

**TRUSTEES' REPORT AND
UNAUDITED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024
FOR
SISTERWOOD**

SISTERWOOD

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FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024

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SISTERWOOD
TRUSTEES' REPORT
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024

The Trustees have pleasure in presenting their report along with the financial statements for the year ended 31 August 2024. The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with current statutory requirements, the charity's governing documents, and the recommendations of the Statement of Recommended Practice "Accounting and Reporting by Charities" (SORP 2005) and complies with applicable law. We have also referred to the guidance contained in the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit when reviewing our aims and objectives for the year.

OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES

Objectives and aims

SisterWood supports young women aged 12 - 16 years with their mental wellbeing through a woodland-based programme, blending practical skills and mindfulness-based practices. Our vision is to create a foundation of mental wellbeing for young women that provides a toolkit for confidence and resilience, so they can handle whatever life brings.

ACHIEVEMENT AND PERFORMANCE

Introduction

This year has been one of transition for SisterWood. Our founder and previous Director, Fran, stepped down due to health reasons, leading to leadership and governance changes. We extend our deep gratitude to Fran for her dedication, vision, and the impact she has made in shaping SisterWood.

In May, Fran was also featured on Countryfile, bringing valuable recognition to the work she has led and the impact of our nature-based approach. This was a proud moment for SisterWood and a testament to everything she built.

Alongside these leadership changes, we've also seen shifts within the trustee board and the challenge of securing a new venue for programme delivery. While this period has brought uncertainty, it has also provided space for reflection, learning, and strengthening our foundations for the future.

While I was not in post during the reporting period (August 2023 - August 2024), I was brought in later in the year to assess SisterWood's viability and long-term potential. Following this consultancy project, I stepped into the role of Director in December 2024. Since then, my focus has been on stabilising operations, securing long-term sustainability, and preparing SisterWood for the next phase of its work.

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TRUSTEES' REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024

Leadership & Governance

- Director Transition: Fran stepped down as Director, and SisterWood entered an interim period before my appointment in December 2024.
- Trustee Board Changes: The trustee board saw changes, with Beverley Garland and Karen Salt stepping into roles. We still need to recruit a treasurer, but our immediate focus has been on stabilising operations before expanding the board further.
- Operational Pause & Reflection: Programme delivery was paused in summer 2024 while trustees assessed the organisation's future. I was brought in as a consultant to review SisterWood's financial position and overall viability, in November 2024 which led to my appointment as Director.
- Clarifying Roles & Decision-Making: To improve operational efficiency, we are refining role descriptions and decision-making structures to ensure clarity between staff, trustees, and volunteers as we rebuild.

Programme Impact (Aug 2023 - Aug 2024)

Despite the challenges this year, SisterWood continued to run impactful programmes during the spring and summer. Activities included:

- Landing and Settling In - Icebreaker games, nature-based check-ins, and discussions on emotional and physical safety.
- Heartspace & Emotional Well-being - Breathwork, guided meditation, and emotional regulation using the RAIN framework.
- Fire-Making & Outdoor Skills - Practical fire-making, team challenges, and learning about fire structures.
- Stress Management & Resilience - Recognising stress, grounding techniques, and self-care strategies.
- Boundaries & Communication - Storytelling, personal boundaries, and active listening.
- Ikigai & Visioning for the Future - Exploring purpose, goal setting, and vision board creation.

Key Impact & Participant Reflections:

Connection with Nature: "thrive being outdoors" shared one participant, highlighting the restorative power of time in nature.

Personal Growth: "I can be me, without caring what others think" reflected another young woman, showing increased confidence and self-acceptance.

Community Building: 100% of participants surveyed identified "making friends" as the best part of the programme, underscoring the importance of peer connection.

Flexibility & Sensitivity: SisterWood's adaptive approach allowed for deeper engagement, ensuring inclusivity and meaningful participation.

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TRUSTEES' REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024

Challenges & Organisational Learning

Challenges Faced:

- Leadership Transition & Programme Disruption: Shifts in leadership and venue uncertainty led to a temporary pause in programme delivery.
- Funding Uncertainty: While core programme costs were covered, a long-term funding strategy is needed to ensure stability.
- Venue & Logistics: Securing a stable, long-term venue remains a key priority.
- Expectation Balancing: As a grassroots charity, balancing ambition and capacity is an ongoing challenge. Sustainable growth needs to align with available resources while maintaining a strong vision for impact.

