

Connected Lives

Report and Accounts

Year ended 31 December 2023

CONNECTED LIVES
LEGAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE DETAILS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023

ADDRESS FOR CORRESPONDENCE	255 Old Marylebone Road London NW1 5QT
GOVERNING DOCUMENT	CIO Constitution dated July 2019
CHARITY REGISTRATION NUMBER	1184376
TRUSTEES RESPONSIBLE FOR MANAGING THE CHARITY	Lindsey Hayward Anita Jones Daniel Mogue (appointed February 2024) Nicola Morriss Margaret Sandilands Jonathan Sercombe (resigned January 2024)
BANKERS	National Westminster Bank Plc
INDEPENDENT EXAMINER	Jaimée Young Stewardship 1 Lamb's Passage LONDON EC1Y 8AB

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CONNECTED LIVES
REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023

The Trustees have pleasure in submitting the Report and Accounts for the year ended 31 December 2023.

Objects of the charity

Connected Lives is an early intervention charity, governed by a constitution and is constituted as a charitable incorporated organisation. The charity's principal objects, as set out in its governing document is for the benefit of the public in the advancement of education in relation to parenting, couples relationships, relational wellbeing and childcare.

At Connected Lives our groups and courses give parents and partners space to think about their relationships, permission to struggle and help to respond in new ways so everyone can thrive. We run targeted support groups for parents/carers with their babies and children, groups for parents of teenagers and groups for couples. All the programmes we use are attachment-based, trauma-informed, evidence-based and have a strong preventative track record.

Our proven track record of working with parents, partners, children and teens is that early intervention helps families thrive.

Our approach involves utilising evidence-based programmes like Circle of Security Parenting, Hold Me Tight, Created for Connection and Connected Teens.

Our trained facilitators offer a secure environment for individuals to explore these connections via groups, courses, trainings, and one-off evening events.

Early help is the most effective kind, both in relation to the wellbeing of families and society as a whole.

We love the on the ground work we do with parents and are grateful for all our partners.

Summary of the charity's main activities and achievements

To further the above objects and vision, the charity's main activities and achievements were as follows:

Core Principles

At Connected Lives we work hard to ensure that the help and support we give is both effective and accessible. Based on 60 decades of research here are the core principles which are fundamental to all the groups, courses and support we offer:

- Time to step back and think about what's working and not yet working in our relationships.
- A map (attachment theory) for understanding how these relationships work and what our children and partners need from us.
- Facilitators who are trained in listening and helping us make sense of our struggles and celebrating our strengths.
- Other parents and partners who have their own stories and help us see we are not alone.
- Permission to ask questions and be real about our struggles.
- All of our programmes have been evaluated by independent researchers and found to be effective.

It is always good to remember that this is all about the 'Power of Attachment'.

Hub Network

Excitedly, our South East London (Brockley Hub) got launched in 2023 and is running independently out of St Peter's Church Brockley. The Hub is partnering with St Peter's Church, the local Schools, early help teams and a local social supermarket. In 2023, the Hub delivered 5 Circle of security groups, participated in the Connected Teens groups and ran a one day Marriage course.

Our three hubs were able to help significantly more couples and families, pioneer new initiatives and officially start our new Connected Teens programme. Thanks to the great team of trustees, staff and volunteers who have all made a profound contribution to our work and enabled us to provide a helping hand to many more families.

We are on course to set up more new hubs in the year 2024. We are also diversifying with these hubs; one with a GP practice, a charity, potentially a premier league football club and are aiming to continue to work with wide number of partners.

Central NW London Hub

In 2023, Central NW London worked with over 950 partners, parents and children. We launched the Connected Teens programme and thanks to the generosity of our donors and grants, we were able to expand the delivery of Circle of Security Parenting Groups into more London Boroughs, namely; Westminster, Kensington and Chelsea, Brent, Harrow and Wandsworth.

Cambridgeshire Hub

HonC! and Trumpington Meadows Community Hub stay and plays continue to meet weekly on a Wednesday morning and a Friday lunch time.

347 individual families took part in Connected Lives Cambridgeshire stay and play groups in 2023 which included 492 children.

The hub championed new programmes including: Body mind connections, Out of Box initiative and a weekly community hub where pantry and free clothing for 0-2-year-olds are provided.

