

# SAMARITANS

North Herts & Stevenage



Annual review 2021–22

**SAMARITANS**

**North Herts & Stevenage**

**Charity number 1173578**

**2021 – 2022  
Annual review  
and accounts**

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## Director's message

It is my pleasure to introduce this **annual review on North Herts & Stevenage Samaritans** for the period of April 2021 to March 2022.

As we have emerged from the restrictions and the most serious concerns of the pandemic, we have relished the return to more normal ways of supporting our callers. One of the most rewarding aspects of volunteering at Samaritans is being part of such a wonderful team, so it is great testament to our volunteers' commitment that they persevered while personal contact was so restricted. During this financial year, Samaritans Central Office (SCO) staff also recognised the need for a large number of improvements to our safeguarding and call-quality monitoring, and our volunteers positively embraced the **additional training requirements**.

By March 2022, nearly all of those people who had needed to minimise personal contact were able to return to shifts within the branch. We have enjoyed the return to some **in-person get-togethers**, including for training, meetings and some outreach activities. It has also been great to be able to mix with more people within the branch.

Our training team has welcomed a record number of new candidates, delivering the extensive training and mentoring needed for them to become listening volunteers. Due to our ever-increasing numbers, and with the lack of disability access at our branch, we continue to explore the possibility of acquiring a **larger and more fit-for-purpose premises**.

One of the highlights of this year has been our **50th Anniversary Party**, celebrating half a century since our branch was founded in Hitchin. In November 2021 more than 80 volunteers, partners and friends enjoyed an evening of dinner, speeches and music at Hitchin's Sun Hotel. As many people's first social event since before the first lockdown, this was a truly heartwarming and motivational event, helping to bring our volunteers together and recognise their achievements. We were joined by our patron, Caroline Bowes Lyon, who kindly gave a speech and offered us to use her family home, St Paul's Walden Bury, for future fundraising events.

Fundraising remained a challenging aspect of keeping our branch operational, not least due to Covid restrictions minimising face-to-face activities. Fortunately, Sarah Millican's performance in Stevenage was permitted in December 2021, with her audience members generously donating £886 to our branch. We remain **extremely grateful to all the organisations and individuals** who provide financial support, enabling us to continue our work in supporting those experiencing emotional distress.

This has been a successful year of development and expansion for our branch, and I am lucky to have a **very supportive team of deputy directors and board of trustees**. Together, we will do everything we can to maintain and increase the essential service we provide to our callers. Pivotal to this service is the commitment of our volunteers, so we will continue to focus on enabling them to feel valued and motivated while maintaining our service to our callers.

**Ilsa 383, branch director and chair of trustees, North Herts & Stevenage Samaritans**

## About Samaritans

Samaritans provides non-judgemental emotional support, 24 hours a day, for people who are experiencing feelings of distress or despair, including those that could lead to suicide. We offer our service by telephone, email, letter and face to face, from our branches and at hospitals, schools, prisons, workplaces and festivals, through a network of 201 branches in the UK and the Republic of Ireland.

From its base in Hitchin, North Herts & Stevenage Samaritans is a charity operating as a branch of Samaritans. Whilst supporting the residents of the surrounding area, it also supports the residents of the whole of the UK and ROI via the Samaritans central calls system.

### Our vision

Our vision is that fewer people die by suicide.

### Our mission

- We make sure there's someone there for anyone who needs someone.
- Every year, Samaritans volunteers spend over one million hours answering calls for help via our unique 24-hour listening service, by email, letter and face to face, and through our Welsh language service.
- We give people ways to cope and the skills to be there for others.
- We want to encourage, promote and celebrate those moments of connection between people that can protect and even save lives. To do this, we're working in schools, prisons, workplaces and communities, and in partnership with organisations like Network Rail.
- We campaign to make suicide prevention a national and local priority.
- Our staff and volunteers run nationwide and community campaigns to raise awareness and influence decision-makers.

### Our values

We have five core values. They're supported by these behaviours, which we share within the Samaritans organisation: support, trust, aspirational and respect.

- **Listening** – Exploring feelings alleviates distress and helps people to reach a better understanding of their situation and the options open to them.
- **Confidentiality** – If people feel safe, they are more likely to be open about their feelings.
- **Non-judgemental** – We want people to be able to talk to us without fear of prejudice or rejection.
- **People making their own decisions** – We believe that people have the right to find their own solutions and that telling people what to do takes responsibility away from them.
- **Human contact** – Giving people time, undivided attention and empathy meets a fundamental emotional need, and reduces distress and despair.

# Fundraising

## Fundraising and donations

For a good part of this year, our ability to fundraise was hampered by intermittent Covid restrictions. Some of these were government-imposed; others as a result of policy decisions based on risk assessments by SCO, local authorities and supermarket companies.

