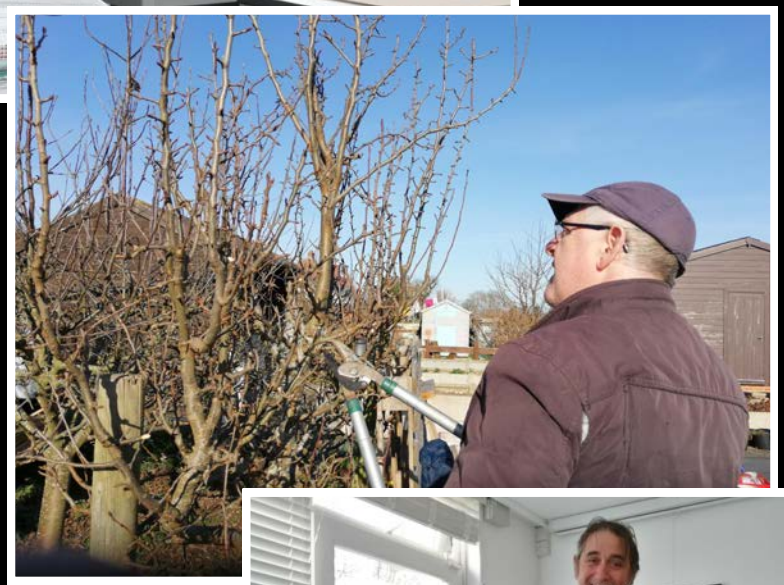
take off







Annual Report
2022-2023

An Introduction

Take Off provides ready-made social networks and also provide other peer support services as needed. When a need is identified, we will endeavour to design, develop and deliver a service to fill that void. We have a large group of sessional workers spread across East Kent. We believe peer support is a significant part of our recovery process and therefore has an economic value.



Designed, Developed and Delivered for service users by service users.



100% Peer Led- we have experience living with mental health problems and believe peer support has been a significant part of our recovery process.



We pay everyone who wants to be paid and employ individuals with mental health problems.



97% recommend to family or friends



Welcoming ages 16+

"THE PEER SUPPORT GROUP HAS BEEN A LIFELINE FOR ME. IN A WORLD THAT OFTEN FEELS ISOLATING, THIS GROUP PROVIDES A SAFE HAVEN WHERE I CAN SHARE MY THOUGHTS AND FEELINGS WITHOUT JUDGMENT. KNOWING THAT I'M NOT ALONE IN MY STRUGGLES AND THAT OTHERS GENUINELY CARE HAS BEEN A SOURCE OF TREMENDOUS COMFORT AND STRENGTH."

An Overview

- 602 groups
- 275 people supported each month
- 3295 attendances
- 236 new sign-ups

It has been a year of change for us here at Take Off, with an update to our branding, moving more groups back to in-person and expanding some projects.

Thanks to the wonderful input from Corinna and the pro-bono work from Lydia's fantastic team at I Do Marketing, we updated our website and have a fantastic marketing plan, including the new and exciting Guardians scheme which we have been implementing this year.

We are very happy to have kept our 'door' open on Christmas day this year on Zoom so attendees from across the county could attend. We enjoyed cooking and a very fun quiz.

Our work representing the voice of service users continues and has expanded this year. We're now not just working in Canterbury and Shepway but in Ashford and Dover too. Thank you to our staff for highlighting several gaps in mental health provision as well as the compliments to those who provide excellent service in Kent.

The system managed by EK360 for User Voice compiling the data received and presenting it coherently is the best we have witnessed. As an organisation Take Off took two cases to the highest level in Kent which we hope will result in preventative measures being put in place.

Thank you to Kent Community Foundation who awarded us with a Strategic Grant. This helped us to improve many aspects of our Strategic plan which we will continue to develop in years to come.

We have several former clients awaiting training as peer workers and we look forward to them joining our staff soon. It is one of the shining achievements of Take Off that we offer a fully paid peer worker role. We will continue to pay an hourly rate greater than the Living Wage.

Thank you to all of our peer workers, funders and donators, without you all we would not be able to offer so many wonderful groups and support so many great people.

Mark Kilbey- Chief Executive Officer



This year has been one of resuming our ‘normality’ at Take Off and building our services back to post covid levels. Our ambition to return many groups back from web based to in-person has been gradual but ordered. This has proved the resilience and professionalism of the organisation and our staff.

The feedback from clients remains overwhelmingly positive. Our unique model assists several hundred people a year to grow more resilient whilst on their recovery ‘journey’.

The planned expansion of Take Off has been put on hold until we meet the need identified in East Kent. We have a new, more central, location for our services in Dover which will assist with enhancing delivery there. Thank you to Wayne Smith the South Kent Coast Manager and his staff for working on the transition to the new location.

Our Director of Operations, Ellie Williams, continues to demonstrate her leadership and organisational skills. She never fails to impress with her commitment to the success and longevity of Take Off.

Thanks to Zoe Pemble for her great work in supporting and mentoring staff, managing our Thanet offer, (which is expanding soon) and being a great peer worker. A particular highlight for me is to witness the wonderful Depression Group hosted with John Childs, our Safeguarding lead and wise counsel, every Monday in our Canterbury office. A very supportive group which is a model of how Take Off is important to our clients' lives.

Our Board of Trustees continues to support the management, suggest positive changes and highlight potential risks in advance. Thank you to them for enabling Take Off to fulfill its brief.

Thanks to our many funders for seeing the benefit of Take Off’s unique model and backing us. The larger funding agencies enable us to plan for the next three years and that brings stability to our staff and clients. Many smaller but no less valuable donations have been made by local individuals, businesses and community groups. We appreciate their support and rely on that for our ongoing success.

I am proud of the work of Take Off and it is a joy to see our staff and clients support each other in our unique peer-led way. May we all continue to do so as we travel the difficult path to improved mental health.

Simon- Group attendee

I've been battling depression for several years, and it's been a challenging journey. I want to share my experience with Take Off which has been a turning point in my life. I was feeling increasingly isolated and struggled with my mental health. That's when I found out about Take Off, I decided to give it a try, not sure what to expect.

I was nervous at first, especially about opening up to strangers but I soon realised that everyone there understood what I was going through. Sharing experiences and coping strategies in a space where everyone understood each other's struggles was deeply comforting. I didn't feel alone anymore, in fact it was the first time in years I didn't feel isolated because of my mental health issues. We discussed everything from managing daily stressors to finding joy in small things. Over time, I felt more connected, both to the group members and to myself. I started understanding my emotions better and felt equipped to handle them. With each group meeting, I felt stronger and more confident. I was no longer the person who shied away from talking about my feelings.

These groups have been a lifeline for me and have given me a sense of belonging. Joining these peer support groups has been one of the best decisions of my life. They've helped me manage my depression, connect with others, and find joy in everyday life. It has been a game-changer for my mental health.

"I DIDN'T FEEL ALONE ANYMORE, IN FACT IT WAS THE FIRST TIME IN YEARS I DIDN'T FEEL ISOLATED BECAUSE OF MY MENTAL HEALTH ISSUES"





Dover



We are incredibly proud of Wayne Smith, our South Kent Coast Manager, who received his MBE in November. What an achievement!

A Year of Resilience and Adaptation

The fifth year of operation at Take Off in Dover brought forth unforeseen challenges, but our team's unwavering dedication and the incredible support from the community enabled us to overcome these hurdles with resilience and determination. Despite facing an unexpected setback early in the year, we emerged stronger than ever, proving that together, we can weather any storm.

