



Charity Registration Number 1197447

Annual Report

April 2024 to April 2025

Echoes Charity is a registered Mental Health Charity providing free mental health and wellbeing support.

We pride ourselves on being led by the community. Surveys on our website allow us to understand the needs of the community and our aim is to provide online workshops and groups to meet those needs, as they arise.

We are here to support people disadvantaged through circumstance, such as mental ill-health, the cost-of-living crisis, Covid-19 or disability for example. Using only qualified and registered counsellors and psychotherapists we will offer a safe, nurturing and therapeutic environment, where people will not be judged and will have their voice and opinions valued and heard. We aim to provide a service that is more interactive and allows those who may have felt previously isolated and unheard, to discuss their needs with others who are, or have been, on the same journey. As professional therapists, we will provide those strategies and skills that we found useful in individual and group therapy.

Our website has a Hub which offers access to free mental health and disability information and resources, including helpful strategies and tools, plus direct links to other charities and services, both local and national. Our Creative Corner aims to build a caring community where individuals can share music, art, poetry, or strategies for example, that they have found poignant or useful.



Board:

Chair: Wendy Harrison

Trustee: Andrew Beaumont

Trustee: Toni Jackson

Management Team:

Joint CEO: Elissa Vale

Joint CEO: Maria Robinson

Echoes Charity was founded by Maria Robinson and Elissa Vale in June 2020 and was registered in January 2022.

Both Maria and Elissa wanted to provide for the increasing demand for mental health support and wanted it to be freely accessible to everyone.

They continue to provide their services to the charity and are responsible for managing the charity and website, and running the workshops and groups.

Our trustees, Wendy Harrison, Andrew Beaumont and Toni Jackson all joined us in 2021 and work hard to support and govern Echoes Charity.



Trustee Recruitment

Echoes Charity have a fantastic board of trustees, bringing a vast array of skills and knowledge along with a great enthusiasm for the charity and it's support of the community.

We are looking to welcome in other potential Trustees and have a post on our website encouraging those who may be interested to apply for a trial run on the board.

A knowledge of how charities work is useful but not essential. Candidates should have a clean financial record and any skills offered would be gratefully received. This can include fundraising, accountancy, research or administration for example, but this is not a barrier if you are willing to give your time and experience.

We view joining the board as an opportunity for someone looking for professional development and wishing to help shape the future of a charity and make a real difference to peoples' lives.

The role of Trustee will be:

- To work with those managing and governing the charity.
- To attend monthly, hour-long trustee meetings to update the board on the workings of the charity and to make policy decisions together with the other members of the board.
- To take ownership of one or more policies and be responsible for any issues that may arise.

- To take an active interest in the work of the charity, promoting it on your social media and, where possible and appropriate, providing networking contacts to the management group.

Ideally, we would like all trustees to volunteer for a few days each year to help with the running of the charity, using their skills and strengths to work alongside the management team.

When taking on new Trustees, Maria Robinson and Elissa Vale will conduct the first interview. Elissa Vale will prepare a summary of each candidate with skill sets and references. Candidates will be required to read and adhere to all Echoes Charity policies including the 'Register of Interest' policy and will be required to submit a 'Declaration of Interest' form. Trustees will be invited to the final interviews and will then choose candidates they would like to go forward for a six-month trial period.

If the candidate is successful and has understood and agreed to the requirements of governance, they will be asked to join the charity.

Volunteering for Echoes Charity

Echoes Charity currently have two regular volunteer charity workers, three volunteer Trustees and occasional additional volunteers, including placement A level students.

As a charity we rely on volunteers and we welcome those from all backgrounds and abilities who would like to apply (please see our volunteer post application form on our website at www.echoescharity.org.uk)

We value every member of society and aim to provide a safe and inclusive atmosphere, treating all volunteers and charity workers with equality and respect.

Volunteers can be a part of our community and contribute in many ways, all of which can build skills and confidence whilst enhancing CV's.

