



ANNUAL REPORT

1st April 2024 – 31st March 2025

Milly's Smiles

Legal and Administrative Information

Trustees: Gemma Dyson (Chair)
David Sears (Treasurer)
Kathryn Thomas (Secretary)
Helen Wall (resigned 22.5.24)
John Sturgess
Carrie Wright (appointed 23.7.24)

Charity Number: 1198503

Registered Address: 45 Lynwood Avenue
Clayton-le-Moors
Accrington
Lancashire
BB5 5RR

Independent Examiner: Kerys Holt FCCA
DPM Accounting Services
Suite 10b
The Beehive
Lions Drive
Shadsworth Business Park
Blackburn
BB1 2QS

Bankers: National Westminster Bank plc
5 St James Street
Accrington
Lancashire
BB5 1LY

Milly's Smiles

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Milly's Smiles

Trustee's Report For the year ended March 2025

The Trustee's present their Annual Report and Financial Statements of the charity for the period ended 31st March 2025.

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the accounting policies set out in note 1 to the accounts and comply with the Charity's Governing Document, The Charities Act 2011 and Account 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 published (FRS 102) (effective 1 January 2019).

Structure, Governance and Management

The charity has previously operated as a charitable trust – registration number 116399. The change to a Charitable Incorporated Organisation was for administration purposes and our aims and objectives remain unchanged. Registration for the new CIO was 4 April 2022.

The trustees administer the charity and regularly meet throughout the year.

The trustees who served during the year were:

Gemma Dyson (Chair)
David Sears
Kathryn Thomas
Helen Wall (resigned 22.5.25)
John Sturgess
Carrie Wright (appointed 23.7.24)

The chair is responsible for the induction of new trustees. The induction provides new trustees with an awareness of their responsibilities, the governing document and the history and philosophical approach of the charity.

The trustees have assessed the major risks to which the charity is exposed, and are satisfied that systems are in place to mitigate exposure to the major risks. The risk register is reviewed regularly at Trustee meetings.

None of our trustees receive remuneration or other benefit from their work with the charity. Any connection between a trustee with any service providers must be disclosed to the full board of trustees in the same way as any other contractual relationship with a related party. There were no connections or conflicts of interest disclosed in the year.

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Trustee's Report (continued) For the year end March 2025

Objectives and activities

The purpose of Milly's Smiles is:

The advancement of health or the saving of lives via the provision of comforts and items to children aged 0-18 years, who have been newly diagnosed with an oncology related illness.

To relieve the distress of families in the UK who have suffered the bereavement of a child by the provision of charitable means that the trustees think fit including but not exclusively by providing monthly support groups involving creative and holistic therapies.

The trustees have paid due regard to guidance issued by the Charity Commission in deciding what activities the charity should undertake. The trustees are satisfied that they have complied with their duty to have due regard to the guidance on public benefit published by the Commission in exercising their powers or duties.

Benefit

Milly's Smiles is committed to supporting families at one of the most distressing and life-altering moments they may ever face, the point at which their child is diagnosed with a cancer-related illness and admitted to hospital for treatment.

The initial admission to a children's oncology ward is often sudden and unplanned. In many cases, families are transferred urgently from a local hospital following an emergency consultation.

They arrive at specialist treatment centres with little warning, no time to prepare, and often without any essential items.

For families, this marks the beginning of an extremely challenging journey, filled with fear, uncertainty, and overwhelming emotional and practical pressures.

Milly's Smiles was founded to provide immediate, practical support to these families through the provision of our Milly Bags, holdalls filled with both comfort and essential items to help parents and children navigate their unplanned hospital stay with greater ease.

These bags are designed not only to offer practical relief, but also to send a clear and compassionate message that parents are not alone.

In addition to this core service, Milly's Smiles is proud to continue funding a family room at Ronald McDonald House Manchester, located adjacent to the Royal Manchester Children's Hospital.

This room, known as Milly's Castle, provides families who live far from the hospital with a nearby, supportive place to stay, enabling them to remain close to their child during inpatient treatment.

Our sponsorship of this room is renewed on a three-year cycle, with the most recent renewal completed in March 2023.

Milly's Smiles has continued its dedicated bereavement support for parents, grandparents, and siblings under the name SOULS (Support, Optimism, Understanding, Love).

This service remains in place in response to a clear and growing need for emotional and peer support among families who have experienced the devastating loss of a child.

The SOULS programme offers tailored support to parents, grandparents, and siblings following the death of a child, grandchild, or sibling. While many bereaved families wish to honour and remember their loved one, the emotional impact of such a loss can make verbal communication extremely difficult. Traditional support mechanisms do not always meet the nuanced and deeply personal needs of these families.

Within our local area, there is a significant gap in accessible, non-clinical bereavement support. Milly's Smiles has continued to provide monthly peer support groups, offering a safe, understanding, and compassionate space for those affected.

Unlike conventional discussion-based support groups, SOULS integrates creative activities into its sessions. This approach is grounded in psychological research, which shows that engaging in creative expression can reduce anxiety, build trust, and offer alternative pathways for processing grief, particularly when verbal expression is too painful.

