

Registered Charity No. 1190885
Company registration No. CE023602

DEAF UNITY

TRUSTEES' REPORT AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023

DEAF UNITY
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023
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**DEAF UNITY
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023
CHARITY INFORMATION**

Head Office

Office 75652
PO Box 6945
London
W1A 6US

Registered Charity Number

1190885

Company Registration Number

CE023602

Trustees (also directors under company law) who served during the year and up to the date of this report were as follows:

Alexandra Marchesi
Stephen Norton
Paul Ntulila
Bassim Baz
Susan Kukunda

Bankers

HSBC
593 - 599 Fulham Road
Fulham
London
SW6 5UA

Independent Examiner

Griffin Stone Moscrop & Co
Chartered Accountants
21-27 Lamb's Conduit Street
London
WC1N 3GS

DEAF UNITY FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023 REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES

The trustees present their report and the financial statements of the charity for the year ended 31 December 2023.

Reference and administrative information set out on page 1 forms part of this report. The financial statements comply with current statutory requirements, the charity's constitution (adopted on 10 August 2020) and the requirements of the Charities Act 2011.

Objectives and activities

The charity's objectives are the development of capacity and skills among deaf people, enabling them to participate more fully in society; the promotion of equality and diversity; the promotion of the social inclusion among deaf and hard of hearing people; and the provision of wider support e.g. access to translators and interpreters.

Our mission is to empower deaf people and to push for and enable change at three pivotal transition points: moving on from school to further studies/work; entering the workforce; and progression in the workplace.

As a London-based organisation, we rally deaf Londoners around key barriers facing our community. Together we:

- raise awareness of the barriers that exist at points of transition.
- develop new tools and resources to challenge the injustices that reduce deaf people's aspirations and limit their education and career paths.
- create opportunities and networks, across communities and spaces.
- campaign for the change that is needed if deaf people are to thrive within and contribute fully to society.
- support deaf individuals to aspire and succeed.

Our core development and campaigning work happens in London. Online BSL training and digital resources reach a wider deaf audience, nationally.

Deaf Unity's current strategy and programmes span 5 key areas of activity:

1. Working with education providers and deaf young people to ensure dreams are being nurtured and appropriate support is provided for **progression into further education and work**. We believe that leaving school should be a gateway to endless possibilities.
2. Pushing for deaf people to enjoy the same rights and opportunities as others when **entering the workforce**. We provide resources, training and support; and share best practice models.
3. Supporting **progression within the workplace**, through training and networking opportunities. We work to challenge and overcome the barriers that deaf people face.
4. Working across London's deaf community to foster a richer, connected life: **regular meet-ups and shared activities** nurture a sense of self and community, build relationships, share learning, information and ideas. This community makes an important contribution to our work, helping to highlight areas of shared concern and need and providing a sounding board for new projects.
5. Promoting **deaf role models who provide inspiration** and illuminate the many paths open to deaf people, whether around education, career paths or purely embracing deafhood and thriving.

Public Benefit

The trustees have referred to the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit in reviewing the charity's aims and objectives and in planning its future actions.

Achievements and performance

We are very proud of the work that we have achieved over the last year to eighteen months. We have really taken the time to sit and listen to our community and understand the challenges that they face, both in relation to our core areas of work and also the additional barriers, frustrations and disenfranchisement that is felt across all parts of life. Being deaf and disabled at the moment is tougher than ever, with the cost-of-living crisis, changes to the support provided through Personal Independence Payments (PIP) and Access to Work; the deaf community is feeling less and less seen and heard by government and decision-makers.

We responded to this by putting a stronger focus on community projects, and the year ending December 2023 saw three of our funded projects nearing their end. These projects have allowed us to build and nurture relationships with individuals and groups across London, enabling an open and instructive dialogue around needs, interest and crisis.

