



Trustees' Report and Accounts unaudited For the year ended 31 December 2023

Little Stars Baby Bank
Registered Charity No. 1191130
www.littlestarscharity.org



Little Stars Baby Bank
Financial statements for the period ended 31 December 2023
Reference and administration details

Charity registration number	1191130
Registered office address	Little Stars C/O Aico Maesbury Road Oswestry SY10 8NR
Accountants	TCA (Shrewsbury) LLP Third Floor 21 St Mary's Street Shrewsbury Shropshire SY1 1ED
Bankers	CAF Bank 25 Kings Hill Avenue West Malling Kent ME19 4JQ
Trustees	A Bowler (appointed 30 January 2023, resigned 11 July 2023) H Scurr (resigned 24 July 2023) C Williams (appointed 24 January 2023) S Bates (appointed 5 September 2023) D Kortas A Garmston



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Trustees' Annual Report

The Trustees of Little Stars Baby Bank are pleased to present their report and the financial statements for the period ended 31 December 2023.

OUR VISION *and* MISSION

Little Star's vision is to ensure babies and children across Shropshire have access to the basic essentials that they need to feel safe and secure. Our mission is to alleviate the emotional stress and financial pressure of families by providing quality essentials for babies, children and pregnant women. We believe that every family, no matter how complex their situation, should be shown kindness and support at the time they need it most.



Statement of Public Benefit

Our service benefits children of families who, for various reasons, do not have access to the basic essentials that every child deserves. We deliver bundles to various referral partners around the county of Shropshire. In delivering our services we further benefit the public, as follows:

Families: Providing essentials has a significant impact on the family, the service helps keeps babies and young children clothed, clean and safe. This not only helps to remove financial pressure, but also alleviate the emotional stress by providing the basic provisions.

Wider community: The local community are able to donate their pre-loved baby items which not only helps the family who are receiving those items but it also reduces landfill waste and helps the environmental impact.

Referral partners: Professionals now have a service within the county they can use after a visit to a family they know need the basics.



Due to the kind support of fundraisers and donors, Little Stars is able to contribute and supplement the bundles with brand new equipment needed that cannot be donated as pre-loved. Voluntary income enables Little Stars to continue the work and develop the service. In defining our charitable programme, we have regard for the Charity Commissions general guidance on public benefit.

Structure, governance and management

The charity is a Charitable Incorporation Organisation ("CIO") which was registered with the Charity Commission on 3rd September 2020 and is governed by a constitution as a Foundation CIO.

Methods used to recruit and appoint new trustees

New Trustees are recruited openly in line with Little Stars Baby Bank's Trustee Recruitment Policy. Trustees receive a full induction to the charity and a set of key documents, to enable them to gain the required information to fulfil their role.

An annual skills analysis ensures the Trustees offer a suitable range of knowledge and skills to support the charity. Where a skills gap is identified we aim to seek Trustees to bridge this gap.

The Board will aim to adhere to the principles of the Charity Governance Code for Small Charities. This is an ongoing process, and we are working towards fulfilling all aspects of the code.



Objectives

The general aims and objectives of Little Stars are to support families living and working within Shropshire by:

- Working alongside various organisations to provide relief of financial hardship for families who cannot afford the essential baby/children items needed.
- Provide quality items which not only helps the family receiving them but also the environment impact.
- Giving help to pregnant women with essentials needed after giving birth.

Activities



Our Bundles

We provide items free of charge which include, although not limited to; clothing, prams and cots (with a new mattress included). As babies grow and explore, we are able to provide the right safety equipment in the home such as stairgates. We are very proud to offer a hospital bag pack and maternity clothing, ensuring pregnant ladies are looked after with all the basics they need too.

Our Partnerships

Little Stars are able to offer support to those fleeing domestic abuse and are in need of items urgently for their young child; those who may be on the brink of homelessness; or families where there has been a job loss and the household income has been impacted.

Little Stars are continuing to build on their relationships whilst developing new ones. This ensures Little Stars reaches as many families as we can.



Achievements and Performance

With the cost of living crisis, our demand has increased again by double this year. Our referrals have gone from 24 on average a month in 2022, to now being on average 10 referrals a week. We are now seeing a rise in demand from working families.

