

# SAMARITANS

Cheltenham & District



Annual Review 2023–24



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## **1. OUR OBJECTIVES**

Cheltenham Samaritans is a charitable incorporated organisation.

The charitable purposes, as set out in our governing document, are:

- To enable persons in Cheltenham, the surrounding area, and elsewhere, who are experiencing feelings of distress or despair, including those who may be at risk of suicide, to receive emotional support at any time of the day or night in order to improve their emotional health and to reduce the incidence of suicide;
- To promote a better understanding in society of suicide, suicidal behaviour and the value of expressing feelings which may otherwise lead to suicide or impaired emotional health;
- To collaborate with and support Samaritans Central Charity and all affiliated Branches in fulfilling the same objectives.

## **2. TRUSTEES REPORT**

This year we are very proud to celebrate 60 years of supporting callers.

For 2023/2024, the trustees confirm that Cheltenham & District Samaritans continue to meet the charitable purposes set out in our governing document. In relation to these purposes our main achievements during the year include:

- We have provided effective emotional support to callers through phone calls, emails and on-line chat. We are also open for callers to receive emotional support face to face in branch. Cheltenham is the only Samaritans branch in the South West region to provide emotional support through all of these channels.
- Emotional support is provided by a dedicated team of volunteers. During 2023/2024, the branch supported over 21000 callers. This was made up of around 14000 inbound telephone calls, and over 5000 emails and 1000 chats.
- In March 2024, we had around a total of 142 volunteers with 122 active listening volunteers. This is a reduction since March 2023 but actions are now in place to increase the number of listening volunteers.
- We have raised awareness of the Samaritans service and suicide prevention through outreach events and activities. In addition, we have provided effective emotional support in our local community through partnerships with Cheltenham Opendoor, Network Rail and Gloucestershire NHS. We are proud to offer emotional support within the Gloucester Royal Hospital Emergency Department in collaboration with Gloucester Samaritans branch.

- Our purposes are met in collaboration with and support of Samaritans Central Charity and other affiliated branches. Cheltenham & District Samaritans adopt all the policies and procedures of the central charity to enable us to provide this emotional support through the national helpline 116 123 and associated email and chat channels. During 2023, an independent quality review was performed by volunteers from other branches. This confirmed that our performance was high and expectations were being met.

Trustees agreed to maintain 36 months of reserves and will be investing the funds in different term bonds to earn interest. The increased cash balances held allow for increased spend on advertising for volunteers to increase numbers and reducing the need to close shifts.

Income for the branch has once again been enhanced by generous legacies and grants, plus, of course, the Friends funds raising efforts on top of kind donations from volunteers and supporters. They have enabled us to continue running the branch as well as replace windows throughout, refresh volunteer facilities and add to reserves to provide for adequate funds to replace the roof on the Frances Twyford room at Back Albert Place. This is a huge project to be carried out in the summer of 2024.

One of the highlights of 2023/2024, was the ball held to celebrate the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Cheltenham Samaritans. Nearly £2,000 was raised through the raffle and silent auction. We were very grateful to Felicity Varah agreeing to be guest of honour, sharing her memories of her grandfather Chad Varah in an engaging speech.

The main risk associated with the charity is the number of volunteers (high risk). There has been a fall in volunteer numbers which has resulted in a drop in the number of volunteer hours contributed each month and a gradual increase in shift closures. This is a trend which is being seen across the whole organisation, and compared to some other branches, Cheltenham still performs very well. We continue to try to operate a rota which only allows the branch to schedule 6.5 hours of closure per week. During 2023/2024 there was a drive to advertise our need for more listening volunteers. This has been successful and will lead to an increase in listening volunteers over the next year.

The Trustees have fulfilled their responsibility for ensuring that accounting records comply with the Charities Act 2011. The financial situation is summarised on a quarterly basis. The financial information is stored in a dedicated area of 3Rings and is available for all volunteers to access. The position is appraised at each Trustee meeting.

Governance of the charity is ensured with an effective board of trustees that meets once a quarter and as required. The Branch Director has been appointed to the joint roles of Director and Chair of Trustees since 1st April 2017. The current Branch Director, Andy Goddard, continues to hold both of these roles and has done so since March 2023.

The sections that follow outline the performance and achievements of the charity in the reported year and present the financial statements.

Signed on behalf of the Trustees:



**Andy Goddard**  
Branch Director

### 3. SUPPORTING OUR CALLERS

Cheltenham branch is proud to be able to support our callers through phone calls, emails and online chat. We are the only branch in the region to support callers through all these ways. We now also open during the day to support our local community by providing face to face emotional support.

