



HERTS AND ESSEX (WARE) SAMARITANS

TRUSTEES ANNUAL REPORT YEAR TO 31 MARCH 2023

BRANCH ACTIVITIES AND FINANCE REPORT

Herts and Essex (Ware) Samaritans is an independent charity affiliated with Samaritans, a National organization whose vision is that no one dies by suicide. Our mission is to make sure there's someone there for anyone who needs someone, to give people ways to cope and the skills to be there for others, and to campaign to make suicide prevention a national and local priority.

Our branch is based in Ware, in Hertfordshire and as well as assisting with the National helpline on the phone and via chatlines, we also reach out to our local communities in East Hertfordshire and West Essex. As a small charity we have regard to the Charity Commission guidance on public benefit and consider that our activities are for the public benefit.

We are entirely voluntarily funded by a mixture of donations, legacies, grants, and fundraising activities.

FINANCE REPORT

Our total income for 2022/23 was £41,324, from donations, legacies, charitable activities and grant income. We thank all contributors for their essential financial support which enables the branch to operate and support our communities. We remain grateful to Herts County Council and PohWer for their continued annual support. The trustees recognise that the main risks faced by the charity, are in terms of receiving ongoing funding

We wish to thank all our volunteer fundraisers for their ongoing commitment and efforts, especially the Friends of Ware Samaritans, led by Joyce 249 and Brian 77, and the 300 Club managed by Vivien 22 which ensure we can continue to raise much needed funds for the branch.

Our regular operating costs for the year were £39,075 which are back at pre Covid levels with the exception of additional salary costs paid to our part time employee and our cleaner. We recruited a part time administrative assistant in March 2022, to assist our Director and Branch Leadership team and have also recruited a cleaner to keep our property up to the standard that our volunteers deserve. Apart from this we have no paid staff and are very grateful to our volunteers for their time freely given. It has been estimated that the employment cost of our volunteers would exceed £835,000.

We were also in a position, based on surplus income from previous years to contribute to specific projects including building alterations costing £10,025 to allow us to have an additional duty room for chat duties, a one off contribution to a Central Office VOIP project of £40,000 (see below) and the cost of £15,000 for financing the Gypsy, Romany, Traveller project (see below).

We have paid a Branch Contribution to Samaritans Central Office during the year of £17,271 as an affiliated branch, as stated in note c to the Accounts. This was based on a formula related to our income, expenses, and reserves for 2021/22 and contributes to phone lines, marketing, governance and ongoing support.

The Voice Over Internet Protocol (VOIP) project is a necessary project headed by SCO recognizing that by 2025 traditional copper landlines are being phased out and all calls will be taken over the internet. As you will appreciate, the cost of changing the phone lines for the entire organization is huge, and we were very happy to be able to offer ourselves as a pilot branch, so that most of our phone lines have been transferred over, and also to contribute to the cost of this project.

Full details of the Gypsy, Romany, Traveller project were detailed in the Annual report for 2021/22. The branch was in a fortunate position to be able to fund two short videos, one depicting a scripted telephone conversation by a male individual, played by an actor, who lived within one of the communities and a Samaritans volunteer; and the other detailing a conversation between one of our volunteers, Alister 220 and Claire Rice, the project manager at GATE Herts, who also spoke at our 2022 AGM, in which they discussed the relevant concerns within the community and how we could try and reach out and bridge the gap. The videos were launched in March 2023 and have currently had over 30,000 views on YouTube. Susannah 178, our ex Branch Director, was invited to speak in the Houses of Parliament, representing Samaritans, in September 2023, to discuss our involvement in the project in line with two All Party Parliamentary Groups - APPG on Suicide and Self-Harm Prevention together with the APPG for Gypsies, Travellers and Roma. We continue to work closely with GATE Herts and Samaritans Central Office to try to extend our reach.

The net effect of the above income and costs resulted in a net deficit for the year of £84,461, as a result of a mismatch in timing between receiving donations and spending funds. However, during the tenure of this 3 year Branch Directorship under Susannah 178's successful steer, the branch was able to add over £70,000 to its reserves, even taking into account the contributions to exceptional projects, due to the generosity of our donors and grants obtained, in particular during Covid. This leaves the branch in a very good position, now that we are fully functioning post Covid, to be able to reach out to the community, maintain our branch to a good standard, and to support our volunteers enabling them to ultimately support our callers and local communities.

