



Parents1st
UK

PARENTS 1ST UK

TRUSTEES' ANNUAL REPORT

FOR THE PERIOD ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

Charity Number: 1186445

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LEGAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

Trustees	E Catalli	(Appointed Chair 23 February 2023) resigned 24 January 2024
	V Emlyn	(Appointed 9 April 2019)
	J E Robins	(Appointed 9 April 2019)
	A Bamigboye	(Appointed 11 December 2019) appointed Interim Chair 24 January 2024
	J Tulloch-Jordon	(Appointed 18 January 2023)
Charity number:	Rachel Heathcock	(Appointed 20 February 2024)
	B Bond	(Appointed 25 March 2024)
	1186445	
Principal address:	Construction House, Runwell Road, Wickford, Essex, SS11 7HQ	
Independent examiner:	Clay Ratnage Strevens & Hills, Construction House, Runwell Road, Wickford, Essex, SS11 7HQ	

As we reflect on the last year, it is my privilege to present this foreword for the Parents 1st UK Annual Report. The past year has been both inspiring and transformative and we have continued to champion the value of early parent-to-parent support and deepened our impact in the communities that we serve.

Among our notable achievements this year was new funding to expand our service offer in the Start for Life Family Hubs in Thurrock. This initiative brings together in one place health, education and parenting support that families need to support children in their early years. We have further developed our partnership with specialist perinatal mental health teams across Essex and have been able to increase our ability to deliver one-to-one support. We have been able to recruit and train additional peer support workers which further enables us to increase our community reach.

But this period has also presented a challenging landscape, marked by ongoing economic pressures and heightened demand for support services. This has affected most organisations in the voluntary sector. In response, our dedicated team of staff and volunteers have continued to meet the needs of families, showing resilience, empathy, and determination. Current and new funding partners have continued to show belief in our mission and together we have been able to strengthen our reach into the community, a clear demonstration of the critical role of community-led support.

I am proud to report that Parents 1st UK has remained steadfast in our mission to advocate for policy changes that support family wellbeing. Our voice has been instrumental in raising awareness about the importance of early, community-based support, and we continue to work closely with policymakers to ensure that every family has the opportunity to thrive.

In November 2023, we were honoured with the prestigious King's Award for Voluntary Service (KAVS). This was a celebration of the exceptional dedication and hard work of our staff and volunteers over a long period of time. Their compassion and commitment lie at the heart of everything that we do, and the award serves as a testament to the positive impact we have on families and communities. We are incredibly proud of this achievement.



Looking forward, we remain dedicated to building on our successes, addressing emerging needs, and expanding our reach. The resilience and commitment of our trustees, staff, volunteers, and partners will continue to be our foundation as we pursue our vision of a supportive community for every parent and caregiver.

Thank you for your unwavering support and belief in Parents 1st UK. Together, we are making a meaningful difference in the lives of parents and children, and I am proud to have had a small part in this journey with you.

Ade Bamigboye, Interim Chair, Parents 1st UK

This has been a year of growth and collaborative partnerships at Parents 1st and the parents we are here to support have experienced the benefits.

Closer working relationships with the specialist perinatal mental health teams across Essex have created new pathways between clinical services and community support networks. Fear of being judged prevents many mothers disclosing mental health issues to a professional but they often feel comfortable to talk about how they are feeling within a trusting peer relationship. As intermediaries within their communities, our peer supporters have reduced the stigma and broken down the barriers, enabling parents to access the support they need, when they need it. Our peer support supervisors have also benefited – they now have easier access to clinical support, advice, safeguarding expertise, and reflective practice.

Our Start for Live Family Hub Transformation work in Thurrock has also increased our reach to vulnerable families through integrated working. The new funding has supported us to expand our core, early prevention work, building trusting peer relationships during pregnancy followed by a continuum of personalized, strengths-based, one-to-one support throughout the transition to parenthood – whether at home, hospital, community, or virtual. Active listening, lived experience, and nurturing the confidence of parents to find their own way forward is at the heart of what we do.

“Perinatal peer support offers a lifeline to those most in need, helping parents feel connected to, accepted, understood, and supported by others in their community”

(Feedback from a mother we have supported this year)

There have also been some challenges this year that we have needed to overcome. It has been increasingly difficult to recruit new volunteers. This is something that our voluntary sector partners are also experiencing. We are developing more diverse and flexible volunteer role offers that can more easily fit around the busy, working lives of parents.

We are also actively looking for a new Chair due to the resignation of our previous Chair this year who was finding it increasingly challenging to carry out her role on top of a full-time job and caring for a young family. Meanwhile, one of our existing trustees has taken on the role of Interim Chair.

Despite the challenges, we have plenty to feel proud of:

- We received the prestigious King's Award for Voluntary Service this year (previously known as the Queen's Award). This award aims to recognize outstanding work by volunteer groups to benefit local communities. The award is equivalent to an MBE and the highest award given to local voluntary groups in the UK. This was a landmark for Parents 1st volunteering and all the dedicated people who have joined us to support parents to give their babies the best possible start in life.
- Our four Peer Support Link Workers tested out our new online learning portfolio and successfully achieved our new customized Cache Level 3 Award in Perinatal Peer Support. Four of our other peer support workers are also now well on their way.

Finally, I made the decision to retire as CEO this year, giving the Board six months' notice and a leaving date planned for August 2024. It has been an incredible journey, starting out as a one-person social enterprise in 2008 to the present day - a well-established charity with 21 employees and 15 volunteers all dedicated to our mission and ethos.

It now gives me great pleasure to handover to our new CEO, Paula Beare, who has the experience, knowledge, skills and integrity to take Parents 1st onto its next chapter...



