

An experience in learning, sharing, growing - individually and together

Trustees' Annual Report

1st April 2022 - 31st March 2023

Please note, when **CIS'ters** was founded in 1995, the name was chosen in 1994 and represents CIS (childhood incest survivors) and 'ters, for the sisters who had been victims within the same family

Contents

Section one: Reference and administrative details	3
Trustees	3
Section two: Structure, governance and management	4
Policies	4
Conflict of Interest	4
Risk management statement	5
Public benefit statement	5
Financial review	5
Additional reference and administrative information	6
Section three: Objectives and activities	6
Summary of the objects of the charity set out in our governing document	6
Summary of the main activities in relation to these objects	7/8
Section four: Achievements and performance	9
Maintaining existing services	9
Helpline	9
Annual Weekend (residential) workshop for members	10
Referrals/Signposting	10
Advocacy	10
Emotional resilience of workforce	10
Achievements	11
Hidden Harm podcasts	11
Peer support sessions	12
Toolkit development	12
Workforce	13
Section five: Consultancy and commissions	13
Section six: Acknowledgements	13
Section seven: Declaration	14

Section one: Reference and administrative details

Charity Name	CIS'ters –surviving rape and sexual abuse during childhood
Registered charity number	1184857 (<i>previously 1123125</i>)
Charity's principal address	CIS'ters Po Box 119 Eastleigh Hampshire SO50 9ZF

Trustees

Trustee Name	Office	Dates	Name of person (or body) entitled to appoint trustee
Samantha Richley	Trustee/Chair	12/08/2019 - present	CIS'ters Board of Trustees
Elsa Montgomery	Trustee/Secretary	12/08/2019 - present	CIS'ters Board of Trustees
Mary Bridgman	Trustee/Treasurer	12/08/2019 - present	CIS'ters Board of Trustees
Louise Bird	Trustee	12/08/2019 - present	CIS'ters Board of Trustees
Gillian Finch	Trustee Unpaid Manager Founder	12/08/2019 - present	CIS'ters Board of Trustees
Eileen Gorrod	Trustee	12/08/2019 - present	CIS'ters Board of Trustees
Catherine Handley	Trustee	17/11/2020 - present	CIS'ters Board of Trustees
Shelley Unwin	Trustee	12/08/2019 - present	CIS'ters Board of Trustees

Section two: Structure, governance, and management

Type of governing document: Charitable Incorporated Organisation - Foundation

The charity migrated from original registration (1123125) to a CIO format and achieved registration on 12th August 2019 (1184857). Funds were transferred from the original registration on 31st March 2020, to the new CIO and 1123125 was formally closed on 19th January 2021.

It is important that when reviewing the Annual Report and Audited Accounts, that consideration is given to the achievements gained whilst previously registered (as 1123125) as they cover a substantial part of the history of our charity since originally set up and then initial registration.

Trustees are selected following skills gap analysis. They may be recommended by existing trustees, and selection is by unanimous vote of the Board of Trustees. Trustees are appointed on their abilities and skills. In appointing trustees **CIS'ters** aims to ensure a majority of trustees are adult female survivors of childhood rape, sexual abuse or sexual exploitation and are therefore representative of those using the primary service. Where no such majority is possible the survivor trustees (i.e. those with lived experience) have a joint casting vote.

Policies

The policy framework, developed under the original registration, was adopted in January 2014 and distributed to the trustees and workers in the agency in April 2014. There is a rolling programme of review every three years. During the reporting period of 2022-23, the following policies have been reviewed and updated:

- Conflict of Interest
- Covid
- Gifts, Hospitality & Gratuities
- Redundancy
- Retirement
- Support Supervision & Appraisal
- Unsatisfactory Standard of Work
- Volunteer Grievance/Complaints Procedure

Conflict of Interest

A Conflict-of-Interest Register was initiated at the Trustee meeting on 23rd May 2018 and is now a formal part of each meeting. During the reported period, Trustees confirmed that they had no conflicts of interest.

Risk management statement

The trustees take responsibility for management of risk within the charity. Major risks are reviewed by the Trustees at their regular meetings and control systems have been established to manage those risks. A designated trustee provides documented supervision sessions on a monthly basis with the manager during which risks (known and emerging) are subject to ongoing monitoring. Risk management extends to financial awareness.

The charity continued to deliver against priorities agreed with funders for key projects. We were successful in securing a new three-year grant from The Joseph Rank Trust.

