



SERVICE BY EMERGENCY RIDER VOLUNTEERS (SERV) TRUSTEE ANNUAL REPORT 1st APRIL 2024 To 31st March 2025

How does a hospital get donated blood when it's urgently needed?

NHS Blood and Transplant (NHSBT) collects blood from donors in the UK and, after processing and testing, supplies the components (red cells, platelets, and frozen products) to hospitals 24 hours a day, seven days a week, on a not-for-profit basis recovering costs only (<http://www.blood.co.uk/index.aspx>). However, it does not provide a standard, all-in-one **FREE** delivery service between local Hospital Trusts. Additionally, there is no standard service between the hours of 7pm and 6am, at weekends and on national holidays. Hospitals can choose to arrange their own transport, whether they use contractors or charity volunteers like SERV. SERV volunteers work with their local hospitals and other NHS sites on an *ad-hoc* basis, without charge, thereby complementing the service provided by NHSBT.

Who are we? Service by Emergency Rider Volunteers (SERV Sussex) is a registered charity (No. 284455) initially set up in 1981. As a charity, SERV Sussex has provided, and continues to provide a FREE, rapid and reliable means of transporting emergency blood products, and time-critical laboratory samples to hospitals at night, on request. In **2024/2025** SERV responded to over 3500 separate calls in East and West Sussex, allowing re-deployment of much-needed funds for improved patient care and other essential facilities within the local NHS Trusts. Male and female SERV volunteers from all walks of life are long serving (average 5-20 years) and range from 21-80 years. SERV supports the NHS and population in general regardless of race, gender, disability, or sexual preference, providing a FREE service (24hrs on bank holidays and weekends) using their private motorcycles and cars. Assessed volunteers provide additional back-up support using SERV fleet vehicles.



How does SERV work? Volunteer bike riders and drivers work on a roster, waiting to respond to urgent calls relayed via their duty controller. On request, SERV collects and securely delivers lab samples between hospitals and from hospitals to London. We transport life-saving blood and blood products using an insulated NHSBT-approved box. We also transport human breast milk from our hub in Worthing on request to Neonatal Intensive Care Units across Surrey and Sussex. Currently, there is no government or local funding to support milk banking across the UK. Additionally, we support the NHS children's nursing teams in the Sussex area. This allows nurses to spend more time looking after the health of children in long term care at home rather than using precious time delivering supplies and servicing machines across Sussex. SERV volunteers generally use their own machines and pay for the fuel themselves; they receive no money for this all and all officers of the charity are unpaid volunteers. We support the population of Sussex as a whole, regardless of race, gender, ethnic group, disability, or sexual preference. The use of a SERV fleet bike or car is also

an option for volunteers. Following a series of fund-raising events over many years, SERV has purchased dedicated vehicles to facilitate such secure deliveries. These vehicles are used for riders/drivers who have been independently assessed and who can ensure back-up cover any night of the week, when requested. Through public donations, SERV pays for the fuel, insurance, and upkeep of these dedicated vehicles.



Structure and Governance

Corporate Governance

The Trustees continue to review the Charity's structure and methodologies. This ongoing review has led to a refined operating structure, whereby each committee member has several associated volunteers to assist in the execution of the committee members' areas of activity. These changes were necessitated due to the increased workload caused by the expansion of the Charity. The key areas are membership, treasurer, fundraising, roster management and fleet management. As a registered charity SERV adopts rigorous financial controls and procedures throughout the organisation, inline with the requirements of the Charities Commission. This policy has been designed to be flexible to allow the Charity to

expand or restructure, as necessary.

The Board of Trustees is responsible for: oversight of, and safeguarding of the assets of the charity; preventing potential fraud; avoiding mistakes; keeping financial records in accordance with the governing document of the Charities Acts; preparing annual accounts in accordance with the governing document and legislation; setting a reserves policy.

The board of Trustees' responsibilities are achieved through designating responsibilities to the Daily Operations Committee, which consists of:

Chairperson – Harry Lewis

Treasurer – Neil Hayward

Secretary – Simon Morley

To enable the board of Trustees to carry out these responsibilities, the finance policy must be adhered to by all board of Trustee members, staff, and volunteers. In exceptional circumstances this policy may be overridden with the approval of the Chairman; any such override will be immediately reported by the chair of Trustees. A Trustee decision may also override the policy in exceptional circumstances. A copy of this policy is given to all Trustee members following their election/appointment to the Board, and to all relevant staff and volunteers.