#### Statistics for 2023/2024

The following table provides a summary of our support to callers during 2023/2024 and how these compare to 2022/2023.

	2023/2024	2022/2023
Total logged contacts	24015	25,836
Inbound telephone calls	13852	15,258
Outbound telephone calls	216	495
Snap calls	3227	3,670
Face to face (in branch)	15	0
Face to face (outside branch)	96	Not Recorded
E mail	5599	5,080 (899 logged as spam)
Online chat	1010	1,270
Letter	0	0
Total	24015	25,836
Gender breakdown		
Male	39.2	38.5%
Female	49.3	50%
Unknown or other	11.5	11.5%

#### Caller support and safeguarding hub

The Caller Support and Safeguarding Hub and the Quality hub are now well established and each branch now has a Hub Liaison Officer who acts as a conduit between branch and the hubs.

Since the reconfiguration of the e-mail hub many branches no longer offer e mail support. However, Cheltenham branch continues to offer emotional support through e mail. A random sample of e mails is audited every month and the standard of replies remains high.

All volunteers responding to or checking emails have completed the latest e-mail training module.

The branch completes 9 duties of on-line chat per week. During 2024 it is expected that the on-line chat pilot will be extended to include Friday evenings.

The hub Liaison officer continues to provide up to date information to support our volunteers, guidance on handling callers of concern, updating signposting lists, no call back numbers, misuse of service list and ensuring best practice for follow up calls and the written word.

### Local referral services

We have referral services in place with two organisations:

- Partnership with CRUSE to provide emotional support to callers awaiting bereavement support through CRUSE.
- Partnership with Gloucestershire Counselling Service (GCS). GCS is a counselling service based in Stroud, Gloucester and Cheltenham which offers means tested counselling in the local area. The partnership enables GCS to refer at risk people to Samaritans for a series of calls. Those referred may be in crisis or may have been assessed as unsuitable for counselling but assessed by GCS as being at high risk of suicide.

Whilst we continue available to support, the referrals from these organisations has seen a significant reduction over the last 12-24 months and the continuation of these referral services will be reviewed during 2024. For CRUSE this is due to a change in their approach with group bereavement support being provided to many people who are waiting for individual bereavement support.

### Independent Quality Review

It is expected that around 6 months after the appointment of a new branch director a review is performed by 2 quality mentors from other Samaritans branches. A quality review was performed in September 2023.

The following strengths were identified:

- Branch leadership, teamwork and resilience including good delegation of responsibilities amongst leadership team and teams of volunteers.
- Branch facility management including IT management
- Support to local community with established partnerships with NHS, charities supporting homeless and vulnerable people, Long Lartin High Security Prison, Network Rail, local universities and schools.
- Strong financial management including fundraising support through Friends of Cheltenham Samaritans

The following areas for improvement were identified:

- A need to increase number of active listening volunteers
- Reinstate ongoing mentoring

Looking Forward

- Extend our support through on-line chat by opening chat shift(s) on Friday evening.
- Run a campaign for our volunteers to increase our support to priority night shifts between 02:00 and 06:00
- Review the effectiveness of our existing referral services and how these should continue.

**4. VOLUNTEER AND ROTA MANAGEMENT**

Overall, Cheltenham is a branch with highly engaged volunteers. In March 2024 we had 122 active listening volunteers (volunteers who completed at least one shift during the month) completing a total of 1356 volunteer hours during March. The following table summarises the change in volunteer numbers during 2023/2024 and how this compares to the previous year.

	2023/ 2024	2022/ 2023	Notes
New Samaritans Trained	15	24	
Volunteers transferring from another branch	1	1	
Volunteers leaving branch	33	45	33 volunteers left during 2023/2024 including 7 support volunteers and 26 listening volunteers.
Total Volunteers	142	160	
Active Listening Volunteers	122	128	137 in March 2022 Peak of 150 during in July 2021
Listening Volunteers on sabbatical or who didn't do a shift during March	19	24	
Support Volunteers	1	8	Reduction in support volunteers due to removal of non-active ex-volunteers from 3 rings. Remaining support volunteer leads social media and website.

In March 2023, the rota in Cheltenham Branch requires 553 volunteer hours each week. This is made up of 2 person shifts 24 hours a day (except 6.5 hours of planned closures each week) and an additional 30 hours / week for on-line chat shifts.