The first event we were able to take part in was the **Letchworth Garden City Armed Forces Day in June, when £240 was raised.**

In July and then the autumn of 2021, we were able to recommence some outreach activities. Although not fundraising as such, these activities enabled people to kindly donate to the branch.

Towards Christmas the return of Covid restrictions was a concern. Fortunately, it did not prevent the **Sarah Millican performance at Gordon Craig concert hall going ahead on 19 December.** Sarah is a great champion of Samaritans and, as part of her national tour, she invited local branches to carry out post-performance bucket collections. Her audience donated an amazing **£886** to the branch. This was the first opportunity to use our newly acquired card readers to accept cashless payments. Following this success, the card readers were also used in **January 2022 at the Brew Monday events** at Hitchin and Stevenage stations, when a very good **£450** was received.

Although it is usually a lesser element of fundraising and donations, the willingness of individuals and small businesses to have our small collecting cans has been welcome, as have other donations by individuals.

Various charity platforms enabled donations and fundraising sponsorship to generate about **£4,000.** Perhaps understandably, this was quite a bit less than in 2020/21, at the height of the pandemic.

Thanks to those who are taking a few extra seconds when ordering shopping on the internet to enable the branch to receive a contribution from many retailers. To do this, you can use:

**Amazon Smile** <https://smile.amazon.co.uk>

**GivingMachine** [www.thegivingmachine.co.uk](http://www.thegivingmachine.co.uk)

Web users have also donated via searching online for Samaritans of North Herts & Stevenage.

**Thanks to everyone for your loyal support, which has enabled our branch to remain fully operational despite the challenges and restrictions of the pandemic.**

## Supporters (not individuals)

### Businesses with collecting cans

- Biggleswade Station Book Library (passengers and GTR staff)
- Brickyard, Bancroft, Hitchin
- Doghouse Grooming, Arlesey
- Rose & Crown Ashwell
- Tallents, Hitchin
- Toni & Guy, Hitchin
- The Bull, Whitwell
- Village Shop, Whitwell

### Donations

- Baldock & Clothall WI
- North Herts Bowls Club
- SETTLE Housing Association

### Grants

- Hertfordshire County Council (POhWER)

## Providers of 'in-kind' or enabling services

We are very grateful to all the organisations that help us to carry out the work we do. This can be by direct donation or by providing 'in-kind' services or materials.

- Phillips Digital Print, Letchworth
- Satchells Estate Agents, Hitchin
- TPS Visual Communications, Letchworth Garden City

## Donating

If you would like to help us, you can make a donation:

### By bank transfer

Account name: Samaritans of North Herts & Stevenage

Account number: 63678547

Sort code: 20-05-73

Please quote your name as reference.

### By cheque

Please make your cheque payable to 'Samaritans of North Herts & Stevenage' and send it to our branch address: 5 Nuns Close, Hitchin, SG5 1EP.

### By text message

Text SAMSLOCAL 3 to 70460 to donate £3.

Texts cost £3 plus one standard rate message and you'll be opting in to hear more about our work and fundraising via telephone and SMS. If you'd like to give £3 but do not wish to receive marketing communications, text SAMSLOCALNOINFO 3 to 70460.



## Caller support

From May 2021 until April 2022, **Hitchin volunteers answered 15,850 calls**. They also participated in an average of **80 webchats monthly**. Unfortunately, owing to continuing Covid restrictions, we were unable to admit face-to-face callers to our branch during the 2021–22 financial year. New safeguarding measures for face-to-face calls have been devised and, at time of writing, are being trialled at three larger Samaritans branches. The special service dedicated to supporting NHS staff has now ended, and the volunteers who offered that service from their homes have returned to the main branch.

SCO have also provided additional support to branches by forming a **specialised team who offer 24-hour advice on safeguarding**. Other teams also specialise in quality control, emails and caller support.

As always, we are infinitely grateful to our listening volunteers, each of whom devotes at least four hours a week listening to our callers, including overnight shifts when the need is particularly acute.

## External relations

### Outreach and talks

We have enjoyed the gradual return to outreach activities following the easing of Covid restrictions. This has enabled us to participate in the following events, raising awareness and supporting our local community.

In June 2021 we were present at the **Letchworth Armed Forces Day**, mainly for fundraising purposes. On two dates in July we had stands at Stevenage railway station, as part of the **Samaritans 'Big Listen' National Railway Partnership Campaign**. This resulted in an estimated 220 contacts with members of the public, raising awareness of Samaritans and encouraging people to contact us for emotional support. On the September **Hitchin Health and Wellbeing Day**, we made contact with approximately 70 people.