Policy Revisions

This policy will be reviewed at least every three years and amended as necessary, in accordance with any forthcoming legislation affecting the operations or premises of the organisation.

Finance Policy; The treasurer takes the lead on:

Ensuring that the Charity keeps proper accounts; reviewing financial performance; ensuring policies for finance and relevant investment are regularly reviewed; ensuring that the Charity has robust and effective financial controls in place; liaising with the Chairman about financial matters and with the independent examiner; reporting on financial matters at the AGM.



Organisational Information

- a) The Financial year runs from: 1st April to the 31st of March.
- b) Name of bankers: Metro Bank Limited and CAF Bank
- c) Name of auditor/independent examiner: JG Accounting Services.

Bank Accounts

- a) All bank accounts must be in the name of the organisation.
- b) No account may ever be opened in the name of an individual or individuals.
- c) New accounts may only be opened by a decision of the Trustees, which must be minuted.
- d) Changes to the bank mandate may only be made by a minuted decision of the Trustees in agreement with the operations committee.
- g) Two people (one Trustee) must be involved in handling cash receipts.
- h) All internet bank transfers must be authorised by the Treasurer or assigned deputy.
- i) Authorised individuals are responsible for examining the payment documentation (purchase invoice etc) prior to authorising an internet transfer or bank card payment.
- j) New bank debit cards may only be opened by a decision of the board of Trustees in agreement with the operations committee.
- k) Bank card signatories are authorised to incur expenditure up to £2000 at their own discretion. Above that email confirmation is required from another signatory. The Treasurer must be copied in on all emails relating to this expenditure and he/she is responsible for maintaining the relevant audit trail.

Annual Budget

- a) An annual budget, setting out the organisation's financial plan for the year, will be prepared so that the board of Trustees can approve it before the start of each financial year.
- b) The Chairman and Treasurer are responsible for the draft budget.

Financial Reports

The management accounts report will be prepared for every board of Trustees meeting. The report will consist of: income and expenditure accounts; balance sheet; notes to the accounts and commentary for the meeting attendees.

Accounts and Audit

Accounts will be drawn up after each financial year and presented for approval at the next Annual General Meeting.

The accounts and Trustee annual report (TAR) will be submitted to the Charity Commission, as directed by the Charities Commission procedures.

The Trustees will appoint an appropriately qualified independent examiner to audit the accounts for presentation to the next AGM.

The Trustees will review the appointment of the auditor/independent examiner at least every 3 years.

Accounting and Other Financial Records

The Charity has robust procedures in place to ensure that all legal and statutory responsibilities are upheld. The organisation maintains an accredited accounting system (Xero), which records: bank transfers, cheques and cash received and banked; bankcard payments, Internet banking transfers and other amounts paid from the bank accounts. Xero is a cloud-based system that provides: the date of the transaction; the name of the person or organisation money was received from or paid to and the full amount; a brief description of why the money was received or paid. Documents relating to receipts and payments are scanned and uploaded to the Xero accounting software.

The Treasurer is responsible for accurate recording of income and expenditure, but the designated Xero Administrator will be responsible for the integrity of the system.

Regular Bank Payments

There will be a quarterly review to ensure no redundant regular payments (standing orders or direct debits) are made. If any redundant payments have been made, then a refund will be requested from the payee.

Insurance

Appropriate Insurance policies will be maintained to cover:

- Employer's Liability
- Public Liability
- Contents
- Professional Indemnity (Trustees Liability)
- Vehicles

The Chairman and Treasurer are responsible for ensuring appropriate insurance is in place.

Collections, donations, and Gift Aid

The charity is aware of and will ensure that all fundraising activities are carried out in line with its legal responsibilities and the Charity Commission best practice guidance. A collections, donations and Gift Aid procedure is in place to outline what must happen to ensure that money raised is managed securely and transparently. The organisation will make use of gift aid schemes to increase the charity's income. Where donations fall within the Gift Aid scheme declarations will be provided and any returns submitted in line with legislation.



Other Undertakings

All fundraising and grant applications are undertaken on behalf of the Charity with be done in the name of the organisation with prior approval of the operations committee.