The rota management team aims to reduce the number of unplanned shift closures by highlighting rota gaps regularly.

Despite our group of amazing volunteers, the number of active listening volunteers has continued reduce due to a reduction in new Samaritans being trained. This does mean that we do not quite have enough volunteers to stay open for all planned listening shifts and unplanned closures occur on a weekly basis.



Each listening shift is supported by a leader. As in the previous year, we have not had to close any shifts through lack of a Leader. Leaders at Cheltenham put volunteer welfare at the forefront of their role. Being a big branch, there's a risk volunteering at Cheltenham might seem a little impersonal. Making volunteers feel welcome, valued and supported is therefore a key part of the Leader role.

### Looking Forward

Looking forward we will aim to increase the number of active listening volunteers through

- continue active advertising to meet our aim of 3 full training cohorts during each of 2024 and 2025
- continued support to existing Samaritans to increase engagement and retention
- supporting those on sabbatical to enable those that need some time off to return when they are ready.
- Trending data and reasons associated with volunteers that leave the branch.

It is judged that with 140 active listening volunteers and 40 leaders, the branch could support its outreach commitments as well as remain open with a low number of unplanned closures.

## **5. VOLUNTEER SUPPORT, TRAINING AND ENGAGEMENT**

Cheltenham is a branch with a really engaged group of volunteers providing dedicated support to our callers and those most at risk in the local community. At Cheltenham branch we provide support to our volunteers through

- continuous training
- engagement activities and
- supporting those that need a period of sabbatical or time off shifts

### Continuous Training and Ongoing Mentoring

During the year, training has been provided to all volunteers to enable face to face emotional support to be reinstated. In addition, mandatory training has been completed for data protection awareness and (for on-line chatters) revised on-line chat training.

Looking forward we have a plan to reinstate ongoing mentoring which will be used to inform any training needs for branch volunteers. There is also a planned schedule of mandatory training associated with equity, diversity and inclusion which is due to commence in January 2025.

### Engagement Activities

In October 2023, Cheltenham Samaritans celebrated our 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary. As part of this anniversary we held a celebration dinner for volunteers, partners and supported which was hugely successful, attended by many volunteers and also Keith Leslie (Chair of Samaritans

Trustees) and Felicity Varah (Honorary President of Samaritans and daughter of Samaritans founder, Chad Varah).

< PHOTO OF PREVIOUS DIRECTORS AT 60<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY DINNER >

Over the last year, the branch has continued open communications with regular branch director emails. The aim is to try and create a mutually supportive culture where volunteers feel supported by and engaged in the branch. We have a volunteer lobby moving screen display which aims to keep people informed and updated each fortnight with general information plus Samaritans Central Office and branch news. In addition, the branch supports:

- A Library where branch members can borrow books relevant to the role of Samaritans. During 2024, the Samaritans book club has also restarted and meets every 2 months in the community room of a local pub.
- Weekly yoga sessions run by the partner of a listening volunteer.
- An annual quiz was held for volunteers, partners and supporters. The questions, food and drink were arranged by Friends of Cheltenham Samaritans
- Friends of Cheltenham Samaritans hold a beer festival twice a year to raise funds and awareness for the branch. Engagement of our listening volunteers is encouraged either by joining the festival with friends or volunteering to serve beer behind the bar.

#### Sabbatical Management

During 2023/2024, Cheltenham Samaritans have implemented the national guidelines for sabbatical management which includes assessment of training needs following a period away from shifts. Other changes include more proactive contact with volunteers who have not been able to meet the expectation of (on average) 1 weekly shift.

#### Criminal Record Checks

Following a review performed by the central Samaritans the criminal records policy was updated to strengthen the current level of criminal records checks to include checks against the child barring list. In March 2024, revised criminal record checks commenced for all existing volunteers and is due to be completed during May 2024

## **6. RECRUITMENT, SELECTION AND TRAINING OF NEW VOLUNTEERS**

Our objective as a branch is to train 3 cohorts of volunteers each year. This is required to increase the branch size to around 135-140 active listening volunteers which is the number required to meet our rota requirements.

To enable this objective it is necessary to:

- Recruit potential volunteers that may be interested in training to become Samaritans. This includes advertising to raise awareness of our need for more volunteers.
- Select potential volunteers to commence core training
- Train and Mentor potential volunteers through core training, mentoring and embedding training.

Unfortunately, during 2023/2024 we were only able to train 15 new Samaritans due to a reduction in potential volunteers attending information sessions and progressing to interview. A further analysis is provided below including comparisons with previous years.

