



# PSS (UK) Annual Report

2023-24

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# Administrative Information

## Administrative Details of PSS (UK)

Company registration number	PSS (UK): 214077
Registered charity number	England and Wales: 224469
Registered office (UK)	Eleanor Rathbone House Connect Business Village 24 Derby Road Liverpool L5 9PR Telephone: 0151 702 5555 Email: <a href="mailto:hello@pss.org.uk">hello@pss.org.uk</a>
Website	<a href="http://www.pss.org.uk">www.pss.org.uk</a>
Bankers	Barclays Bank plc Lord Street Liverpool L2 1TD
Solicitors	Hempsons The Exchange Station Parade Harrogate HG1 1DY
Investment managers	CCLA Senator House 85 Queen Victoria Street London EC4V 4ET
Auditors	Crowe U.K. LLP 3rd floor The Lexicon Mount Street Manchester M2 5NT
Chief executive	Lesley Dixon

The **trustees** on the date of this report and who served during the year 2023/24 were:

Julie Cooke	Chair
Dr Kim Heyes	Vice-Chair and Chair of People Committee
Jenny Hannon	Chair of Audit and Governance Committee
Beverley Mitchell	Chair of Finance and Performance Committee
Matthew Rothwell	
Colin Bell	
David Sweeney	Resigned 4/10/23
Georgia Marriott-Smith	Co-opted 5/7/23, elected 27/3/24
Christian Shannon	Co-opted 5/7/23, resigned 19/2/24
Helen Shaw	Co-opted 5/7/23, elected 27/3/24
Richard Bramwell	Co-opted 5/7/23, elected 27/3/24
Nicola Parkinson	Co-opted 27/3/24, elected 26/6/24

### **Investment Powers and Authority**

The Articles of Association place no restrictions on the amount or type of investments made by the company. However, PSS complies with the restrictions placed upon it by law.

PSS is a registered charity and, as such, is not liable to Income Tax or Corporation Tax.

The current active membership of PSS is 10.

The Trustees of the charity derive no benefit, income or capital interest from PSS (UK) ("PSS") except for related party transactions (note 15).

### **PSS Charitable Objects as declared in our Articles of Association**

The advancement of education, the advancement of health, the relief of poverty and the advancement of such other charitable purposes for the benefit of the community in such manner as the Trustees shall from time to time think fit and in particular (but without prejudice to the generality of the foregoing) by assisting individuals in need to live and/or manage their needs more independently.

## Welcome from our chief executive

It's been such a productive year here at PSS. We've all been hard at work laying some really strong, important foundations for the future, immersing ourselves in our vision for the next version our organisation. It's shaping up to be something special!

This year we put the wheels in motion on making big changes: we improved how we manage our talent, with our new Be Brilliant framework; we made an exciting plan of action for how we make PSS the most equitable, inclusive and diverse organisation we can be; we made changes to our Board and how we're governed; we launched our brand new Big Thinks where our whole team can get together and help solve PSS issues; we're changing how we govern PSS; and we've made our working environments and the tech we use at work the best it can be. Operationally, there's also been change. After a long process, we transferred our Supported Living service over to new providers to help make them more sustainable for the people we support and laid the groundwork for some fantastic new contracts to flourish, as well.

One of the biggest successes of the year has to be winning our brand new Shared Lives contract in North Yorkshire. Our business development team put everything they had into that tender to show why we'd be an excellent choice to take it on, and it paid off. We're really happy to welcome a new staff team and a wonderful new network of over 90 fab Shared Lives carers into our fold – and, of course, lovely new people to support.

We've had happy news too about our Women's Turnaround Wales, Parent-Baby Service and Shared Lives Staffordshire services, all of which were renewed or grew this year, keeping us around for future generations. I feel like I say this a lot (a lovely problem to have!), but I really am so proud of our teams and all the incredible work they put into making our services so great.

Speaking of laying the foundations for the future, it's been a year for planning and making change for me personally, too. In March, I made the decision to take semi-retirement, and in September 2024, I'll be stepping down as CEO of PSS to spend more time with my family in York, take my foot off the pedal a bit, and give myself a little more balance in this season of my life. I've truly loved working at PSS. It's fed my soul from the beginning in so many ways, and after 14 years as CEO, I still feel as inspired by the work we do as I did on my first day. I feel so lucky to have been surrounded by so many kind, committed and brave people who are willing to go the extra mile for others every day.

One of the things I love most about PSS is how we help make life better for people who don't often have many of life's advantages. I've loved seeing the difference we make on a daily basis, in the big ways and in the little ways, and I'll always be proud to have been a part of such an amazing organisation. The people I've met, the stories they've told me about their experiences in life, and the ways our work has supported them will stay with me forever.

Lesley

## Intro from our Chair of Trustees

PSS has always been a brave organisation. And this year has been no different. It's been a year of flux across the organisation and at Board level, but it's all positive change that means we can keep on pushing ahead, trying new things and learning.

Last year we invited Social Justice Collective to come and do an audit of PSS and this year, we were given our report. The report talks about how systemic issues affect our teammates in daily life and about how PSS can do better to support them. It has been an eye-opening read, and has made the fire in our bellies to make PSS the most equitable, inclusive and diverse organisation we can be burn stronger, both at Board level and throughout the organisation. I was so proud to read the first draft of our vision for the future of equity, diversity and inclusion at PSS this year, and we've got such big, exciting plans to bring about lasting, meaningful change in PSS (including on our Board) and in our sector. You can read more about how we're doing that later in this report.

We've had some change on the Board this year – we said a fond farewell to trustees Christian and Dave, and welcomed three fresh faces in Rich, Georgia and Helen, who after an initial settling-in period last year, took the plunge and became full trustees this year. They each bring so much knowledge, talent and experience to our Board and we're thrilled to have them with us. But we're not finished there. We want to better represent the communities we work in, we want to hear from a broader range of voices, and we want to have more underrepresented people in senior roles, so we're excited to be diversifying our Board further in upcoming 2024, recruiting two people from minority groups to join us.

This year we also took a fresh look at how we're governed. After some careful consideration, the Board and PSS's members made the decision to bring PSS in line with how other charities like us are governed, and make our trustees the only members of PSS, instead of having a wider membership. Trustees are kept right up-to-speed with what's happening at PSS, so we can be sure that all of our decisions are made with the latest happenings in mind. This decision means PSS is now governed in a much more modern, straightforward way.

Some big news to come from PSS this year was of course that our wonderful CEO, Lesley, is leaving us to take semi-retirement. Lesley's done incredible work in her time at PSS. One of the phrases most synonymous with Lesley's leadership, and her take on the support we provide, is 'with, not to'; her focus is firmly on listening to the voices of people we support and doing what's right for them. As a result, she's made a raft of strategic changes that mean we now work more closely with the people who use our services to make decisions than ever before.

Also important to Lesley has been making sure our organisation is accessible to those who need it – she's led changes to make the language we use much simpler, more inclusive and easier to understand, and to give us a friendly, down-to-earth feel that's matched by the feeling you get when you walk through our doors. Lesley's created an award-winning culture at PSS, brought in new ways to recognise the work of our amazing people, and introduced a set of values that were fully embraced by all of our team and still filter into everything we do, guiding everyone in their work and behaviour. She's earned a reputation amongst the team as a genuine, open and listening leader.

I'd like to say a huge thank you to Lesley for all she's done for PSS over the last 14 years – she'll be missed by all of us. In early 2024/25, we'll be working with Peridot Partners to recruit a new CEO for PSS, and Lesley will continue to lead the organisation until the autumn.

It's certainly an exciting time at PSS and I'm looking forward to being part of our next chapter.

Julie

# Report of the Trustees

## Our governance

PSS was founded in 1919, is a company limited by guarantee (incorporated in 1926) and registered as a UK charity in 1963. PSS was established under a Memorandum of Association, which sets out what we're here to do, and the powers we have. We're governed under our Articles of Association.

Back in 1919, PSS was set up by a number of like-minded, influential people and institutions coming together to change things for the better in their community. These were called our members. In the 1920s, our executive committee was made up of representatives of public bodies, voluntary organisations, religious bodies and individual members. Our members were the people who would decide who was on our Board of Trustees and made other decisions on behalf of our organisation. Looking back over our history, we're really proud to see what a huge difference PSS has made to the lives of so many people for such a long time, and we couldn't have done this without our membership.

Like lots of charities, what we do and how we support people has changed over time, meeting the needs of a very different world than the one we were founded in. The way we're governed has also changed, including the role of our members. And while our members have always played an important role in PSS, as time's gone by, more and more of the responsibilities our members had in the beginning have been delegated to managers and directors employed by PSS, with our Board taking ultimate accountability for everything we do.

We want to make sure that any role in our governance is meaningful, so in summer 2023, we ran a consultation exercise with our members to talk about changing our governance document, so that the only members of PSS are also members of our Board. This will mean our membership is actively involved in the organisation and up-to-speed with all of our work throughout the year. Our members agreed to make the changes on 27<sup>th</sup> March 2024, and the updated Memorandum and Article of Association were accepted by both Companies House and the Charity Commission.

Membership is now made up of just our trustees, who are also directors of the company. The Board is required to include a Chair and Vice Chair. Trustees are elected for a term of up to three years but may be re-elected up to three terms of three years.

The Board meets four times a year. It has three sub-committees: Audit and Governance, Finance and Performance and the People sub-committees, which all meet four times per year. The sub-committees exist to provide a level of scrutiny to the work PSS does, each with their own job to do. The Audit and Governance Committee covers things like governance, risk management, internal and external audit, quality, accounts reporting, approval and key policies in their delegation. The Finance and Performance Committee keeps an eye on organisational performance, approves the long-term financial plan and business development strategy, recommends the annual budget to Board and scrutinises the accounts for forecasting accuracy. Finally, the People Committee reviews PSS's internal functions to make sure that they support effective recruitment, retention, development opportunities and staff pay, as well as making sure that PSS is doing all it can to provide a happy, fulfilling place of work, supported by an open and honest culture in line with our values. Each of our committees reports to the full Board.



## **Charity Governance Code**

The principles of the charity governance code are well embedded in the way things are done at PSS, including: the work of the Board; the approach to trustee and staff recruitment and development; policy; procedures; and our approach to putting the people we support at the heart of what we do. Our Board periodically looks at PSS's performance against the governance code by looking the recommendations under each of the seven principles.

Here's some examples of how we've put the principles into practice this year:

### **Organisational purpose**

Our purpose influences everything we do – from the action plan we set ourselves every year to meet our strategic aims (our Big Plan), to the development of new goals and strategies to help us meet the needs of the people we support and the communities we operate in.

Being aware of the bigger picture is an important part of a charity's ability to achieve its purpose. We were delighted to retain our Staffordshire Shared Lives contract and win a contract for North Yorkshire Shared Lives, both of which will go a long way to making sure we're financially stable next year. But we're also aware that the wider environment remains challenging. With an alarming number of local authorities filing section 114 notices, we've to be wise to the fact that there is less money to go around. In April 2024, our trustees had an away day focusing on the state of the sector and explored how we can grow our services to help as many groups of different needs as possible. Our new business development strategy, approved in March 2024, will make some of the ideas we talked about a reality, and aims to take us through the next two years, all while staying true to our core purpose.

Demonstrating our impact is key. We've been investing in our ability to extract data from our client management system, using reporting capabilities to track our performance against commissioner expectations and deliverables, and using data to monitor and measure the progress of people who use our services against the goals they set for themselves. Being able to demonstrate the difference we make to the people who use our services is important evidence that we are fulfilling our organisational purpose. By the end of the 24/25 year, we'll make sure that every service has their own impact report in place.

### **Leadership**

This principle is all about demonstrating that our Board provide strategic leadership in line with our aims and values. The Big Plan is our five-year strategy which plots how we plan to achieve our purpose in the years ahead. We started work to deliver our current Big Plan in 2020 and, as our Annual Reports over the last few years show, we have completed a heck of a lot of work to help us achieve our goals. However, we still think there's life left in the 2020-25 Big Plan, as our action plan for 24/25, approved by the Board in March 2024, shows. As well as that, Lesley's big news means that a new chief executive will be taking the helm during the 24/25 year. So with that in mind, the Board have taken the decision to extend the current Big Plan to the end of the 2025/26 year. This will give the new chief executive time to settle in and get involved in the planning process, and it will also mean that we'll be able to finish off a few important bits of work... so we can say we've delivered the latest Big Plan with bells on. We've got big ambitions for our next Big Plan, which will be co-produced with the people we support, giving those who use our services the opportunity to shape what we do and when. We'll be starting the planning for its development soon.

Reporting on the progress we've made against the current Big Plan to the Board is no mean feat. Accurately summing up all the work our hardworking teams are doing, against all of the key objectives, while keeping the trustees focused on the bigger picture can be a tricky balance to find - but last year, we cracked it. We've developed a way of communicating our progress that keeps the Board up-to-date on the important wins, but also the key challenges across PSS. This has created the space for a high-challenge, high-support relationship between PSS leadership and the Board and, combined with regular presentations from our operational and central teams at Board and committee meetings, our trustees really have their finger on the pulse of our performance.

Last but by no means least, a key part of this principle is that the Board makes sure there are proper arrangements in place for the appointment, supervision and support of the CEO. We'll know this time next year how well we do here, but one thing we were keen to keep hold of was Lesley's incredible amount of institutional knowledge, gained from over 14 years of leading PSS. In April 2024, our trustees and leadership had an afternoon together, exploring Lesley's reflections of her time with us, the important lessons she's learned along the way, and the priorities for her time left with us. The trustees also spent some time on their own, focused on what they want from our next chief executive. Good governance says that a Board will make sure that a charity's values underpin all of its decisions, and this is one of the most important of all. Our values and culture are at the heart of everything we do and they will be central to our approach to CEO recruitment.

### **Integrity**

Last year, we expanded the role of the previous Remuneration Committee to cover all things people and our culture, and the People Committee was born. We first increased how often we meet from once to twice per year, but when we thought more about just how important our people are, and about how we're in the midst of a recruitment crisis in our sector, we decided to keep a closer eye on things, and upped that again, to four times per year. This decision was made so that the Board have the time needed to properly focus on the wellbeing of our staff team, opportunities for development and making sure that our people work in a safe and supportive environment.