These sessions allow families to connect with others who share the lived experience of child loss, creating an empathetic and supportive environment. Attendees are welcome to talk, listen, reflect, or simply be present without pressure or expectation.

The peer-to-peer connection that develops within the group provides a unique and powerful form of support, built on mutual understanding, shared grief, and a profound, unspoken bond.

Through SOULS, Milly's Smiles aims to ensure that no bereaved family feels isolated, and that they have access to support that is both gentle and meaningful.

Milly's Smiles



Through these initiatives, Milly's Smiles remains steadfast in its mission to make an immediate, meaningful difference at a time when families feel that their entire world has collapsed.

Beneficiaries

Milly's Smiles provides immediate, practical support to families whose child has been newly diagnosed with cancer and admitted to a specialist children's oncology ward. Each eligible admission receives a Milly Bag, a thoughtfully curated holdall designed to offer comfort and essential items during what is often an unplanned and deeply distressing hospital stay.

Each Milly Bag contains:

- A soft fleece blanket
- Neck pillow and heat pack
- Towel and waterproof bag
- Reusable juice bottle and thermal cup
- Notepad, pen and document wallet
- Thermal cup with a lid and a water bottle
- A soft Beanie hat
- Full set of toiletries
- Vegan-friendly sweets
- A hand-knitted elephant, crafted by our volunteers





These items are selected to provide both practical help and emotional reassurance at a critical moment, helping families feel supported, seen, and cared for.

Milly's Smiles currently supports the following hospitals:

- Royal Manchester Children's Hospital (Ward 86)
- Alder Hey Children's Hospital (Ward 3B)
- Leeds Children's Hospital (Wards L31, L32, L33)
- Nottingham Children's Hospital (Ward E39)
- The Great North Children's Hospital (Ward 4)
- Oxford Children's Hospital (Kamran's Ward)

In 2024, we expanded our reach by taking on two additional oncology wards. We are also proud to collaborate with Team Luke Foundation, a children's cancer charity, in our support for Ward 4 at The Great North Children's Hospital. This partnership has been instrumental in facilitating our work in the region, with Team Luke generously funding an initial supply of 100 Milly Bags.

Milly's Smiles remains committed to expanding our services sustainably while ensuring every family continues to receive the same high standard of care, compassion, and support.

Achievements and performance

This year has seen both growth and consolidation of our core services and our work has reached more families than ever before. We are proud to have maintained high-quality, compassionate support through every stage of a family's journey.

We distributed a total of 420 Milly Bags this year to children newly diagnosed with cancer across six major treatment centres in the UK:

- Royal Manchester Children's Hospital – 100 bags
- Alder Hey Children's Hospital – 80 bags
- Leeds Children's Hospital – 60 bags
- Nottingham Children's Hospital – 45 bags
- The Great North Children's Hospital (Newcastle) – 80 bags
- Oxford Children's Hospital – 55 bags

Our SOULS bereavement support group has continued to grow and now supports over 25 families, including bereaved parents, grandparents, siblings and for the first time, several fathers and brothers, who have found comfort in the safe space we offer.

We have continued with our one-to-one counselling with a qualified bereavement counsellor, for those families who require extra specialist input. These sessions take place in our dedicated counselling room within the Milly's Smiles unit.

Milly's Smiles remains deeply rooted in the local community, and we are continually humbled by the support we receive. Many of our fundraisers have a personal connection to our work, having received a Milly Bag themselves. This year's community support included:

- Ongoing fundraising through local schools, fire services, Tesco's book swap service, and ASDA
- Annual Golf Day organised by Sabden Cricket Club
- Charity Golf Day organised by a company with a connection to Ward 3B at Alder Hey Children's Hospital.
- A Charity Football Match day organised by a community group after Milly's Smiles supported one of their families when they were on Ward 86.
- Our first Spring Fair, which was a great success and is set to become an annual event
- Our Grease-themed Ball in November, held in honour of what would have been Milly's 21st birthday
- Our 10th Annual Birthday Walk for Milly, which continues to draw loyal support each year

Financial review

Milly's Smiles has continued to sustain strong financial stability throughout the reporting year, enabling us to continue and expand our vital services to families facing childhood cancer and bereavement.

We were fortunate to receive support from a number of organisations who selected us as their chosen charity or supported us through a range of fundraising activities.

These included:

- JaRo HR
- HVDP Media
- Avidly Marketing
- Harrison Drury Solicitors
- North Lancashire Training Group

In addition to corporate partnerships, we have had generous donations from local companies as well as outstanding support from individuals in our community, many of whom have undertaken personal fundraising challenges on our behalf.

This includes a number of families who have previously received a Milly Bag and now actively support our cause through fundraising and awareness-raising efforts.

Our charity has also benefited from the continued support of local schools and community groups, who have held events to raise funds on our behalf, which is support that we never take for granted.

Furthermore, we are thankful for those who contribute through monthly regular giving, helping to provide a consistent and reliable income stream.

