

Staffordshire Sight Loss Association
(Registered charity, number 1176919)
Financial Statements
for the year ended 31 December 2022

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**Staffordshire Sight Loss Association
Trustees' Annual Report
for the year ended 31 December 2022**

Full name Staffordshire Sight Loss Association

Registered charity number 1176919

Principal address

Unit 6, the Forecourt,
12 Albion Street,
Hanley
Stoke on Trent
ST1 5DD

Trustees

Andrea Scott (Chair)
Linda Dunn (Treasurer)
Sandra Barlow (Secretary)
Ian Wiltshaw

Bankers

Natwest

Independent examiner

Daryl Denson ACMA
VAST
The Dudson Centre
Hope Street

Charity Objectives

For the public benefit to promote the relief of blind and partially sighted people, their friends, families, and carers who primarily (but not exclusively) live in Staffordshire, including those who may not be registered as Blind/ Severely Sight Impaired or Partially Sighted/ Sight Impaired, by such means as the trustees think fit including:

- Providing services, advice and information, social activities/opportunities, and peer support.
- Increasing public awareness of the needs of blind and partially sighted people.

Governance and management

The Charity is governed by a Charitable Incorporated Organisation Constitution (Foundation Model), adopted on 31st January 2018.

The methods adopted for the recruitment and appointment of new trustees

The trustees of the charity must be appointed by a resolution passed at a properly convened meeting of the charity trustees.

Related Parties

Staffordshire Sight Loss operates independently and has no related party transactions.

Staffordshire Sight Loss Association Trustees' Annual Report (continued) for the year ended 31 December 2022

Summary of the main activities undertaken for the public benefit

- Advice, information, and support around living independently with sight loss, including welfare rights, concessions, advice about equipment, support with forms, grant applications and housing issues.
- Community Hubs which include a pop-up Resource Centre that provides opportunities for members of the community to come and try a wide range of daily living equipment. Beneficiaries can also attend our Community Hubs for advice and information, support with forms and a coffee and chat. This service became available as a weekly service in Hanley from June 2021 and a monthly service in Biddulph from August 2021 with plans to expand to other areas in 2022.
- Peer support/ social groups, for the first part of 2021 these were delivered as online groups with in-person groups being reintroduced from August in Hanley, Leek and Newcastle. At the end of the year, we offer a blend of online and in-person social groups with plans to expand our in-person groups to other locations in 2022.
- Weekly Hanley braille class which began in August 2021.
- Weekly online yoga class and monthly online book club
- Group excursions: In October we arranged a group visit to the British Ceramics Biennial Festival for plate making and ceramics handling. In December we arranged a group visit to a local Art event presented by local Arts organisation Appetite, held at Staffordshire University called 'Lookout'. We plan to organise further outings in 2022.
- Technology Support Service to support people to use technology for independence, including phones, tablets, computers, and smart speakers.
- Telephone peer support/ befriending service: a weekly or fortnightly call from someone with lived experience of sight loss
- Regular newsletter produced in a range of formats to maximise accessibility.
- Social media pages including a closed Facebook group for information sharing and peer support and the delivery of Interactive Facebook live videos for sharing information, asking questions, and engaging with others.
- Accessible volunteer opportunities

Public Benefit

The trustees of the Charity are aware of the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit and have had regard to it in their administration of the Charity.

Achievements and Performance

Staffordshire Sight Loss Association was set up in 2018 to provide in-person support services for blind and partially sighted people living in North Staffordshire. Our consultation within the local community helped us to design a range of services that we were confident would make a positive difference to the lives of many and in the first 2 years we were gradually building and developing these services on a small scale as a group of volunteers.

In 2020 we were thrilled to be awarded a substantial 2-year grant from the National Lottery Community Fund which would enable us to develop and expand upon these services. This success was quickly followed by the COVID-19 pandemic and we, like other charities have navigated the challenges that this has presented over the last 2 years, being unable for a long period to deliver the face-to-face services that we know are so important and needed within our community and adapting our services accordingly. In 2021 we began our transition back to in-person services and by the end of that year we were successfully delivering a combination of remote and face-to-face services to meet the varying needs of our community.

We feel that 2022 has been a success, it has been the year that we have been able to execute plans that we made prior to the pandemic and by the end of the year we are delivering a range of in-person community-led services that we know are making a positive impact within our community each day.