We developed our brand new Be Brilliant competencies and values framework this year (more on that later in the report!). The People Committee were involved in the framework's development and were pleased to see that the whole framework is shaped by our values, with a heavy focus on belonging.

Another part of this principle is about the right to be safe. This year we updated our safeguarding policy to reflect that Jenny Hannon, trustee and Chair of the Audit and Governance Committee, is our trustee lead for safeguarding. Jenny works closely with Harriet, our director of operations and Simone, our head of quality to make sure that PSS's strategic plans reflect our legal and regulatory requirements around safeguarding; that our policies and procedures do everything they can to keep people safe; that when things go wrong, we're able to learn from them and improve what we do; and champion a culture of safeguarding throughout PSS. Keeping people safe is a crucial part of our work and we make sure trustees have loads of time at their meetings to monitor and review things.

### **Decision making, risk and control:**

We're currently doing loads of work around how we write, structure and communicate our policies. In September 2023, our Audit and Governance Committee agreed which policies

should be owned by the Board, and how often they should be reviewed. New policies around procurement and information governance have been developed this year, and we've recently done a big test of our business continuity plan, facilitated by an external provider (including real-life scenarios!). Next up, we'll be working smarter by making better use of technology when it comes to policy review and approval, and we'll be doing a lot of work to pull together policies into themed booklets, making groups of policies easier to find. Making the language we use in our policies easier to understand and more inclusive is also part of our plan.

Our Board also delegates oversight of key business areas to its sub-committees and, every year, we complete a thorough review of how our committees have performed against their terms of reference. This makes sure our committees are focusing on the stuff they need to be focusing on, and lets the Board know that nothing is being missed. This year, we made changes to how we review the performance of internal and external auditors, to improve assurance here.

### **Board effectiveness**

Well, it's been all change on our Board this year! We welcomed Rich, Georgia and Helen as fully fledged trustees following their recruitment back in 2022 but had to say a sad goodbye to Dave and Christian. This shuffle gives us an opportunity to rethink how we can recruit and retain brilliant, skilled trustees. So in 2024, we'll be going back out there on the hunt for some new trustees, and we'll be advertising a permanent opening for committee members to join us. Nicola Parkinson has been a wonderful addition to our People Committee and has shown the value someone can bring to the Board without the full commitment of being a trustee. We'll be looking at how we can bring committee members into important Board chats so they can share their valuable skills, thoughts and experience. It'll even help us when it comes to succession planning. In fact, Nicola is on track to becoming a trustee herself and will be joining our Board in the 2024/25 year.

Our Board makes sure that it reviews its own performance, and the performance of individual trustees, including the Chair, in line with the Code's recommendations. We have a formal appraisal process for trustees each year, along with full Board performance reviews every two years. In October 2023, we gave the Board a recap on the work we've done to do all the stuff we agreed at the October 2022 performance review (there's too much to list here, but trustee induction procedures, meeting structure, recruitment approaches, policy development, risk management, visits to services and much more were all talked about!).

### **Equality, diversity and inclusion**

Our mammoth EDI journey ramped up several gears over the last year. At the start of 23/24, Social Justice Collective completed their audit report looking at how systemic issues like power, privilege and oppression are at play in PSS and wow, did it open our eyes! We'll talk about this in more depth later in this report, but our internal steering group, which includes Julie, Kim and Nicola from the Board and staff from a variety of roles and teams across PSS, have worked so hard to develop our vision for change, and lay the foundations for a five year action plan which will truly make PSS a place where everyone feels like they belong. The Board are super committed to and really excited about making this vision a reality. We know that big, meaningful change like this has to come from the top so at the time of writing, we're developing our plans to recruit two new trustees – a person of colour and someone with lived experience of a learning disability. To support the Board's own journey here, we were

privileged to have Gem Turner, disabled content creator and consultant join us for our October 2023 away day. Gem told us her story of living with a disability, and the huge number of barriers she faces in everyday life. Gem's insights about ableism and how the world is geared in a way that just doesn't work for so many people really sharpened our focus for centring accessibility in all its forms in our plans. It was a privilege to hear her speak and we highly recommend giving her a follow.

### **Openness and accountability**

Every year we ask the people we support, our commissioners, our partners and our Shared Lives carers to take part in our Annual Survey, giving them an opportunity to tell us about their experience of working with us. These results are reported to the Board. We were chuffed to get feedback from 958 people this year in total. This adds up to a 39% response rate, which is a 44% increase on the return rate achieved in 2021/22 (667 responses, or 26%). We got feedback from two of our commissioners and partner agencies, which is a lot fewer than the 14 we heard from last year, but lucky for us, we work closely with our commissioners throughout the year, getting lots of useful feedback as we go, on top of the usual contract monitoring that happens on a regular basis.

This year, response rates were up in almost all areas compared to last year:

People we support - **32.6% increase**

Shared Lives carers - **66.6% increase**

Parents, carers and guardians - **217.8% increase**

The average star ratings for PSS as a social care provider were also fantastic:

People we support - **4.8 out of 5**

Shared Lives carers - **4.6 out of 5**

Parents, carers and guardians - **4.7 out of 5**

We're working on some reports right now that list off all the scores we got, which will be going on our website in June. Safe to say, we're chuffed to bits with the scores and can't wait to get stuck into the feedback we've received. Because of the low number of responses from our commissioners and partners, it's a bit difficult to give an average star rating for these. The two participants rated PSS at a four and a five out of five stars – which is pretty good going.

These were some of the cracking take-aways we got from doing the survey:

- Lots of people supported by Shared Lives love living in their Shared Lives arrangements. Many said how happy they were to be a part of a family, and that their quality of life dramatically improved once in their arrangement.
- The people we support had lots of positive things to say about the staff at PSS. They were described as approachable, helpful, kind, and respectful.

- A big chunk of the comments mentioned something people we support have been able to do thanks to support from PSS, things like volunteering, attending college, building relationships and going out in the community.

People we support added 280 comments – and the vast majority were positive.

#### **Our Shared Lives carers told us there was a bit of room for improvement:**

- A number of respondents referenced concern about staff turnover or part time staffing.
- Some people expressed concerns regarding the quality of communication they felt they received from their PSS team.
- Two people mentioned there is a lot of focus on IT and how they struggle to access the E-learning, complaining that it is difficult to navigate and can crash, causing you to lose progress.

Our main focus now is reflecting on and making improvements in the areas where people didn't have such a great experience - and we're beaver away on our plan of action.

We've also still got a really strong compliments and complaints process, which allows people we support, families, commissioners or anyone else who wants to give us feedback to tell us their thoughts either by email, letter or using a form on our website. Both compliments and complaints are reported to the Board at every meeting to make sure we continue to be transparent and open when responding to feedback. We keep a register of interests so that trustees and senior managers can declare any conflicts or relationships relevant to the agenda at the beginning of each meeting.

#### **Trustee performance**

The Chair of Trustees meets with individual trustees on every April to talk about their contribution to the Board and to the organisation as a whole. The Chair also has an appraisal done by the Vice Chair, and committee members have an annual meeting with the relevant Chair to talk about their experience of volunteering for PSS and their contribution to their committee. The Board also does a review of its own performance and on the skills and expertise of our Board members on a biennial basis, as well as self-assessments against the Charity Governance Code. This helps us to make sure trustees are acting in line with best practice.

Our teams regularly come to Board meetings to talk about the different parts of what they do, and our trustees often get out and about to visit our services throughout the year. Trustees are also expected to regularly attend Board and sub-committee meetings. These elements of trustee performance are reported to the Audit and Governance Committee every quarter.

#### **Delegation of authority**

The Board of Trustees give our chief executive responsibility for the day-to-day workings and development of PSS, and for making sure PSS is moving in the right direction towards our goals. The trustees are involved in recruiting our leadership team, made up of PSS directors. We've got a delegation of authority framework, which allows our trustees to delegate authority in a structured way. Before every Board meeting, our trustees are given a range of things to read through which give them updates on how PSS is doing, so they've

always got a great picture of what's going on and what our next steps are. Trustees are also kept up-to-speed on any risks they need to be aware of, and our Audit and Governance Sub-committee looks at PSS's strategic risk register really closely before our whole Board sees it and gives their views. Reviews like these feed back into PSS's business plans. The Board is also involved in making decisions about collaborations with other charities or organisations.

### **Trustees Statement on Public Benefit**

PSS (UK)'s vision is to influence health, social care and community services both locally and nationally, through innovative approaches that make a real difference to people's lives. It does this by carrying out activities that identify those in need and create innovative service solutions. PSS's trustees therefore confirm that they have complied with the duty in section 17 of the Charities Act 2011 to have due regard to the public benefit guidance published by the Charity Commission in determining the activities undertaken by the charity.

### **Pay and remuneration**

At PSS we're committed to accountability and transparency in the charity sector, but we believe that personal privacy is also an important factor when it comes to what we share.

All executive pay is determined by our People Committee. The trustees who make up this group are responsible for ensuring a fair pay structure across PSS's executive team that recognises:

- Individual and team performance in the context of a challenging climate.
- The importance of recruiting and retaining the right people (both in terms of their ability to do the job and their attitude).
- Fair pay that reflects the level of knowledge, skills and experience required and the responsibilities and accountabilities associated with the position.
- Pay levels that are benchmarked against comparable jobs locally and in the sector.

We pay close attention to pay rates for every role and we benchmark pay across our sector to see how PSS rewards compare to other organisations that are similar to us. The results of this research helped inform our pay and remuneration offers across the board, helped us keep pay and remuneration at PSS fair and helped us remain a competitive employer.

### **Employing people who have disabilities**

We make sure that anyone who's disabled is fairly considered for any roles we've got at PSS. We don't ask people about their health or disabilities before we offer them a job with us, unless we need to know whether someone needs to have some adjustments made. We offer interviews to everyone who considers themselves to be disabled and has all the essential requirements for a role at PSS. When someone who's disabled comes to work with us, we make sure we make all the reasonable adjustments we need to prevent them being off work, to make sure they have a safe return to work if they are off, and to try and stop them needing to be off work in the future. We encourage all of our teams to develop their skills and qualifications and take full advantage of the promotion and development opportunities, regardless of disability or any other protected characteristic.

## **Fundraising**

By law, we need to make a statement about what we do to fundraise (Section 162a of the Charities Act 2011). The law describes fundraising as 'soliciting or otherwise procuring money or other property for charitable purposes'. At PSS we don't do lot of fundraising from the general public. But if we do get any kind of donation, including things like legacies and grants, we make them clear in our accounts as voluntary income.

Any fundraising we do is managed internally, without any involvement from professional fundraisers, third parties or commercial organisations. The day-to-day management of any kind of fundraising sits with the senior management team.

We don't think it's necessary for us to comply with any voluntary code of practise because we're not bound by any regulatory schemes. We haven't had any complaints about our fundraising. Our team's terms of employment say they have to behave reasonably at all times - and we don't approach anyone for funds, ask for funds for particular reasons or feel like we need to monitor fundraising in this way.

## **What we've been up to this year**

It's been a year of lots of little and big changes here at PSS. But one thing that's remained unchanged is the unwavering, creative and personalised support our team provides to so many - either directly, putting their heart and soul into their work with the people we support, or indirectly, working hard to keep PSS at the top of its game in the background. Let's have a look at what they've been up to in each of the areas of our Big Plan (that's our five-year strategy):

### **Theme one: only the people we support know what it's like to be in their shoes**

#### **Time for more people to learn about Women's Turnaround**

Our Women's Turnaround service is a brilliant service that supports women on probation. Our support begins when the women are in prison and continues once they're released, which is something you didn't see in the BBC Series two of Time - a hugely popular BBC drama set in a women's prison, which aired this year.

To coincide with the release of Time and the big hype around it, our communications team thought this would be a great opportunity to highlight the incredible work that takes place within our Women's Turnaround service. We were invited onto BBC Radio Merseyside and our very own Heather Bromilow and Claire\* (someone we have supported in Women's Turnaround) went on the radio and were absolutely incredible!

They talked about how we support women to turn their lives around and Claire talked about how we supported her to make an amazing change in her life. We're so proud of Claire for

sharing her experiences and of Heather for really shining a light on the work that we do at PSS.

\*Name changed for privacy

### **Funny mummies**

We love a good laugh round here (we were born and bred in Liverpool, after-all, where people never take themselves too seriously). Joking about with people can be a great way to lift our mood. So, this year we got creative with the support we offer and teamed up with The Comedy Trust to give some of the mums from our Parent-Baby Service the chance to learn how to do stand-up comedy. In their weekly sessions, the mums have learnt how to bring their experiences of motherhood to life and give a relatable insight into what it's like to be in their shoes. By the end of the sessions, they will be able to create a comedy performance that is just as entertaining as it was educational!

The mums have also been filmed and interviewed by journalist Jessica Bradley, who's making a short film about their journey to 'doing funny' at PSS (stay tuned!).

And to round it all off, the mums are so funny that they even bagged themselves a space at Hot Water Comedy Club where they, and some of the dads who get support from Everton in the Community, will showcase their amazing routines in September.

### **Quality checkers are a go**

Quality checkers are a bunch of lovely PSS volunteers who mean business when it comes to making sure our services are doing what they say they will, in the right way. An honorary part of our quality team, our quality checkers are trained to go out and about and chat to people who use our services and our PSS teammates about how they feel and what they want to improve, reporting back on what they find.

Since the launch of quality checking in 2023, we've carried out and recorded 24 quality checker conversations across PSS services! We're currently working with 21 quality checkers, who are a mixture of supported people and Shared Lives carers.

The group meet quarterly and shares their findings from their quality-checking conversations. We've had quality checker visits in our Making Days centres, some of our Wellbeing Centres and the Merseyside office for Women's Turnaround.

Here's what Corinne, one of our quality checkers told us about her visit to Women's Turnaround:

'The women we support feel so safe when they come to PSS and often don't have the confidence to go out anywhere else. They feel respected and listened to and that their support is person-centred to them.

'Everyone scored their experience with Women's Turnaround a score of four or five out of five stars. The front-of-house team also got lots of positive feedback about how welcome they make the women feel when they step through our front door.