#### Volunteer Recruitment and Selection

	2023/24	2022/23	2021/22	2020/21
Expressions of Interest	141	183	197	271
Potential Volunteers being interviewed	65	33	61	69
Potential Volunteers Selected for Core Training	42	27	33	64

Over the last 6 months, there has been a move to much more proactive advertising to increase awareness of our need for more volunteers. Advertising activities included:

- Purchase of recruitment banners and, with agreement from local authorities, placement of banners at various locations in Cheltenham
- Social media posts advertising our need for more volunteers and information sessions to find out more
- Volunteers supporting by placing recruitment posters in local businesses, libraries, etc.

This has been hugely successful and has led to significant interest and information sessions. 16 volunteers are currently being trained in the cohort that commenced core training in March 2024.

#### New Volunteer Initial Training and Mentoring

	2023/24	2022/23	2021/22	2020/21
Volunteers trained by Central Training School	1	1	0	0
Number of core training cohorts	2	3	5	4
Potential volunteers starting core training in branch	19	24	59	48
New Samaritans completing core training	15	23	48	41

2 programmes of core training were completed commencing in May 2023 and October 2023. 19 volunteers commenced and 15 completed core training.

During 2023/2024, changes to training included:

- Core training has now reverted to in branch learning which is felt to be the best way of ensuring engaged training sessions and for the new Samaritans to feel part of the team.
- Alignment of training schedule with on-line training being performed by central training school. This enables missed sessions by trainees to be more easily caught up on.
- Inviting key members of the lead team to training sessions to help trainees understand the wider branch activities and support available.
- Enabling trainees to meet their mentors on the final core training session.

All mentors now complete the Samaritans mentor training and the expectations on mentee and mentor have been clarified to make sure that new Samaritans are supported prior to and after moving to shifts without their mentor. The expectations for new Samaritans have been clarified so that it is clear that embedding training and a minimum number of shifts need to be completed before becoming a full Samaritan. These changes have been important to ensure skills are embedded and support to callers is of a high quality.

### Looking Forward

Looking forward the aim is to continue to train and mentor new volunteers, running 3 programmes of core training each year with a maximum of 16 trainees in each cohort. Core training programmes will now run with between 12 and 16 trainees. To enable this there will be a need to train more mentors, consider new ways of mentoring and have further support to the training sessions including skills practice and role plays.

## **7. SUPPORT TO OUR LOCAL COMMUNITY**

2023/2024 has continued to be a strong year for outreach activities. The strategy continues to be to

- Develop an engaged group of volunteers trained in providing emotional support in outreach settings.
- Build small teams of volunteers to work in partnership with selected organisations to provide emotional support to those most in need in our local community
- Attend selected events to improve awareness of Samaritans as well as providing an opportunity for recruitment.

During the period there has been further joint working with Gloucester Samaritans including joint outreach training.

### Partnerships with local organisations

- Network Rail. There is now a regular presence at Cheltenham Spa and Kemble train stations on the first Wednesday of each month. The regular day was changed to Wednesday due to the number of commuters working from home on Mondays. As

well as increasing awareness, the volunteers regularly provide emotional support to those passing through the station. As part of our 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebrations, two planters with Samaritans signage have been installed on Platform 2 of Cheltenham Spa train station.

< PHOTO OF PLANTERS >

- Cheltenham Opendoor. Cheltenham Opendoor is a charity providing support to street homeless and vulnerable people in Cheltenham. For over 2 years, we have had a partnership with Opendoor which enable our volunteers to provide face to face emotional support to those most in need. We have now extended the service so that volunteers attend Opendoor every fortnight.
- Gloucestershire NHS Hospitals. The partnership with Gloucestershire NHS Trust continues. A joint team of volunteers from Gloucester and Cheltenham branches attends the Gloucester Hospital Emergency Department each fortnight to provide emotional support to patients and relatives. Feedback is positive although this partnership continues to be difficult with no clear point of contact at the hospital and a small team of volunteers being part of the team.
- Cheltenham Ladies College. During 2023, a series of 7 sessions were held with Year 10 students at Cheltenham Ladies College to encourage conversations about emotional health, coping strategies and the importance of talking to someone you trust.

### Events

Samaritan volunteers had a presence at the following events in 2023/2024 with the aim of raising awareness, demonstrating that Samaritans are there for everyone and providing an opportunity for recruitment.