Prior to covid pandemic we had been chosen by BIZPEDIA, a local business network, to raise funds for during 2020 – which proved not to be possible. During July 2022 they were able to honour their previous promise to raise funds – and they and we were staggered at their success.

On this basis trustees were satisfied that the charity had sufficient financial resources for the year. In common with the majority of small/medium size charities and particularly those, like ours, who focus on subjects that society would prefer to not so easily acknowledge – future and sustainable funding remains an issue that requires constant attention from within scarce workforce resources.

Public benefit statement

All trustees have complied with their duty to have due regard to guidance on public benefit when exercising their duties.

Financial review

Income received during the year 2022-23 was £92,784. The end of year balance for the prior financial year (2021/22) was £66,027. Expenditure for 2022-23 totalled £63,417 compared with £52,079 in the prior year. The main reason for the increase was increased delivery of services (notably the weekend workshop).

As of 31st March 2023, the balance carried forward into the next financial year i.e. 2023-24 was £95,395 which included restricted grants linked to ongoing projects (as grants periods did not strictly align with our financial years).

Our Reserves policy recognises the need to ensure cash reserves to:

- ❖ Meet contractual liabilities should the organisation have to close. This includes redundancy pay, amounts due to creditors and commitments under leases.
- ❖ Meet unexpected costs
- ❖ Replace equipment as it wears out
- ❖ Provide working capital if and when funding is paid in arrears
- ❖ Ensure the charity can continue to provide a stable and quality service

CIS'ters Business Continuity Plan requires us to have 4-6 months close down reserves and we achieved this. The level of reserves is crucial to our charity in that new funding is unstable with good and not so good years – whilst expenditure remains reasonably static. Expenditure costs are subject to ongoing and robust review.

Additional reference and administrative information

Bank	HSBC	3 Leigh Road, Eastleigh SO50 9YW
Auditor	Fred Bendall	8 Tenby Drive, Chandlers Ford, SO53 4NL

Section three: Objectives and activities

Summary of the objects of the charity set out in its governing document	<p>The Trustees shall hold the trust fund and its income upon trust to apply them for the following objects (“the objects”):</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> to promote and protect the health of female survivors aged over 18 who, born as female, during childhood were raped, sexually abused or sexually exploited in particular but not limited to those who were raped, sexually abused or sexually exploited by a member of their immediate or extended family; empowering such survivors in their own personal healing through the mutual affirmation, acceptance, respect and support of other survivors and, subject to funding, to assist in the provision or development of services for other persons affected directly or indirectly by rape, sexual abuse or sexual exploitation as the trustees shall think fit. To promote and protect the health of
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<p>Summary of the objects of the charity set out in its governing document (continued)</p>	<p>female survivors aged over 18 who, born as female, during childhood were raped, sexually abused or sexually exploited in particular but not limited to those who were raped, sexually abused or sexually exploited by a member of their immediate or extended family; empowering such survivors in their own personal healing through the mutual affirmation, acceptance, respect and support of other survivors and, subject to funding, to assist in the provision or development of services for other persons affected directly or indirectly by rape, sexual abuse or sexual exploitation as the trustees shall think fit.</p> <p>c. to advance the education of the public, in particular those providing services, of the impact on child victims/adult survivors of childhood rape/sexual abuse/exploitation and the associated coping strategies used by some victims; and to promote an improved service response to the unmet needs of such child victims/adult survivors, and others affected directly or indirectly by experiences of sexual crimes.</p>
<p>Summary of the main activities in relation to these objects</p>	<p>As our primary workforce are (in the main) volunteers and those with lived experience we continue to be affected by their resilience as they move forward post pandemic. This has had a limiting factor on how services are being now delivered and in some areas re-configured.</p> <p>a. Production of our newsletter has continued without being affected by the pandemic. It was available to our 500+ Members (ie service users/clients) via hard copy or email and to the public via our website.</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> b. Continued to provide a national helpline (answer phone and call back or email response), to offer support to adults who have been affected by such abuse, signposting where appropriate to other services/agencies. c. Social media was used to promote awareness raising with the general public, so that they better understand core issues including prevalence of such abuse. d. Continued to network with key professionals in other agencies (local and national), including the statutory sector, to highlight the unmet needs of child victims and adult survivors. e. Undertook fundraising activities to raise income needed to sustain the agency; recognising the impact that restrictions would have on those already accessing our charity; and those that might reach out to us. f. During this financial year we managed to increase the number of physical face to face meetings that were available, plus responded to phone and emails, and offered limited zoom calls. g. In May 2022 we were able to successfully deliver our annual weekend residential workshop.
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Section four: Achievements and performance