Key Learnings:

Leadership transition planning is critical: Ensuring continuity and stability during changes is vital. Strengthening governance & operations will support long-term sustainability. A flexible, participant-centered approach remains key to meaningful engagement. Trustee & operational alignment: Clear expectations between trustees and staff will improve decision-making and effectiveness.

To support these efforts, I have developed a Theory of Change, outlining SisterWood's core aims, impact, and strategic direction. I have also restructured staff roles to create a more sustainable workload, ensuring facilitators focus on programme delivery, while I manage the operational and strategic side of SisterWood.

Theory of Change & Strategic Direction

Over the past few months, I have focused on strengthening SisterWood's long-term impact. A major step in this has been developing a Theory of Change (ToC), which defines how our activities lead to meaningful change for young girls.

The ToC outlines:

- The challenges our participants face (e.g., low confidence, mental health struggles, lack of access to safe spaces).
- The interventions we provide (e.g., nature-based learning, mentorship, community-building).
- The outcomes we expect to see (e.g., increased confidence, resilience, deeper community connection).

This framework will shape programme design, governance decisions, funding applications, and impact measurement. It is currently under trustee review and will be a key tool for guiding SisterWood's future growth.

Safeguarding at Sisterwood

SisterWood is committed to providing a safe, inclusive, and supportive environment for all participants. As a small grassroots charity, we are mindful of the need to balance best practice with what is realistic for our capacity and resources.

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TRUSTEES' REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024

Over the next year, we will:

- Review and update our safeguarding policies to ensure they are clear, practical, and aligned with best practice in a way that works for SisterWood's size and structure.
- Provide safeguarding training for facilitators and key staff, ensuring they feel confident in identifying and responding to safeguarding concerns.
- Develop clear safeguarding roles and responsibilities, making sure that everyone involved staff, trustees, and volunteers, understands their part in keeping young people safe.

As SisterWood grows, we will continue to review and improve safeguarding structures in a way that is both effective and achievable for a small organisation. Safeguarding is not just about policies, it is about creating a culture where young people feel safe, respected, and supported in everything we do.

Looking Ahead (Post-Aug 2024 Plans)

Since stepping into the role in November 2024, my focus has been on:

- Finalising a long-term venue partnership to provide a space where young girls can shape and take ownership.
- Developing a long-term funding strategy to sustain operations, with a focus on finding skilled support in this area.
- Reviewing policies, plans, and procedures to ensure alignment with SisterWood's mission.
- Updating the website to reflect SisterWood's vision and programme offerings.
- Strengthening governance through deeper trustee engagement.
- Recruiting & onboarding staff: A Lead Facilitator is in place, and recruitment for a Co-Facilitator is underway.
- Refining SisterWood's aims and embedding impact measurement through our Theory of Change.
- Increasing youth involvement: Looking at ways girls have more say in the referral process and creating pathways for future leadership & mentorship.
- Developing Impact Reports: Introducing a structured approach to tracking and communicating SisterWood's impact, ensuring that we can measure and demonstrate our effectiveness to funders, trustees, and the wider community

To guide SisterWood's next phase, I am also developing a Strategic Plan that aligns our operational priorities, funding sustainability, and long-term growth with our Theory of Change.

Conclusion

Building and sustaining a grassroots charity takes time, care, and persistence. This year has been one of transition and stabilisation, laying the groundwork for a sustainable future. From securing a venue and planning for funding to refining governance and structuring the team, every step has required commitment, patience, and strategy.

This work wouldn't be possible without those who believe in SisterWood's vision - especially Fran, whose dedication to young women's well-being shaped everything we do. I'm also grateful to the trustees, facilitators, and wider community for their support as we move into this next phase.

SISTERWOOD

TRUSTEES' REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024

SisterWood remains rooted in its mission and is now well-positioned for the next chapter. I look forward to working alongside our trustees, facilitators, and partners to ensure SisterWood not only continues but thrives, providing a space where young women can build confidence, connections, and agency in a way that is truly transformative.

A huge thank you to all trustees, supporters, and partners for your ongoing commitment.

Freesia Bassett
Director, SisterWood

FINANCIAL REVIEW

Financial position

Total incoming resources for the year to 31 August 2024 amounted to £41,246 (year ended 31 August 2023 £32,806). Unrestricted funds incoming resources amounted to £4,974 (year ended 31 August 2023 £12,832). Restricted funds incoming resources amounted to £36,272 (year ended 31 August 2023 £19,974).

