



Liberty Choir UK

Registered Charity Number: 1173799

Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31 December 2023

Liberty Choir UK
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For the Year Ended 31st December 2023

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LIBERTY CHOIR UK

Trustees Annual Report

For the period 1 January 2023 to 31 December 2023



Full Name: Liberty Choir UK

Legal Structure: Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO)

Foundation Model: Registered charity number 1173799

Principal Address: Jackson Hall, Portland Place, Hastings, East Sussex TN34 1QN J

Trustees

Pia Sinha - elected 2023

Oliver Huggins - elected 2023

Jennifer Holden - elected 2023

Alexandra Felix - elected 2020

Sheila Jones - elected 2018

Paul Webster - elected 2018

Founders

MJ Paranzino

Ginny Dougary

Bankers

Lloyds Bank, PO Box 132, 1 Butler Place, Westminster SW1H OPR

Independent Examiner

Steve Sampson BFP FCA FCIE DChA - Ashdown Hurrey Auditors Limited, 20 Havelock Rd, Hastings, TN34 1BP

Governance and Management

The charity is operated under the rules of its constitution adopted 13 July 2017 and registered with the Charity Commission as a Charitable Incorporated Organisation. Trustees are elected for three years on a rotational basis. Any trustee retiring after their three-year term is eligible for re-election.

The day-to-day running of the organisation is delegated to a team, with the trustees being responsible for the strategic direction of the organisation.

Trustee Induction and Training

The methods adopted for the recruitment and appointment of new trustees are as laid down in the constitution. All potential trustees are interviewed, follow an induction process, and sign an eligibility declaration on election to the position of trustee. Trustees are invited to join the board because of their skills, knowledge and expertise.

All trustees are expected to have experienced the programme and supported fundraising initiatives within the first year of being a trustee.

Aims and Objectives

[Liberty Choir](#) is a full-circle charity celebrating its 10th year of bringing volunteers from community choirs and prisoners together in song. Strong supportive links between volunteers and prisoners are forged and nurtured behind prison bars and then blossom out 'through the gate' and into the community upon release. Brainchild of co-founders MJ Paranzino and Ginny Dougary, since our inception back in 2014, Liberty Choir has sung with over 2000+ prisoners in London, Surrey and East Sussex. An experience that transforms lives - not just those of the prisoners themselves, but those of their families and of their wider communities.

Liberty Choir acts as the bridge between prison and the community which is fundamental to successfully breaking the cycle of reoffending. Liberty Choir's vision is to help those who have been marginalised by imprisonment to find a voice and to feel connected, to be able to belong, and ultimately, to be able to strive for success in the community. Through the Liberty Choir Music Programme, choir attendees have the opportunity to learn key social skills such as building positive relationships, communicating, teamwork, listening, and reading, as well as social history, musical theory, and coordination. Liberty Choir helps prisoners build their self-esteem and self-confidence, opening doors to rewarding challenges such as an annual Friends & Family Concert (an essential part of the re-integration process) which provides an opportunity for prisoners to demonstrate a new discipline in their lives and re-affirm those bonds with family members which prepares them for release. According to the MoJ Farmer Review (2017), the odds of reoffending being 39% lower for prisoners who receive visits from family members.

Once released into the community, ex-offenders are welcomed into our network of community choirs where they are supported by our volunteers who help with a range of practical as well as emotional needs including probation appointments, applying for employment and education, or just to have a cup of tea and a chat with a friendly face. This connection with the community choirs also offers them the chance to perform in such illustrious places as the V&A Museum, Highclere Castle (Downton Abbey), the Curious Arts Festival and the Brighton Fringe, allowing them to expand their horizons and engage with events that may have once been completely outside their ordinary social compass. Public performances like these also can help ex-offenders rebuild bonds with the family members who come to watch them as incarceration often causes rifts in family relationships that need time and effort to restore.

Public Benefit Statement

The trustees confirm that they have complied with the duty in section 4 of the Charities Act 2011 to have due regard to the Charity Commission's general guidance on public benefit 'Charities and Public Benefit'.

The trustees are confident that Charity Commission aims, objectives and activities accommodate a range of activities that are relevant, accessible and affordable and improve and enhance the lives of people, while encouraging and developing partnerships and networks and are in accordance with the regulations on public benefit.

Liberty Choir fills a vital gap in the current prison provision at a time when prisons in the UK are at breaking point. With the highest incarceration rates in Europe, the worst reoffending rates and an 80% population explosion in the past 30 years¹, overcrowding coupled with budget cuts and extreme staff shortages have contributed to a ticking time bomb which is so serious that it has prompted an official inquiry into whether our prisons are still able to operate in a safe and purposeful way. [Channel 4 interview with Pia Sinha](#)

It is estimated that, this year, we will be fast approaching a prison population of 94,000 men and women. Men and women who are locked up in squalid conditions for 23 hours a day because it is, quite simply, just easier for an already overstretched staff. With statistics from the Prison Reform Trust showing that 67% of prisoners identify as suffering from some form of mental health disorder and suicide rates being at an all-time high², such an appalling situation is clearly untenable and detrimental to society in general when prisoners are eventually released back into the community. The 'horrific' conditions in Wandsworth, for example, have recently been highlighted in a Channel 4 report³.