Celia Suppiah, Founder and CEO of Parents 1st UK (2008-2024)



**Paula Beare joins
Parent 1st UK as
our new
Chief Executive
Officer**



I am delighted and honored to have been appointed CEO of Parents 1st UK, building on the legacy created by Celia. My role commences in August 2024.

Bringing over a decade of executive and senior leadership experience, with a proven track record in strategy development, operational leadership, and business transformation, I have spent the past 20 years of my career in the health and community sectors, consistently demonstrating my ability to drive organisational growth, improve service delivery and innovate.

I am passionate about community engagement and co-production and a strong advocate for equity, diversity, and inclusion.

I look forward to enabling the on-going development of Parents 1st UK and of the impact that we can deliver as we move into the next chapter of the organisation's growth, working collaboratively with trustees, staff, volunteers and partners and contributing to improving the health and wellbeing of the parents and babies that we support.

Paula Beare, CEO of Parents 1st UK (August 2024 onwards)

The object of Parents 1st UK 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 focuses entirely on enabling quality perinatal peer support to flourish across the UK. When implemented effectively, peer support makes a unique and important contribution to improving the health and wellbeing of parents and babies.

Robust recruitment of peer supporters, provision of quality training and ongoing, regular supervision are vital for enabling parents with lived experience to deliver effective parent-to-parent support. Parents carry out both volunteer and paid peer support roles.

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.

Our core belief is to share learning and good practice. We have two key strands of work:

1. Local - we directly deliver perinatal peer support across Essex:

Our ten peer support workers and 15 volunteers have supported over 1,400 parents facing multiple disadvantages across Essex. Mothers are often wary of professionals for fear of being judged. Many are isolated and have mental health needs.

This year our Parents 1st Essex programme achieved the [King's Award for Voluntary Service](#) - the highest award to local voluntary groups in the UK.

2. National - we connect and share good practice with other organisations across the UK: Our national, online community inspires, shares knowledge and resources, and promotes best practice. It is a free, central, dedicated space to connect with peers and experts.



Our history

Parents 1st was first created by Strengths in Communities CIC (trading as "Parents 1st") in 2008. Our founder, Celia Suppiah, is an experienced midwife and public health nurse.

Celia developed the first 'Community Parent' perinatal peer support initiative 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 which established our "Pregnancy Pals and Birth Buddies" initiative in South Essex.

Parents 1st UK CIO was established in 2019 with a separate board of trustees to create our "Open Source" national, online learning platform.

We identified a need for a "community of practice" to overcome isolated practice. Effective perinatal peer support needed to be shared across the UK. This online platform now has over 800 members.

Parents 1st online platform

Local and national voices share their experiences. Parents and their peer supporters share their stories. Practitioners work with us to develop new resources.

Working together, we inform and improve the development of community based perinatal peer support.

In January 2023, the directors of Strengths in Communities CIC transferred all its assets and employees to Parents 1st UK CIO to form a single, and more focused legal entity.

Strengths in Communities CIC is now in the process of being dissolved.

1990

First NHS Community Parent pilot.

1995

Provided NHS training nationally.

1999

Identified as one of six national models of good practice by the Health Education Authority and Mental Health Europe.

2005

National Research: 10 community parent programmes across the UK.

2006

Pilot programmes show independence from the NHS is needed.

2008

Formed independent social enterprise to further develop Community Parents: Parents 1st.

2015

NESTA provides seed funding to establish new Parents 1st licensed affiliate programmes.

2019

Parents 1st UK charity set up to share all our learning and resources for free, to enable peer support to flourish across the UK.

2021

Pan Essex project in partnership with NHS perinatal mental health services (Essex Peer to Parent Network).

2023

Parents 1st Essex (set up in 2008) is merged with the Parents 1st UK charity.

Parents 1st Essex awarded Kings Award for Voluntary Service.

2024

Founder and CEO of Parents 1st UK, Celia Suppiah, retires. We welcome Paula Beare as the new Chief Executive Officer.

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 Voluntary, Community, and Social Enterprise (VCSE) organisations
- Commissioners of early years services
- Academics
- Field practitioners
- Statutory providers

How we deliver our aims

We deliver our aims by...

1. Delivering perinatal peer support in communities across Essex
2. Sharing learning and best practice via our national online platform
3. Developing new partnerships and collaborative working

1. Delivering perinatal peer support in communities across Essex



We have expanded our perinatal peer support across Essex this year by:

- Expanding the Peer-to-Parent Network in partnership with Essex Partnership University NHS Foundation Trust (EPUT) alongside each of the five maternity hubs across Essex
- Expanding our flagship Pregnancy Pal and Birth Buddy initiative in South and North Essex – with a focus on early prevention, starting in pregnancy
- Increasing the reach of our North Essex closed Facebook group to improve the emotional wellbeing of pre and post birth parents
- Delivering a range of new “coffee connections” groups where mothers and babies support each other

2. Sharing learning and best practice via our national online platform

We have continued to provide the following learning opportunities on the platform to our 800+ members:

- Increased the information resources for peer supporters to share with parents in our public group space.
- Posted new stories in our Community Voices section.
- Built new learning portfolios for our customized Level 3 Cache qualification for Perinatal Peer Support – ten peer supporters have now benefited and over 40 organisations across England have expressed an interest in the qualification.
- Posted a wide range of new activities of particular interest to our members.

