



SociABLEs Hub & C.R.E.W.S.

Registered Charity
1185428

01/04/2023 –
31/03/2024

Annual Report & Accounts

Unaudited Annual Report & Financial Statements of

SociABLEs Hub & C.R.E.W.S.

Longbank, BEWDLEY, Worcestershire DY12 2QW Tel 01299 400655

Email office@sociableshub.org.uk

Prepared on a Receipts & Payments basis

SociABLEs Hub & C.R.E.W.S.

**Annual Report, Unaudited Accounts Report & Financial Statements
For the Year Ended 31st March 2023**

General Information

Trustees:

Rebecca Lathe
Kim Cooper - Secretary
Sue Breakwell
Vincent Breakwell
Carole Horton
Patrick Warrington
Shirley Hughes
Deborah Millington
Anita Pickering
Nicholas Lathe – Treasurer

**(NB: SociABLEs currently operate a rotating Chair arrangement with Carole Horton
being Chair at time of AGM)**

Administrative Office:

Longbank Centre
Longbank
BEWDLEY
Worcestershire
DY12 2QW

Management/Admin Contact:

Sharon Ann Fairfax - CEO

Accounts Prepared F.O.C. By:

Rice & Co
14A Market Place
Uttoxeter
Staffordshire
ST14 8HP

Bankers:

Barclays Bank Plc
66 Oxford Street
Kidderminster
DY10 1BL

Status:

The Organisation gained Registered Charity (CIO) Status in September 2019 following an Application to Charity Commission of England & Wales. Our Registered Charity Number is 1185428.

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The Trustees present their annual report with the financial statements of the organisation for the year ended 31st March 2023.

Trustees

The Trustees have overall responsibility and provide the legal framework to ensure that the Organisation is managed in an exclusively charitable manner, and to drive provision within the established Objects. Trustees meet on a quarterly basis.

Trustees serving during the year and their positions held were as follows:

Kim Cooper – Charity Secretary	
Nicholas Lathe – Treasurer	(Special Responsibilities Health & Safety)
Carole Horton –	(Special Responsibilities Staff/Vols Support)
Shirley Hughes	(Special Responsibilities Monitoring & Evaluation)
Deborah Millington	(Special Responsibilities Staff/Vols Support)
Patrick Warrington	(Special Responsibilities Health & Safety)
Susan Breakwell	((Special Responsibilities Staff/Vols Support)
Vincent Breakwell	(Special Responsibilities Health & Safety)
Rebecca Lathe	(Designated Trustees for Safeguarding & CP)
Anita Pickering	(Special Responsibilities Monitoring & Evaluation)

Structure, Governance and Management

To effect the daily running of the Organisation, SociABLEs Hub & C.R.E.W.S. devolves management duties to the CEO/Projects Manager, and a Staffing structure as follows:

CEO/Projects Manager Sharon Weston (Safeguarding Deputy) TEL 0777 333 5524
Projects Co-ordinator – Daily Operations, Staff Support & Service User Liaison Richard Crompton (Incl. Specialised Independence/Buddying & Activities Co-ordinator) - TEL 07816 273202
Projects Quality Officer/Specialist Support Worker Special Responsibility for Support Plans, Individual Risk Assessments, Policy & Regulations Michelle Weaver (Designated Safeguarding Officer) TEL 07581 701522
Projects Development Worker Stan Jones Special responsibility for Fundraising, Marketing and Retail, Social Media & Digital Workshops
Specialist Support Workers Lee Cutler (Site Maintenance, Outdoor Activities & Work-based Skills Training) Jo Ward (Outdoor Activities, Allotment, Horticulture, Cookery & Specialised Independence Support) Nikki Faulkener (Catering & Hospitality, Special Support and Outings Support) Dave D`Alton (Woodwork, Maintenance & Work Experience) Sarah Carey (House Keeping & Life Skills and Special Support) Julia Tacey (Art Therapy & Crafts) Brenda Banford (Arts and Crafts, Housekeeping, Life Skills and Outings Support) Joyce Williams & Kath Wilson (Vol Crafts & Cooking) Kim Cooper (Charity Secretary & Admin Support)
Staff Members also available for Booking for P.A. work: Michelle Benjamin, Richard Crompton, Jo Ward, Nikki Faulkener & Sarah Carey

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Governing Document

Constitution

The Organisation has achieved Charity Commission registration and is a Community Interest Organisation CIO registered in England & Wales.

