



South Cheshire  
**CLASP**

**Annual Report 2023**

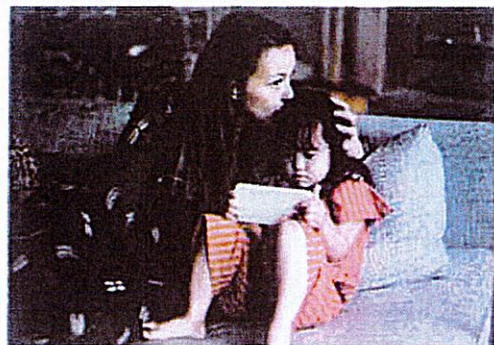
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registered charity number: 1188608



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# Organisational Structure & Governance:

South Cheshire CLASP is governed by its Constitution adopted on 12<sup>th</sup> June 2020.

The governing body is the board of Trustees. As at 31<sup>st</sup> December 2022, there were 6 members. Trustees are recruited annually at the AGM or can be co-opted on to the board. Decision making takes place at bi-monthly Trustee meetings.

## Trustees:

Chris Wenlock  
Gemma Harris (Parent Representative)  
Graham Bushill (Safeguarding Lead)  
John Colclough (Chairman)  
Ruth Grimshaw (Treasurer)

## Staff:

Emma Culleton (Support Worker)  
Jan Wenlock (Support Worker)  
Jill Lloyd (Support Assistant)  
Julia Wood (Chief Executive)  
Lynne Davies (Finance Officer)  
Marie Harrison (Cleaner)  
Rachael Doherty (Children's Work Manager)  
Sandra Tatton (Parent Support Worker)  
Sarah Blake-Appleton (Counsellor)  
Sarah Mankazana (Administrator)  
Sharon Hickson (Counselling Service Manager)  
Sharon Stowell (Funding Manager)  
Stuart Watson (Counsellor)  
Sue Chapman (Project Manager)

## Volunteers:

Anna Murray  
Christel Remond  
Jean Bradshaw  
Margaret Whyley  
Maureen Joy  
Natalie Clowes  
Ray Breen



# Values and Objectives

The Charity is an expression of care and support for all lone parents in the locality, whatever their circumstances and regardless of how they became lone parents.

South Cheshire CLASP was first established in 1998 and obtained charity status in 2002 under charity number 1093471. In 2020 the Charity became a CIO with the new Charity Number of 1188608.

## Charitable Objects:

The objects of the CIO are:

For the public benefit and within a Christian ethos to advance the education and development of children and lone parents living in the South Cheshire area, in particular but not exclusively by:

- a) providing child development and parenting skills training to parents;
- b) providing safe group play and other activities designed to support children's social and emotional development;
- c) providing support, activities and signposting to advice which develop the capabilities, competences, skills and understanding of parents;
- d) providing activities and services designed to preserve and protect the physical and emotional health and wellbeing of children and their parents;
- e) providing or assisting in the provision of facilities in the interests of social welfare for recreation or other leisure time occupation of children and their parents with the object of improving their conditions of life.

## Vision Statement:

To reach out and support those in the community who are affected by the difficulties associated with parenting alone, whatever their circumstances. We offer friendly support and encouragement to assist with the progression from crisis to wholeness, and a positive future for the whole family.

## Values

- CARING
- ACCEPTING
- RESPECTFUL
- EMPOWERING

### Overarching Aims and Objectives

- Lone parents and their children will experience an increase in confidence and self-esteem
- Lone parents and their children will experience improved family relationships
- Lone parents and their children will be able to better cope with family breakdown/their family situation
- Lone parents and their children will report improved emotional health and wellbeing

# Chairman's Report

2023 was another good year for CLASP. This was the first full year after the Covid pandemic, and our services all operated without restrictions.

Nationally, inflation and the cost-of-living crisis hit many lone-parent families, so it was no surprise that demand for our comprehensive range of support remained high. It is always encouraging to read the quarterly outcomes reports that consistently reflect high levels of satisfaction from people who access our services.

At the end of the year we moved to more appropriate accommodation, which will help us to provide a welcoming environment for counselling and group work; also to offer a better working environment for staff.

The Treasurer's report outlines the strong financial position that we were able to maintain, whilst acknowledging the challenges that lie ahead. Maintaining sufficient income from grants and other sources is a constant battle- our success rate is a testimony to both the strength of our work and the quality of our bids to funders.

Finally, I thank once again our dedicated team of workers and volunteers, and of course my fellow trustees.