Maintaining existing services

Membership: As of 31st March 2023, we had 517 Members (a slight reduction on the 547 members as at 31/3/22). Of these 51% live within combined Hampshire, Isle of Wight, Portsmouth and Southampton local government areas. The remaining 49% of our Members live across England and Wales. The reduction is due to undertaking an administrative initiative to contact Members to ensure that their contact listings were up to date. The pandemic has had an impact, in that there were a number of individuals who we had either lost complete contact with, were now deceased, or confirmed that they no longer needed our support.

Helpline: (phone and email): We have ensured that there is a wealth of content on our website www.cisters.org.uk which enables and empowers victim/survivors to find a suitable pathway, that does not necessarily include making direct contact with us. We receive higher numbers of emails from new contacts than phone calls – as this appears easier for the initial contact being made by the individual ie any hour of any day.

We do still receive direct contact from individuals who meet the criteria for our core service, and are enquiring about Membership. In addition, we continue to receive calls from professionals/others who are seeking affirmation that they are providing help and support for their clients, in a way which is helpful rather than creating boundaries.

Annual Weekend (Residential) Workshop for Members: In May 2022 we were able to successfully deliver our annual weekend residential workshop. This has been a regular event since 1999, though in 2020 and 2021 was postponed due to the global pandemic.

Due to the continued health risks during May 2022 and the acknowledged vulnerability (health) of our lived experience workforce, we undertook additional safeguards to ensure that they, and our equally vulnerable delegates (who had travelled some distance to attend the event) were protected. The event was well received and provided a much needed emotional boost to all those who took part, and to the charity as a whole.



Referrals/Signposting: In recognition of the fact that **CIS'ters** might be part of a survivor/members journey, we have ensured that there is comprehensive information on our website which can be used by survivors and others to find additional services such as counselling.

Within **CIS'ters**, when responding to emails and phone calls we continue to highlight the existence of additional services so that individuals have the widest choices open to them.

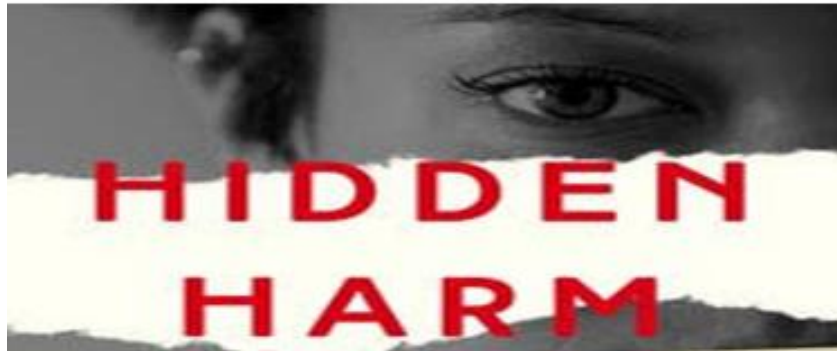
Advocacy: Increasingly we are finding that many of our members, whether they live in Hampshire or elsewhere, require advocacy or empowerment in addition to emotional support.

Currently this is an under resourced area and will need sustainable funding if we were to promote it as a service. We are currently undertaking the task on a case by case basis, which is very much dependent on how time/people resources allow.

Emotional Resilience of Workforce: The supervisor appointed in 2020 continues to provide support for our workforce, in addition to that provided by both our Manager and Senior Administrative Support Officer.

The majority of our workforce are members (i.e. survivors with lived experience of sexual abuse during childhood within a familial environment). They are carefully monitored to ensure that they are sufficiently resilient individuals, in order to undertake their respective roles.