3. Developing new partnerships and collaborative working

There have had some exciting new partnership developments this year:

- Solid working relationships with Essex Partnership NHS Foundation Trust (EPUT) specialist perinatal mental health teams has resulted in a 3-year NHS contract to further embed the partnership. An 'add-on' contract was agreed this year to co-design a new Fathers and Partners Wellbeing Service for partners of women referred with perinatal mental health needs.
- A two-year contract with Thurrock Council to expand our flagship Pregnancy Pal and Birth Buddy initiative using joined up and integrated working as part of the Thurrock Family Hub Start for Life Transformation programme.
- Gaining a public health accelerator grant from Essex County Council to develop a new partnership project with B3: Bumps, Babies and Belonging CIC and Live Music Now Charity. This project particularly reaches out to Black African and Caribbean families, connecting parents through peer support, music and wellbeing.



Statement from the trustees

Trustees' Report 2023-2024 10

The Trustees present their annual report and financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2024.

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 objectives 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.

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.



Promote and protect the

health & wellbeing

of parents



Promote and develop

volunteering

and peer support

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) and despite excellent outcomes, it is still the norm that these important initiatives struggle to survive.

"A feeling of privilege exists with every new mum I meet and support despite the sometimes difficult issues being faced. However, the highlight of my time as a volunteer has to be seeing the look on a mum's face as she holds her new baby for the first time."

Parents 1st volunteer

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

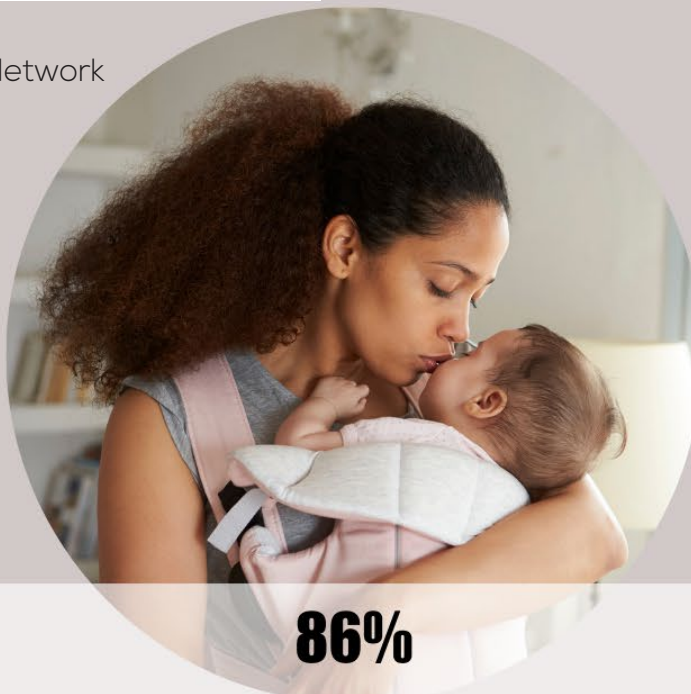
1. Direct delivery of perinatal peer support in Essex

- 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 longer-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 evidence-based, good practice far wider.
- 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.

2. Our national online platform

- Users are able to share and manage their own information (through unique URLs and associated sub-pages) 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.
- 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.

Essex Peer to Parent Network Outcomes



86%

felt a closer bond with
their babies



68%

reported improved access
to services



64%

reported improved access
to social support



60%

reported improved
emotional wellbeing



57%

reported feeling happier
with their closest
relationships



56%

reported feeling more
confident about
parenting



54%

reported improved
confidence to communicate
with professionals

The outcomes of Parents 1st UK's activities

A key outcome this year has been the creation of more effective models of peer support:

a. Our close working partnership with Essex University Partnership NHS Foundation Trust (EPUT) perinatal mental health practitioners has developed closer, collaborative working relationships with mental health practitioners that has:

- Increased mutual understanding of complementary roles i.e., illuminated the non-clinical nature of peer support and how that can sit alongside clinicians.
- Fine-tuned referral pathways of mothers with mental health needs.
- Enabled more timely information sharing and early action to prevent escalation of safeguarding concerns.
- Provided new training opportunities about birth trauma and suicide prevention for our peer supporters.

30 mothers referred to the Peer to Parent network have completed self-rating scales at the beginning and end of their one-to-one peer support this year. This has enabled us to track changes. (See previous page for outcomes)

b. New integrated working with Thurrock Family Hubs.

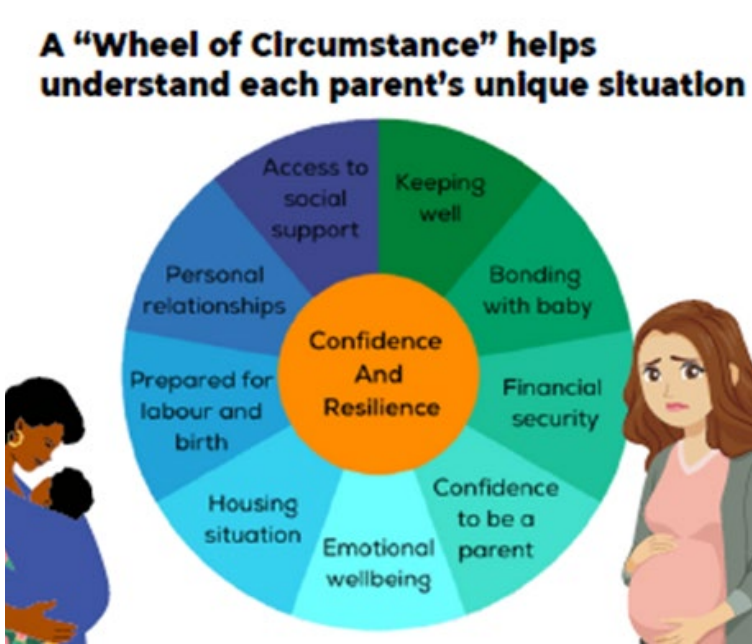
This was the first year of the new Family Hub project in Thurrock. The following health professionals have made new referrals of pregnant women facing challenges:

- Community midwives (18 referrals) i.e., midwives based in the Family Hubs who the peer supporters have built a relationship with during their outreach activities.
- Perinatal mental health practitioners (10 referrals) – These practitioners have met families for an initial conversation, assessed their needs and signposted and referred them for peer support.
- Specialist Perinatal Mental Health midwife Basildon Maternity Unit (6 referrals) – she has championed Parents 1st for many years and regularly refers parents.
- Health visitors (5 referrals) – the Specialist HV for Vulnerable families in Thurrock.
- Social worker (4 referrals).
- Hospital midwives (2 referrals).
- Community Mental health practitioner (1 referral).

c. Impact data from our Wheel of Circumstance self-rating questionnaire

An intensive research process, validated by NESTA in 2016, underpins our approach to capturing impact for our parent beneficiaries. This research process involved:

- Review of relevant documentation to understand Parents 1st peer support programme.
- Research with staff members to understand the programme and data collection tools and processes.
- Interviews with staff and peer supporters to understand parent journeys and the impact of peer support.
- Interviews with commissioners to find out what data is important to them.
- Interviews with partners to understand how they value the service.
- A review of tools to capture impact and explore any existing tools which could be used.



The research concluded that Parents 1st peer supporters work with parents across multiple areas, so it is important to capture data across all of these.

The measurement tool needed to be appropriate to the varying individual circumstances of each parent.

Our visual tool (the ‘Wheel of circumstance’) was therefore designed to represent the different areas pre and post birth that peer supporters and parents commonly work on together.

Impact data is collected based on each segment of the wheel at intervals during

the peer support process, using simple strengths-based, self-rating scales. This enables us to report on changes.

During 2023 to 2024, 43 mothers living in South Essex who were supported by our Pregnancy Pal and Birth Buddy initiative, completed Wheel of Circumstance questionnaires at the start of their support.

36 of the 43 mothers completed another Wheel of Circumstance questionnaire when they finished their peer support after having their babies. This enabled us to compare their baseline self-scores with their end of support scores.

Overall, 86% of the mothers supported identified positive change across all of the Wheel of Circumstance domains.

Domain	No. of mothers with before and after scores	Mothers showing improvements when comparing before and after self-scores
Average across all 11 domains	36	31 (86%)
Parenting confidence	37	28 (76%)
Felt bonded with baby	24	24 (100%)
Feeling emotionally well	35	27 (77%)
Feeling physically well	33	24 (73%)
Access to social support	27	18 (67%)
Confidence to access services	30	20 (67%)



Qualitative feedback from the mothers supported reflected deep appreciation for the quality of peer support they received:

"I was thinking of cancelling today because I have been feeling so rubbish about things. It's been really tough feeling so judged by everyone, all of the professionals, social services, staff at the contact centre and solicitors. It adds such much pressure, and guilt and feels like everyone is against me. I couldn't face any more of it today. I'm pleased that I didn't cancel, it has been so great to be able to speak so freely without judgement. It has made such a difference to feel listened to, to be able to be myself and get things off my chest."

"I felt like I was chatting to my sister / best friend. Mentally [my peer supporter] has helped me get through many tough days & I am very grateful"

"Peer support doesn't feel like they are doing a tick box exercise that some services make you feel. They relate, becoming a friend and not judging. I felt I could say anything and not be judged for my feelings"

Structure, governance and management

Trustees' Report 2023-2024 16

The Charity is a Charitable Incorporated Organisation whose only voting members are its charity trustees. The charity was established by Constitution on 9th April 2019. The current Constitution by which it is governed is dated 14th November 2019 and the charity was entered on the Register of Charities on 19th November 2019.

As per last years' report, on the 18th of January 2023, Strengths in Communities CIC (trading as "Parents 1st") transferred all its assets to Parents 1st UK CIO through an Asset Transfer Agreement. This agreement was prepared by Latham & Watkins Lawyers, 99 Bishopgate, London EC2M 3XF, who were appointed by the Board on a pro bono basis, to advise and support us throughout the execution of this process. Strengths in Communities CIC is currently going through the process of final dissolution.

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

- Ade Bamigboye, Interim Chair
- Brenda Bond
- Jeanette Tulloch-Jordon
- Jo Robins
- Rachel Heathcock
- Veronica Emlyn

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

In addition to our CEO, our team includes:

- Operations and Strategy
- Training and Practice development leads
- Programme managers
- Marketing and Communication
- Perinatal Fitness Trainer
- Peer support workers
- Peer support link workers
- Administrators

A heartfelt thank you to our Founder

As we reflect on the year, we extend our deepest gratitude to Celia, whose unwavering dedication and vision brought Parents 1st UK to life. For over 35 years, she has been a beacon of inspiration, fostering a community that uplifts parents, champions early years support, and transforms lives.

35 years of focus and dedication has laid a strong foundation for a brighter future and led to winning the King's Award for Voluntary Services. Her leadership and legacy will continue to guide us as we build on the incredible impact of her work. On behalf of the entire organisation and the families we serve, thank you for your passion, commitment, and the profound difference you have made.

Thank you to our staff, volunteers and funders

At Parents 1st UK, our achievements are a testament to the extraordinary dedication and generosity of our community. To our remarkable staff and volunteers, thank you for your tireless commitment, compassion, and the incredible impact you make every day. Your efforts transform lives and ensure parents and families receive the support they need to thrive.

To our funders, we are profoundly grateful for your trust and investment in our mission. Your partnership enables us to grow, innovate, and reach more families during crucial moments in their lives. A summary of our funders is provided in the section on Fundraising.