Liberty Choir offers a small light of hope and purpose in a dark and increasingly chaotic place. Delivering a maximum impact service with minimum demand on prison resources, Liberty Choir provides access to an all-inclusive, high quality music programme supported by an exceptional music team and a cohort of vetted volunteers, including key-trained members to lock and unlock the many gates safely without recourse to prison staff. These volunteers are the life blood of who we are, attending choir sessions week after week and establishing a familiar routine for the inmates.

Research shows that group singing influences mood (Unwin, Kenny, & Davis, 2002), and physical health (Bungay, Clift, & Skingley, 2010). Singing has also been credited as having a positive effect on the treatment of neurological disorders. Group singing is a musical activity that has been used with marginalized populations and has a positive effect on inmate happiness (Cohen, 2009). Co-designed and developed by our informal Advisory Group of over 100 Liberty Choir Ex-Prisoner Graduates with our Music Programme Director and Board, the Liberty Choir programme is known to be used by prisons for their most challenging prisoners, from young people barely out of their teens desperately trying to beat their alcohol and drug addictions to women/mothers on the At-Risk Register.

To enhance the Liberty Choir 'through the gate' support network, we partner with organisations such as The Clink, Trailblazers and the Bounceback Project. At the beginning of this year, we began a pilot employment pathway programme with a local Brighton business,

a flagship initiative for Liberty Choir graduates with the idea of encouraging other businesses to follow suit, as the employers have committed to acting as advocates for our charity. Our positive collaborative practice has led to a commendation from the NHS Mental Health Awards.

What we do works

Improved self-esteem and mental wellbeing

The greatest testament we have to the impact of the Liberty Choir programme is from the prisoners themselves.

"I've been straight since I left prison and I can honestly say that a lot of what I experienced through the Liberty Choir in prison literally changed my life.

I no longer feel a need to take drugs to bury my head in the sand and face life head on with a different mindset completely... it's 100% down to the Liberty Choir and the support & love they showed to me in those early days that's helped me change.

I only wish that I had been given the opportunity earlier.

I was in the care system from an early age and then into the prison systems.

Meeting new people that take time out of their lives to help others was a alien concept to me. But definitely changed me for the better, I no longer hurt other people with my criminality which is a massive u-turn and have no intention of ever doing anything like that ever again."

Roy – Liberty Choir Graduate 2015

"You never know how dark it can get until you're there. I'm no gangster or hard man, least of all road man, yet I am thrust into the darkness for my deeds. There is NO light in there, and it just gets darker.

One day, I met, what can only be described as an angel, on the landing, rallying people to join the choir. I am forever indebted to the Liberty Choir, fore I can surely say - The singing saved me. These wonderful people giving up their own precious spare time to try and help elevate us. They may not have wings these people are truly angels.!

Stuart – Liberty Choir Graduate 2016



One of the starkest and most touching illustrations of how Liberty Choir impacts lives has been when prisoners look to the only materials at their disposal to give something back to the music team as a token of their appreciation and gratitude.

Clive spent 3 days making us a beautiful origami swan; he says he feels that Liberty Choir is changing him. We feel he is changing us.



Tommy presented this beautiful soap sculpture as a gift to Liberty Choir at his last session before being released. He had crafted it from standard bars of prison soap using a pen lid.

Tommy is now out in the community and has sung with the South London Choir and appeared as a guest on 48 Songs: How Music Saved My Life, Liberty Choir Radio, a year-long partnership with National Prison Radio. We are looking forward to welcoming Tommy to our next F&F Concert in Brixton.



Feedback from Liberty Choir and prison staff who witness the changes in prisoners over the course of several rehearsal sessions, report significant improvements in self-esteem and mental wellbeing. Indeed, HMP Wandsworth cites the programme as one of its most successful voluntary organisations there to date. Attendance data from HMP Coldingley shows a commitment from prisoners which, we are told informally by staff, is remarkable and HMP Send has been delighted to advise that women prisoners attending the choir session had subsequently come off the At-Risk Register, citing the programme for their significantly improved mental health.

“The introduction of Liberty Choir at HMP Send brings a much needed creative and musical outlet for our prisoners. This is particularly helpful for those feeling vulnerable, those suffering with mental health issues and those needing a safe, emotional release. A beneficial side-effect of being in a choir is the sense of cohesion and community that it brings with it.” **Sunita Dobisz, Head of Safety, HMP Send**

Improved safety and staff morale

Prison staff also appear to be affected positively by choir sessions and confirm that inmates are easier to handle afterwards. They note improvements in their confidence, eye contact, social interaction and behaviour. They are also moved by the opportunity to relate to their prisoners on a more human level.

What stuck (with) me the most is seeing the prisoners almost having an outer body experience and feeling like for that short time, they were in fact not in a jail.