- Three Counties Show
- Talks with Tewkesbury School
- Presentations at local businesses (TSB, GCHQ)
- University of Gloucestershire Freshers' Event. Also attendance at Gloucester College events.
- Gloucestershire Pride
- Talks to local veterans groups, rotary and church groups.
- Brew Monday events at Cheltenham Spa and Kemble train stations

### Looking Forward

Looking forward the aim will be to continue to further consolidate the partnerships which enable us to provide emotional support in the local community.

## **8. LONG LARTIN PRISON LISTENER SCHEME**

Cheltenham Branch Samaritans give support to the Listener scheme at Long Lartin prison, a high security men's prison in Worcestershire, about 22 miles from the Centre. It currently accommodates over five hundred men, almost all of whom are serving long sentences.

There are currently 12 Listeners who have been trained by Samaritan volunteers to provide emotional support within the prison. There is a team of 10 Samaritan volunteers who, on a rota, attend a weekly meeting with the Listeners to provide support to them and enable them to offload from contacts with prisoners during the week.

Over the last 12 months, some of the restrictions within the prison have been lifted which means that listeners are now more able to provide emotional support to other prisoners. It remains difficult, though, to ensure that the listeners are able to provide effective support to prisoners at all times including at night.

In February 2024, we were extremely pleased to receive a beautiful handmade table. It was made by one of our listeners at Long Lartin who had spent many hours over the last 3 years making this table during the limited workshop time he had. It will be a permanent reminder of the relationship between Cheltenham Samaritans and Long Lartin and the important work done by the listeners.



### Looking Forward

Challenges within the overall prison estate, mean that prisoners are now more likely to be moved between prisons. To ensure that the number of listeners at Long Lartin is maintained there are plans for another round of Listener training during 2024 (commencing in May 2024).

## 9. MANAGING VICTORIA HOUSE

Over the last year, we have continued to ensure that Victoria House is a fantastic place to volunteer. An external inspection led to minor improvements to guttering and also the repointing of brick work. Cupboards have been tidied and excess equipment and furniture has now been disposed of.

From an IT perspective, we have now moved over to internet based calls using VOIP (Voice over Internet Protocol). This was required due to the removal of analogue phone services in the UK. The change also reduces costs for the branch. The branch continues to look for opportunities to make volunteering accessible for all our volunteers. As part of that we purchased some new headphones which are compatible with hearing aids.

### Looking forward

The national phone system (LINK) which is used to receive calls will no longer be supported by December 2024. There is a national project to replace LINK during 2024 which we are engaged with to ensure continuation of service.

Following roof surveys, the trustees have agreed to progress a project to replace the roof over the FT training room. Initial building and structural surveys have been completed and specifications are currently out to tender to enable a decision to be made on whether to progress the project and the prime contractor. The aim would be to complete roof works during Summer 2024 to avoid disruption to the training programme.

## 10. FRIENDS OF CHELTENHAM SAMARITANS

The following report is from Leigh Norwood (Chairman) to mark the 45<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Friends of Cheltenham Samaritans:

*I find it quite surreal that the first time I wrote a report for the branch annual report was forty years ago! At the time I was Chairman of the 'Young Friends' of the Samaritans and with the resignation the previous year of 'Friends' Chairman, Dennis Newman, our fledgling young group which had been together for just five years, suddenly became responsible for all fundraising for the Branch.*

*Over the next forty years we would of course gel into an efficient fundraising unit, having at the latest count run more than four hundred events (including some seriously big ones) and raised over £360K! To mark our group's 45<sup>th</sup> anniversary, I spent quite a lot of last year researching and writing a book detailing our fascinating history. This book has now been published (Titled: Fundraisers in an English Town)*

*and is available in both paperback and kindle versions from Amazon or indeed from the branch.*

*Although in our early years our annual fundraising totals could be anything between £1K to £10K. Since 2003 we have regularly been handing over between £10K-£16K to the branch (even through Covid!). Last year, thanks to being the nominated Cheltenham Mayor's charity, we had our most successful year ever and handed over £24K. This was an amount we thought we were unlikely to match again. However, fundraising in the last year went so well that we managed to beat that figure, handing over a cheque for £25K at the Branch 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary dinner in October.*

*So, what has changed? To be honest, it's not easy to pinpoint. Certainly, moving to two relatively risk-free beer festivals per year at Pip & Jim's has helped, especially when each of them seem to be raising as much as our old single summer beer festivals. Also now having so many active Samaritan listeners on the committee has helped to cement a much closer union to a large willing group of helpers and supporters.*