To illustrate:

We have been able to launch a ground-breaking project, funded by the Greater London Authority, providing free sign language training to two different groups: parents of deaf children and recent immigrants to the UK. Training leads to a recognised Signature qualification. There remains a pressing need, as campaigns to secure free training for families of deaf children have had little success to date. Meanwhile a number of cuts to support programmes and increasing racial tension can create huge barriers for people coming to the UK who not only do not speak English but also do not know British sign language. Deaf Unity has successfully provided Level 1 BSL training, free of charge, to both groups – not only providing critical support and training in the immediate-term, but also highlighting the value of and need for such provision. Cost should not prevent a family from being able to communicate with their child; nor should someone be excluded from the wider community owing to being deaf and an immigrant. The training has created support networks that will extend far beyond the life of the project and we are extremely proud of being able to deliver this.

Another project we are very proud of is our *Deaf Lives* community consultation project, funded by People's Health Trust. Focusing on the deaf community in west London, we have created a dynamic space where deaf individuals scattered throughout the area can come together to provide and receive support from their peers, as well as receiving information and training in a safe space, in their natural language. This is a wonderful and important opportunity: it is proven that deaf people learn better in group settings, where sign language is used and there is the opportunity for discussion and to ask questions. Topics have all been chosen by members of the group as have the frequency, venues, and timings of the meetings. This is a truly community-owned project that has seen presentations from leading deaf organisations speaking directly to their stakeholders and informing them of vital services and support. Thus, this work has not only provided a space for deaf individuals to come together fortnightly – recreating the now lost *Deaf Club* spaces – it has also supported and amplified the work of other deaf organisations supporting deaf people in London. In addition, it has bolstered the efforts of pre-existing groups that were struggling to get a foothold and regular support from the community.

Lastly, our *Deaf Eyes* creative project, funded by the National Lottery Community Fund, has seen sensitive and reflective activity, bringing deaf people from different parts of London to contribute to an art and reminiscence project using artistic techniques to record memories and reflections. This has been a wonderful opportunity for deaf people to come together and give time and space to feelings of being left behind by the changes experienced in the last few years in technology, society, work, and life. It has been an enriching experience for those involved and the work will be showcased for a broad audience when it comes to a close, celebrating the valued and treasured experience of our deaf elders in the community.

We are also delighted that we have taken over the running of *Healthy Deaf Minds London*, which was founded in 2000, as this links directly to work in our community. We hope we can continue this for many years.

In 2023 these and other community-based activities reached 130+ regular participants. We feel grateful that we move into 2024 with a strong connection to the deaf community of London that is based on recognition and trust.

In addition, in 2023 we provided regular online BSL training for 115 students in groups based in London and Glasgow. Groups have a regional focus to reflect regional variances in BSL. This work directly supports Deaf Unity's mission: as a unique culture in its own right, BSL creates bridges with the hearing and empowers deaf people, supporting equal access to education, healthcare, and wider services. Training provision represents a valuable income stream for our small charity.

Plans for future periods

Deaf Unity has taken the learning from these last 18 months and distilled it into a new and ambitious strategy that leverages the insights gained from conversations and activities with the deaf community. The new strategy targets with a laser focus the barriers and points of inertia that are felt by deaf people when transitioning at the three main points identified earlier: moving on from school to further studies/work; entering the workforce; and progression in the workplace.

Our process is as follows: the initiatives suggested by our stakeholders will be the starting point for meaningful initiatives, resources and relationships to drive the changes that are needed. New approaches will be designed and tested with our community and with partners in London – schools, colleges, universities, employers, voluntary groups and wider stakeholders - so as to develop and evidence robust interventions that make a real difference in the lives of deaf people. New tools, resources, advocacy, and awareness will challenge the injustices that deny deaf people the same opportunities as their hearing peers.

Successful, proven provision will then be disseminated through digital media and partners to amplify their impact across the UK. This approach is built on recognising the rich and vibrant deaf community in London that is incredibly representative of a range of people's journeys, needs and aspirations.

Over the coming year Deaf Unity will focus on the following:

- developing a series of resources and approaches that provide inspiring, impactful careers advice for secondary age deaf students. Research by the National Deaf Children Society showed that only 12% of parents of deaf young people aged 15-18 felt that their child had received tailored careers advice that focused on their needs; 90% of parents felt that their child's career options would be limited in the future.
- pushing for increased information provision and access to support for deaf FE/HE students, at a time when they face exceptional pressures in completing their studies. A recent poll showed that a chronic shortage of vital support at university (waits of up to a year for e.g. interpreters, specialist tutors and note-taking in lectures) was driving deaf students to consider abandoning their degrees.
- exploring and identifying with a small group of jobseekers the specific interventions that have greatest impact in enabling successful transitions into work and career progression.