Recruiting volunteers

The level of assessment and background checks when recruiting a volunteer will depend on the safeguarding risks of a role, and so recruitment may follow on from a friendly conversation or an in-depth interview, reviewed by two or more people (one of whom will understand safeguarding responsibilities), where references would be required.

Safeguarding

Volunteer roles, where there are safeguarding risks, will be offered conditionally until DBS and references checks are completed and volunteer roles in all capacities may be withdrawn if the management team and/or trustees deem the volunteer unsuitable for that role.

Echoes charity is a mental health and disability support service and volunteers may come across potentially distressing subject matter. If at any point a volunteer feels emotionally challenged or triggered, they are invited to speak to a member of the management team. Disclosures will be kept confidential, unless there is risk of harm, in which instance emergency services may be contacted. Volunteers making a disclosure will be treated with the utmost respect and compassion and support options will be explored and actioned.

Role Description & Responsibilities

Volunteer roles will vary considerably according to volunteer skills and the needs of the charity. Volunteers are encouraged to put forward skills they might have or suggest areas they would like to work in. Examples are administrative work, fundraising, policy writing, or marketing promotion of Echoes Charity. Volunteers may change or adjust their roles after discussion with the management team and/or the trustees.

Qualifications are not mandatory to volunteer, however role suitability will be assessed and will remain flexible and at the discretion of the management team and/or trustees. Echoes Charity would aim to find a role for all those who wish to volunteer.

All volunteers are asked to promote Echoes Charity

Volunteers will work online from home after a suitable risk assessment has been done. Volunteers will be given phone and text access to a member of the

management team at all times. They will also be able to join in meetings with management and trustees if they wish to do so.

All volunteers will be trained in, and agree to comply with Echoes Charity policies and procedures.

Although we expect commitment from volunteers, we are flexible and ask only that volunteers give sufficient notice if they are unable to fulfil agreed commitments.

Echoes Charity aims to:

- Guide, instruct, or train volunteers in the roles/tasks they are assigned
- Provide monthly supervision where volunteers will be free to discuss issues, concerns, difficulties, suggestions or achievements.
- Provide volunteers with transferable workplace skills, offer references and relevant training where appropriate.

Insurance

Echoes Charity Public and Employer Liability insurance covers all volunteers between the ages of 18 and 75 years and includes any activities they may undertake for the charity.

Echoes Charity Mission

‘To promote the mental and emotional health of the public, primarily, but not exclusively, by educating and counselling through workshops, therapeutic support and training, those disadvantaged by circumstances in England and Wales, to improve their wellbeing, skills, understanding and competencies and to achieve their potential.’

We achieve our mission with the provision of online workshops and groups and through our website Hub, where there is access to mental health and disability information and resources (including helpful tools and strategies),

direct links to other charities and support services (local and national) and a Creative Corner where service users can build a caring community by sharing music, art, poetry, or strategies for example, that they have found poignant or useful. We are hoping this will help people and encourage them to feel they are part of a community.

The Hub will also bring organisations together and add value to their services as they can also use our Hub to find suitable support for, and to signpost, their clients.

We hope to work with and alongside other services, charities and professionals, such as CRUSE (Bereavement) and Autism UK/MIND/CCASS and will welcome their contributions and expertise.

Going forward, we will also be developing funding groups across England and Wales where people can feel part of a community, develop skills, strengths and confidence whilst raising funds for the charity.

Online Workshops and Groups

Initial workshops and groups have been chosen because of the need in our community. By networking in many local groups, organisations and businesses in the area we have identified that there is insufficient therapeutic support for the parents and carers of autistic people, and for 18 to 25 year old autistic young people. These two groups often feel unheard, unsupported and isolated.

By providing online workshops and groups for the above cohorts, we are hoping to develop understanding, communication, coping skills, better relationships, confidence and a sense of belonging and community.

We want people to feel heard and supported.