Staffordshire Sight Loss Association Trustees' Annual Report (continued) for the year ended 31 December 2022

Achievements and Performance (continued)

In February 2022 our National Lottery funded Independence and Wellbeing Project came to an end and we were thrilled to be awarded a further National Lottery Community Fund grant for our 3-year Independent and Connected Communities Project. This project combined with a grant from the Stoke-on-Trent and North Staffordshire Clinical Commissioning Groups Long Term Condition Support Fund and a further National Lottery Awards for All grant has enabled us to expand our range of Community Hub drop-ins, social opportunities and the number of people that we could reach through our Independent Living Service.

In 2022 we have delivered 92 Community Hub drop-ins, attended by 283 people. We have delivered 126 peer support and activity groups, 93 of these groups were face to face and 33 were online. Groups were delivered in Hanley, Leek, Newcastle, Biddulph and Cheadle. Groups and activities were attended by 63 people. We supported 181 people through our Independent Living and Technology Services.

A big part of the work we do is to bring people together for peer support and many of our services aim to reduce isolation and feelings of loneliness. This year we have been able to increase the number of peer support groups that we offer as well as providing various group outings and activities. We have seen how valuable sharing experiences and information with peers can be for building confidence and increasing independence. Increased work in this area has also provided opportunities for attendees to have fun together, make memories and in many instances to build lasting friendships.

Throughout the year we have seen increased demand for our services, we feel that this is in part due to increased awareness of our services but also because of current national issues. Issues currently impacting our beneficiaries include the lasting impact of the pandemic, the cost-of-living crisis, and the global energy crisis. This is resulting in increased requests for support from people who have complex issues and needs, including financial crisis, mental health, addiction, and homelessness. We are therefore working with partners to ensure the best possible outcomes for our beneficiaries and to manage demand. It is also important that our staff are trained and feel supported and well equipped to deal with complex issues as they arise including confidence in lone working and safeguarding policies and practices. We will continue to monitor demand for our services so that we can respond appropriately.

During 2022 we have delivered Awareness Sessions to local organisations including Frontline Dance, Appetite and Door to Door Community Transport as well as for a local Cubs group to help them to achieve their Disability Awareness Activity Badge. We reached approximately 90 people through these sessions.

Our Information Day held at the Best Western Stoke City Centre Hotel on the 13th of October was a success. This is the first time that we have been able to hold this event since 2019 due to the pandemic. The event aimed to bring together local, regional and national organisations for the community to find out about a wide range of services, equipment, technology and support in one place.

28 organisations attended to provide information, advice and equipment demonstrations, these included national charities such as the RNIB, Guide Dogs, Sightline, the Macular Society and Blind Veterans as well as local charities such as VAST, Changes, Appetite and the North Staffordshire Pensioner's Convention. Statutory and sports organisations also attended a wide range of Assistive technology companies as well such as Optelec, Vision Aid, Dolphin and Humanware. Sighted Guides were available throughout the day as well as a BSL interpreter. There was a schedule of talks provided in a separate room, talks were provided by the local sensory team, The Royal Association for Deaf People, Staffordshire Cricket as well as some Employability Workshops delivered by Severn Trent.

**Staffordshire Sight Loss Association
Trustees' Annual Report (continued)
for the year ended 31 December 2022**

Achievements and Performance (continued)

115 members of the community attended the event and feedback from attendees and exhibitors was excellent. The event was supported by 14 of our volunteers who helped with tasks such as setting up, welcoming and counting guests, providing information about our services and asking guests for feedback.

Funding received during 2022 meant that we have also been able to grow our team of staff and volunteers. In May 2022 we hired a new part time Administration and Customer Service Assistant to provide administration support to the team and to work within the weekly Hanley Community Hub drop-in. We also hired a part time Independent Living Coordinator who supports our community-based drop-ins and social groups as well as providing advice, information and support through our Independent Living Service, this includes form filling and support with welfare rights issues amongst other things. In October we hired our first part time Assistive Technology Coordinator who provides support with technology issues including phones, tablets, smart speakers and computers. At the end of 2022 we have five staff members (3 part-time and 2 full-time).

Feedback has shown us that our services this year have led to many positive outcomes for our beneficiaries. We could not have delivered these services without the support of our volunteers, funders, partners, and supporters.

Volunteers have played a huge part in all areas of the charity's work in 2022 including supporting services (for example with administration tasks, technology support, telephone peer support and hosting social groups), attending Steering Group meetings, helping with social media and fundraising. Our charity has been supported by 21 volunteers during 2022. We were also very proud that one of our wonderful volunteers was recognised at the BBC Radio Stoke Make a Difference Awards where he was nominated for an award in the Volunteer Category and received a trophy for being highly commended in the category.