Reserves Policy

SERV is a mature charity that has built considerable resources over the years. It has a strong volunteer base, delivers a consistently high standard of service for the NHS, at no charge, and supports a range of other community activities. To support the Charity financially, SERV has also developed an effective range of initiatives to raise money through successful and carefully directed fundraising activities such as:

Direct collections from major supermarkets, targeted grant applications, sponsorship from commercial and financial organisations together with donations from individuals and small charitable organisations. This multi-level approach has allowed our charity to bolster the free cash reserves significantly. As a legal and best practice requirement, the Trustees have, and continue to reviewed the financial sustainability of SERV.

The Trustees have approved the policy, set out above, and concluded that SERV has more than ample cash reserves in hand to meet the increasing calls on its services.

NHS Service Demands

SERV has experienced a significant increase in demand for our service. This includes:

- 24hr cover at weekends.
- Supporting the Sussex Community NHS Trust's Children's Nursing Group with local delivery services on a weekly basis.
- Supporting initiatives like the Dementia Research study.

- A significant increase in donor human milk deliveries and collections.
- Transfer of blood from the Nuffield hospital in Woodingdean to Worthing transfusion labs to prevent waste.

The Trustees are of the view that the calls on our resources will continue to grow. As a result, they have established the following:

- The need to update the vehicle fleet where appropriate.
- Financial controls are in place using Xero cloud-based accounting software.
- To continue to develop internal processes to improve structure and efficiency.
- The Charity has established headquarters/workshop premises, at 13, Thesiger Close, Worthing BN11 2RN, to better manage the fleet and provide a focused central point and structure for future expansion. This also houses the Sussex Milk Hub.
- The Charity continues the updating and repair of the current portal for the foreseeable future.
- The Charity has initiated additional developments for handling milk bank deliveries and an initial further development of the Milk Bank Hub.

Recruitment of New Rider/Driver Volunteers

Background. The charity has a continuous recruitment policy as there is a turnover of volunteers. The Charity therefore continues to recruit to fill vacancies (as and when vacancies occur bearing in mind the need to provide runs for existing volunteers) and to meet the increased demand from NHS hospitals as required. Weekend work has been previously implemented for hospitals in East and West Sussex. The Trustees and Operations Committee reserves the right to maintain recruitment if weekend work demands additional volunteers to meet demand.

Finance

Income and expenditure levels. The past year has again seen a continuance of the Charity's increased activity in the number of runs (both blood and donated breast milk). The continuing effect of the cost-of-living crisis has made many face-to-face fund-raising events difficult to arrange. Also, the focus of grant funding on food poverty has decreased SERV's access to this funding. However, in spite of these limitations, the Charity has continued to make several successful grant applications.

Total receipts for the period April 2024 to March 2025 were £90,204. Total expenditure was £91,382 hence expenditure exceeded our income by £1,178. Please see the detailed statement of account on the Charity Commission website. The Charity has maintained substantial reserves as it expects additional expenditure in forthcoming years to exceed receipts due to the planned expansion of the Charity's services.

Reserves stand at £148,667 as at the 31st March 2025. Strenuous fund-raising efforts will continue throughout the coming financial year. Current major donors to the Charity include: Devitts Insurance brokers; Bloomberg; Tesco; ASDA; Sainsbury's; Morrisons; the Bolney pram race; Sussex Steam Rally and a local Sussex recycling company, Recycling in Lancing.

Confidentiality. Board members and volunteers will always act in the best interest of the Charity and if they experience a conflict of interest, they must follow the Conflict-of-Interest Policy.



Objectives for Future Plans

Where is SERV going in the future? Our goal is to rise to the ever-increasing requests from the local NHS Trusts to provide a rapid and reliable means of transporting urgent blood, blood products, and time-critical laboratory samples to local hospitals at night, 365 days per year. To this end we have updated our fleet, purchasing 2 nearly new liveried FJR motorcycles from another bloodbike group. The Mark Mason Benevolent Fund donated a new Toyota Yaris hybrid to SERV Sussex which will shortly become operational. We have sold the older Toyota Prius and will be selling one Pan European motorcycle (16 plate) and retiring another (57 plate) for parts.