We will continue to support our deaf community in London through regular meet-ups, information sharing and consultation: their lived experience, perspectives and needs will continue to drive our work.

Financial review

The financial transactions of the charity during the year and the position at the end of the year are set out in the attached accounts.

Receipts for the year ending 31st December 2023 was £115,316, compared to £89,365 in 2022. This increase was the result of increased demand for our BSL training courses and for BSL interpreting. Our interpreting service started in 2022, with c. £6,000 generated in this first year and included that year under course fees. For 2023, interpreting income is shown separately and totalled £47,710.

Receipts from donations and grants reduced relative to last year: this is the result of the stronger focus we put on community projects in the immediate post-Covid period, with most of the grant income received in 2022 relating to community activities. In 2023 the charity reviewed its strategic direction, to focus more tightly on the three transition points noted above. Fundraising activity is now realigned to prioritise these more strategic interventions.

We are grateful to the many generous funders who have enabled our activity on the ground, right across London, bringing deaf people together to share social time, ideas, concerns and more. They include The Churchill Fellowship, London Catalyst, The People's Health Trust, GLA (Building Stronger Communities) and the National Lottery Communities Fund.

Reserves policy and position

The Trustees aim to hold sufficient levels of reserves to enable normal operating activities to continue over a period of at least 6 months should a shortfall in income occur. The corresponding target figure is £10,850. At the close of December 2023, unrestricted funds stood at £40,751. These unrestricted funds include a designated fund of £27,430 which is intended to support the development of new initiatives and projects in response to identified needs among our community, until such a point as we are able to raise the necessary funds for delivery.

Structure, Governance and Management

Deaf Unity is a Charitable Incorporated Organisation. The CIO's governing document stipulates that an executive committee of not less than three members will meet twice a year, with additional meetings when called.

Members (currently five) bring direct, lived experience of deafness, they are culturally diverse and representative of the ethnicities and backgrounds of the communities we serve. Day-to-day activities of the charity are led by CEO Abdi Gas, a deaf professional recognised for his achievements as a change-maker in education, employment and empowerment for deaf people.

We are keen to mature and deepen the expertise on the Board of Trustees, whilst retaining our strong representation of the community, through the recruitment of someone with knowledge in HR. We will advertise the role in the coming year in professional and third sector spaces, as well as within the deaf community through the relationships that we have built.

Trustees' responsibilities statement

The trustees are responsible for preparing the Trustees' Annual 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 & 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 period.

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 2019 (FRS 102);
- make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charity will continue in operation.

The trustees are responsible for keeping proper accounting records that disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charity and enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Charities Act 2011, the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 and the provisions of the trust deed. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charity and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

Independent examiner

The firm appointed to carry out the independent examination was Griffin Stone Moscrop & Co.

Signed on behalf of the trustees



Stephen Norton, Trustee

Date: 9 May 2024

**DEAF UNITY
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023**

Independent Examiner's Report to the Trustees of Deaf Unity

I report to the charity trustees on my examination of the accounts of the charity for the year ended 31 December 2023 which are set out on pages 7 to 12.

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').

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.

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.

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.



Reema Mistry ACA
Griffin Stone Moscrop & Co
21-27 Lambs Conduit Street
London
WC1N 3GS

Date: 9 May 2024

**DEAF UNITY
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023
RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS ACCOUNT**

	2023			2022
Funds	Unrestricted £	Restricted £	Total £	Total £
Receipts				
Course Fees	46,679	-	46,679	40,755
Donations & Grants (Note 2)	50	19,302	19,352	44,974
Adverts	1,575	-	1,575	3,636
Interpreting Fees	47,710	-	47,710	-
Total receipts	96,014	19,302	115,316	89,365
Payments				
Freelance costs (Tutors, Project manager, Consultants, Writers, Interpreter)	66,220	21,522	87,742	54,238
Consultancy & professional fees	1,600	-	1,600	1,346
Exam board certification	7,291	-	7,291	6,243
Office expenses	1,849	3,299	5,148	3,343
Accounting	2,202	-	2,202	1,036
Bank Fees	68	-	68	77
Total payments	79,230	24,821	104,051	66,282
Asset purchases				
Office equipment	163	-	163	-
	163	-	163	-
Net receipts / (payments) in the year	16,621	(5,519)	11,102	23,082
Transfer between funds	50	(50)	-	-
Cash funds brought forward	24,080	35,960	60,040	36,958
Cash funds this period end	40,751	30,391	71,142	60,040

