



PARENTS 1ST UK

TRUSTEES' ANNUAL REPORT

FOR THE PERIOD ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

Charity Number: 1186445

CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

Chair’s Foreword	3
CEO’s Foreword	4 - 5
About Us	6 - 9

GOVERNANCE

Statement from the Trustees	10 - 12
Structure, Governance and Management	14 - 15

AIMS & ACHIEVEMENTS 16 - 17

FINANCIAL REVIEW

Risk Management	18
Reserves Policy	18 - 19
Statement of Trustees’ responsibilities	19
Independent examiner’s report	21
Statement of financial activities	22
Balance sheet	23
Notes to the financial statements	24 - 29

LEGAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

Trustees	E Catalli	(Appointed Chair 23 February 2023)
	V Emlyn	(Appointed 9 April 2019)
	J E Robins	(Appointed 9 April 2019)
	A Bamigboye	(Appointed 11 December 2019)
	J Tulloch-Jordon	(Appointed 18 January 2023)
Charity number	1186445	
Principal address	Construction House Runwell Road Wickford, Essex SS11 7HQ	
Independent examiner	Community 360 Winsley’s House, High Street Colchester, Essex CO1 1UG	

It has been a rewarding year for Parents 1st UK. In this Annual Report you will find details of our amazing work, achievements, and challenges over the past year. I hope you will enjoy reading the report.

During the last year Parents 1st UK continued raising awareness across the UK of the beneficial effects gained through the provision of high-quality Perinatal Peer Support via our open-source platform as well as directly supporting parents and babies in local communities in Essex during the key life changing stages of pregnancy, birth, and early parenthood.

At the beginning of 2023 Parents 1st UK CIO merged with Strengths in Communities CIC (trading as "Parents 1st"). The two organisations had worked together since Parents 1st UK was established in 2019; however, the merger was a crucial moment to streamline administrative and management processes and most importantly to ensure continued cross-fertilisation between our national work and local programmes.

In the last year, considerable effort has been made to strengthen our organisational health following the merger and we have worked to address the constant challenge of maintaining the financial sustainability of the organisation into the future. We are more than ever determined to continue sharing our free resources and expanding the provision of Perinatal Peer Support for parents and babies whilst being truly present and rooted in local communities in Essex.

The open-source platform has continued growing its members, and to gain more attention from other organisations that are using our guidance to set up their own peer support initiatives. Two key models of peer support in Essex have been developed and a new accredited vocational qualification.

It is an honour to Chair the organisation and to work with such a committed board of trustees. I am immensely proud of our achievements, of our talented and enthusiastic staff and volunteers who are at the heart of our work. Parents 1st UK exists thanks to their passion, enthusiasm, and vision that every baby deserves the best possible start in life and that every parent is worthy of high-quality support to make that happen.

**Eleonora Catalli,
Chair of Parents 1st UK**

Our national work has continued to raise the awareness of commissioners, professionals, organisations, and parents about what quality peer support looks like, and how to grow and sustain it. To this end it has been vital to clarify a common understanding of the term “peer support” as it means different things to different people. During our workshops and on our online platform, we have drawn attention to the accumulating evidence of what effective perinatal peer support looks like if it is to be of real benefit to parents, carers, and babies:

- Emotional support that avoids dependency but enables a parent to feel care for
- Active listening that enables a parent to reflect on their strengths and find their own way forward
- Ability to build and maintain warm, unconditional, and non-judgmental parent-to-parent relationships
- Sharing reliable information in response to what a parent needs e.g., how to navigate local health systems
- Practical help with basic necessities, advocacy and help to access services
- Relevant life experience that is shared appropriately

Quality peer support, starting in pregnancy, enables parents to keep well, feel supported and prepare for the inevitable changes ahead. Through expanding our peer support in Essex, and further developing our national “Community of Practice” we continue to reduce the isolation and anxiety experienced by vulnerable mothers, fathers, and birthing people. Peer support has provided them with hope, empathy, and compassion by walking alongside during times of trouble. Active listening has helped parents to offload feelings, to feel heard and accepted for who they are. We have continued to provide reassurance, helped parents to reflect on their challenges and find solutions, and assisted them to build their confidence. Our strengths-based approach is central to what we do – a process of enabling parents to recognize their own strengths and encouraging them to achieve realistic, ongoing self-selected goals.

The respective Board decisions to merge Strengths in Communities CIC (trading as “Parents 1st”) with Parents 1st UK CIO has been an important landmark for us this year. Bringing fifteen years of experience together under one legal entity has created even better opportunities to combine our learning from our on the ground grass-roots delivery, with innovations and good practice delivered by others across the UK.

This year we have further developed our two key models of peer support in Essex:

- **One-to-One Peer Support:** this personalised support is at the heart of everything we do. It takes place in parents’ homes, in hospital, in the community, and remotely. Our new Link Worker roles adopt principles of social prescribing and are aligned to the five maternity hubs across Essex. One-to-one peer support does require significant training and supervision, but we have strong evidence of impact. The frequency of peer support varies in length and intensity in line with individual needs.
- **Group Peer Support:** our group support sits alongside our one-to-one support. Some parents need one-to-one support to build confidence to join a group. Again, significant training is needed. We have delivered both structured and semi-structured groups this year, closed, and open, face-to-face in local venues, and virtual groups using Facebook, Zoom and WhatsApp.