Prison Officer at HMP Coldingley

The importance of improving prison safety and morale among prison staff cannot be underestimated at a time when the state of our prisons is so dire that officers are leaving their jobs in droves.⁴

Positive impact on prisoners' families

It is estimated that approximately 300,000 children are affected each year by the imprisonment of a parent⁵ with far-reaching implications for their welfare.⁶

The wife of a Liberty Choir graduate speaks of the comfort and reassurance she and her children felt knowing that her husband and their father was 'safe' and had contact with the outside world during his time in Wandsworth's Liberty Choir:

At the most difficult and distressing phase of Ross's prison sentence, the Liberty choir was able to do something for Ross that I couldn't. They could get into the prison and make sure he was alright. I called them my "Avatars... - when the kids asked about the Choir, they could see how much it lifted their Dad. It became our go to "happy topic".

Vicky Bell (Ambassador & Wife of Liberty Choir Graduate, Ross Bell)

Reduced risk of reoffending

In the words of Ian Bickers (Prison Group Director for London Prisons to December 2023), *'for every prisoner that does not reoffend, this has a positive impact on at least 100 people in the community.'*

Of the Liberty Choir graduates (Choir members who have since been released from prison) that we are still in touch with, only 2.8% have re-offended since their release. This is a staggering reduction on the national average.

"..more than two in five adults (42%) are reconvicted of another offence within one year of release...for those serving shorter sentences of less than 12 months, the rates are even higher (63%)" **Prison Reform Trust 2023**

One of our graduates, Richie, who had never spent two consecutive Christmases out of prison while his son was growing up, has now celebrated his 10th Christmas as a free man and his grandchildren have only ever known him as such. Richie celebrated the 10th anniversary of his release with his community choir in South London.



Richie's son, Ricardo, explains what it means to him to have his father back:

"Where do I start, the Liberty choir is such an important part of my life and I am eternally grateful. I spent the first 25 years of my life having to deal with my father being in and out (mostly in) the prison system. This all changed when he met MJ and the Liberty choir team. It felt like he was given a whole new purpose and perspective, that allowed him to see why we, his family mattered and loved him. These last 10 years of having him here present has meant so much to me and my family. We have the Liberty choir to thank for that."

Ricardo – Son of Liberty Choir Graduate Richie from Liberty Choir's first year in Wandsworth 2014

We are currently working on a year-long structured evaluation project with Confluence Partnerships, alongside the Royal Society of Statisticians, to better understand the full impact of our programme on prisoners, their families and wider communities upon their release. We expect to have the results of this initiative by early 2025.

Key Impact Statistics

A prison place costs £44,640 per annum (MOJ 2020). Based on an anticipated running cost per prison of £34,274 with a potential outreach over the year of 100 prisoners (allowing for natural fluctuations in attendance), the cost of Liberty Choir per capita is around £342/year. Given that an average prison term is in the region of 23 months, if Liberty Choir succeeds in preventing just one prisoner from re-offending, then the cold hard cash saving is around £85,000 even before wider social and societal benefits are considered. From these figures, we can estimate that **our graduates over the past 10 years have saved the taxpayer in the region of £8m.**

2023 – A year of Growth and Milestones

Looking Back

As we look back on our decade working in the Criminal Justice System, the 9 years that have led us to this point have been paved with golden opportunities and incredible moments. It all started in April 2014 when 15 singers from the Brighton and London community choirs entered HMP Wandsworth for our very first in-prison session funded with seed money from the Arts Council and Pink Floyd's David Gilmour. David went on to become one of our Patrons and, in 2015, invited us to perform on his hit record [Rattle That Lock](#). With personal experience of having a loved one in prison, David comments:

"I have been into prison and seen the joy the Choir brings to the prisoners and I have also met the guys singing in MJ's community choirs when they come out of prison. Now it is exciting to see it enter more prisons – which will mean more hope for prisoners and more hope for society when they come out."

Over the years, we have developed numerous high-profile press and marketing relationships that have raised awareness of our work and the appalling situation in UK prisons, including being featured twice on the BBC's flagship current affairs **Today Show, with Mishal Husain** visiting our choirs in both HMP Wandsworth and Coldingley. [Liberty Choir on the Today show](#).

We had to demonstrate extreme resilience and innovation during the lockdown period when we completely restructured our delivery; our face-to-face programme was temporarily replaced during this period with a radio programme broadcasting to over 100 prisons, care packages and volunteer letter-writing. We came out the other side of this stronger and all-the-more determined as a result of the challenges the pandemic brought to the prison system.

Since 2014, we have had the privilege of working shoulder to shoulder with more than **100 Graduates** (Liberty Choir members who have since been released), watching them rebuild their relationships with their families (see Richie's story above) and turn their lives around and onto a more purposeful trajectory.

A passionate spokesperson for our work, Liberty Choir graduate and Ambassador Ross Bell, alongside his Ambassador wife, Vicky have formed the Ramsgate Fundraising Committee in support of our cause. Ross' experience with the choir back in Wandsworth's in 2014 opened his eyes to a whole new world of arts and culture where he learned very quickly that he had an exceptional aptitude for music. Since his release, he has formed his own band, Rosco Piko and released an album including a hit single. Ross' songs have also been covered by other bands at festivals. Ross tells of his 'salvation in music' here: [Ross Bell: Salvation in Music](#).