We have adopted the Charity Commission model foundation document for CIOs with few amendments relevant to our organisation. Objects and powers have been established and are governed under our constitution.

Objects of the Charity

1. “To promote social inclusion for the public benefit by preventing people (Children & Adults) from becoming socially excluded, relieving the needs of those people (Children & Adults) who are socially excluded and assisting them to integrate into society.

For the purpose of this clause ‘socially excluded’ means being excluded from society, or parts of society, as a result of one or more of the following factors: discrimination on the grounds of disability; ill health (physical or mental); poor educational or skills attainment; relationship and family breakdown; financial hardship.

2. “To provide or assist in the provision of facilities in the interests of social welfare for recreation or other leisure time occupation and/or for supported work based activities of individuals who have need of such facilities by reason of their disability, ill health (physical or mental), poor educational or skills attainment, financial hardship or social circumstances with the object of improving their conditions of life.”

In furtherance of the above the trustees will have a particular focus, without limitation, to people (Children & Adults) with disabilities.

The Trustees have considered carefully the Charity Commission’s guidance on public benefit. The provision of the services as described herein provides a benefit to all in this country and further afield.

Risk Statement

The Trustees maintain a register of the major risks to which the organisation is exposed. This register is reviewed annually. Systems are in place to mitigate any risks as far as is possible, within practical and financial constraints.

Policy Review

Management have developed a comprehensive set of Management and Service Delivery Policies which are reviewed annually. These include Safeguarding Children & Vulnerable Adults and Adults and Child Protection.

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Annual Review

SociABLEs Hub & C.R.E.W.S. is a Registered Charity (CIO) formed and introduced by a group of parents/carers responding to a gap in provision and the need for continued and developed services for local Children/ Adults who have Disabilities/Special Needs, following the collapse and closure of two major local charity providers in 2015. SociABLEs Hub & C.R.E.W.S., still in its infancy, have grown steadily from its original unincorporated Not for Profit Voluntary Group to gain charity status in September 2019, becoming registered with the Charity Commission in England & Wales, registration number 1185428.

SociABLEs Hub & C.R.E.W.S. provides a comprehensive range of Inclusive services in support primarily for Adults and Children with Disabilities/Special Needs/Complex Health Conditions including Mental Health and anxiety. Where funding permits, our services can also extend through specifically funded projects to others identified as being disadvantaged. This may be due to multiple risk factors including those from Abusive Backgrounds, Socially Excluded, Low Income, Rural Isolation etc. Our services are intended to play a part in each individuals` personal development and to contribute towards improving outcomes.

SociABLEs Hub programmes promote, social inclusion and provide Play/Social Activities and Friendship Clubs for Adults & Children of all abilities. Recognising the need for meaningful work experience/work-based skills, our C.R.E.W.S. (Centre for Recreation, Education and Work-based Skills) Projects provide progression by means of skills workshops, short courses and supported work placements for adults of All Abilities. C.R.E.W.S. also provides an Enrichment programme to include socialisation, life skills and personal development. Locally we are Leading Specialist Providers of services prioritised for Adults/Children who have any kind of diagnosed disability/special need and are approved providers with local authorities, within their Dynamic Purchasing System for referrals and tenders.

SociABLEs Hub & C.R.E.W.S. do not provide domiciliary care, we do however employ and have access to, and/or can introduce P.A. Support Workers who may be able to provide additional support including personal care if required to access our services more easily.