On the operational side we have expanded our human milk transport service, now providing regular support to various milk banks in the Southeast. SERV is the only charity to collect human infant milk from donors in Sussex, Surrey and London at pre-arranged times and deliver to the milk banks in the South-East. We also deliver treated milk to parents at their homes if they need donor milk and cannot make it to the hospital to collect the supplies. Further investment is planned to support the Hearts Milkbank processing centre following the establishment of our Milk Bank Hub at the Charity's headquarters at 13 Thesiger Close, Worthing BN11 2RN. This facilitates the collection, storage, and distribution of donated breast milk. SERV also currently delivers equipment to children's homes in support of the Sussex Community NHS Foundation Trust's children's services in Worthing, Chichester, Brighton and Crawley. Future expansion of these services is likely to occur. Further weekend working throughout East and West Sussex will be subject to availability of weekend duty controllers and volunteers. In the future, we are focused on updating our website and purchasing a permanent home for SERV Sussex in the Worthing area.







Receipts and payments accounts

For the period from	Period start date 01/04/2024	To	Period end date 31/03/2025
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Section A Receipts and payments

	Unrestricted funds to the nearest £	Restricted funds to the nearest £	Endowment funds to the nearest £	Total funds to the nearest £	Last year to the nearest £
A1 Receipts					
Donations & Collections	59,174	-	-	59,174	56,875
Local Giving	8,657	-	-	8,657	8,842
Bank Interest	2,397	-	-	2,397	1,861
VAT Refund	4,388	-	-	4,388	3,225
Contributions to insurance from other branches	1,000	-	-	1,000	1,000
Grants	14,588	-	-	14,588	4,800
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
Sub total (Gross income for AR)	90,204	-	-	90,204	76,603
A2 Asset and investment sales, (see table).					
insurance received on Fixed Asset claim	-	-	-	-	4,858
sale of vehicle	-	-	-	-	3,000
Sub total	-	-	-	-	7,858
Total receipts	90,204	-	-	90,204	84,461
A3 Payments					
operating costs	77,857	-	-	77,857	67,871
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
Sub total	77,857	-	-	77,857	67,871
A4 Asset and investment purchases, (see table)					
Fixed Assets (vehicles)	13,525	-	-	13,525	10,417
	-	-	-	-	-
Sub total	13,525	-	-	13,525	10,417
Total payments	91,382	-	-	91,382	78,288
Net of receipts/(payments)	- 1,178	-	-	- 1,178	6,173
A5 Transfers between funds	-	-	-	-	-
A6 Cash funds last year end	149,845	-	-	149,845	143,672
Cash funds this year end	148,667	-	-	148,667	149,845

Section B Statement of assets and liabilities at the end of the period

Categories	Details	Unrestricted funds to nearest £	Restricted funds to nearest £	Endowment funds to nearest £
B1 Cash funds	Bank Balances	148,667	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
	Total cash funds	148,667	-	-
	(agree balances with receipts and payments account(s))	OK	OK	OK
		Unrestricted funds to nearest £	Restricted funds to nearest £	Endowment funds to nearest £
B2 Other monetary assets		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
B3 Investment assets			Cost (optional)	Current value (optional)
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
B4 Assets retained for the charity's own use		Fund to which asset belongs	Cost (optional)	Current value (optional)
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
B5 Liabilities		Fund to which liability relates	Amount due (optional)	When due (optional)
			-	
			-	
			-	
			-	
Signed by one or two trustees on behalf of all the trustees	Signature	Print Name	Date of approval	



Section A

Independent Examiner's Report

Report to the trustees

Charity Name
SERVICE BY EMERGENCY RIDER VOLUNTEERS

On accounts for the year
ended

31 MARCH 2025

Charity no
(if any)

284455

Set out on pages

1 & 2

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the above charity ("the Trust") for the year ended 31/03/2024

Responsibilities and
basis of report

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

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

Independent
examiner's statement

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

- the accounting records were not kept in accordance with section 130 of the Charities Act; or
- the accounts did not accord with the accounting records; or
- the accounts did not comply with the applicable requirements concerning the form and content of accounts set out in the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 other than any requirement that the accounts give a 'true and fair' view which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination.

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in this report in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Signed:

Date:

24 November 2025

Name:

JANE GAREZE FCA ATT

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

Chartered Accountant (FCA): Fellow of Institute of Chartered Accountants for England & Wales (ICAEW)

Address:

Gravelye Farm House

Hanlye Lane, Cuckfield

West Sussex, RH17 5HR

Only complete if the examiner needs to highlight material matters of concern (see CC32, Independent examination of charity accounts: directions and guidance for examiners).

Give here brief details of any items that the examiner wishes to disclose.