



**TRUSTEE REPORT AND ANNUAL ACCOUNTS**

***1st April 2024 - 31 March 2025***

**Charity Registration Number 1202295**

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## 1 **TRUSTEES' REPORT**

### 1.1 **REFERENCE AND ADMINISTRATIVE DETAILS**

#### **Charity Name**

Mediation Plus

#### **Registered Charity Number**

1202295

#### **Charity's Principal Address**

Robsack Centre, Bodiam Drive, St Leonards on Sea, East Sussex, TN38 9TW

#### **Board of Trustees**

<i>Name</i>	<i>Commencement</i>	<i>Office (if any)</i>
Barbara Molog	21st February 2023	Co-Chair
Jennifer Daniels	21st February 2023	Co-Chair
Ian Saunders	21st February 2023	Treasurer
Caroline Adcock	21st February 2023	
Catherine Nash	21st February 2023	
Kendal Wells	21st February 2023	retired July 2024
Mary Locke	21st February 2023	
Patrick Farmer	21st February 2023	
Susanna Rynehart	21st February 2023	

#### **Chief Executive**

Alice Matthews

#### **Clerk to the Board of Trustees**

Becky Sperring

#### **Bankers**

CAF Bank Ltd, Kings Hill Avenue, Kings Hill, West Malling, Kent, ME19 4JQ

#### **Independent Examiner**

Andrew Hillsdon FCA, A C Hillsdon Accountancy, 33 Ashley Green, East Hanningfield, Essex CM3 8AY

### 1.2 **STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT**

#### **Charity Structure and Governing Documents**

- Mediation Plus is a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO).
- The Charity began trading on 1st July 2023, following the merger of Mediation+ and Hastings and Rother Mediation Service.
- The CIO constitution is dated 21st February 2023.
- Mediation Plus is an independent partner of the Sussex Mediation Alliance, in collaboration with Brighton and Hove Independent Mediation Service.
- The Board of Trustees regularly carry out skills audits and review the number of Trustees; their length of service and requirements set out in the charity's constitution. We strive to recruit Trustees from a broad range of backgrounds, in an open and fair manner. Vacancies are advertised on our website and social media channels, as well as through word of mouth and direct approaches to those who may be able to support the charity with specific skills or expertise. Applicants are interviewed and invited to observe a board meeting before any election, and we are in the process of developing an induction plan to ensure any new members are well supported.

1.3 **OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES**

**Charitable objectives**

Purpose of the charity as set out in the Mediation Plus constitution dated 21st February 2023.

(I) To promote for the public benefit in the area of East Sussex, and elsewhere, with a view to the preservation of public order, the provision of affordable, quality services directed towards mediation and conciliation between persons, organisations and groups who are involved in disputes or interpersonal conflicts where that dispute or conflict results from or may lead to acts of nuisance, vandalism, racial abuse or breach of the peace.

(II) To provide assistance through conciliation for couples and families in dispute or difficulty whose relationships appear to be breaking down, and where such relationships have already broken down, to support and help in the settlement of differences or potential differences.

(III) To advance the education of the public in methods of mediation and other restorative practices and in particular the nature and causes of such disputes and means of managing them.

**Main activities undertaken**

a) Family Mediation: Mediation between adults going through separation or divorce to resolve disputes and support joint decision-making.

b) Time2Talk Mediation: Supporting young people of the age 11-18 years and their parents or carers to help repair relationships or to resolve a specific issue affecting families.

c) Neighbourhood Mediation: Helping neighbours and communities to resolve issues and restore lines of communication where there is conflict.

d) One-to-One Support: Listening support, also known as 'conflict coaching', aimed at helping people to manage difficult situations and to find a way of reducing the impact conflict has on their lives.

e) Workplace Mediation: A low-cost, effective solution to resolving disputes between managers and staff, or colleagues, to improve team relationships, and performance, and to retain skilled staff.

f) Bespoke Mediation: Mediation tailored to individual needs. This could include mediation between adult relatives, young peers, elders or between a local business and a customer.

g) Training: Delivery of a Level 3 Award in Understanding Mediation and bespoke courses and workshops in conflict management and intergenerational mediation.

**Public Benefit Guidance**

All Mediation Plus trustees have regard to the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit.