We have enhanced our digital presence in perinatal care:

- **Delivered new digital services in collaboration with partners**
- **Improved our operational efficiency**

Many parents we support are wary of who they perceive to be 'the authorities'. Our peer supporters are intermediaries – their warm and informal approach feels reassuring to anxious parents who fear being judged. For this reason, we firmly believe that peer support must remain distinct from (but alongside) public services. At the same time, a peer supporter is not simply a friend, the relationship has a purpose. Quality peer support includes clear ground rules and boundaries, skilled supervision, robust training, and personal development support – promoting the importance of these core elements has remained at the heart of our work this year.

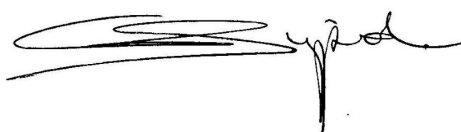
We are particularly proud of our **new, bespoke, level 3 Cache accredited vocational qualification**, and the accompanying online learning portfolio facility we have created on our platform. For the first time, we have created a customized opportunity that truly reflects and values the unique role of being a perinatal peer supporter. We plan to extend this accreditation opportunity to other organizations over the coming years.

We have been privileged this year to collaborate with NHS perinatal mental health services across Essex. We have co-designed and piloted a new partnership project called "Peer to Parent" which sits alongside specialist perinatal mental health teams. This will now be sustained through a 3-year NHS contract.

We have also worked with Thurrock Council to help plan their Start for Life Family Hub Transformation and are excited to be contracted to deliver the peer support element of this with them next year. We have also provided consultancy services to Kent and Dudley Councils to help them co-produce their perinatal Start for Life peer support initiatives. Each local context is unique. Our role is to share the 'golden threads' of 'what works', enabling this to be sewn into the local fabric of different and diverse communities.

There has been increasing national interest in the synergies of our perinatal peer support with the principles of social prescribing. We are excited to explore new opportunities over the coming year. The importance of social prescribing to address the [first 1001 days](#) is compelling.

However, we still have a lot more work to do – particularly about reaching more Black and Asian mothers who face disproportionate health inequalities during the perinatal period. This is a key priority for us moving forward.



Celia Suppiah, CEO Parents 1st UK

The object of Parents 1st UK CIO is to:

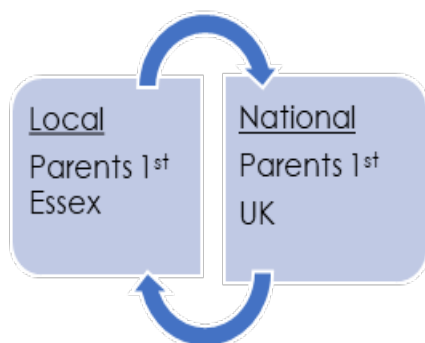
“Act for the public benefit, to advance the education and promote and protect the health of parents, by promoting and developing volunteering and peer support during pregnancy, birth and being a parent” (Our constitution 14th November 2019)

Parents 1st UK is a leading charity that enables individuals with lived experience to take action in their own communities and deliver effective volunteering and peer support during pregnancy, birth and early parenthood.

Our mission - to enable quality peer support during pregnancy, birth and beyond, to flourish across the UK. In so doing, we help parents to give their babies the best possible start in life.

We have two key strands of work:

- 1. Local** - we directly deliver perinatal peer support across Essex;
- 2. National** - we connect and share good practice with other organisations across the UK.



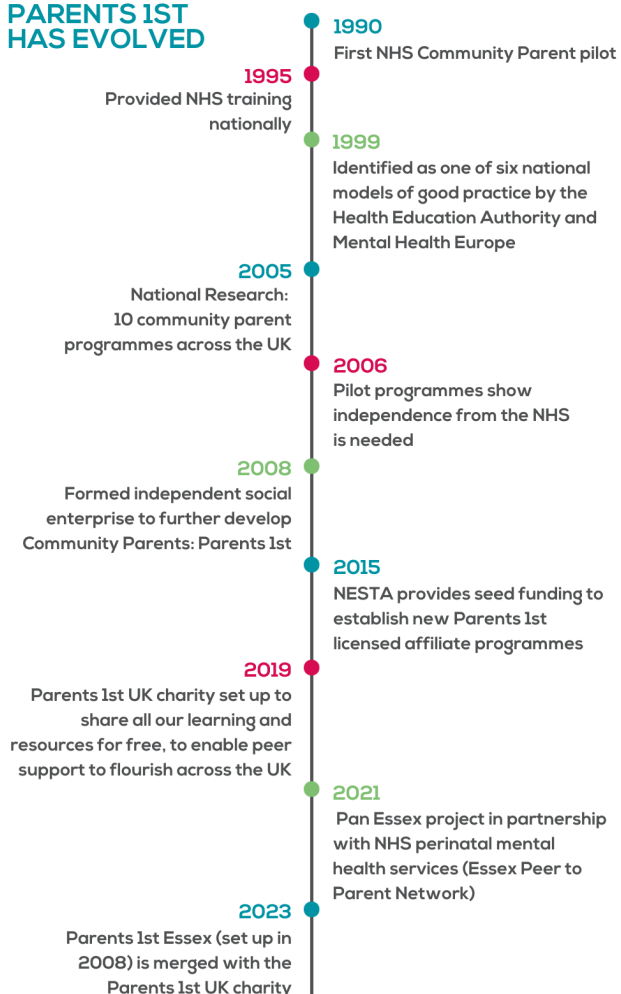
The local learns from the national and vice versa.

