

Staffordshire Sight Loss Association
(Registered charity, number 1176919)
Financial Statements
for the year ended 31 December 2023

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**Staffordshire Sight Loss Association
Trustees' Annual Report
for the year ended 31 December 2023**

Full name Staffordshire Sight Loss Association

Registered charity number 1176919

Principal address

1 Ketton Close
Stoke-on-Trent
ST6 6UE

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
Hanley
Stoke on Trent
ST1 5DD

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 2023**

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. Our Independent Living Coordinators provide this service through office appointments and home visits.
- Resource Centre: We have a Resource Centre based on Albion Street in Hanley that is open every Tuesday from 10 am till 4 pm. Here we display a wide range of daily living equipment for the community to try, for example, magnifiers, talking kitchen equipment, lighting, mobility aids, and assistive technology. Beneficiaries can also attend our Resource Centre for advice and information, to find out about our other services and those of other organisations, and for a coffee and chat.
- Community Hubs in Leek and Biddulph: These are community-based social groups and advice drop-ins that take place from 10.30 am till 2 pm. We use a community room at the Salvation Army in Leek on the second Friday of each month and the Town Hall in Biddulph on the third Friday of each month for these services. At both locations, we offer a social group from 10.30 am until 12 pm, and from 10.30 am until 2 pm we provide an advice drop-in with a range of equipment that people can try. At the start of 2023 we were delivering an advice drop-in in Newcastle-under-Lyme but due to the availability of suitable venues, we had to end this in May. We are currently looking for an alternative venue to re-launch this service.
- Peer support/ social groups: In addition to the social groups that take place monthly in Leek and Biddulph we offer monthly groups in Hanley and Newcastle. Our Hanley group takes place at our offices on Albion Street and during 2023 our Newcastle group relocated to the Community Junction Cafe at Andrew Place.
- Weekly braille class every Monday in Hanley.
- Group excursions: During 2023 we arranged several group outings and excursions. In July we visited the Brompton Museum for an object handling session and an audio-described tour of their visiting Matisse Exhibition. We also visited Weston Park for a tour of their house and gardens, we took part in a Tile Making session at All Saints Church to celebrate the British Ceramics Biennial, we visited Sight Village which is an exhibition event in Birmingham and The Big Feast which is a local art event that takes place across Hanley delivered by local organisation Appetite.
- Group celebrations: In May 2023 we arranged a party to celebrate the Coronation of King Charles III, this brought the community together for an afternoon tea with entertainment and dancing. In December we arranged a Christmas celebration at a local venue.
- Technology Support Service: to support people to use technology for independence, including phones, tablets, computers, and smart speakers. We provide this service through office appointments and home visits.
- Living Well with Sight Loss Courses: these are four-day courses designed using the RNIB Quality Framework which aim to ensure that people experiencing sight loss are well-informed, connected to others, and have the information and support that they need to live full and independent lives.
- In 2023, thanks to a grant provided by British Blind Sports we delivered 3 Goalball Taster Sessions at Staffordshire University in partnership with Goalball UK.
- Community Radio Show: In February our volunteers began to host a weekly Community Radio show aired by local Community Radio Station Rainbow FM, the show airs weekly and is repeated each weekend and includes music, topical conversations, guest speakers and lots of information about our charity.

Staffordshire Sight Loss Association Trustees' Annual Report (continued) for the year ended 31 December 2023

Summary of the main activities undertaken for the public benefit (continued)

- **SSLA Information Day:** this is a partnership event bringing 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. This year's event was held in the Catalyst Building at Staffordshire University, 25 organisations exhibited at the event including the RNIB, Guide Dogs, Staffordshire Cricket, Goalball UK, Appetite, and Healthwatch as well as a range of Assistive Technology companies.
- **Awareness Work:** this year we held two Community Awareness Events, one in July at Burslem Park and one in December at The Floral Hall in Tunstall. These events aimed to raise awareness of and increase the local community's understanding of sight loss, break down barriers, and dispel myths and stereotypes. To achieve this, we delivered a range of awareness-raising activities alongside other more mainstream activities to attract as wide an audience as possible. We have also delivered several Awareness sessions with local businesses and organisations this year.
- **Accessible Volunteer Opportunities:** this year we received Know Your Neighbourhood Funding which enabled us to hire a part-time Volunteer Coordinator to work with and support our team of volunteers.