Achievements



Hidden Harm Podcasts: A further 4 were recorded during the year 2022-23. A complete list of episodes as at 31st March 2023 is shown below:

- 1 - Introducing **CIS'ters** - 'You Are Not Alone'
- 2 - What Do Survivors Talk About?
- 3 - Hurdles to Telling as a Child
- 4 - Disclosing as an Adult
- 5 - Telling Partners, Family & Friends
- 6 - Disclosing to Your Family of Origin
- 7 – Coping Strategies
- 8 – The Pressure to Forgive
- 9 – Loss
- 10 – Collaborative Working
- 11 – The Power of Music
- 12 - Isolation Through the Eyes of Survivors
- 13 - Learning Something New
- 14 - Through the Eyes of a Midwife'
- 15 - Self Neglect/Self Harm
- 16 - Everyone's Invited
- 17 - Domestic Abuse
- 18 - When an Abuser Dies
- 19 - Interview with Fay Maxted
- 20 - Reflections on the Past Few Months
- 21 - Counselling & Therapy
- 22 - Mind Your Language
- 23 - Trauma & Physical Health

- 24 - Abusers Can Be Female
- 25 - Institutional CSA Cover-Ups
- 26 - ISVA's (Independent Sexual Advisor Service)
- 27 - You Think I'm Alright. You Are Wrong
- 28 – ACE's - Adverse Childhood Experiences
- 29 -The Window of Tolerance
- 30 – The Importance of NHS England to Victims/Survivors of Sexual Assault & Abuse
- 31 Using Self Help Materials
- 32 The Sensitivity of Raising Awareness of Sexual Abuse & Sexual Violence
- 33 A Heartfelt Thank You to Bizpedia

The podcast channel can be found via our website: [The 'Hidden Harm' Podcasts | CIS'ters \(cisters.org.uk\)](https://www.cisters.org.uk). Further editions are to be recorded during the next and future financial years, with topics being added at the suggestion of Members and of emerging issues.

Peer Support Group Sessions: The weekday booked telephone support sessions continued and the Saturday support session was replaced with physical meetings, as this was what was being sought from Members who contacted us at that time.



Toolkit development: This had been a new initiative and reflected that Members who lived remotely to our physical base in Hampshire, needed something more practical to use as a self-help guide, or toolkit. As at the end of March 2023, five of the anticipated 12 modules had been created in outline, and appropriate content is being developed. Our intention is to pilot the product as we develop it, with 5-6 individual members (of varying abilities). We can then capture their feedback which will be used to build into individual modules, as they continue to be mapped out and content created. Once fully assessed and operational we will be able to use it as a bespoke physical resource for our whole national membership.

Workforce: Our pre-pandemic workforce has been adversely affected by covid in that the majority of our volunteers had underlying physical and emotional health conditions (in common with other victim/survivors of sexual abuse during childhood). Care has been taken, and continues to be taken, to slowly rebuild the team and monitor the resilience of existing team members. Victim/survivors who become Members of **CIS'ters** continue to give feedback that: they find the greatest value in their contact with us, is that those they communicate with, within our frontline teams, are also victim/survivors. Thus, we continue to see merit in choosing a workforce with lived experience, despite the additional work that this requires to choose and maintain resilience individuals.

Section Five: Consultancy/Commissions

- ❖ Our Founder was a key member of the team that NHS England consulted during its development of a Sexual Assault and Abuse Services Strategy (SAAS) which was published in 2016. Our Founder was then appointed as the Chair of the Lived Experience Group that met within the framework of NHSE, monitoring the delivery of the SAAS. In addition, she attended the NHSE SAAS Advisory Group in that capacity, which is a cross government forum, with representatives from other national leads.
<https://www.england.nhs.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/strategic-direction-sexual-assault-and-abuse-services.pdf>
- ❖ Our Founder is also a member of a Lived Experiences Group for the NIHR-funded MESARCH project, based at Coventry University. This study is evaluating Sexual Assault Referral Centres across England and is also exploring the experiences of survivors of sexual abuse & violence and their long-term support needs. <https://www.coventry.ac.uk/research/areas-of-research/centre-for-intelligent-healthcare/mesarch/>
- ❖ She also joined a recently set up Lived Experience Group established by CSA Centre of Expertise <https://www.csacentre.org.uk>, to develop care pathways for child victims.
- ❖ We continue to be part of a number of national consultative forums, and also some that are within Hampshire where our office is located.

Section Six: Acknowledgements

We wish to give thanks to the following for their exceptional help and support during 2022-2023 which has continued to be a difficult year for so many charities and their service users:

- ❖ Bizpedia – for their fundraising on our behalf and generous unrestricted donation
- ❖ Joseph Rank Trust – for their approval of a three-year grant

- ❖ NHS England – for their ongoing Covid-19 grant towards improvement in digital services.



Trustees, on behalf of all of those who access our small charity, wish it to be known that we are hugely grateful to all those who donated directly or raised funds through sponsored events.