A New Home for Our Community

In the face of adversity, Take Off swiftly moved from our building and secured an alternative location to continue our vital work. We successfully relocated most of our groups and operations to the welcoming embrace of the St Radigunds Community Centre in Dover. Additionally, the Dover Big Local, a generous partner, provided us with valuable space at their Hub in the Charlton Shopping Centre. This collaborative effort demonstrated the power of community solidarity.

"MONDAY MORNING GROUP IS SOMETHING I GENUINELY LOOK FORWARD TO EACH WEEK. IT'S A CRUCIAL ANCHOR FOR ME, HELPING ME KICKSTART THE WEEK WITH POSITIVITY AFTER WHAT WOULD OTHERWISE BE A LONELY WEEKEND. THE SENSE OF BELONGING AND SUPPORT I FIND HERE IS INVALUABLE."

Embracing the Outdoors: A Day in the Park

Amidst the trials and tribulations of the year, we carved out moments of joy and togetherness. Our "Picnic in the Park" event at Radnor Park, Kearsney, stands as a testament to the resilience of our community. On a sun-kissed day, attendees, some accompanied by their furry friends, came together to share laughter, engage in interactive games, and take leisurely strolls through the park. It was a reminder that even in challenging times, the bonds we share can provide much-needed solace and happiness.



"I FEEL COMING TO THE GROUP GIVES ME THE POSITIVENESS AND SUPPORT THAT I NEED."

Advocacy and Partnership

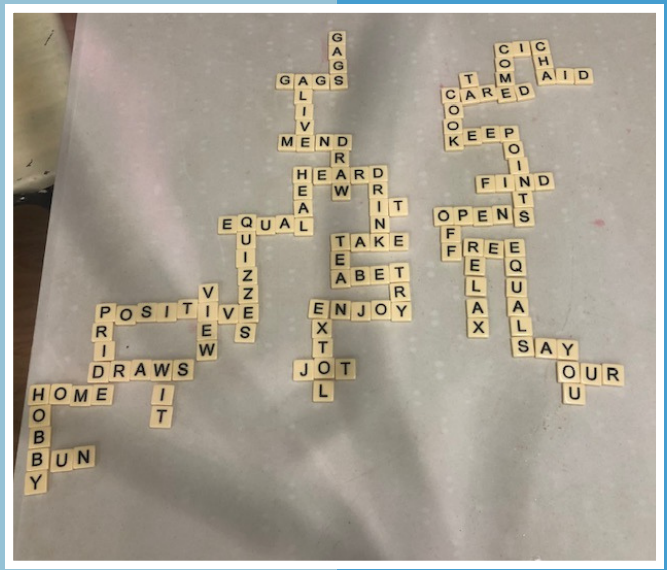
At the year's close, we proudly announced a new partnership with EK360, where Take Off would serve as the voice of service users in Dover. This collaboration reinforces our commitment to advocating for the mental health needs of our community.



Strengthening Collaborations

Our continued relationships with vital organisations such as the DWP, Coleman House, CMHT, Big Local, Adult Social Services, and DDC have been crucial in ensuring the sustainability of our initiatives. These partnerships remain central to our ability to provide comprehensive support and resources to those in need.





Empowering Through Technology

Our IT Group underwent a significant transformation as we moved operations to St Radigunds Community Centre. We were fortunate to receive a generous donation of eight gaming laptops from Town and Country during the pandemic, which allowed us to adapt to our new environment seamlessly. Malcolm and Wayne continued to be invaluable resources, providing guidance on various IT-related matters, from using smartphones effectively to assisting attendees in acquiring free laptops through local schemes.

Restoring Connections Through Peer Support

The Peer Support Activity Group, led by Tracie, Ronnie, and Malcolm, transitioned from its online format to an in-person gathering at the Dover Big Local, courtesy of the Charlton Shopping Centre. Witnessing participants engage in heartfelt conversations and share genuine smiles around the table was a poignant moment. For many attendees, these sessions were a beacon of hope and friendship, reigniting connections forged prior to the pandemic. The group's activities, ranging from arts and crafts to cooking and board games, provided not only an outlet for creativity but also essential tips for navigating the energy and cost of living challenges many faced during these times.

Continued Support for Mental Health

Our Depression and Anxiety Group, facilitated by Tracie, Wayne, and Malcolm, continued to thrive in Dover, albeit in our new temporary home at St Radigunds Community Centre. The group remained a cornerstone of our services, consistently drawing a dedicated following and welcoming new members throughout the year. It served as a haven for individuals seeking solace, understanding, and the tools to manage their mental health effectively.

In the face of adversity, Take Off in Dover stood unwavering, and our commitment to mental health support has never been stronger. The challenges of the past year have only reinforced our determination to make a meaningful impact in the lives of those we serve. We look forward to the year ahead with hope, resilience, and an unwavering dedication to our mission of supporting mental health in our community. Together, we can overcome any obstacle that comes our way.

Canterbury and Coastal

This year has been another busy and successful year for the Canterbury and Costal regions, with a main focus of returning to in person groups. We have managed to restart a number face to face groups with a mix of talking groups and activity groups, welcoming old and new faces to groups.

We extend our heartfelt gratitude to each and every staff member who has worked tirelessly in the Canterbury and Coastal areas. Your remarkable contributions this year have been integral to our success. We sincerely appreciate your dedication and hard work. Thank you for making this year a remarkable one!

In Faversham we had another great year at the allotment with extra funding to renovate the building to make it a great space that can be used for other groups in winter. We are very much looking forward to working here for many years to come.

"WITHOUT TAKE OFF'S INTERVENTION, I MIGHT NOT HAVE BEEN HERE TODAY."

Managing Depression

This year we are thrilled to have been able to restart our in-person depression group. The group has garnered immense popularity and has proven to be highly effective. One of our participants shared a heartfelt testimonial:

"I HAVE IMMENSE GRATITUDE TO EVERYONE INVOLVED. YOU'VE TRANSFORMED ME FROM A RECLUSIVE INDIVIDUAL GRAPPLING WITH SEVERE DEPRESSION TO SOMEONE WHO EMBRACES THEIR DIAGNOSIS AND SINGLEHOOD. I'VE LEARNED TO ACCEPT MY DEPRESSION, WHICH HAS SIGNIFICANTLY BOOSTED MY SELF-CONFIDENCE AND ABILITY TO FORGE FRIENDSHIPS. YOUR SUPPORT HAS ENDOWED ME WITH NEWFOUND CONFIDENCE AND DETERMINATION TO PURSUE A STABLE, FULFILLING LIFE."

The group's journey has been remarkable, witnessing participants and leaders alike offering mutual support and guidance, while also directing members towards additional resources and assistance when needed.







Cooking Group

We are incredibly thankful to Elite Blinds who got in contact with us and have funded our cooking group for a whole year. This group was sorely missed during the pandemic and after the economic crisis we decided to add an element of money-saving, now running a Cooking on a Budget group. They cooked wonderful recipes and it was lovely to see smiling faces around the table again.

Reinstating our in-person cooking group ranks as one of our most significant accomplishments this year. The challenges posed by the pandemic in recent years made it crucial for us to implement stringent safety measures as we resumed these gatherings. Our joy knows no bounds in successfully relaunching this initiative. The enthusiasm and participation this year have been overwhelming, with our service users eagerly learning new culinary skills and creating a range of delectable dishes, from mixed veggie chili and homemade burgers to stew and dumplings. We are excited to continue fostering culinary skills and confidence in the kitchen, and we eagerly anticipate creating more delicious recipes together in the future.

"THE GROUP HELPS ME LEARN NEW SKILLS FOR EVERY DAY LIFE AND CHAT TO MORE PEOPLE AND MEET PEOPLE. THE RECIPES ARE EASY GOING AND I CAN COPY THEM AT HOME. I ACTUALLY LIKE COOKING NOW!"