Public Benefit

In planning our activities our trustees have given serious consideration to the Charity Commission's general guidance on public benefit. The trustees are committed to being a community-led charity that carries out continuous engagement with our beneficiaries in order to stay relevant to the needs of the community that we serve.

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, hire our first staff members, and rent an office space. This success was quickly followed by the COVID-19 pandemic and we, like other charities, navigated the challenges that this presented by adapting our services to meet the needs of our local community. In 2021 we began our transition back to in-person services and in 2022 we were thrilled to be awarded a further National Lottery Community Fund grant for our 3-year Independent and Connected Communities Project. This grant alongside support from our other funders enabled us to build upon our service offer further and by the end of 2022, we were delivering a range of in-person community-led services able to meet the varying needs of our community.

During 2023 we delivered:

- 62 Community Advice drop-ins,
 - 73 peer support / social groups,
 - 24 five-hour sessions that combined a peer support group with a Community Advice drop-in.
- In total, this amounted to 159 community-based sessions.

We also delivered:

- 5 Living Well with Sight Loss Courses (3 in Hanley and 2 in the Staffordshire Moorlands),
- 6 outings,
- 3 Goalball taster sessions,
- 2 celebration events, and
- 1 Partnership event.

Staffordshire Sight Loss Association Trustees' Annual Report (continued) for the year ended 31 December 2023

Achievements and Performance

When we combine attendance for the above activities with the number of people who have accessed our Independent Living Advice service and Technology Support Service, this year over 700 people have engaged with our services with many people engaging on multiple occasions.

In addition to this, approximately 580 people have engaged with our Awareness activities and events this year including approximately 350 people attending our Burslem Park event and approximately 200 attending our Christmas-themed event at the Floral Hall.

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 provided a range of groups, activities, and outings, all of which have been well attended. We have seen how valuable sharing experiences and information with peers can be for building confidence and increasing independence. Our activities have provided opportunities for attendees to have fun together, make memories, and in many instances build lasting friendships. In October we were thrilled to be awarded Know Your Neighbourhood funding through the Community Foundation for Staffordshire which will enable us to expand and develop our work around social inclusion. This funding has enabled us to hire a part-time Events and Activities Coordinator, by the end of 2023 she has delivered several activities and is planning an exciting programme of activities and outings for our beneficiaries in 2024. These will be delivered in addition to our existing groups.

This year we delivered our first-ever Community Awareness event, and we were extremely pleased with attendance and feedback from the event. We promoted the event with the help of local schools and businesses, through social media and banners at the park. We designed a free Scavenger hunt-style trail for families to follow around the park. We provided a map of the park with various points marked out, participants had to find each point on the map, and at each point they could learn something about sight loss. Once the trail was complete, they could return to our Welcome tent to collect a small prize. 102 people completed the trail.

We also provided simulation glasses for people to try on, these give an idea of how different eye conditions can affect people's vision. We provided everyday activities for people to try whilst wearing the glasses as well as a variety of aids and equipment available for people with sight loss to help manage day-to-day tasks (e.g. magnifiers, talking scales, and labelling equipment). In addition to our awareness activities, we also offered a range of more traditional community fun day activities, for example, stalls, a bouncy castle, penalty shoot-out, face painter, and Disney Princess.

Throughout the year we have seen increased demand for our services as awareness of our organisation grows. We are very proud of what we have achieved this year, and feedback has shown that our services have led to many positive outcomes for our beneficiaries. Moving into 2024 we are looking forward to developing our services further using beneficiary and partner feedback to continue to improve in a community-led way.