We would also like to thank our partners who have helped us to spread the word about the services that we offer. Our partners include the Eye Clinic Liaison Officers at the Royal Stoke University Hospital, the local Sensory Teams at Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire County Council, local Social Prescribers, The Macular Society, East Cheshire Eye Society, the RNIB, Guide Dogs, Blind Veterans, Appetite and our local Talking Newspapers.

Moving into 2023 we are looking forward to developing our services further using beneficiary and partner feedback to continue to improve in a community-led way. We are also looking forward to planning and delivering our first ever Community Awareness Event over the summer, the aim of which is to increase people's understanding of sight loss, dispel myths and stereotypes, and to break down barriers making North Staffordshire a more inclusive place to live.



**Staffordshire Sight Loss Association
Trustees' Annual Report (continued)
for the year ended 31 December 2022**

Financial Review

Staffordshire Sight Loss Association had an income of £148,281 in the financial year 2022. Most of this funding (£99,311) came from the National Lottery Community Fund for our 3-year Independent and Connected Communities project which began in February 2022. During 2022 we received a further £27,458 in restricted grants from other funders including:

- The Stoke-on-Trent and North Staffordshire Clinical Commissioning Group's Long Term Condition Support Fund for our Independence, Health and Wellbeing Project. This enabled us to scale up and enhance existing services.
- Stoke-on-Trent City Council's Community Investment Fund for our Digital Skills Project, this provided us with equipment necessary to demonstrate and support local people with using Assistive Technology.
- Local Giving for accessible yoga classes; and
- A further grant from the National Lottery from their Awards for All funding stream to increase local peer support opportunities.

The remainder of our income has come from an unrestricted grant from the Sir Jules Thom Charitable Trust (£1000), as well as individual donations, in memory donations, fundraising activities, and sale of daily living equipment. We would also like to thank our Potter's Arf Relay team who ran the local hilly half marathon for sponsorship and raised £1161.

We rent an office space on Albion Street in Hanley and our assets consist of our office furniture and equipment (for example our printer, laptops, phones etc.), daily living equipment and technology purchased for demonstration purposes at our Community Hubs and stock for our resource centre.

At year end the charity has a balance of £38,427. £10,488 of this is unrestricted funds and the remaining £27,939 is restricted.

Reserves Policy

The charity has a reserves policy. As a relatively new charity that has been operating for just under 5 years, we have been gradually building our reserves during that time and reserves have increased year on year. Unrestricted reserves are currently £10,488. Building up reserves has been challenging over the last couple of years as fundraising activities have been impacted by the pandemic however, we have a Sustainability Plan in place which is regularly reviewed and aims to diversify our income and build reserves to an adequate level.

It is the policy of the charity that unrestricted funds which have not been designated for a specific use should ideally be maintained at a level equivalent to between three- and six-months non-project expenditure. The trustees consider that reserves at this level will cover continuity, restructuring to cover essential activities where it's necessary to source further income and a Dissolution Fund to provide for dissolution should the charity be unable to continue.

We are working towards this goal and aim to increase our reserves to an adequate level over the next 24 months. Due to the nature of the organisation and the regular review of the budget our Reserves Policy will be reviewed on an annual basis to ensure that it reflects what is needed for continuity, that the restructuring element matches the requirements of our activities, and that the dissolution element matches the requirements of staffing levels.

Signed on behalf of the charity's trustees:

Signed 
Andrea Scott Chair

Date 31/10/23

Signed 
Linda Dunn Treasurer

Date 31/10/23

**Independent examiner's report to the trustees of
Staffordshire Sight Loss Association
for the year ended 31 December 2022**

I report to the charity trustees on my examination of the accounts of the charity for the period ended 31 March 2022 which are set out on pages 7 to 9.

Respective responsibilities of trustees and examiner

As the charity's trustees of Staffordshire Sight Loss Association, you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with requirements of the Charities Act 2011 ('the Act').

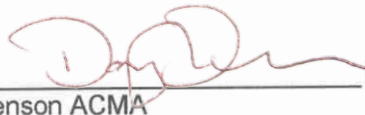
I report in respect of my examination of Staffordshire Sight Loss Association accounts carried out under section 145 of the 2011 Act and in carrying out my examination I have followed all the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the Act.

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 in any material respect:

1. Accounting records were not kept in respect of Staffordshire Sight Loss Association 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 accounting 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.