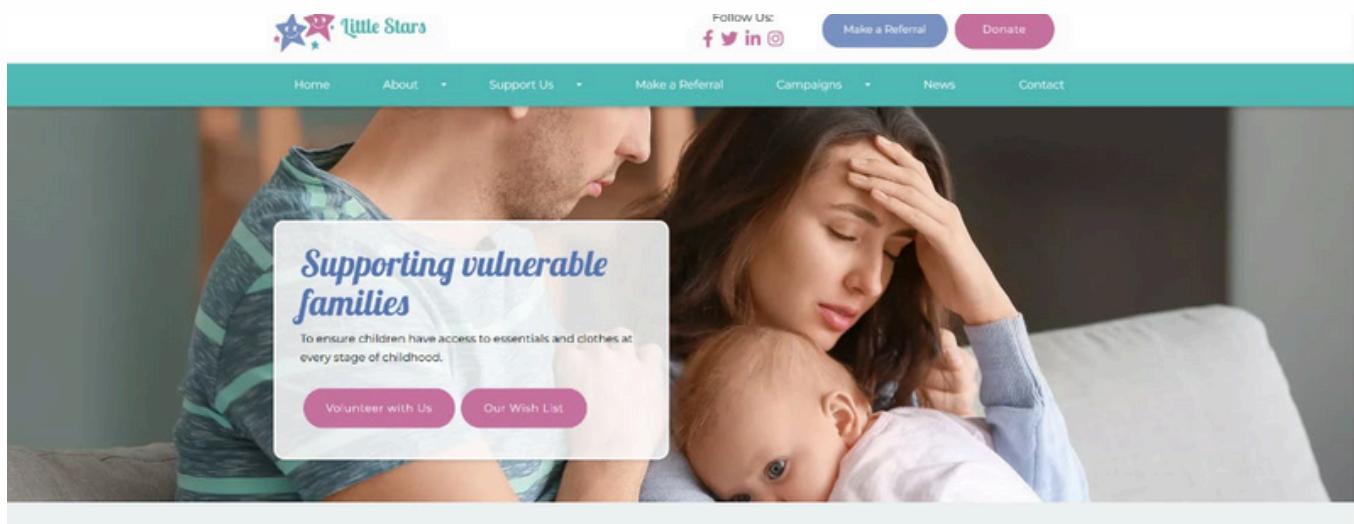
We have successfully introduced Community Hubs in Shrewsbury, Market Drayton, and Oswestry. Our work within the hubs means families who attend sessions for support with their children have access to essentials they need, without an official referral.

We provide nappies, wipes and toiletries for both children and adults. This has been extremely popular and the professional partners we work with log how many we support.

We have also created a monthly drop-in for families to attend at a medical centre in Shrewsbury, this has enabled us to be in the community our drop in's have been for Winter coats, school uniforms and the essentials.



This year we used money that Aico donated to us in 2022 to produce a new website, this has seen increased traffic, made it easier for referral partners to find us and get in touch to make a referral. It has also increased our visibility and enabled us to update content quickly, which has meant supporters, as well as those looking for support can find it easily and have all the information they need about our service.



Aico kindly hosted a Family Fundraising Festival for ourselves and The Movement Centre in May, the day was fun-filled and raised £5000 for each charity.



Trustee Alex and CEO Leanne visited Stripey Stork in Surrey to meet with founder Nicola and the team to learn more about their baby bank, how they have been successful, what has worked and what hasn't worked so well. It was an informative visit that they were able to take a lot away from the day to bring back for Little Stars.



Shropshire's Chamber of Commerce selected Little Stars as one of their Charity of the Year and saw our founder and CEO Leanne speak to the 700 in attendance at the awards about the charity. The chamber also raised funds for Little Stars on the evening which raised over £2000.



Leanne, Trustee Sadie and Hannah our project co-ordinator visited Kids Bank in Chester, again as with the Stripey visit to meet with other baby banks, to understand and learn from them. This visit was really informative and took away ideas that would work for Little Stars.

October saw us host two fundraisers which were huge successes and sellouts. For our Musical Bingo evening we had over 50 people in attendance and raised a fantastic £2000!