Our Services operate 6/7 days per week all year round including Weekends and School/College Holidays, providing currently 82,400 hours of care each year with more than 23,000 hours of this made possible due to volunteering commitment. We support Adults across the age range and children/teens from aged 14yrs onwards with transition support. We operate mainly out of our base in Bewdley, Worcestershire but also serving those who are resident in Herefordshire and South Shropshire but attend our services regularly (between 1 – 4 times weekly). Our socially inclusive Services operate out and about throughout the Marches Counties of Herefordshire, Worcestershire and Shropshire and beyond.

Our Social Enrichment/Play programmes are written by our service users themselves and are personal to their own interests; there is no end to the possibilities and programmes include a full spectrum of ideas from Countryside Visits and Picnics, Arts and Crafts to Bowling, Eating Out and more adventurous Rock Climbing and Canoeing. Activities are adapted so that everyone can take part. Regular activities include general chilling out at with friends at our Centre, Skills Training, Digital Workshops, Cinema, Swimming, Bowling, Canoeing, Skiing, Dance, Music, Theatre, Eating Out, Craft Workshops, Outings etc etc.

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CEO/Projects Manager Report

Not unlike many other small organisations, we find ourselves 4 years on from the effects of Covid Lockdowns, still working towards catch up, of our pre-pandemic Development Plans, a situation we aim to be free of, within the next year or two with improvement plans. Although year on year we have continued to make good growth, further progress will require additional funding, dedicated management time, changes in staff responsibilities with one role expanded to include fundraising and project development, and extra allocated staff hours to prioritise bringing some of our underdeveloped projects to successful fruition. Overall, this year has been another successful one, with plenty to be proud about including an influx of new service users and therefore an increase in the number of sessions delivered and numerous individual achievements for many of our Service Users, including those with more complex needs. Always we work to review our services and to make changes and new introductions where necessary, to meet the needs of our service users.

Organisation Structure: Our new structure introduced a full year ago with the aim to free up CEO time for more strategic planning has been of great assistance, with Richard Crompton, our Projects Co-ordinator, completing his first year in his expanded role with great competence and dedication. The popular appointment of Richard in his new role, marks a significant milestone in our progression planning for the future of SociABLEs Hub. Richard has responsibility for daily operations and programme planning and bookings, as well as team support and service user liaison.

Alongside Richard, Michelle Weaver who also has been with us since inception has special skills and understanding in complex needs, also had her role expanded within the past year and so as Projects Quality Officer will continue to concentrate on Individual Support Plans, Individual Risk Assessments as well as programming our therapeutic Arts and Crafts Programmes. Michelle will also assist Staff with Behavioural Management in some of our Service Users and is also our Designated Safeguarding Officer.

A third planned change in our staffing line up going into our next year, is to progress further the role of Stan Jones who currently has responsibility for Marketing, Social Media and Digital Workshops and whom has brought a new dimension to our offering. Digital literacy among our users has been on the rise, thanks to the dedicated workshops instructed by Stan (including a Spring Photo Competition with Prize-winners) and an informative visit from the local police to name but a few.

Stan has a masters degree in Business and is eager to use his skills to aid Sociables fundraising plans, it is anticipated therefore, that Stan`s role will be expanded to include this responsibility as our Projects Development Worker. All newly expanded roles report directly to and work closely with the CEO on policy and procedures as well as on projects development. Services take up have increased by 100% over the past three years and we look forward to responding to the exciting new opportunities ahead of us, as well as looking to consolidate our learning and ensuring projects in the pipeline are realised effectively. Capital developments are also planned for the coming year both in terms of renovation of our premises and expanding/repurposing some areas to meet our growing needs. This will include having a new roof on our Stowaways building in order to increase its use for all year round (previously an open fronted shelter and now to become an indoor usable building).

