



Trustees' Annual Report for the period

From	Period start date			To	Period end date		
	Day 1	Month Apri	Year 2023		Day 31	Month March	Year 2024

Section A Reference and administration details

Charity name	Samaritans of Maidstone and the Weald		
Other names charity is known by	None		
Registered charity number (if any)	1171193		
Charity's principal address	48 Grecian Street		
	Maidstone		
	Kent		
	Postcode	ME14 2TS	

Names of the charity trustees who manage the charity

	Trustee name	Office (if any)	Dates acted if not for whole year	Name of person (or body) entitled to appoint trustee (if any)
1	Ross Gill	Director		
2	Julian Smith	Trustee		
3	Hilary Adams	Treasurer		
4	Stephen Carr	Trustee	01.04.23 – 04.11.23	
5	Pamela Cuerden	Trustee		
6	Christine Ansell	Trustee		
7	Eva Jolly	Trustee		
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9				
10				
11				
12				
13				
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15				
16				
17				
18				
19				
20				

Names of the trustees for the charity, if any, (for example, any custodian trustees)

Name	Dates acted if not for whole year

Names and addresses of advisers (Optional information)

Type of adviser	Name	Address
Bank	Natwest	3 High Street, Maidstone, Kent ME14 1HJ

Name of chief executive or names of senior staff members (Optional information)

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Section B Structure, governance and management

Description of the charity's trusts

Type of governing document (eg. trust deed, constitution)	CIO – Association adopted 19 January 2017
How the charity is constituted (eg. trust, association, company)	Charitable Incorporated Organisation
Trustee selection methods (eg. appointed by, elected by)	Elected by members of charity

Additional governance issues (Optional information)

You **may choose** to include additional information, where relevant, about:

- policies and procedures adopted for the induction and training of trustees;
- the charity's organisational structure and any wider network with which the charity works;
- relationship with any related parties;
- trustees' consideration of major risks and the system and procedures to manage them.

Samaritans Maidstone and Weald is affiliated to the central Samaritans charity (registration number 219432) as a local branch. This means that we are committed to providing a consistent service in line with Samaritans' Mission, Vision and Values and its policy and governance framework, via an agreed Operating Agreement, alongside 201 local branches across the UK and Ireland.

Our processes for recruitment, training, volunteer support and quality assurance are consistent with that agreed by the central charity. Our constitution, operating structure and key systems are materially the same as those which governs other affiliated branches. This provides us with the strength of both a locally-based, volunteer-run branch and the scale and capacity of a national charity. Along with all other branches, we participate in a collaborative Quality Review process, with the involvement of senior volunteers from other branches.

Training is provided for all trustees, as well as for all other roles with specific responsibilities in the Branch. We also receive advice on governance matters and safeguarding from the central charity.

The Trustees maintain a risk register which is regularly reviewed and acted upon. The risk register takes account of all forms of risk, including those relating physical and building risks, financial risks, and risks associated with the delivery of our emotional support service. In addition, the Trustees provide an annual checklist to confirm compliance with financial and governance procedures, health and safety, etc. to the central charity.

Section D

Achievements and performance

*“Our **vision** is that fewer people die by suicide. We’re here every day and night of the year for anyone struggling to cope. We make sure people have somewhere to turn and support when they need it most. We work with communities to let people know we’re here for them and we campaign to make suicide prevention a priority.”*

As part of the wider Samaritans movement across the UK and Ireland, Samaritans Maidstone and Weald contributes to a unique listening service, helping people to explore their feelings, alleviate distress and reduce the risk of suicide. Each year, volunteers in Maidstone respond to around 15,000 telephone calls – a crucial contribution to around three million calls across the organisation, the equivalent of some 400 per hour. In addition, we respond annually to around 1,000 emails. Our service makes a real difference: one call in every four is about suicidal thoughts and feelings, and our most recent organisation-wide impact report demonstrates that people report a significant reduction in distress as a result of calling Samaritans.

In addition, Samaritans Maidstone and Weald is active outside the Branch. In particular, we support Listener schemes at Maidstone and East Sutton Park prisons, training and supporting prisoners to provide emotional support to fellow prisoners who are struggling to cope. We also deliver outreach activities, promoting Samaritans services in conjunction with Network Rail; and offering talks to a range of external organisations.

During the year, we have made continued efforts to improve our availability and the services we are able to offer our callers. It is vital that we are open for as much of the time as possible, and our team of rota secretaries does an amazing job in ensuring that we are there when we are needed. In 2023/24, work took place across the organisation to strengthen the resilience of our telephone service, with significant improvements in technology planned for 2024/25.

All this activity is only possible because of the commitment and dedication of our team of volunteers. Currently, there are 114 members of Samaritans Maidstone and Weald, including ‘listening’ volunteers and others who provide a wide range of essential support services. Our volunteers are at the heart of the service and volunteer support is a top priority for the Branch. We also continued to recruit, train and welcome new volunteers to the Branch. We are very grateful to the Blackthorn Medical Practice for the use of their facilities for training.

Beyond Maidstone, the Branch plays an active role in the South East Region, working together with our neighbouring branches. In addition, some volunteers at Maidstone are also volunteers with the Email Hub, established to provide greater capacity to support those who choose to contact us in writing.

At 31 March 2024, the Branch management consisted of Ross 687 (Director) and Marion 922 (Vice-Director), with John 1092, Heidi 1102, Rita 1126, Tara 1032N and Trish 701 as Deputy Directors. The Trustees of the Charity were Annie 885 Eva 1078, Gerry 869, Hilary 27N, Pamela 616N and Ross 687.