Creative group

This year, we have restarted our in-person creative group, bringing vibrant energy back into our office. The presence of individuals engaging in various creative activities, led by our wonderful peer worker Emily, has been a refreshing and enriching experience. These creative sessions are especially beneficial as they provide a therapeutic and expressive outlet as well as a much needed distraction from service users' ongoing mental health difficulties. The activities, ranging from painting to drawing, writing, working with clay, offer a non-verbal mode of self-expression, crucial for those who find traditional communication challenging. Additionally, participating in these creative endeavours can be a form of mindfulness, helping to reduce stress and focus the mind. It's particularly beneficial as attendees have the opportunity to try activities they might not have considered before, further broadening their horizons. The sense of accomplishment and boosted self-esteem gained from these creative pursuits can be a significant uplift for individuals dealing with depression or anxiety. Moreover, the in-person aspect of our group fosters a sense of community and connection, which is vital in combating the isolation that often accompanies mental health struggles.





"THANK YOU SO MUCH FOR THE KINDNESS AND SUPPORT I HAVE FOUND AT THE CREATIVE GROUP OVER THE LAST FEW MONTHS! I AM SO GRATEFUL TO HAVE FOUND SUCH A WELCOMING, FRIENDLY AND COMFORTING GROUP AND I DON'T KNOW HOW I WOULD HAVE GOT THROUGH THE LAST FEW MONTHS WITHOUT THIS GROUP!

I'M GUTTED TO BE MOVING AWAY BUT I CAN'T THANK YOU ENOUGH FOR GIVING ME A 'SAFE' SPACE TO HELP ME HEAL (AND A MILLION CUPS OF TEA)! KEEP HELPING PEOPLE – YOU'RE ALL AMAZING!"



Butterfly Conservation

Our Butterfly Conservation group was a resounding success, much to our delight. Participants were thoroughly captivated by the exploration of local butterflies and moths. An especially enjoyable activity was crafting seed bombs and cultivating golden rods, which we later planted in Blean Wood. This initiative aims to attract rare moth species to the area. We extend our heartfelt gratitude to Emma from Butterfly Conservation for not only providing this unique opportunity but also for generously sharing her extensive expertise with us.

Farm Group

This year at Little Shatterling Farm, our ‘On the Farm’ group experienced remarkable popularity and attendance. We’ve enthusiastically engaged in a variety of farm tasks, from grooming and feeding the animals to egg collection and mucking out, not to mention various DIY projects. Among these activities, a standout favourite was the delightful experience of walking the goats. We eagerly anticipate our return to the farm this summer, ready for more engaging and rewarding experiences. We also facilitated extra sessions for KMPT staff for their wellbeing days which were much appreciated. It is always so rewarding to see so many smiling faces at this group.

"THE TEAM AT TAKE OFF WELCOME US AS SOON AS WE ARRIVE. THEY ENCOURAGE US TO BE AS WE ARE AND SUPPORT US IN THAT. TIME AND CARE IS GIVEN TO EACH PERSON WHERE WE FEEL A SENSE OF POSITIVE REGARD, SELF WORTH AND BELONGING. IT IS A RARE GIFT TO HAVE A GROUP LIKE THIS. THEY ALSO SIGN POST AND INFORM US OF RESOURCES AVAILABLE WHENEVER WE ARE IN NEED."









100% they would recommend Take Off to others

100% said “The sessions have had a **positive impact** on my life outside of Take Off”

90% said “I feel like the group is **keeping me well**”

95% said “This group helps me feel more **hopeful**”

96% said they have done or **learned something new** at the group

94% said they feel **less isolated** after attending groups

99% said “The groups help me feel **more optimistic** about the **future**

97% said they **feel valued** and **have a voice** at groups

94% said they are becoming **more confident** in social situations

Thanet

Take Off has been serving the Thanet area for several years, a region notably impacted by poverty and deprivation. Thanet's challenges are significant, as evidenced by its ranking in national UK studies, where it consistently stands out for its high levels of need compared to other towns in Kent. This context underscores the critical importance of our services in the area, where our provision is not just beneficial but essential to address the unique challenges faced by the community.We are deeply grateful for the opportunity to offer mental health assistance and social inclusion to those in need.

Implementing our services in Thanet has presented unique challenges, notably the lack of a dedicated venue and the rising costs associated with room hire amidst the ongoing cost of living crisis. In response to these challenges, we launched a weekly outdoor wellbeing group in the spring, which quickly became a favourite among our service users. Both participants and facilitators observed notable improvements in their mental wellbeing, underscoring the value of spending time outdoors with a supportive community. However, as winter approached, we had to pause this outdoor initiative.

In February, we initiated a weekly depression group at St John's Community Centre in Margate. Our gratitude extends to St John's, and particularly to Tabitha, for their warm welcome. Though our tenure at this venue has been brief, we've already grown fond of it and anticipate many more months there.

Given the pressing needs in Thanet, increasing our presence in the area has always been a priority. We are diligently working towards securing additional funding to facilitate more groups. I want to extend a heartfelt thank you to John, Fay, and Anthony for their unwavering support in ensuring these groups run smoothly. Their commitment to travelling from other. areas to support our service users in Thanet is truly commendable and greatly appreciated.

As we look to the future, we're excited to deepen our engagement with the community, and expand our service offerings in Thanet, reflecting our commitment to meeting the evolving needs of those we support.





My Journey with Take Off - Martin

It's difficult to list all the ways that Take Off has supported and helped me, as it has happened in so many ways and over a long time. As a person with PTSD and severe depression I found it difficult to leave my flat and to be with people I didn't know. I think the first group I went to was an in-person group; I was so anxious but the fact that they clearly 'got me', understood and didn't judge made all the difference.

They gave me a place in my world where people were not threatening, which helped counter my view that the world was too scary and horrible to live in. When Covid hit it was Take Off that was my only safe point of contact with the world - the online sessions regularly kept me this side of safe - I can honestly say Take Off has kept me alive on more than one occasion.

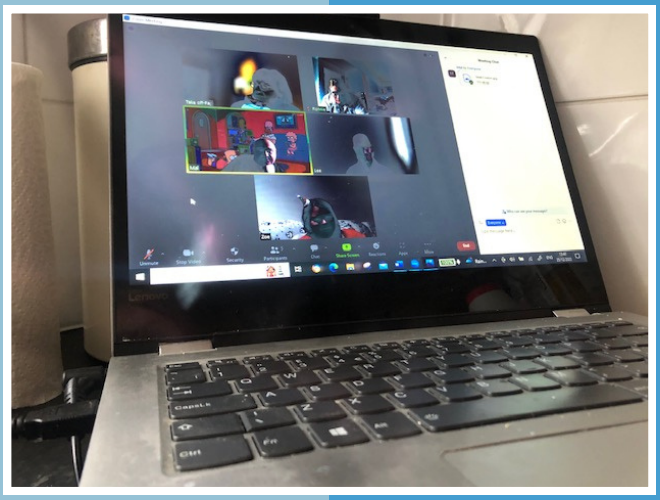
More than that, I picked up so many helpful tips from the other members of the group, and when I could support or encourage them it really helped with my self-worth.

Take Off also reduced my use of statutory services - the Sunday Crisis groups, and all the other groups for that matter, meant than when I was in a bad way, or something bad happened, I could hold the feelings until the next meeting (usually on the same or next day) rather than go to A&E or phone the awful Beacon Crisis team.

Over time, I guess I ended up valuing myself because the people who I valued clearly valued me - one of the many 'Take Off Effects'. I started at Take Off as someone who woke up every morning wanting not to exist, and had no self-care routines - I didn't wash myself, my clothes or tidy my flat and I didn't go out. Thanks to their help, I now look after myself properly, my flat is tidy, and my depression is much reduced - I haven't attempted or even had the impulse to kill myself for the last 9 months.