The end of the month saw the Creative Fundraiser evening, supported by Jesmonite, who kindly gave up their time to host a creative workshop using their product for each person to create their own unique coaster. With it being another sellout and over 20 people in attendance the evening raised £300.



Each event has had fantastic feedback, with one person saying:

'The musical bingo has been the talk of the office and how great the evening was, I could not miss your next fundraiser and this has been brilliant.'

We are already looking to host more of these fundraiser's in 2024.

This year our CEO took on a part-time role and became a Community Lead for the Baby Bank Alliance. The role saw Leanne engaging with other baby banks from across the UK, and championing the newly formed Alliance. The Alliance's purpose is to form a network of support to baby banks, so that they can come together as one voice and boost the impact of the work they are doing to support families.

The Alliance wants to ensure that all baby banks can access funding, goods, volunteers and practical support they need to be the most effective they can be.

Leanne, since being in the role has had the incredible opportunity to meet with Her Royal Highness The Princess of Wales alongside four other baby bank founders from across the UK. This discussion allowed the founders to highlight the growing need for their services and the challenges they face.



Leanne also attended the Christmas Carol Service at Westminster Abbey along with 9 other baby banks from across the UK and this years' service was a moment to thank all those who work to support babies, young children and families in the communities across the UK.



Christmas 2023

The Darwin and Samuel Wood Estate Agents who had donation drop off points for us. This created increased awareness for the charity and our campaign, with lots of gifts donated.



Aico volunteers were ready again in their Christmas jumpers to help us wrap all the gifts to go out to the children.



More Christmas support came our way with the companies Aico and Start Tech raising funds for us on Christmas Jumper day which came to £440.00. This gave us the funds to be able to purchase gifts that we had a shortfall on for our Santa's Little Stars campaign.



Theatre Severn also supported us as we were able to be at the end of three pantomime shows to collect money for Little Stars, the public were extremely generous and we raised £924.93 across the three shows.

Our Impact

We work closely with our referral partners to gather feedback and case studies so that we can understand the impact our work. It also helps us to identify areas where we can make changes and improve the services we offer.

Case Studies

We recently supported a young couple who were both 18 years old. The mum was in foster care as a young child and has moderate learning difficulties which makes it difficult for her to trust professionals. Neither family has given support to the couple. Our referral partner reached out to us when their son was 6 months old, the family live in temporary accommodation and our referral partner found there were very few age appropriate toys to help with his development, as well as outgrowing his clothes and not having a winter coat/snowsuit. The mum also disclosed he was not sleeping well and they were not able to afford a sleeping bag for him.

When we were contacted, we were able to support with all of the items needed for the little one and after the referral partner delivered them and returned a week later, she found that the little one was playing with the toys provided and the parents said he is sleeping much better which they directly linked to the use of the new sleeping bag. They have also been able to go out as the little one has the right clothing and winter coat to stay warm.

Testimonials

"I have recently been able to provide ongoing support to a young single 18yr old mother on my caseload. She was initially in temporary accommodation and with no family support. The baby bank provided her with a hospital bag to prepare for going into hospital to give birth as well as some nappies, a changing mat and a baby bath. Once her baby was born, my client gained her own tenancy but had no funds other than her basic benefits, again the baby bank stepped in by providing a floorplay mat and most recently, now that the baby has started weaning, my client was able to reach out and ask for a high chair which was immediately forthcoming from the baby bank. All these items have helped relieve financial stress for my client but also helped her to feel that she is providing adequately for her child and maximising his development. Access to these items from the baby bank also helps us as FNP nurses to support our young families to achieve better outcomes for themselves and their children." **FNP Nurse**

"I have asked for assistance from the Little Stars Baby Bank on numerous occasions, in order to aid and support families in Shropshire who have limited resources and are in desperate need of support, and every time the team have come through, providing hospital bags, clothing, hygiene items, cots and even a double pram! Without the service the most at risk members of our community would be left without the most basic items needed to ensure their children are clothed and have appropriate items to ensure they are safe and can thrive." **Social Worker**

"Little Stars Baby Bank are amazing! The service and support they offer to families in need of help and at crisis point is excellent. Always receive a fast reply and the support packages are always dropped off in a timely manner. Without Little stars a number of vulnerable families would not have been able to progress and make changes in their lives." **Social Worker**

"Little Stars have been working together with our Early Help Family Drop in here in Oswestry. They have allowed families to access basic essentials for parents, children and babies. They have also been able to our families get essential equipment that they would have either gone without or just ended up in debt for, the cost of living crisis has been very difficult for so many and Little Stars had made a BIG difference to many." **Early Help Family Worker**

Acknowledgments

Little Stars have been delighted with the support of so many wonderful families, individuals, and organisations.