The total sum donated during 2022-23 was £36,731 of which £31,741 was the exceptional and unexpected amount raised by Bizpedia in July 2022. In the prior year all new income received by the charity was £9,351 of which £8,782 was from donations.

Section Seven: Declaration

The trustees declare that they have approved the trustees' report above:

Signed on behalf of the charity's trustees (as at this date):

Signatures		
Full Names	Samantha Richley In Role as Chair, Trustees	Gillian Finch In Role as a Trustee
Date	2 nd October 2023	2 nd October 2023

Notes:



1 - this grant period is Aug 22 > Jul 23

2 - this grant period is Nov 22 > Oct 23

3 - this grant is towards Weekend Workshop May 2023

4 - The Gift Aid element to be claimed in early April 2023

5 - Total of £1885.02 is early receipt for May 2023 event

<p>Statement on Behalf Of CIS'ters:</p> <p>This is a true and fair record of accounts for year 2022/23</p> <p>Signature: </p> <p>Date: 14-6-2023</p> <p>Name: Mary Bridgman</p> <p>Treasurer</p>	<p>Auditor Opinion:</p> <p>I have examined the expenditure and grant income and reviewed the miscellaneous income.</p> <p>I believe this statement to be a true reflection of these transactions.</p> <p>Signature: </p> <p>Date: 14-6-2023</p> <p>Name: F Bendall (C.I.P.F.A.)</p> <p>External Auditor</p>
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CHARITY COMMISSION
FOR ENGLAND AND WALES

Charity Name

CIS'ters: surviving rape and sexual abuse during childhood

No (if any)

1184857

Receipts and payments accounts (link to prior registration 1123125)

CC16a

For the period from

Period start date

01-Apr-22

To

Period end date

31-Mar-23

Section A Receipts and payments

	Unrestricted funds to the nearest £	Restricted funds to the nearest £	Endowment funds to the nearest £	Total funds to the nearest £	Last year to the nearest £
A1 Receipts					
Grants and Donations	4,859	84,041		88,900	8,782
Training Awareness Events/Wksp etc	1,980			1,980	-
Refunds	878			878	230
Interest Reserves		373		373	7
Commissions and Consultancy	635			635	285
Gift Aid				-	-
Other	18			18	47
Sub total (Gross income for AR)	8,370	84,414	-	92,784	9,351
A2 Asset and investment sales, (see table).					
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
Sub total	-	-	-	-	-
Total receipts	8,370	84,414	-	92,784	9,351
A3 Payments					
Paid Worker/Sessional Workers/Contractors	27,871	-	-	27,871	29,225
Office rent, rates electricity and PO Box	12,374	-	-	12,374	12,033
Covid Related equipment/purchases		-	-	-	3,004
Comms: Web, Stamps, Phones	1,731	-	-	1,731	2,423
Governance etc Incl Insurances	4,006	-	-	4,006	1,843
Stationery and Photocopying	1,418	-	-	1,418	1,418
Volunteer Training and Travel	1,799	-	-	1,799	1,591
Equip etc plus sundries	1,901	6,393	-	8,294	356
Training and Awareness Events	5,924	-	-	5,924	189
Sub total	57,024	6,393	-	63,417	52,079
A4 Asset and investment purchases, (see table)					
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
Sub total	-	-	-	-	-
Total payments	57,024	6,393	-	63,417	52,079
Net of receipts/(payments)	- 48,654	78,021	-	29,367	-
A5 Transfers between funds	-	-	-	-	-
A6 Cash funds last year end	-	-	-	-	-
Cash funds this year end	- 48,654	78,021	-	29,367	-

Section B Statement of assets and liabilities at the end of the period

Categories	Details	Unrestricted funds to nearest £	Restricted funds to nearest £	Endowment funds to nearest £
B1 Cash funds	General Ledger	6,808		-
	Reserves; Restricted and Contingency	23,488	62,885	
	Petty Cash	489		-
		-	-	-
	Total cash funds	30,785	62,885	-

	Details	Unrestricted funds to nearest £	Restricted funds to nearest £	Endowment funds to nearest £
B2 Other monetary assets	Deposit - for premises	-	1,724	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-

	Details	Fund to which asset belongs	Cost (optional)	Current value (optional)
B3 Investment assets			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-

	Details	Fund to which asset belongs	Cost (optional)	Current value (optional)
B4 Assets retained for the charity's own use			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-