Parents 1st UK CIO was established in 2019 to develop our national “Open-Source” vision. The vision reflects our firm belief that learning should be widely shared to overcome isolated and what can be often inconsistent practice nationally. We created a unique, online, “Community of Practice” that shares learning about what’s going on in perinatal peer support across the UK. The online community inspires, shares knowledge and resources, and spreads best practice. It provides a central, dedicated space to connect with peers and experts, and provides members with access to free tools, resources, and guidance. Membership is free and we had 623 members at the end of March 2023.

Our founder and Co-CEO is an experienced midwife and public health nurse. She developed the first ‘Community Parent’ perinatal peer support programme in a deprived area of Essex (1990-2008). This became a national model of good practice. Celia left the NHS to set up Strengths in Communities CIC in 2010 (trading as “Parents 1st”) which established a new volunteer-led perinatal support programme in South Essex.

HOW PARENTS 1ST HAS EVOLVED

Our history...



This has grown and thrived over the past 13 years to a point where we now deliver perinatal peer support Essex-wide. During this financial year, the Board of Strengths in Communities CIC and the Board of Parents 1st UK CIO decided there would be considerable benefits from becoming one legal entity. The decision was made to dissolve the CIC and all its assets were transferred to the CIO in January 2023. We now combine our local delivery in Essex with our national work under the umbrella of one unified charity.

Integrated in our work are the local and national voices, experiences and knowledge of parents and their peer supporters who share their stories, work with us to develop resources and inform the better development of community based perinatal support.

Our beneficiaries

Our core beneficiaries are parents, their babies, and the peer supporters who support them. Parents supported include those living in situations of significant poverty and deprivation; young vulnerable people; individuals who are incredibly isolated and lonely; women experiencing a traumatic birth; and families facing racial discrimination, domestic violence, and health inequalities. They do not have access to the types of strong community support networks that every new parent needs to rely upon and often experience significant problems as a result.

Our other beneficiaries include:

- Peer Support Programme Leaders
- Funders of VCSE organisations
- Commissioners of early years services
- Academics
- Field practitioners
- Statutory providers

How we deliver our aims

1. Through directly developing and delivering perinatal peer support “on the ground” across Essex
2. Through constantly developing our “open source” [online platform](#) to share learning and best practice about perinatal peer support across the UK
3. Through collaborative working and partnership projects with other organisations across the UK across the UK

1. Direct development and delivery of perinatal peer support “on the ground” across Essex

Our activities this year have expanded perinatal peer support across Essex. These activities have included:

- a. Piloting a **new “Peer to Parent” pan Essex perinatal peer support collaborative** in partnership with NHS perinatal mental health services, and other Voluntary and Community Sector organisations across Essex. The overall aim is to improve emotional wellbeing of mothers and birthing people through a close working partnership with perinatal mental health teams. The project was launched October 2022, and is aligned with the five maternity hubs across Essex.

We have:

- Set up a multi-agency advisory group.
 - Employed four Peer Support Link Workers who have completed our level 3 accredited training and started supporting mothers referred by the Essex Specialist Perinatal Mental Health Teams. The Link Workers offer one-to-one support to enable these mothers to feel supported, access services and overcome social isolation.
 - Explored how peer support can best complement clinical care provided by the perinatal mental health teams.
 - Carried out surveys and delivered 2 online workshops that have identified specific needs and how best to improve perinatal peer support for:
 - Fathers, partners, and birthing people
 - Black, Asian, and other minority groups
 - Mapped the availability of perinatal peer support initiatives operating across Essex so that our Link Workers can offer supported signposting.
 - Set up an online referral system and project database that monitors project outputs and outcomes.
 - Set up a new website facility on our online platform to share learning and support delivery of the project.
- b. Supporting the development of a **new Perinatal Peer Support initiative** in North Essex. We have:
- Provided training, guidance and resources to the new programme manager.
 - Designed and developed a new closed Facebook Group where expectant and post birth parents can safely connect and support each other's emotional wellbeing.
- c. Working with strategic managers to plan **new perinatal peer support for the Thurrock Council Family Hubs and Start for Life programme** (funded by the Department of Education) – we will be delivering this peer support during the next financial year
- d. Strengths in Communities Community Interest Company (CIC) (Trading as Parents 1st) has transferred the direct delivery identified above to our CIO. All grant funds, contracts, intellectual property rights, and assets were transferred via a Deed Transfer using the services of experienced pro-bono lawyers. The transfer took place on January 18th 2023. From this date, responsibility for direct delivery of the perinatal peer support activities were transferred to Parents 1st UK CIO.

We have brought together 15 years' experience of innovation and good practice into one legal entity

2. Development of our "open source" [online platform](#) to share learning and best practice across the UK

This year we have listed 70 activities on the platform of particular interest to members.

We have:

- Stimulated engagement and shared learning through newsletters, blogs, surveys, new features on our "Community Voices" section, and using our "conversations" feature e.g., Infant Mental Health Awareness week; Bringing Baby Home (a call to action from the Fatherhood Institute); BBC's Tiny Happy People resources.