Thank you to the families and individuals who donate their pre-loved baby and children clothing for Little Stars to pass onto other families in need of a helping hand.

Thank you to all the individuals who have donated money to Little Stars and to Morrisons customers who buy the pick-up packs that keep us stocked up with nappies, wipes and toiletries.

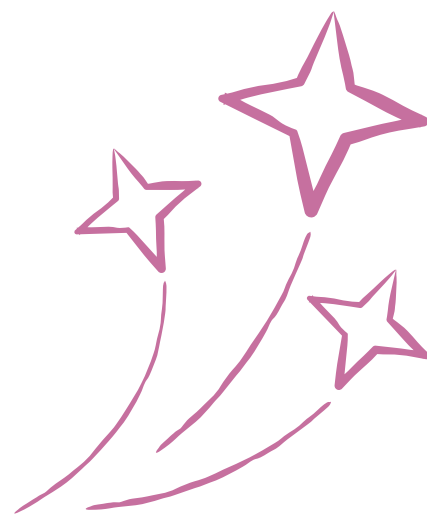
Thank you to The Darwin Centre for their support during our Santa's Little Stars Campaign 2023, to Samuel Wood who also had a donation drop off point. Also to Theatre Severn for having us at three of the pantomime shows, collecting afterwards for Little Stars.

Thank you to all of our funders who have kindly given us money. We could not continue our service and support the many families we do without your funding for our service. We have been incredibly lucky with our financial support from Aico, Brian Murtagh Trust, Millichope Foundation, Woodward Trust, Shropshire Masonic Trust, St James Place, The Wilmcote Charitrust, 8 Financial Services, Asda, National Lottery Cost of Living Fund.

Future plans

As we look toward the new financial year our focus will be:

- Recruitment of a Marketing and Fundraiser Co-Ordinator on a 12 month part time contract. Their objective will be to build on the success of our two fundraisers hosted this year.
- Develop our corporate and public support. They will also bring their marketing experience to be able to engage more with our audiences, design marketing materials for our fundraisers and shop.
- Host our first ball fundraiser. This will be a Halloween ball in October, we have already secured a headline sponsor for the ball and the CEO will work closely with the marketing and fundraiser co-ordinator to ensure it's success.
- Continue to deliver our community hub work, expand the service over the year to have more hubs but also community champions in place from the local areas to help deliver the hubs. Continuing to work alongside our referral partners when delivering the hubs so we can ensure we can support the families who need it most.
- Opening our first shop with the support from The Darwin Centre Shrewsbury. We will be selling our excess donations along with maternity wear and school uniforms. The money from the shop will go directly back into Little Stars to continue building the charity but most importantly delivering the service and reaching more families in need of support.
- Continue working with the Baby Bank Alliance to amplify baby banks voices and to raise our profiles on a national level.
- Continue to build our volunteer base, with opportunities for stock sorters and shop helpers.



Financial review and reserves policy

The Charity has had another successful year, generating income of £74,740. Expenditure for the year was £67,262, leaving £68,893 in monetary funds carried forward. £33,991 of this is restricted funding, as set out on page 18.

The trustees agree to hold free reserves in the region of **£16,000**. This is to ensure that there is sufficient funds to cover the running costs of the charity for 3 months. Trustees have taken possible risks into account and considered the loss of gifted storage space.

The Trustees agree to continuously monitor this as the charity grows and develops to ensure the amount held in reserves mirrors the level of activity.

The free reserves of the Charity at the year end, calculated as unrestricted funds less fixed assets, were £34,902. (2022: £18,842).



