

## **Charity Trustees' Annual Report: 2 April 2021 to 1 April 2022**

### **1. Introduction**

The trustees have pleasure in presenting their report and financial statements for the period 2 April 2021 to 1st April 2022. Unreal is a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) adopting its constitution under the CIO (General) Regulations 2012 and registering with the Charity Commission (*No. 1186498*) on 13 November 2019. Such constitution provides the trustees with limited legal liability and responsibility for the management of Unreal's affairs and the exercise of all of its powers. Unreal commenced operations on 21 November 2019.

### **2. Objectives and Activities**

Unreal's mission is to raise awareness of Depersonalisation and Derealisation Disorder (DPRD). Our approach is to enable the wellbeing of people with lived experience of DPRD through support, resources, and education. We aim to help people restore their lives and empower them to share their experiences to help others in building a strong and resilient community.

We specialise in running peer support groups, signposting people to relevant resources, pushing for policy change, supporting academic studies, and providing general medical information that has been validated by leading clinicians in the field.

### **3. Achievements and Performance**

This reporting period was again overshadowed by the Covid-19 pandemic and the corresponding restrictions, meaning our charity's operations remained almost entirely virtual. The most major adjustment we made during the previous reporting period was to move our peer support program online when in-person spaces became closed – running free sessions on Zoom for members of the community. What we quickly realised, however, was that by making the groups not London-centric, they were then available to a much larger audience. This was positive in that we began to attract participants from all over the world (including Europe, America, Canada, Australia, and India), but it came with the problem of the monthly sessions becoming oversubscribed and the 20 free tickets were typically running out within minutes. We committed to monitor this situation and ultimately made the decision to recruit and train new volunteer facilitators, with the aim of doubling the number of sessions we could offer – something we successfully implemented at the start of 2022. After one of the sessions, a participant emailed us stating: *"In peer support sessions, I've felt more emotionally connected...these are the only people who understand what I'm going through."* During this reporting period we have run a total of **15** virtual peer support sessions, with **271** free tickets used by members of the community. We have also continued

running our internal peer support groups reserved for members of Unreal to look after the wellbeing of our trustees, board members and volunteers.

We successfully hosted our planned virtual launch event for Unreal in May via a Zoom Webinar, which saw some of our board members and ambassadors taking questions from invited members of the press, as well as footage compiled from interviews with members of the DPRD community and some animated illustrations created for us to help depict what the condition is like to live with. We then made the footage of this event available on our YouTube page and participated in a 'Replay Premiere' allowing us to chat directly with our charity followers as the recording was played out.

Our online presence has continued to grow, with overall website visits up approximately **15%** on the previous 12 months, and overall page views up nearly **10%** to an annual total of **34,000**. But, most interestingly for us, we've found a dramatic increase of **64%** in the number of overall hits that have come directly from a Google search (over **8000** during the period) – which suggests both a continuing global increase in the awareness of DPRD and that more people are searching about the condition; and also that we're playing a big part in the awareness-raising process by having the most current medically-validated information available online, as people are clearly discovering us directly from their internet searches. Activity on our social media channels also increased significantly too, with our Facebook 'impressions' up **14%** on the previous year, and Instagram 'impressions' up over **600%** (helped by a couple of particularly popular posts).

Trustee Joe Perkins released his book *Life On Autopilot: A Guide To Living With Depersonalisation Disorder*, which was published worldwide by Jessica Kingsley Publishers on 21 June 2021 in conjunction with Unreal. The initial response has been positive, with it regularly being a topic of conversation on social media and in our peer support groups, and Joe has promoted it on the likes of BBC Radio 4, the Mentally Yours podcast and in The Metro.

Another exciting development was that the study into specialised CBT for DPRD, for which Unreal was a co-applicant, was approved and funded by the NIHR – meaning that the charity is now directly involved in running a two-year first-of-its-kind randomised feasibility study, involving the training of NHS clinicians to deliver specialised therapy for the condition. We envision the outcome(s) of this study acting as a basis to apply for greater funding to conduct a much larger trial into the efficacy of the treatment.

Due to the ever-increasing administrative workload within our charity, the board deemed it necessary for us to take on the services of an Administration & Marketing Coordinator. Whilst not employed directly by Unreal – working on a self-employed freelance basis and invoicing the charity at the end of each month – now having somebody able to dedicate more time and attention to the behind-the-scenes running of the charity has allowed us to maintain our forward momentum.

#### **4. Financial Review**

The Covid-19-related restrictions and subsequent virtual operations once again meant that our outgoings for the period were small and largely administrative overall. Previously, board members of the charity had been paying certain operational costs – for example, web hosting and our Zoom account – out of their own pockets, but as we now have a functioning Unreal bank account and available funds, we phased this out during the current reporting period and had successfully brought all costs completely in-house by October 2021. The largest cost to the charity during the period was the invoices from the Administration & Marketing Coordinator freelancer, but other notable expenditures included the hosting and promotion of the virtual launch event and the purchase of a new dedicated PO Box specifically for Unreal.