As at 31 March 2023 we held cash reserves of £15,027 to cover future short-term commitments.

Surplus funds, not needed to meet our immediate needs, are invested in a Common Investment Fund (CIF) for Endowments managed by Sarasin and Partners Investment Managers. The invested and reinvested funds at 31 March 2023 had a market value of £178,675. We made a withdrawal from our investment of £30,000 to enable us to make a contribution to Samaritans Central Office towards the VOIP project. The investments did fall in value during the year due to the current financial crisis. We are aware that our future income is exposed to the threat of the ongoing economic situation and may impact all our donors and other sources of income.

The trustees consider that the liquid reserves held of £193,702 are sufficient to enable us to continue with our mission both nationally and locally, and to enable us to maintain our premises to a good standard.

GOVERNANCE AND TRUSTEES

Herts and Essex (Ware) Samaritans is registered with the Charity Commission under registered number 1173717, and its registered office is at 1 Cross Street, Ware, SG12 7AH and is governed by its Constitution alongside a Branch Agreement with Samaritans Central Office.

The Branch Directors are appointed trustees of the charity. Other trustees are appointed by the members at the Annual General Meeting and they are appointed until the next Annual General Meeting when they resign. The Branch Secretary and the Treasurer must be trustees appointed by the members.

The charity has a maximum of 13 trustees.

The trustees that were in place in 2022/23 and since that date are as follows:

Branch Director:

Susannah Fenton (resigned 31 March 2023)

Jill Milner (appointed 1 April 2023)

Morisha Christy*

Treasurer:

Carol Tittensor

Branch Secretary:

Vicky Jordan (resigned 31 March 2023)

Liz Doughty (appointed 1 April 2023, resigned 9 September 2023)

Other trustees:

Jenny Barnes (appointed 21 September 2022)

George Goldspink

Emma Harrison

Guya Persaud

Mike Tarpey

Jodie Wheatley

*currently acting as Branch secretary

INVESTMENT POLICY

Our approach to investment risk requires a diversified portfolio for our investments with the asset allocation as at 31 March 2023 being Fixed Income 14.5%, Equities 64.6%, Property 4.3% and other 16.6% including liquid assets. The geographic allocation is 42.1% UK, 31.3% North America, Europe 9.4% and 17.2% being the Rest of the World. Our CIF for

Endowments is specifically for charities and stocks are selected using ethical criteria by qualified investment managers.

The Trustees review this investment policy annually and to ensure that it remains fit for purpose by reviewing the quarterly reports of our Investment Managers, attending their annual Spring Seminar and the annual Autumn Review of the CIF fund to gain insight into their market perspectives and seeking additional advice if required.

INDEPENDENT EXAMINER

The Accounts were independently examined by Sylvia Jenkins. The Examiners report to the Trustees, dated 25 September 2023, is available from the Secretary.

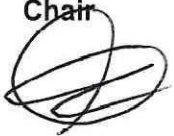
A resolution for the reappointment of Sylvia Jenkins will be proposed at the next Annual General Meeting. We are very grateful for Sylvia's continued support.

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

Signed on behalf of the charity's trustees on 23 October 2023



Jill Milner
Chair



Morisha Christy
Co Branch Director

HERTS ESSEX (WARE) SAMARITANS
Statement of Assets and Liabilities as at 31st March 2023

	Note	2023 £	2022 £
FIXED ASSETS (at Cost)			
Freehold Property - 1 Cross Street, Ware		270,529	270,529
Capitalised Development Costs		<u>258,269</u>	<u>258,269</u>
		528,798	528,798
INVESTMENTS (Market Value)			
Sarasin & Partners CIF for Endowments b/f		216,125	111,996
(Loss)/Gain in Year		(7,450)	4,129
(Sold)/Invested in Year		<u>(30,000)</u>	<u>100,000</u>
		178,675	216,125
CURRENT ASSETS			
Bank Balances			
Lloyds Bank plc - Current Account		13,356	68,142
Barclays - Friends account		1,329	854
Barclays - 300 Club account		342	492
Petty Cash		<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>
		15,027	69,488
TOTAL NET ASSETS		<u>722,500</u>	<u>814,411</u>
THE FUNDS OF THE CHARITY:			
THE FUNDS OF THE CHARITY:			
Restricted funds (after expenses)	d	38,898	54,457
Designated Reserves			
Freehold Property on acquisition - 1 Cross St		270,529	270,529
Development cost to date		<u>258,269</u>	<u>258,269</u>
Total Fixed Asset reserve		528,798	528,798
Major Property maintenance Fund	e	<u>48,975</u>	<u>59,000</u>
General Fund		<u>105,829</u>	<u>172,156</u>
Total unrestricted funds	f	683,602	759,954
TOTAL CHARITY FUNDS		<u>722,500</u>	<u>814,411</u>