- Created an online learning portfolio facility for peer supporters using our 'private space' functionality. This new facility provides peer supporters with everything they need to gain our new bespoke level 3 Cache qualification, specifically customized to our unique perinatal peer support model. Each peer supporter works within their private space to upload their evidence of learning to meet assessment criteria across four units. Personal feedback and assessment against each unit is provided by our trainer/ assessors. Once the four units are completed, each peer supporter gains a Level 3 Award in Perinatal Peer Support. Six peer supporters have now successfully tested out this new facility and the Association of Accredited Learning have quality assured and approved our assessment methods.
- Promoted a wide range of peer support activities delivered across Essex and the wider UK community
- Transferred the [Parents 1st Essex website](#) content onto the platform (thereby reducing costs)
- Used the functionality of the platform to create a new mini website for the [pan Essex peer to parent collaborative](#)

3. Collaborative working with other organisations

This year we have:

- Continued to work collaboratively with the Maternal Mental Health Alliance
- Worked with Dads Rock, Dad-Pad, Dad Matters and Dad's Cafes. They presented at our online workshop, and were featured on our platform
- Worked with the Rahman Project, Newham Nurture (NCT) and Welcome to the UK to share best practice in peer support for Black, Asian and other minority groups. They presented at our online workshop and were featured on our platform
- Provided consultancy services to Kent Community Health NHS Foundation Trust to support them to plan, design and co-produce a new perinatal peer support initiative
- Provided consultancy services to Dudley Council to support them to plan, design and co-produce a new perinatal peer support initiative
- Provided an online training module for the [Hearts and Minds Partnership](#) about funding and finance to benefit new VCS organisations delivering perinatal mental health activities

Statement from the trustees

Trustees' Report 2022-2023 10

The Trustees present their annual report and financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2023.

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement on Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (effective 1 January 2019) – (Charities SORP (FRS 102), the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) and the Companies Act 2006.

The financial statements do not include a cash flow statement because the charity, as a small reporting entity, is exempt from the requirement to prepare such a statement under Financial Reporting Standard 1 "Cash Flow statements".

Objectives and activities

The trustees confirm that in compiling this report they have had due regard to guidance on public benefit issued by the Charity Commission in compliance with the duty set out in section 17(5) of the Charities Act 2011.

Parents 1st UK's charitable objects are to advance the education and promote and protect the health of parents, by promoting and developing volunteering and peer support during pregnancy, birth and being a parent.



**I finally feel heard, and seen and it is great to see the same person and have that continuity.
My peer supporter is giving me so much support and information and has really helped me prepare for my birth.**

Parent Feedback

Evidence is compelling that quality peer support focusing on early prevention (starting in pregnancy) has a unique and valuable contribution to make to improving the health and wellbeing of parents and babies. It can reduce stress during pregnancy, enable a more positive birth experience, and supports vulnerable parents to prepare for and cope with the challenges that parenthood brings.

Evidence is also compelling that the first 1001 critical days (pregnancy to age 2) is a significant and influential phase in infant development – important groundwork needs to take place to support children's emotional wellbeing, resilience, and adaptability. Services are typically reactive rather than preventative.

There is a need to develop more perinatal peer support, increase awareness of its benefits, and influence better investment.

Furthermore, we know that many practitioners who are planning, developing, or already delivering perinatal volunteering initiatives work in isolation with few opportunities to learn and collaborate. The work and resources needed for an initiative to become operational can be considerable (creating operational resources e.g., volunteer training programmes, policies and procedures, evaluation tools). Furthermore, despite excellent outcomes, it is still the norm that these important initiatives struggle to survive.

The outcomes we expect from Parents 1st UK's activities are:

Our peer support model in Essex and those delivered elsewhere are based on evidence of 'what works'.

- Those planning and delivering perinatal peer support initiatives access useful, free resources and guidance to help avoid common pitfalls and problems.
- Practitioners, volunteers, and parents have opportunities to share their stories, learning, new ideas, good practice, and solutions to day-to-day challenges.
- Statutory services are aware of the benefits to the health and wellbeing of parents and volunteers who are giving and receiving peer support.
- Commissioners procure more sustainable, quality peer support initiatives.
- Funders make realistic and more long-term investments so that those responsible for operating perinatal peer support initiatives can concentrate on what they do best – delivering perinatal peer support.
- Opportunities to share good practice far wider: users will improve it and freely share knowledge.
- Practitioners, peer supporters and parents share views, new ideas and tools to operate initiatives more effectively and benefit parents and families.
- Stronger partnerships are developed with other organisations delivering similar work who share our ethos and vision.

In addition, the functionality of the Parents 1st UK online platform enables members to:

- Share and manage their own information and what's going on with their initiatives – they can add, manage, and promote their own peer support activities and events for free.
- Find, add, and manage information about services, events, and community activities.
- Share and manage their own information through unique URLs and associated sub-pages.
- Generate, develop, and communicate new ideas to the issues that are important to them.
- Solve problems by using collaboration tools such as group chat, task lists, file sharing, Survey Monkey and Trello boards.



After months of research into postnatal peer support I have just come across Parents 1st which feels like the ray of light I need!

Parents 1st UK website user feedback

Statement from the trustees (cont.)

Trustees' Report 2022-2023 12

Outcomes achieved by the Parents 1st Essex Pregnancy Pal and Birth Buddy Programme

We respond to over 150 referrals for one-to-one peer support each year.