**Grant making**

Mediation Plus is not a grant making organisation.

**Social Investment**

Mediation Plus does not access social investment to achieve its social purposes.

**Volunteers**

Mediation Plus works closely with volunteers to deliver services. Between 1st April 2024 and 31st March 2025 the charity worked with 60 volunteer mediators, each contributing a minimum of 10 hours per month of their time in mediation, training, and supervision.

**Strategic Plan**

2025 - 2026 will mark the second year of our 2024-2027 Strategic Plan, with a focus on maintaining high quality mediation services, shaped by best practice and delivered by well supported staff and volunteers. We will be investing resources into marketing our Family Mediation, Training and Workplace Mediation to build on our income generating work streams, which support our financial viability. We will be engaging partners across our Neighbourhood and Intergenerational programme areas, to ensure our services reach those most in need at the earliest possibility.

## 1 **TRUSTEES' REPORT continued**

1.4 <b>ACHIEVEMENTS AND PERFORMANCE</b>	1 Apr 24 - 31 Mar 25	1 Jul 23 - 31 Mar 24
Neighbourhood mediation referrals	130	116
Conflict coaching (individual support) cases	57	35
Intergenerational mediation referrals	40	67
Family mediation MIAMs	229	325
Family mediation joint meetings	97	70
Workplace mediation cases	9	6
Bespoke mediation cases	6	6

**Neighbourhood Mediation and Conflict Coaching:** Delivered across East and West Sussex (excluding Lewes), supporting local residents impacted by neighbourhood disputes by trained, skilled volunteer mediators. Referrals were received from Sussex Police, Housing Associations including Southern Housing, Clarion, Eastbourne Homes, Saxon Weald and Worthing Homes, District and Borough Councils and as self referrals. The process supports people in conflict to understand each other and find their own solutions. Neighbourhood mediators listen and facilitate safe conversations with people in the same community around a wide range of disputes including noise, parking, anti-social behaviour, gardens and the use of outside space.

Mediation is cost-effective and avoids long legal battles or formal procedures. Our mediators help you identify needs, clarify issues, and negotiate practical solutions. Mediation is voluntary, and the parties make the decisions.

**Time2Talk Intergenerational Mediation:** Covering East Sussex only (including Lewes), our case coordinators and volunteer mediators help children/young people and their parents/carers to talk and listen to each other, and work towards better communication and understanding. One third of our referrals were self referrals from parents / carers who had been signposted to Time2Talk or had heard about us through word of mouth with the remaining two thirds coming from ESCC Children's Services, local schools and third sector agencies. These cases included mental health issues for young people and parents/carers, estrangement, school absenteeism, anti social behaviour and communication issues.

**Family Mediation:** Sussex-wide, our low cost mediation service is delivered by professional, qualified family mediators. This is a structured process in which a mediator helps families who are going through separation or divorce, settle disputes and make joint decisions about the issues which need to be resolved. Our conversion rate for this programme is particularly high, meaning we support a large number of people who see us for their initial meeting (MIAM) to then take part in joint mediation, where they can speak to one another in a facilitated meeting to reach mutually agreed-upon solutions while minimising the need for lengthy and costly legal proceedings. This process can be used to address a wide range of family-related issues, including property, finance and child-related matters.

**Workplace and Bespoke Mediation:** Sussex wide mediation for anyone experiencing conflict outside our core programmes. We are able to provide support through our experienced volunteer mediators and out network of self employed mediators, who have a wealth of expertise.

**Training:** We have continued to deliver our OCN accredited Level 3 Award in Understanding Mediation to our volunteers, those working for other community mediation services and independent learners. As well as helping us to maintain a pool of volunteer mediators, this programme helps equip people to resolve conflict at home, in their workplace and community, promoting and raising awareness of conflict resolution tools.

## 1.5 **FINANCIAL REVIEW**

A review of the charity's financial position is given in the Treasurer's Report on page 7.

The trustees have assessed the charity's financial position, future funding prospects and level of reserves and have no reason to believe that the charity will not continue as a going concern for the foreseeable future.

## 1 **TRUSTEES' REPORT continued**

### 1.6 **CHAIR'S REPORT**

This has been the first full year of operation for our newly merged charity, Mediation Plus, and I am pleased to report that we have successfully streamlined our services across East Sussex. Our dedicated staff continue to operate from both our Hailsham and Hastings offices, and we have effectively integrated our teams of volunteer mediators to serve the entire county.