*The biggest honour that our group has ever witnessed happened earlier last year, when as Friends Chairman, I was invited to a 'Community Champions' reception at Number 10 Downing Street. I was accompanied by Cheltenham MP Alex Chalk and was introduced to the Prime Minister, with the obligatory photos being taken.*

*Although I was the one lucky enough to get the invite (and it was amazing to just enter through that iconic door and then walk up the staircase with all of the photos of previous PMs). I saw this as being an honour being bestowed on all of the committee members of our friends group, past and present, for their unbelievable work over the last forty-five years.*

*This will be my last year as Chairman of the Friends and I would like to thank everybody for the amazing support and encouragement that I have received over the last three years, I would also like to make special mentions to three of the superstars on our current committee.*

*Firstly, Gary Newman (like me, a founding member at our first meeting in 1979), for the sheer amount of work that he not only puts into making our own events run efficiently, but into everything he does. The Cheltenham Samaritans 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary dinner last October would not have gone anywhere near as smoothly as it did without Gary pulling the strings.*

*Secondly, Debbie Christopher. Debbie originally joined our committee in 1988 having originally been a listening volunteer. Over the next nineteen years, Debbie took on all of the key roles on our committee, including spending twelve years as our treasurer. We lost touch for a number of years, but in 2022 I asked Debbie to help me to create and run our first Retro Pop Quiz for the mayor's charity. Following that success, I successfully managed to persuade her to return to the committee as Treasurer again to sort out our accounts, which to be honest were in a bit of a state. Debbie did so, and our fiscal status and treasurer's reports have never looked so good.*



*Lastly, I want to mention my good friend Nige Bethell, with whom I first cooked up the idea of running a beer festival back in 2006. Nige subsequently joined the committee that same year and has been a major influence on beer festivals and our annual attendance at the Glastonbury Festival ever since. He (together with Gary) has become a massive part of the engine room, driving our group forward, and is essential to our success. Nige prefers to remain low key, so I can assure you now, he won't be the next Chairman of the Friends.*

*That's it from me – I believe this was the eleventh time I have written for the Annual report as Friends Chair over the last 40 years, and it will most likely be my last. Don't forget to look out for future Friends events. The next three Beer Festivals are already booked in, and we hope to have more quizzes, Bingo nights and even a Paint & Fizz evening. Finally, if you are not already signed up to our 250 club – why not?*

## 11. FINANCIAL STATEMENTS AND INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT

### INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT TO THE TRUSTEES OF CHELTENHAM AND DISTRICT SAMARITANS

#### Independent examiner's report to the trustees of Cheltenham and District Samaritans

I report to the charity trustees on my examination of the accounts of Cheltenham and District Samaritans (the Charity) 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 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.



Jeremy Kitson FCA  
Prime  
Chartered Accountants  
Corner Oak  
1 Homer Road  
Solihull  
B91 3QG  
Date: .....13 September 2024.....

## CHELTENHAM AND DISTRICT SAMARITANS

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES  
INCLUDING INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT  
for the Year ended 31 March 2024

	Note	Unrestricted funds	Restricted Funds Prison Service	Reserved Funds Buildings	Total	Linked Charity Friends	Overall Total 2024	Total 2023
		£	£	£	£	£	£	£
<b>Incoming resources</b>								
Donations and legacies		48,299	2,151		50,450		50,450	73,088
Investment Income		1,869			1,869	523	2,392	878
Charitable Activities				25,000	25,000	10,193	35,193	64,388
<b>Total</b>		<b>50,167</b>	<b>2,151</b>	<b>25,000</b>	<b>77,318</b>	<b>10,716</b>	<b>88,034</b>	<b>138,355</b>
<b>Resources expended</b>								
Charitable activities	4	9,507	2,363		11,870	11,988	23,858	28,065
Direct Charitable Expenditure	4	14,132			14,132		14,132	13,980
Management and Administrative Costs	4	12,960			12,960	132	13,092	2,307
Building repairs and Maintenance	4	4,877		15,916	20,793		20,793	15,573
Governance Costs	4	3,093			3,093		3,093	3,038
<b>Total resources expended</b>		<b>44,570</b>	<b>2,363</b>	<b>15,916</b>	<b>62,849</b>	<b>12,120</b>	<b>74,969</b>	<b>62,963</b>
<b>Net movement in funds</b>		<b>5,597</b>	<b>(212)</b>	<b>9,084</b>	<b>14,470</b>	<b>(1,404)</b>	<b>13,065</b>	<b>75,392</b>