Referrals to the programme come from:

- Midwives and perinatal mental health teams (84%)
- Self-referrals (16%).

Referrals are reflecting increasingly complex needs following the impact of Covid-19 and the cost-of-living crisis. 38% of families had safeguarding concerns.

We use our Wheel of Circumstance tool to enable parents supported to rate how they feel across 12 domains impacting on their wellbeing during the perinatal period. Data collected before, during and after peer support was analysed by a senior statistician (end of March 2023 – 277 mothers).

Statistical analysis of the data showed:

Highly statistically significant improvements across the domains (an increase of 1.9 in the average and 91% of parents demonstrating improved scores).

Parenting saw the largest increase in average scores (2.9) with 79% of mothers demonstrating improvements.

During pregnancy, 86% of mothers felt better prepared for labour and birth, 73% felt better able to look after themselves and their developing baby.

At the end of support, parents reported:

- Improved emotional wellbeing (74%)
- Less money worries (71%)
- Improved bonding with baby (68%)
- Improved access to services (68%)
- Improved social networks (67%)
- Improved ability to communicate with professionals (56%)





Future plans:

- Key focus on addressing health inequalities, particularly those faced by Black and Asian families and young parents
- Develop new models of peer support for fathers, partners and LGBTQ+ parents
- Explore social prescribing opportunities in maternity and perinatal mental health care
- Financial sustainability to remain top on our agenda with a coordinated approach to our fundraising
- Spread national learning from Early Start Family Hub peer support innovations

Structure, governance and management

During the decade before the creation of Parents 1st UK, Strengths in Communities CIC (trading as Parents 1st Essex) developed a perinatal peer support initiative in South Essex. This became a NESTA Social Action Innovation Project and inspired the development of new initiatives, based on the same model, in Derby and Tower Hamlets. The directors of Strengths in Communities CIC wanted to share the learning but were acutely aware of isolated practice – peer support initiatives typically competed for funding. Furthermore, many initiatives started with the best intentions but did not survive for a variety of reasons. The directors decided to pioneer a new “open source” approach to address these issues – their firm belief is that all initiatives should collaborate for the benefit of parents and babies, not compete.

Parents 1st UK CIO was created to fulfil this vision. The Charity is a Charitable Incorporated Organisation whose only voting members are its charity trustees. The charity was established by Constitution on 9 April 2019. The current Constitution by which it is governed is dated 14 November 2019 and the charity was entered on the Register of Charities on 19 November 2019.

On the 7th of February 2022 the Trustees of Parents 1st UK CIO and the Directors of Strengths in Communities CIC voted in favour of merging Strengths in Communities CIC with Parents 1st UK CIO as the local and national mutual endeavours, ethos and values are intertwined. Opportunities to learn from direct practice delivery keeps everyone at every level of the organisation grounded in what works in practice. Work on the merger was completed on January 18th 2023.

Brenda Bond served during the period and stood down as Trustee and Chair on 23rd February 2023

The Trustees who served during the period and up to the date of signature of the financial statements were:

- Eleonora Catalli (appointed Chair on 23 February 2023)
- Ade Bamigboye
- Veronica Emlyn
- Jo Robins
- Jeanette Tulloch Jordan (appointed 18 January 2023)

Trustee selection process

The process to recruit new trustees is agreed by the Board. Recruitment of trustees is conducted by the Chair, trustees and CEO and is based on an evaluation of the skills required to govern the charity.

New trustees are appointed following shortlisting and interview against agreed criteria by a small panel of trustees ensuring a fair and objective approach. Preferred candidates are appointed subject to references, formal vetting, and approval by the full trustee board.



Unsuccessful candidates are notified and thanked for their interest. Newly appointed trustees receive a letter of appointment and a pack of information about the charity, their fellow trustees, and their responsibilities as trustees. They are invited to away days and additional training is provided as needed. Trustees are elected for a three-year period and may be re-elected for further 3-year periods.

Operational team

- Co-CEO: Celia Suppiah
- Co-CEO: Jayne Newman
- Operations and Strategy Manager: Audrey Haggis
- Senior Trainer and Practice Development Lead: Zoe Jarvis
- Programme Manager: Emma Stewart
- Perinatal Fitness Trainer: Sally Taylor
- Open Source Platform Marketing Manager: Nicole Ranaweera
- Open Source Administrator and Moderator: Mandy Evans
- Programme Administrator: Angie Leigh Jones
- Peer Support Worker: Jamie Harrop
- Peer Support Worker: Laura Nieberg
- Peer Support Worker: Sarah Kholia
- Peer Support Worker: Terina Deville
- Peer Support Link Worker: Julie Rollins
- Peer Support Link Worker: Keri Stevens
- Peer Support Link Worker: Kirsty Heard
- Peer Support Link Worker: Laura Crawford

Aim 1: Continuous development of a free, online space dedicated to sharing good practice across the UK about quality volunteering and peer support during pregnancy, birth and beyond.

Achievements

- Our online platform now has 623 members (a 36% increase from last year)
- 541 free resources have been downloaded by our members
- 520 videos have been viewed
- 9 new group spaces have been created



As an organisation, Parents 1st have supported New Baby Network with so much, their free resources are AMAZING!