Also in September 2021, our volunteers represented Samaritans at three **North Herts College Welcome Days**, at the Stevenage Campus on Monkswood Way, the Stevenage Engineering & Construction Campus and at Hitchin Campus. We find that most young people have little or no awareness of Samaritans, so it is rewarding to raise awareness of the support we provide. On these three college days we made contact with an estimated 500 staff members and students.

In December we entered the **Hitchin Christmas Tree Festival**, the decorations on our tree celebrating the 50th anniversary of our branch.

In January 2022 our branch participated in the Samaritans national campaign for **Brew Monday**, with volunteers manning stalls at Hitchin and Stevenage railway stations. In February we took part in the **Network Rail and Safety Partners Action Day** at Stevenage station. In March we supported the Bedfordshire Initiative at Luton Airport, the **Ukraine Refugees Hub**.

Our **Talks Team** has been delivering an increasing number of presentations, raising awareness at other organisations. From October to December, in conjunction with other local Samaritans branches, the team provided weekly talks to the **Police Custody Officer training** groups, as part of their annual continuous development. This is to ensure that police officers know of the support Samaritans can provide, especially as there has been an increase in suicide numbers amongst those leaving police custody.



## IT and comms

The IT support team continues to ensure our technology is appropriate, current and functional, primarily to enable **communication between callers and volunteers**. It also provides safety and security measures, including the CCTV system, which allows immediate remote review of any significant intrusions in the branch, as well as the possibility of on-demand recordings of the front and back of our premises.

Our technology has allowed us to function as a branch in Covid-limiting times, and to continue to teach, learn and recruit in ways not even considered five years ago. It's the IT support team's role to ensure, as far as possible, that we find a balance in enjoying the benefits of technology without affecting the confidence of our volunteers (through too-rapid integration), or the technology adversely affecting volunteers' ability take calls.

This system is now **more secure than before**, with more options to balance security with accessibility. It has a backup, fail-safe system, in case of a total denial of service or internet outage.

## Leaders

Our Leader team have continued to provide vital support to our listening and online chat volunteers. This support includes being available throughout shifts to provide any **necessary advice and guidance** and to take **offloads at the end of each shift** from the on-shift volunteers. This Leader support helps ensure that the service provided by the branch is in line with Samaritans key policies and procedures. It also helps volunteers in their response to particularly difficult situations, and in ensuring that their emotional needs are met.

During this period, a few Leaders retired for various reasons but were replaced by new Leader volunteers. This meant that the overall number of Leaders remained at about 18 – approximately the same as in the previous year. Although the addition of the online chat service increased the number of weekly shifts, the dedication and commitment of the team meant that all shifts were covered.

Leaders are represented on the branch leadership team by a deputy director. Along with other deputy directors, this provides support to the branch director and helps to provide consistency in our service to callers.

## Partnerships

We continued to liaise with the inspector of the **Police Custody Team** and our neighbouring Samaritans branches, to review and update our current processes and procedures for the police custody suites. This was to ensure we are meeting the needs of distressed detainees in the best possible way.

Our Talks Team, in conjunction with other local Samaritans branches, provided weekly talks to the Police Custody Officer training groups, as part of their annual continuous development, from October 2021 to December 2021.

Due to the pandemic, we were unable to meet face to face with representatives from POHWR. However, we continued to attend six-weekly sessions with them and other local charitable organisations via Zoom.

In November 21 we signed a memorandum of understanding (MOU) and an information sharing agreement with the **Hertfordshire Partnership University NHS Foundation Trust**. The MOU will enable us to work together in a pilot to provide a complementary referral service to their service users. It will also allow the development of a range of opportunities, for service users and staff to benefit from

the knowledge and experiences offered by Samaritans in support of emotional wellbeing and suicide prevention.

## Prisons

Prisoners are an **extremely vulnerable group**, and the incidence of suicide and self-harm in prisons generally is on the increase. Prisons can be lonely, stressful, intimidating and scary places for some inmates, who need emotional support to get through their time in prison. More and more of our prison callers suffer with poor mental health. The Covid pandemic necessitated most prisoners being locked up in their cells for 23 hours a day. Visits from family members and friends, as well as from Samaritans volunteers, were also curtailed, adding to the **feelings of isolation** within prison and being cut off from the outside world.

Samaritans work in conjunction with the safer custody teams in most prisons in the UK. Inmates can seek support from Samaritans using the free-to-use Samaritans phones as well as via a free, confidential correspondence service.

Understandably, some prisoners prefer to speak to others who are in the same situation as themselves, which is why we train and carefully select prisoners to be **Listeners**, who can offer listening support to fellow inmates in person at the very time they are in need. Listeners are unpaid, available 24/7, and give up their time freely, to help those less able to cope with life inside. Together with colleagues from Samaritans Cambridge branch, some of our volunteers visit **Littlehey Prison in Cambridgeshire**. We support the Listener team, helping them do fulfil their roles, as well as promoting the work we do jointly with them.