'Some suggestions from the women were that they'd like to be given more info about other PSS services and things they might be able to get involved with, and somewhere to buy snacks – always a good idea.'

We're so proud of what we have achieved with our quality checkers so far and cannot wait to see where we're at next year.

### **Ryan's Shoebox Full of Love Appeal returns for the second year running**

You might remember last year when Ryan, who uses our Making Days service in Liverpool, did a big call-out for donations to the Shoebox Full of Love Appeal in December 2022. The appeal was a massive success, which meant lots of disadvantaged and homeless people were given the gift of warm socks, toiletries and food in December.

Well, 2023 was no different and Ryan did another massive campaign for donations to support the appeal once again. He even created and performed his own poem about showing love and kindness to homeless people in the hopes of encouraging people to donate.

Ryan really went above and beyond and with the support of the Making Days team, was able to collect over 75 gift bags. Ryan's commitment is a reminder that we've all got the power to make a positive impact in our community and we're so proud to support him at PSS!

### **Another ace co-production session in the bag**

Our Parent-Baby Service is passionate about working with the parents who use our service to co-produce on the type of things they'd like to see be part of their service at PSS. The team have been meeting with lots of parents in the community and creating a safe space for parents and their children to talk, share ideas, socialise and have fun.

We've been exploring what it means to feel like a good parent and what makes people feel like they're not good parents and having some really healthy and positive conversations. We've also been looking at different ways the PSS Parent-Baby Service can support and engage with new parents by using more accessible methods, for example, there have been discussions around creating a podcast or YouTube channel.

These sessions are more than just stay and play, they are a chance for parents to openly talk about how they feel, and things they'd like to see in place for parents and to meet other parents who might be in a similar situation to themselves.

### **Our Making Days gang are just 'sew' lovely**

Some of the people we support in Making Days have been taking part in weekly sewing classes at a local sewing group called Sewing Connect. At the start of their sessions, they were told they'd be able to make their own tote bags. But of course, being the big-hearted gang that they are, they decided to make syringe driver bags to give to a local hospice, rather than making bags for themselves. They wanted to help people at the end of their lives by making something to help make someone's day that little bit easier.

Over six weeks, they made their bags with the lovely Paula and Cathy at Sewing Connect and once they were finished, they took them to Woodlands Hospice to gift the bags to the team there. It was such a lovely afternoon and so inspiring seeing the people we support live

our PSS values through and through! The team at Woodlands Hospice was super welcoming and was so grateful for the lovely gesture from our Making Days gang.

### **Co-production for the win in Making Days**

At PSS co-production is a word we use quite a lot, and for good reason, too. We like to work with the people we support to design how we do things as much as we can – after all, it's the people we support who know exactly what good support, or a good service, looks like.

We've been supporting the people who use our Making Days service to get together in groups to talk, share ideas and take action on the things that are important to them. And from those groups we've launched two Making Days co-production groups in the last 12 months, the Getting it Together group and the GoGo Branching Out group.

Each group has their own agenda, issues, and things they'd like to do or see. They also picked their own representatives, who then attend the quarterly Shared Voices meetings. It's super inspiring to hear all the amazing things they're going to achieve this year.

### **Eurovision fever strikes PSS**

Whether you're a Eurovision lover or loather – no matter where you sit on the fence there's no denying that, in honour of Liverpool being the host city on behalf of Ukraine, our Making Days service threw the BEST Eurovision parties ever.

Thanks to funding from EuroGrant, PSS became party central and we were able to host lots of epic celebrations across our Making Days centres in Liverpool.

We partied at Hetherlow Community Centre, at The Noah's Ark Centre in Speke and the people we support at Eleanor Rathbone House also threw a huge party.

We got to see the amazing talent shows, with the likes of Bucks Fizz and Abba, who kept everyone entertained. But the special part of our celebrations was the bit where we got to make lovely new Ukrainian friends, show our support to our local Ukrainian community and learn about Ukrainian culture. Thanks to Inna and Paulina from Liverpool Ukrainian Support Group, we also had performances from UKrainia, the most incredible Ukrainian dance group who wore the most beautiful traditional Ukrainian outfits, and we got to try some delicious Ukrainian food - chef's kiss!

Told you it was party central.

Everyone put so much effort and energy into the week and made it so memorable for the people we support.

### **Farm Fest at Dutch Farm**

Every year we hold our annual Farm Fest at our urban allotment in Liverpool, and this year it was bigger and better than ever! We had stilt walkers, circus workshops, drumming sessions, delicious food from the farm, live music from the Making Days Choir, Strumbrellas, Sing! Sing! Sing! and The Choir With no Name.

We invited people from our local community, as well as our PSS teammates and the atmosphere was amazing. It really was a show-stopping day, and everyone had so much fun.

## **Theme two: we'll make wise decisions to keep PSS around for future generations**

### **The end of an era for one of our services**

Last year, we asked the people we support with our Supported Living service what they wish their home could be like. They told us all about the ideas they have for the future, and they sounded amazing. There's nothing we want to do more than make those things happen – it's really important to us that the people we support live their lives in the way they want to.

It's equally important to us that we're able to pay our team fairly for the wonderful job they do. With the cost of living continuing to rise, we've continued to increase our team's wages because it's the right thing to do.

But to be able to make the changes we want to make for the people we support and keep our team on a fair wage, we know we'd need a lot more money than what our commissioners are able to give us to provide the service.

That's why, on 8th January, we transferred our Supported Living Service over to a new provider called Mediline.

It's in our Big Plan to make wise decisions that keep PSS around for future generations, and with that in mind, we decided that if doing what's right means we need to pass the baton over to another organisation who may have what's needed to make that happen, that's what we'll do. That's where Mediline came in, who Liverpool City Council chose to take over from us.

At PSS we've been providing our Supported Living service in Liverpool for a long time. We've supported hundreds of people to live in a safe and happy home, with as much independence as possible. Our amazing, big-hearted team have consistently gone above and beyond to give the people they support the best experience with PSS, showing up for them through thick and thin, including during a worldwide pandemic when the Government asked millions of us to stay home.

We'd like to say such a huge thank you to our Supported Living team for all they've given to us over the years. You're all incredible, and we wish you all the very best for the future. We're really going to miss the people we support, too, who we know so well. It's been such a pleasure to support you all, and we wish you all the best.

### **PSS comes to North Yorkshire**

We were over the moon to win a new service with North Yorkshire Council last year and we started delivering their Shared Lives service in February this year. We welcomed over 90 new shared Lives carers to our network in locations across North Yorkshire, including Scarborough, Selby, Harrogate, North Allerton, and the village of Botton (which, if you haven't heard of it before, is a community made up of just Shared Lives households). This new region means PSS now has contracts across seven regions the UK, with North Yorkshire joining:

- Norfolk and Suffolk
- Merseyside
- North Wales
- Staffordshire
- Lincolnshire
- Greater Manchester

Next: world domination.

### **Staying put in Staffordshire**

We were pleased as punch to retain our Staffordshire Shared Lives contract after a tender process and we can continue to deliver our service across the region. After a big year with many changes this goes to show that our Midlands team are still the best in the biz.

### **Stickin' around in Wales**

We're super chuffed to report that we've also retained our contract for Women's Turnaround in North Wales. This big win is down to the incredible work done by our team who have also given our service an absolutely crackin' rep with our commissioners, and our crack team of tender writers who give their all to show how great PSS is and win us some business.

### **Eleanor Rathbone House gets a glow-up**

Earlier this year we did a staff survey to catch up with how our teammates were feeling about hybrid working. The good news was that the majority of staff were happy with a mix of home and office working. Yay for slippers, fewer commutes and unlimited pet cuddles! But what did come out of the survey was the need for more private meeting spaces, and more places to go to hop onto virtual meetings, while working in head office.

To get the best out of our space, we worked with Susanna Smith, a fab design consultant who combines psychology with interiors. She did a big review of the building, chatting with a focus group of our teammates to nail down what people need to be able to work well when they're in the office. Susannah whipped up a plan and worked with our head of comms, Lisa, to bring her vision to life.

Here's what we did:

- Split our big meeting rooms up to make lots more smaller spaces with more purpose
- Added glass panels to the booths in our first-floor area, creating another private little nook for people to jump into
- Turned the area where our staff dartboard was a Zoom zone for those who need to make a quick video call
- We gave our whole office a bit of a glow-up, introducing calming, brain-friendly colours, bringing the outside in and adding cool new bits of furniture to make our space feel more homely.

And because we're on a mission to be kinder to our planet, we got our mitts on as many pre-loved or ethically-sourced items as we could – and anything we had to buy was from UK suppliers.

## **New roomies**

This year we welcomed some fab new roommates to Eleanor Rathbone House. Our friends at Shared Lives Plus are based on our ground floor and The Charities Trust are now based on the top floor of the office, helping third sector organisations make a big impact. We love sharing our communal spaces with our new roomies, who have brought some extra buzz to our office.

## **Here for parents and babies**

Our Parent-Baby Services team signed a new contract this year to expand what we do for new mums and dads, and their babies, in Liverpool. We merged our Parent-Baby Relationships and Parent-Baby Wellness services to create a really rounded service that can give general support to help new parents form healthy, positive relationships with their children up to the age of two, and more specialist support to parents experiencing more specific issues in their relationship with their baby and may be on the edge of intervention from social services. Parents can move seamlessly between the various levels of support, and our team of brilliant experts can do our best work.

## **Theme three: people want to be part of our team**

### **Comms and engagement strategy for Shared Lives**

Our Shared Lives service is the farthest reaching of all of the services we offer at PSS. With over 750 Shared Lives carers and over 550 supported people across seven services, not to mention an amazing team of people making the service work as well as it does across the country, it's a pretty big undertaking to keep awareness and engagement top-of-the-list. So, we made it a priority by creating a brand new role: Shared Lives communications and engagement manager.

In June, we welcomed the superstar that is Carla to our communications team, and she got to work writing a communications and engagement strategy that focuses on, well, raising the awareness and boosting the engagement of everyone in Shared Lives. It includes supporting the regional teams to offer top notch engagement initiatives that make our carers feel proud to be part of PSS, as well as a bunch of work to raise the profile of both PSS as a provider and Shared Lives as a model of care.

Almost nine months into the strategy being rolled out and we've had some pretty big wins. That includes standing on the big stage during Social Work Week with Social Work England. It also includes our CEO, Lesley Dixon and a PSS Shared Lives household appearing live on Steph's Packed Lunch, to an average viewership of 87,000 people. And it includes doing loads of little things that make a huge difference, like setting up WhatsApp groups for our carer communities and giving our marketing materials a lick of paint. We've still got loads of great stuff to come and look forward to seeing where it takes us!

## **Gem by name, gem by nature**

This year our Board of Trustees had the excellent fortune to be joined by disability content creator, speaker, advocate, consultant, and all-round fantastic human Gem Turner. Gem led a session with our Board all about equality, diversity and inclusion, where they explored issues around disability, learning from Gem's lived experience. Our CEO Lesley said that Gem

‘really helped open up our thinking, supported some deep conversations and so firmly but nicely challenged our thinking.’ Our Board had a cracking afternoon of learning and sharing, and we look forward to hopefully working with Gem again in the future.

### **Keeping our carers connected**

We’ve got some exciting initiatives happening across our volunteer network, and that includes our new carer champions. We know that peer support for Shared Lives carers is just as important as having the support of our Shared Lives teams, so we set out to find Shared Lives carers who aren’t just experts in what they do, they also have the passion, interest and knowledge to champion other carers to achieve the same.

Our carer champions are based in all parts of our national network, and they help other carers learn and improve on their skills, share best practice and make carers feel part of a team. They cover five key areas:

- Tech support
- Wellbeing support (trained by Samaritans as ‘listeners’)
- New carers
- Specialist skills like positive behavioural support
- Promoting the service

Crackin’ work.

### **Shiny, happy people**

If you’re a big PSS fan and a regular reader of our Annual Reports, you won’t be surprised to hear that for another year running, our staff survey, otherwise known as ‘The Big Survey’, showed that our teams are still super happy with their roles at PSS.

In our 2023 staff survey, we had 233 members of staff and 68% of them told us what they think. Of those people:

97% of PSS people said PSS was a friendly place to work

97% of PSS people said their work has special meaning and was more than ‘just a job’

98% of PSS people thought the leadership team were effective and trust them to lead

### ***Here’s what people had to say about why they love it here\*:***

‘It’s the people you work with.’

‘I feel lucky to work for an organisation that does so much wonderful work.’

‘I feel valued – I’m not just a number.’

‘The culture is supportive and the people are friendly.’

‘The best thing about working for PSS is the people. Both my manager and director have a genuine interest in me (and my wellbeing) and encourage me to be the best I can.’

‘The high level of support. If, for any reason, I’m struggling at work or at home, I know I can talk to my manager. No matter what else is going on in the team, I’ll be encouraged to do what I need to do to look after myself. There’s a real recognition in PSS that people do a better job when they are looked after and I think that’s a rare culture in organisations across all sectors.’

'I love that I can help the people I support and see them grow their independent skills and achieve their goals.'

'Everything - the people, the culture and its embedded values. I feel really proud to be part of PSS.'

\*Nobody was paid to say any of these lovely things

### **Fingers on the pulse**

Listening closely to our big team of PSS staff and carers is an important way for us to make sure we're doing things right. Alongside our Big Survey for staff, and our Annual Survey for carers, this year we introduced pulse surveys, where we could find out how our staff and carers are feeling more often.

We asked our staff about a whole host of things - from how well they felt they belonged through to whether they'd recommend PSS to a friend or family member - and the anonymous results were fed back to our leadership team, who used them to get a closer look at how things were looking for our teams.

Our Shared Lives carers get a visit from their development worker every 12 weeks, but we make sure to keep in touch with them through carer meetings and socials as well as sending them our Annual Survey. In Wales, we did a successful trial of pulse surveys so that we can practice continuous listening and encourage an even better feedback culture. We contacted Shared Lives carers two more times in the year, around every four months.

The best thing about the pulse surveys was that the team could use the regional survey as an opportunity to ask more specific questions about their service, like what they want from carer meetings and how they find their communication. We were able to do some cool engagement initiatives in response that really boosted the happiness of our carers - the number of people coming to carer meetings alone improved from just a handful at times to hitting 60 at one meeting!