I caught a train for the first time the other day, I've started going for walks and to cafes, and have even started exploring opportunities for voluntary work with a MH charity. I have attended activities with other organisations but none feel as natural and safe - not sure whether it's the natural empathy and skills of the people who run the groups or the training they receive but they are genuinely awesome.





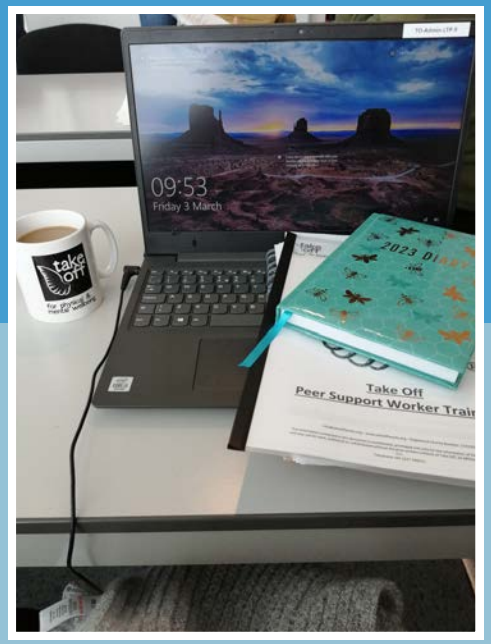


Training and Mentoring

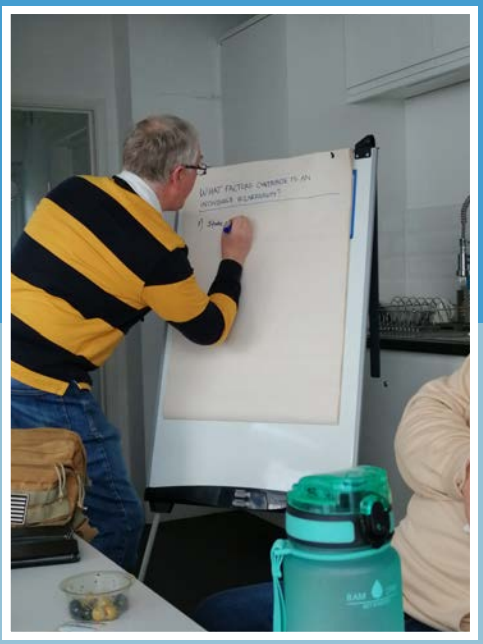
Sara

I started my training as a peer worker last September and I found it really helpful to do the group exercises and run through all the important information I needed to know. The safeguarding training run by John was really informative as well. I then received mentoring from Zoe whilst I was shadowing groups for a few months which I found incredibly helpful. I knew I could ask her about anything I didn't understand or wanted extra help with. I was also able to get feedback about how I was doing which really helped improve my confidence. It was a great opportunity to get support and go through things in more detail. All the peer workers I shadowed and later facilitated groups with were very encouraging and supportive which helped a lot too.

"I REALLY ENJOYED DOING THE PEER WORKER TRAINING. IT WAS SO NICE TO MEET EVERYONE AND EVERYONE WAS LOVELY. IT WAS VERY INFORMATIVE AND ALSO FELT VERY SUPPORTIVE AND WELCOMING. I'M REALLY EXCITED TO GET STARTED AS A PEER SUPPORT WORKER."







We're excited to introduce Zoe as our Training and Mentor Manager. Zoe has solidified our recruitment, training and mentoring process to support our new peer workers into their role. Some of our peer workers have been out of work for a while or not had a job before so it's especially important for mentoring to fit each individual.

Our Flagship Services

Patients' Council

At Take Off, as part of our **User Voice** work, we have been dedicatedly running the Patients' Council at St Martins Hospital in Canterbury for several years. This unique initiative empowers patients within a psychiatric setting, often feeling voiceless, by providing them with a platform to express their experiences and suggestions. Our approach involves two peer workers attending community meetings on the wards weekly, focusing on areas such as food quality, activities, environment, facilities, and staff interaction.

Patient feedback, recorded anonymously, is a vital component of our process. We collate these insights and present them in quarterly meetings with ward managers. Our **independence** and our team's lived experiences foster a relatable atmosphere, encouraging patients to share openly. This not only gives us a clear picture of the hospital's functioning but also drives **meaningful changes to enhance patient experiences**.

We take immense pride in this challenging yet crucial work. Our peer workers deserve heartfelt thanks for their dedication, with **special appreciation to Emma** for her exceptional coordination of this pivotal project.

As we reflect on the successes of the past year, we would like to extend our very best wishes to Emma as she embarks on her maternity leave. Emma's contribution to the Patients' Council has been invaluable, and her absence will be deeply felt. However, we fully support her in this exciting new chapter of her life and eagerly await her return, bringing the same passion and dedication she has always shown. Our team will miss her greatly, but we look forward to welcoming her back with open arms after her well-deserved break.

Peer Support Crisis Group

Our Peer Support Crisis Group (PSCG) has been a vital part of the community for several years, consistently **evolving** to meet the **changing needs** of those we serve. This year, we have continued to provide our support services through an online group via Zoom. This adaptation has been exceptionally well-received, highlighting the ongoing need for **accessible and flexible** support solutions.

"FINDING THIS PEER SUPPORT GROUP HAS BEEN A LIFESAVER FOR ME, ESPECIALLY ON SUNDAY EVENINGS WHEN IT FEELS LIKE THE REST OF THE WORLD IS CLOSED OFF. THE SENSE OF COMMUNITY, UNDERSTANDING, AND ACCEPTANCE I GET FROM EVERYONE HERE IS UNPARALLELED. IT'S A SPACE WHERE I CAN TRULY EXPRESS MYSELF WITHOUT FEAR OF JUDGMENT, WHERE I FEEL HEARD AND UNDERSTOOD. THIS GROUP IS MORE THAN JUST A MEETING; IT'S A LIFELINE THAT HELPS ME NAVIGATE MY TOUGHEST MOMENTS WITH THE SUPPORT OF THOSE WHO REALLY GET IT."

This feedback underscores the essence of PSCG – creating a space of unconditional acceptance and understanding, where individuals can freely express themselves **without the fear of judgement.**

We extend our deepest thanks to The Integrated Care Board for their continued funding of this project. Their support has been crucial in enabling us to maintain and enhance this invaluable service. Because of their commitment, we can offer a supportive and nurturing environment for individuals to connect, share experiences, and find comfort.

Looking to the future, we remain committed to adapting our services to best support the wellbeing of our community members, ensuring that PSCG continues to be a reliable and welcoming space for all who need it.



Daisy- Group Attendee

After being referred to us by Live Well Kent at the end of May 2022 for support with BPD, Daisy was also diagnosed with depression, anxiety and PTSD. She was very anxious to join the groups and was worried about finding a place where she felt safe due to previous experiences.

She was in need of support for her mental health and help to prevent and manage depressive episodes and the challenges of having BPD. Daisy tends to pile a lot of responsibility and demands on her own shoulders leaving her with little time to herself and to look after her own wellbeing. Attending the Take Off groups became a huge step in helping to dedicate some time for herself and look after her mental health needs. She was quick to become a popular member of the group.





"TAKE OFF HAS HELPED ME GREATLY, I HAVE GAINED SO MUCH CONFIDENCE FROM ATTENDING GROUPS. TAKE OFF IS MY SAFE PLACE WHERE I FEEL REALLY COMFORTABLE. I KNOW I'M COMFORTABLE HERE AS I'LL TAKE MY SHOES OFF AND WALK AROUND."