Basis of Accounting

The accounts of the charity have been prepared on a receipts and payments basis in accordance with charity regulations.

This report was approved by the Board and signed on its behalf by Alex Garmston

Signed by

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Alex Garmston', written over a horizontal line.

Alex Garmston – Chair Trustee
27 June 2024

Little Stars Baby Bank
Independent Examiners Report for the year ended 31 December 2023

I report to the charity trustees on my examination of the accounts of the charity for the period ended 31 December 2023 which are set out on pages 17 to 18.

This report is made solely to the charity's trustees, as a body, in accordance with section 145 of the Charities Act 2011 and regulations made under section 154 of that Act. My work has been undertaken so that I might state to the charity's trustees those matters I am required to state to them in an Independent Examiners Report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, I do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the charity and the charity's trustees as a body, for my work or for this report.

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.

C Moelwyn Williams

Mrs C L Moelwyn-Williams BSc FCA

TCA (Shrewsbury) LLP
Third Floor
21 St Mary's Street
Shrewsbury
Shropshire
SY1 1ED

Date - *2nd July 2024*

Little Stars Baby Bank
Financial statements for the year ended 31 December 2023

Receipts and payments account				
	Unrestricted	Restricted	Total	Total
	2023	2023	2023	2022
Receipts	£	£	£	£
Grants	3,000	40,657	43,657	37,952
Donations and fundraising income	28,350	1,189	29,539	41,260
Sale of Van	1,481	-	1,481	-
Bank Interest received	63	-	63	15
Total Receipts	32,894	41,846	74,740	79,227
Payments				
<i>Charitable activities</i>				
Purchases for service users	90	2,902	2,992	5,510
<i>Costs of fundraising</i>				
Fundraising events and promotion	1,794	-	1,794	198
<i>Support costs</i>				
Wages and Salaries	-	40,721	40,721	14,583
Employers National Insurance	104	790	894	1,570
Employers Pension Contributions	565	319	884	192
Accountancy	618	-	618	600
Consultancy	-	4,965	4,965	10,320
Insurance	460	-	460	250
Marketing	1,206	-	1,206	1,856
Office admin (inc'g telephone)	61	-	61	62
Bank charges	78	-	78	81
Rent and storage costs	1,838	-	1,838	3,631
IT costs & Website	8,866	-	8,866	505
Vehicle costs	430	683	1,113	2,013
Training	480	48	528	-
Sundry	244	-	244	215
Total Payments	16,834	50,428	67,262	41,586
Net (Payments)/Receipts - unrestricted funds	16,060	- 8,582	7,478	37,641
Cash and bank balances brought forward	18,842	42,573	61,415	23,774
Cash and bank balances carried forward	34,902	33,991	68,893	61,415

Little Stars Baby Bank
Financial statements for the year ended 31 December 2023
Statement of funds

	2023 £	2022 £
Monetary assets		
Current account	68,818	61,339
Paypal account	75	76
	<u>68,893</u>	<u>61,415</u>
 Other assets		
Van	-	5,995
	<u>68,893</u>	<u>67,410</u>
 Funds		
Unrestricted Funds	34,902	24,837
Restricted Funds		
Project Co-ordinator fund	-	4,965
Other restricted fund - Baby Bank Service	5,043	5,496
Salaries Fund	6,517	32,112
The National Lottery Community Fund	18,431	-
Community Hubs	4,000	-
	<u>33,991</u>	<u>42,573</u>
	<u>68,893</u>	<u>67,410</u>

The Project Co-ordinator fund relates to restricted funding received for the appointment of a Project Co-ordinator, funded by The National Lottery and The Charles Lewis Foundation.

The Other restricted fund relates to restricted funding provided by The Postcode Lottery, Tesco and The National Lottery to be used for the baby bank service.

The Salaries Fund relates to restricted funding provided by The Postcode Lottery, Tesco and The National Lottery to be used for wages and salaries.

The National Lottery Community Fund relates to project work until the end of March 2024. This includes salaries, overheads and volunteer costs.

Community Hubs Fund -This fund relates to our community hubs project, where we are out in communities, helping families with the essential nappies, wipes and toiletries for children and adults, which they can access whilst they are having support from family practitioners and the Early Help teams.