

# **The Swan Song Project**

Charity number 1178096

## **Annual Report and Financial Statements** **for the year ended 30 April 2021**



West Yorkshire Community Accounting Service

# **The Swan Song Project**

## **Annual Report and Financial Statements for the year ended 30 April 2021**

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**Prepared by West Yorkshire Community Accounting Service**

# **The Swan Song Project**

## **Trustees' report for the year ended 30 April 2021**

### **Reference and administrative details of the charity, its trustees and advisors**

The trustees during the financial year and up to and including the date the report was approved were:

<b>Name</b>	<b>Position</b>
Adrian Sinclair	Chair
Anthony Waddington	Treasurer
Jeannie Lumb	
Chris Martin	

**Charity number** 1178096

### **Principal address**

c/o Chapel FM  
Old Seacroft Chapel  
York Road  
Leeds  
LS14 6JB

### **Bankers**

The Cooperative Bank  
PO Box 250  
Skelmersdale  
WN8 6WT

### **Independent examiner**

Stephen Procter

### **West Yorkshire Community Accounting Service**

Stringer House  
34 Lupton Street  
Leeds  
LS10 2QW

### **Structure, governance and management**

The charity is a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) formed on 25 April 2018 and is governed by a constitution.

### **Method of recruitment and appointment of trustees**

The trustees of the charity are appointed by the members at the AGM.

# **The Swan Song Project**

## **Trustees' report (continued) for the year ended 30 April 2021**

### **Objectives and activities**

#### **The charity's objects**

The relief of sickness and the preservation of mental and physical health among people facing end of life, bereavement by death of a person or the anticipation thereof and the protection and preservation of public health, particularly through the prevention of any sickness which may arise from bereavement by death of a person or the anticipation thereof through the use of arts, in particular, but not exclusively, the art of music.

#### **The charity's main activities**

The Charity's uses music to support people through the challenges associated with end of life and bereavement. Our core work involves helping terminally ill and bereaved people to write and record an original song. The Covid-19 pandemic put a temporary pause on this work as it was primarily with patients in hospices and the hospices were unable to let visitors in. Soon enough we developed a virtual way of offering our service and started supporting people to write their swan songs again.

During the pandemic we also started a virtual singing group as a way of supporting people struggling with isolation during the lockdowns. This has been well attended and has become a wonderful supportive community including many people who have written songs with us and family members of participants who have since passed.

We also started a podcast discussing song writing and bereavement. This has also been successful reaching a great number of people and engaging a lot more musicians with the charity's work. The aim of the podcast was to produce something informative and engaging. They feature in depth song writing discussions as well as conversations about how music has helped people through bereavements. The podcast inspires listeners to feel more confident about writing a song themselves and is comforting to people dealing with bereavements hearing stories from others.

#### **Public benefit statement**

In furtherance of the objects of the charity the charity works with people facing end of life, due to terminal illness or old age, their families, carers and loved ones. We help to address the mental and physical health issues associated with end of life. We do this through the following main activity:

The creation of original music and lyrics with beneficiaries to help them to address the emotional impact of death on the individual, their family, carers and loved ones. These original songs are recorded and shared by loved ones as a lasting record. Beneficiaries have the opportunity to share their work with the wider public if they choose to do so, both as a recording or as a live performance. We bring beneficiaries and their families, carers and loved ones together through regular Swan Song Project events, providing an opportunity for people to share their creative achievements and support one another through a challenging stage of life. We engage with musicians and song writers to promote the participants work and encourage people to get involved in supporting our beneficiaries.

Our song writing and bereavement podcast reaches large numbers of people promoting healthy conversations about bereavement. The podcast is educational and inspiring, both in relation to the practicalities of song writing and real stories of people dealing with bereavements.

#### **Achievements and performance**

The Covid-19 pandemic and lockdowns in the UK produced a lot of challenges for the charity. All of our work pre-pandemic had been with our partner organisations (hospices across Leeds and Bradford), these all had to stop allowing visitors and we were unable to reach our usual beneficiaries. We used the early stages of the pandemic to develop some of our resources and plans for development of the organisation, in particular training programs for bringing in new songwriters to deliver our service virtually enabling us to start working with beneficiaries again.

We are extremely proud of being able to adapt in this way and still make an impact with the individuals we have supported. The virtual way will remain a part of our offering going forward alongside the in person work we look forward to returning to. This will enable the charity to support people from a wider geographical region as travel is no longer an issue.