	Details	Fund to which liability relates	Amount due (optional)	When due (optional)
B5 Liabilities	Annual Healing Weekend Deposits	Reserves	1,885	31 May 2023
	Annual Weekend Grant - Enterprise	Reserves	2,000	31 May 2023
	NHSE Grant (elements April - July 2023)	Reserves	12,000	30 July 2023
	HIWCF Grant Conference October 2023	Reserves	2,500	30/10/2023
	Ongoing Service Development	Reserves	14,500	31/03/2024
	Contingency Planning	Reserves	30,000	31/03/2024

Signed by one or two trustees
on behalf of all the trustees

Trustee / Treasurer

Signature

Print Name

Date of approval

Trustee / Unpaid Manager

CCXX R2 accounts (SS)

M BRIDGMAN

14/6/23

G FINCH

14/6/23

24/04/2023



Independent examiner's report on the accounts

Section A

Independent Examiner's Report

**Report to the trustees/
members of**

**On accounts for the year
ended**

Set out on pages

**Respective responsibilities
of trustees and examiner**

Charity Name

CIS'ters: surviving rape and sexual abuse during childhood

31st March 2023

Charity no
(if any)

1184857

(Remember to include the page numbers of additional sheets.)

The charity's trustees are responsible for the preparation of the accounts. The charity's trustees consider that an audit is not required for this year under section 144 of the Charities Act 2011 (the Charities Act) and that an independent examination is needed.

It is my responsibility to:

- examine the accounts under section 145 of the Charities Act,
- to follow the procedures laid down in the general Directions given by the Charity Commission (under section 145(5)(b) of the Charities Act, and
- to state whether particular matters have come to my attention.

**Basis of independent
examiner's statement**

My examination was carried out in accordance with general Directions given by the Charity Commission. An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the charity and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts, and seeking explanations from the trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit, and consequently no opinion is given as to whether the accounts present a 'true and fair' view and the report is limited to those matters set out in the statement below.

**Independent
examiner's statement**

In connection with my examination, no matter has come to my attention (other than that disclosed below *)

1. which gives me reasonable cause to believe that in, any material respect, the requirements:
 - to keep accounting records in accordance with section 130 of the Charities Act; and
 - to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and comply with the accounting requirements of the Charities Act
 have not been met; or
2. to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

* Please delete the words in the brackets if they do not apply.

Signed:

F Bendall

Date:

14-6-2023

Name:

F BENDALL

**Relevant professional
qualification(s) or body
(if any):**

C.I.P.F.A

Address:

8 Tenby Drive
Chandlers Ford
Hampshire
SO53 4NL



Independent examiner's report on the accounts

Section A

Independent Examiner's Report

**Report to the trustees/
members of**

**On accounts for the year
ended**

Set out on pages

**Respective responsibilities
of trustees and examiner**

**Basis of independent
examiner's statement**

**Independent
examiner's statement**

Charity Name

CIS'ters: surviving rape and sexual abuse during childhood

31st March 2023

**Charity no
(if any)**

1184857

(ENTRUSTED TO INCLUDE THE PAGE NUMBER OF REVISIONS/REVISED)

The charity's trustees are responsible for the preparation of the accounts. The charity's trustees consider that an audit is not required for this year under section 144 of the Charities Act 2011 (the Charities Act) and that an independent examination is needed.

It is my responsibility to:

- examine the accounts under section 145 of the Charities Act,
- to follow the procedures laid down in the general Directions given by the Charity Commission (under section 145(5)(b) of the Charities Act, and
- to state whether particular matters have come to my attention.

My examination was carried out in accordance with general Directions given by the Charity Commission. An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the charity and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts, and seeking explanations from the trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit, and consequently no opinion is given as to whether the accounts present a 'true and fair' view and the report is limited to those matters set out in the statement below.

In connection with my examination, no matter has come to my attention (other than that disclosed below *)

1. which gives me reasonable cause to believe that in, any material respect, the requirements:
 - to keep accounting records in accordance with section 130 of the Charities Act; and
 - to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and comply with the accounting requirements of the Charities Act
 have not been met; or
2. to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

* Please delete the words in the brackets if they do not apply.

Signed:

F BENDALL

Date:

14-6-2023

Name:

F BENDALL

**Relevant professional
qualification(s) or body
(if any):**

C.I.P.F.A

Address:

8 Tenby Drive
Chandlers Ford
Hampshire
SO53 4NL