# CHELTENHAM AND DISTRICT SAMARITANS

## BALANCE SHEET AS AT 31 MARCH 2024

	Note	Unrestricted £	Prison Service £	Buildings £	Total £	Total £
<b>FIXED ASSETS</b>						
Fixed assets	5	156,501	-	-	156,501	157,108
<b>CURRENT ASSETS</b>						
Debtors	6	960		-	960	3,669
Cash at bank and in hand		111,770	8,969	97,542	218,281	201,704
Creditors	7	(2,960)		-	(2,960)	(2,764)
<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>		<b>266,271</b>	<b>8,969</b>	<b>97,542</b>	<b>372,782</b>	<b>359,214</b>
<b>FUNDS</b>						
Balance at 1st April 2023		262,078	9,181	88,458	359,717	284,325
Surplus or deficit for year	8	4,193	(212)	9,084	13,065	75,392
<b>TOTAL FUNDS</b>	8	<b>266,271</b>	<b>8,969</b>	<b>97,542</b>	<b>372,782</b>	<b>359,717</b>

Unrestricted Funds include the balances held by the Friends.

The financial statements were approved by the Board of Trustees and authorised for issue on

*Toni Hardie*

.....  
T Hardie  
Hon Treasurer & Trustee

**CHELTENHAM AND DISTRICT SAMARITANS  
NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS  
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024**

**1. Accounting policies**

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, with the exception of investments which are included at market value, as modified by the revaluation of certain assets.

These accounts include the results for the year of the associated Friends group.

**1.2 Tangible fixed assets and depreciation**

Tangible fixed assets other than freehold land and buildings are stated at cost less depreciation. Depreciation is provided at rates calculated to write off the cost of each asset over its expected useful life as follows:

Fixtures, fittings & equipment	- 15% reducing balance
Freehold improvements	- not depreciated

**1.3 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.

Services provided by volunteers are not recognised as income.

**1.4 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.

**1.5 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.

The funds of the linked charity The Friends of Cheltenham Samaritans can only be used to support the objects of that charity.

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

**2. Trustees**

None of the trustees (or any persons connected with them) received any remuneration during the period (2023: none), but it is the policy of the Charity to reimburse all expenses properly incurred by its volunteers in connection with its charitable activities.

**3. Employees**

There were no employees during the period (2023: none).

**4. Analysis of expenditure**

	2024 £	2023 £	Variance £
<b>Charitable activities</b>			
Volunteers Travel	897	1,080	183
Fundraising and Outreach	8,611	591	
National Prison Service Support	2,363	1,190	(1,173)
	11,870	2,861	(989)
<b>Direct Charitable Expenditure</b>			
Telephone, Computer & Broadband Services	2,810	3,344	534
Electricity, Gas, & Water	3,901	2,907	(994)
Housekeeping, Cleaning & Refreshments	3,488	2,812	(676)
Library Costs	56	69	13
Marketing	1,258	2,547	1,289
Stationery and Photocopier	2,621	2,301	(320)
	14,132	13,980	(152)
<b>Management and Administrative Costs</b>			
Central Office payment	12,960	2,258	(10,702)
<b>Building repairs and Maintenance</b>			
Maintenance & Repairs	4,877	5,500	623
Capital Projects	15,916	10,073	(5,843)
	20,793	15,573	(5,220)
<b>Governance Costs</b>			
Independent examination	1,020	960	(60)
Insurance & Governance	2,073	2,078	5
	3,093	3,038	(55)
	<b>62,849</b>	<b>37,710</b>	<b>(25,139)</b>

**5. Tangible fixed assets**

	Land and buildings £	Freehold Improvements £	Fixtures, fittings and equipment £	Total £
<b>Cost</b>				
At 1 April 2023 and 31 March 2024	96,825	56,239	9,116	162,180
<b>Depreciation</b>				
At 1 April 2023	-	-	5,072	5,072
Charge for the period	-	-	607	607
At 31 March 2024	-	-	5,679	5,679
<b>Net book value at 31 March 2024</b>	<b>96,825</b>	<b>56,239</b>	<b>3,437</b>	<b>156,501</b>
Net book value at 31 March 2023	96,825	56,239	4,044	157,108

**6. Debtors**

	2024 £	2023 £
Other debtors	960	3,669
	<b>960</b>	<b>3,669</b>

**7. Creditors**

	2024 £	2023 £
Deferred Income	1,910	1,500
Accruals	1,050	1,264
	<b>2,960</b>	<b>2,764</b>