Together, you are the heart and soul of Parents 1st UK. Thank you for making our shared vision a reality.

"The hardest is leaving the ladies. As sad as it can be to let them go, it's great seeing the changes they have worked so hard on with me. It's wonderful to know that they are stronger, more confident, and are steering their parenting and lives potentially into a more positive direction."

Parents 1st Peer Supporter

Welcoming our next CEO

We are pleased to announce the appointment of Paula Beare as our new Chief Executive Officer.

Paula brings over a decade of executive and senior leadership experience, with a proven track record in strategy development, operational leadership, and business transformation. Her expertise spans across health, social care, and community sectors, where she has consistently demonstrated her ability to drive organisational growth and improve service delivery.



Paula has a strong track record in fundraising and business development, which has been pivotal in her leadership roles. She has successfully led bid-writing efforts to secure new business and developed comprehensive business cases and service specifications that have driven organisational growth.

Paula's most recent role was as Director of Patient Services at Newham Health Collaborative CIC, a GP federation serving approximately 450,000 residents in London. There, she provided strategic and operational leadership for a portfolio of 16 services, significantly expanding the organisation's offerings from just two services in three years. Her leadership was critical in developing innovative services such as virtual wards and the award-winning Newham Health Collaborative (NHC) Roving Team, which supports the most vulnerable and marginalized residents in the community. Her ability to build strong, collaborative relationships with NHS, local authorities, and voluntary sector organisations has been a hallmark of her success.

Paula has demonstrated versatility and leadership across various strategic and operational functions. As Chief Operating Officer at Waltham Forest Federated GP Network (FedNet), she led key operational initiatives that drove business growth, improved operational performance, and successfully managed the organisation's borough-wide response to the Covid-19 pandemic, including the establishment of multiple vaccination sites.

Prior to this, as Associate Director of Quality and Business Development at FedNet, Paula was instrumental in securing new business through successful bid writing, while also supporting the organisation through its inaugural CQC inspection by developing and implementing a robust clinical and integrated governance framework. Additionally, as Deputy Programme Director at One Hackney and City GP Confederation, she played a critical role in coordinating primary care services, fostering collaboration among healthcare providers, and ensuring the delivery of high-quality patient care across the network.

Known for her values-driven and collaborative leadership style, Paula excels at building cohesive, high-performing teams. She has extensive experience in financial management, quality improvement, and program management, with a deep commitment to enhancing the experience and outcomes for service users. Her strategic vision is complemented by her hands-on approach, ensuring that objectives are clearly communicated and effectively executed at all levels of the organisation.

Paula is passionate about community engagement and is a strong advocate for equity, diversity, and inclusion.

Volunteers

Ranging from expectant or new, first-time parents through to grandparents or carers, our volunteers are the embodiment of lived experience. They are carefully recruited for their ability to build trusting peer relationships and "walk the journey" with vulnerable parents through pregnancy, labour and birth, and the early months of parenthood.

The one-to-one peer support role is at the heart of our programme. They offer a continuum of intensive but informal one-to-one peer support in the parents' own homes, in the community and in hospital during labour and birth. Parents supported typically describe their Pregnancy Pal / Birth Buddy as "someone in my corner" who knows the local community and helps them to feel valued and supported.

Other volunteer roles include:

- Assisting with groups (exercise sessions; antenatal and postnatal friendship and information groups; workshops for expectant fathers)
- Helping with a variety of community outreach activities;
- Meeting pregnant women in antenatal clinics;
- Attending volunteer recruitment events.

All these roles include:

- Supporting emotional wellbeing
- Assisting parents to prepare for the birth sharing (evidence-based) information
- Promoting healthier lifestyles (including stopping smoking and healthier eating)
- Nurturing warm and confident parenting
- Encouraging and enabling parents to build their own local social support networks
- Providing supported signposting to assist parents to navigate maternity, perinatal mental health, VCS and early years services
- Enabling disengaged expectant parents to communicate more effectively with professionals
- Encouraging sustained breastfeeding

"It has been an exciting journey so far, the learning, the experience, the fulfilment and enrichment is second to nothing. It's a role I love, enjoy and it now comes so naturally to me and the benefits to families is on top on the list.

Peer support is so special as it's so relaxed yet so informative. Just by talking, listening and sharing learning gives families confidence and the tools to a greater future. The goals are then neverending."

Parents 1st volunteer

Volunteer training programme and the accreditation

An experienced National Childbirth Trust Antenatal Teacher develops and leads our volunteer training programme. We review and improve the quality of the volunteer experience through annual reviews, evaluation of training and questionnaires when volunteers leave.

Through high-quality training and skilled supervision, our volunteers gain new life skills and pathways to employment. Volunteer training is delivered in 5 modules (module 1 being an initial 4-session taster course which is part of the volunteer recruitment process). Once recruited, volunteers start module 2 which prepares them to start meeting pregnant women in antenatal clinics under the supervision of a member of staff. Volunteering experience then dovetails in tandem with completing each training module (15 x 3-hour sessions).

This section outlines some of our main achievements over the year.

- a. We have **further developed our exciting "Peer to Parent" Network in partnership with specialist perinatal mental health teams across Essex.** We have responded to 306 new referrals for one-to-one peer support this year.

Mothers referred to our Peer to Parent Network, self-rated their needs at referral.

- 79% of mothers felt low emotionally
- 60% of mothers felt socially isolated
- 56% of mothers felt insecure financially
- 56% of mothers self-scored low for feeling physically healthy
- 39% of mothers were unhappy with their housing situation

88% of mothers referred during pregnancy felt ill-prepared for labour and birth, reflecting the level of anxiety they were experiencing

- b. Our **North Essex closed Facebook group for pre and post birth parents has continued to grow** (474 members – a 49% increase from last year). We continue to provide daily information posts, chat rooms and videos about emotional wellbeing. A new volunteer ambassador role has been created to embed parent ownership, and we are seeing increasing self-support interactions between parents.