During this year we have been able to get back to our regular weekly visits and train a new group of Listeners. We are therefore on our way to resuming our usual level of activity.

## Publicity

We have had some **good press coverage** of events and activities over the year thanks to local media outlets, including a feature in our local newspaper, the *Comet*, with coverage of the visit from David Matthews to Hitchin as part of 'The Listening Walk' – a 6,000 mile walk on which he visited every Samaritans branch in the UK and Ireland, raising awareness and donations for the charity.

Our website is regularly updated and is worth perusing: [www.samaritans.org/branches/hitchin](http://www.samaritans.org/branches/hitchin)

We also have a social media presence on Twitter. Follow us at [twitter.com/NorthHertsSams](https://twitter.com/NorthHertsSams)

## Recruitment

Changes made during the pandemic to enable us to still be able to recruit new volunteers are at present still in place. The online information evenings and selection interviews work well, and we have managed to recruit 40 new volunteers during this year. Although the online system works, we are considering starting up face-to-face selections and interviews again, hopefully in the near future, as we feel they are a vital part of recruitment.

## Rota

Samaritans are privileged to have been able to continue our **24/7 listening service** in the UK and ROI throughout the pandemic. While not all of our 201 branches are open all the time, we have a national call distribution system, which means all calls should receive a response.

In Hitchin branch we have around 90 listening volunteers and are striving to recruit and train more so we can open for more hours. Our shifts are either three or four hours long, with seven shifts each 24 hours, so our volunteer numbers generally result in **30 to 40 shifts running in an average week**. We operate an online self-rota system for a four-week period, which is issued about three weeks ahead. Volunteers are expected to cover one part-overnight shift and three daytime shifts during each rota. An effective and efficient online arrangement exists for swapping when a volunteer becomes unable to fulfil a chosen shift, enabling us to close as few shifts as possible.

In the height of the pandemic and lockdowns, a number of volunteers were isolating or shielding, and our number of shifts necessarily reduced. However, this year we are seeing a **return to good numbers** and hope this will continue.

In April 2021 we started opening three weekday 7.30 pm shifts of three hours each for **online chat** callers, in addition to telephone shifts. Listening volunteers are comprehensively trained and have a further session of training for online chat. This service is proving successful and gives an alternative means of communication for callers uncomfortable with or unable to speak to us by phone.

Our volunteers come from different age groups and walks of life but form a very supportive team working together towards the same goal – supporting those in distress or despair in the hopes that our service will be of some help.

## Training

In the 2021–2022 financial year, a **record number of new volunteers** successfully applied to become active listening volunteers at our branch. All of those 40 volunteers underwent our extensive initial (Core) training, with sessions delivered via Zoom, and gave very positive feedback on the training they received.

Our training team ran **four Continuous Development sessions**, using a combination of face-to-face and Zoom sessions. With outreach activities resuming as Covid restrictions eased, we needed to find ways to deliver the additional training required by all volunteers delivering emotional support outside of the branch, before which our trainers needed to receive the relevant training. The team overcame these challenges, and by the end of this financial year, 15 of our volunteers were ready to undertake outreach activities.

Another challenge, faced by most Samaritans branches nationwide, is the recruitment and training of **Leaders**, who support listening volunteers during and after each shift. In 2021–2022 the training team prepared five new leaders for this vital role.

Another highly experienced volunteer took over as deputy director for training in February 2022. Peter has ambitious plans for 2022–2023, including resuming face-to-face delivery of some Core training sessions; and improving the processes between recruitment/selection and training, while also remaining an active member of the east region's Regional Training Team.

## Volunteer support

As the pandemic restrictions began to lift, many of the volunteers on Covid leave felt able to return to the branch to resume listening shifts. We felt it was very important to make sure all returning volunteers felt **safe and well supported** on their return. We spoke to all returning volunteers to see what we could put in place to help ease them back into the branch. For some this was additional training, while many were allocated an experienced buddy volunteer for their first few shifts back. Some, who were still nervous about returning, opted to do shifts with a chosen volunteer until they felt safe to mix with additional people.

Following guidelines from SCO, in July 2021 we were eventually able to **remove the half-hour gap between shifts**, which had been in place to reduce contact between volunteers. This return to increased interaction significantly lifted morale amongst our volunteers, in addition to **increasing our hours of support**.

Supporting all our volunteers, whether they are actively taking shifts or on leave of absence, is vitally important in making them feel valued and appreciated. This helps maintain our high retention level, allowing us to continue delivering the optimum level of support for our callers.

## Financial review

The financial statements cover the 12 months to 31 March 2022. Total income amounted to £13,236, compared with £60,908 in the previous year, when we had extraordinary support from grants.