Folkestone

We began facilitating the Folkestone Group in January 2023. The Folkestone Bookshop were incredibly generous to invite us to use the bookshop free of charge. The group emerged with only a couple of members, however through community engagement with organisations such as Porchlight, Citizens Advice and One You Kent, members and drop ins began to grow. It became clear that with regular attendance of up to 18 members/drop ins per week it was no longer tenable to operate from the bookshop and we began to look for another base. We also invite members to provide forum feedback and see drop ins from individuals who have heard about the forum survey through an organisation or agency we have networked or partnered with.

As a group we explore the themes of mental health and wellbeing, sharing tips and strategies and finding creative ways in which to share them with the broader community through art and crafting. We gifted the bookshop with positive affirmations painted on stones to display in the shop, for example and have recently co created a wellbeing Advent calendar with 24 tips and strategies to support mental health and wellbeing which is displayed in the community room and which we invited everyone who uses the space to interact with.

"I KNOW I'M SAFE AT GROUP, SO I CAN NOW TRAVEL HERE ON MY OWN WITHOUT WORRYING ABOUT HAVING A PANIC ATTACK"







"THE GROUP IS A SAFE PLACE FOR ME"

"THERE IS NO NEED TO MASK (I AM NEURODIVERSE) I CAN BE MYSELF HERE"

Online

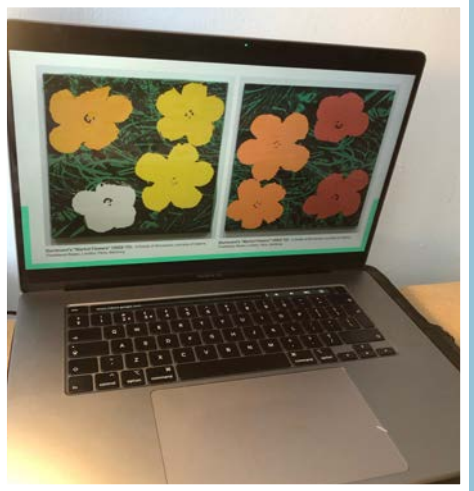
This year, we have continued to offer a variety of online group sessions alongside our traditional in-person meetings. As the year progressed, we strategically adjusted the balance between these two formats. This approach was adopted to accommodate the resumption of some in-person groups, while ensuring we continued to cater to those who prefer or require online participation. Our hybrid model of support has been designed to extend our reach and inclusivity, ensuring that everyone, regardless of their circumstances, has access to the support they need.

This strategy's effectiveness is reflected in the words of one of our online service users:

"JOINING THE ONLINE PEER SUPPORT GROUPS HAS SIGNIFICANTLY IMPACTED MY LIFE. IT'S AKIN TO DISCOVERING A COMMUNITY WHERE MY EXPERIENCES RESONATE WITH EVERYONE. IN THESE VIRTUAL GATHERINGS, I HAVE ENCOUNTERED UNDERSTANDING AND STRENGTH, AND HAVE FOUND A SENSE OF BELONGING THAT WAS PREVIOUSLY UNKNOWN TO ME. SHARING MY STORY AND HEARING OTHERS' EXPERIENCES IN THESE GROUPS REMIND ME THAT I AM NOT ALONE IN MY JOURNEY. THESE SESSIONS ARE MORE THAN MERE MEETINGS; THEY SERVE AS A VITAL CONNECTION TO OTHERS, OFFERING PERSONAL GROWTH AND HEALING, ALL WITHIN THE COMFORT AND SAFETY OF MY OWN HOME"







Managing Depression

This year, we have sustained our commitment to supporting mental health by running online depression support groups twice a week. These sessions have proven to be exceptionally popular, uniting service users from various locations in a supportive and collaborative environment. It's been heartening to witness our attendees forge connections, offering each other support and reassurance, a truly rewarding experience from a facilitator's perspective. Even as we resume some in-person groups, we take pride in continuing to provide these online sessions, a decision that has been greatly valued and appreciated by our service users

Mood Group

The support available for individuals diagnosed with Borderline Personality Disorder (BPD) is often insufficient, leaving many feeling isolated and misunderstood. Despite its prevalence, BPD remains one of the most stigmatised and under-supported mental health conditions, leading to significant challenges in finding adequate care and understanding.

At Take Off we have a number of peer workers who have faced this themselves and we fully understand the need to provide support to people with a mood disorder and reach as many people as possible, therefore we have continued to provide a fortnightly mood group online. The group aims to provide a nurturing and non-judgmental space where individuals can connect, share their experiences, and find solace in the understanding of peers who have similar experiences.

The success of this support can be seen in this comment from an attendee:

"PEER SUPPORT HAS BEEN A BEACON OF HOPE IN MY JOURNEY WITH BPD. IT'S LIKE FINDING A COMMUNITY WHERE MY STRUGGLES ARE UNDERSTOOD, AND MY FEELINGS ARE VALIDATED. IN THESE GROUPS, I'M NOT DEFINED BY MY DISORDER, BUT RECOGNISED FOR MY RESILIENCE AND STRENGTH. SHARING EXPERIENCES WITH OTHERS WHO TRULY 'GET IT' HAS BEEN INCREDIBLY EMPOWERING. IT'S A SAFE SPACE WHERE I CAN BE OPEN ABOUT MY EMOTIONS WITHOUT FEAR OF JUDGMENT, AND I FIND COMFORT IN KNOWING THAT I'M NOT ALONE. THIS CAMARADERIE HAS BEEN INSTRUMENTAL IN FOSTERING SELF-ACCEPTANCE AND IN HELPING ME DEVELOP HEALTHIER COPING MECHANISMS. PEER SUPPORT HAS NOT JUST BEEN ABOUT MANAGING SYMPTOMS, BUT ABOUT FINDING A SENSE OF BELONGING AND BUILDING A LIFE BEYOND THE CONFINES OF BPD"









Online Creative Group



This year, we've maintained our bi-weekly online creative group, providing a platform for individuals to channel their creativity from afar. Each session introduces a unique theme or topic, with the flexibility for service users to interpret and express these in their personal artistic style. True to our peer-led ethos, the themes are inspired by suggestions from our service users themselves. This year's dynamic selection of activities has included:

Nature landscapes
Urban cityscapes
Mythical creatures
Seasons and weather
Famous landmarks
Watercolour techniques.



A key highlight of this group is its inclusivity; regardless of one's confidence level or the resources available at home, there's always an opportunity to participate. Participants are welcome to engage with the weekly theme or to work on their own art projects, offering a flexible and supportive environment for artistic expression.

The diversity and creativity displayed by our service users have been remarkable. From innovative crafts and knitting to sculpture and origami, each person has brought a unique perspective and flair to the themes. We've also been delighted by an assortment of imaginative and skilful drawings and paintings, showcasing the incredible talents within our community.

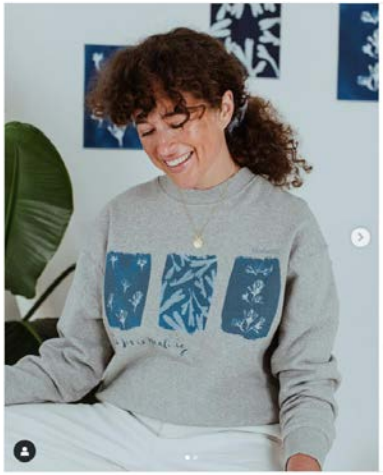
"THE GROUPS ARE EDUCATIONAL AND FUN, I JUST LOVE THEM!"