During the hub pantry, the locals get specialist housing advice and are signposted for financial and food provision.

"I think Connected Lives is amazing, but such an outfit needs to be standard in every community, not just one city, more macro than that." (Parent after attending Circle of Security Group in our Cambridgeshire Hub).

Our services

We supported couples, parents, carers and children through; Relationship and Parenting courses, drop-in toddler groups, baby groups, webinars and new baby visiting programmes.

(1) Parenting

Circle of Security Parenting

In 2023, Central NW London Team delivered 15 Circle of Security Parenting Groups, supporting 110 parents across Westminster, Brent, Harrow and Kensington and Chelsea, Battersea and Brighton. Referrals came from Perinatal Mental Health Teams, Early Help Teams, Schools, Therapists, other local charities and social services. We delivered increasingly in-person groups but continue to retain online delivery as this helps parents who could not physically travel to attend our in-person groups.

Thanks to a successful 2023 Fundraiser, we were able to extend our services to more London Boroughs with the support from a great team of 14 facilitators delivering COSP groups online and in person.

For our Cambridge Hub, in 2023, the hub ran 15 COS-P groups, 8 in-person and 7 online, helping over 87 families.

The groups were a mix of referrals accounting for about 60% of the groups from a range of sources.

Connected Teens

Drawing from the neuroscience and attachment theory, this course empowers parents to comprehend the rapid changes and developments during adolescence, providing them with the vital "emotional first aid training" to enable them to respond to their Teens with straight forward kindness that helps them thrive.

For the year 2023, after a successful launch of the Connected Teens programme, we delivered 3 Connected Teens courses, helping a total of 39 parents of 117 Teenagers.

What Parents said after attending the Connected Teens Groups:

"I have a background in working with young people professionally and in psychology so I was expecting to find this course too basic but I found the space in which to reflect on parenting with other parents in a structured and evidence based way amazing! The amount of info covered in each topic, visual slides/videos, handouts and discussion was perfectly balanced for multi sensory learning."

"This course and the expertise of the professionals facilitating delivery far exceeded my expectations and was excellent! Please keep delivering this course and sharing good practice in parenting skills and I would love to hear about any other courses you offer on parenting teens and young adults."

(2) Children

Drop Ins and Baby Boxes

We run bi-weekly stay and play toddler groups and about 115 families attend each week across our Hubs. These sessions for babies, toddlers, parents and carers provide a dual purpose. They provide a safe space for children to play (developing gross motor skills, social skills and imagination), and can be a lifeline for families to share struggles with their parenting and to receive support. Studies show that meeting regularly with people who understand what we are going through is a key protective feature against maternal ill-health.

The central NW London and Cambridgeshire Hub Deliver Welcome baby boxes to families in their communities. The Cambridge Hub who championed this initiative delivered their 129th Welcome Baby Boxes in 2023. The baby boxes are delivered to local families with babies under 16 weeks. The boxes provide gifts for both the parents and baby and a 'mum to mum' pamphlet with tips for thriving in the first few weeks. These visits give us an opportunity to touch base with the local families and encourage them to join in our different activities. Evaluation suggests that it increases parental confidence to join groups and reduce social isolation.

(3) Relationships

Marriage preparations

This course aims to help couples set good foundations for their relationships. 2,142 people have participated in this programme. Run over five sessions, couples look at Promises, Expectations, Communication, Conflict, Sex and Intimacy and (optional session for those marrying in church) a session on the wedding service. Led by a range of couples, the sessions give couples the chance to prepare emotionally and relationally for a wonderful life together.

Hold Me Tight

This course was developed by leading couples therapist and author, Dr Sue Johnson. 272 people have undertaken this 7 session programme with us. Participation is proven to increase couples' sense of connection, gives insight as to why they might be feeling stuck and increases a sense of intimacy and connection.

This course is delivered by our team of experienced facilitators and supported by Emotionally Focused Couples Therapists. The course is suitable for any couple in a committed relationship for two or more years.

Created for Connection

Connected Lives delivers this programme over a weekend. The material retains the key therapeutic concepts of the Hold Me Tight programme but with a specifically Christian focus. In total we have run 3 weekend for couples using this programme and have also delivered a shortened version to 742 couples.

New programmes

Body Mind Connections

The 1.5 hour sessions combine therapeutic story telling and body movement. Providing opportunities for deeper thinking for parents / carers through reflection, exercise and relaxation.