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Management time continues to be monitored. This year has seen a need for a 'hands on' approach from all due to repeated staff absences which have placed strain on management roles. 'Office time' remains in short supply. A large proportion of all hours spent working are provided voluntarily for the CEO. Policy and Procedures reviews are taking place with Trustees and management working closely to address issues of managing attendance and performance. However, as in previous years, there is a continued sense within the Staff and Volunteer team of true progress again this year. We have a very dedicated, passionate team and our ethos and the services we provide for our service users, reflects this.

Achievements this year have included:

- Continuing to be registered as preferred providers on local authority Dynamic Purchasing Scheme (DPS) for Positive Day Opportunities, has led to new referrals and an increase to our purchase order/contracts paid on portal with the Local Authority, by approx. 50% in 3 years.
- We have welcomed a number of interested parties and new starters, as well as many existing service users choosing to increase their number of participation days in our service.
- We have seen successful grants from local initiatives such as the Rotary Club and Monday Night Club, these have aided our development plans, e.g. purchase of a new shed for our bikes and wheelchairs and new pergola raised, and next to it we have established a new raised bedding memory garden stocked with beautiful flowers. Lee and Dave have also renovated our large shed to provide a woodworking workshop area for future development.
- Part funding has been achieved from Kate Wellings Trust towards the cost of a new roof for our Stowaways building. The need for this renovation is becoming increasingly important to enable us to spread out and accommodate our increased community. The new roof will mean that Stowaways will be useable all year round with areas for relaxation and workshops (presently the building with its polycarbonate roof is too hot in summer and too cold in winter) Active fundraising is now underway to make this planned improvement a reality before the winter.
- Digital literacy among our users has been on the rise, thanks to our pilot scheme introduced last year to include dedicated workshops in basic skills for enjoying digital literacy, film making, presenting skills, photography (including Spring Photo Competition with Prize-winners) and an informative visit with talks on online e safety, from the local police. For so many of our Service Users these workshops have opened up a whole new world and development of new skills that we wish to continue. Fundraising to formalise these workshops is a priority for the coming year.
- Our Centre continues to benefit from last year's installation of bulk gas tank, sunken in our garden. This has been a saving on heating bills and our new gas boilers function much more efficiently.
- Staff retention continues to be a success on our Team, with the majority of our staff now being in place since inception. This continuity is of benefit to our service users, particularly those who have Autistic Spectrum Disorders and find change difficult.
- Our Service Users Shop is well stocked with general items for everyday use but also include gift packs and handmade craft items, made with the creativity of our service users, during Enterprise Workshops. Service Users make purchases of items using the 'vouchers' they earn (so our given freely) and some items are offered for sale to the public at craft fairs and open

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days etc. We are grateful for donated items to our and those from In-Kind direct, which provide added element of life skills learning built into this scheme and work based skills in terms of learning about Retail and Marketing, which means the donated products have triple the value!

- We feel our Enterprise Project, run by Service Users with packs previously sold on Bewdley Market and at Craft Fairs, is still underdeveloped and funding is required to help bring it more fully to fruition for the benefit of meaningful work experience for our Service Users. We continue to look for an outlet for our Retail items. The Enterprise Project has however, still been successful and has given Service Users a great sense of worth.
- Continuation of our own SociABLEs Youtube Channel with regular videos being created by Service Users and managed by Service Users continues to be a great success. Our online Followership (total new subscribers from Facebook, YouTube, and Instagram) has expanded by over 100 individuals - and we have a new, modern, updated website.
- Our Comprehensive Activities Programme has delivered a vast array of Social Opportunities to suit every interest. Activities take place mainly out and about within the mainstream community and range from gentle indoor activities to outdoor adventures. There have been numerous success stories, personal to individuals attending our Services. Newly introduced elements have included: Jo's new Thursday gardening group which has been a great success, particularly with participation from SU's in the development of a thriving herb garden. Val (aka Knitting Nanny) has been knitting with us every Thursday, providing a warm and engaging activity for those who wish to knit and natter. We have successfully diversified our Friday schedule (previously aimed only at Specialised Independence Users) to include and accommodate for 3 mixed ability groups. Funding will be sought to continue and build upon our successful new elements this year.
- We have added a new vehicle to our fleet, which is specifically designed to accommodate a wheelchair, improving our in-house transport capabilities.
- Again, our Festival Style Outdoor AGM with street food served from the Noshery and live entertainment was a great event this year and enjoyed by all, with over 100 attending. Other events have been several themed Afternoon Teas, Christmas Dinner for 47 and Fairs & Markets at our Centre. The `Noshery` comes into its own particularly at times of SociABLEs events. Having purchased this catering trailer, we are working on developments to extend its use, maybe incorporating our Picnics in Sheds projects. This will provide further valuable work experience for our Service Users interesting in Catering and Hospitality and Marketing.