Total expenditure for the year to 31 August 2024 amounted to £37,473 (year ended 31 August 2023 £18,145). Unrestricted funds expenditure amounted to £9,732 (year ended 31 August 2023 £6,449). Restricted funds expenditure amounted to £27,741 (year ended 31 August 2023 £11,696).

As at 31 August 2024, cash at bank and in handheld by the charity was £19,472 (year ended 31 August 2023 £16,579), with a healthy net current assets figure of £18,434 (year ended 31 August 2023 £14,661).

The purposes of the different types of funds are explained in the accounting policies as shown in the financial statements.

Notes 10 and 11 to the financial statements provide further explanation.

Reserves policy

SisterWood is building up a reserve over the next 3 years of a minimum of 3 months expenditure. This will cover our regular outgoings and staff fees, ensuring that we can deliver a term-long programme regardless of the success/failure of fundraising activities.

The total funds, detailed in note 10 and 11, held by SisterWood are broken down as follows:

The unrestricted fund shows a total fund balance of £1,625 in 2024 (year ended 31 August 2023 £6,383).

The restricted fund shows a total fund balance of £16,809 in 2024 (year ended 31 August 2023 £8,278).

SISTERWOOD

TRUSTEES' REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024

STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

Structure, Governance and Management

SisterWood is Charitable Incorporated Organisation, registered with the Charity Commission on 19th April 2022. The registered charity number can be found in the Reference and Administration section below.

Our current management committee consists of a Director and four Trustees.

All relevant training by our governing body is stored on a register that is regularly updated, whenever new training or experience is gained.

Trustees are found through connections within the local community, with a maximum number of 12 on the board.

For new Trustees, training is offered through an informal meeting with the Director before the first meeting with the Trustee team, and through provision of our Volunteer Handbook and Trustee Induction Guide. Prior to commencing the post officially through the Charity Commission, the new Trustee is invited to attend a meeting with the board for everyone to meet and for questions to be asked about the role. This also offers everyone a good opportunity to assess whether the post is the right fit, and lays the groundwork for open, inclusive communication.

Risk management

The Trustees have considered all potential risks posed to the charity and have undertaken the necessary measures to mitigate these. A risk register is in place and reviewed annually, or when new risks are identified within the organisation.

REFERENCE AND ADMINISTRATIVE DETAILS

Registered Charity number

1198650

Principal address

2nd Floor
33 Longbrook Street
Exeter
Devon
EX4 6AW

SISTERWOOD

TRUSTEES' REPORT
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024

Trustees

R Vincent

T Irwin (to 31/10/2024)

R Oakes (to 31/12/2024)

M Cadby (to 13/05/2024)

S J Holloway (from 11/12/2023)

K Salt (from 4/12/2024)

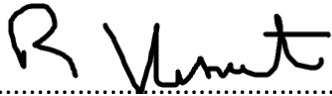
B Garland (from 4/12/2024)

Advisers

Bankers: Cooperative Bank, 242 High Street, Exeter, EX4 3QB

Accountants: Merlin Accountancy Services Ltd, 2nd Floor, 33 Longbrook Street, Exeter, Devon, EX4 6AW

Approved by order of the board of trustees on^{21/05/2025} and signed on its behalf by:



.....
R Vincent - Trustee

INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT TO THE TRUSTEES OF
SISTERWOOD

Independent examiner's report to the trustees of Sisterwood

I report to the charity trustees on my examination of the accounts of Sisterwood (the Trust) for the year ended 31 August 2024.

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').

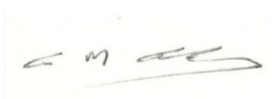
I report in respect of my examination of the Trust's accounts carried out under Section 145 of the Act and in carrying out my examination I have followed all applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under Section 145(5)(b) of the Act.

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.



G M Corby BSc FCA

Merlin Accountancy Services Ltd
2nd Floor
33 Longbrook Street
Exeter
Devon
EX4 6AW

Date:23/05/2025.....