Signed  Date 31/10/2023
Daryl Denson ACMA
VAST

Staffordshire Sight Loss Association
Receipts & Payments Account
for the year ended 31 December 2022

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total 2022 £	Total 2021 £
Receipts				
Social Groups	136	-	136	78
Grants	1,500	126,769	128,269	76,981
Donation	1,799	-	1,799	210
Events	1,586	-	1,586	217
Sales	13,720	-	13,720	2,797
Fundraising	2,771	-	2,771	650
Miscellaneous income	-	-	-	2,769
Total receipts	21,512	126,769	148,281	83,702
Payments				
Equipment	2,774	5,288	8,062	28,488
Other Purchases	293	-	293	2,349
Salaries plus expenses	-	73,110	73,110	33,031
Administrator	-	-	-	12,427
Social Groups	-	-	-	1,819
Volunteer Expenses	808	-	808	875
Rent and Storage	-	19,821	19,821	13,242
Room Hire	2,430	-	2,430	714
Resource Centre Stock	-	14,753	14,753	-
Database	-	171	171	-
Staff Training	-	701	701	816
Miscellaneous expenditure	48	-	48	462
Yoga	-	-	-	264
Fundraising	1,212	-	1,212	522
Accountancy	-	1,170	1,170	-
Phone and Internet	-	1,776	1,776	1,345
Stationary and Postage	1,358	-	1,358	947
Refreshments	458	-	458	-
Insurance	946	-	946	774
Activities and Events	4,504	-	4,504	-
Rates	448	-	448	160
Subscriptions & Memberships	472	-	472	295
Monitoring & Evaluation	-	-	-	6,000
Project Management Support	-	-	-	5,100
Transcripts	-	2,369	2,369	433
Repairs & Decorations	136	-	136	552
Marketing	581	-	581	909
Total payments	16,468	119,159	135,627	111,524
Net receipts/(payments)	5,044	7,610	12,654	(27,822)
Cash funds at start of this period	6,203	19,570	25,773	53,595
Cash funds at end of this period	11,247	27,180	38,427	25,773

Staffordshire Sight Loss Association
Statement of Assets and Liabilities
at 31 December 2022

	2022	2021
	£	£
Cash assets		
Bank Current Account	<u>38,427</u>	<u>25,773</u>
	<u>38,427</u>	<u>25,773</u>
 Liabilities due		
Accountancy Fees	<u>630</u>	<u>600</u>
	<u>630</u>	<u>600</u>

These financial statements are accepted on behalf of the charity by:

Signed 
 Andrea Scott Chair

Dated 31/10/23.

Signed L. Dunn
 Linda Dunn Treasurer

Dated 31/10/23

Staffordshire Sight Loss Association
Notes to the Accounts
for the year ended 31 December 2022

1. Receipts & payments accounts

Receipts and payments accounts are statements that summarise the movement of cash into and out of the charity during the financial year. In this context "cash" includes cash equivalents, for example, bank accounts where cash can be readily withdrawn to pay for debts as they become due. For the purposes of understanding a statement of assets and liabilities at the year-end has been included.

2. Trustees' remuneration

Trustees received no expenses, remuneration or benefits in this year.

3. Funds

	Opening balance	Receipts	Payments	Transfers	Closing balance
	£	£	£	£	£
Restricted Funds					
National Lottery - CF Project 1	16,781	-	(11,681)	(5,100)	-
National Lottery - CF Project 2	-	99,311	(80,161)	5,100	24,250
National Lottery - Awards for All	-	9,950	(9,732)	-	218
Community Foundation Staffordshire	2,525	-	(2,525)	-	-
Local Giving Fund - Yoga	-	500	(225)	-	275
Stoke-on-Trent City Council	-	5,500	(3618)	-	1,882
Tackling Inequalities Fund	264	-	-	-	264
Long Term Condition Fund	-	6,508	(5458)	-	1,050
Restricted Funding	-	5,000	(5,759)	759	-
	<u>19,570</u>	<u>126,769</u>	<u>(119,159)</u>	<u>759</u>	<u>27,939</u>
Unrestricted Funds					
General Funds	6,203	21,512	(16,468)	(759)	10,488
	<u>6,203</u>	<u>21,512</u>	<u>(16,468)</u>	<u>(759)</u>	<u>10,488</u>
Total	<u>25,773</u>	<u>148,281</u>	<u>(135,627)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>38,427</u>