Online Cooking

This year, we continued with our online cooking group sessions until December 2022, at which point we made the transition back to in-person gatherings. As we brought this chapter to a close, we took a moment to reflect on the tremendous success of the online group. We are immensely proud of how effectively both the facilitators and service users adapted to this new format, especially during the challenging times of lockdown. Their ability to pivot and continue delivering engaging and valuable sessions is truly commendable. At this juncture, we would like to extend our heartfelt appreciation to Sally for her extraordinary dedication and flexibility in leading this group. Her hard work has been a cornerstone of the group's success. We also extend our sincere thanks to Ronnie and Fay for their invaluable support and contributions to the group. Their efforts have played a significant role in making the online cooking sessions a rewarding experience for everyone involved.

Donations

We've had some wonderful donations this year from a range of people and organisations. Thank you to those who got in contact with us to fundraise and donate!





Emily was commissioned to design a sweatshirt for a sustainable fashion company and was so kind to donate from her sales



Mockford and Hunt held a fantastic fundraising music event in Ashford



Morrisons donated a lovely collection of treats for us in Canterbury



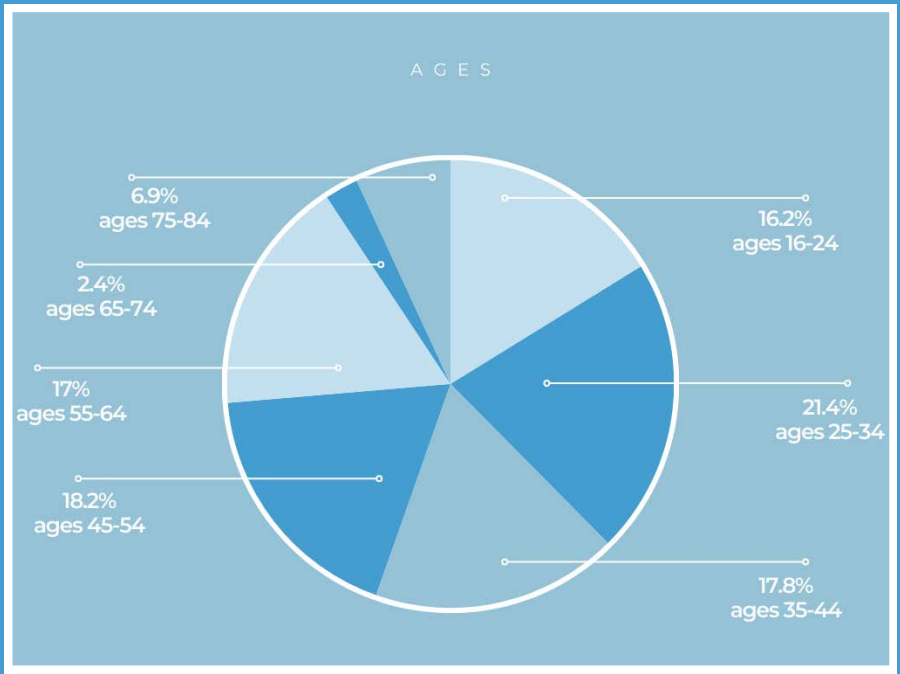


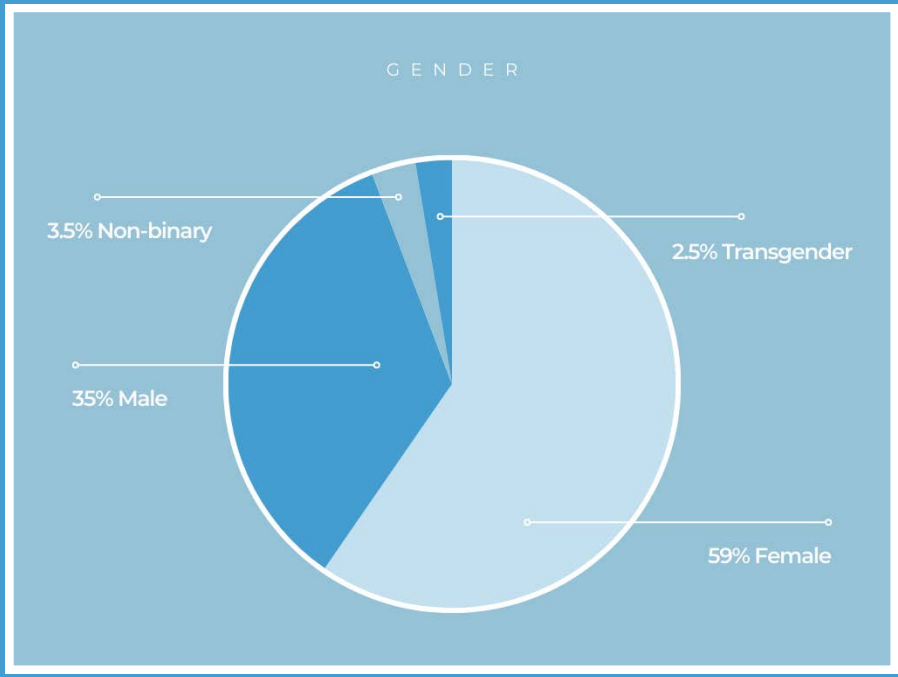
Elite Blinds funded our Cooking Group for a whole year!