The group provides a helpful addition to Circle of Security Parenting groups or as stand-alone session.

Out of the box

Out of the Box deep-talk story telling offers parents and their children a safe space to meet regularly and talk about different aspects of parenting. This approach resonates with Circle of Security Parenting and Dan Hughes' PACE model of nurturing secure attachments which encourages play, acceptance, curiosity and empathy.

Weekly Community Hub

This project is a joint collaboration between Connected Lives Cambridgeshire, bpha - a local Housing Association, and Social Prescribers from GP practices.

Every Friday the Cambridgeshire hub offers local people of all ages in Trumpington Meadows, the space to play, chat, lunch and support carers in their parenting journey.

"Before we came to your group in Cambridge, we did not know about different aspects of parenting, didn't know anyone and did not feel a part of this community. Coming a long has made all the difference to us finding a place where we are welcome and that we belong. Thank you!" (Quote from one of the parents after attending the Friday community drop in group).

Circle of Security Impact Analysis

We continually monitor our COS-P groups, using both pre and post standard psychological measures including:

Parental Reflective Functioning Questionnaire (PRFQ), The Maternal Object Relationships Scale (MORS) and Circle of Security International Evaluation questionnaires.

(i) **PRFQ** is an evaluation measure which helps track how well parents/carer givers see things from their child's perspective (build empathy).

(ii) **MORS** looks at the changes to the parent's sense of warmth and invasion. Looking at the combination of warmth and invasion helps to see what needs to change in the parent/child relationship.

(iii) We also use **Parents' Own Goals** -where we ask the parents to set goals at the start of the group and evaluate the extent at which the set goals are met after the 8 week course.

(iv) **Circle of Security International evaluation measures**, this evaluates the pre and post parental understanding of their children's emotional needs.

Some recent analysis of the parents who participated in Circle of Security Parenting groups in 2023 concluded:

PRFQ:

- An increase in parental reflective functioning from 18% at the start of the group to 90% by the end of the group.
- An increase in parental confidence in their ability to meet their children's needs rose from 22% pre- to 96% post-course.

MORS:

- The MORS scale showed that parents' scores indicating a warm and appropriate relationship rose from 32% pre- group to 75% post- group participation.

While parents' invasion score went from 38% down to 5%.

Whilst no form can adequately capture the nature of a relationship, the reduction in invasion scores is encouraging.

Parents who can move from a position of seeing their child as being invasive, demanding and hard to manage, to seeing their child is in need of help and support are making profound shifts. Such empathic shifts will likely have a positive impact on the quality of the attachment relationship.

Parents' own goals :

Across our Hubs, 93% of the parents said that the goals they set at the start of the course had been fully or largely met.

Security International parent's evaluation statistics:

- Reduction in parental stress (85%)
- Increased insight into children's behaviour (80%)
- Improvement in relationship with child (95%)
- Increased understanding of their children's emotional needs (93%)
- Increased capacity for self-reflection (84%)
- Gave new parenting abilities (85%)
- Would recommend to other parents (100%)

Circle Clinic and parenting talks

All parents have moments or stages where they would like to chat through a parenting dilemma with someone who understands.

We offer 45 minutes circle clinic to parents who have completed the Circle of Security Parenting group and also hold one-off termly parenting talks and workshops to give parents help and advice to those tricky times when they feel a little stuck.

Comments from Parents who attended our COSP Groups in 2023:

"When I remove the distractions and I can fully engage in his 'moments' and what he's feeling then I can deal with it properly and we both feel good. It's really, really hard to be a single mum, it's full on and there's no breaks or days off but having and growing these new skills means we are both happier and healthier. It's a direct result of the way COS (Circle of Security) is making me think about my parenting! So thank you!"

"The course was really nice, it helped me to connect with other parents and share our parenting struggles."

"The course can revolutionise the way you relate to your children".

Volunteers

Since 2022 the Central NW London Hub has continued to partner with the University of Westminster to recruit volunteers to help with; admin work, crèche for COS-P groups, evaluation of course data; scoping of area and outreach to families. The Cambridgeshire hub gets volunteers from the local community.