Once again, self-generated income was much reduced due to the restrictions imposed by Covid; we managed to utilise the reserves and grants from previous years to keep the branch going without having to touch our long-term reserves.

Total expenditure of £33,649 has decreased against the previous year of £41,532. Costs were incurred in completing the branch fire safety commitments for volunteers, which is always an imperative. Governance costs of £11,221 include the accrued figure of £3,513 of contribution to SCO, due under our operating agreement with them. The operating deficit for the year, including gains/losses on investment, amounted to a shortfall of £26,131, compared with a surplus of £20,578 in 2020/21. The financial market has been very unstable this year, which has led to a fall in the value on the investments, but the trustees have discussed and decided to keep invested for the long term.

The accumulated general reserves, which exclude fixed assets (see page 15), amounted to £85,608 (2020/21: £111,738), which, in representing more than one year's normal expenditure, is considered by the trustees to adequately meet the needs of the branch for the foreseeable future.

The total net assets of £103,209 is held in both bank deposits and investments (the latter valued at £76,357 as at 31 March 2022).

The trustees are mindful of a need to move to premises when a suitable property becomes available and are maintaining reserves for this purpose (see 'Future plans' below). The title to the freehold premises is held by Samaritans as custodian trustee and the charity, subject to a trust deed in respect of its premises.

## Reserves

The trustees reviewed and updated the Financial Reserves Policy in the year since the last review and agreed a minimum level of six months and a maximum of 18 months of free reserves, to allow the branch to continue operating without financial income for that period without releasing long-term reserves or requiring assistance from SCO. This has been monitored on a regular basis. The trustees will continue to review the reserves policy on an annual basis.

In the period from March 2021, the trustees have taken full account of the Charity Commission advice on the use of reserves. Cash flow projections indicate that Samaritans of North Herts & Stevenage will end the financial year (2022/23) with unrestricted funds above the minimum reserves level.

## Risk management

The trustees have a duty to identify and review the risks to which the charity is exposed. At their meetings, they carry out this duty and ensure appropriate controls are in place and any necessary action is taken to mitigate such risks.

Many of the protocols put in place in March 2020 at the start of the Covid outbreak remained in force during the 2021–22 year to keep volunteers safe. These measures are regularly reviewed as guidance is provided by SCO.

In addition, a risk register has been developed during this financial year, and it is reviewed regularly by trustees at their meetings.

## Future plans

Cash flow estimates indicate Samaritans of North Herts & Stevenage will maintain the minimum reserves level throughout 2022/23 whilst meeting all financial commitments.

At the time of writing, although all restrictions have been lifted in England since 19 July 2021, Covid outbreaks remain a concern. Under guidance from SCO, face-to-face support for our callers has not resumed. Similarly, for both safety and practical reasons, trustees continue to conduct meetings online.

Our outreach activities and fundraising have started to increase, with additional precautions advised to ensure the safety of both service users and volunteers.

The trustees continue to look for a property more suited to the long-term growth of the branch and with full disability access.

## Structure, governance and management

Samaritans of North Herts & Stevenage became a charitable incorporated organisation (CIO), governed by constitution, on 22 June 2017. Trustees have a limit of six-year terms; except the director, who serves a three-year term, which can be extended by up to 12 months by the approval of SCO's board of trustees.

The day-to-day operation of the activities of the branch are controlled by the director, with the support of deputy directors. The director is appointed by the branch committee, under the recommendation of a consensus of the members of the branch and with approval from SCO.

The trustee committee is responsible for fundraising, the approval of expenditure, and the maintenance of the branch premises and equipment. Committee members/trustees are either elected or ex officio and serve as trustees for a period of no more than six years. Ex-officio committee members are appointed or stand down at the annual general meeting each year.

The trustees meet at least six times a year. All trustee meetings in the year have used Zoom, in accordance with constitutional and legal requirements.

## Recruitment of trustees

Ilsa Hawtin was branch director and chair of trustees throughout the 2021–22 financial year.

New trustees are identified either through an open recruitment from the membership base, or by recommendation or selection for their skill and abilities. Appointments are subject to the approval of a quorum of members. On appointment, new trustees are provided with the information recommended by the Charity Commission. They receive Samaritans-specific training, as well as access to general trustee training, as part of their induction.

Additional trustees, including a branch secretary, were appointed at an EGM in April 2021. After this, the new trustee board conducted a skills review during the 2021–22 financial year, confirming they had the necessary representation to operate effectively.

## Governance

Over the 12 months of this review, the trustees carried out regular reviews of Samaritans standard policies, as required by SCO, and were able to advise to SCO that we are adhering to central guidance regarding governance, finance, data protection, and health and safety. We introduced policies to cover conflicts of interest, financial controls and data protection; and we continue to focus on governance. At the time of writing, new policies on fire safety and fundraising have been drafted for approval.