8. Reconciliation of funds

	Balance at 01-Apr-23	Incoming Resources	Outgoing Resources	Balance at 31-Mar-24
National Prison Service	9,181	2,151	(2,363)	8,969
Total Restricted Funds	9,181	2,151	(2,363)	8,969
Unrestricted Funds	232,042	50,167	(44,570)	237,639
Friends	30,036	10,716	(12,120)	28,632
Total Unrestricted Funds	262,078	60,883	(56,690)	266,271
Reserved Funds - Building Fund	88,458	25,000	(15,916)	97,542
<b>Total Funds</b>	<b>359,717</b>	<b>88,034</b>	<b>(74,969)</b>	<b>372,782</b>

Restricted fund balances of £8,969 (2023: £9,181) are held in relation to grants received from the National Prison Service for the Charity's work at HMP Long Lartin.

The fund will be used in the summer of 2024 to replace the roof on Victoria House, total cost currently estimated at £100,000.

9. Related party transactions

During the year, the Trustees of Friends agreed a donation of £25,000 (2023: £24,000) to the Charity.

## 12. SPECIAL THANKS TO OUR VOLUNTEERS

Cheltenham and District Samaritans would not be able to support people in distress without the dedicated support of our volunteers.

Many of our volunteers meet the expectation of one shift every week to provide support to callers by phone call, email or on-line chat. They are all part of our special group of people who give up their time to help others.

In addition, many volunteers support the many activities which need to be done to keep the branch running. Particular thanks go to:

### Branch Leadership Team

- Branch Director – Andy 665
- Branch Trustees – Andrew 651, Anthony 407, Sally 1130, Steve 808
- Branch Treasurer – Toni 659

### Teams supporting new volunteers

- Recruitment and Selection – Joanne 597 and all those supporting information evenings and interview including Ali 660, Andrew 651, Anne 435, Claudia 739, Chris 1071, Dermot 357, George 594, Gary 645, Nasir 788, Sarah
- Core Training team – Sue 991, Alex 593
- Mentoring team – Sue 844, Anne 435, Robin 207 and all those that supported skills practice and mentoring of new volunteers
- Embedding training team – Sandi 793, Judy 791 and Mike 669
- 3 rings and DBS security clearances – Barbara 236 and Richard 129

### Volunteer Support

- Volunteer support – George 594 and Dawn 660 supported by Anne 435, Caroline 440, Cathy 738 and James 843.

### Caller Support

- Caller and safeguarding hub – Andrew 651
- Rota Management team – Nicky 992, Karen 443, Ben 804, Liz 232, Claudia 739, Richard 129, Amber 520
- CRUSE and GCS Referrals – Sarah 245

### Outreach Teams

- Prison team – Penny 948, Debbie 227, Anne 612, Helen 568, Helen 776, Julia 276, Karen 443, Karen 954, Kaz 742, Mike 669 and Sam 952
- Cheltenham Opendoor – Jon 1036, Richard 949, Toni 659, Helen 568 and Nigel 240
- Network Rail – Nigel 240, Julia 276, Dawn 660, Anthony 407 and Helen 350
- NHS Gloucester Hospital Emergency Department – George 594 and Cathy 738
- Schools and Universities – Isabelle 942
- Support to many outreach events – Laura 234



## Social Media

Twitter and Website – Sarah 672

## Facilities

Facilities management – Dermot 357

Kitchen Supplies – Isabelle 942

Fire Alarm Service – Gary 645

IT Team – Anthony 213, Sam 604, Tim 1152, Mike 669

## Friends of Cheltenham Samaritans

- Committee Members - Leigh 5001, Gary 5002, Debbie 5003, Steve 5004, Phil 5005, Nige 5005, Alex 5006, Lucy 5007, Lucy 5008 and Jilly 5009

# We're here to listen

Call free day  
or night on

**116 123**

Email

[jo@samaritans.org](mailto:jo@samaritans.org)

Web

[samaritans.org/cheltenham](http://samaritans.org/cheltenham)

Visit us

Victoria House

Back of Albert Place, Pittville  
Cheltenham GL52 2HN

**SAMARITANS**

Samaritans Cheltenham and District is a Charitable Incorporated Organisation registered in England and Wales (1170900). Our registered office is located at Victoria House, Back Albert Place, Pittville, Cheltenham, Gloucestershire GL52 2HN.