Our first project is for Autism [also known as Aspergers, High Functioning Autism, Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD), Autistic Spectrum Condition (ASC), and The Spectrum] whether diagnosed, or self-diagnosed, and we are

providing a workshop for the parents and carers of autistic people, and a group for autistic 18 – 25 year olds.

Early 2025 we trialled our workshop for parents and carers of autistic people. Potential attendees were invited to complete our confidential online survey prior to joining the group. Using this questionnaire, we were able to tailor the first online workshop to meet the needs of the group.

Between each session further workshop questionnaires were emailed to each workshop attendee asking for feedback on the workshop just attended, and questions on what they would like the focus of the next workshop to be. This allowed us to make our service more effective, efficient and goal focussed, whilst remaining client-led and relevant to the group.

We also trialled three different formats for the workshops. The first was educational, using power points, where questions and discussions were welcomed at any point. The second was based around a case study of a volunteer member of the group, encouraging group discussions and the sharing of strategies and experiences, and the third was a group therapy session.

Feedback from the attendees as to their preferences on the effectiveness of the presentation styles will further improve future workshops.

Feedback from the beta group was a 100% positive and all found it helpful

Online Surveys

Our online general mental health survey was added to the homepage of our website at the end of 2024. Once the website is launched, this will enable Echoes Charity to ask the community what their individual, family and community needs are. We will then provide workshops that are appropriate to meet those needs, as they arise, in an appropriate time frame (thus reducing pressures on other organisations and mental health services such as schools and RISE).

Currently we have a general mental health, a parenting and carers of autistic people and an 18 to 25's autistic young person's survey. As the charity progresses and accesses further funding, we will add more surveys relevant to our target community.

Funding

Project Management

Throughout this year, Echoes charity has used it's funding to run the website and monthly G-suite payments. It has also allowed us to start a collaboration with Adam Irvine of Together CSR.

Adam is a full Member of the Chartered Institute of Fundraising and has been in the sector since 2008. He has raised tens of millions of pounds for a wide-range of causes from small grassroots organisations to National household names.

The management team, Maria Robinson and Elissa Vale, now hold regular project management meetings with Adam and are very excited to work with him on current and future projects.

Donations

Families First sadly closed their doors in 2024 and kindly donated their remaining funds to Echoes Charity. Their founder, Wendy Huckle felt that we shared the same ethos of building a brighter and better future for families and children, and transferred **£1,900.00** in July 2024. This has kept us afloat whilst preparing for our launch.

This financial year we received **£77.27** through the charity donation website 'Just Giving'.

Finances

Echoes Charity has remained in credit this financial year with a pot of unrestricted funds and minimum expenses.

Our Tax Return was submitted on the 10-12-2025

Echoes Charity Income and Expenditure Accounts

April 6th 2024 to April 5th 2025

Unrestricted funds brought forward from financial year 2023 to 2024 - **£216.78**

Date	Funding/Donation	Amount Received	Date	Outgoings	Cost	Running Total
			02/05/2024	Gsuite	£6.00	£210.78
			03/06/2024	Gsuite	£6.00	£204.78
15/07/2024	Families First	£ 1,900.00	02/07/2024	Gsuite	£6.00	£2,098.78
			02/08/2024	Gsuite	£6.00	£2,092.78
			02/09/2024	Gsuite	£6.00	£2,086.78
			10/09/2024	Domains	£86.33	£2,000.45
			02/10/2024	Gsuite	£6.00	£1,994.45
			03/10/2024.	Rugby Web Design	£334.80	£1,659.65
			04/11/2024	Gsuite	£6.00	£1,653.65
			02/12/2024	Gsuite	£6.00	£1,647.65
			09/12/2024	Together Csr Ltd Funding	£360.00	£1,287.65
23/12/2024	Just Giving	£62.86				£1,350.51
			02/01/2025	Gsuite	£6.00	£1,344.51
01/03/2025	Just Giving	£14.41	03/02/2025	Gsuite	£6.00	£1,352.92
			03/03/2025	Gsuite	£6.00	£1,346.92
			02/04/2025	Gsuite	£6.00	£1,340.92

Balance brought forward from 2023-2024: £216.78

Total Income: £1,977.27

Total Expenditure: £853.13

Current Balance: £1,340.92

Total of Unrestricted Funds - £1,340.92

Restricted funds - £0



We listen. We support. We help.