The aims of the North Essex Facebook group are to:

- Improve emotional wellbeing amongst expectant and new parents.
- Create a culture where parents and parents to be can interact, connect with each other and share information and experiences.
- Increase awareness of local activities.
- Increase local connections between parents .

- c. We have **expanded our Pregnancy Pal and Birth Buddy initiative in Thurrock** through a new contract with the Thurrock Council Family Hub Start for Life transformation programme.

Thurrock Family Hub transformation has created exciting new opportunities for joined up and enhanced integrated working. During the first year of our new 2-year contract we have:

- Recruited and trained 3 new part-time Peer Support Workers and a Manager.
- Responded to new 57 new referrals from the family hub team.
- Increased the antenatal health and wellbeing group information sessions we deliver (30 pre-birth parents have attended to date).
- Delivered 29 community outreach sessions engaging with 188 pregnant women and 34 expectant fathers.

- d. We have **further developed a new Pregnancy Pal and Birth Buddy initiative in Jaywick and Clacton**. Seven new volunteers, an outreach support volunteer and a peer support worker have been recruited and trained. Referral pathways have been set up and excellent relationships developed with Clacton Maternity Unit.
- e. We have **developed a range of new "Coffee Connections" groups** where the mothers and babies we support can meet together and support each other.



- f. We have started to **co-design a new Fathers and Partners Wellbeing Service in partnership with Essex perinatal mental health services**. An experienced father has just been recruited to the Coordinator Post.

The overall aims are to enable fathers and partners of women referred to PNMH services to:

- Reflect on their own wellbeing.
- Be signposted into available support / information.
- Gain insights into supporting maternal emotional wellbeing.
- Reduce their anxiety / maintain their emotional wellbeing.
- Have easier access to support and information.
- Feel less isolated by having easier access to networks for self-support.

- g. Our valuable partnership with the Association for Accredited Learning has continued this year. Ten peer supporters now have their own individual online learning portfolios on our platform, supported by our fully qualified and experienced assessors. **Four peer supporters have now achieved our new customized Level 3 Cache accredited Award in Perinatal Peer Support** – the remaining six peer supporters are progressing well.

h. Our Peer Support Link Workers have **tested out a new virtual group support package for pregnant women.** The online 4-session course has a strong emphasis on emotional wellbeing and is particularly beneficial to mothers who:

- Are anxious about the birth and the postnatal period.
- Have previously experienced a difficult labour and birth.
- Have suffered from postnatal depression.
- Are pregnant for the first time.

i. We have gained a new **Public Health Accelerator grant to develop a partnership project with B3 CIC and Live Music Now Charity.** The project aims to improve maternal and infant wellbeing in Basildon and Tendering by providing:

- Group peer-to-peer sessions that are culturally appropriate to Black African and Caribbean mothers.
- Group and one-to-one activities that pair musicians with new mothers and families to write, sing, record and perform a personal lullaby for their baby.
- Peer support community outreach activities.

This exciting new project will be externally evaluated by WSA Community Consultants.

We continue to raise 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



These accounts show activity during the accounting period April 2023 – March 2024.

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

- The National Lottery Reaching Communities Fund
- Henry Smith Charity
- Essex Community Foundation
- Essex County Council
- National Highways
- The Tudor Trust
- Thurrock Council
- Essex Partnership University NHS Trust

Parents 1st UK considers itself to be in a healthy financial position. Total income is much higher for 2023 – 2024 at £570,940 compared to the previous financial year (£402,095).

Expenditure on charitable activities was £540,050. This included £60,201 restricted expenditure made up of £33,895 to continue our peer support initiative in North Essex, and £26,306 spent on our national work.

Unrestricted funds at 31st of March 2023 were £277,209 and restricted funds were £82,359. Unrestricted funds at the end of March 2024 were £303,051 and restricted funds were £62,002.

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 corporate 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.

To support operational risk management, an updated safeguarding log has been adopted and a summary of safeguarding is reviewed at each board meeting, with escalation processes in place across the organization.

Reserves policy

Our Reserves Policy is reviewed on a 3-monthly basis. We are aware of our responsibilities and aim to build our reserves fund actively and responsibly.

Our reserves are funds that are freely available to spend on any of our charity's purposes. They need to:

- Be unrestricted funds.
- Exclude tangible fixed assets used to carry out the charity's activities.
- Exclude designated funds i.e., funds formally set aside by our trustees for a specific purpose.

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. We aim to hold appropriate reserves that:

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

The Unrestricted Reserve requirement will vary in line with the number and size of projects and services being undertaken by Parents 1st UK at any time. Parents 1st UK will 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 trade.

The reserve level requirement will be reviewed by the board on a three-monthly basis. The board will also assess the conditions of the reserves account and decide whether to invest any of the reserves on a short-term basis with an appropriate bank or building society. Risks are identified on our risks register and reassessed regularly.

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:

Signed by:
Ade Bamigboye
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Dated: 1/16/2025

Ade Bamigboye, Trustee (Interim Chair)



"My peer supporter has been an absolute lifeline to me and no topics are off limits. It's so refreshing to be able to talk to someone about anything and everything. I don't want answers, I just need to feel normal."

Independent Examiners Report

Trustees' Report 2023-2024 26

I report to the charity trustees on my examination of the accounts of the charity for the year ended 31 March 2024 which are set out on pages 25 to 32.