Approved by the Trustees and signed on their behalf:

Morisha Christy.....

Carol Tittensor.....

HERTS ESSEX (WARE) SAMARITANS
Receipts and Payments for the year ending 31st March 2023

Note

		General fund £	Designated funds £	Restricted funds £	2022/23 Total £	2021/22 Total £
RECEIPTS	b					
Donations		16,343	3,766		20,109	105,385
Legacies		1,000			1,000	500
Restricted Funds		0			0	0
Charitable activities:	Friends of Samaritans	10,475			10,475	10,326
	Grants Income	7,500			7,500	8,000
	Other income (Vodafone refund)	0			0	3,980
	Branch events				0	0
Other trading activities:	300 Club	2,150			2,150	2,142
TOTAL RECEIPTS		37,468	3,766	0	41,234	130,333
PAYMENTS	b					
Emergency Telephones		717			717	802
Volunteers Training & Support		5,395	3,766		9,161	4,376
Publicity & Outreach		2,373			2,373	3,029
Stationery & Postage		1,413			1,413	344
Water, Light & Heat		3,445			3,445	2,346
Household Expenses		3,289			3,289	1,791
Repairs, Renewals & Servicing		4,272			4,272	2,756
Equipment Purchase & Hire		5,782			5,782	3,337
Office telephone		839			839	768
Governance Costs		1,755			1,755	421
Insurance & Legal		1,094			1,094	1,009
Salary costs		8,701			8,701	520
COVID 19 specific costs				559	559	2,561
Cross Street alterations			10,025		10,025	0
Gypsy, Romany, Traveller project				15,000	15,000	0
Contribution to VOIP project		40,000			40,000	0
Contribution to SCO	c	17,271			17,271	31,178
TOTAL PAYMENTS		96,346	13,791	15,559	125,696	55,238
NET INCOME SURPLUS / (DEFICIT) for the Year		(58,877)	(10,025)	(15,559)	(84,461)	75,095
Gains / (Loss) on Investment assets		(7,450)			(7,450)	4,129
MOVEMENT IN FUNDS		(66,327)	(10,025)	(15,559)	(91,911)	79,224
RESERVE BALANCES at start of Year		172,156	587,798	54,457	814,411	735,187
RESERVE BALANCES at end of Year		105,829	577,773	38,898	722,500	814,411

THE SAMARITANS, HERTS AND ESSEX (WARE) BRANCH

INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT TO THE TRUSTEES

I report on the accounts for the year ended 31 March 2023, which are set out on the two pages attached hereto.

Respective responsibilities of trustees and examiner

As the charity's trustees you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts; you consider that the audit requirement of section 43(2) of the Charities Act 1993 (the Act) does not apply. It is my responsibility to state, on the basis of the procedures specified in the General Directions given by the Charity Commissions under section 43(7)(b) of the Act, whether particular matters have come to my attention.

Basis of the independent examiner's report

My examination was carried out in accordance with the General Directions given by the Charity Commissioners. An examination includes a review of the accounting records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the account, and seeking explanations from you as trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit, and consequently I do not express an audit opinion on the view given by the accounts.

Independent examiner's statement

In connection with my examination, no matter has come to my attention:

1. which gives reasonable cause to believe that in any material respect the requirements:
to keep accounting records in accordance with section 41 of the Act, and
to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and to
comply with the accounting requirements of the Act

have not been met, or

2. to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.



Sylvia A Jenkins,
Mimram House
Tewin Water
Welwyn
HERTS
AL6 0AB

25 September 2023