We thank our dedicated volunteer base for the hours and hours of volunteer Craftsmen time enabling us to continue to renovate our buildings but also thank you to local businesses that have discounted or even sponsored items for our Longbank Centre.

Future Plans

2025 will be our 10th Birthday year! We plan to celebrate in style and to recognise those who have journeyed along with us over the past wonderful decade! Our Service Users, their needs, their aspirations and their personal development have always been central to our service planning. We take our learning always from them and they write the script in terms of designing our services and

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programmes. With this ethos and commitment to our Service Users, we are confident of providing quality services that encourage progression for every individual, that increase skills for independence and that promote social inclusion. Moreover, we are confident our services contribute positively towards each Service Users personal development and that Services remain flexible and relevant over time. We now have the following priorities for coming year/s in order to achieve this, much of which is ongoing and built upon successes of last year : (in no particular order)

- To fundraise for, plan and execute a wonderful 10th year birthday celebration to remember, with all Service Users and invited guests!
- To monitor the changes to staffing structure and its affect on service quality and its intention to free up time for the CEO to concentrate on fundraising and development tasks.
- To ensure funding available to correctly remunerate staff for the hours they work, rather than so many of those hours being made voluntary (all staff have agreed to continue to give some hours voluntary however for some it is more than half of the time they work)
- To continue to provide Staffing Capacity in line with Service Delivery Needs and to respond to referrals and to meet the needs of those currently on our waiting list.
- To address issues of Staff absences/performances in some, mindful of the affect on the team and service quality as a whole
- To increase offering in terms of personalised interest groups
- To affirm the successful pilot project of Digital Skills Workshops and Marketing on a permanent basis by sourcing funding.
- To seek ongoing funding to formalise successful introductions in service and to respond to development needs
- To work closely with local authority and health professionals to promote Healthy Lifestyles and Wellbeing and to look to provide workshops and/or workshop space for the same.
- Look to raise our profile with active networking, publicity, and information/social events.
- To continue to become 'Greener' including moving toward electric vehicles in the future. We will also continue with our green planting schemes and upcycling/recycling etc,
- Drawing on past successes in running short courses run for Kidderminster College's Bridging Course Groups, we still seek to develop specific and individualised programmes of supported work placements and work-based skills workshops/training. We hoped for these programmes to operate twice weekly for up to 16 service users and to cover a variety of work experience skills for learning outcomes in Horticulture, Land-based Skills, Catering & Hospitality, Retail & Marketing and Arts and Crafts. We aim to provide volunteer reimbursements and access to the shop voucher scheme will be in place for Service User Volunteers accessing this area of specialised independence/supported work placements. This development is partly in place, achieved in the past year for 10 Service Users but would benefit from more dedicated management time and funding to be fully operational.
- To continue with onsite improvements and update/renew equipment that is past its shelf life.
- To further develop our Service Users Enterprise Project and identifying other sales outlets including online shops
- Develop our website more fully and update our promotional materials/leaflets.