Responsibilities and basis of report

As the charity's trustees you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 ('the Act'). You are satisfied that the accounts of the Trust are not required by charity law to be audited and have chosen instead to have an independent examination.

I report in respect of my examination of the charity's accounts carried out under section 145 of the Act and in carrying out my examination I have followed all the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the Act.

Basis of the Independent Examiner's Report

An independent examination does not involve gathering all the evidence that would be required in an audit and consequently does not cover all the matters that an auditor considers in giving their opinion on the accounts. The planning and conduct of an audit goes beyond the limited assurance that an independent examination can provide. Consequently I express no opinion as to whether the accounts present a 'true and fair' view and my report is limited to those specific matters set out in the independent examiner's statement.

Independent examiner's statement

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no material matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination giving me cause to believe that in any material respect:

1. accounting records were not kept in respect of the charity as required by section 130 of the Act; or
2. the accounts do not accord with those records; or
3. the accounts do not comply with the applicable requirements concerning the form and content of 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 no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in this report in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Signed:



Name Steven James Garrod FCA
ICAEW

For and on behalf of:

**Clay Ratnage Strevens & Hills, Construction House,
Runwell Road, Wickford, Essex SS11 7HQ**

Date 21st October 2024

Statement of Financial Activities

STATEMENT OF PROFIT OR LOSS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

	Note	2024 Unrestricted Funds £	2024 Restricted Funds £	2024 Total Funds £	2023 Total £
Income Resources:					
Donations and legacies	2	1,560	-	1,560	-
Income from charitable activity	3	529,536	39,844	569,380	15,822
Total Incoming Resources		531,096	39,844	570,940	15,822
Resources Expended:					
Charitable activities	4	484,849	60,201	545,050	237,542
Cost of raising funds		20,405	-	20,405	1,932
Total Expenditure		505,254	60,201	565,455	239,474
Net Income		25,842	(20,357)	5,485	(223,592)
Merger income	12	-	-	-	386,273
Net Income for the Year		25,842	(20,357)	5,485	162,681
Total Funds brought forward	10	277,209	82,359	359,568	196,887
Total Funds carried forward	10	303,051	62,002	365,053	359,568

Notes on pages 27 to 32 are part of these accounts.



Balance Sheet

As at 31 March 2024

		2024		2023	
	Note	£	£	£	£
Fixed Assets					
Tangible assets	9		5,838		1,473
Current Assets					
Debtors	7	46,959		2,961	
Cash at bank and in hand		386,674		430,258	
		433,633		433,219	
Current Liabilities					
Creditors	8	74,418		75,124	
Net Current Assets			359,215		358,095
Net Assets			365,053		359,568
Funds					
Restricted Funds	10		303,051		277,209
Unrestricted Funds	10		62,002		82,359
			365,053		359,568

Signed:

A Bamiboye
Trustee

Signed by:
Ade Bamigboye
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Dated 1/16/2025

V Emlyn
Trustee

DocuSigned by:
V. E. Emlyn
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Dated 1/17/2025

Notes to the Financial Statements

For the year ended 31 March 2024

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 2024 £	Total 2023 £
Donations	1,560	-
Total	1,560	-

A total of £1,560 restricted donations and legacies were received during the year (2023:£Nil)

3. Income from charitable activities

	Total 2024 £	Total 2023 £
Sales with charitable activities	2,494	14,231
Grants	210,940	-
Contract Income	347,855	-
Other	8,092	1,651
Total	569,381	15,882

A total of £39,844 restricted income was received from charitable activities during the year (2023:£Nil)

4. Expenditure on charitable activity

		Total 2024 £	Total 2023 £
Saff costs	Note 6	467,091	152,651
Worker allowances		432	509
Website		3,540	5,889
Evaluation		3,296	1,757
Accreditation		2,858	565
Consultancy		4,825	56,993
Conference costs		5,017	677
Marketing		4,680	480
Other direct costs		-	555
Fundraising costs		6,337	-
Peer support costs		9,051	-
Support costs	5	58,329	17,466
Total expenditure		565,456	237,542

A total of £60,201 restricted expenditure was spent from charitable activities during the year (2023:£85,443)

5. Support costs

	Total 2024 £	Total 2023 £
IT Costs	13,753	4,443
Insurance	1,674	2,066
Bank Charges	342	226
Office related costs	776	699
Rent	1,692	-
Depreciation	1,683	177
Examiners fee	-	460
PPS	1,881	-
Subscriptions	1,389	-
Accountancy fees	21,294	-
Professional fees	13,845	9,395
Total	58,329	17,466

6. Staff costs

	2024	2023
	£	£
Gross wages	406,362	140,192
Pension	7,155	2,030
Employer NI	27,595	4,869
Training and supervision	1,671	240
Other	9,568	1,936
Travel	14,740	3,384
Total	467,091	152,651

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

7. Debtors

	2024	2023
	£	£
Prepayments	1,746	2,694
Accounts receivable	45,213	267
	46,959	2,961

8. Creditors

	2024	2023
	£	£
Other creditors	853	952
Creditors	5,138	9,406
Accruals & deferred income	61,254	58,388
Taxation	7,173	6,378
	74,418	75,124

9. Fixed assets

	Computer Equipment £	Office Equipment £	Total £
Cost			
Cost as at 1st April 2023	42,062	6,149	48,211
Additions	6,048	-	6,048
Total	48,110	6,149	54,259
Depreciation			
Depreciation as at 1st April 2023	40,589	6,149	46,738
Charge for the year	1,683	-	1,683
Total	42,272	6,149	48,421
Net Book Value 2024	5,838	-	5,838
Net Book Value 2023	1,473	-	1,473

10. Analysis of funds

	Opening £	Income £	Expenditure £	Merger £	Closing £
Unrestricted	277,209	531,096	(505,254)	-	303,051
Restricted					
Christie Foundation	69,465	2,644	(26,306)	-	45,803
Henry Smith North PPBB	7,814	37,200	(33,895)	-	11,119
"Essex County Council New Generations Fund"	5,080	-	-	-	5,080
Total Restricted	82,359	39,844	(60,201)	-	62,002
Total	359,568	570,940	(565,455)	-	365,053

11. Related party transactions & trustee remunerations

During the financial year, there were no related party transactions (2023:£Nil)

Trustees received £Nil for their time assisting the charity.