In April 2024, following the closure of West Sussex Mediation Service, we welcomed their staff to Mediation Plus and extended invitations to their volunteer mediators to join our own volunteer team. This has enabled us to expand our reach to include West Sussex. The Board is deeply grateful to our CEO, Alice Matthews, and the Leadership Team for their exceptional dedication and effort in smoothly incorporating these staff and volunteers into our organisation.

I am also pleased to report that our finances have remained stable over the past year, with healthy reserves maintained. While we have not been immune to the funding uncertainties that many charities are currently facing, our careful oversight of available funding opportunities, along with the security of our core funding, has allowed us to navigate these challenges successfully.

Mediation Plus continues to provide Neighbourhood Mediation through contracts with Housing Associations across East and West Sussex. We also maintain our Intergenerational Mediation services, supporting families with young people typically aged between 11 and 18. However, due to the financial constraints associated with delivering Family Mediation under Legal Aid, we have had to make the difficult decision to offer Family Mediation services on a private, fee-paying basis only. Although this was not a decision taken lightly, the Board takes some reassurance in knowing there are several alternative providers available to deliver Legal Aid-supported mediation.

We also continue our close collaboration with Brighton & Hove Independent Mediation Service (BHIMS), working together as the Sussex Mediation Alliance to deliver mediation services funded by the Sussex Police & Crime Commissioner. This vital area of our work focuses on helping individuals find constructive solutions to conflict, thereby preventing more serious issues such as crime and homelessness.

Looking ahead, the Board is aware that Sussex is currently under review for Devolution, a process which may have implications for our funding and partnership arrangements. The Board is actively monitoring this evolving situation to ensure that we are well positioned to adapt to the changes that Devolution is likely to bring.

As we conclude this busy year, the Board would like to express its sincere appreciation to our CEO, Alice Matthews, and Finance and Volunteer Manager, Becky Sperring, for their strong and effective leadership in guiding the charity forward. We also extend our heartfelt thanks to all our staff for their unwavering commitment to delivering high-quality mediation services to the community. Both my co-chair, Barbara Molog, and I would like to thank our fellow Trustees for their valued advice and support throughout the year. Most importantly, we wish to recognise and thank our volunteer mediators across East and West Sussex, who so generously give their time and expertise to ensure mediation services are available to those who need them most. Together, we continue to make a meaningful difference.

Jenny Daniels  
Co Chair

## **TREASURER'S REPORT**

### **1. Introduction**

This report provides an overview of the financial performance of Mediation Plus for the period from 1 April 2024 to 31 March 2025. It includes details on income, expenditures, and the overall financial health of the organisation. The information is based on our financial records and aims to ensure transparency and accountability to our donors, stakeholders, and board members.

### **2. Financial Summary**

#### **2.1. Income:**

During the period from 1 April 2024 to 31 March 2025, Mediation Plus generated total income of £263,930. The income is largely received from Grants and Donations from a range of funders. Total income is recorded as £190,225 of Restricted funds and £73,705 of Unrestricted funds.

#### **2.2. Expenditure:**

Mediation Plus incurred total expenditures of £276,824 during the same period. The running costs include Employee costs, Administration and other Charity running costs as well as costs for Self Employed Personnel.

#### **2.3. Net Surplus/Deficit:**

For the period from 1 April 2024 to 31 March 2025, Mediation Plus had a net deficit of £12,894 which is in line with expectations and is covered by accumulated reserves.

### **3. Financial Position**

As of 31 March 2025, the charity's financial position is as follows:

**Bank Balance:** £173,433

**Reserves:** £194,583

Represented by:

**Unrestricted Funds** £53,033

**Restricted Funds** £141,550

These reserves are held to ensure the charity's sustainability and to cover any unforeseen expenses. The Charity has a reserves policy in place that ensures that main operations can continue for a period of at least 6 months. This equates to £140,000 being 6 months of the Mediation Plus expenditure based on this set of Accounts.