John Colclough  
Chairman

# A Snapshot of 2023

Our Coffee n' Chat groups have offered a safe space for parents to have open discussions about the challenges they have faced over the last year. Common themes include;

- School
- bullying
- holidays
- safety
- family court and contact
- parenting children with additional needs
- applying for DLA and EHCP's
- lack of support from family
- how to cope with lack of sleep
- difficulty making friends as adults
- household fund
- moving house
- pregnancy loss
- volunteering
- healthy eating
- autism awareness
- having children when you are young
- the cost of living crisis
- experiences with social care
- planning to return to work

As a result we have been able to signpost parents for further support, share information and plan relevant courses including Autism Awareness and Life Skills for first time parents.

## Therapeutic groups in schools

Primary Plus has been running in 9 different primary schools and our therapeutic group for high school children has been running in 2 high schools throughout the year. These groups are attended by children referred via the schools and provide safe group play and other activities designed to support children's social and emotional development and help them deal with the issues associated with family breakdown or bereavement. supporting 62 children and young people in 11 different schools.

## Holiday Activities

We have been able to arrange an easter egg hunt, family kayaking, a day trip to the seaside, a trip to Snugburys ice cream farm, a picnic in the park, den building, family crafts, healthy eating sessions and a magical panto trip for Christmas! More than 50 families have joined us for the holiday activities.



We asked families what they enjoyed most about the activities, here's what they said;

**Relaxing and spending time with friends in the sunshine**

lovely to see our families relaxing & making friends, trying new things and having fun.

**Really good day spent with friends - I loved paddling in the sea**

Spending time with my children and seeing them enjoying themselves

**Wonderful day, I enjoyed walking along the pier and paddling in the sea**

Fresh air and beach - Seeing my daughter smile

**It was a lovely atmosphere and there was no judgement when my son wasn't coping, only support.**

Seeing the kids have so much fun - Watching my daughter gain confidence

**Really appreciate the opportunity to have a day out which otherwise we wouldn't have been able to experience**

### **1:1 parent Support**

1:1 parent support has helped parents achieve goals that they had set themselves, increasing confidence and resilience. Many parents have received support with parenting skills, budgeting or housing issues and reduced isolation by attending groups and courses.

Support has included:

- Budgeting
- Making phone calls and dealing with benefits, energy companies etc
- Making and attending appointments
- Making links in the community and attending groups and social activities.
- Parenting courses (along with well being course and life skills course)
- Practical help in the home, helping families to declutter.
- Support with parenting skills, routines, and boundaries.
- Referring on to other types of support

19 families received support during in 2023

### **Here to listen weekly check in calls**

Facilitated by CLASP volunteers and developed as a result of the success and very apparent need for check in calls throughout lockdown. This project has become a 'lifeline' for parents who may not meet the criteria for counselling but feel isolated and in need of a listening ear or to be signposted to additional support. The feedback from this service has been extremely positive.

During 2023 volunteers dedicated more than 50 hours to offer this service, completing 43 calls to parents in need.

### **Parenting Courses**

CLASP wellbeing – 5 weeks based on the 5 ways to wellbeing



Life Skills including budgeting and healthy eating

Parenting for primary years

### **Counselling Service**

Those who have accessed CLASP counselling most report an improvement in health and wellbeing, increased ability to make a positive change and an improvement in their relationship with their children, both in the short and long term.

We have received an increase in more complex referrals for young people and work closely with CAMHS and CWP to manage the increased complexities and risk thanks to our responsive and flexible approach. The support that the CAMHS crisis line offers is both beneficial and important to help manage risk in complex cases.

### **Feedback from CLASP counselling clients:**

*'I'm so grateful for the support-my confidence and self-awareness has changed significantly. I feel happier for the first time in a long time. I have had incredible support' (adult male)*

*'I have hope for the future and increased self-confidence' (adult male)*

*'My counsellor was really easy to approach and that helped me to open up and talk about my problems. She was very friendly and provided an atmosphere of warmth' (adult female)*