Charity Registration Number 1197447

Financial and Reserves Policy and Procedures

2024 - 2025

Echoes Charity reserves are to be used solely for the management and running of the charity and the benefit of its service users. Designated (by the donor), restricted (by the trustees), required and unrequired free (undesignated) reserves will be spent accordingly.

Echoes Charity will endeavour to build its funds through grant applications, sponsorship and fundraising activities so that it may provide and continue to provide a service to the public and fulfil its charitable purpose. Donations and funding will be spent in a timely fashion.

[Maria Robinson and Elissa Vale](#) will plan budgets and financial forecasts and will manage, monitor and report finances in monthly meetings with the trustee board throughout the year. The trustees will review and action necessary changes to maintain the reserves. Overall responsibility of finances and reserves lies with Echoes Charity Trustees who should;

- act transparently and in the interests of their charity and its beneficiaries
- act with reasonable care and skill
- manage, plan, protect and safeguard the assets and finances of Echoes Charity to enable it to carry out its activities
- agree a reserves level and endeavour to ensure there is enough undesignated funding to keep the charity going (for 3-9 months)

- seek legal/Charity Commission advice if wishing to hold reserves
- ensure the charity does not misrepresent its financial status
- ensure their charity is accountable
- provide a full and honest annual record of the charity's accounts to the Charity Commission annually along with a copy of the Reserves Policy and accounts will be made available where applicable (The financial year runs from April 6th to April 5th)
- address the financial risks of unplanned closure on their charity workers and volunteers

Banking

- All bank accounts will be in the name of the organisation
- No bank account will be opened with out the permission of the trustees and will be recorded in the minutes
- Trustees to inform the bank (through [Maria Robinson](#)) of any changes i.e. contact details or additional/changed trustees -

Current Bank:

Co Operative Bank, **P.O. Box 101, 1 Balloon Street, Manchester M60 4EP**

Accounts, Authorisation and Payment

- All purchases are recorded in the charity accounts and receipts kept
- [Maria Robinson](#) is responsible for the day to day upkeep of the accounts o Every transaction will be entered into the accounts including the date of the transaction and the person/service/company money was received from or paid to

- [Maria Robinson](#) and [Elissa Vale](#) are responsible for keeping and storing receipts
- All financial investments must be agreed and minuted by the board of trustees
- Payer ([Maria Robinson](#)) will keep monthly, quarterly and annual spreadsheets of accounts
- Payer ([Maria Robinson](#)) will share these with an accountant when appropriate
- Payer ([Maria Robinson](#)) to bring the monthly bank statements and/or detailed accounts to each monthly trustee meeting to be agreed by the board of trustees.

Any changes implemented by the trustees will be put into ECHOES financial procedure and will be adhered to from the date of the meeting. Accounts will be added as an agenda item for every meeting

○ **Payments out;**

- Spending limit for [Elissa Vale & Maria Robinson](#) without permission - £500
- Spending between £500 and £1,000 [Maria Robinson & Elissa Vale](#) need permission from [Wendy Harrison](#) (Chair)
- Spending over £1,000 requires permission of every trustee
- 1 signatory ([Maria Robinson](#)) then [Elissa Vale](#) plus trustees as counter signatories. If the bank does not set this up as an automated service, and [Elissa Vale](#) is not available to counter sign then a trustee will be contacted to counter sign
- If not an automated bank procedure, we are to email each other re payments and [Maria Robinson](#) will log (not to print unless necessary for sustainability) so there is a record of payment request and agreement. Logs will be kept for 6yrs
- Payments will be recorded by payer ([Maria Robinson](#)) on a spreadsheet
- Direct Debits will be set up by payer ([Maria Robinson](#)) and a second signatory for IT, Accounting, Insurance, IT etc