The Central NW London and the Cambridgeshire hubs have built up a team of about 35 volunteers who help us with our Stay and Play sessions, our Community hub outreach and welcome baby box delivery and the creche for the Circle of Security Groups. Volunteers work over the last year amounted to 880 hours of help.

Safeguarding

The charity has a robust safeguarding policy in place and it is mandatory that everyone we take on board under our umbrella, follows or has a robust a safeguarding policy as us. We commit ourselves to nurture, protect and safeguard all those we work with, particularly children and young people. Connected Lives undertakes to exercise proper care in the recruitment, selection processes, training, work practices and procedures. All our Employees and Volunteers are first DBS checked before they can do any paid or unpaid work with us.

In planning the activities the Trustees have applied the guidance on public benefit issued by the Charity Commission.

Financial review

During the year income increased by £41,600, to £203,100, and expenditure increased by £33,670, to £181,510. As a result the cash held by the charity increased by £21,590, to £42,820, all of which is unrestricted and can be used for any charitable purpose.

Reserves policy

The trustees have determined that the charity should aim to hold unrestricted cash of not less than 3 months' salary (which equates to about £27,000) so that the charity could continue to operate should income and / or expenditure vary adversely. At the year end, the charity held unrestricted cash balance of £42,820.

Governance

Responsibility for setting policy and for making operating decisions rest with the trustees who meet regularly to monitor the activities of the charity. Responsibility for the day to day operation of the charity has been delegated to Connected Lives Director Jenny Peters. New trustees are recruited and appointed by the existing trustees, by a majority vote.

Relationships with other charities and related parties

We have an existing relationship with St Mary's Church Bryanston Square, where we originally started as a family project and we are grateful for their continued support and relationship.

Risk statement

The charity is exposed to various risks - be they operational, financial or reputational. The trustees review the charity's activities regularly to identify significant risks and, where possible, they take appropriate measures to mitigate those risks.

Responsibilities of trustees

Charity law requires us as Trustees to prepare financial statements for each accounting year which record the receipts and payments of the charity for the year.

We are responsible for keeping proper accounting records which disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charity and enable us to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Charities Act 2011.

We also have a responsibility to safeguard the assets of the charity and to take reasonable steps to prevent fraud or any other irregularities.

Approval

This report was approved by the trustees and signed on their behalf by:

M Sandilands

Margaret Sandilands

Date: 30 July 2024

INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT
TO THE TRUSTEES OF
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of Connected Lives ('the charity') for the year ended 31 December 2023 on pages 7 to 9 following.

Responsibilities and basis of report

As the trustees of the charity you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 ('the 2011 Act').

I report in respect of my examination of the charity's 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 2011 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 accordance with section 130 of the 2011 Act; or
2. the accounts do not accord with the accounting records.

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

J Young

Jaimée Young

Stewardship
1 Lamb's Passage
LONDON
EC1Y 8AB

Date: 31 July 2024

CONNECTED LIVES
RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS ACCOUNT
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023

	Notes	<u>Unrestricted Funds</u>		Restricted Funds	Total 2023	Total 2022
		General Funds	Designated Funds			
		£	£	£	£	£
<i>Income receipts</i>						
Donations		98,222	-	4,352	102,573	55,390
Gift aid receipts		6,736	-	69	6,805	641
Other grants		44,290	-	36,418	80,708	87,863
Income from charitable activities		9,216	-	3,797	13,013	17,603
<i>Total receipts</i>		<u>158,464</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>44,635</u>	<u>203,099</u>	<u>161,497</u>
<i>Payments</i>						
Payments in relation to charitable activities undertaken directly	2	119,262	10,000	52,249	181,512	147,840
<i>Total payments</i>		<u>119,262</u>	<u>10,000</u>	<u>52,249</u>	<u>181,512</u>	<u>147,840</u>
Net of receipts / (payments) before transfers		39,202	(10,000)	(7,614)	21,587	13,657
Transfers between funds	5	(17,379)	10,000	7,379	-	-
Net movement in funds		<u>21,822</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>(235)</u>	<u>21,587</u>	<u>13,657</u>
Cash funds as at last year end		26,000	-	(4,765)	21,235	7,579
Cash funds at this year end	A	<u>47,822</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>(5,000)</u>	<u>42,822</u>	<u>21,236</u>

The notes on page 9 form part of these accounts.