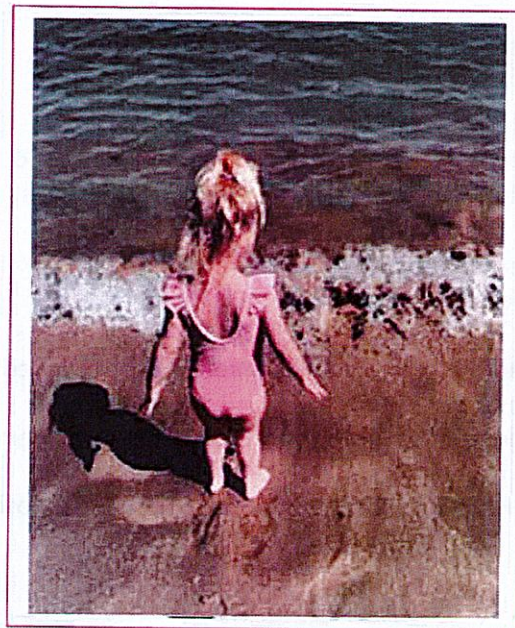
*'I am gaining so much from the counselling sessions, which I did not expect to happen. My emotional health and family relationships have increased significantly' (adult female)*

*'Counselling has helped me to be more open with my issues. My confidence has increased and I can deal with my anger better' (teenage girl)*

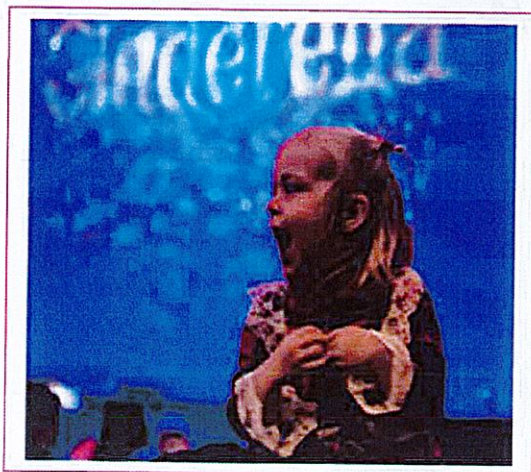
*'I haven't had a panic attack since the sessions started. My mental health has improved' (teenage girl)*

*'My Daughters ability to handle home life and family relationships has improved' (parent 10 year old girl)*





Paddling in the sea  
at Llandudno



Christmas treat at the  
Lyceum Theatre

Ice creams all round at  
Snugburys!





# Achievements 2023/4

We have 4 main outcomes running across all of our projects, as well as additional outcomes relating to individual projects. The following shows our progress across these 4 main outcomes.

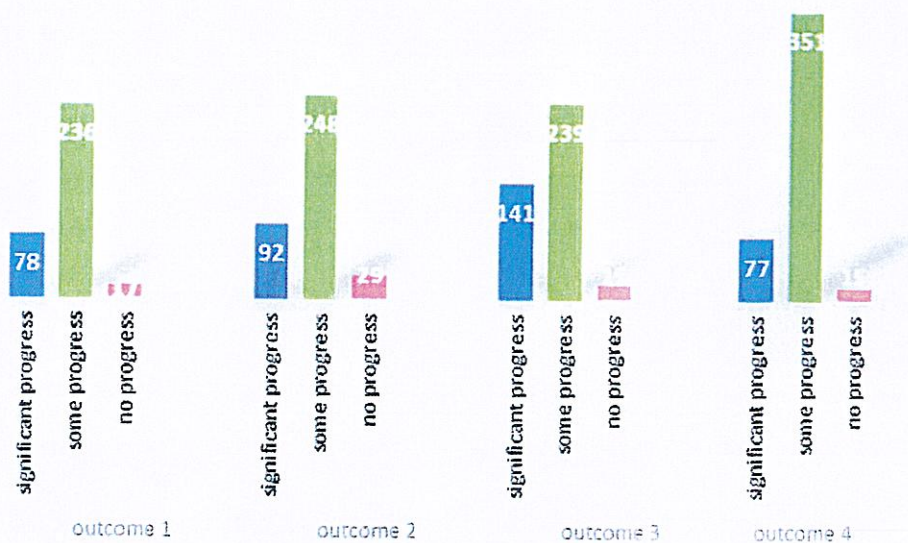
Outcome 1. Lone parents and their children will benefit from an increased ability to cope with family breakdown and/or their family situation

Outcome 2. Lone parents and their children will benefit from improved family relationships

Outcome 3. Lone parents and their children will benefit from increased confidence/self-esteem

Outcome 4. Lone parents and their children will report improved emotional health and wellbeing.

## CLASP Outcomes 2023/4



### Some feedback from volunteers:

CLASP is an amazing place! As a trainee counsellor, I really believe there is nowhere else I'd have been better off at. I've had freedom, I've not felt watched, and I've been trusted.

**It's just great! A really nice place to be.**

Everyone's really friendly and supportive. It feels like a family. I feel relaxed and looked after here.