# **The Swan Song Project**

## **Trustees' report (continued) for the year ended 30 April 2021**

### **Achievements and performance (continued)**

One of the challenges we faced when launching our new virtual service was ensuring potential beneficiaries were aware of the service and able to access it. We were unable to attend the hospices where our previous referrals all came from. We developed a marketing strategy and connected with a wide range of service providers across the country who work with similar client groups. This has greatly improved our network of partner organisations and we hope to further develop these going forward. We were able to complete 13 songs with people virtually. These came from a range of new referral organisations and some self referrals that we are now able to accept through our website.

These often came following prominent social media attention. The impact of these songs is huge both for the individuals supported during the process of writing them but with their friends and family as well as the general public when songs are shared on our website. Many of the songs are played at funerals and on anniversaries and birthdays after someone has passed.

We employed a fundraising manager during this financial year who has brought great value to the charity. As well as fundraising responsibilities, this role involves communications, social media and measuring impact with participants. We have improved our impact measurements and have a consistent process in place now to help us gather feedback.

Outside of our core work we also started an online singing group. Conversations with our beneficiaries taught us that they would like another method of staying involved with the charity beyond the core work of writing a song. Family members of participants often want to stay involved as well. We also knew many people were struggling with isolation during the lockdowns and wanted to offer something positive for people to engage with. The singing group is weekly and free to attend, we promote it across our networks and is well attended with over 160 sign ups.

This includes a lot of people who have directly benefitted from the charity's core work, people involved with partner organisations and people who are new to the charity. The feedback for the group has been amazing with many people saying it is the highlight of their week and enjoying a real sense of community within it. This is something else we hope to continue beyond the pandemic.

The Swan Song Project Podcast was something we started during the pandemic to share conversations around song writing and bereavement. Our aim was to provide inspiration and practical tips on song writing for people who might be daunted by it as a task. We also wanted to share open conversations of experiences of bereavement and how music has helped people through these times. We produced 52 episodes of the podcast during this financial year featuring a range of songwriters from around the world. The podcast was played and downloaded over 20,000 times during the year. This has greatly expanded the reach of the project, increased awareness and established relationships with more musicians.

The charity is pleased to have retained a stable and committed trustee board throughout the year with no changes being made. Investment was also made in developing the charity's policies and procedures with help from an outside organisation. Our ambition is to expand our staff team in the coming years and we are building a solid foundation to ensure this goes smoothly.

The year also saw significant media interest and support in the project. A book titled "How to die well" produced by Rankin, featured a 4 page feature about The Swan Song Project. A local author is donating the 2021 profits of her book to The Swan Song Project. The podcast was featured on social media by The National Lottery in a video that had over 5 million views.

Our most consistent funder, The National Lottery also expressed their admiration of the work of the charity by dedicating a bespoke bench to us in a local park. The bench was one of thirteen benches dedicated to amazing projects across the UK. It is installed in Meanwood Park, Leeds and was designed by star of BBC One's "The Repair Shop" who spoke very highly of our work.

# **The Swan Song Project**

## **Trustees' report (continued) for the year ended 30 April 2021**

### **Financial review**

The net receipts for the year were £2,735, including net payments of £4,105 on unrestricted funds and net receipts of £6,840 on restricted funds.

### **Reserves policy**

The charity's free reserves, excluding fixed assets, at the year end were £30,981.

The Trustees will consider the level of reserves that it is prudent for the Organisation to have at its meeting every year. Consideration will be given to redundancy liabilities, lease agreements and any other significant factors that should be considered if the Organisation were to close.

In line with the finance policy commitment to review prudent levels of unrestricted reserves on an annual basis, the trustees have determined that; given the increased economic uncertainty created by the Covid pandemic, and taking into account the growth plans of the charity, an unrestricted reserve of between 6 and 12 months, after all liabilities are met, is prudent at this time.

Signed on behalf of the board of trustees on 15/09/2021

Adrian Sinclair (Trustee)

# **The Swan Song Project**

## **Independent examiner's report to the trustees of The Swan Song Project Charitable Incorporated Organisation ('the CIO')**

I report to the charity trustees on my examination of the accounts of the CIO for the year ended 30 April 2021, which are set out on pages 7 to 10.

### **Responsibilities and basis of report**

As the charity trustees of the CIO 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 CIO's accounts as carried out under section 145 of the 2011 Act. 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 the CIO as required by section 130 of the Act; or
- 2 the accounts do not accord with those records.

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.