2023: 10 years - 10 prisons

2023 has been a pivotal year for Liberty Choir in terms of growth. After a creative restructuring of our delivery during COVID and the prolonged post pandemic period, Liberty Choir re-launched our face-to-face programme in the spring of 2022 with HMP Coldingley and Brixton. In 2023 we began the year in just these 2 prisons. However, by the end of 2023, we **had launched/re-launched in a further 7 prisons**: HMP Send in January, Wandsworth in March, Lewes in May, Downview and HighDown in September and Bronzefield and Thameside in November. This has been no mean feat when the logistical implications of each launch are considered; the cooperation of the prison governor in the first instance, a steady and reliable volunteer base to underpin the sessions and, crucially, an exceptional music team to maintain the high standards that have come to be expected from the Liberty Choir programme. With HMP Pentonville coming onboard in January this year (2024) - the year of our 10th anniversary - this means that we now have an outreach in 10 prisons, 50% of London prisons, **all 5 of the Surrey prisons** and 1 in Sussex. This incredible growth is as much a testament to the stalwart support of Liberty Choir's ambassadors, Trustees and funders as it is to the hard work and dedication of our music teams.

Our Board has also grown and strengthened during 2023 with Pia Sinha, former Head of women's prisons in England and Wales coming onboard in May. We also welcomed back Oliver Huggins, Chief Risk Officer of MarketAxess, as Treasurer. The internal team has been complemented with the addition of two new faces; Kate Steere joined as Development Administrator in September 2023 and, more recently, Nialah Rowe came onboard as our Prisons Administrator.

As Liberty Choir continues to grow and strengthen, we are also **welcoming more and more 'graduates' into our community choirs**. These now exceed 100. Family members of serving prisoners are also joining our choirs on the outside to pave the way for when their loved ones are released. This shared interest gives them a bond that transcends any prison wall, offering them a positive mutual choir experience to share on their weekly prison visits.

Other links with the wider community are also being established. In particular, we are nurturing our career partnerships and forging links with both job hub organisations and businesses. One Brighton business has confirmed that they will be looking to **prioritise employment opportunities for our graduates**. This has been a particular blessing for one of our choir members at HMP Coldingley who participated in our second Friends & Family Concert (attended by other prison partners, funders, ambassadors, graduates, and other supporters, as well as the Liberty Choir men's families) in September. He was offered a position with the business upon his release in January 2024 and reports to date that he is very happy in his new role. He is also a member of MJ's Choirs in the community, receiving wraparound attention from the volunteers of Liberty Choir and spoke emotionally about this specifically at our Brixton Friends & Family concert in March.

Demonstrating our resilience and growth in a time where charities are feeling the pinch, the expansion of Liberty Choir over 2023 has been supported by a **73% increase in turnover to £349k** (our highest in 10 years of operations) with half a dozen trusts joining our repeat funders and multi-year grant providers.

2023: Events & Achievements

Liberty Choir was the subject of considerable press coverage during 2023 which was instrumental in raising our profile and promoting growth.

Our 2nd Friends & Family Concert held at HMP Coldingley on the 25th of September 2023 was, as the previous year, a moving and uplifting event for prisoners and their families alike.

Life in prison can be mundane and bland - and this shows that it is possible to do something different and be human. As a group of singers in prison, we have a really strong sense of solidarity, camaraderie and we are always looking out for one another. My sense is that the prison officers looked at us singing and suddenly we weren't just prisoners - they look at us differently, as human beings.

Matthew – Liberty Choir Member

A showcase for all the hard work, determination and commitment shown by prisoners throughout rehearsals, this concert is an event full of pride and purpose and one that we are looking forward to replicating at our 3rd concert at Coldingley this coming September.

Having never attended a Prison Concert before, I didn't know quite what to expect, but as my son was performing I wanted to be there. Once the Liberty Choir and the performers started, I realised that I was in for a treat.

Yvette – Liberty Choir Family

The concert, as always, was a remarkable experience. Witnessing men who face immense pressure due to incarceration come together to sing in harmony truly showcased the power of the Liberty Choir.

Kate - Liberty Choir Ambassador

In the autumn of 2023, Dame Sheila Hancock came into HMP Brixton's Liberty Choir and wrote about the experience in her Long Life column in Prospect magazine on 1 November.

[Sheila Hancock - Kindness is Everywhere](#)

In the lead up to Christmas, our 2nd MojoVember campaign saw supporters from all corners of the Liberty Choir network come together to undertake a 7-day sponsored challenge designed to take them outside their comfort zone. The purpose of this challenge purpose is to draw attention to the men and women who are being challenged daily by prison conditions.



Each day of the MojoVember challenge, despite being on set of 'Call the Midwife', our wonderfully creative and proactive Ambassador, Jenny Agutter wrote and performed her own haiku.