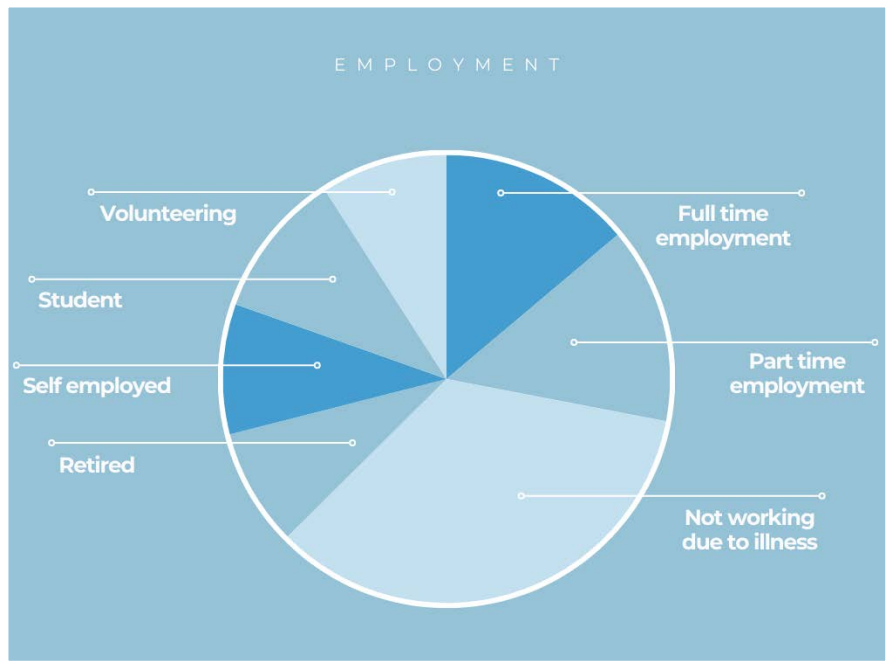


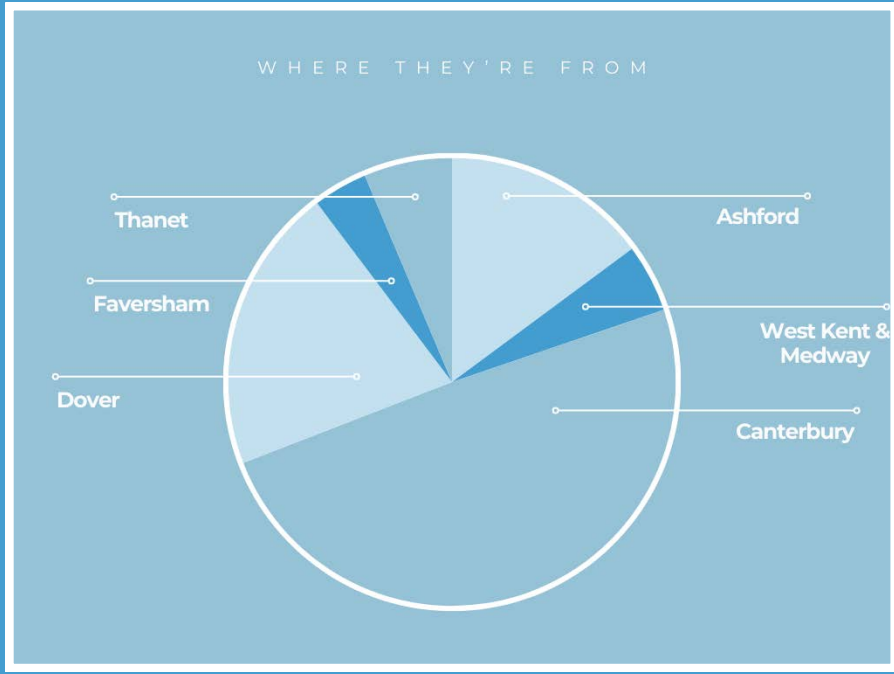
UKC Womens football ran a fab bingo party to fundraise!

Our attendees









Social media

Sarah has been doing such a wonderful job with our social media, especially since we rebranded! With I Do Marketing, Sarah has been thinking up fun ways of sharing information and stories and helping our followers get to know Take Off and our staff even better!



Twitter followers: 826
Facebook followers: 765

Take Off
Annual Report 2022-2023

With thanks to our funders and partners:
Kent and Medway Integrated Care Board
EK360
Kent Community Foundation
Philip and Connie Phillips
Elite Blinds
Colyer Fergusson
Live Well Kent
Town and Country
Girlings
Mockford and Hunt
Clothworkers

Office
Take Off, 34 Military Road, Canterbury, CT1 1LT

www.takeoffworks.org
info@takeoffworks.org
01227 788211

REGISTERED CHARITY NUMBER: 1069836

REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES AND

UNAUDITED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

FOR

TAKE OFF (UNINCORP)

Ackland Webb Ltd
Chartered Certified Accountants
Suite 1, First Floor
3 Jubilee Way
Faversham
Kent
ME13 8GD

TAKE OFF (UNINCORP)

CONTENTS OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

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Balance Sheet	5
Notes to the Financial Statements	6 to 10
Detailed Statement of Financial Activities	11

REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

The trustees present their report with the financial statements of the charity for the year ended 31 March 2023. The trustees have adopted the provisions of Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (effective 1 January 2019).

OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES

Significant activities

The Trustee Team has pleasure in reporting on another successful year assisting to provide Take Off's unique model of Peer Support. The profile of the organisation is returning its service delivery to pre-pandemic levels. The Board has experienced the satisfaction of seeing its recent Strategic Review implemented and the subsequent resilience that review has enabled.

The Board has seen the newly designed feedback method implemented. This has shown clients are overwhelmingly very satisfied with the service they receive. It also puts the client at the centre of the development of new groups. This is one of the organisations core principles and is a key factor in ensuring we deliver value for money to funders.

It is also very satisfying to see Take Off continue to pay more than the Living Wage to all staff. We were early members of the Living Wage Foundation. They have recognised us as an employer of staff who are historically deprived of employment opportunities. Many go on from us to Full-Time roles with other organisations and we wish them all success in their new roles.

Looking to our finances, the Board thanks the Management Team, particularly Director of Operations Ellie Williams, for ensuring the stability and sustainability of Take Off. Thank you to Liz Tootell for her expertise in assisting with funding bids. The funding landscape has become a different and more competitive world post- covid so we are very pleased with our current position.

We have identified funding as a future risk area and want to focus on building our Reserves. This will ensure we can continue to take advantage of all opportunities identified and offer our diverse selection of groups to clients. We look to having six months funding in Reserve when able and this is considered an achievable target.

We are delighted to see that ambitions for expansion are returning to the long-term plan. This will happen once we are satisfied that the service in East Kent is meeting the need. A desire to work in partnership with suitable organisations and share assets, like buildings, will be at the heart of our future plans. It is clear this helps with sustainability and this will remain as the Boards key objective for Take Off.

Thanks to all who work for Take Off as well as those who support this important work. We commend this report.

STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

Governing document

The charity is controlled by its governing document, a deed of trust and constitutes an unincorporated charity.

REFERENCE AND ADMINISTRATIVE DETAILS

Registered Charity number

1069836

Principal address

34 Military Road
Canterbury
Kent
CT1 1LT

Trustees

All trustees are required to undergo regular training in relation to their responsibilities as trustees and in relation to the services discharged by the Charity.

Independent Examiner

Ackland Webb Ltd
Chartered Certified Accountants
Suite 1, First Floor
3 Jubilee Way
Faversham
Kent
ME13 8GD

Approved by order of the board of trustees on ..... and signed on its behalf by:

.....
Trustee

Independent examiner's report to the trustees of Take Off (Unincorp)
I report to the charity trustees on my examination of the accounts of Take Off (Unincorp) (the Trust) for the year ended 31 March 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 Act and in carrying out my examination I have followed all 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; or
3. the accounts do not comply with the applicable requirements concerning the form and content of accounts set out in the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 other than any requirement that the accounts give a true and fair view which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination.

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in this report in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

David Muggridge

Ackland Webb Ltd
Chartered Certified Accountants
Suite 1, First Floor
3 Jubilee Way
Faversham
Kent
ME13 8GD

Date: .....

TAKE OFF (UNINCORP)

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

	Notes	Unrestricted fund £	Restricted fund £	31.3.23 Total funds £	31.3.22 Total funds £
INCOME AND ENDOWMENTS FROM					
Donations and legacies		-	209,064	209,064	229,625
Other trading activities	2	12,641	-	12,641	8,752
Investment income	3	6,493	-	6,493	3,865
Total		19,134	209,064	228,198	242,242
EXPENDITURE ON					
Raising funds		46,771	233,119	279,890	266,858
Charitable activities					
Direct costs		9,330	-	9,330	909
Total		56,101	233,119	289,220	267,767
NET INCOME/(EXPENDITURE)		(36,967)	(24,055)	(61,022)	(25,525)
RECONCILIATION OF FUNDS					
Total funds brought forward		75,017	12,727	87,744	113,269
TOTAL FUNDS CARRIED FORWARD		38,050	(11,328)	26,722	87,744

The notes form part of these financial statements

BALANCE SHEET
31 MARCH 2023

	Notes	Unrestricted fund £	Restricted fund £	31.3.23 Total funds £	31.3.22 Total funds £
FIXED ASSETS					
Tangible assets	6	23,820	-	23,820	11,304
CURRENT ASSETS					
Cash at bank		10,009	19,890	29,899	107,273
CREDITORS					
Amounts falling due within one year	7	4,221	(17,884)	(13,663)	(9,999)
NET CURRENT ASSETS		14,230	2,006	16,236	97,274
TOTAL ASSETS LESS CURRENT LIABILITIES		38,050	2,006	40,056	108,578
CREDITORS					
Amounts falling due after more than one year	8	-	(13,334)	(13,334)	(20,834)
NET ASSETS		38,050	(11,328)	26,722	87,744
FUNDS	11				
Unrestricted funds				38,050	75,017
Restricted funds				(11,328)	12,727
TOTAL FUNDS				26,722	87,744

The financial statements were approved by the Board of Trustees and authorised for issue on ..... and were signed on its behalf by:

.....
Trustee

The notes form part of these financial statements

1. ACCOUNTING POLICIES

Basis of preparing the financial statements
The financial statements of the charity, which is a public benefit entity under FRS 102, have been prepared in accordance with the Charities SORP (FRS 102) 'Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (effective 1 January 2019)', Financial Reporting Standard 102 'The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland' and the Charities Act 2011. The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention.