Samaritans of North Herts & Stevenage does not employ professional fundraisers in any capacity, and no complaints regarding fundraising were received for the period of this review.

## Statement of trustees' responsibilities

The trustees are responsible for preparing the trustees' review and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom accounting standards. The Charity Commission requires the trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year that give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charity and of the incoming resources and application of resources, including the income and expenditure for that period. In preparing these financial statements, the trustees are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently
- observe the principles in the Charities SORP 2019
- make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent
- prepare the financial statements on a going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charity will continue in operation

The trustees are responsible for keeping proper accounting records that disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charity to enable them, as a matter of good practice, to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP 2019) applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Statement FRS 102. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charity and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

## Reference and administration – 1 April 2021 to 31 March 2022

Samaritans of North Herts & Stevenage – registered charity number 1173578

The committee members who served as trustees in the period were as follows:

Ilsa Hawtin	Director	Appointed 1 January 2021
Graham Sutton	Treasurer	Appointed 31 January 2020, re-appointed 22 November 2021
Barbara Haines		Resigned 14 April 2021
Steven Harrison		Resigned 14 April 2021
Valerie Docking		Resigned 14 April 2021
Jan Gosling		Resigned 14 April 2021
Jude Brooks		Appointed 1 November 2020, re-appointed 22 November 2021, resigned April 24 2022
Alan Chaney		Appointed 3 Sept 2019, re-appointed 22 November 2021
Sandra Oakes		Appointed 1 November 2020, re-appointed 22 November 2021, resigned 14 September 2022
Kate Adams		Appointed 14 April 2021, re-appointed 22 November 2021
Tim Coulson		Appointed 14 April 2021, re-appointed 22 November 2021
Fiona Pearce	Secretary	Appointed 14 April 2021, re-appointed 22 November 2021



Charity bank account      Barclays Bank, Leicester, LE87 2BB

Independent examiner      Tara Aldwin ACA, FKCA Limited, 260–270 Butterfield, Great Marlings,  
Butterfield Business Park, Luton, LU2 8DL  
(Appointed 27 July 2022)

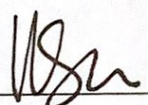
Charity registered address      5 Nuns Close, Hitchin, Herts, SG5 1EP

Contact telephone number      01462 453100

Website      [www.samaritans.org/branches/hitchin](http://www.samaritans.org/branches/hitchin)


The trustees declare that they have approved the trustees' review up to and including page 12.

Signed on behalf of the charity's trustees:

Signed:  (Signature of authorised person)

Date: 25/11/22

**Ilsa Hawtin, chair of trustee board** (Name and position of authorised person)

Signed:  (Signature of authorised person)

Date: 25/11/22

**Graham Sutton, treasurer** (Name and position of authorised person)

## Independent examiner's report

### to the trustees of Samaritans of North Herts & Stevenage

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of Samaritans of North Herts and Stevenage (the charity) for the year ended 31 March 2022.

### Respective responsibilities and basis of report

As the charity trustees of the Charity you are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements 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 the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under Section 145(5)(b) of the Act.

### Independent examiner's statement

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no material matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination giving me cause to believe that:

- accounting records were not kept in respect of the Charity as required by section 130 of the Act; or
- the accounts do not accord with those records; or
- the accounts do not comply with the applicable requirements concerning the form and content of the 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.



**Tara Aldwin ACA  
FKCA LIMITED  
Chartered Accountants**

260–270 Butterfield  
Great Marlings  
Luton  
Beds  
LU2 8DL

25/4/2022

# Financial accounts and notes for the year ended 31 March 2022

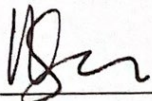
		Fixed asset cover fund	Designated general fund	Unrestricted general fund	2021/22 Total funds	2020/21 Total funds
		£	£	£	£	£
<b>Incoming resources from generated funds</b>						
Christmas card sale		-	-	98	98	-
Interest income		-	-	2,516	2,516	-
Prison income		-	-	(438)	(438)	(1,040)
Donations		-	-	851	851	22,928
Generated income, including from Friends of Samaritans		-	-	1,755	1,755	9,580
Grants income		-	-	8,000	8,000	29,440
Gift Aid		-	-	454	454	-
<b>Total incoming resources from charitable activities</b>		-	-	13,236	13,236	60,908
Costs of generating funds	2	-	645	1,415	2,060	2,440
Charitable activities	3	-	5,156	15,212	20,368	21,102
Governance costs	4	-	645	10,576	11,221	17,990
<b>Total resources expended</b>		-	6,446	27,203	33,649	41,532
<b>Net surplus/(deficit)</b>		-	(6,446)	(13,967)	(20,413)	19,376
(Loss)/Gain on investment		-	-	(5,718)	(5,718)	1,202
<b>Net movement in funds</b>		-	(6,446)	(19,685)	(26,131)	20,578
<b>Funds brought forward</b>		17,601	11,466	100,273	129,340	108,762
<b>Funds carried forward</b>		17,601	5,020	80,588	103,209	129,340