12. Merger income

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



The Board of Trustees give careful consideration on how to secure income to cover the costs of running the charity and funding its work, achieved through diversifying our range of income sources.

As Trustees we are also responsible for making sure funds are secured ethically, legally and in a way that supports the charity's values.

Grant funding

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

- National Lottery Reaching Communities Fund
- Henry Smith Charity
- Essex Community Foundation
- National Highways
- The Tudor Trust

Contracts

We would also like to thank our new contract partners:

- Thurrock Council: a 2-year contract totaling £303,787 commenced on 1st of April 2023 to expand our perinatal peer support as part of the Family Hub Transformation Start for Life partnership.
- Essex Partnership University NHS Foundation Trust (EPUT): a 3-year contract totaling £588,000 commenced on the 1st of May 2023 to continue to deliver the Peer to Parent service – a collaborative partnership with EPUT's specialist perinatal mental health clinical services. An addition to this contract of £151,665 over 3 years also commenced on the 1st of March 2024 to develop a new Fathers and Partners wellbeing review service.

Investments

Opened in June 2023, Parents 1st UK had holdings as at 31st March 2024 of £150,000 in a CCLA COIF Charities Deposit Fund. The average Fund yield for this period was 5.12% per annum.

The COIF Charities Deposit Fund is a common deposit fund, governed by the Charities Act 2011 (as amended) and authorised by the Charity Commission.

In addition we hold:

- An Ethical 40 day notice account with Charity Bank, with funds as at 31st March 2024 of £86,442.72, with a 3.26% yield;
- A Business Instant Saver account with Nationwide, with funds as at 31st March 204 of ££85,252.18, with a yield of £2.25%

Regulation and Good Practice

Parents 1st UK is in the process of registering with The Fundraising Regulator. Registering shows our commitment to best practice fundraising in line with the Code of Fundraising Practice in a way that is legal, open, honest and respectful.

Strategy and Priorities

As we transition into the next chapter of Parents 1st growth, we are developing a new 5-year strategy that will send a strong signal of our continuing commitment to being a leading charity that focuses entirely on enabling quality perinatal peer support to flourish across the UK.

Our strategic priorities will focus on:

- **Growth** – sustaining and improving our existing services, with a co-ordinated approach to fundraising, whilst also building and learning from our successes, applying evidence-based practice to grow and expand our offers.
- **Innovation** – using our national platform as well as local networks to support innovation in working, transforming the provision of perinatal peer support through a range of diverse partnership.
- **People** – recognising and building on the potential and positive impact of lived experience in the design of our systems and services.
- **Research and Education** – supporting research to evidence the need for greater access to quality perinatal peer support, with a particular focus on health inequalities faced by Black and Asian families and young parents, and development of our accredited Peer Support Worker qualification for delivery in external organisations.
- **Governance** – we will strengthen our board expertise by adding new trustees with expertise in strategy development, learning and development, research and fundraising

People, Culture and Wellbeing Charter

The Association for Accredited Learning (AAL) launched its new Charter for People, Culture and Wellbeing this year. At the heart of AAL is lived experience, celebrating individual achievements and recognising employer best practice.

This new groundbreaking Charter puts at the forefront an organisation's focus on person centred initiatives in helping with employee wellbeing and ensuring a positive workforce culture.

We are in the process of signing up to the Charter. Signing the People, Culture and Wellbeing Charter is our declaration that we understand the importance of implementing person-centred initiatives, by having supportive measures for mental health and wellbeing in the workplace.

The declaration is our agreement to uphold the following principles:

1. Wellbeing of people and teams
2. Wellbeing through collaboration and engagement
3. Health and wellbeing strategy
4. Wellbeing resources and support

We have much to be proud of and are optimistic about the future.

Our strategy will demonstrate our resilience, responsiveness and adaptability alongside the compassion and commitment of our staff and volunteers.

However, we can only achieve our aims in close collaboration with partners and look forward to co-producing our strategy with a range of stakeholders for the benefit of those we support.

Risks and uncertainties

We have identified the following as areas of greatest concern, which will be addressed through robust risk management processes and the development of our new strategy:

- **Workforce:**
 - We have a committed and dedicated workforce, however as the cost-of-living crisis continues our ability to retain of our staff becomes increasingly uncertain, without a comprehensive programme of upskilling and career progression, along with attractive and useful benefits packages.
 - Any change in staff also creates a loss of significant knowledge, experience and skills.
- **Funding risks:**
 - Due to closure of grant funder programmes, increasing competition and changing priorities in statutory bodies such as the NHS.
- **Data protection and cybersecurity:**
 - A greater reliance on technology to operate creates an increased vulnerability to a cyber-attack that could compromise sensitive information and disrupt operations.
- **Political risk:**
 - A shift in policy that affects our operations or changes in level of support for the issues we work on.
- **Reputational risk:**
 - We rely on the trust and support of our service users, funders and contract partners, any negative publicity or loss of trust could have a significant impact on our reputation and ability to secure funds.



Parents 1st UK

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www.parents1st.org.uk



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