Funding received during 2023 meant that we have been able to grow our team of staff and volunteers. In June we welcomed a part-time Volunteer Coordinator to our team and in October our new Events and Activities Coordinator joined the team. This means that we have been able to extend our reach as an organisation and provide support for more people. At the end of 2023 we have 7 staff members (2 full-time and 5 part-time)

Thank yous

We would like to thank all partner organisations that we have worked with and who have helped to promote our services this year. We would like to thank the staff at the Royal Stoke University Hospital Eye Clinic Helpdesk, our local Sensory Teams in Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire, local Social Prescribers, and Primary Care Network staff for their support in helping to promote our services and for inviting us to their community events. We would also like to thank the RNIB, The Macular Society, Update Talking Newspaper, Rainbow FM, Goalball UK, and Appetite.

Staffordshire Sight Loss Association Trustees' Annual Report (continued) for the year ended 31 December 2023

Thank yous (continued)

We would like to thank everyone who supported our Burslem Park Awareness Event including the Port Vale FC Foundation, Staffordshire Fire and Rescue, Beat the Cold, Endon Storm Troopers, local schools and nurseries including Jackfield Infant School and Moorpark Junior School, the North Staffs Pensioners Convention, Frontline Dance, Stoke-on-Trent City Council, and all of our wonderful volunteers who came to help on the day.

Due to the success of this event we decided to deliver a further Christmas-themed event at the Floral Hall, and we would like to thank the staff at the Floral Hall as well as everyone who supported that event including Wrights Food Group, Wayne Walkers and Stafford Superbowl.

We would also like to thank the many organisations who supported our Information Day in October by exhibiting at the event and helping to promote the event. We would like to thank Staffordshire University and Newcastle Community Transport who provided a shuttle bus on the day.

We would like to thank our many funders and supporters including The National Lottery Community Fund, British Blind Sports, The Community Foundation for Staffordshire, VAST, The Edgar Lawley Foundation, and Former Mayor of Biddulph, Councillor Sylvia Rushton. We would like to thank our wonderful Potters 'arf Marathon Relay team, Lauren Horler who bravely took on a 10,000 foot skydive for us, and the 23 people who walked for almost 15 miles across Stoke-on-Trent in our September North Staffordshire Big Walk, in total a fabulous £7,399 was raised through sponsored events this year. Thank you also to everyone who has supported our other fundraising efforts across the year including businesses who have donated raffle prizes, members of the community who have bought raffle and tombola tickets and the many people who have supported us at community events such as Stoke-on-Trent Pride and Longton Pig Walk and Carnival.

Volunteers have played a huge part in all areas of the charity's work in 2023 including supporting services (for example with administration tasks, technology support, and hosting social groups), attending Steering Group meetings, helping at events, assisting and guiding at outings, and helping with social media and fundraising. This year our charity has been supported by 48 volunteers who have donated an amazing 4324 hours of their time, and we cannot thank them enough for the difference that they have made for our community and our organisation.

Financial Review

Staffordshire Sight Loss Association had an income of £195,878 in the financial year 2023.

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 funds of £63,568. £30,691 of this is unrestricted funds. Our expenditure for the year was £170,737.

Reserves Policy

The charity has a reserves policy. Staffordshire Sight Loss Association has been operating for just under 6 years, we have been gradually building our reserves during that time and reserves have increased year on year. Building our reserves was initially challenging because any money raised was needed for operational costs, our fundraising plans were later impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic.

We have a Sustainability Plan in place which is regularly reviewed and this year we have worked hard to diversify our income and try different fundraising approaches. We have also found over the last 12 months that as the reach of our services has grown, support for our charity has grown leading to an increase in individual donations from our beneficiaries for which we are extremely grateful.

**Staffordshire Sight Loss Association
Trustees' Annual Report (continued)
for the year ended 31 December 2023**

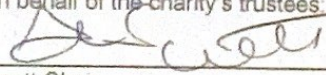
Reserves Policy (continued)

As a result of this work, we have more than tripled our unrestricted reserves in 2023 and at year end they are £30,691. 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.

£30,690 equates to approximately 2.16 months of our 2023 expenditure and our reserves are therefore not yet where we need them to be, but we are very pleased with our progress this year. We will continue to work towards our goal, and we aim to increase our reserves to an adequate level over the next 18-24 months.