Income
All income is recognised in the Statement of Financial Activities once the charity has entitlement to the funds, it is probable that the income will be received and the amount can be measured reliably.

Expenditure
Liabilities are recognised as expenditure as soon as there is a legal or constructive obligation committing the charity to that expenditure, it is probable that a transfer of economic benefits will be required in settlement and the amount of the obligation can be measured reliably. Expenditure is accounted for on an accruals basis and has been classified under headings that aggregate all cost related to the category. Where costs cannot be directly attributed to particular headings they have been allocated to activities on a basis consistent with the use of resources.

Tangible fixed assets
Depreciation is provided at the following annual rates in order to write off each asset over its estimated useful life.

Improvements to property - 20% on cost

Taxation
The charity is exempt from tax on its charitable activities.

Fund accounting
Unrestricted funds can be used in accordance with the charitable objectives at the discretion of the trustees.

Restricted funds can only be used for particular restricted purposes within the objects of the charity. Restrictions arise when specified by the donor or when funds are raised for particular restricted purposes.

Further explanation of the nature and purpose of each fund is included in the notes to the financial statements.

Hire purchase and leasing commitments
Rentals paid under operating leases are charged to the Statement of Financial Activities on a straight line basis over the period of the lease.

2. OTHER TRADING ACTIVITIES

	31.3.23	31.3.22
	£	£
Misc income	12,641	8,752

3. INVESTMENT INCOME

	31.3.23	31.3.22
	£	£
Rents received	6,435	3,858
Deposit account interest	58	7
	6,493	3,865

4. TRUSTEES' REMUNERATION AND BENEFITS

No trustee received any remuneration for services as a trustee. The following trustees receive payment for professional services relevant to the Charity.

C Plume £1,200 (2022 - £1,200) Human Resources advice

5. COMPARATIVES FOR THE STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES

	Unrestricted fund	Restricted fund	Total funds
	£	£	£
INCOME AND ENDOWMENTS FROM			
Donations and legacies	259,805	(30,180)	229,625
Other trading activities	8,752	-	8,752
Investment income	7	3,858	3,865
Total	268,564	(26,322)	242,242
EXPENDITURE ON			
Charitable activities	266,859	(1)	266,858
Charitable activities			
Direct costs	909	-	909
Total	267,768	(1)	267,767
NET INCOME/(EXPENDITURE)	796	(26,321)	(25,525)
RECONCILIATION OF FUNDS			
Total funds brought forward	74,221	39,048	113,269
TOTAL FUNDS CARRIED FORWARD	75,017	12,727	87,744

6. TANGIBLE FIXED ASSETS

	Improvements to property £
COST	
At 1 April 2022	14,130
Additions	18,471
At 31 March 2023	32,601
DEPRECIATION	
At 1 April 2022	2,826
Charge for year	5,955
At 31 March 2023	8,781
NET BOOK VALUE	
At 31 March 2023	23,820
At 31 March 2022	11,304

7. CREDITORS: AMOUNTS FALLING DUE WITHIN ONE YEAR

	31.3.23 £	31.3.22 £
Bank loans and overdrafts (see note 9)	10,000	9,999
Taxation and social security	3,090	-
Other creditors	573	-
	13,663	9,999

8. CREDITORS: AMOUNTS FALLING DUE AFTER MORE THAN ONE YEAR

	31.3.23 £	31.3.22 £
Bank loans (see note 9)	13,334	20,834

9. LOANS

An analysis of the maturity of loans is given below:

	31.3.23 £	31.3.22 £
Amounts falling due within one year on demand:		
Bank loans	10,000	9,999
Amounts falling between one and two years:		
Bank loans - 1-2 years	10,001	10,000
Amounts falling due between two and five years:		
Bank loans - 2-5 years	3,333	10,834

10. LEASING AGREEMENTS

The Charity occupies a property under a 20 year lease expiring in 2037.

11. MOVEMENT IN FUNDS

	At 1.4.22 £	Net movement in funds £	At 31.3.23 £
Unrestricted funds			
General fund	75,017	(36,967)	38,050
Restricted funds			
Restricted	12,727	(24,055)	(11,328)
TOTAL FUNDS	87,744	(61,022)	26,722

Net movement in funds, included in the above are as follows:

	Incoming resources £	Resources expended £	Movement in funds £
Unrestricted funds			
General fund	19,134	(56,101)	(36,967)
Restricted funds			
Restricted	209,064	(233,119)	(24,055)
TOTAL FUNDS	228,198	(289,220)	(61,022)

Comparatives for movement in funds

	At 1.4.21 £	Net movement in funds £	At 31.3.22 £
Unrestricted funds			
General fund	74,221	796	75,017
Restricted funds			
Restricted	39,048	(26,321)	12,727
TOTAL FUNDS	113,269	(25,525)	87,744

11. MOVEMENT IN FUNDS - continued

Comparative net movement in funds, included in the above are as follows:

	Incoming resources £	Resources expended £	Movement in funds £
Unrestricted funds			
General fund	268,564	(267,768)	796
Restricted funds			
Restricted	(26,322)	1	(26,321)
TOTAL FUNDS	242,242	(267,767)	(25,525)

A current year 12 months and prior year 12 months combined position is as follows:

	At 1.4.21 £	Net movement in funds £	At 31.3.23 £
Unrestricted funds			
General fund	74,221	(36,171)	38,050
Restricted funds			
Restricted	39,048	(50,376)	(11,328)
TOTAL FUNDS	113,269	(86,547)	26,722

A current year 12 months and prior year 12 months combined net movement in funds, included in the above are as follows:

	Incoming resources £	Resources expended £	Movement in funds £
Unrestricted funds			
General fund	287,698	(323,869)	(36,171)
Restricted funds			
Restricted	182,742	(233,118)	(50,376)
TOTAL FUNDS	470,440	(556,987)	(86,547)

12. RELATED PARTY DISCLOSURES

There were no related party transactions for the year ended 31 March 2023.

DETAILED STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

	31.3.23 £	31.3.22 £
INCOME AND ENDOWMENTS		
Donations and legacies		
Live Well Kent	30,895	40,685
EK360	51,371	44,010
Grants	18,470	5,000
Kent Community Foundation	8,832	8,174
NHS Grant	99,496	119,396
UK Gov Grants	-	12,360
	209,064	229,625
Other trading activities		
Misc income	12,641	8,752
Investment income		
Rents received	6,435	3,858
Deposit account interest	58	7
	6,493	3,865
Total incoming resources	228,198	242,242
EXPENDITURE		
Wages		
Training	203,537	223,497
Other operating leases	2,289	1,584
Utilities	16,253	10,358
Insurance	-	14,906
Light and heat	2,871	2,760
Telephone	3,086	-
Expenses	5,373	-
Travel	6,375	4,017
Office	3,688	1,333
	13,690	5,705
	257,162	264,160
Other trading activities		
Exceptional items	22,728	(128)
Support costs		
Management		
Maintenance	3,375	-
Finance		
Depreciation of tangible fixed assets	5,955	2,826
Governance costs		
Sundries	-	909
Total resources expended	289,220	267,767
Net expenditure	(61,022)	(25,525)