### **4. Conclusion**

Mediation Plus remains financially stable, and we continue to work closely with our stakeholders and donors to maintain strong sources of funding. This is crucial to providing the support and achieving the positive outcomes that our service users rely on. Good financial planning has been essential in ensuring a successful first period of operating as a merged charity. I believe we have established a solid foundation from which to build and evolve the charity further, positioning Mediation Plus for continued growth and impact.

Ian Saunders

Treasurer

2024/2025 has been a year of continued growth, after our merger in 2023/24, as Mediation Plus extended its reach into West Sussex, following the closure of West Sussex Mediation Service (WSMS). This was a necessary step to ensure equal access to conflict resolution services across the Sussex Mediation Alliance and maintenance of our existing shared contracts. This change, supported by volunteers, staff and Trustees, gave us the opportunity to welcome the WSMS Case Coordinators, Tina Skilton and Diane Whelan and 20 mediators based in and around West Sussex who had previously supported WSMS, enabling us to provide an uninterrupted service from 1st April 2024. This work was supported by WSMS Trustees who worked hard to manage the transition and sad closure of their charity. Since expanding, we have built relationships with the district and borough councils across West Sussex as well Registered Social Landlords covering the area and have seen our neighbourhood mediation and conflict coaching numbers increase as a direct result of this move. We have continued to work with Brighton and Hove Independent Mediation Service, our Sussex Mediation Alliance partner, allowing us to co-deliver on Sussex wide contracts.

We have not extended our Time2Talk Intergenerational Mediation Service into West Sussex. Instead, we have focused on maintaining our current funding levels, through grants and donations and building new referral routes. In addition, our Time2Talk Team have lead on strengthening our safeguarding policies and procedures and increasing the knowledge of all volunteers, staff and trustees, including the introduction of our new volunteer newsletter which features a safeguarding update in each issue.

This year has also seen significant change within our Family Mediation Team. In July 2024 we made the difficult decision to decline the newly awarded Legal Aid Agency contract as delivering government funded family mediation was no longer viable on the rates provided, which remained unchanged for 15 years. Our renewed focus is now on providing cost effective mediation locally, through low-cost service fees.

The charity continues to work with an incredible, dedicated team of employees who support our volunteers, and work directly with service users and partners as the face of our charity. During the financial year we have said goodbye to Karen Bramham, as she retired from her Family Mediation Admin role, Sarah McEvoy Peall (Senior Neighbourhood Case Coordinator) as she embarks on a new challenge and Khadija Khan, who leaves us as an employee but continues to support us as an Internal Quality Assessor in our Training Team. As well as Tina and Diane from WSMS, we have also welcomed Lesley Adams as Senior Neighbourhood Coordinator and Nicola Hodson as Training Administrator.

As always, I would like to conclude my report by thanking all the volunteers supporting Mediation Plus. Our volunteer mediators have enabled us to support over 220 neighbourhood, intergenerational and bespoke cases giving up a huge amount of their time to mediate and offer one to one interventions following our co-mediation model, as well as attending essential training, information sessions and peer supervision to ensure high practice standards. They are our greatest asset and we would not be able to achieve our mission as a charity without them. We are also blessed to have an engaged and proactive Board of Trustees supporting the governance and strategic direction of our charity who give their time and expertise for free. Thank you all.

Alice Matthews

Chief Executive



4 **STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES**  
**For the year ended 31st March 2025**

		Unrestricted funds	Restricted Funds	Total Funds 12 months ended 31 March 2025	Total Funds 9 months ended 31 March 2024
	Notes	£	£	£	£
<b><u>Incoming resources</u></b>					
Donations and grants	2	3,634	190,225	193,859	161,215
Charitable activities	3	65,392	-	65,392	45,367
Investment income	4	4,679	-	4,679	3,113
<b>Total income</b>		<b>73,705</b>	<b>190,225</b>	<b>263,930</b>	<b>209,695</b>
<b><u>Resources expended</u></b>					
Charitable activities	5	160,036	116,788	276,824	207,734
<b>Total Expenses</b>		<b>160,036</b>	<b>116,788</b>	<b>276,824</b>	<b>207,734</b>
<b><u>Net income/(expenditure) for the year/ net movement in funds</u></b>					
		-	86,331	73,437	-
Funds brought forward as previously stated			119,347	88,130	207,477
Prior period adjustment (see below)			20,017	-	20,017
Funds brought forward restated			139,364	68,113	207,477
<b>Funds carried forward</b>	10		<b>53,033</b>	<b>141,550</b>	<b>194,583</b>

**Prior period adjustment**

Following a review of the basis of allocation of charity management, administration and running costs, a decision was taken to increase the proportion of costs allocated to restricted funds in order to more accurately reflect the utilisation of resources. The revised allocations have been reflected in the current year numbers and the prior period fund balances have been restated on the same revised basis.