*"The light will lead us
And the darkness falls behind
Don't turn back to look"*



Mandy Duncan Smith treated us all to 'Make-up through the ages'



Kate Steere sang karaoke tunes chosen by her family and friends

Once again, this fundraising exercise was a resounding success, both raising funds and awareness and leading into our most important fundraising campaign of the year, The Big Give.

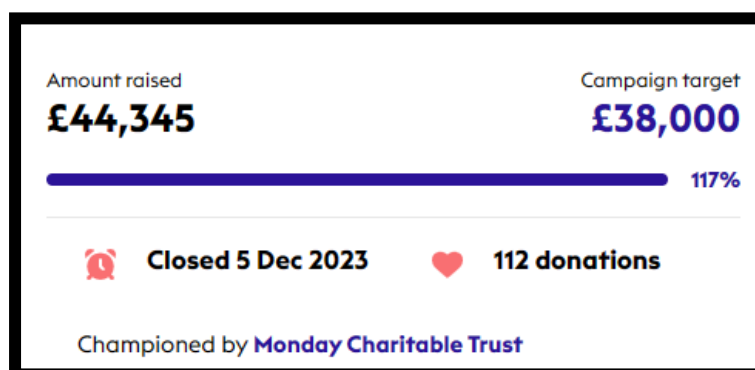
Incredibly, out of 1000s of charities, in 2023, The Big Give selected Liberty Choir as their media partner and this opened the forum for our Ambassador, Jenny Agutter to talk about her

involvement with Liberty Choir and The Big Give on Good Morning Britain and in Hello magazine.
[Jenny Agutter talks to Hello Magazine](#)



[Jenny Agutter on Good Morning Britain - YouTube 2023](#)

Each year, the Big Give Campaign allows us to double our fundraising efforts by matching every pound raised. In 2022, Liberty Choir smashed its original target of £66k, raising almost £90,000 with Gift Aid. In 2023, our target was half that of the previous year - a reflection of the tougher economic climate. However, within a day of the campaign launch, we had reached our initial target thanks to a most generous contribution from the author, Matt Haig and his wife Andrea and were subsequently able to stretch our original target after our amazing Ambassadors, Ross & Vicky Bell offered to pledge a further £4000. In all, with Gift Aid, the Big Give campaign brought nearly £52k to the Liberty Choir coffers. Considering that, behind every donation received during the Big Give Christmas Week lies a whole network of supporters, every one of them wanting to see prisons change for the better, we are confident that there is a real appetite in the public for prison reform and support.



Christmas 2023 brought with other traditional activities; carol singing in tube stations, a wonderful opportunity for all the community choir singers including Liberty Choir Graduates to come together at the V&A museum in London in true Christmas spirit, sporting their Christmas jumpers and other festive attire.



Finally, to cap off a most exciting and productive year, Liberty Choir was featured as one of the Christmas Countdown Choirs on BBC Radio London ([BBC Radio London - Christmas Choir Sing Out](#)), singing out the year with Christmas (Baby Please Come Home) – a most poignant and fitting reminder of the impact of imprisonment on the families of prisoners at Christmastime.

Looking Forward

2024, our 10th anniversary year opened with a bang with us launching into our 10th prison, HMP Pentonville, in late January.

Already this year, we are delighted to have held our 1st Friends and Family concert at HMP Brixton in March 2024 and are preparing for a 3rd concert at HMP Coldingley in the Autumn and a 1st at HMP Bronzefield later this year.

Our focus this year will be to further preliminary discussions with new prisons to add to our 10 as well as exploring possible satellite choirs elsewhere in England.

We will also be concentrating on our Evaluation Project which we hope will really highlight the transformative power of the Liberty Choir programme on prisoners and illustrate the wider social and societal benefits this brings to the communities they are released into.

Risks and Risk Management

The Charity Trustees regularly review and assess the risks faced by the charity in all areas of its work and plan for the management of those risks. Risk is an everyday part of charitable activity and managing it effectively is essential if the trustees are to achieve their key objectives and safeguard the charity's funds and assets.

The Trustees have discussed and set a risk framework that allows them to:

- Identify the major risks that apply to the charity.
- Make decisions about how to respond to the risks they face.

The Trustees have considered:

- Governance risk, including strategy and direction.
- Operational risk, including staff and volunteer safety.
- Financial risk, including cash flow, reserves and diversity of income.
- Environmental risk, including government policy and public perception.

Reserves Policy

The Board of Trustees is responsible for ensuring that we manage our resources responsibly and that we act in the best interests of the organization and the people we serve. The Board has the responsibility for approving and monitoring the implementation of policy.

To ensure that there is no significant disruption to our charitable activities, holding appropriate reserves will enable the organisation to respond to any unforeseen reduction in income (for example when income does not reach expected levels) or additional expenditure (for example when projects overrun, or unplanned events occur). The amount of reserves held would provide short-term financial security until long-term solutions can be established.

As agreed by the Board of Trustees, Liberty Choir will hold the sum of £30,000 in reserve funds. The reserve amount is based on the direct costs of running activities in ten choirs for two months.