**DEAF UNITY
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023
STATEMENT OF ASSETS AND LIABILITIES**

	2023 £	2022 £
Monetary Assets		
Cash funds		
Cash at bank	71,133	60,040
	<u>71,133</u>	<u>60,040</u>
Assets retained for the charity’s own use		
Fixed assets		
Computer & Office equipment (Note 3)	301	359
	<u>301</u>	<u>359</u>
Non Monetary Assets		
Assets		
Debtors (Note 4)	13,423	15,325
	<u>13,423</u>	<u>15,325</u>
Liabilities		
Creditor (Note 5)	680	2,713
Accruals (Note 6)	1,920	1,740
	<u>2,600</u>	<u>4,453</u>

Approved by the trustees and signed on its behalf by:

Stephen Norton

Stephen Norton, Trustee

Date: 9 May 2024

DEAF UNITY
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023
NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS

1 Accounting policies

1.1 Basis of accounting

The Financial Statements have been prepared on a receipts and payments basis in accordance with Section 133 of the Charities Act 2011.

1.2 Incoming resources

Income is recognised when received by or on behalf of the charity.

1.3 Grants and donations

Grants and donations are only included in the Receipts and Payments account when the charity has received them.

1.4 Resources used

Expenditure is recognised in the period in which it is incurred and allocated to the appropriate category. Expenditure includes irrecoverable VAT.

1.5 Debtors

Debtors are recognised at the settlement amount.

1.6 Liabilities and provisions

Liabilities are recognised when there is an obligation at the balance sheet date as a result of a past event, it is probable that a transfer of economic benefit will be required in settlement, and the amount of the settlement can be estimated reliably.

Provisions are measured at the best estimate of the amounts required to settle the obligation.

1.7 Funds

General funds are unrestricted funds which 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.

Designated funds comprise unrestricted funds that have been set aside by the Trustees for particular purposes. The aim and use of each designated fund is set out in the notes to the financial statements.

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 costs of raising and administering such funds are charged against the specific fund. The aim and use of each restricted fund is set out in the notes to the financial statements.

DEAF UNITY
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023
NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS

2 Statement of funds

	Balance at 1 January 2023	Income	Expenditure	Transfer in/(out) between funds	Balance at 31 December 2023
	£	£	£	£	£
Unrestricted funds					
Designated funds (8)					
Projects	16,470	-	-	50	16,520
Staffing	8,910	-	-	-	8,910
Operations	2,000	-	-	-	2,000
General Funds (1)	(3,300)	96,014	(79,393)	-	13,322
	24,080	96,014	(79,393)	50	40,752
Restricted funds					
International Leadership Project funding (1, 2)	4,800	-	-	-	4,800
The Deaf Futures (3)	493	-	-	-	493
The Churchill Fellowship (4)	3,305	-	(4,200)	6,695	5,800
London Catalyst (5)	3,000	-	-	-	3,000
The People's Health Trust (6)	14,822	6,738	(12,791)	(6,745)	2,024
National Lottery Communities fund (7)	9,540	-	(4,382)	-	5,158
Healthy Deaf Minds (9)	-	3,569	(438)	-	3,131
GLA (Building Strong Communities) (10)	-	8,995	(3,010)	-	5,985
	35,960	19,302	(24,821)	(50)	30,391
Total of funds	60,040	115,316	(104,214)	-	71,142

The Transfer between the two restricted funds is due to correction of previous misallocation.