Our outgoings for the period totalled **£3832**. Our total income, both from donors and donations by a board member in the form of paying some of the final operational costs (before bringing them in-house) totalled **£13,235**, leaving us with a closing balance sheet of **£75,859**. Given our current level of expenditure compared to this final balance, and the fact that we've continued to both exist *and* grow throughout the Covid-19 pandemic, the charity has not felt there to be any substantial financial operating risks posed to us during this period, and our finances keep us well above our newly-implemented Reserves Policy of keeping **£5000** (approximately one year of basic operational costs, at our current annual expenditure levels) at our disposal. This would allow us to refocus our efforts on increasing fundraising and bidding for grants should it become necessary. The charity has committed to review this policy every 6 months in board meetings.

#### **5. Plans For The Future**

We have been having many internal discussions about how we can begin to use more of our plentiful funds to further the key objectives of the charity – especially now that Covid-19 restrictions have largely eased. We have so far identified 26 actions for which investment would help them progress, but we've narrowed these down to a handful of key primary objectives to focus on.

We are wanting to redesign our website, with an emphasis on improved user flow and include a wider variety of content – including new video footage (to reduce the reliance on heavy-text), introduce a community section and give our content a more positive angle overall. To do this effectively, we would need to employ a professional web designer to work on the back end and graphic design, as well as potentially hiring a space and camera equipment to create the new video content. We envision this redesign costing in the region of £1500-2500 depending on how much functionality it's deemed we need.

Another important project we would like to get underway promptly is the creation of a feature-length documentary about DPRD that could either be released online or pitched to a production house. This documentary would likely require a large budget to cover costs such as hiring television-grade camera equipment, potentially somebody to help operate it, and travel to various locations to conduct interviews. But if we were able to do this documentary properly, it could be one of the biggest projects that has ever been done in the DPRD community. The exact budget will depend on whether we are able to attract interest and investment from a broadcaster up-front, but creating it in-house for a lower outlay

would also be an option given members of our board having presenting and filmmaking skills (and equipment).

Given the huge success of our virtual peer support program – and the sustained demand for places in the sessions – we’re also looking at how these could be even expanded beyond the doubling of sessions implemented at the start of 2022. Potential ideas currently include hiring a professional to offer more clinical sessions (e.g. mindfulness workshops), lunchtime and weekend sessions, and the realisation of our Young People’s peer support groups.

Finally, we’re aiming to create, print and disseminate awareness-raising literature all about DPRD to the likes of doctors surgeries, mental health teams and university mental health societies. These plans will incur printing and postage costs. The costs associated with this will largely be printing and dissemination, which we anticipate being in the region of £1000.

## **6. Structure, Governance and Management**

Unreal is governed by its constitution dated 13 November 2019. Our governing team are very committed, and so far in our history as a registered charity it hasn’t been necessary for us to recruit any new trustees. But we have previously expanded our charity board using the same process that we would use for trustees: advertising the position through both the Charity Jobs website and our social media channels; a shortlist of candidates being invited for interview; and then a final decision being taken by the board. No new board members were recruited during the current reporting period.

Our trustees and board members meet monthly to discuss Unreal’s operation and make decisions on actions needed – being responsible for all areas of the charity’s operations. Whilst all trustees are ultimately involved in all major decisions, some members of the charity do have more specific remits – for example, one board member’s primary role is to run the virtual peer support programme. We also operate a subcommittee system where smaller groups meet to discuss and action certain tasks (for example, managing the website, planning the proposed documentary, etc).

We also have a group of dedicated volunteers who support us in the daily running of the charity – from facilitating peer support sessions, to advising us on marketing strategy and creating engaging illustrations to bolster our online presence.

## **7. Reference and Administration**

**Charity Name:** Unreal

**Charity Number:** 1186498

**Registered Address:** PO Box 227, Bristol, BS20 1EH

**Trustees:** Jane Charlton (appointed 21/11/2019), Liam Macpherson (appointed 01/03/2020), Heather Perkins (appointed 21/11/2019), Elaine Hunter (appointed 21/11/2019), Joe Perkins (appointed 21/11/2019), Mary Charlton (appointed 21/11/2019), Jen Astley (appointed 01/07/2019), Michael Down appointed 01/07/2019.

**Chair:** Jane Charlton

**Secretary:** Mary Charlton

**Treasurer:** Joe Perkins

**Bank:** The Co-Operative Bank, Business Directplus (Online Services)

The trustees of Unreal approved this report on 31 August 2022.