### **Big Thinks**

Our track record for coming up with new and exciting services speaks for itself: our people have the best ideas. That got Lisa, our head of comms, to thinking: 'Why don't we solve more problems together?' She came up with the idea (see... ideas) to replace our usual leadership team roadshows with what has simply been titled 'Big Thinks', where each of our teammates comes to a quarterly meeting to help brainstorm ideas, solve tricky things and generally have a good think about issues we need to work on.

In February and March, our learning and development team were the first to hop onto the new Big Thinks concept and brought the first draft of our new competency and values framework to the party for everyone's thoughts on what should and shouldn't be in it, how it should look and what the language was like. They walked away with a load of amazing feedback and suggestions for change, meaning what the team created was both what our teammates want to see, and what's going to work really well in practise.



## **Be Brilliant**

On the subject of Be Brilliant, let's tell you a little bit more about it. When Sharon, our new head of learning and development, joined PSS in the summer, her first task was to get cracking on a new framework to look at the competencies we need to have in our roles and how we can use them to guide us, reflect and develop. Working with Michelle, our head of people and culture, Sharon whipped up a fantastic piece of work that not only tells us what type of stuff we should be doing at the various levels within PSS, but how we should be behaving, which PSS values we should be living, and the stuff we definitely *shouldn't* be doing, too. It's being rolled out this year and we can't wait to see how it's going to help people figure out where they are and where they want to be.

## **World Mental Health Day at PSS**

With the popularity of the PSS mental health podcast, we decided to create our first-ever mental health webinar for PSS people to join live and get the conversation going around mental health.

We had a panel of guests which included Jo Jackson, Libby Davies, Simone McCaskill and Rachel Clark who all shared their experiences with mental health. We asked them what good mental health looks like to them and how they manage their own mental health.

The most important thing about World Mental Health Day was to get our teams talking and breaking down the barriers and stigmas associated with mental health. We got such good feedback for creating a safe space for people to talk about mental health, and by creating it as a live event we were able to engage with lots of people on World Mental Health Day.

## **Menopause and menstruation policy**

We're mega proud of our brand-new menopause and menstruation policy and the security and reassurance it will give people who might be experiencing symptoms whilst they're working at PSS.

We're also super proud of the work that has gone into making it as inclusive as possible. Lots of menopause resources exclude the experience of people who are not cisgendered, so that means some groups of people who will go through menopause at some point in their lives may feel left out of conversations about it. When menopause support is aimed exclusively at cis women, other people may feel uncomfortable asking for support, which is exactly what we didn't want to do at PSS and why this piece of work was so important. Equity, diversity and inclusion are at the forefront of everything we're doing, and so it felt super important that we get this right.

## **Becoming a more equitable, inclusive and diverse organisation**

A few years ago, we made a commitment to change how we do things at PSS to become the most equitable, diverse and inclusive organisation we can be. We wanted to look closely at the way systemic power, privilege and oppression operates in our sector and in PSS, and what we can do to make things fairer for everyone. To help us make lasting change, we invited social justice experts, Social Justice Collective, to come and help us see what needs to be done. They gave us a fantastic report that showed clear areas for improvement and told us about things we can do to make PSS more inclusive and to help more people feel like they belong here. Throughout this year, we've been making careful, steady progress (slow and steady



wins the race, or in this case, slow and steady makes permanent, meaningful change) and we couldn't be more excited about our vision for the future.

**Telling our stakeholders about our audit:** once we'd digested our report from Social Justice Collective, we made sure we told all of our staff, the people we support and our other stakeholders about what we found. We did a special PSS roadshow all about the findings for our staff, talking them through so that everyone understood what they meant, and reminded all of our teammates that we're all responsible for making PSS the most welcoming place we can. We made sure we were honest and open about the areas we needed to get better in, took responsibility for the things that we weren't doing right, and told everyone what our next steps would be: coming up with a vision for what we want PSS to look like in the future, and hatching a plan for how to get there.

**Our vision for an equitable, inclusive and diverse PSS:** this year was the year we really nailed our vision for the future of our organisation. Our EDI steering group worked with Social Justice Collective to come up with a vision that really works for PSS and speaks to what we believe in:

*PSS is shaped and led by the communities we're part of, and we find joy in celebrating and learning about everyone's experiences. Anyone we work with is met with warmth, safety and a deep sense of respect, care and belonging.*

*We're passionate about disrupting the oppressive behaviour, power systems and structures our communities face.*

**Training from Social Justice Collective:** the experts at Social Justice Collective gave some in-depth training to a group of managers across PSS this year, tackling a range of important issues from active allyship (and how to call out and call in), how power and privilege impact others and the various ways oppression can show up. The training was fantastic, and it has empowered key PSS people to have important, impactful conversations, and to form policies and procedures that are informed and fair.

**Leadership Narada:** Leaders from across PSS got together at Kuumba Imani Millennium Centre in February for one of our Leadership Naradas, where we learned more about what we can do to make sure PSS is as equitable and inclusive as possible. We were joined by two amazing speakers. Having our meeting at the centre was important to us – we want to support other third sector organisations wherever we can.<sup>[1]</sup> First up was the inspirational Christian Owens, founder of Gender Space and friend of PSS. A retired detective sergeant, Christian is a trans man who has been on an incredible journey to become the person he is today. He spoke honestly and openly about his experiences in the workplace and in life in general, explaining why being kind, asking honest questions and not being afraid to say you might get things wrong can be some of the most powerful ways we can support our trans community. Hearing Christian speak helped us spark some more ideas for ways we can help people who may be interested in coming to work with us know that we're an inclusive place to be, and how we can help support trans people at PSS. It was also Christian's birthday, so we couldn't resist getting him a cake and singing happy birthday.

Next up, we were joined by community historian, independent researcher, writer and broadcaster Laurence Westgaph. Laurence gave us an eye-opening lecture about the deep involvement our home city of Liverpool had with the slave trade. Laurence told us all about the history of the Black community in the city, how and why Liverpool became a diverse community, and about the massive impact slavery has had on the city's built environment, culture and institutions.

**Friends and allies:** this year, we helped set up two support network groups for our teammates – one for people who are part of the LGBTQIA+ community, and one for people who are neurodivergent. We wanted these groups to be led and set up by people from those communities, providing a safe space for people to come together as friends and allies. We're hoping that as our work continues, more support networks for underrepresented groups will be set up.

**Did we just launch our brand-new awards? Oh yes, we did!**

We replaced The Big Awards with our brand-new set of PSS awards - The Brilliant Awards aka The Brillies. These awards were designed to recognise the people across PSS who have given their all in their roles and been, well, brilliant. And not to blow our trumpet but we received a whopping 114 nominations for our PSS people!

**What did we change?**

- New brilliant name
- All-new award categories that focus on important areas of PSS work
- New judging criteria, making it easier to nominate and to pick winners
- One winner per category
- Guaranteed winners from each of our directorates
- New judging process, including guest judges
- Shorter award ceremony
- Increased prizes

To make our awards even more exciting, we encouraged all of our teams to get together for watch parties, where people could watch the awards together with lots of snacks courtesy of PSS. It was so great to see all of our teams celebrating together.

So, what were our all-new categories?

**Star of the Year Award:**

*Star of the Year: Homes and Communities*

*Star of the Year: Strengthening Families*

*Star of the Year: Shared Lives*

*Star of the Year: Central Services*

**Brilliant Leadership Award**

**Belonging Award**

**Working Together Award**

**Thinking Big Award**

**Volunteer of the Year**

**Pride of PSS**

A massive well done to all of our brilliant Brillies winners.

### **Stress awareness month**

As April is Stress Awareness Month, we wanted to do something to relieve the stress of our PSS people. Looking after the wellbeing of our teammates is super important to us and we're always looking for different ways we can support people's wellbeing.

To raise awareness about the impact of stress and how to reduce it we shared lots of tips on our Teams channel and in The Loop. We also gave our teams the choice of a wellbeing kit or an Indian head massage. It was so lovely to hear feedback from our PSS teammates telling us how much more relaxed they felt.

### **A gift to say thank you**

If there's one thing that's for sure, it's that our people are the best of the best. They are some of the most dedicated, big-hearted and highly skilled people we could ever wish to be part of our team. We're always blown away by the incredible stuff that they do – whether they're supporting people directly on the frontline or supporting our services and people to thrive in one of our offices.

We're able to do what we're doing because of the hard work of our PSS people, and after a good financial year, we were so chuffed to be able to give them a gift. We've given everyone a voucher to say thanks for everything they do.

We've told our teammates that this isn't something we can do every year and it's only because of how hard everyone has worked that we're able to do so – but if we can do something nice for our teammates, we will, and we're really happy that this year, we can.

## **Theme four: we'll use tech in the best way**

### **Elite support**

We've made some big shake-ups this year when it comes to tech at PSS – and one of the biggest ones has to be the move to our brand new IT helpdesk. We've moved to a provider called Elite, giving us access to loads of new ways to raise any IT issues we might have, and much and more streamlined service, meaning our small but mighty in-house tech team have much better support.

### **Tech swap**

At PSS, we once used desktop computers as our main bit of tech. But with hybrid working, and lots of us relying on our laptops, we decided the time had come to move on and retire our good old PCs. Instead, we've swapped them out for safe and secure laptops, meaning everyone's got just one device to work from, and people can get their work done from anywhere they fancy, without being tied to their desk. Our team now have remote access to our secure desktop from one device, making life easier for our tech team and streamlining our digital processes. Not only that, but we've been able to swap 50 of our older laptops for shiny new ones.

## **Super-fast Wi-Fi**

The Wi-Fi in our offices has also had a big upgrade this year – it's now the fastest it's ever been, and it's managed centrally. That means that if there's a Wi-Fi issue in one of our regional offices, our head-office-based tech team can sort it out from afar instead of having to travel to the location, which is much better for our planet.

## **Super-secure systems**

Cyber attacks are an increasingly scary risk for lots of organisations. It takes a worryingly low level of skill to launch a cyber attack, and even the lowest levels of cyber crime can have huge consequences. Making sure our organisation is as safe as it possibly could be was a big priority for us this year – and a requirement as part of our contracts with Government bodies. We're proud to say that with lots of hard work from our tech team, we passed both the Cyber Essentials and Cyber Essentials Plus certifications with flying colours.

## **WhatsApp-ening in our Shared Lives communities?**

We know that for a lot of our Shared Lives carers email isn't the most enjoyable way to keep in touch. Loads of carers told us they would much prefer a call or a text. So, that's what we decided to do. We trailed the use of WhatsApp communities with our carers. The advantage of communities is that the team can send messages (what WhatsApp calls 'announcements') but the carers can only respond with an emoji or a short reply to the announcement. This means there's much less chance of getting caught up in a long chat thread and it can remain a space where carers can get essential information straight to their phones.

We trialled this with our carers in Greater Manchester and Merseyside. After three-months we surveyed the carers. Here's what they told us:

100% of carers polled told us that they love the WhatsApp community and that they find the information they received relevant and useful

'Really good idea using WhatsApp' - Shared Lives carer, Merseyside

'The info is just right' - Shared Lives carer, Manchester

And even our Shared Lives teams felt it made things easier.

'I think the Merseyside WhatsApp group is a great way of reaching all of my carers at once, when inviting them to carers meetings etc.' - Shared Lives development worker, Merseyside

## **Theme five: we'll have a positive impact on our sector, local communities, the people within them and the planet we live on**

### **Blooming brilliant green spaces at PSS**

Not to toot our own horns (well, maybe a little bit) but we're really proud of our green spaces at PSS, so much so, that we entered them into the Britain in Bloom competition, which was in partnership with the Royal Horticulture Society.

We entered Dutch Farm and our outdoor space at the back of Eleanor Rathbone House. The judges were all really impressed by how much hard work the people we support, Andy our property services manager and our fab Making Days team had put into transforming our green spaces into places where people can get stuck into gardening, relaxing or simply enjoy being outdoors.

Well, we only went and bloomin' did it! We won awards for both sites in the 'It's Your Neighbourhood' category! Some of our Making Days gang and Tessa, our activity coordinator for Making Days, were invited to the awards ceremony in Bolton, where they collected our awards.

### **Sharing our wisdom**

As the founders of Shared Lives, PSS has so much Shared Lives wisdom that we should all have big white beards to rival Gandalf's\* by now. As part of Social Work England's official Social Work Week event (18th - 22nd March), PSS were invited to do not one, but two headline spots, hosting online info sessions about Shared Lives for professionals. Over 600 tickets social workers across the country booked to come and hear Bob, our Shared Lives North West team manager, Lesley, our CEO, and carer Adele, and Barney who we support, talk about what we do and the difference it makes. We co-hosted a session with Social Work England about our Move On Together service, too. Check us out!

\*We know wisdom can be shown in many more ways than a big, white beard

### **Packing a punch with Steph's Packed Lunch**

All our communications team's Christmases came at once back in November, when they were contacted by Steph's Packed Lunch back with an invitation for PSS to appear on the show to talk about Shared Lives. Host Steph McGovern had met someone we support through Shared Lives and the way they described how Shared Lives had changed their life meant Steph wanted to know more and share it with her 87,000 average viewership. Of course, our team were all over it, and within two weeks, our CEO, Lesley, Merseyside carers Craig and Beth, and Mark and Chelsea who they support, took to the Steph's Packed Lunch couch to talk about all things Shared Lives and share their experience of being part of a Shared Lives arrangement. We had loads of great feedback online and we saw a 45% spike in visits to the website.

### **Being kinder to the planet**

At PSS, we're big on sustainability and being kinder to our planet. It's a big part of our Big Plan to make sure we're around for future generations.

Here are our top sustainability projects from 2023:

- LED lighting was installed, and energy monitoring was implemented at our head office, Eleanor Rathbone House. From April 2023 to November 2023, we saved £13,885!
- Environmental champions have been appointed in all of our regions to support the implementation of the sustainability plan.
- A sustainability learning module has been added to Learning Pool, our learning management system, as essential training for PSS teammates.
- Created a Buy Social and Buy Local policy.