	Balance at 1 January 2022	Income	Expenditure	Transfer in/(out) between funds	Balance at 31 December 2022
	£	£	£	£	£
Unrestricted funds					
Designated funds (8)					
Projects	16,470	-	-	-	16,470
Staffing	8,910	-	-	-	8,910
Operations	2,000	-	-	-	2,000
General Funds (1)	3,485	45,003	(51,787)	-	(3,300)
	30,865	45,003	(51,787)	-	24,080
Restricted funds					
International Leadership Project funding (1, 2)	4,800	-	-	-	4,800
The Deaf Futures (3)	493	-	-	-	493
The Churchill Fellowship (4)	800	17,000	(14,495)	-	3,305
London Catalyst (5)	-	3,000	-	-	3,000
The People's Health Trust (6)	-	14,822	-	-	14,822
National Lottery Communities fund (7)	-	9,540	-	-	9,540
	6,093	44,362	(14,495)	-	35,960
Total of funds	36,958	89,365	(66,282)	-	60,040

**DEAF UNITY
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023
NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS**

2 Statement of funds (continued)

(1)

Deaf Unity registered as a charitable incorporated organisation (CIO) on 17 August 2020. All funds accumulated up until that date were donated to the CIO on incorporation (£16,610 unrestricted funds and £4,800 restricted funds).

(2)

In 2013, the International Leadership Project Funding community in Shepherd's Bush fundraised £4,800. This is a reserved pot of money to be spent only on project(s) in Somalia for the benefit of deaf people.

(3)

The Deaf Futures fund represents funding received for the purpose of creating a digital series and paying speakers and access requirements.

(4)

The Churchill Fellowship fund represents funding received for an employability project.

(5)

A grant from the London Catalyst for a programme of Deaf Awareness health workshops and training resources.

(6)

The People's Health Trust, Deaf Lives - Deaf people are systematically, culturally and linguistically isolated and disenfranchised. This project seeks to create a responsive series of workshops and information sharing sessions, led by the attendees themselves from the boroughs of Hounslow and Ealing.

(7)

National Lottery Community Fund: Deaf Eyes - This enrichment project is led by an acclaimed deaf artist. He will be bringing together deaf people from across London to reflect on the experience of being deaf and express their lived-experience through artwork relating to handshapes and wireframe forms. The art work shall be exhibited towards the end of 2024.

(8)

Trustees authorised unrestricted funds to be used to cover expenditure for the following areas:

Projects: funds set aside to cover projects relating to consultations, online courses, dictionary.

Staffing: funds set aside to cover various staffing roles including Administrator, project manager, CEO, writers, development officer and interpreters.

Operations: funds set aside to cover costs of training, as required.

(9)

This fund represents the accumulation of entrance fees and donations since Healthy Deaf Minds was founded over 20 years ago. It has been donated on the understanding that the money will be used to facilitate periodic public meetings for BSL signing deaf people to learn about, and discuss, topics pertaining to well-being in its broadest sense. If, after a year from today's date, that there is insufficient interest from the deaf community, the remaining donated money can be used for whatever purposes that closely matches HDM's vision.

(10)

Funded by the Greater London Authority (GLA), this provides our high-quality sign language teaching free-of-charge to two groups of people who most need it: families of deaf children and recent immigrants to the UK. This funding has allowed 10 immigrants and 15 parents of deaf children to access free BSL Level 1 courses that will result in a recognised Signature qualification. Alongside the language learning, communities are being built that will continue to support and nurture participants for the rest of their lives.

DEAF UNITY
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023
NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS

3 Fixed assets - Computer & Office Equipment **£**

<u>Cost</u>	<u>Total</u>
Balance brought forward at 1 January 2022	721
Additions	163
Disposals	-
Balance carried forward at 31 December 2023	884

Depreciation

Balance brought forward at 1 January 2022	362
Charge for the year	221
Disposals	-
Balance carried forward at 31 December 2023	583

Net Book Value

As at 31 December 2023	301
As at 31 December 2022	359

4 Debtors	2023	2022
	£	£
Course fees	13,423	15,325
	13,423	15,325

5 Creditors	2023	2022
	£	£
Trade creditors	680	2,713
	680	2,713

6 Accruals	2023	2022
	£	£
Accountancy fee	1,920	1,740
	1,920	1,740

7 Trustees

During the period, no trustees received any remuneration or other benefits.

During the period, no expenses were reimbursed or paid directly to trustees.