	Bank accounts		143317
<u>63</u>	Cash in hand		<u>63</u>
<u>98035</u>			<u>143380</u>
	Other monetary assets		
-	Debtors - subs & interest		2335
<u>115</u>	Prepayments	3	<u>585</u>
<u>115</u>			<u>2920</u>
	Liabilities		
<u>(1040)</u>	Creditors	4	<u>(1294)</u>
<u>(1040)</u>			<u>(1294)</u>

These financial statements are accepted on behalf of the charity by:

Signed  Dated 18/09/24
Charlotte Stafford, Trustee

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Notes to the accounts
for the year ended 31 March 2024

1. Receipts & payments accounts

Receipts and payments accounts contain a summary of money received and money spent during the period and a list of assets and liabilities at the end of the period. Usually, cash received and cash spent will include transactions through bank accounts and cash in hand.

2. Grants & donations

	Unrestricted £	Restricted £	Total £
Cumberland Trust	1000	-	1000
Give as You Live	5899	-	5899
Payroll Giving	204	-	204
The Whitaker Charitable Trust	1000	-	1000
Literacy Capital PLC	10000	-	10000
Winifred Eileen Kemp Trust	2500	-	2500
Clearwater Corporate Finance LLP	1000	-	1000
Grand Provincial Lodge of Notts Masons	-	5000	5000
J N Derbyshire Trust	2000	-	2000
Notts County Council	10900	-	10900
SSBC	-	20000	20000
The Charles Littlewood Hill Trust	2000	-	2000
The Forman Hardy Charitable Trust	1000	-	1000
Thomas Farr Charity	4000	-	4000
Wesleyan Foundation	-	8000	8000
Co-op Community Foundation	-	1582	1582
Mr Brian Clarke O'Neill	1200	-	1200
Sundry donations	623	-	623
	<u>43326</u>	<u>34582</u>	<u>77908</u>

3. Debtors

	£
Prepayment - Insurance	100
Prepayment - Professional fees	485
	<u>585</u>

4. Creditors

	£
Independent examination fee	810
Salaries, NI & pension (HMRC)	295
Salaries, Ni & pension (NEST)	189
	<u>1294</u>

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5. Funds analysis

	Opening balance £	Receipts £	(Payments) £	Transfers £	Closing balance £
Restricted funds					
Learning to Love Books (Boots)	125	-	-	-	125
Learning to Love Books (Capital One)	1385	-	-	-	1385
Warsop Book Boxes	209	-	-	(209)	-
Learning to Love Books (SSBC7)	755	5000	(5755)	-	-
Learning to Love Books (SSBC8)	-	15000	(7270)	-	7730
Black Lives Matter Books	20	-	-	(20)	-
Schools (The Jones 1986 Trust)	4000	-	(858)	-	3142
Schools (Forman Hardy Trust)	500	-	-	(500)	-
Early Years (St James Place)	2500	-	(2047)	-	453
Early Years (The Jones 1986 Trust)	3000	-	-	-	3000
Early Years (Renewal Trust)	98	-	(11)	-	87
Early Years (Masons)	-	5000	(4240)	-	760
Early Years (Co-op)	-	1582	-	-	1582
Early Years (Wesleyan)	-	4000	-	-	4000
Schools (Wesleyan)	-	4000	-	-	4000
	12592	34582	(20181)	(729)	26264
Unrestricted funds					
General fund	50943	88700	(57756)	729	82616
<u>Designated funds</u>					
Reserves	34500	-	-	-	34500
	85443	88700	(57756)	729	117116

The transfers from the restricted funds to the General fund reflect the release of any restrictions on the use of these funds.

The specific purposes for which the funds are to be applied are as follows:

Early Years Programme - Learning to Love Books (SSBC7, SSBC8, Boots Charitable Trust, Capital One, St James Place, The Jones 1986 Trust, Renewal Trust, Mason, Co-op, and Wesleyan) - to run our early years (0-4) storytelling sessions and Story Box project. Each Story Box contained a book, flash card for learning new words and a selection of fun resources for parents to support the home learning environment.

Schools (The Jones 1986 Trust & Wesleyan) - to deliver support in a creative and fun way to help all the children we work with to enjoy reading and learning from books whilst improving their confidence and self-esteem.

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6. Trustees' remuneration

Trustees received no expenses, remuneration or benefits in this period.

7. Related party transactions

There were no related party transactions in this period.

8. Premises

The premises are provided by the local authority.

9. Glossary of terms.

Creditors: These are amounts owed by the charity, but not paid during the accounting period.

Debtors: These are amounts owed to the charity, but not received in the accounting period.

Prepayments: These are services that the charity has paid for in advance, but not used during the accounting period.

Restricted funds: These are funds given to the charity, subject to specific restrictions set by the donor, but still within the general objects of the charity.