The reserve amount can only be spent when:

- The charity is experiencing financial difficulty and the amount of the unrestricted fund available is insufficient to pay the monthly consultancy fees of the core team members
- The charity is ceasing operations and the funds are required to settle outstanding payments

When the amount of unrestricted funds held reaches the reserve fund amount of £30,000, the project director will convene an urgent financial planning meeting with the Board of Trustees.

In the interim:

- Prison programme operations will be paused pending the outcome of the discussion with the Board of Trustees
- Freelance contractors and consultant arrangements not required for the essential core operations of the charity will be paused pending the outcome of the discussion with the Board of Trustees.

The Board of Trustees will review the reserves policy in January 2025.

Financial Review

The charity received income during the accounting period totalling £349,103 and overall had a surplus for the year of £81,097. At the end of the accounting period the charity held funds totalling £124,218 of which £76,630 are held for restricted purposes. The remaining unrestricted reserves of £47,588 exceeds the amount stated in the reserves policy agreed by the Board of Trustees.

Approved by order of the board of trustees on 27 June 2024 and signed on its behalf by:

O Huggins – Trustee

References

1. [Prison Reform Trust 2023 Report](#)
2. According to the MOJ, 92 prisoners killed themselves in the 12 months to September 2023, a 24% increase on the year before. [Prison suicides in England and Wales rise by nearly a quarter | Prisons and probation | The Guardian](#)
3. [Inside the 'horrific' conditions at Wandsworth prison – Channel 4 News](#)
4. [Prison Operational Workforce Survey](#)
5. [Children of Prisoners: Fixing a broken system](#)
6. [Children-with-a-Parent-in-Prison-Factsheet-and-letter-writing-tips-2020.docx.pdf \(prisonfellowship.org.uk\)](#)

LIBERTY CHOIR UK

STATEMENT OF TRUSTEES' RESPONSIBILITIES FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023

The trustees are responsible for preparing the Report of the Trustees and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

The law applicable to charities in England and Wales, the Charities Act 2011, Charity (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 and the provisions of the trust deed requires the trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year which 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, of the charity for that period. In preparing those financial statements, the trustees are required to

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

The trustees are responsible for keeping proper accounting records which disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charity and to enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Charities Act 2011, the Charity (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 and the provisions of the trust deed. 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.

INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT TO THE TRUSTEES OF LIBERTY CHOIR UK

Independent examiner's report to the trustees of Liberty Choir UK

I report to the charity trustees on my examination of the accounts of Liberty Choir UK (the Trust) for the year ended 31 December 2023.

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

Since your charity's gross income exceeded £250,000 your examiner must be a member of a listed body. I can confirm that I am qualified to undertake the examination because I am a member of the Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales, which is one of the listed bodies.

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.

S R Sampson BFP FCA FCIE DChA

Ashdown Hurrey
Chartered Accountants & Business Advisers
20 Havelock Road
Hastings
East Sussex
TN34 1BP

Date: 27 June 2024

LIBERTY CHOIR UK

**STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023**

	Notes	Unrestricted fund £	Restricted funds £	31.12.23 Total funds £	31.12.22 Total funds £
INCOME AND ENDOWMENTS FROM					
Donations and legacies		202,884	146,219	349,103	201,792
EXPENDITURE ON					
Raising funds		7,974	-	7,974	12,288
Charitable activities					
Charitable Activities		178,443	81,589	260,032	237,534
Total		186,417	81,589	268,006	249,822
NET INCOME/(EXPENDITURE)		16,467	64,630	81,097	(48,030)
RECONCILIATION OF FUNDS					
Total funds brought forward		31,121	12,000	43,121	91,151
TOTAL FUNDS CARRIED FORWARD		47,588	76,630	124,218	43,121

The notes form part of these financial statements

LIBERTY CHOIR UK

BALANCE SHEET 31 DECEMBER 2023

	Notes	Unrestricted fund £	Restricted funds £	31.12.23 Total funds £	31.12.22 Total funds £
CURRENT ASSETS					
Debtors	7	13,606	-	13,606	-
Cash at bank		39,140	76,630	115,770	43,121
		52,746	76,630	129,376	43,121
CREDITORS					
Amounts falling due within one year	8	(5,158)	-	(5,158)	-
NET CURRENT ASSETS		47,588	76,630	124,218	43,121
TOTAL ASSETS LESS CURRENT LIABILITIES		47,588	76,630	124,218	43,121
NET ASSETS		47,588	76,630	124,218	43,121
FUNDS	9				
Unrestricted funds				47,588	31,121
Restricted funds				76,630	12,000
TOTAL FUNDS				124,218	43,121

The financial statements were approved by the Board of Trustees and authorised for issue on 27 June 2024 and were signed on its behalf by:

O Huggins - Trustee

The notes form part of these financial statements

LIBERTY CHOIR UK

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023

1. STATUTORY INFORMATION

Liberty Choir UK is a charitable incorporated organisation, registered in England and Wales. The charity's registered number and principle address can be found in the Report of the Trustees.

2. ACCOUNTING POLICIES

Basis of preparing the financial statements

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.