- 64 pieces of IT hardware were recycled as part of our technology reduction and recycling initiative, resulting in 87.5% of staff now using only one IT device for work purposes.
- Two additional hives were established at Dutch Farm, enabling us to sell our first crop of honey at our Abundance Day event. -
- We grow and farm our own fruit and vegetables, using the produce in our cooking classes at Making Days and the Wellbeing Centres.
- Worked on a gardening project with the people we support and PSS teammates to give Eleanor Rathbone House a makeover using funds from our purchases at the local gardening centre, Tony Almonds (who also donated £200!).
- Organised an Abergele beach clean-up!
- Collected trees and bushes from local residents who were giving them away and replanted them at Eleanor Rathbone House.

### **Who can grow the biggest tomatoes?**

There was a bit of a treat in store for our PSS teammates this Valentines Day when they received some little gifts from our quality team. In February, each of our offices was sent heirloom tomato seeds, or 'seeds of love' as our head of quality Simone described them, with the challenge of who can grow the biggest tomato. Between now and summertime we're hoping to see tomatoes on a gigantic level, we're talking Jack could trade in his beanstalk level!

Not only will we end up with lots of delicious tomatoes to share with our teammates, volunteers, and people we support, but we'll also have taught people the skills to grow their own vegetables. How awesome is that?

### **Remember Me Day**

We gifted a peace lily to each of our PSS areas to bring a little bit of peace during Grief Awareness Week, which took place from the 2nd until the 8th of December. Peace lilies are plants that symbolise peace, prosperity, innocence, purity, healing, and hope. They're also beneficial plants to have in our working spaces as they can remove toxins from the air and help manage indoor humidity levels.

## Our performance in 2023-24

The remainder of the Trustees' Report constitutes the Strategic Report requirements of the Companies Act 2006.

### Financial results

What a good year. We know that working with the provision of statutory services continues to support our financial sustainability in a way that being reliant on grants or donations would not. Our net income and expenditure, inclusive of gains and losses on investments, resulted in a surplus of £0.9m (22/23: loss of (£0.1m)). Gains on investment for the year totalled £0.5m against a prior year loss of (£0.3m). The underlying position exclusive of gains and losses on investments was £0.3m, (£0.2m in the previous year).

During the year, we rewarded each staff member with a £500 high street shopping voucher, to recognise the tremendous work delivered. We also continued to pay our lowest paid earners in line with the real living wage, and conducted a benchmarking exercise to ensure our pay rates are competitive for our sector across the board.

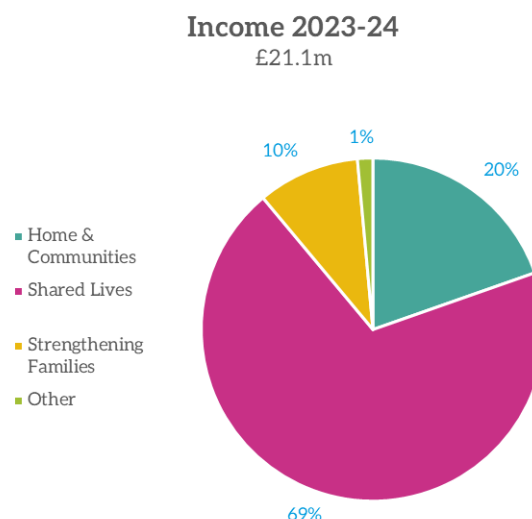
There are no post balance sheet events.

### Statement of Financial Activities

#### Income

Our yearly income of **£21.1m** represents an increase of £1m on prior year income. The increase is due mainly to inflationary rises in fees received and winning our North Yorkshire Shared Lives service.

*Income by Portfolio:*



Our Shared Lives service remains the strongest generating 69% of our income and this is up 1% on prior year. Homes and Communities represent 20%, down 2% on prior year. This is mainly because during the year we made the difficult decision to hand back our Supported Living service. The service was relatively small and due to lack of economies of scale and fee pressures, we would not have been able to continue to pay the real living wage, which is very

important to us at PSS. Our Strengthening Families stood at 10% against a prior of 8%. The increase is mainly due to an increase in income in our Parent & Baby Service.

### **Expenditure**

Our yearly expenditure of **£20.8m** represented a £0.9m increase on prior year. This is mainly due to self-employed carer cost and salary increases. Our salary increases were based on our desire to maintain the real living wage for our lowest paid staff, and a benchmarking exercise completed during the year for all the PSS team. We are confident this should enable PSS to remain an employee of choice in our sector.

### **Pension**

During the year PSS executed a deed of prepayment to record the fact that PSS, as a departing employer of the Pension Trust Growth Plan, agreed to pay £718,097 on account to the Trustees. This represented a reasonable pre-estimate of the amount of the debt due by PSS in relation to the Growth Plan multi-employer scheme.

The Trustee of the Growth Plan has stated that they are unable to certify the debt due to the ongoing court case regarding potential non-adherence to Plan rules. The latest update from the Trustee is that the case is likely to be heard by the court in February 2025. The impact on the cessation valuation, and for each employer, can vary. At this point, as the outcome of the court case is highly uncertain, no adjustment to our balance sheet provision has been made.

### **Gains and losses on investment**

During the year gains on investments totalled £0.5m. Over the last year our investment return was ahead of other managers, due mainly to CCLA managing our equity exposure on a global basis, resulting in our portfolios holding more overseas and technology companies. Our annualised return for the year was 13.1% against an ARC benchmark return of 9.4%.

## **Balance Sheet**

Our Total funds position is £10.7m. This is an increase of £0.8m on prior year.

### **Working capital**

Our liquidity position has remained healthy with £1.1m (22/23: £1.2m) being held in cash at year-end. The organisation can cover its immediate liabilities by a factor of 2.0 (22/23: 1.5).

### **Debt**

During the year we secured £0.7m loan finance from our bankers Barclays, which was used to pay our section 75 exit debt from The Pensions Trust pension scheme. The loan was secured by legal charge against our head office.

### **Investments**

The value of our investments has increased by £0.5m against prior year to £6.1m. The increase is due to unrealised gains.

Our investments are held with CCLA – (COIF Charities Investment Fund).

CCLA COIF Charities Ethical Investment Fund is a Common Investment Fund established and regulated by the Scheme dated October 2009 and made under section 24 of the Charities Act 1993, now section 96 of the Charities Act 2011.



The Fund is managed by the Manager as an unregulated collective investment scheme and as an alternative investment fund in accordance with the FCA Regulations and the AIFMD Legislation

- Investment Objective – To provide a long-term total return comprising growth in capital and income
- Investment Policy – The portfolio is an actively managed, diversified portfolio of assets designed to help both present and future beneficiaries from the effects of inflation. It has an emphasis on equities but also includes property, bonds and other asset classes
- Target Returns – over time, the fund aims to achieve an average total return before costs of Consumer Price Index (CPI) inflation plus 5%

The Fund follows a client-driven ethical investment policy.”

### **Reserves**

Our reserves policy outlines the level of free reserves that PSS holds to ensure we can cover our current cash flow needs and potential future obligations. This is done with the objective that we would be able to continue our work if faced with difficult financial times, whilst having time to adjust our business strategy, and additionally maximise the funds available to fund charitable activities. Our free reserves are unrestricted reserves less tangible fixed assets.

Our balance of free reserves currently stands at £6.5m. This includes approximately ten to twelve weeks’ worth of anticipated expenditure and the remaining balance being our Transformation & Development fund. This is reviewed regularly, and our Trustees consider the level of free reserves held to be satisfactory.

### **Restricted reserves**

Our restricted funds are to be used for detailed purposes as specified by the original objectives of those funders. Two of the restricted funds; Child Welfare and Liverpool Queen Victoria Fund have been invested and the income arising is spent on the specified purpose. The Mountford has a balance of £10k carried forward.

### **Going concern**

The Trustees have given consideration to the basis of preparing financial statements in the context of the challenging times affecting the charitable sector.

A going concern paper was delivered to board June 2024 highlighting our favourable position in terms of reserves, our latest rolling three-year financial forecast and options for growth.

Our Finance Committee reviews the financial forecast quarterly. This includes sensitivity analysis reflecting best and worst-case scenarios. The latest projection for the period ending March 2025 & March 2026 shows an expected surplus of £0.3m. Worst case scenario for March 2025 is forecasted as a surplus of £0.1m and March 2026 a deficit of (£0.2m).

Our management accounts to April 2024 are showing a surplus of £34k which is ahead of budget reflecting the prudent nature of our forecasting

Our reserves remain very strong, and our worst-case scenario can be fully covered. Our free reserves stand at £6.5m, which would cover our total costs net of carer payments for 8 months.

The Trustees consider that the going concern basis remains appropriate. Further information in this respect is given in the accounting policies.

### Key Performance Indicators

KPI	23/24				Year-End Result	22/23
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4		
Number of Shared Lives Carers approved at panel (Target = 48)	17	13	16	14	60	63
<b>Commentary:</b> This year's total is 125 % of the annual target.						
Progress against annual new growth target (Target = 100%)	36%	32%	173%	173%	173%	56%
<b>Commentary:</b> Actual End of Year Position £259,346 / Budget £150,000						
Regulated services compliant	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
<b>Commentary:</b> All rated as good or above.						
Number of Active Volunteer roles (New KPI from November 2023)	N/A	N/A	96	110	110	N/A
<b>Commentary:</b> As of March 24, we have a total of 110 active volunteers across the organisation.						

### Managing external pressures: funding

We receive the majority of our income from contracts with the public sector, and as a result the continued squeeze on public finances does impact our ongoing budgeting, new work price setting and continual need to re-evaluate costs and spend. Therefore, our approach to pricing, value for money and creativity in budget setting and service design are critical to our continued growth and impact.

For 2024/2025 we have a new Business Development strategy which has a focus on retaining key work and continued growth in our three core areas of work. None of this growth is for growth's sake and we'll only look at opportunities if we believe we can improve on the

current provider's offer. All new work opportunities we look at must fit with our team's skills and specialisms, our core families and of course must be financially affordable.

In 2023-2024 we retained funding around key contracts including:

- Ministry of Justice/Welsh Parliament: North Wales Women's Turnaround (in partnership with Nelson Trust, PACT and North Wales Women's Centre)
- Shared Lives Staffordshire
- Shared Lives Wrexham

We've also built on our growth strategy by winning a key contract:

- Shared Lives North Yorkshire

We also expanded the income around our existing work and increased short-term income through pieces of work including:

- Parent Baby Relationship: Better Start Funding to support more parents, workforce development funding (to improve perinatal mental health skills and awareness) and funding to develop a peer support programme.

Work that ended during the year:

- Supported Living Liverpool: During this year we decided to hand back all PSS Supported Living Contracts to Liverpool City Council as a result of continually tightening margins and our inability to provide the service we wanted to within the available budget.

## **Risk Management**

The Board of Trustees has ultimate responsibility for the management of risk across PSS. However, delegated authority has been passed to the Audit & Governance Sub-committee to maintain a framework of risk management and control across the organisation.

We have a cross-organisational risk register that sits at leadership level and is assessed by the Audit & Governance Sub-committee, and the Board quarterly. Any changes in the potential impact and or interventions around these risks are discussed at these meetings. Underneath this sits a directorate risk register and underneath that, portfolio and service level registers. All risk registers are real-time active documents and are also formally re-assessed each quarter at team meetings. We have listed below the top risks taken from our risk register.

### **1. Financial risk - relating to contract margins squeeze**

The current economic climate remains challenging, specifically the financial challenges arising from the cost-of-living crisis and resulting wage expectation. We continue to mitigate financial risk by focusing on securing new contracts through our Business Innovation Strategy. We have a high-level long term financial plan that considers the financial risks and how they can be mitigated.

In terms of investments, PSS is exposed to market price risks arising from movements in the value of units held in the COIF Charitable Investment fund.

CCLA Fund Managers are responsible for all the investment management, risk management and administration services.

They employ a risk management process, including the use of appropriate stress testing procedures, which enables it to identify measure, manage and monitor at any time the relevant risks of the positions to which the Fund is or may be exposed and their contribution to the overall risk profile of the Fund.

## **2. Cyber security risks**

Cyber security continues to be an important part of our operational and financial functions. ransomware attacks, fraudulent activity, entrapment and attempted grooming of vulnerable people are all pertinent risks faced by PSS. During the year:

- we have successfully undertaken the government IT Health Check which includes vulnerability and penetration testing.
- we now use Microsoft Intune which allows us to centrally monitor, configure and control all of our devices.
- we became Cyber Essentials and Cyber Essentials Plus certified.
- we have completed an external Mazars audit based on the CIS Microsoft 365 foundation benchmark and were pleased to receive a substantial rating.
- the business continuity plan has been updated and scenario testing been done with an external health and safety consultant.
- we have worked on our Microsoft Secure Score with our external IT suppliers. Our rating is now 69 with the average for an organisation of our size being 42.

Cyber safety, data protection and friends against scams is mandatory training for staff and Shared Lives carers and it is a topic covered with people we support as part of support planning or when risks arise within safeguarding incidents. The trustees are happy with the work being done in this area including regular penetration and vulnerability testing, as well as the learning and development that supports the prevention of individuals being impacted by cyber risks.

## **3. Local Authority Instability**

Over the past couple of years, the number of councils issuing section 114 notices has increased.

Within the Local Government Finance Act 1988, Section 114 (3) dictates that: "The chief finance officer of a relevant authority shall make a report under this section if it appears to him/her that the expenditure of the authority incurred (including expenditure it proposes to incur) in a financial year is likely to exceed the resources (including sums borrowed) available to it to meet that expenditure".

The only allowable expenditure permitted under an emergency protocol would include the following categories:

- existing staff payroll and pension costs

- expenditure on goods and services which have already been received
- expenditure required to deliver the council's provision of statutory services at a minimum possible level
- urgent expenditure required to safeguard vulnerable citizens
- expenditure required through existing legal agreements and contracts
- expenditure funded through ring-fenced grants
- expenditure necessary to achieve value for money and / or mitigate additional in year costs

Most of the services PSS provides are statutory which provides some level of protection. In the event one of our funders issued a section 114 notice, due to this statutory nature and the comfortable level of our free reserves our trustees are comfortable we would be able to weather the storm.