5 **BALANCE SHEET**  
As at 31st March 2025

	Notes	At 31 March 2025 £	2024 £
<b>Current assets</b>			
Debtors	7	39,183 -	14,343
Cash at bank and in hand		173,433	223,880
		<b>212,616</b>	<b>209,537</b>
<b>Current liabilities</b>			
Creditors	8	18,033	2,060
		<b>18,033</b>	<b>2,060</b>
<b>Net current assets and total assets less current liabilities</b>		<b>194,583</b>	<b>207,477</b>
<b>RESERVES</b>	10		
Unrestricted funds	10	53,033	139,364
Restricted funds	10	141,550	68,113
		<b>194,583</b>	<b>207,477</b>

The accounts were approved by the Trustees on 29 October 2025

Barbara Molog  
Co- Chair of Trustees  
Signed:

*Barbara Molog*

Jenny Daniels  
Co- Chair of Trustees  
Signed:

*J.M. Daniels*

Ian Saunders  
Treasurer  
Signed:

*ISL*

**6.1 Accounting Policies****a. Basis of preparation**

The accounts have been prepared under the historical cost convention.

The accounts have been prepared in accordance with applicable accounting standards, the Statement of Recommended Practice, "Accounting and Reporting by Charities" (FRS102)(effective 1 January 2019) and the Charities Act 2011.

Mediation Plus is a charitable incorporated organisation, registered in England and is a public benefit entity.

**b. Income**

Income is recognised on a receivable basis and is reported gross of related expenditure, where entitlement is confirmed, the amount is virtually certain and there is adequate probability of receipt.

Income received in advance is deferred until entitlement to the income has arisen.

Income from charitable activities, including contracts, is recognised when earned.

The accounts reflect no amounts in respect of time provided by volunteers.

**c. Expenditure**

Expenditure is recognised on an accruals basis when a legal or constructive obligation exists and is reported gross of related income.

**d. Pensions**

Mediation Plus contributes to the NEST defined contribution scheme for employees. Contributions payable are expensed in the year in which they are incurred.

**e. Operating leases**

Operating lease rentals are expensed on a straight-line basis over the term of the lease.

**6.2 Donations and grants**

	Unrestricted funds 2025 £	Restricted Funds 2025 £	Total 2025 £	Total 2024 £
Donations	3,634	376	4,010	4,373
Grants	-	189,849	189,849	156,842
	3,634	190,225	193,859	161,215

**6.3 Income from charitable activities**

	Unrestricted funds 2025 £	Restricted Funds 2025 £	Total 2025 £	Total 2024 £
Family Mediation income	50,525	-	50,525	34,600
Other mediation income	8,522	-	8,522	4,720
Training income	6,345	-	6,345	6,047
	65,392	-	65,392	45,367

**6.4 Investment income**

	Unrestricted funds 2025 £	Restricted Funds 2025 £	Total 2025 £	Total 2024 £
Interest receivable	4,679	-	4,679	3,113
	4,679	-	4,679	3,113

**6.5 Expenditure on charitable activities**

	Unrestricted funds 2025 £	Restricted Funds 2025 £	Total 2025 £	Total 2024 £
Charity management and administration	12,188	10,529	22,717	16,449
Charity running costs	13,597	5,997	19,594	20,932
Employee costs	104,726	99,806	204,532	148,320
Other running costs	10,374	126	10,500	4,490
Self employed personnel	19,151	330	19,481	17,543
	160,036	116,788	276,824	207,734

6 **NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS (Continued)**

6.6 **Employees**

	2025	2024
Number of employees	Number	Number
The average monthly number of part time employees during the year was:	10	10
<b>Total staff costs</b>	<b>2025</b>	<b>2024</b>
	£	£
Salaries	189,944	139,071
Social security costs	7,711	4,694
Employer pension contributions	6,877	4,555
	<b>204,532</b>	<b>148,320</b>

No employees received remuneration in excess of £60,000.

