



A Year of Charitable Impact

**The Guardians Grow Charity
1192539**

**Annual Report and Accounts for
April 2023-April 2024**



**From initiatives to impact, our charity
report tells a story of change**

Breaking isolation and Loneliness

In 2023-2024, The Guardians Grow Charity tackled isolation and loneliness through various initiatives delivered at the Makery, supported by partnerships with local organisation's to foster connection and community engagement.

Improving mental health and wellbeing

In 2023-2024, The Guardians Grow Charity improved mental health and well-being through targeted initiatives at the Makery, including mindfulness sessions and stress management workshops. Partnerships with local organisation's enhanced access to resources, fostering resilience and emotional support within the community.

**Presented by
Sioux Watkins
CEO**

Makery@theguardiansgrowcharity.com
www.theguardiansgrowcharity.com



Content

- Chairs Statement
- Our vision
- Our Mission
- Our Work
- Our Impact
- Independent Financial Statement



Chair's Statement

The Guardians Grow charity makes a profound difference to the lives of the many people we engage with through our activities and services. Over the last year, we have continued to grow and develop our work, adapting to meet the changing needs of our community. This report provides a dynamic picture of the many ways in which we have touched the lives of people and communities who have faced massive hardship and disadvantage. Change is constant. Organisations rarely reach a state of permanent stability, and this has never been truer than in 2023-24. During this period, we took on a significant new project that marks a major milestone for our charity. In addition to running The Makery, we expanded into the store next door, which we have named Individual Chapters. This project has been a transformative step for us, addressing some of the more sensitive and challenging issues that we cannot always deal with in our community hub. Individual Chapters focuses on providing support around domestic abuse, violence, rape, human trafficking, and sexual exploitation. It also offers a safe and inclusive space for community organisations to utilise—a private room where individuals can receive counselling or support in a secure environment. Taking on this new project represented a massive undertaking for our charity. It has meant managing additional financial pressures and tackling complex challenges, but it also demonstrates our commitment to responding to the urgent needs within our community. Over the course of this year, we have welcomed new volunteers, whose contributions have been invaluable. These volunteers bring fresh energy and ideas, and while it is always sad to see them move on, we take immense pride in knowing that they leave with greater confidence and self-esteem, often stepping into new employment opportunities. The beginning of 2024 brought exciting changes to the way we work. We reached out to other organisations, building and developing relationships that have blossomed into meaningful collaborations. These partnerships not only strengthen our work but also ensure that we continue to provide the best possible support to those who rely on us. This year has been one of growth, challenge, and impact, and I look forward to what we can achieve together in the future.



Over the past year, we have also taken a step back to reflect on the incredible impact we have had on our communities through the work we do. Starting as a small community group in 2017 and becoming a registered charity in 2020, right in the heart of a global pandemic, we were not entirely sure of our direction—only that we wanted to support our community and fill the gaps where support was lacking.

Being community-driven, community-led, and community-focused, we have worked tirelessly to listen, adapt, and remain at the heart of our community. From navigating COVID-19 to addressing the ever-changing challenges within our community, we have continued to grow and evolve. We take pride in our ability to respond to these shifting needs.

The increase in safeguarding referrals we make weekly, both for adults and children, has been significant. We have also seen a sharp rise in domestic abuse cases, with referrals becoming a daily part of our work. This evolution has forced us to adapt, learn, and grow—recognising that the scale of our impact required a more structured approach.

At the beginning of 2024, we reached a pivotal moment in our journey when we received news that we had been awarded a National Lottery grant of £179,000. This funding will enable us to employ three paid members of staff for the first time: a manager, assistant manager, and a chef for The Makery Community Support Hub. Employment will commence in June or early July 2024, marking a turning point in our development.

This milestone gives us the opportunity to sustain and expand our work in a professional and impactful way. We are incredibly excited about the endless possibilities this funding creates and the future achievements it will enable. What an incredible accomplishment for our charity and the communities we serve.