Brianna Dymond from New Baby Network CIC

Aim 2: To work collaboratively to continuously develop quality perinatal peer support

Achievements

Our new pan Essex Peer to Parent collaborative project has resulted in more vulnerable parents benefiting from perinatal peer support across Essex. By the end of March 2023, referrals for one-to-one peer support had risen from 12 per month (March 2022) to over 40 a month.

Benefits have included:

- Early, informal support to prevent escalation of need
- Personalized care: active listening / strengths-based / solution focused
- Supported signposting and advocacy
- Reduced pressure on statutory services
- Valuing parents' lived experience and co-producing peer support to suit local needs
- Engagement and reassurance for parents who are wary of professionals

How peer support is helping:

- Improved emotional wellbeing: feeling supported / listened to without judgement
- Reassurance: parenting challenges normalized
- Information shared including useful practical tips and reliable, evidence-based resources
- Supported signposting and advocacy to help navigate services and access activities in the local area

Case Study

- Referred by Perinatal Mental Health Practitioner
- Learning difficulties
- Living in hostel
- Long-term involvement with social services
- One child adopted, one child in foster care – due to mental health issues



Child in need plan ending soon

- Weekly peer support visits...
- ✓ Someone to 'offload' to
 - ✓ Kept in contact after the birth
 - ✓ Mum pleased she had more support this time
 - ✓ Moved to temporary flat – Peer Supporter helped understand bills and signposted to Essential Living Fund, appliances store and foodbank

Case Study

- Young pregnant parent
- Referred by Perinatal Mental Health Practitioner
- Living with parents
- Anxious and lacks confidence about being a good parent
- Relationship challenges



"I am enjoying talking to my peer supporter it releases stress and emotion. It's good to have someone else to speak to and not be judged."

"She's been perfect."

17

Aim 3: To develop new learning, personal development, and pathways to employment for volunteers and peer supporters

Achievements

We have developed a new Cache accredited, level 3 qualification customized specifically to reflect the skills and experience of volunteers and peer supporters delivering quality perinatal peer support. We have created a purpose-built online learning portfolio facility on our platform where each peer supporter can build their evidence of learning, supported by their assessor. Six peer supporters have been successfully uploading their evidence of learning this year.



It is apparent the team has worked exceptionally hard on the Trello Board to make the record keeping and feedback well organised and user friendly for learners

Internal Quality Assurance Feedback from the Association of Accredited Learning

Over 40 organisations have expressed an interest in offering this opportunity to their own peer supporters. We will be exploring this further during the next financial year.

Aim 4: To develop our digital strategy

Achievements

Early in 2023 we started work on updating our digital strategy. Using the National Council for Voluntary Organisations (NCVO) Digital Maturity Matrix we identified our strengths and weaknesses and identified opportunities for reaching and supporting more service users. Our Digital Platform, developed in partnership with Made Open supports users by providing easy access to advice and learning whilst also enabling safe and secure sharing of individual experiences.

Going forward, we have plans to further develop our platform to share our expertise with other groups and we will make more use of the data we have to make more informed decisions regarding the content that we develop and the way in which we make this accessible to our audiences. We will also use digital technology to expand the ways in which we engage with funders and will to explore opportunities to enhance our on-line presence, support our volunteers and promote our successes.

These accounts show activity during the accounting period of April 2022 – March 2023. **Please note that Strengths in Communities CIC was merged with Parents 1st UK CIO on January 18th, 2023. The income received in our end of year accounts only shows the income received prior to the merger (£15,882). Income received by Strengths in Communities CIC was £447,229 for the financial year to March 2023 (and was a one off occurrence), including grant income of £249,427, contract income of £192,636 and consultancy income of £5,166. Total merger income from Strengths in Communities CIC into the Parents 1st UK CIO accounts January 2023 was £386,273.**

We would like to sincerely thank our grant funders for supporting us during this financial year:

- The National Lottery Reaching Communities Fund
- Henry Smith Charity
- Essex Community Foundation
- Active Essex

Parents 1st UK considers itself to be in a healthy financial position. Total income is much higher for 2022 – 2023 (£15,822 from charitable activities prior to the merger plus £386,273 merger income from Strengths in Communities CIC). This comes to a total of £402,095 compared to the previous financial year (£104,533).

Expenditure on charitable activities was £237,542. This included £85,443 restricted expenditure made up of £41,067 on our Pregnancy Pal and Birth Buddy (PPBB) peer support initiative in South Essex, £8,955 for a new peer support initiative in North Essex, and £35,421 spent on our national work. The remaining unrestricted expenditure provided match funding for the PPBB initiative, supported development of a Pan Essex Perinatal Peer Support Collaborative in partnership with NHS perinatal mental health services, and was to supply consultancy services to Dudley Council for their Family Hub peer support transformation. We also provided accredited training for our peer supporters.

Unrestricted funds at 31st of March 2022 were £92,004 and restricted funds were £104,886. Unrestricted funds at the end of March 2023 were £277,209 and restricted funds were £82,359.

Funds over £85,000 in our Unity Bank current account are invested into savings accounts to provide a level of protection from the Financial Services Compensation Scheme. The charity continues to fundraise to meet future projects and to ensure all operational costs are covered. Our investment policy is reviewed on an annual basis.

Risk management

Responsibility for risk management lies with trustees. A risk register has been established and is regularly reviewed by the board at each board meeting. The risk register includes major operational and strategic risks. Mitigation actions are in place to manage current risks and maximise opportunities.