## Auditor

In respect of each trustee at the date the trustees' report is signed:

- So far as we are aware, there is no information needed by the charity's auditor in connection with preparing their report (relevant audit information) of which they are unaware, and;
- As the trustees of the charity we have taken all steps that we ought to have taken in order to make ourselves aware of any relevant audit information and to establish the company's auditor is aware of that information.

A resolution to reappoint Crowe UK LLP as auditors for the ensuing year will be proposed.

Signed on behalf of the trustees

  
Julie Cooke (Oct 30, 2024 14:40 GMT)

Julie Cooke, Chair

## Trustees' responsibilities

The trustees are responsible for preparing the strategic report, the trustees' annual report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and regulations.

Company law requires the trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice (United Kingdom Accounting Standards and applicable law). Under company law the trustees must not approve the financial statements unless they are satisfied that they give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charity and of the incoming resources and application of resources, including the income and expenditure, of the charity for that period.

In preparing these financial statements, the trustees are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- make judgements and accounting estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- state whether applicable UK Accounting Standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements; and
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charity will continue in business.

The trustees are responsible for keeping adequate accounting records that are sufficient to show and explain the charity's transactions and disclose the financial position of PSS with reasonable accuracy at any time and enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the UK Companies Act 2006. They're also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charity and taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

Financial statements are published on PSS's website in accordance with legislation in the United Kingdom governing the preparation and dissemination of financial statements, which may vary from legislation in other jurisdictions. The maintenance and integrity of the charity's website is the responsibility of the trustees. The trustees' responsibility also extends to the ongoing integrity of the financial statements contained therein.

# **Independent Auditors' Report to the Members of PSS (UK)**

## **Opinion**

We have audited the financial statements of PSS (UK) for the year ended 31 March 2024 which comprise the Statement of Financial Activities, the Balance Sheet, the Statement of Cash Flows and notes to the financial statements, including a summary of significant accounting policies and notes to the financial statements, including significant accounting policies. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards, including Financial Reporting Standard 102 The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

In our opinion the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the state of the charitable company's affairs as at 31 March 2024 and of its incoming resources and application of resources, including its income and expenditure for the year then ended;
- have been properly prepared in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice; and
- have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006.

## **Basis for opinion**

We conducted our audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK) (ISAs (UK)) and applicable law. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements section of our report. We are independent of the charitable company in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in the UK, including the FRC's Ethical Standard, and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

## **Conclusions relating to going concern**

In auditing the financial statements, we have concluded that the trustees' use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements is appropriate.

Based on the work we have performed, we have not identified any material uncertainties relating to events or conditions that, individually or collectively, may cast significant doubt on the charitable company's ability to continue as a going concern for a period of at least twelve months from when the financial statements are authorised for issue.

Our responsibilities and the responsibilities of the trustees with respect to going concern are described in the relevant sections of this report.

## **Other information**

The trustees are responsible for the other information contained within the annual report. The other information comprises the information included in the annual report, other than the financial statements and our auditor's report thereon. Our opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and, except to the extent otherwise explicitly stated in our report, we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon.

Our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements or our knowledge obtained in the audit or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If we identify such material inconsistencies or apparent material misstatements, we are required to determine whether this gives rise to a material misstatement in the financial statements themselves. If, based on the work we have performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, we are required to report that fact.

We have nothing to report in this regard.

## **Opinions on other matters prescribed by the Companies Act 2006**

In our opinion based on the work undertaken in the course of our audit

- the information given in the trustees' report, which includes the directors' report prepared for the purposes of company law, for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements; and
- the directors' report included within the trustees' report have been prepared in accordance with applicable legal requirements.

## **Matters on which we are required to report by exception**

In light of the knowledge and understanding of the charitable company and its environment obtained in the course of the audit, we have not identified material misstatements in the directors' report included within the trustees' report.

We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters in relation to which the Companies Act 2006 requires us to report to you if, in our opinion:

- adequate accounting records have not been kept; or
- the financial statements are not in agreement with the accounting records and returns; or
- certain disclosures of trustees' remuneration specified by law are not made; or
- we have not received all the information and explanations we require for our audit



## **Responsibilities of trustees**

As explained more fully in the trustees' responsibilities statement set out on page 38, the trustees (who are also the directors of the charitable company for the purposes of company law) are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements and for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view, and for such internal control as the trustees determine is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, the trustees are responsible for assessing the charitable company's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the trustees either intend to liquidate the charitable company or to cease operations, or have no realistic alternative but to do so.

## **Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements**

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with ISAs (UK) will always detect a material misstatement when it exists.

Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

Irregularities, including fraud, are instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations. We design procedures in line with our responsibilities, outlined above, to detect material misstatements in respect of irregularities, including fraud. The extent to which our procedures are capable of detecting irregularities, including fraud is detailed below:

We obtained an understanding of the legal and regulatory frameworks within which the charitable company operates, focusing on those laws and regulations that have a direct effect on the determination of material amounts and disclosures in the financial statements. The laws and regulations we considered in this context were the Companies Act 2006 and the Charities Act 2011 together with the Charities SORP (FRS 102). We assessed the required compliance with these laws and regulations as part of our audit procedures on the related financial statement items.

In addition, we considered provisions of other laws and regulations that do not have a direct effect on the financial statements but compliance with which might be fundamental to the charitable company's ability to operate or to avoid a material penalty. We also considered the opportunities and incentives that may exist within the charitable company for fraud.

Auditing standards limit the required audit procedures to identify non-compliance with these laws and regulations to enquiry of the Trustees and other management and inspection of regulatory and legal correspondence, if any.

We identified the greatest risk of material impact on the financial statements from irregularities, including fraud, to be within charitable service fee income, grant and other income and the override of controls by management. Our audit procedures to respond to these risks included enquiries of management about their own identification and assessment of the risks of irregularities, designing audit procedures over income, sample testing on the posting of journals, reviewing accounting estimates for biases and reading minutes of meetings of those charged with governance.

Owing to the inherent limitations of an audit, there is an unavoidable risk that we may not have detected some material misstatements in the financial statements, even though we have properly planned and performed our audit in accordance with auditing standards. For example, the further removed non-compliance with laws and regulations (irregularities) is from the events and transactions reflected in the financial statements, the less likely the inherently limited procedures required by auditing standards would identify it. In addition, as with any audit, there remained a higher risk of non-detection of irregularities, as these may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal controls. We are not responsible for preventing non-compliance and cannot be expected to detect non-compliance with all laws and regulations. A further description of our responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements is located on the Financial Reporting Council's website at: [www.frc.org.uk/auditorsresponsibilities](http://www.frc.org.uk/auditorsresponsibilities). This description forms part of our auditor's report.

### Use of our report

This report is made solely to the charitable company's members, as a body, in accordance with Chapter 3 of Part 16 of the Companies Act 2006. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the charitable company's members those matters we are required to state to them in an auditor's report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the charitable company and the charitable company's members as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.



Vicky Szulist

Senior Statutory Auditor

For and on behalf of **Crowe U.K. LLP**

Statutory Auditor

The Lexicon

Mount Street

Manchester

M2 5NT

# Statement of financial activities including the income and expenditure account

	Note	2024			2023		
		Unrestricted	Restricted	Total	Unrestricted	Restricted	Total
		£	£	£	£	£	£
<b>Income and Endowments from:</b>	<b>2</b>						
Donations and legacies		7,114	150	<b>7,264</b>	23,565	4,005	27,570
Charitable activities		20,193,924	506,536	<b>20,700,460</b>	19,362,504	327,848	19,690,352
Investments		165,063	31,534	<b>196,597</b>	147,468	31,279	178,747
Other		219,105	-	<b>219,105</b>	197,279	-	197,279
<b>Total</b>		<b>20,585,206</b>	<b>538,220</b>	<b>21,123,426</b>	<b>19,730,816</b>	<b>363,132</b>	<b>20,093,948</b>
<b>Expenditure on:</b>	<b>3</b>						
Raising funds		769	-	<b>769</b>	692	-	692
Charitable activities							
- standard expenditure		20,276,815	538,220	<b>20,815,035</b>	19,510,759	417,940	19,928,699
<b>Total</b>		<b>20,277,584</b>	<b>538,220</b>	<b>20,815,804</b>	<b>19,511,451</b>	<b>417,940</b>	<b>19,929,391</b>
<b>Net gains/(losses) on investments</b>		<b>448,693</b>	<b>100,668</b>	<b>549,361</b>	<b>(239,649)</b>	<b>(53,767)</b>	<b>(293,416)</b>
<b>Net income/(expenditure)</b>		<b>756,315</b>	<b>100,668</b>	<b>856,983</b>	<b>(20,284)</b>	<b>(108,575)</b>	<b>(128,859)</b>
<b>Transfers between funds</b>		<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>Other recognised gains/(losses)</b>							
Gains/(losses) on revaluation of fixed assets	4,5	-	-	-	154,618	-	154,618
Gain/(loss) on revaluation of pension liability	10	(9,761)	-	<b>(9,761)</b>	361,817	-	361,817
<b>Net movement in funds</b>		<b>746,554</b>	<b>100,668</b>	<b>847,222</b>	<b>496,151</b>	<b>(108,575)</b>	<b>387,576</b>
<b>Reconciliation of funds</b>							
Total funds brought forward		8,986,155	891,090	<b>9,877,245</b>	8,490,004	999,665	9,489,669
Total funds carried forward		<b>9,732,709</b>	<b>991,758</b>	<b>10,724,467</b>	<b>8,986,155</b>	<b>891,090</b>	<b>9,877,245</b>

PSS has no recognised gains and losses other than those included above. All operations are continuing. The notes on pages 46-62 form part of these accounts.

# Balance sheet at 31 March 2024

	Note	2024 £	2023 £
<b>Fixed assets</b>			
Tangible assets	4	2,577,586	2,785,755
Investment property	5	664,094	443,333
Investments	6	6,140,904	5,591,543
		<u>9,382,584</u>	<u>8,820,631</u>
<b>Current assets</b>			
Debtors	7	2,795,749	1,971,526
Cash at bank and in hand	12	1,103,497	1,175,735
		<u>3,899,246</u>	<u>3,147,261</u>
<b>Liabilities</b>			
Amounts falling due within one year	8	1,956,530	2,090,647
		<u>1,942,716</u>	<u>1,056,614</u>
<b>Net current assets</b>			
		<u>11,325,300</u>	<u>9,877,245</u>
<b>Liabilities</b>			
Amounts falling due greater than one year:			
Bank loans	9	600,833	-
		<u>600,833</u>	<u>-</u>
<b>Total net assets</b>		<u>10,724,467</u>	<u>9,877,245</u>
<b>The funds of the charity</b>	11		
Restricted funds		991,757	891,089
Unrestricted funds:			
General Reserve		9,266,507	8,509,769
Fixed Asset revaluation reserve		466,203	476,387
		<u>10,724,467</u>	<u>9,877,245</u>

These Financial Statements were approved by the Board of Directors on 25th September 2024 and signed and authorised for issue on its behalf by:

Julie Cooke  
Julie Cooke (Oct 30, 2024 14:40 GMT)

Julie Cooke

Chair

The notes on pages 46-62 form part of these Accounts.

Company registration number 00214077

# Cash flow statement for the year ended 31 March 2024

	2024	2023
	£	£
<b>Cash flows from operating activities:</b>		
Net cash provided by/(used in) operating activities	(719,337)	(768,620)
<b>Cash flows from investing activities:</b>		
Dividends, interest and rents from investments	196,597	178,747
Interest on bank loans	(27,068)	
Proceeds from the sale of property, plant and equipment	-	-
Purchase of property plant and equipment	(193,263)	(124,834)
Proceeds from sale of investments	-	37,152
Purchase of investments	-	-
Net cash (used in)/provided by investing activities	(23,734)	91,065
<b>Cash flows from financing activities:</b>		
Repayments of borrowing	(29,167)	-
Cash inflows from new borrowing	700,000	-
Net cash provided by (used in) financing activities	670,833	-
Change in cash and cash equivalents in the reporting period	(72,238)	(677,555)
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the reporting period	1,175,735	1,853,290
Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the reporting period	1,103,497	1,175,735
<b>Reconciliation of net income/(expenditure) to net cash flow from operating activities</b>		
Net income/(expenditure)for the reporting period (as per the SOFA)	856,983	(128,859)
Adjustments for:		
Reversal of depreciation charge on revalued assets	-	(46,988)
Depreciation charges	180,670	133,955
Profit on sale of property	-	-
(Gains)/losses on investments	(549,361)	293,416
(Gains)/losses on revaluation of pension liability	(9,761)	361,817
Dividends, interest and rents from investments	(196,597)	(178,747)
Interest on bank loans	27,068	
(Increase)/decrease in debtors	(824,222)	(117,399)
(Decrease)/increase in creditors	(204,117)	(1,085,815)
Net cash provided by/(used in) operating activities	(719,337)	(768,620)
Analysis of cash and cash equivalents		
Cash in hand	1,103,497	1,175,735
	1,103,497	1,175,735

An analysis for net debt for the year can be found in note 13 (page 62).

# Notes to the financial statements

## 1 Accounting policies

### **Basis of preparation**

PSS (UK) is a company limited by guarantee, incorporated in England and Wales under the Companies Act 2006 and has no share capital. The address of the registered office is given on the company information page and the nature of the company's operations and its principal activities are set out in the Report of the Trustees.

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the Charities SORP (FRS 102) - Accounting 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 (FRS 102) effective 1 January 2019 (Charities SORP (FRS 102)), the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102), the Companies Act 2006 and the Charities Act 2011.

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the historical cost convention, except that investments are stated at market value, and freehold land & buildings are carried at valuation.

The company has a £1 investment in a dormant subsidiary. Consolidated accounts have not been prepared on the grounds of materiality. The accounts therefore present information about the company only and not about its group.

The trustees confirm that the charity meets the definition of a public benefit entity under FRS 102.

### **Going concern**

The financial statements have been prepared on a going concern basis, which principally assumes that the company will continue to receive grants and fees at a sustainable level.

A going concern paper was delivered to board June 2024 highlighting our favourable position in terms of reserves, our latest rolling three-year financial forecast and options for growth.

Our Finance Committee reviews the financial forecast quarterly. This includes sensitivity analysis reflecting best and worst-case scenarios. The latest projection for the period ending March 2025 & March 2026 shows an expected surplus of £0.3m. Worst case scenario for March 2025 is forecasted as a surplus of £0.1m and March 2026 a deficit of (£0.2m).