Beyond these roles, many volunteers take on a number of roles across the branch, including as duty leaders, members of the training and recruitment teams, mentors to new volunteers, members of the prison, outreach, fundraising and volunteer support teams, and many more. As an organisation which is volunteer-led and, at local level, entirely staffed by volunteers, the contribution of so many people to making the branch work effectively is vital.

In June 2023, we held an open day at the Branch, linked with the ‘Big Help Out’ volunteering initiative during the weekend of the Coronation. This was an opportunity to thank volunteers, as well as raise awareness in the community, and we were delighted to welcome the Mayor of Maidstone, Cllr Derek Mortimer, to the Branch.

In November, we also celebrated 70 years since Chad Varah established the first Samaritans service. Since then, we have expanded to over 200 branches across the UK and Ireland, with a wider range of ways in which people can contact us, and a telephone system that maximises the ability of people to get through

Section D

Achievements and performance

when they need us. As technology changes the ways in which people access services – and the ways in which people want to volunteer, we need to continue to adapt, locally and together with the wider Samaritans movement. Looking to the future, we want to build on this, expanding our availability and capacity and strengthening our work outside the branch, in prisons and in the wider community.

We owe great thanks to our volunteers and donors and to all those involved in the wider Samaritans movement. It is through the commitment of our volunteers and the generosity of all those who contribute to us that we continue to grow as a Branch and as a vital service to the public. Thank you.

“There are in this world, in every country, people who seem to be ‘ordinary’, but who turn out to be extraordinary. They give their total attention. They listen and listen and listen, without interrupting. They do not preach. They have nothing to sell. We call them Samaritans.”

- Chad Varah, Founder of Samaritans

Section E

Financial review

Brief statement of the charity's policy on reserves

The Charity aims to keep enough funds in reserve to keep the branch running for 18 months. We have maintained this reserve throughout the year.

Details of any funds materially in deficit

none

Further financial review details (Optional information)

You **may choose** to include additional information, where relevant about:

- the charity's principal sources of funds (including any fundraising);
- how expenditure has supported the key objectives of the charity;
- investment policy and objectives including any ethical investment policy adopted.

The great majority of our funds are from public fundraising and the generosity of those who wish to donate to our charity. This includes income from charitable fundraising events and grants from trusts, church and community groups and other bodies. We also receive funds through a service level agreement with HM Prison Service to deliver the Listener service at HMP Maidstone and HMP East Sutton Park.

This income enables us to operate a service providing emotional support for those experiencing distress or despair, including thoughts of suicide. In practical terms, our principal expenditure relates to telephone and IT costs, the maintenance of our building (which we own freehold), fundraising and outreach expenses and administrative costs.

We rely on the significant non-financial contribution of volunteer hours: all those involved in delivering the Samaritans service do so on a voluntary basis. We also make a contribution from our funds to the operation of the Samaritans Central Charity, which provides us with a wide range of central services as well as our overall policy framework.


Section F

Other optional information

Section G Declaration

The trustees declare that they have approved the trustees' report above.

Signed on behalf of the charity's trustees

Signature(s)		
Full name(s)	Ross Gill	
Position (eg Secretary, Chair, etc)	Director	
Date	05.12.24	



CHARITY COMMISSION
FOR ENGLAND AND WALES

Samaritans of Maidstone and Weald

No (if any)

1171193

Receipts and payments accounts

CC16a

For the period
from

Period start date
01-Apr-23

To

Period end date
31-Mar-24

Section A Receipts and payments

	Unrestricted funds to the nearest £	Restricted funds to the nearest £	Endowment funds to the nearest £	Total funds to the nearest £	Last year to the nearest £
A1 Receipts					
Fundraising	723		-	723	1,294
Donations	4,528		-	4,528	8,232
Grants	8,408		-	8,408	3,512
Other income	1,527		-	1,527	1,479
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
Sub total (Gross income for AR)	15,186	-	-	15,186	14,517
A2 Asset and investment sales, (see table).					
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
Sub total	-	-	-	-	-
Total receipts	15,186	-	-	15,186	14,517
A3 Payments					
Charitable activities	7,999	157	-	8,156	5,055
Light, heat and utilities	3,364	-	-	3,364	1,987
Property repairs and maintenance	-	2,060	-	2,060	5,013
Publicity costs	-	-	-	-	74
Telephone and internet	2,437	-	-	2,437	2,394
Insurance	1,000	-	-	1,000	930
Branch administration	1,451	-	-	1,451	1,420
National contribution	3,255	-	-	3,255	6,086
Sub total	19,506	2,217	-	21,723	22,959
A4 Asset and investment purchases, (see table)					
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
Sub total	-	-	-	-	-
Total payments	19,506	2,217	-	21,723	22,959
Net of receipts/(payments)	- 4,320	- 2,217	-	- 6,537	- 8,442
A5 Transfers between funds	-	-	-	-	-
A6 Cash funds last year end	53,561	9,220	-	62,781	71,223
Cash funds this year end	49,241	7,003	-	56,244	62,781

Section B Statement of assets and liabilities at the end of the period

Categories	Details	Unrestricted funds to nearest £	Restricted funds to nearest £	Endowment funds to nearest £
B1 Cash funds	Nat West Bank	49,241	7,003	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
	Total cash funds	49,241	7,003	-
	(agree balances with receipts and payments account(s))	OK	OK	OK
		Unrestricted funds to nearest £	Restricted funds to nearest £	Endowment funds to nearest £
B2 Other monetary assets	Details	-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
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)
	Freehold Property		9,250	-
	Computer Equipment		4,403	-
	Equipment		1,120	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
B5 Liabilities	Details	Fund to which liability relates	Amount due (optional)	When due (optional)
			-	
			-	
			-	
			-	
			-	
Signed by one or two trustees on behalf of all the trustees	Signature	Print Name	Date of approval	
	Ross Gill	Ross Gill	5.12.24	