## Balance sheet at 31 MARCH 2022



	31 Mar 2022 £	31 Mar 2021 £
<b>FIXED ASSETS</b>		
<b>Tangible assets</b>		
Building renovation – cost	14,808	14,808
Building renovation – accumulated depreciation	(14,808)	(14,808)
Freehold property – cost	17,601	17,601
Office equipment	16,647	13,173
Less accumulated depreciation on office equipment	(13,868)	(13,173)
<b>Total tangible assets</b>	<b>20,380</b>	<b>17,601</b>
<b>Fixed asset investments</b>		
BLK Charities UK Bond Fund 00005085	76,357	80,118
<b>Total fixed assets</b>	<b>96,737</b>	<b>97,719</b>
<b>CURRENT ASSETS</b>		
<b>Cash at bank and in hand</b>		
Barclays Community Account 63678547	8,418	44,366
<b>Total cash at bank and in hand</b>	<b>8,418</b>	<b>44,366</b>
Sundry debtors	3,056	6,867
<b>Total current assets</b>	<b>11,474</b>	<b>51,233</b>
<b>CREDITORS: AMOUNTS FALLING DUE WITHIN ONE YEAR</b>		
Accounts payable	289	-
Accruals	4,713	19,612
<b>Total creditors: amounts falling due within one year</b>	<b>5,002</b>	<b>19,612</b>
<b>Net current assets</b>	<b>6,472</b>	<b>31,621</b>
<b>Total assets less current liabilities</b>	<b>103,209</b>	<b>129,340</b>
<b>Net assets</b>	<b>103,209</b>	<b>129,340</b>
<b>CAPITAL AND RESERVES</b>		
Designated funds	5,020	11,466
Fixed asset cover fund	17,601	17,601
General funds	80,588	100,273
<b>Total capital and reserves</b>	<b>103,209</b>	<b>129,340</b>

These financial statements were approved by the trustees on 25 November 2022 and signed on their behalf by:

  
(Ilsa Hawtin, chair of trustees)

  
(Graham Sutton, treasurer)

## Notes to the accounts for the year ended 31 March 2022

### Accounting policies

- (a) These accounts have been prepared under the historical cost convention as modified by the revaluation of investments to market value and in accordance with applicable accounting standards and the Statement of Recommended Practice on Accounting by Charities ('Charities SORP'), (effective 1 January 2019).
- (b) Voluntary income received by way of donations and gifts is included in the statement of financial activities (SOFA) when received. Gifts in kind are valued and brought in as income.
- (c) Gross fund-raising income from events organised by the charity itself is included in the SOFA when received. Where deemed material, fund-raising proceeds not yet received by the charity at the year end have also been taken to income at the trustees' estimate of likely receivable amount.
- (d) Covenant, gift aid and other income received by the charity in respect of which a claim for payment of tax has or will be made is grossed up for the tax recoverable and the gross amount recognised in the SOFA.
- (e) Income from legacies is included in the SOFA when received or when the trustees are satisfied the charity has a legally enforceable right of receipt of a conservatively measured sum.
- (f) Revenue grants for immediate financial support and assistance are recognised in the SOFA on receipt and on satisfaction of pre-conditions.
- (g) Net fund-raising income raised by Friends of Samaritans of North Herts & Stevenage is recognised in the SOFA on receipt by the charity as part of the Friends overall contribution, and the associated fund-raising costs separately disclosed in a note.
- (h) Premises overheads are aggregated and allocated to the various functional activities of the charity on a percentage basis determined by the trustees and disclosed in a note.
- (i) Any costs which cannot be specifically identified to another functional activity of the charity are included in the management and administration function.
- (j) Depreciation is provided on all tangible fixed assets of material value held by the charity for its own use on a straight line basis so as to write off their cost over their estimated useful lives as follows:
 

Freehold property	Nil
Building renovation costs	20% p.a.
Office equipment and furniture	20% p.a.
- (k) No provision for taxation is included in the accounts as the charity is entitled to the exemption from tax afforded by Section 505 of the Income and Corporation Taxes Act 1988.
- (l) Funds held by the charity are either:
  - Unrestricted general funds – these are funds that can be used in accordance with the charitable objects at the discretion of the trustees.
  - Designated funds – these are funds set aside by the trustees out of unrestricted general funds for specific future purposes or projects.
  - Restricted funds – these are funds than 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