CONNECTED LIVES
STATEMENT OF ASSETS AND LIABILITIES
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023

		<u>Unrestricted Funds</u>			Total	Total
		General funds	Designated funds	Restricted funds	2023	2022
		£	£	£	£	£
A Cash funds						
Cash at bank with immediate access		47,823	-	(5,000)	42,823	21,235
		<u>47,823</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>(5,000)</u>	<u>42,823</u>	<u>21,235</u>
B Other monetary assets						
Gift aid due to charity		885	-	-	885	-
Other debtors		200	-	-	200	-
Promised grant funding	See Note 4	-	-	5,000	5,000	7,962
		<u>1,085</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>5,000</u>	<u>6,085</u>	<u>7,962</u>
C Liabilities						
Falling due within one year:						
Trade creditors		960	-	-	960	3,642
PAYE/NIC due		3,694	-	930	4,624	2,117
Pension due		327	-	172	499	238
Fee for Independent Examination		1,200	-	-	1,200	990
		<u>6,181</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>1,102</u>	<u>7,283</u>	<u>6,987</u>

D Assets retained for charity's own use

The charity owns minimal assets

E Guarantees and secured debts

The charity has not given any guarantees and has not provided its assets as security for any liabilities.

The accounts were approved by the trustees and signed on their behalf

by M Sandilands date 30 July 2024
Margaret Sandilands

The notes on page 9 form part of these accounts.

CONNECTED LIVES
NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023

1 Accounting policies

The accounts have been prepared on a receipts and payments basis and comprise a statement that shows the charity's receipts and payments, a statement that summarises the charity's assets and liabilities and related notes. The accountancy profession have determined that only accounts prepared in accordance with applicable accounting standards present a 'true and fair' view and, as these receipts and payments accounts have not (and cannot) be prepared in accordance with accounting standards, these accounts do not present (and are not intended to present) a 'true and fair' view of the charity's financial activities and state of affairs.

General funds are unrestricted funds which are available for use at the discretion of the trustees in furtherance of the general objectives of the charity. Designated funds comprise unrestricted funds that have been set aside by the trustees for particular purposes. Restricted funds are donations which are to be used in accordance with specific restrictions imposed by donors; they include donations received from appeals for specific activities or projects.

	<u>Unrestricted Funds</u>		Restricted Funds	Total 2023	Total 2022
	General funds £	Designated funds £	£	£	£
2 Payments in relation to charitable activities undertaken directly					
Employment costs	90,406	-	41,488	131,893	116,974
Direct project costs	24,233	10,000	8,028	42,261	21,040
Rent	-	-	2,734	2,734	4,250
Insurance	580	-	-	580	580
Professional fees and subscriptions	845	-	-	845	1,003
IT software and consumables	1,999	-	-	1,999	1,800
Administration and support	-	-	-	-	1,203
Governance	1,200	-	-	1,200	990
	<u>119,262</u>	<u>10,000</u>	<u>52,249</u>	<u>181,512</u>	<u>147,840</u>

3 Transactions with related parties

No payments were made to trustees or persons related to them, except for reimbursement of expenses paid out on behalf of the charity.

4 Acting as agent

During the year, the charity received money on behalf of St Mary's Church. This income was received as agent; the receipt totalling £859, and the subsequent payment, are excluded from the Receipts and Payments account.

5 Movement of funds

	Opening balance £	Receipts £	Payments £	Transfers £	Closing balance £
General funds	26,000	158,464	(119,262)	(17,379)	47,822
Designated funds					-
Cambridge Hub [Hands on the Circle]	-	-	(10,000)	10,000	-
	<u>26,000</u>	<u>158,464</u>	<u>(129,262)</u>	<u>(7,379)</u>	<u>47,822</u>
Restricted funds					
Cambridge Hub [Hands on the Circle]	(4,765)	44,635	(52,249)	7,379	(5,000)
	<u>(4,765)</u>	<u>44,635</u>	<u>(52,249)</u>	<u>7,379</u>	<u>(5,000)</u>
Total funds	<u>21,235</u>	<u>203,099</u>	<u>(181,512)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>42,822</u>

The £10,000 transfer from general funds to the Cambridge hub designated fund was given after the successful March 2023 fundraiser.

The restricted funds deficit balance relates to Cambridge hub budgeted expenditure against secured grant funding that was not received until after the year end (see statement of assets and liabilities).