6.7 **Debtors**

	2025	2024
	£	£
Customer accounts receivable	15,660	15,660
Prepayments and accrued income	23,523 -	30,003
	<b>39,183 -</b>	<b>14,343</b>

6.8 **Creditors: amounts falling due within one year**

	2025	2024
	£	£
Accruals and deferred income	14,383	2,060
BHIMS (share of contracts)	3,650	-
	<b>18,033</b>	<b>2,060</b>

6.9 **Trustees**

None of the trustees (or any persons connected with them) received any remuneration or benefits from the charity during the year (2024: none) other than reasonable expenses for travel to meetings. Two Trustees received reimbursed travel expenses totalling £148.

There were no related party transactions requiring disclosure in the year.

6.10 **Reserves**

To avoid closure, if funding difficulties arise, the Board of Trustees have set a 6-month financial reserves level to ensure that main operations can continue for this minimum period. It has been calculated that reserves of £140,000 would be needed to continue running for at least 6 months. The calculations are available upon request, but relate to salary/redundancy, rent, utilities and expenses.

The level of reserves are calculated and monitored during every Board meeting by the Treasurer in consultation with the Trustees and Chief Executive and this policy is reviewed yearly and whenever there are significant changes in staff, overheads or reserve levels.



I report to the Trustees on my examination of the accounts of the CIO for the year ended 31st March 2025.

**Respective responsibilities of trustees and examiner**

The charity's trustees are responsible for the preparation of the accounts. The charity's trustees consider that an audit is not required for this year under section 144(2) of the Charities Act 2011 (the 2011 Act) and that an independent examination is needed.

It is my responsibility to:

- (i) examine the accounts under section 145 of the 2011 Act;
- (ii) to follow the Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the 2011 Act; and
- (iii) to state whether particular matters have come to my attention.

**Basis of independent examiner's report**

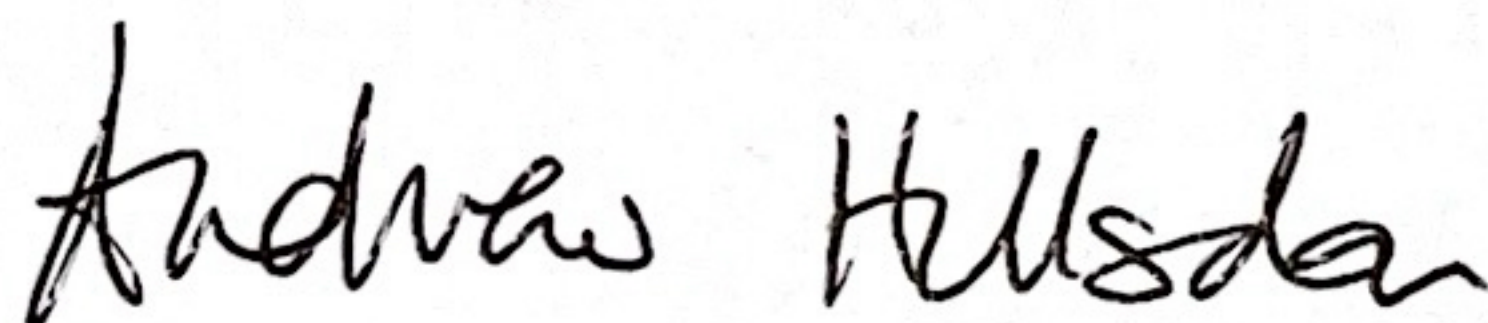
My examination was carried out in accordance with the general Directions given by the Charity Commission. An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the charity and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts, and seeking explanations from you as trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit and consequently no opinion is given as to whether the accounts present a 'true and fair view' and the report is limited to those matters set out in the statement below.

**Independent examiner's statement**

In connection with my examination, no matter has come to my attention which gives me reasonable cause to believe that in any material respect:

- (i) the accounting records were not kept in accordance with section 130 of the 2011 Act; or
- (ii) the accounts do not accord with the accounting records; or
- (iii) 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 your attention should be drawn in this report in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.



Andrew Hillsdon FCA

A C Hillsdon Accountancy

33 Ashley Green, East Hanningfield, Essex, CM3 8AY

Date: 29 October 2025