£                      £                      £                      £

	2021/22 designated	2021/22 unrestricted	2021/22 total	2020/21 total
<b>1. PREMISES OVERHEADS</b>				
Rates and water rates	-	206	206	325
Power and heat	-	3,194	3,194	2,761
Repairs and renewals	5,654	5,433	11,087	7,266
Cleaning and housekeeping	26	288	314	3,794
Equipment repairs and replacements	766	108	874	3,903
IT Support	-	1,998	1,998	5,315
Office telephone and postage	-	697	697	222
Insurance and legal costs	-	799	799	814
Independent examiner's fees	-	1,325	1,325	-
Operating lease fees	-	100	100	-
<b>Total for the year</b>	<b>6,446</b>	<b>14,148</b>	<b>20,594</b>	<b>24,400</b>
<b>Allocated to:</b>				
Costs of generating funds	645	1,415	2,060	2,440
Charitable activities	5,156	11,318	16,474	19,520
Governance costs	645	1,415	2,060	2,440
<b>Total allocations for the year</b>	<b>6,446</b>	<b>14,148</b>	<b>20,594</b>	<b>24,400</b>
<b>2. COSTS OF GENERATING FUNDS</b>				
Share of premises overheads (see detail 1)	645	1,415	2,060	2,440
<b>Total for the year</b>	<b>645</b>	<b>1,415</b>	<b>2,060</b>	<b>2,440</b>
<b>3. CHARITABLE ACTIVITIES</b>				
Emergency telephone	-	849	849	534
Volunteer travel expenses	-	242	242	686
Volunteer training	-	211	211	326
Advertising	-	-	-	36
Outreach	-	102	102	-
Conference fees	-	2,490	2,490	-
<b>Total activities</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>3,894</b>	<b>3,894</b>	<b>1,582</b>
Share of premises overheads (see detail 1)	5,156	11,318	16,474	19,520
<b>Total for the year</b>	<b>5,156</b>	<b>15,212</b>	<b>20,368</b>	<b>21,102</b>

	£	£	£	£
	2021/22 designated	2021/22 unrestricted	2021/22 total	2020/21 total
<b>4. GOVERNANCE COSTS</b>				
Printing, stationery and photocopying	-	974	974	-
Bank fees	-	20	20	-
Depreciation expense	-	695	695	-
Gifts and sundry expenses	-	5,023	5,023	662
<b>Total activities</b>	-	6,712	6,712	662
Contribution to SCO support costs	-	2,449	2,449	14,888
Share of premises overheads (see detail 1 )	645	1,415	2,060	2,440
<b>Total for the year</b>	645	10,576	11,221	17,990

	Freehold property £	Building renovation £	Office equipment & furniture £	Total £
<b>5. TANGIBLE FIXED ASSETS</b>				
<b>Cost</b>				
At 1 April 2021	17,601	14,808	13,173	45,582
Additions	-	-	3,474	3,474
Disposals	-	-	-	-
At 31 March 2022	17,601	14,808	16,647	49,056
<b>Depreciation</b>				
At 1 April 2021	-	14,808	13,173	27,981
Charge for the period	-	-	695	695
Disposals	-	-	-	-
At 31 March 2022	-	14,808	13,868	28,676
<b>Net book value</b> 31 March 2022	17,601	-	2,779	20,380
31 March 2021	17,601	-	-	17,601

	Cost £	Market value £
<b>6. LISTED INVESTMENT FUNDS</b>		
At 1 April 2021	48,148	80,118
Investment income	-	1,957
Change in market value	-	(5,718)
<b>At 31 March 2022</b>	48,148	76,357

	2021/22 £	2020/21 £
<b>7. SUNDRY DEBTORS</b>		
Sundry debtors	3,056	6,867
<b>Total sundry debtors</b>	3,056	6,867



<b>8. CREDITORS</b>	<b>2021/22</b>	<b>2020/21</b>
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
Trade creditors	289	-
Accruals	4,713	19,612
<b>Total sundry debtors</b>	<b>5,002</b>	<b>19,612</b>

## 9. TRUSTEES' REMUNERATION AND EXPENSES

None of the charity's trustees were directly or indirectly remunerated in any way. It is the policy of the charity to reimburse in full all expenses properly incurred by its volunteers in connection with its charitable activities. During the year, the total amount reimbursed to the trustees and members of the charity's management committee in respect of travel costs for attending meetings, telephone, postage and similar expenses is included in note 4.

## 10. INDEMNITY INSURANCE

Samaritans has centrally effected professional indemnity insurance to protect employees, trustees, members of the charity's management committee and other volunteer members of all Samaritans branches.

## 11. DESIGNATED FUNDS

Fixed asset cover fund – represents funds designated to cover the cost of the charity's freehold property.

Designated general funds – represents funds designated for projects and improvements beyond normal annual expenditure.

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# SAMARITANS