SISTERWOOD

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024

		Unrestricted fund £	Restricted fund £	2024 Total funds £	2023 Total funds £
	Notes				
INCOME AND ENDOWMENTS FROM					
Donations and legacies	2	<u>4,974</u>	<u>36,272</u>	<u>41,246</u>	<u>32,806</u>
EXPENDITURE ON					
Charitable activities	3				
General		9,732	-	9,732	6,449
Funded Places		<u>-</u>	<u>27,741</u>	<u>27,741</u>	<u>11,696</u>
Total		<u>9,732</u>	<u>27,741</u>	<u>37,473</u>	<u>18,145</u>
NET INCOME/(EXPENDITURE)		(4,758)	8,531	3,773	14,661
RECONCILIATION OF FUNDS					
Total funds brought forward		<u>6,383</u>	<u>8,278</u>	<u>14,661</u>	<u>-</u>
TOTAL FUNDS CARRIED FORWARD		<u>1,625</u>	<u>16,809</u>	<u>18,434</u>	<u>14,661</u>


The notes form part of these financial statements

SISTERWOOD

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION
31 AUGUST 2024
REGISTERED CHARITY NUMBER: 1198650

		Unrestricted fund £	Restricted fund £	2024 Total funds £	2023 Total funds £
	Notes				
CURRENT ASSETS					
Cash at bank	8	2,663	16,809	19,472	16,579
CREDITORS					
Amounts falling due within one year	9	(1,038)	-	(1,038)	(1,918)
		<u>1,625</u>	<u>16,809</u>	<u>18,434</u>	<u>14,661</u>
NET CURRENT ASSETS					
		<u>1,625</u>	<u>16,809</u>	<u>18,434</u>	<u>14,661</u>
TOTAL ASSETS LESS CURRENT LIABILITIES					
		<u>1,625</u>	<u>16,809</u>	<u>18,434</u>	<u>14,661</u>
NET ASSETS		<u>1,625</u>	<u>16,809</u>	<u>18,434</u>	<u>14,661</u>
FUNDS	10				
Unrestricted funds:					
General fund				1,625	6,383
Restricted funds:					
Funded Places				<u>16,809</u>	<u>8,278</u>
TOTAL FUNDS				<u>18,434</u>	<u>14,661</u>

The financial statements were approved by the Board of Trustees and authorised for issue on
21/05/2025
..... and were signed on its behalf by:



R Vincent - Trustee

The notes form part of these financial statements

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024

1. ACCOUNTING POLICIES

Basis of preparing the financial statements

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their financial statements in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (effective 1 January 2015) - (Charities SORP (FRS 102)), the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) and the Companies Act 2006.

In drafting these financial statements, the charity has also takes advantage of the exemptions for smaller charities contained in Charity Commission publication CC17.

SisterWood meet the definition of a public benefit entity under FRS 102. Assets and liabilities are initially recognised at historical cost or transaction value unless otherwise stated in the relevant accounting policy note(s).

The financial statements are presented in pound sterling (£) which is the charity's functional and presentation currency.

Preparation of the financial statements on a going concern basis

SisterWood reported a net surplus in the reporting period of £3,773, with total funds held at the end of the period of £18,434. Of these total funds, £1,625 was held in the Unrestricted Fund.

The trustees are of the view that, on the above basis, the charity is a going concern.

Income

Incoming resources are included in the Statement of Financial Activities (SOFA) when the charity becomes entitled to the income, it is more likely than not that it will be received by the trustees and the amount can be quantified with reasonable accuracy.

Grants and donations are included when the charity becomes entitled to the income.

Expenditure

Expenditure is recognised on an accrual basis when a liability is incurred.

Charitable activities include all expenditure associated with the delivery of projects including both direct and support costs.

Resources expended include attributable VAT which cannot be recovered.

SISTERWOOD
NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS - continued
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024

1. ACCOUNTING POLICIES - continued

Financial instruments

SisterWood only has financial assets and financial liabilities of a kind that qualify as basic financial instruments. Basic financial instruments are initially recognised at transaction value and subsequently measured at their settlement value with the exception of bank loans which are subsequently measured at amortized cost using the effective interest method.

Financial assets, includes trade receivables, cash and balances and investments are recognised at transaction value.

Financial liabilities, includes trade payables and recognised at transaction value. Trade payables are obligations to pay for goods and services required from suppliers in the course of business activities.

Debtors and creditors

These are measured on initial recognition at settlement amount.

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.