Finally, we remain deeply appreciative of the unwavering support from Milly's family and friends. Their commitment, generosity, and passion continue to honour Milly's legacy and inspire the work we do every day.

Reserves Policy

The purpose of the reserves is to secure the future of our work and to maintain our commitment to supporting newly diagnosed families in the hospitals where we have already made a commitment to provide Milly Bags. The reserves will provide protection against unexpected events and fluctuations in income.

The trustees have considered the risks and needs of the charity, identifying the following areas:

- UK or worldwide events which will impact on the charity's fundraising capability such as terrorism, natural disaster or pandemic
- Funds to allow for an increased number of children being newly diagnosed with cancer and requiring a Milly Bag.
- Cost increases in bag contents.

- Sufficient to protect the charity from the risk of insolvency or serious disruption to its work.
- Reputational risk – this is managed through careful recruitment of trustees and volunteers, and by carefully managing any perceived or actual conflicts of interest.

The trustees consider that reserves should be maintained at a level equivalent to twelve-month's expenditure. This will ensure that, in the event of a significant drop in funding they will be able to continue the charity's current activities while consideration is given to ways in which additional funds may be raised. This level of reserves has been maintained through the year.

Risk management

As the charity continues to establish itself the trustees will conduct a review of the major risks to which the charity may be exposed and systems will be established to mitigate exposure to those risks.

Plans for future periods

The trustees are proud of what has been achieved so far, but are determined to continue to build upon the work undertaken to date in order to help as many newly diagnosed families as possible.

The trustee's report has been approved by the Board of Trustees.



Gemma Dyson
Chairperson.
Dated: 23/6/25



Section A

Independent Examiner's Report

Report to the trustees

Charity Name
Milly's Smiles

On accounts for the year
ended

31 March 2025

Charity no
(if any)

1198503

Set out on pages

15 to 17

(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 **31 / 03 / 2025**.

Responsibilities and
basis of report

As the charity's trustees, you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 ("the Act").

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

Independent
examiner's statement

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no material matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination which gives me cause to believe that in, any material respect:

- the accounting records were not kept in accordance with section 130 of the Charities Act; or
- the accounts did not accord with the accounting records; or
- the accounts did 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.

Signed:

K Holt

Date:

25/07/2025

Name:

Kerys Holt FCCA

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

ACCA

Address: Suite 10B The Beehive, Lions Drive
Shadsworth Business Park, Blackburn
BB1 2QS

Section B

Disclosure

Only complete if the examiner needs to highlight material 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.

Millys Smiles**Charity No : 1198503****Income & Expenditure Account
Year Ended 31 March 2025****2025****£****2025****£****Income**

Grants	2,100
Donations	41,062
Fundraising	154,788
Interest received	9,227

207,177**Less Expenditure and Overheads****Direct Expenses**

Cost of direct charitable activity	78,257
Staff Wages	43,878
Nest Pension	2,099
SJP Pension	1,969

126,203**Administration Expenses**

Accountancy Fees	804
Bank Charges	217
Depreciation	790
Insurance	164
Professional Fees	0
Rent	6,508
Repairs	5,373
Sundry Expenses	611
Telephone	120
Travel	3,495
Utilities	2,663

20,747**Total Expenses****146,950****Surplus (Deficit) Generated from Operations****60,227****Profits (Losses) transferred to Revenue Reserves****60,227**

Milly's Smiles**Charity No : 1198503****Balance Sheet****Year Ended 31 March 2025**

	2025	2025
	£	£
Fixed Assets		
Motor Vehicles	6,809	
Less: Depreciation	<u>4,559</u>	2,250
Fixtures and Fittings	371	
Less: Depreciation	<u>143</u>	228
Current Assets		
Cash at bank	344,663	
Petty Cash in Hand	<u>201</u>	344,864
Current Liabilities		
Accrued Charges	960	
Deferred Grant Income	0	
PAYE & NI	<u>3,134</u>	4,094
Net Current Assets		<u>340,769</u>
		343,247
Less : Restricted Funding & Grants		0
		<u>343,247</u>
Reprersented by :		
Revenue Reserves brought forward		283,020
Capital Introduced		0
Surplus (Deficit) for the year		60,227
		<u>343,247</u>

Notes to the Financial Statements
For the period ended 31 March 2025

1. ACCOUNTING POLICIES

Depreciation

Depreciation has been calculated to write off the net book values of fixed assets over their expected economic lives at the following annual rates.

Motor Vehicles	25% on reducing balance
Fixtures and Fittings	15% on reducing balance

2. INCOME

Turnover for the year was £207,177 (2024 £106,981) and represents the £2,100 restricted and £205,077 unrestricted funding grants and donations received from various sources and during the year.

3. CORPORATION TAX

Corporation tax is charged in the accounts in the period to which it relates.

The amount of corporate tax due on non-mutual trading activities for the year was £ nil.

4. CONTINUING OPERATIONS

None of the charity's activities were acquired or discontinued during the year.

5. TOTAL RECOGNISED GAINS AND LOSSES

The charity has no recognised gains or losses other than the profit for the financial period detailed herewith.