Reserves policy

Our Reserves Policy is reviewed on a 4-monthly basis. We are aware of our responsibilities and aim to build our reserves fund actively and responsibly.

We aim to hold appropriate reserves that:

1. Cater for unforeseen emergencies or other unexpected need for funds.
2. Cover unforeseen day-to-day operational costs.
3. Protect the continuity of our core work
4. Meet commitments that cannot be met by future income alone.
5. Fund any short-term deficits in our cash budget.

We aim to hold 3 months of the running costs of the organisation in order to allow for cash flow issues, pay notice and redundancy to staff together with other costs in the event of the organisation ceasing to operate. Risks are identified on our risks register and reassessed regularly. We receive unrestricted income through service contracts, and other sources such as providing training and consultancy. It is our policy that all "profits" from such activities are used to enhance Parents 1st UK charitable activities and beyond that being funded by restricted funds. However, as the need for reserves increase some of these "profits" will be allocated as Unrestricted Reserves i.e., reserves not held for any specific project or service but are necessary for contingency purposes.

Statement of Trustees' responsibilities

The Trustees are responsible for preparing the Trustees' Report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

The law applicable to charities in England and Wales requires the Trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the Charity and of the incoming resources and application of resources of the Charity for that year.

In preparing these financial statements, the Trustees are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently
- observe the methods and principles in the Charities SORP
- make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent
- state whether applicable accounting standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements; and
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charity will continue in operation.

Public benefit

The Trustees confirm that they have complied with the duty in Section 17(5) of the Charities Act 2011 to have due regard to the Charity Commission's general guidance on public benefit: "Charities and Public Benefit". The Trustees' report was approved by the Board of Trustees.

Signed: 
FA3E4BC61BCB4CA...

Dated: 1/18/2024

E Catalli, Trustee (Chair)



We have raised awareness of what quality perinatal peer support looks like:

- Hope, empathy, passion, walking alongside
- Relationship with a purpose – strengths-based and focused
- Active listening to reflect on challenges and explore solutions
- Robust standards of training, supervision and personal development

Independent Examiners Report

I report on the accounts of Parents 1st UK for the year ended 31 March 2023 which are set out on pages 22 to 29.

Respective responsibilities of trustees and examiner

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 (2) of the Charities Act 2011 (The Act)) but 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 Commissioners (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 the General Directions given by the Charity Commissioners. 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 considerations of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts, and seeking explanations from you as trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit and consequently I do not express an audit opinion on the view given by the accounts.

Independent examiner's statement

In the course of my examination, no material matters have come to my attention which gives me cause to believe that in, any material respect:

- the accounting records were not kept in accordance with section 130 of the Charities Act; or
- the accounts did not accord with the accounting records; or
- the accounts did not comply with the applicable requirements concerning the form and content of the accounts set out in the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 other than any requirement that the accounts give a true and fair' view which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination.

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

Signed:  E4F881E2EF544BB...

Dated: 1/19/2024

David Courtier FMAAT AATQB for and on behalf of:
Community360, Winsley's House, High Street, Colchester, Essex

Statement of Financial Activities

Trustees' Report 2022-2023 22

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

	Note	2023 Unrestricted funds £	2023 Restricted funds £	2023 Total funds £	2022 Total funds £
Income resources:					
Donations and legacies	2	-	-	-	100
Income from charitable activity	3	15,882	-	15,882	104,433
Total incoming resources		15,822	-	15,882	104,533
Resources expended:					
Charitable activities	4	152,099	85,443	237,542	106,140
Cost of raising funds		1,932	-	1,932	-
Total expenditure		154,031	85,443	239,474	106,140
Net income		(138,149)	(85,443)	(223,592)	(1,607)
Merger income	12	323,357	62,916	386,273	-
Net income for the year		185,208	(22,527)	162,681	(1,607)
Total funds brought forward	10	92,001	104,886	196,887	198,494
Total funds carried forward	10	277,209	82,359	359,568	196,887

Notes on pages 24 to 29 are part of these accounts.



Balance Sheet

As at 31 March 2023

Trustees' Report 2022-2023 23

	Note	£	2023	£	£	2022	£
Fixed assets							
Tangible assets	9			1,473			-
Current assets							
Debtors	7		2,961			-	
Cash at bank and in hand			430,258			200,666	
			433,219			200,666	
Current Liabilities							
Creditors	8		75,123			3,779	
			75,123			3,779	
Net current assets				358,096		196,887	
Net Assets				359,568		196,887	
Funds							
Restricted funds	10			277,209		92,001	
Unrestricted funds	10			82,359		104,886	
				359,568		196,887	

Signed:

E Catalli
Trustee

DocuSigned by:
Eleonora Catalli
FA3E4BC61BCB4CA...

Dated 1/18/2024

V Emlyn
Trustee

DocuSigned by:
V. E. Emlyn
57CA5CE56C43444...

Dated 1/19/2024

Notes to the Financial Statements

For the year ended 31 March 2023

1. Accounting Policies

Basis of the preparation of the accounts

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement on Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (effective 1 January 2019)- (Charities SORP (FRS 102)), the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) and the Companies Act 2006.

The financial statements do not include a cash flow statement because the charity, as a small reporting entity, is exempt from the requirement to prepare such a statement under Financial Reporting Standard 1 "Cash flow statements".