*(On behalf of Unreal's Trustees):*



**Joe Perkins – Trustee & Treasurer**



**Jane Charlton - Chair**



CHARITY COMMISSION  
FOR ENGLAND AND WALES

Unreal

1186498

## Receipts and payments accounts

For the period  
from

2-Apr-21

To

1-Apr-22

### Section A Receipts and payments

|  | Unrestricted<br>funds<br>to the nearest<br>£ | Restricted<br>funds<br>to the nearest £ | Endowment<br>funds<br>to the nearest £ | Total funds<br>to the nearest £ |
|--|--|---|--|---------------------------------|
| <b>A1 Receipts</b>   |  |   |  |                                 |
| Corporate Donations  | 10,000                                       | -                                       | -                                      | 10,000                          |
| Donations from Trustees (personal payment of charity expenses) | 151  | -                                       | -                                      | 151                             |
| Donations from supporters                                      | 3,084  | -                                       | -                                      | 3,084                           |
|  | -  | -                                       | -                                      | -                               |
|  | -  | -                                       | -                                      | -                               |
|  | -  | -                                       | -                                      | -                               |
|  | -  | -                                       | -                                      | -                               |
|  | -  | -                                       | -                                      | -                               |
| <b>Sub total</b> (Gross income for AR)                         | 13,235                                       | -                                       | -                                      | 13,235                          |
| <b>A2 Asset and investment sales, (see table).</b>             |  |   |  |                                 |
|  | -  | -                                       | -                                      | -                               |
|  | -  | -                                       | -                                      | -                               |
| <b>Sub total</b>   | -  | -                                       | -                                      | -                               |
| <b>Total receipts</b>  | 13,235                                       | -                                       | -                                      | 13,235                          |
| <b>A3 Payments</b>   |  |   |  |                                 |
| Squarespace (Web Hosting)                                      | 302  | -                                       | -                                      | 302                             |
| Zoom Account   | 150  | -                                       | -                                      | 150                             |
| Public Liability Insurance                                     | 370  | -                                       | -                                      | 370                             |
| Freelance Administration & Marketing Role                      | 1,908  | -                                       | -                                      | 1,908                           |
| Launch Event   | 350  | -                                       | -                                      | 350                             |
| JustGiving Subscription  | 198  | -                                       | -                                      | 198                             |
| PO Box   | 360  | -                                       | -                                      | 360                             |
| Miscellaenous  | 194  | -                                       | -                                      | 194                             |
|  | -  | -                                       | -                                      | -                               |
| <b>Sub total</b>   | 3,832  | -                                       | -                                      | 3,832                           |
| <b>A4 Asset and investment purchases, (see table)</b>          |  |   |  |                                 |
|  | -  | -                                       | -                                      | -                               |
|  | -  | -                                       | -                                      | -                               |
| <b>Sub total</b>   | -  | -                                       | -                                      | -                               |
| <b>Total payments</b>  | 3,832  | -                                       | -                                      | 3,832                           |
| <b>Net of receipts/(payments)</b>                              | 9,403  | -                                       | -                                      | 9,403                           |
| <b>A5 Transfers between funds</b>                              | -  | -                                       | -                                      | -                               |
| <b>A6 Cash funds last year end</b>                             | 66,456                                       | -                                       | -                                      | 66,456                          |
| <b>Cash funds this year end</b>                                | 75,859                                       | -                                       | -                                      | 75,859                          |


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

| Categories  | Details  | Unrestricted funds<br>to nearest £ | Restricted funds<br>to nearest £ |
|---|--|------------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| <b>B1 Cash funds</b>                                | Bank Balance   | 75,859                             | -                                |
|   |  |                                    | -                                |
|   |  | -                                  | -                                |
|   | <b>Total cash funds</b>                                | <b>75,859</b>                      | <b>-</b>                         |
|   | (agree balances with receipts and payments account(s)) | OK                                 | OK                               |
| <b>B2 Other monetary assets</b>                     | Details  | Unrestricted funds<br>to nearest £ | Restricted funds<br>to nearest £ |
|   |  | -                                  | -                                |
|   |  | -                                  | -                                |
|   |  | -                                  | -                                |
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|   |  | -                                  | -                                |
| <b>B3 Investment assets</b>                         | Details  | Fund to which asset belongs        | Cost (optional)                  |
|   |  |                                    | -                                |
|   |  |                                    | -                                |
|   |  |                                    | -                                |
|   |  |                                    | -                                |
| <b>B4 Assets retained for the charity's own use</b> | Details  | Fund to which asset belongs        | Cost (optional)                  |
|   |  |                                    | -                                |
|   |  |                                    | -                                |
|   |  |                                    | -                                |
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|   |  |                                    | -                                |
| <b>B5 Liabilities</b>                               | Details  | Fund to which liability relates    | Amount due (optional)            |
|   |  |                                    | -                                |
|   |  |                                    | -                                |
|   |  |                                    | -                                |
|   |  |                                    | -                                |

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

Signature

Print Name



JOE A PERKINS

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