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With Thanks

SociABLEs Hub & C.R.E.W.S. is about an amazing bunch of Adults and Children, with personality plus, determinedly overcoming their differences and perceived barriers, to Enjoy a Life of Their Choice. We are very proud of what has so far been achieved with SociABLEs Hub & C.R.E.W.S. and I would like to thank Staff, Volunteers, Trustees, Workmen, Instructors, those who have made Grants and Donations to us, those who have provided goods or services at reduced or free of costs, our Landlords for the support given, but most of all I would like to thank our brilliant Service Users and their families for the absolute pleasure and inspiration they give us every year and for making all things worthwhile.

*Prepared by Sharon-Ann Fairfax
CEO/Projects Manager*

**B.A. Hons Education Studies (special needs)
F.C.M.I. DMS Chartered Manager**

Financial Review

Reserves Policy

It is the Trustee's aim to maintain reserves equal to at least 3 months running costs to ensure ongoing viability and to safeguard the organisation against unforeseen circumstances. We are still working towards meeting this reserves policy, hindered to some extent by the covid years and losses not met by BI Insurance and by loss of development time during that time. We have moved forward towards this policy, with managing a small cash generation of more than £9,020 last year which helps preserve a buffer ongoing despite continued development this past year. Planned changes to one staff role to increase hours for fundraising activity, aims to assist in further improving financial stability.

Financial Statements follow overleaf:

**SOCIABLES HUB AND C.R.E.W.S.
Receipts and Payments Account
for the Year Ended 31st March 2024**

	Total Funds 2024 £	Total Funds 2023 £
Receipts		
Student Fees	247,529	242,472
Donations and fundraising	0	333
Grants received	2,500	-
Grants received - HMRC CVJRS	-	-
Insurance claim	7,550	-
Other	5,393	895
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Total receipts	262,973	243,700
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Payments		
Payroll - Salaries	123,266	106,318
Payroll - Pension	2,978	3,035
Sessional work/volunteer expenses	8,880	7,300
Staff Training	1,195	1,662
Activities	58,934	71,613
Rent	7,960	7,320
Capital Purchase - HONDA VF11KTE	0	6,400
Car Finance	2,265	894
Building & maintenance	5,956	7,838
Furniture/Equipment	4,742	8,247
Catering	3,260	703
Telephone\Utilities	7,251	3,483
Crafts\Enterprise Activities	7,789	1,702
Insurance	5,389	3,721
Vehicle running costs	5,611	7,298
Community Transport	3,481	-
Professional fees	1,110	1,044
Bank Charges	122	-
Sundries	3,765	2,656
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Total payments	253,953	241,234
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Excess of receipts over payments/ (payments over receipts) for the year	9,020	2,465
Opening cash funds	24,790	22,325
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Closing cash funds	33,810	24,790
	<hr/>	<hr/>

These financial statements have been prepared on a receipts and payments basis.

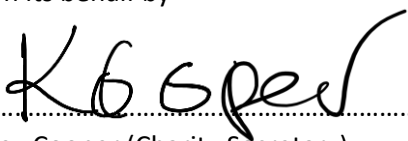
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**Statement of Assets and Liabilities
at 31st March 2024**

	2024	2023
	£	£
Assets		
motor vehicle reg.LY56ZCN	712	950
Vauxhall Sharan - reg.GP57 JHX	451	601
Vauxhall Sharan - reg.WG08 NLD	-	1,353
Honda - reg.VF11KTE	4,425	5,900
Caravan	178	237
Noshery	2,813	3,750
	<u>8,579</u>	<u>12,791</u>
Cash funds		
Cash at bank	33,810	24,790
Cash in hand	-	-
Total cash funds	<u>33,810</u>	<u>24,790</u>
Other monetary assets		
Fees owing	9,400	7,814
PAYE refund	-	-
	<u>9,400</u>	<u>7,814</u>
Liabilities		
Accruals	-	-
	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>
	<u></u>	<u></u>
	<u></u>	<u></u>

All assets and liabilities of the charity relate to unrestricted funds.

Approved by the Board of Trustees on 28th June 2024
and signed on its behalf by



Mrs Kimberley Cooper (Charity Secretary)

These financial statements have been prepared on a receipts and payments basis.