In preparing the financial statements, the trustees are required to make an assessment of the ability of the charity to continue as a going concern. On the basis of these forecasts and the fact that the charity has substantial net current assets and net assets, the trustees are confident that the charity has adequate resources to continue in operational existence and to meet its liabilities as they fall due for the foreseeable future. As a result of the above, the trustees have concluded that it remains appropriate to adopt a going concern basis of preparation in these financial statements.

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.

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.

Taxation

The charity is exempt from tax on its charitable activities.

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.

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

Pension costs and other post-retirement benefits

The charity operates a defined contribution pension scheme. Contributions payable to the charity's pension scheme are charged to the Statement of Financial Activities in the period to which they relate.

continued...

LIBERTY CHOIR UK

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS - continued FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023

3. INDEPENDENT EXAMINERS' REMUNERATION

	31.12.23 £	31.12.22 £
Fees payable to the charity's independent examiners for the independent examination of the charity's financial statements	2,760	-
Fees payable to the charity's independent examiners for the independent examination of the charity's financial statements - Prior year	3,240	-
	<u>6,000</u>	<u>-</u>

4. TRUSTEES' REMUNERATION AND BENEFITS

There were no trustees' remuneration or other benefits for the year ended 31 December 2023 nor for the year ended 31 December 2022.

Trustees' expenses

There were no trustees' expenses paid for the year ended 31 December 2023 nor for the year ended 31 December 2022.

5. STAFF COSTS

	31.12.23 £	31.12.22 £
Wages and salaries	3,997	33,312
Other pension costs	74	-
	<u>4,071</u>	<u>33,312</u>

The average monthly number of employees during the year was as follows:

	31.12.23	31.12.22
Charitable activities	-	1

No employees received emoluments in excess of £60,000.

6. COMPARATIVES (2022) FOR THE STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES

	Unrestricted fund £	Restricted funds £	Total funds £
INCOME AND ENDOWMENTS FROM			
Donations and legacies	<u>159,792</u>	<u>42,000</u>	<u>201,792</u>
EXPENDITURE ON			
Raising funds	12,288	-	12,288
Charitable activities			
Charitable Activities	<u>136,372</u>	<u>101,162</u>	<u>237,534</u>
Total	<u>148,660</u>	<u>101,162</u>	<u>249,822</u>
NET INCOME/(EXPENDITURE)	11,132	(59,162)	(48,030)

continued...

LIBERTY CHOIR UK

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS - continued FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023

6. COMPARATIVES (2022) FOR THE STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES - continued

	Unrestricted fund £	Restricted funds £	Total funds £
RECONCILIATION OF FUNDS			
Total funds brought forward	19,989	71,162	91,151
TOTAL FUNDS CARRIED FORWARD	<u>31,121</u>	<u>12,000</u>	<u>43,121</u>

The 2022 financial statements were prepared on the receipts and payments basis.

7. DEBTORS: AMOUNTS FALLING DUE WITHIN ONE YEAR

	31.12.23 £	31.12.22 £
Other debtors	5,840	-
Accrued income	7,766	-
	<u>13,606</u>	<u>-</u>

8. CREDITORS: AMOUNTS FALLING DUE WITHIN ONE YEAR

	31.12.23 £	31.12.22 £
Trade creditors	1,280	-
Accrued expenses	3,878	-
	<u>5,158</u>	<u>-</u>

9. MOVEMENT IN FUNDS

	At 1.1.23 £	Net movement in funds £	At 31.12.23 £
Unrestricted funds			
General fund	31,121	16,467	47,588
Restricted funds			
Arts Council	12,000	8,021	20,021
Bowerman	-	7,026	7,026
OPCC Surrey	-	30,000	30,000
Serco	-	6,883	6,883
Sodexo	-	12,700	12,700
	<u>12,000</u>	<u>64,630</u>	<u>76,630</u>
TOTAL FUNDS	<u>43,121</u>	<u>81,097</u>	<u>124,218</u>

continued...

LIBERTY CHOIR UK

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS - continued FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023

9. MOVEMENT IN FUNDS - continued

Net movement in funds, included in the above are as follows:

	Incoming resources £	Resources expended £	Movement in funds £
Unrestricted funds			
General fund	202,884	(186,417)	16,467
Restricted funds			
Arts Council	60,886	(52,865)	8,021
Fishmongers	15,000	(15,000)	-
Bowerman	15,000	(7,974)	7,026
KCCF	2,000	(2,000)	-
OPCC Surrey	30,000	-	30,000
Serco	8,333	(1,450)	6,883
Sodexo	15,000	(2,300)	12,700
	<u>146,219</u>	<u>(81,589)</u>	<u>64,630</u>
TOTAL FUNDS	<u>349,103</u>	<u>(268,006)</u>	<u>81,097</u>

Comparatives for movement in funds

	At 1.1.22 £	Net movement in funds £	At 31.12.22 £
Unrestricted funds			
General fund	19,989	11,132	31,121
Restricted funds			
Albert Hunt	2,000	(2,000)	-
Arts Council	31,467	(19,467)	12,000
Big Give	34,707	(34,707)	-
Rayne Foundation	2,988	(2,988)	-
	<u>71,162</u>	<u>(59,162)</u>	<u>12,000</u>
TOTAL FUNDS	<u>91,151</u>	<u>(48,030)</u>	<u>43,121</u>

continued...