**I enjoy coming. I really enjoy being with the children. It's a very pleasant group.**

I enjoy working with the children. CLASP staff are very approachable and kind. I like doing something purposeful and continuing to use my skills.

**Everyone's lovely – and everyone who attends. It brings out confidence in me. It gives me purpose. It's time for me, too.**

I can help single parents, which is close to my heart. And I feel supported and included.

**Everyone who works here is lovely. It's a really supportive environment. I love the clients. I like the mix – it helps my development.**



Referrals received in 2023 for **289** families



We interacted in some way with **282** lone/step parents



We provided support to **296** children and young people



# Acknowledgements & Thanks

The Trustees and Staff Team of South Cheshire CLASP wish to thank all the individuals and organisations who have supported us throughout 2023, through donations, funding support, partnership working, free training, volunteering, and advice.

- ❖ All of our wonderful volunteers
- ❖ Allchurches
- ❖ Ann Norburn
- ❖ Anonymous donors
- ❖ Audlem Baptist Church
- ❖ Cheshire Community Foundation
- ❖ Cheshire Connect (Dianne Parish, Hilary McDonald)
- ❖ Cheshire East Council – Children and Families
- ❖ CVS Cheshire East
- ❖ Cheshire & Wirral Partnership Trust
- ❖ Dunelm (staff and customers)
- ❖ Henry Smith Charity
- ❖ J & R Rivers
- ❖ Just Drop-In
- ❖ L Gentil
- ❖ Local Primary & Secondary Schools
- ❖ Nantwich Churchwardens Merged Charity
- ❖ Phoenix Cellular
- ❖ St Bridget's Trust
- ❖ The National Lottery Fund – Reaching Communities
- ❖ The Oakhanger Project
- ❖ Trusthouse Charitable Foundation
- ❖ Visyon
- ❖ Wishing Well Project
- ❖ West St Christian Fellowship
- ❖ Wrenbury PCC



# Appendix: Financial Reports

- Treasurer's Report
- Receipts & Payments Accounts for the period 1<sup>st</sup> January 2022 to 31<sup>st</sup> December 2023 for Charity Number 1188608
- The set of Accounts includes a statement of Assets and Liabilities for the period, an analysis of Restricted Funds, notes to the Accounts and the Independent Examiner's Report

## **Operating for the Public Benefit:**

As can be seen from the Project report we were able to meet our aims and objectives during the year to provide support for lone parents and their children, enabling them to grow and develop.

## Treasurer's Report

I am pleased to report that we have had another good year financially. Our total income for the year ending 31<sup>st</sup> December 2023 was £198,879 and expenditure for the same period was £195,939, giving us a balance of £171,838 at the end of the year of which £27,277 was in restricted funds and £144,561 in unrestricted funds. Comparative figures for 2022 were income of £188,673 and expenditure of £190,442.

Restricted funds are as the name implies for specific projects and cannot be spent on other things.

The Charities Commission recommends that we keep a reserve sufficient to cover at least our next three months' worth of expenditure which is currently approximately £50,000 and this we have been able to do.

During the year we secured additional funding from Cheshire & Wirral Partnership NHS Foundation Trust, Henry Smith and Nantwich Churchwardens. We are very grateful to these and our other funders as well as the individuals, trusts and churches who have provided financial support during the year.

We have started 2024 in a strong financial position but as ever we are dependant upon securing new funding to maintain our service level especially as the grant from Cheshire & Wirral Partnership NHS ceases part way through 2024.