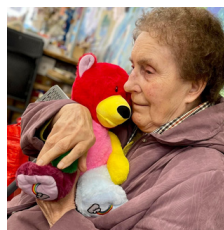
Chair & CEO
Sioux Watkins



Our Vision

Our vision is by working collaboratively with people, Local Authorities and Organisations we aim to bring about change at a Social level: to do the social knitting required to create stronger and more resilient communities. Supporting them to identify and remove barriers that prevent them living connected lives, thus reducing isolation, loneliness and exclusion. We work to reduce social distance and increase the visibility of underrepresented groups across all our interventions.

Our work involves utilising a range of projects and interventions to improve outcomes for communities that are often left behind. Giving people time, undivided attention and empathy meets a fundamental emotional need and reduces distress and despair. We are not like other charities, we are not afraid to challenge existing ways of doing things and pride ourselves in using innovative ideas to create projects that meet current changing needs. We refuse to accept that any life is worth less than another.



Our Mission

The mission of The Guardians Grow Charity is to create a safe, inclusive, and supportive environment where individuals and communities can thrive. We are committed to reducing isolation, loneliness, and exclusion by offering innovative projects, advocacy, and practical support. Through our work, we empower people to overcome challenges such as domestic abuse, violence, and social inequalities, enabling them to rebuild their lives and reach their full potential. Guided by compassion and a deep connection to our community, we strive to bring lasting, meaningful change to the lives of those we serve.



Our Work



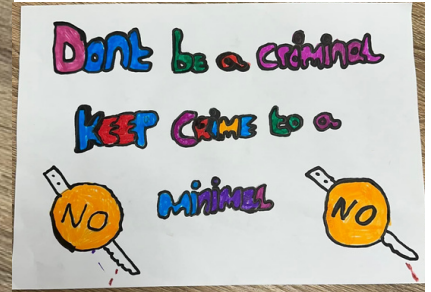
The Big Grow Project

One of the standout initiatives for The Guardians Grow Charity this year was the Big Grow Project, which saw the distribution of 10,000 sunflower seeds, pots, and soil to individuals across the community. These were delivered through a wide range of schools, colleges, care homes, scout groups, and other community organisations.

The project aimed to bring people together with a shared purpose: growing sunflowers while sharing their stories and celebrating each individual's unique journey. Communities connected through the simple yet impactful act of nurturing their sunflowers, sparking conversations and fostering bonds across generations.

With categories such as "the most unusual," "the tallest," and even "the wonkiest," the project encouraged participation and celebrated diversity within the community. This initiative highlighted our ongoing commitment to bringing communities together, ensuring that everyone, regardless of age or background, felt part of a collective experience that promoted joy, connection, and pride in their contributions.

Knives Down



Another impactful initiative during the year was the Knives Down Project, which invited schools, colleges, and members of the community to create drawings, posters, or artwork centred around the themes of “Surrender Your Knife” and “Save a Life.

This creative exercise gave participants an opportunity to express their feelings about knife crime while engaging in meaningful conversations around its dangers.

The project saw significant participation from local schools and young people, with submissions showcasing powerful messages about the importance of surrendering knives and preventing violence. Alongside the creative engagement, we worked closely with schools to provide education about knife crime, its consequences, and the risks associated with carrying knives.

By using art as a medium, we were able to involve a wide audience in this critical conversation, maximising our reach despite limited resources. This initiative aligned with our goal of fostering safer communities and empowering young people to make informed, positive choices.



On July 1, 2023, The Makery celebrated its second year as a community support hub, continuing to reach some of the most vulnerable individuals in our area. On the same day, we were proud to expand our mission by opening a new space right next door: Individual Chapters, our well-being sanctuary. This new addition represents another path for our charity to support the diverse needs of our community.