2. DONATIONS AND LEGACIES

			Year Ended 31/8/24	Year Ended 31/8/23
	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Total funds	Total funds
	£	£	£	£
Donations	4,054	500	4,554	809
Grants	<u>920</u>	<u>35,772</u>	<u>36,692</u>	<u>31,997</u>
	<u>4,974</u>	<u>36,272</u>	<u>41,246</u>	<u>32,806</u>

SISTERWOOD

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS - continued FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024

2. DONATIONS AND LEGACIES - continued

Grants received, included in the above, are as follows:

	Year Ended 31/8/24	Year Ended 31/8/23
	£	£
Other grants	<u>36,692</u>	<u>31,997</u>

The following are some of the Grants received in the year:

The Atch Lench Grant - £2,948	National Lotter - £18,301
Albert Hunt - £2,000	Co-op - £1,255
Devon Community Foundation - £9,444	The Gibbons Family Trust - £1,000

3. CHARITABLE ACTIVITIES COSTS

	Direct Costs (see note 5)	Support costs (see note 6)	Totals
	£	£	£
General	2,561	7,171	9,732
Funded Places	<u>4,866</u>	<u>22,875</u>	<u>27,741</u>
	<u>7,427</u>	<u>30,046</u>	<u>37,473</u>

4. DIRECT COSTS OF CHARITABLE ACTIVITIES

	Year Ended 31/8/24	Year Ended 31/8/23
	£	£
Overheads	530	824
Project Costs	<u>6,897</u>	<u>2,203</u>
	<u>7,427</u>	<u>3,027</u>

5. SUPPORT COSTS

	£
General	7,171
Funded Places	<u>22,875</u>
	<u>30,046</u>

SISTERWOOD

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS - continued FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024

Support costs, included in the above, are as follows:

			Year Ended 31/8/24	Year Ended 31/8/23
	General	Funded	Total	Total
	£	Places	activities	activities
	£	£	£	£
Support Costs – Management	7,171		7,171	
Project Costs - Management		22,875	22,875	
	<u>7,171</u>	<u>22,875</u>	<u>30,046</u>	<u>15,116</u>

6. MOVEMENT IN TOTAL FUNDS FOR THE YEAR

	2024	2023
	£	£
This is stated after charging:		
Independent Examiner's/Accountancy Fee	<u>1,334</u>	<u>1,312</u>

7. TRUSTEES' REMUNERATION AND BENEFITS

There were no trustees' remuneration or other benefits for the year ended 31 August 2024 nor for the period ended 31 August 2023.

Trustees' expenses

There were no trustees' expenses paid for the year ended 31 August 2024 nor for the period ended 31 August 2023.

8. CASH AT BANK

			2024	2023
	General	Funded	Total	Total
	fund	Places	funds	funds
	£	£	£	£
Co-op Bank	<u>2,663</u>	<u>16,809</u>	<u>19,472</u>	<u>16,579</u>
Total	<u>2,663</u>	<u>16,809</u>	<u>19,472</u>	<u>16,579</u>

9. CREDITORS: AMOUNTS FALLING DUE WITHIN ONE YEAR

	2024	2023
	£	£
Trade creditors	37	934
Accruals and deferred income	<u>1,001</u>	<u>984</u>
	<u>1,038</u>	<u>1,918</u>

SISTERWOOD

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS - continued
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024

10. MOVEMENT IN FUNDS

	At 1/9/23 £	Net movement in funds £	At 31/8/24 £
Unrestricted funds			
General fund	6,383	(4,758)	1,625
Restricted funds			
Funded Places	8,278	8,531	16,809
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
TOTAL FUNDS	<u>14,661</u>	<u>3,773</u>	<u>18,434</u>

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

	Incoming resources £	Resources expended £	Movement in funds £
Unrestricted funds			
General fund	4,974	(9,732)	(4,758)
Restricted funds			
Funded Places	36,272	(27,741)	8,531
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
TOTAL FUNDS	<u>41,246</u>	<u>(37,473)</u>	<u>3,773</u>

SISTERWOOD

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS - continued FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024

11. ANALYSIS OF NET ASSETS BETWEEN FUNDS

			Year Ended 31/8/24	Year Ended 31/8/23
	Unrestricted	Restricted	Total	Total
	£	£	£	£
Current Assets	2,663	16,809	19,472	16,579
Current Liabilities	(1,038)	-	(1,038)	(1,918)
	<u>1,625</u>	<u>16,809</u>	<u>18,434</u>	<u>14,661</u>

12. RELATED PARTY DISCLOSURES

There were no related party transactions for the year ended 31 August 2024.