Ruth Grimshaw  
Trustee/Treasurer

# SOUTH CHESHIRE CLASP

Charity Commission Registered Number: 1188608

## RECEIPTS & PAYMENTS ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDING 31st DECEMBER 2023

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total 2023 £	Total 2022 £
<b>RECEIPTS</b>				
Donations & Grants	68,731	127,499	196,230	187,994
Receipts from Operating Activities	-	-	-	-
Tax Recovered on Gift Aid	-	-	-	241
Investment Income	2,214	-	2,214	438
Fundraising Activities	435	-	435	-
Other Income	-	-	-	-
	71,380	127,499	198,879	188,673
<b>PAYMENTS</b>				
<b>Charitable Activities</b>				
Staff Salaries/Sessional Workers/inc Creche	31,555	135,888	167,443	164,765
Volunteers Expenses	289	48	337	228
DBS checks	211	-	211	562
Counselling Supervision	76	1,962	2,038	2,640
Staff Training	192	245	437	899
Travel	504	295	799	398
Parents Courses/Activities	-	-	-	-
Materials/Resources	730	169	899	482
Refreshments/meals	557	-	557	616
Parties/Activities	163	3,092	3,255	1,072
	34,277	141,699	175,976	171,662
<b>Support Costs</b>				
Utilities	3,850	3,850	7,700	7,000
Insurance	-	2,118	2,118	2,858
Consultancy - Building Capabilities	-	-	-	-
Subscriptions	303	-	303	303
Stationery/Telephone/Post	851	344	1,195	1,415
Repairs & Equipment	146	696	842	3,270
Database/IT	4,974	750	5,724	2,570
Advertising/Printing	1,479	-	1,479	1,174
Staff Uniforms	-	-	-	-
Fundraising	-	-	-	-
Staff Uniforms	-	-	-	-
Other	202	-	202	190
Move	400	-	400	-
	12,205	7,758	19,963	18,780
<b>Total Payments</b>	46,482	149,457	195,939	190,442
<b>Net Receipts / (Payments)</b>	24,898	(21,958)	2,940	(1,769)
Transfer between Funds	(3,000)	3,000	-	-
<b>Net Movement in Funds</b>	21,898	(18,958)	2,940	(1,769)
Total funds b/fwd - 1 January	122,663	46,235	168,898	
Total funds c/fwd - 31 December	144,561	27,277	171,838	



# SOUTH CHESHIRE CLASP

Charity Commission Registered Number: 1188608

## STATEMENT OF ASSETS AND LIABILITIES AS AT 31st DECEMBER 2023

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total 2023 £
<b>Cash and Bank Balances</b>			
Unrestricted Funds	144,561		144,561
Restricted Funds			
Cheshire Community Funding		2,093	2,093
CCF Trips/Outings		502	502
Crewe Town Council		1,537	1,537
Henry Smith ( next instalment due early 2024)		68	68
Nantwich Churchwardens NEW AWARD		8,951	8,951
National Lottery		6,010	6,010
National Lottery Children's work		1,007	1,007
Trusthouse Charitable Foundation		7,109	7,109
<b>Total Cash &amp; Bank Balances</b>	<b>144,561</b>	<b>27,277</b>	<b>171,838</b>
<b>Other Monetary Assets</b>	-	-	-
<b>Debtors and Pre-Payments</b>	-	-	-
<b>Investment Assets</b>	-	-	-
<b>Assets Retained for Charity's own use</b>	<b>Fund to which asset belongs</b>	<b>Original Cost £</b>	<b>Current Book Value £</b>
<b>Fixed Assets</b>			
Computers	All	7,640	4,082
Furniture	All	633	252
Total		8,273	4,334
<b>Liabilities at the end of the year</b>		-	-
<b>Total Value of Assets less Liabilities</b>			<b>176,172</b>

Trustee's Signature

Print Name

JOHN COLCLOUGH

Trustee's Signature

Print Name

RUTH GREENAWAY

Date Approved

26/3/24

# **SOUTH CHESHIRE CLASP**

Charity Commission Registered Number: 1188608

## **NOTES TO ACCOUNTS**

### **Reserves Policy**

Our current reserves policy aims to stabilise our unrestricted cash and bank balances at a level sufficient to cover our next three months worth of expenditure. This would suggest that our optimum cash balances would be between £40,000 and £50,000. At the end of 2023 our unrestricted cash balances totalled £144,561

**Debtors and Prepayments are nil.**

### **Depreciation**

Our furniture and office equipment is depreciated over 5 years

### **Trustees Remuneration**

Trustees should not generally receive payment for being a charity trustee and no Trustee has received any remuneration. Janet Wenlock is employed by CLASP and her husband Christopher Wenlock is a trustee. Employment cost was £5503.18 including pension contributions. Christopher does not take part in any discussions regarding salary increases etc.

### **Operating for the Public Benefit**

As can be seen from the Project report, we were able to meet our aims and objectives during the year to provide support for lone parents and their children, enabling them to grow and develop.

## **INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT TO THE TRUSTEES OF SOUTH CHESHIRE CLASP**

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the South Cheshire CLASP (the Trust) for the year ended 31 December 2023.

### **Responsibilities and basis of report**

As the charity trustees of the Trust you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 ('the Act'). I report in respect of my examination of the Trust's accounts carried out under section 145 of the 2011 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.

### **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 Trust as required by section 130 of the Act; or
2. the accounts do not accord with those records.

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: A.P. Buchan - ACMA, CGMA

Member of the Chartered Institute of Management Accountants (CIMA)

28 Cormorant Close

Crewe

Cheshire

CW1 5LN

Date:

25 April 2024