Our management accounts to April 2024 are showing a surplus of £34k which is ahead of budget reflecting the prudent nature of our forecasting

Our reserves remain very strong and our worst-case scenario can be fully covered. Our free reserves stand at £6.5m, which would cover our total costs net of carer payments for 8 months.

The Trustees consider that the going concern basis remains appropriate.

### **Income and expenditure**

Service income represents the amount of grants and fees receivable for the year and is credited to incoming resources when the services have been completed.

Income from government and other grants, whether 'capital' or 'revenue' grants, is recognised when PSS

- has entitlement to the funds;
- any performance conditions attached to the grants have been met; and
- it is probable that the income will be received and the amount can be measured reliably and is not deferred.

Income received in advance of an event is deferred until the criteria for income recognition has been met.

Donations and legacies are recognised when receipt is probable and the value can be measured reliably.

Investment income is recognised when receivable for unrestricted services and in accordance with restrictions for restricted services.

Furlough income from the Government's Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme is recognised when receivable following a submission claim to HMRC.

The contribution of volunteers is not quantified in financial terms.

Expenditure is recognised on an accruals basis and is allocated between:

- expenditure incurred on the fulfilment of the charity's objectives (charitable activities);
- expenditure incurred directly in the effort to raise voluntary contributions (costs of generating funds); and
- expenditure incurred in the governance of the charity.

Any unexpended income on services which relates to grants or donations which must be expended in the following year is taken to creditors as 'Grants and donations received in advance', and shown as deferred income. The outturns of other services, whose income exceeds expenditure or whose expenditure exceeds income, are taken to reserves.

### **Allocation of overheads**

PSS has a significant degree of centralisation of services such as human resources, business development, finance, IT and quality and compliance.

The costs of these centralised services are allocated to individual services on the basis of actual service expenditure. This ensures a fair and transparent allocation of costs and is in line with accepted practices within the voluntary sector.

### **Fund accounting**

Restricted funds are to be used for specific purposes laid down by the donor. Expenditure for those purposes is charged to the fund, together with a fair allocation of overheads and support costs.

Unrestricted funds are donations and other incoming resources received or generated for expenditure on the general objectives of the charity.

The fixed asset revaluation reserve contains revaluation gains recognised on property, plant and equipment currently held by the charity.

## **Investments**

Investments are stated in the balance sheet at fair value. Unrealised gains and losses arising on the revaluation of investments are, together with the realised gains and losses arising on the sale of investments, shown in the statement of financial activities as net gains/(losses) on investments.

## **Tangible fixed assets**

Properties, including land and buildings, are included at fair value as at the balance sheet date. A full valuation is attained from a qualified valuer, for each property at regular intervals, and specifically in any year where the trustees believe there has been a material change in value.

Revaluation gains or losses (which are not considered to be impairment losses) on assets held for the charity's own use are included in the SOFA under the section for other recognised gains and losses.

Depreciation is calculated to write off the cost or valuation of tangible fixed assets, excluding land, less their residual values, on a straight line basis over their estimated useful lives.

The following depreciation rates are used:

Furnishings and fittings	20%
Office equipment and minibuses	25%
Freehold property	2%
Leasehold property	2%

Property valuation are split as follows:

	<b>Land</b>	<b>Building</b>
Eleanor Rathbone House	25%	75%
Other property	75%	25%

The split for Eleanor Rathbone House has been used on the advice of the independent valuers, who deem the majority of the value to be in the building. The 'other' properties however are much older and are therefore deemed to hold the majority of their value in the land.

Service-based assets, and assets individually costing below £250 are written off fully in the year of acquisition.

## **Investment property**

A portion of the leasehold property, Eleanor Rathbone House, is leased out to third parties and is therefore recognised as an investment property, as it meets the definition of a mixed use property. Investment property is held at fair value as at the balance sheet date. The portion of the Eleanor Rathbone House held as investment property is one quarter of the total fair value, which represents the area of the property which the lessees occupy.

## **Leased equipment**

Payments in respect of operating lease agreements (being agreements not giving rights approximating to ownership) have been charged to the Statement of Financial Activities on a straight line basis.

## **Financial instruments**

Financial assets and financial liabilities are recognised when PSS (UK) becomes a party to the contractual provisions of the instrument. All financial assets and liabilities are initially measured at transaction price (including transaction costs). PSS (UK) 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.

### **Debtors**

Trade and other debtors are recognised at the settlement amount due after any trade discount offered. Prepayments are valued at the amount prepaid net of any trade discounts due.

### **Creditors and provisions**

Creditors and provisions are recognised where PSS (UK) has a present obligation resulting from a past event that will probably result in the transfer of funds to a third party and the amount due to settle the obligation can be measured or estimated reliably. Creditors and provisions are normally recognised at their settlement amount after allowing for any trade discounts due.

### **Cash at bank and in hand**

Cash at bank and in hand includes cash and short term highly liquid investments with a short maturity of three months or less from the date of acquisition or the opening of the deposit or similar account.

### **Pension costs and other post-retirement benefits**

PSS participated in the Growth Plan scheme, a multi-employer defined contribution pension scheme managed by TPT Retirement Solutions (TPT), until 30<sup>th</sup> September 2020. From the 1st October 2020 PSS moved to The People Pension.

During the year PSS executed a deed of prepayment to record the fact that PSS, as a departing employer of the Pension Trust Growth Plan, agreed to pay £718,097 on account to the Trustees, representing the reasonable pre-estimate of the amount of the debt due by PSS in relation to the Growth Plan multi-employer scheme. The amount was settled in full by the year end.

### **Termination benefits**

Termination benefits are employee benefits payable as a result of either the charity's decision to terminate an employee's employment; or an employee's decision to accept voluntary redundancy in exchange for those benefits.

### **Taxation and Deferred Tax**

The charity is exempt from tax on income and gains falling within section 505 of the Taxes Act 1988 or section 252 of the Taxation of Chargeable Gains Act 1992 to the extent that these are applied to its charitable objects.

### **Judgements in applying accounting policies and key sources of estimation uncertainty**

In preparing the financial statements, the trustees are required to make estimates and judgements. The matters considered below are considered to be the most important in understanding the judgements that are involved in preparing the financial statements and the uncertainties that could impact the amounts reported in the results of operations, financial position and cash flows.

- Valuation of freehold and long-leasehold property - In order to determine the fair value, advice is taken from independent qualified valuers. In this context, judgement is exercised in a number of areas, including local market conditions and investor demand.
- Classification of leases - whether leases entered into by PSS (UK), as lessee, is operating leases or finance leases. These decisions depend on an assessment of whether the risks and rewards of ownership have been transferred from the lessor to the lessee on a lease by lease basis.

Other key sources of estimation uncertainty include:

- Depreciation of tangible fixed assets and impairment – Tangible fixed assets are depreciated over their useful lives taking into account residual lives, where appropriate.
- Provision for bad debts – bad debts is provided against when there is objective evidence that the debt will not be recoverable.

## 2 Incoming resources

	2024			2023		
	Unrestricted	Restricted	Total	Unrestricted	Restricted	Total
	£	£	£	£	£	£
<b>Analysis of income:</b>						
<b>Grants:</b>						
Ministry of Justice	-	-	-	-	113,221	113,221
Liverpool City Council	-	400,004	400,004	-	-	-
Children in Need	-	37,748	37,748	-	33,435	33,435
Merseyside Police	-	59,663	59,663	-	31,337	31,337
Department of Health & Social Care	-	8,121	8,121	-	149,855	149,855
Other	-	1,000	1,000	-	-	-
<b>Total Grant Income</b>	-	506,536	506,536	-	327,848	327,848
Fees for charitable services provided	20,193,924	-	20,193,924	19,362,504	-	19,362,504
Donations from trusts and individuals	7,114	150	7,264	23,565	4,005	27,570
Investment Income	165,063	31,534	196,597	147,468	31,279	178,747
Sundry Income	219,105	-	219,105	197,279	-	197,279
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>20,585,206</b>	<b>538,220</b>	<b>21,123,426</b>	<b>19,730,816</b>	<b>363,132</b>	<b>20,093,948</b>
	2024			2023		
	Unrestricted	Restricted	Total	Unrestricted	Restricted	Total
	£	£	£	£	£	£
<b>Movements in deferred income</b>						
Grant income deferred at 1.4.2023	-	48,352	48,352	-	216,721	216,721
Grants receivable in the year	-	458,184	458,184	-	159,479	159,479
Grant income deferred at 31.3.2024	-	-	-	-	(48,352)	(48,352)
Grant income recognised for the year	-	506,536	506,536	-	327,848	327,848
Donation income deferred at 1.4.2023	-	-	(5,555)	-	-	-
Donations received in the year	7,114	150	7,264	23,565	9,560	33,125
Donation income deferred at 31.3.2024	-	-	-	-	5,555	(5,555)
Donation income recognised for the year	7,114	150	7,264	23,565	4,005	27,570
Fee income deferred at 1.4.2023	248,083	-	248,083	127,718	-	127,718
Fee income receivable in the year	20,425,303	-	20,425,303	19,482,869	-	19,482,869
Fee income deferred at 31.3.2024	(479,462)	-	(479,462)	(248,083)	-	(248,083)
Fee income recognised in the year	20,193,924	-	20,193,924	19,362,504	-	19,362,504

During the year £8,121 (2023: £263,076) in grants from government departments was received. The grant from the Ministry of Justice was to fund our Prisoners' Families service and the grant from the Department of Health & Social care funded our Parent & Baby work.

Fee income deferred consists of income for contracts which extend beyond the financial year end.

## Incoming resources continued

	2024			2023		
	Unrestricted	Restricted	Total	Unrestricted	Restricted	Total
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Home & Communities	4,135,460	10,621	4,146,081	4,377,974	11,538	4,389,512
Shared Lives	14,639,524	-	14,639,524	13,731,668	200	13,731,868
Strengthening Families	1,503,569	527,599	2,031,168	1,318,593	350,586	1,669,179
Other	306,653	-	306,653	302,581	808	303,389
	<b>20,585,206</b>	<b>538,220</b>	<b>21,123,426</b>	<b>19,730,816</b>	<b>363,132</b>	<b>20,093,948</b>

Investment income includes:	2024			2023		
	Unrestricted	Restricted	Total	Unrestricted	Restricted	Total
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Income from investment & unit trusts	139,162	31,534	170,696	139,417	31,279	170,696
Interest on deposit funds	8,038	-	8,038	8,038	-	8,038
	<b>147,200</b>	<b>31,534</b>	<b>178,734</b>	<b>147,455</b>	<b>31,279</b>	<b>178,734</b>

## 3 Expenditure

	2024				2023			
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
	Direct Costs	Support Costs	Governance Costs	Total	Direct Costs	Support Costs	Governance Costs	Total
Home and Communities	3,585,543	353,482	17,121	3,956,146	3,862,603	395,397	19,204	4,277,204
Shared Lives	12,987,346	1,280,361	62,015	14,329,722	12,137,543	1,242,466	60,344	13,440,353
Strengthening Families	1,819,299	179,356	8,687	2,007,342	1,495,079	153,045	7,433	1,655,557
Other	521,825	-	-	521,825	555,585	-	-	555,585
Costs of generating vol. income	769	-	-	769	692	-	-	692
	<b>18,914,782</b>	<b>1,813,199</b>	<b>87,823</b>	<b>20,815,804</b>	<b>18,051,502</b>	<b>1,790,908</b>	<b>86,981</b>	<b>19,929,391</b>

Expenditure on charitable activities is the cost of providing charitable services, including staff costs, and elements of service managed centrally. Governance costs relate to the costs of compliance with statutory requirements, including the external audit. The portfolios listed above allocate expenditure on charitable activities based on the operations of the charity.

## Expenditure continued

<b>Governance Costs</b>	<b>2024</b>	<b>2023</b>
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
Statutory audit fees	26,334	22,200
Other fees to internal auditors	17,947	12,606
Management & Administration Salaries	42,856	34,298
Legal & professional costs	686	-
	<b>87,823</b>	<b>69,104</b>

	<b>2024</b>	<b>2023</b>
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
The following amounts are included in expenditure:		
Depreciation: tangible fixed assets, owned	180,670	86,967
Operating Lease rentals:		
Land & Building	134,096	134,096
Other	12,216	12,936
Auditors Remuneration - Audit Services	26,334	25,974

	<b>2024</b>	<b>2023</b>
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
<b>Staff costs</b>		
Salaries	5,289,630	5,515,106
Social Security costs	427,833	461,912
Other pension costs	453,237	451,404
	<b>6,170,700</b>	<b>6,428,421</b>

Average no. of employees	<b>241</b>	<b>279</b>
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Analysis:		
Charitable activities	239	277
Governance	2	2
	<b>241</b>	<b>279</b>

	<b>2024</b>	<b>2023</b>
The emoluments of higher paid employees fell within the following ranges:	<b>No.</b>	<b>No.</b>
£60,000 - £70,000	-	-
£70,001 - £80,000	2	2
£90,001 - £100,000	1	1

## Expenditure continued

The key management personnel comprise of the chief executive officer, director of operations and director of finance and people. The total gross salaries and employer pension contributions of the key management was £345,762 (2023: £338,046). During the year 3 higher-paid employees (2023: 3) participated in the defined contribution pension scheme. Employer's pension contributions for higher paid staff were £74,700 (2023: £71,813). The chief executive and director of finance and people have elected to take a portion of their total remuneration package as enhanced employer pension contributions. Taking this into account, their annual notional salaries would be £121,000 (chief executive) and £91,575 (director of finance and people).

The total paid during the year on redundancy and termination payments was £11,289 (2023: £82,471).

No trustee or person with a family or business connected with a trustee received remuneration in the year from the charity. Expenses of £879 (2023: £105) were reimbursed to two (2023: 2) members of the Trustees. Professional indemnity insurance that covers our trustees was paid during the year at a cost of £4,499 (2022: £4,284).

A liability is recognised for short-term compensated absence arising from employee entitlement to paid annual leave. The value of this provision is £50,466 (2023: £60,192).