Individual Chapters is a dedicated space for calm and well-being. It includes a fully equipped interview room featuring CCTV (without sound), a panic alarm, tea and coffee facilities, a comfortable sofa, and a non-institutional décor designed to put people at ease. This room is available for hire by partner organisations, enabling them to offer one-to-one counselling, support, or guidance for those in need. In addition, we offer two hot-desking booths free of charge to community organisation's, creating opportunities for collaboration and partnership.

The well-being sanctuary also includes a small shop providing work experience opportunities for schools, colleges, and universities. This space offers individuals the chance to learn new skills, gain confidence, and enhance their employability.



Since opening The Makery in July 2022, we've identified significant gaps in community resources—spaces where individuals can sit down, have a cup of tea, and access the information, advice, and guidance they need. Both The Makery and Individual Chapters have evolved into essential resources for our community, offering tailored support and making referrals to relevant organisation's. We've provided advocacy and assistance for a wide range of issues, including hunger, housing, homelessness, disability, loneliness, caregiving, terminal illness, domestic abuse, violence, rape, human trafficking, and sexual exploitation.



In just 18 months, we've supported over 10,000 individuals through our projects and services. This includes young people and adults gaining work experience, volunteers finding purpose and connection, families receiving food and warmth, and countless others being signposted to critical services. Our work has also included arranging support groups, networking with other agencies, and forming partnerships to amplify our impact.

Looking ahead, we are excited about new initiatives for 2024–2025, including a partnership with NHS Talking Therapies to provide mindfulness sessions and the development of our own mindfulness journals. As we continue to evolve as a charity, we are proud to serve our community with dedication, innovation, and compassion. We are excited to announce that we have been granted over £179k from the national lottery with effect from July 2024 to provide our services with a manager and 2 other paid roles.



Key Achievements

1. Hot Meals and Drinks Provided

- 1,200 hot meals and 1,800 hot drinks were provided to individuals in need, including the homeless and those escaping domestic abuse.

2. Safe Inclusive Spaces

- 950 individuals utilized our community spaces to combat loneliness, particularly elderly members of the community who would otherwise be isolated.

3. Support for Neurodiverse Individuals

- Hosted 150 support group sessions and provided tailored activities for neurodiverse individuals, including a dedicated sensory area.
- Supported 25 young people with neurodiversity through work experience opportunities.

4. LGBTQIA+ Inclusivity

- Offered work experience and volunteering opportunities to 4 transgender individuals, fostering inclusivity and community support.

5. Community Partnerships

- Partnered with local schools, colleges, and organisation's, enabling 10 doctors in training to gain valuable community-based work experience.
- Collaborated with Warwick University Medical School to expand these opportunities in 2024-2025.

6. Seasonal and Essential Support

- Distributed 250 Christmas presents to children and families in need.
- Provided 300 families with affordable school uniforms and back-to-school packs through our uniform bank.
- Donated 35 slow cookers to individuals moving from homelessness into housing.

7. Safeguarding and Referrals

- Made 32 referrals to organisation's such as Refuge, Rosa, and Safeline for individuals escaping domestic abuse, violence, and rape.
- Filed 25 safeguarding referrals for adults and children at risk, including referrals to mental health teams.

8. Volunteer Contributions

- 10 volunteers donated a total of 19,760 hours over the year (based on 38 hours/week per volunteer).
- At an estimated hourly rate of £10, these hours represent a monetary value of £197,600.

Looking Ahead

In 2024-2025, we aim to build on these successes with new initiatives, including mindfulness sessions in partnership with NHS Talking therapies and the development of mindfulness journals. We are committed to evolving as a charity and addressing the diverse and interconnected needs of our community.



Section A

Independent Examiner's Report

Report to the trustees/
members of

Charity Name

THE GUARDIANS GROW CHARITY

On accounts for the year
ended

01/04/2023-01/04/2024

Charity no
(if any)

1192539

Set out on pages

—

(remember to include the page numbers of additional sheets)

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the above charity ("the Trust") for the year ended DD / MM / YYYY.

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").

Independent
examiner's statement

I report in respect of my examination of the Trust's accounts carried out under section 145 of the 2011 Act and in carrying out my examination, I have followed the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the Act.