LIBERTY CHOIR UK

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS - continued FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023

9. MOVEMENT IN FUNDS - continued

Comparative net movement in funds, included in the above are as follows:

	Incoming resources £	Resources expended £	Movement in funds £
Unrestricted funds			
General fund	159,792	(148,660)	11,132
Restricted funds			
Albert Hunt	-	(2,000)	(2,000)
Arts Council	24,000	(43,467)	(19,467)
Big Give	-	(34,707)	(34,707)
Fishmongers	5,000	(5,000)	-
Marchus Trust	5,000	(5,000)	-
Pentonville Programme	6,000	(6,000)	-
PWCF Grant	2,000	(2,000)	-
Rayne Foundation	-	(2,988)	(2,988)
	<u>42,000</u>	<u>(101,162)</u>	<u>(59,162)</u>
TOTAL FUNDS	<u>201,792</u>	<u>(249,822)</u>	<u>(48,030)</u>

A current year 12 months and prior year 12 months combined position is as follows:

	At 1.1.22 £	Net movement in funds £	At 31.12.23 £
Unrestricted funds			
General fund	19,989	27,599	47,588
Restricted funds			
Albert Hunt	2,000	(2,000)	-
Arts Council	31,467	(11,446)	20,021
Big Give	34,707	(34,707)	-
Rayne Foundation	2,988	(2,988)	-
Bowerman	-	7,026	7,026
OPCC Surrey	-	30,000	30,000
Serco	-	6,883	6,883
Sodexo	-	12,700	12,700
	<u>71,162</u>	<u>5,468</u>	<u>76,630</u>
TOTAL FUNDS	<u>91,151</u>	<u>33,067</u>	<u>124,218</u>

continued...

LIBERTY CHOIR UK

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS - continued FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023

9. MOVEMENT IN FUNDS - continued

A current year 12 months and prior year 12 months combined net movement in funds, included in the above are as follows:

	Incoming resources £	Resources expended £	Movement in funds £
Unrestricted funds			
General fund	362,676	(335,077)	27,599
Restricted funds			
Albert Hunt	-	(2,000)	(2,000)
Arts Council	84,886	(96,332)	(11,446)
Big Give	-	(34,707)	(34,707)
Fishmongers	20,000	(20,000)	-
Marchus Trust	5,000	(5,000)	-
Pentonville Programme	6,000	(6,000)	-
PWCF Grant	2,000	(2,000)	-
Rayne Foundation	-	(2,988)	(2,988)
Bowerman	15,000	(7,974)	7,026
KCCF	2,000	(2,000)	-
OPCC Surrey	30,000	-	30,000
Serco	8,333	(1,450)	6,883
Sodexo	15,000	(2,300)	12,700
	<u>188,219</u>	<u>(182,751)</u>	<u>5,468</u>
TOTAL FUNDS	<u>550,895</u>	<u>(517,828)</u>	<u>33,067</u>

Description of Restricted Funds

Arts Council: Funding towards music teams at Send, Wandsworth and Brixton prisons.

Bowerman: Funding towards frontline costs at Lewes prison.

Fishmongers: Funding towards business manager role.

KCCF: King Charles III Charitable Foundation - Funding towards music team training.

OPCC Surrey: Surrey Police Commission towards costs of charity activities at five Surrey prisons.

Serco: Funding towards music teams at Thameside prison.

Sodexo: Funding towards music teams at Bronzefield prison.

continued...

LIBERTY CHOIR UK

**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS - continued
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023**

10. RELATED PARTY DISCLOSURES

There were no related party transactions for the year ended 31 December 2023.

LIBERTY CHOIR UK**DETAILED STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023**

	31.12.23 £	31.12.22 £
INCOME AND ENDOWMENTS		
Donations and legacies		
Donations	94,371	88,967
Gift aid	19,513	5,825
Grants	235,219	107,000
	<u>349,103</u>	<u>201,792</u>
Total incoming resources	349,103	201,792
EXPENDITURE		
Raising donations and legacies		
Fundraising costs	7,974	12,288
Charitable activities		
Wages	3,997	33,312
Pensions	74	-
Postage and stationery	1,164	186
Promotion and publicity	14,786	9,944
Choir costs	101,981	50,886
Charitable and project development	39,850	39,734
National prison radio	12,000	36,000
Travel and subsistence	9,416	1,077
Licences	50	50
Administration and office costs	43,340	22,635
IT and website	50	144
Freelance staff costs	25,305	41,637
	<u>252,013</u>	<u>235,605</u>
Support costs		
Finance		
Bank charges	106	86
Governance costs		
Independent examiners' remuneration	6,000	-
Accountancy and bookkeeping	1,913	1,843
	<u>7,913</u>	<u>1,843</u>
Total resources expended	<u>268,006</u>	<u>249,822</u>
Net income/(expenditure)	<u>81,097</u>	<u>(48,030)</u>

This page does not form part of the statutory financial statements