- **Payments in;**
 - Cheques and cash – payer will be notified on day of deposit into bank and payer ([Maria Robinson](#)) will log on the accounts spreadsheet. [Elissa Vale](#) and [Maria Robinson](#) will transfer cash and cheques to the branch on alternate months.
 - Donations and sponsorship payments will be logged on the CRM (amount and conditions of use) as well as on the accounts spreadsheet
- **Expenses;**
 - Expenses requests will be logged on an expense request form
 - Receipts should be scanned and emailed to [Maria Robinson](#) (on the day/within a week) and [Maria Robinson](#) will add to the accounts spreadsheet
 - Agreed expenses – likely to be minimal but could include stationery for example
 - Expenses will be paid by the payer ([Maria Robinson](#)) once a month in the last week of the month ○ **Petty cash?** – won't be necessary as we will use the card provided by the bank for all purchases.
- Account spreadsheets may be required and shared with funders/sponsors. This has been agreed as necessary by all trustees.

Donations

Echoes Charity will follow the Charity Commission guidance on laws around public collections and fundraising

- All donors giving over £1,000 will be checked by [Maria Robinson](#) or [Elissa Vale](#). Reasonable checks would be Companies House if a business or google/Companies House check if an individual donor

- Suspicious donations will be reported to the Police
- Cash and cheques given will be accurately recorded and payments will be banked (via Post Office) or online via the Co Op cheque imaging facility within 14 working days

Donations Received 2024 - 2025

Families First sadly closed their doors in 2024 and kindly donated their remaining funds to Echoes Charity. Their founder, Wendy Huckle felt that we shared the same ethos of building a brighter and better future for families and children, and transferred **£1,900.00** in July 2024. This has kept us afloat whilst preparing for our launch.

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Current Funding Applications

Echoes Charity have applied for several funding grants this year, including the Lottery - Awards for All, Alan Laine, Iron

mongers and Coventry Building society.

Insurance

Appropriate Insurance policies will be maintained to cover:

- Employer's Liability
- Public Liability
- Cyber
- Trustee Indemnity

Inventory of Assets

- 2 x laptops £852.32
- 2 x headsets £43.1

Echoes Charity Reserves – End of Financial Year

April 6th 2022 – April 5th 2023 - £3,754.63

April 6th 2023 – April 5th 2024 - £575.01

April 6th 2024 – April 5th 2025 - £1,340.92

Echoes Charity Reserve Requirement for Financial Year:

April 6th 2022 – April 5th 2023 - £3179.62

April 6th 2023 – April 5th 2024 - £575.01

April 6th 2024 – April 5th 2025 - £55.20

April 6th 2025 – April 5th 2026 - £853

Raising, Reporting and Recording concerns regarding financial conduct

If any suspected financial crime or abuse is identified or reported the board of trustees should be immediately informed. If a trustee is the suspect, a board meeting should be held without their being present and the discussion and

agreed action recorded. If the trustee board is identified, or the incidents are serious, the Charity Commission should be contacted.

You should also report it to other bodies depending on the type and level of the incident.

Report:

- all types of fraud to Action Fraud
- tax fraud to HMRC
- any incident involving financial services, such as investments, insurance or pensions, to the Financial Conduct Authority
- data breaches to the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO)

Responsibility for Echoes Charity Financial and Reserves Policy:

Echoes Charity Board of Trustees;

Chair [Toni Jackson](#)

Trustee [Andrew Beaumont](#)

Trustee [Rayna Shock](#)

Please contact a member of the Trustee Board by sending an email to:
enquiries@echoescharity.org.uk

I have read, understand and agree to the terms of the Echoes Charity Financial and Reserves Policy and Procedures;

Signed:



Print Name: Ellen Maria Robinson

Date: 10-12-2025

Date for next review: 10-04-2025