Stephen Procter

16/09/2021

### **West Yorkshire Community Accounting Service**

Stringer House  
34 Lupton Street  
Leeds  
LS10 2QW

# The Swan Song Project

## Receipts and payments account

### for the year ended 30 April 2021

	Notes	2021 Unrestricted funds £	2021 Restricted funds £	2021 Total funds £	2020 Total funds £
<b>Receipts</b>					
Grants and donations	(2)	9,074	30,407	39,481	33,674
Subscriptions		149	-	149	11
Refunds		200	-	200	-
Other income		63	-	63	-
<b>Total receipts</b>		<u>9,486</u>	<u>30,407</u>	<u>39,893</u>	<u>33,685</u>
<b>Payments</b>					
Salaries, NI, pension etc	(3)	10,852	18,151	29,003	5,553
Sessional staff		200	2,900	3,100	10,254
Insurance		354	-	354	347
Training		-	-	-	60
Memberships and subscriptions		-	-	-	194
Marketing		967	1,216	2,183	1,200
Accounting		480	-	480	-
HR support		-	500	500	-
PayPal fees		22	-	22	-
IT expenses		637	800	1,437	-
Other expense		79	-	79	-
<b>Total payments</b>		<u>13,591</u>	<u>23,567</u>	<u>37,158</u>	<u>17,608</u>
<b>Net receipts / (payments)</b>		<u>(4,105)</u>	<u>6,840</u>	<u>2,735</u>	<u>16,077</u>
<b>Fund balances brought forward</b>		<u>35,086</u>	<u>(1,200)</u>	<u>33,886</u>	<u>17,809</u>
<b>Fund balances carried forward</b>	(4)	<u>30,981</u>	<u>5,640</u>	<u>36,621</u>	<u>33,886</u>



**The Swan Song Project**  
**Statement of assets and liabilities**  
**as at 30 April 2021**

	2021	2021	2021	2020
	Unrestricted	Restricted	Total	Total
	£	£	£	£
<b>Cash funds</b>				
Co-op Bank current account	28,011	5,640	33,651	31,447
PayPal	2,970	-	2,970	2,439
<b>Total cash funds</b>	<u>30,981</u>	<u>5,640</u>	<u>36,621</u>	<u>33,886</u>

<b>Liabilities</b>	£
Independent examination	480
	<u>480</u>

**Approval of the accounts**

The financial statements were approved by the board of trustees on 15/09/2021

Adrian Sinclair (Trustee)

# **The Swan Song Project**

## **Notes to the accounts**

### **for the year ended 30 April 2021**

#### **1 Accounting policies**

##### **Basis of accounting**

The trustees have taken advantage of section 133 of the Charities Act 2011 and have prepared the accounts on a receipts and payments basis.

There has been no change to the accounting policies since last year.

No changes have been made to the accounts for previous years.

##### **Taxation**

As a charity the organisation benefits from rates relief and is generally exempt from income tax and capital gains tax but not from VAT. Irrecoverable VAT is included in the cost of those items to which it relates.

##### **Fund accounting**

Unrestricted funds are available for use at the discretion of the trustees in furtherance of the general objectives of the charity.

Restricted funds are subjected to restrictions on their expenditure imposed by the donor or through the terms of an appeal.

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

# The Swan Song Project

## Notes to the accounts continued

### for the year ended 30 April 2021

#### 2 Grants and donations

	2021 Unrestricted funds £	2021 Restricted funds £	2021 Total funds £	2020 Total funds £
Lottery Community Fund (Covid support)	-	10,000	10,000	-
Leeds Community Foundation (Covid)	-	8,500	8,500	-
Awards for All	-	9,907	9,907	-
Red Bull Academy	-	2,000	2,000	-
Car Fest Donation	-	-	-	25,000
Donations	9,074	-	9,074	8,674
	<u>9,074</u>	<u>30,407</u>	<u>39,481</u>	<u>33,674</u>

#### 3 Staff costs

	2021 £	2020 £
Gross salaries	28,187	5,325
Social security costs	1,891	437
Employment allowance	(1,891)	(437)
Payroll costs	283	101
Pensions	533	127
	<u>29,003</u>	<u>5,553</u>

#### 4 Restricted funds

	Balance b/f £	Incoming £	Outgoing £	Balance c/f £
Lottery Community Fund (Covid support)	-	10,000	9,266	734
Leeds Community Foundation (Covid)	-	8,500	7,979	521
Awards for All	-	9,907	5,522	4,385
Red Bull Academy	(1,200)	2,000	800	-
	<u>(1,200)</u>	<u>30,407</u>	<u>23,567</u>	<u>5,640</u>

#### Fund name

#### Purpose of restriction

Lottery Community Fund (Covid support)	To support the organisation through the Covid-19 Pandemic and trial virtual ways of delivering the service.
Leeds Community Foundation (Covid)	To support the organisation through the Covid-19 Pandemic and trial virtual ways of delivering the service.
Awards for All	To expand the virtual service we developed during the earlier lockdowns.
Red Bull Academy	Towards marketing costs including branding and logo.

#### 5 Related party transactions

##### Trustee expenses

No trustee received any expenses during this year or the previous year.

##### Trustee remuneration and benefits

No trustee received any remuneration or benefit during this or the previous year.