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no material matters have come to my attention (other than that disclosed below *) in connection with the examination which gives me cause to believe that in, any material respect:

- accounting records were not kept in accordance with section 130 of the Act or
- the accounts do not accord with the accounting records

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

* Please delete the words in the brackets if they do not apply.

Signed:

Jackie Campbell

Date:

15/01/2025

Name:

JACKIE CAMPBELL

Relevant professional
qualification(s) or body
(if any):

Retired Office Supervisor

Address:

64 Church Street

NUNEATON Warwickshire

CV11 5SD

Only complete if the examiner needs to highlight matters of concern (see CC32, Independent examination of charity accounts: directions and guidance for examiners).

Give here brief details of any items that the examiner wishes to disclose.

Just happy with our findings.
All went well.
Jackie Campbell.

CHARITY COMMISSION
FOR ENGLAND AND WALES

The Guardians Grow Charity

1192359

Receipts and payments accounts

CC16a

For the period
from

01/04/2023

To

01/04/2024

Section A Receipts and payments

	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Endowment funds	Total funds	Last year
	to the nearest £	to the nearest £	to the nearest £	to the nearest £	to the nearest £
A1 Receipts					
5,000 Rethink	- 0	5,000	-	5,000	-
Lottery Grant	- 0	10,000	-	10,000	-
Donations (Cash)	29,560	-	-	29,560	-
Fund Raising Events	22,000	-	-	22,000	-
Community Hub Donations	18,188	-	-	18,188	-
	- 0	-	-	-	-
	- 0	-	-	-	-
	- 0	-	-	-	-
Sub total (Gross income for AR)	69,748	15,000	-	84,748	-
A2 Asset and investment sales, (see table).					
	- 0	- 0	- 0	-	-
	- 0	- 0	- 0	-	- 0
Sub total	- 0	- 0	- 0	-	- 0
Total receipts	69,748	15,000	- 0	84,748	- 0
A3 Payments					
Volunteer Costs	6,250	-	-	6,250	-
Leased Building Costs	28,171	-	-	28,171	-
Community Hub Supplies	15,650	-	-	15,650	-
Office	1,600	-	-	1,600	-
Arts and Crafts	2,400	-	-	2,400	-
Repairs/Maintenance	15,000	-	-	15,000	-
Utilities	6,000	-	-	6,000	-
Machine Rental	6,217	-	-	6,217	-
	- 0	-	-	-	-
Sub total	81,288	-	-	81,288	-
A4 Asset and investment purchases, (see table)					
	- 0	- 0	- 0	-	-
	- 0	- 0	- 0	-	-
Sub total	- 0	- 0	- 0	-	- 0
Total payments	81,288	- 0	- 0	81,288	- 0
Net of receipts/(payments)	- 11,540	15,000	-	3,460	-
A5 Transfers between funds	- 0	-	-	-	-
A6 Cash funds last year end	- 0	-	-	-	-
Cash funds this year end	- 11,540	15,000	-	3,460	-

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

Categories	Details	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Endowment funds
		to nearest £	to nearest £	to nearest £
B1 Cash funds		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
	Total cash funds	-	-	-

	(agree balances with receipts and payments account(s))	Agreement Error	Agreement Error	OK
		Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Endowment funds
		to nearest £	to nearest £	to nearest £
B2 Other monetary assets	Details	-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
B3 Investment assets	Details	Fund to which asset belongs	Cost (optional)	Current value (optional)
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
B4 Assets retained for the charity's own use	Details	Fund to which asset belongs	Cost (optional)	Current value (optional)
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
B5 Liabilities	Details	Fund to which liability relates	Amount due (optional)	When due (optional)
			-	
			-	
			-	
			-	
			-	
Signed by one or two trustees on behalf of all the trustees	Signature	Print Name	Date of approval	
LEAD TRUSTEE		S. WATKINS	20/01/25	