Due to the nature of our organisation and the regular review of our 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 30/10/24

Signed L. Dunn
Linda Dunn Treasurer

Date 30/10/24

**Independent examiner's report to the trustees of
Staffordshire Sight Loss Association
for the year ended 31 December 2023**

I report to the charity trustees on my examination of the accounts of the charity for the period ended 31 March 2023 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 
Daryl Denson ACMA
VAST

Date 30/10/2024

Staffordshire Sight Loss Association
Receipts & Payments Account
for the year ended 31 December 2023

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total 2023 £	Total 2022 £
Receipts				
Social Groups	-	-	-	136
Grants	2,250	151,866	154,116	128,269
Donation	3,848	-	3,848	1,799
Events	9,377	-	9,377	1,586
Sales	14,045	-	14,045	13,720
Fundraising	5,687	-	5,687	2,771
Miscellaneous income	8,805	-	8,805	-
Total receipts	44,012	151,866	195,878	148,281
Payments				
Equipment	5,331	13,083	18,414	8,062
Other Purchases	3,104	200	3,304	293
Salaries plus expenses	137	85,257	85,394	73,110
Volunteer Expenses	720	568	1,288	808
Rent and Storage	-	24,165	24,165	19,821
Room Hire	-	3,056	3,056	2,430
Resource Centre Stock	11,223	-	11,223	14,753
Database	-	267	267	171
Staff Training	-	1,659	1,659	701
Miscellaneous expenditure	-	-	-	48
Fundraising	3,273	-	3,273	1,212
Accountancy	-	1,016	1,016	1,170
Phone and Internet	-	2,279	2,279	1,776
Stationary and Postage	-	1,956	1,956	1,358
Refreshments	780	4,019	4,799	458
Insurance	-	1,099	1,099	946
Activities and Events	-	3,524	3,524	4,504
Rates	-	81	81	448
Subscriptions & Memberships	-	436	436	472
Transcripts	-	2,263	2,263	2,369
Repairs & Decorations	-	319	319	136
Marketing	-	922	922	581
Total payments	24,568	146,169	170,737	135,627
Net receipts/(payments)	19,444	5,697	25,141	12,654
Cash funds at start of this period	11,247	27,180	38,427	25,773
Cash funds at end of this period	30,691	32,877	63,568	38,427

Staffordshire Sight Loss Association
Statement of Assets and Liabilities
at 31 December 2023

	2023	2022
	£	£
Cash assets		
Bank Current Account	63,568	38,427
	<u>63,568</u>	<u>38,427</u>
 Liabilities due		
Accountancy Fees	660	630
	<u>660</u>	<u>630</u>

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

Signed 
 Andrea Scott Chair

Dated 30/10/24

Signed L. Dunn
 Linda Dunn Treasurer

Dated 30/10/24

Staffordshire Sight Loss Association
Notes to the Accounts
for the year ended 31 December 2023

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 £	Closing balance £
Restricted Funds				
National Lottery - CF Project 2	24,250	99,950	(104,581)	19,619
National Lottery - Awards for All	218	-	(218)	-
Local Giving Fund - Yoga	275	-	(275)	-
Stoke-on-Trent City Council	1,882	-	-	1,882
Long Term Condition Fund	1,050	-	(1,050)	-
RNBI Funding	(759)	20,000	(22,339)	(3,098)
Staffs Found KYN (Social)	-	7,584	(3,741)	3,843
KYN NLCF (Volunteering)	-	21,985	(13,081)	8,904
BBS	-	2,348	(1,606)	742
Designated Funds	1,300	7,811	(8,126)	985
	<u>28,216</u>	<u>159,678</u>	<u>(155,017)</u>	<u>32,877</u>
Unrestricted Funds				
General Funds	10,211	36,200	(15,720)	30,691
	<u>10,211</u>	<u>36,200</u>	<u>(15,720)</u>	<u>30,691</u>
Total	<u>38,427</u>	<u>195,878</u>	<u>(170,737)</u>	<u>63,568</u>