During the year fees were paid to 586 (2023: 541) self-employed Shared Lives carers. These fees are categorised as charitable expenditure and are not considered when calculating staff costs.

## 4 Tangible fixed assets

	Freehold property £	Leasehold property £	Furnishings & fittings £	Office Equipment £	Total £
<b>Cost/valuation</b>					
Balance at 01.04.2023	320,000	2,216,666	247,034	1,252,741	4,036,441
Additions	-	-	54,012	139,251	193,263
Disposals	-	-	-	-	-
Gains/(losses) on revaluations	-	-	-	-	-
Transfers	-	(220,761)	-	-	(220,761)
Balance at 31.03.2024	<u>320,000</u>	<u>1,995,905</u>	<u>301,046</u>	<u>1,391,992</u>	<u>4,008,944</u>
<b>Depreciation</b>					
Balance at 01.04.2023	-	-	227,802	1,022,884	1,250,686
Charge for year	1,600	33,667	22,131	123,274	180,672
On disposals	-	-	-	-	-
Written back	-	-	-	-	-
Balance at 31.03.2024	<u>1,600</u>	<u>33,667</u>	<u>249,933</u>	<u>1,146,158</u>	<u>1,431,358</u>
<b>Net book amount</b>					
31.03.2024	<u>318,400</u>	<u>1,962,238</u>	<u>51,113</u>	<u>245,834</u>	<u>2,577,586</u>
31.03.2023	<u>320,000</u>	<u>2,216,666</u>	<u>19,232</u>	<u>229,857</u>	<u>2,785,755</u>

All tangible fixed assets were used for charitable purposes.

An external valuation of the leasehold property Eleanor Rathbone House was completed by Legat Owen on 23 May 2023. An external valuation of the freehold property 16 Watford Road was carried out by Reeds Rains on 23 August 2022. An external valuation of the freehold property 21 Aigburth Road was carried out by SK Real Estate on 24<sup>th</sup> July 2023. The trustees have deemed that these valuations are appropriate at 31 March 2024.

During the year, a long-term loan of £700,000 from Barclays plc was secured against Eleanor Rathbone House. The carrying value of the property is £2,660,000, of which £664,094 is allocated to investment property.

	2024	2023
	£	£

**If the freehold and leasehold land and buildings had not been revalued, they would have been included on the historical cost basis as follows:**

Cost	1,743,563	1,925,404
Accumulated depreciation	167,828	142,744
Net book value	<u>1,575,735</u>	<u>1,782,660</u>

## 5 Investment property

	2024	2023
	£	£
Balance at 01.04.2023	443,333	391,667
Additions	-	-
Transfers	220,761	-
Disposals	-	-
Gain/(loss) on revaluation	-	51,666
Balance at 31.03.2024	<u>664,094</u>	<u>443,333</u>

Investment property is included on a fair value basis. An external revaluation was carried out by Legat Owen on 23 May 2023. The trustees have considered the valuations above as a fair reflection of the year end fair value.

## 6 Fixed asset investments

	Unrestricted	Restricted (LQV)	Restricted (LCWT)	Total
	£	£	£	£
<b>Listed investments:</b>				
Market value at 01.04.2023	4,566,918	307,704	716,921	5,591,543
Legacies	-	-	-	-
Additions	-	-	-	-
Disposals	-	-	-	-
Adjustment to market value	448,693	30,232	70,436	549,361
Market value at 31.03.2024	<u>5,015,611</u>	<u>337,936</u>	<u>787,357</u>	<u>6,140,904</u>
<b>Analysis of quoted investments:</b>				
Fixed interest	-	-	-	-
Ordinary shares - UK	-	-	-	-
Ordinary shares - overseas	-	-	-	-
Alternatives	-	-	-	-
<b>Other investments:</b>				
Deposit fund	-	-	-	-
Investment & Unit trusts	5,015,611	337,936	787,357	6,140,904
	<u>5,015,611</u>	<u>337,936</u>	<u>787,357</u>	<u>6,140,904</u>

All the quoted fixed asset investments investment units with the COIF Charities Fund or deposits with the COIF Charities Deposit Fund.

The historic cost of listed investments at 31 March 2024 is £5,349,002 (2023: £5,349,002).

The company has a £1 investment representing 100% of the issued ordinary share capital of PSS Commercial Services Limited incorporated in England. The subsidiary has been dormant throughout the year. Consolidated accounts have not been prepared on the grounds of materiality. The net assets of the company at the balance sheet date were £1.

## 7 Debtors: amounts due within one year

	2024 £	2023 £
Trade Debtors	1,529,468	1,182,420
Other Debtors	1,502	2,179
Prepayments & Accrued Income	1,264,779	786,927
	<u>2,795,749</u>	<u>1,971,526</u>



## 8 Creditors: amounts due within one year

	2024	2023
	£	£
Trade Creditors	394,692	332,982
Other Creditors	193,459	19,527
Accruals	696,192	612,065
Deferred Income	479,462	301,990
Other Taxes & Social Security	86,344	101,484
Pension Creditor	36,381	43,546
Pensions Trust liability: due within a year	-	679,053
Bank loan	70,000	-
	<u>1,956,530</u>	<u>2,090,647</u>

Deferred income comprises of income received in advance of the delivery of the service, as contracted.

The movement in the period is as follows:

	2024	2023
	£	£
Opening deferred income	301,990	377,564
Amounts charged for the year	20,890,750	19,675,473
Amounts released in the year	(20,713,278)	(19,751,047)
Closing deferred income	<u>479,462</u>	<u>301,990</u>

## 9 Creditors: amounts due greater than one year

	2024	2023
	£	£
Bank loan: due greater than a year	600,833	-
	<u>600,833</u>	<u>-</u>

During the year, PSS completed the drawdown of a £700,000 loan, provided by Barclays. The loan is secured against the charity's property Eleanor Rathbone House and has a term of 5 years, on a floating interest basis. At 31<sup>st</sup> March 2024, £670,833 was outstanding with £70,000 of this due within one year (see note 8).

## 10 Pension obligations

PSS left the Growth Plan as at 30th September 2020. TPT Retirement Solutions (TPT) provided an uncertified debt figure due of £1,932,063. PSS's funding position calculated using an annuity buy-out basis. TPT advised that they were unable to certify the debt, due an ongoing court case relating to their potential non adherence to scheme rules.

In July 2023, TPT provided an updated debt on withdrawal figure for PSS of £718,097 as at 30 November 2022. During the year PSS executed a deed of prepayment to record the fact that PSS, as a departing employer of the Pension Trust Growth Plan, agreed to pay £718,097 on account to the Trustees, representing the reasonable pre-estimate of the amount of the debt due by PSS in relation to the Growth Plan multi-employer scheme. The amount was settled in full at the year end.

The Trustee of the Growth Plan has stated that they are unable to certify the debt due to the ongoing court case regarding potential non-adherence to Plan rules. The latest update from the Trustee is that the case is likely to be heard by the court in February 2025. The impact on the cessation valuation, and for each employer, can vary. At this point, as the outcome of the court case is highly uncertain, no adjustment to our balance sheet provision has been made.

In relation to the current undertaking of a Scheme Benefits Review, the Scheme Actuary confirmed in August 2022 that the court case would affect the Plan and associated liabilities. They estimated that PSS's Section 75 debt will increase by around £200,000, should the Court rule against the Trustee. PSS has recognised a contingent liability for this amount.

<b>The Pensions Trust Growth Plan</b>	<b>2024</b>	<b>2023</b>
As at 1 April 2023	<b>679,053</b>	1,397,676
Charged to SOFA	-	-
Paid	<b>(688,814)</b>	(356,806)
Revaluation movement	<b>9,761</b>	(361,817)
<b>At 31 March 2024</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>679,053</b>

## 11 Reserves

The income funds of the charity include restricted funds comprising of unexpended balances of donations and gains held on trust to be applied for specific purposes.

Movement in funds:

	2024					2023						
	Balance		Net	Realised/					Net	Realised/		
	at	Incoming	Expenditure	incoming/	unrealised	Balance at	Balance at	Incoming	Expenditure	incoming/	unrealised	Balance
	1.4.2023	resources	& losses	(outgoing)	gains/losses	31.3.2024	1.4.2022	resources	& losses	resources	& transfers	31.3.2023
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
<b>Restricted funds:</b>												
Child Welfare	531,440	22,064	(22,064)	-	70,436	601,876	569,060	21,255	(21,255)	-	(37,620)	531,440
Mountford Fund	9,660	-	-	-	-	9,660	37,152	-	(27,492)	(27,492)	-	9,660
Liverpool Queen Victoria	348,486	9,470	(9,470)	-	30,232	378,718	364,634	9,470	(9,470)	-	(16,148)	348,486
Other	1,503	506,686	(506,686)	-	-	1,503	28,819	332,407	(359,723)	(27,316)	-	1,503
<b>Total restricted funds</b>	<b>891,089</b>	<b>538,220</b>	<b>(538,220)</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>100,668</b>	<b>991,757</b>	<b>999,665</b>	<b>363,132</b>	<b>(417,940)</b>	<b>(54,808)</b>	<b>(53,768)</b>	<b>891,089</b>
<b>General funds:</b>												
Fixed Asset Revaluation	476,387	-	(10,184)	(10,184)	-	466,203	321,769	-	-	-	154,618.00	476,387
General reserve	8,509,769	20,585,206	(20,267,400)	317,806	438,932	9,266,507	8,168,235	19,730,816	(19,511,451)	219,365	122,169	8,509,769
	8,986,156	20,585,206	(20,277,584)	307,622	438,932	9,732,710	8,490,004	19,730,816	(19,511,451)	219,365	276,787	8,986,156
<b>Total unrestricted funds</b>	<b>8,986,156</b>	<b>20,585,206</b>	<b>(20,277,584)</b>	<b>307,622</b>	<b>438,932</b>	<b>9,732,710</b>	<b>8,490,004</b>	<b>19,730,816</b>	<b>(19,511,451)</b>	<b>219,365</b>	<b>276,787</b>	<b>8,986,156</b>
<b>Total reserves</b>	<b>9,877,245</b>	<b>21,123,426</b>	<b>(20,815,804)</b>	<b>307,622</b>	<b>539,600</b>	<b>10,724,467</b>	<b>9,489,669</b>	<b>20,093,948</b>	<b>(19,929,391)</b>	<b>164,557</b>	<b>223,019</b>	<b>9,877,245</b>

## Reserves continued

	2024						2023					
	Tangible	Investments			Other		Tangible	Investments			Other	
	fixed	Investment	at market	Bank	assets &	Total	fixed	Investment	at market	Bank	assets &	Total
	assets	property	value	balances	liabilities		assets	property	value	balances	liabilities	
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
<b>Restricted funds</b>												
Child Welfare	-	-	787,357	979	(186,463)	601,873	-	-	716,921	981	(186,464)	531,438
Mountford Fund	-	-	-	-	9,660	9,660	-	-	-	-	9,660	9,660
Liverpool Queen Victoria	-	-	337,936	-	40,786	378,722	-	-	307,703	-	40,786	348,489
Other	-	-	-	-	1,503	1,503	-	-	-	-	1,502	1,502
	-	-	1,125,293	979	(134,514)	991,758	-	-	1,024,624	981	(134,516)	891,089
<b>Unrestricted funds</b>												
Fixed Asset reserve	466,203	-	-	-	-	466,203	424,721	51,666	-	-	-	476,387
General reserve	2,111,383	664,094	5,015,611	1,102,518	372,900	9,266,506	2,361,034	391,667	4,566,919	1,174,754	15,395	8,509,769
Designated funds	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	2,577,586	664,094	5,015,611	1,102,518	372,900	9,732,709	2,785,755	443,333	4,566,919	1,174,754	15,395	8,986,156
	2,577,586	664,094	6,140,904	1,103,497	238,386	10,724,467	2,785,755	443,333	5,591,543	1,175,735	(119,121)	9,877,245

## Purpose of Funds

### Restricted:

Our restricted funds are to be used for detailed purposes as specified by the original objectives of those funders detailed below:

- Child Welfare - to be used for the benefit of children
- Mountford Fund - to be for used for the benefit of the elderly
- Liverpool Queen Victoria - to be used for the benefit of the sick.

## 12 Analysis of cash and cash equivalents

	2024 £	2023 £
Cash in hand	<u>1,103,497</u>	<u>1,175,735</u>

## 13 Analysis of net debt

	At 1 April 2023 £	Cash flows £	At 31 March 2024 £
Cash at bank and in hand	1,175,735	(72,238)	1,103,497
Bank loans	-	(670,833)	(670,833)
	<u>1,175,735</u>	<u>(743,071)</u>	<u>432,664</u>

## 14 Financial commitments

	Land & Buildings		Other	
	2024 £	2023 £	2024 £	2023 £
Not later than 1 year	44,117	67,661	13,080	13,080
Later than 1 year and not later than 5 years	9,167	30,193	34,880	39,240
	<u>53,284</u>	<u>97,854</u>	<u>47,960</u>	<u>52,320</u>

All financial commitments listed in the table above are funded by the charity's income from charitable activities.

## 15 Related party transactions

During the year a total of £Nil (2023: £750) in donations was received from Rodney Paul & Janet Sturges. Our Director of Operations, Harriet Michael-Phillips, is the daughter of Rodney Paul & Janet Sturges. These donations were made voluntarily to support our Ruby service. There was £Nil (2023: £Nil) outstanding at 31 March 2024. There were no other related party transactions in the year.

## 16 Financial instruments

	Method of measurement	2024 £	2023 £
<b>Financial Assets</b>			
Cash at bank and in hand	Valuation	1,103,497	1,175,735
Investments	Valuation	6,140,904	5,591,543
Trade debtors	Valuation	1,529,468	1,182,420
Other debtors	Valuation	1,502	2,179
Accrued income	Valuation	1,106,790	656,890
		<b>9,882,161</b>	<b>8,608,767</b>
<b>Financial Liabilities</b>			
Trade creditors	Valuation	394,692	332,982
Other creditors	Valuation	193,459	19,527
Accruals	Valuation	696,192	612,065
Bank loans	Amortised cost	670,833	-
		<b>1,955,176</b>	<b>964,574</b>










# PSS Annual Report 23-24

Final Audit Report

2024-11-06

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