Charity information

Parents 1st UK is a charitable Incorporated Organisation established on 9th April 2019. The current constitution by which it is governed is dated 14th November 2019.

Incoming resources

All material incoming resources have been included on a receivable basis.

Donations and gifts are included in the statement of financial activities.

All grants are recognised as income within the period covered by these accounts.

Resources expended

All expenditure is accounted for on an accrual basis.

All expenditure has been analysed using a natural classification.

Fund accounting

Unrestricted funds are available for use at the discretion of the trustees in furtherance of the general objectives of the charity and which have not been designated for other purposes.

Restricted funds are funds which are to be used in accordance with specific restrictions imposed by donors or which have been raised by the charity for particular purposes. The cost of raising and administering such funds are charged against the specific fund.

Going Concern

The trustees of the charity deem that there are sufficient funds available to continue operating on a going concern basis for the foreseeable future.

Financial Instruments

The charity only has financial assets and financial liabilities of a kind that qualify as basic financial instruments. Basic financial instruments are initially recognised at transaction value and subsequently measured at their settlement value.

1. Accounting Policies (cont.)

Critical accounting estimates and judgements

In the application of the charity’s accounting policies, the Trustees are required to make judgements, estimates and assumptions about the carrying amount of assets and liabilities that are not readily apparent from other sources. The estimates and associated assumptions are based on historical experience and other factors that are considered to be relevant.

Actual results may differ from these estimates.

The estimates and underlying assumptions are reviewed on an ongoing basis. Revisions to accounting estimates are recognised in the period in which the estimate is revised where the revision affects only that period, or in the period of the revision and future periods where the revision affects both current and future periods.

There are no critical accounting estimates or judgements in the financial statements.

2. Donations and legacies

	Total 2023 £	Total 2022 £
Donations	-	100
Total	-	100

A total of £0 restricted donations and legacies were received during the year (2022:£0)

3. Income from charitable activities

	Total 2023 £	Total 2022 £
Sales with charitable activities	14,231	97,209
Grants	-	7,224
Other	1,651	-
Total	15,882	104,433

A total of £0 restricted income was received from charitable activities during the year (2022:£7,224)

4. Expenditure on charitable activity

		Total 2023 £	Total 2022 £
	Note		
Staff costs		152,651	73,947
Worker allowances		509	-
Website		5,889	12,300
Evaluation		1,757	
Accreditation		565	-
Consultancy		56,993	6,671
Conference costs		677	3,150
Marketing		480	-
Other direct costs		555	285
Support costs	5	17,466	9,787
Total expenditure		237,542	106,140

A total of £85,443 restricted expenditure was spent from charitable activities during the year (2022:£99,720)

5. Support costs

	Total 2023 £	Total 2022 £
IT Costs	4,443	1,976
Insurance	2,066	869
Bank Charges	226	130
Office related costs	699	1,886
Depreciation	177	-
Examiners fee	460	2,900
Professional fees	9,395	2,026
Total	17,466	9,787

6. Staff costs

	2023	2022
	£	£
Gross wages	140,192	70,092
Pension	2,030	951
Employer NI	4,869	2,904
Training and supervision	240	-
Other	1,936	-
Travel	3,384	-
Total	152,651	73,947

No staff have been paid more than £60,000 for the year.

7. Debtors

	2023	2022
	£	£
Prepayments	2,694	-
Accounts receivable	267	-
	2,961	-

8. Creditors

	2023	2022
	£	£
Other creditors	951	109
Creditors	9,406	-
Accruals & deferred income	58,388	3,088
Taxation	6,378	582
	75,123	3,779

9. Fixed assets

	Computer Equipment £	Office Equipment £	Total £
Cost			
Cost as at 31st March 2022	-	-	-
Additions	42,062	6,149	48,211
Total	42,062	6,149	48,211
Depreciation			
Depreciation as at 31st March 2022	-	-	-
Charge for the year	177	-	177
Additions	40,412	6,149	46,561
Total	40,589	6,149	46,738
Net Book Value 2023	1,473	-	1,473
Net Book Value 2022	-	-	-

10. Analysis of funds

	Opening £	Income £	Expenditure £	Merger £	Closing £
Unrestricted	92,001	15,882	(154,031)	323,357	277,209
Restricted					
Christie Foundation	104,886	-	(35,421)	-	69,465
Henry Smith North PPBB	-	-	(8,955)	16,769	7,814
The National Lottery Community Fund - RC London and South East Region	-	-	(20,435)	20,435	-
Henry Smith South Essex	-	-	(15,000)	15,000	-
Essex Community Foundation Mid & South Essex NHS	-	-	(4,167)	4,167	-
Active Essex (Essex County Council)	-	-	(1,465)	1,465	-
Essex County Council New Generations Fund	-	-	-	5,080	5,080
Total Restricted	104,886	-	(85,443)	62,916	82,359
Total	196,887	15,882	(239,474)	386,273	359,568

11. Related party transactions & trustee remunerations

During the financial year, there were no related party transactions (2022: £Nil).

Trustees received £Nil for their time assisting the charity.

12. Merger income

During the financial year, £386,273 was received from Strength in Communities Community Interest Company, company number 06714737 as merger income.

Parents 1st UK

Construction House
Runwell Road, Wickford,
Essex, SS11 7HQ

www.parents1st.org.uk



/parents1st



@Parents1st



/company/parents1st



Parents1st
UK

Registered Charity No: 1186445