

Company number: 1633333  
Charity number: 284912  
Charity number (Scotland): SC039169

# Contact a Family

(trading as Contact)

Report and financial statements  
for the year ended 31 March 2024

## Contact a Family (trading as Contact)

### Reference and administrative information

#### For the year ended 31 March 2024

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**Status** The organisation is a charitable company limited by guarantee, incorporated on 5 May 1982 and registered as a charity on 20 June 1982.

**Governing document** The company was established under a Memorandum of Association which established the objects and powers of the charitable company and is governed under its Articles of Association. The Memorandum and Articles of Association were incorporated on 5 May 1982 and amended on 6 December 1999, 22 November 2004, 22 November 2007 and 20 November 2008.

**Summary of investment powers** The Trustees may deposit or invest funds in any manner, but only after obtaining advice from a financial expert and having regard to the suitability of investments and the need for diversification. The management of investments may be delegated to a financial expert, provided transactions and performance are reported to and reviewed by the Trustees. The Trustees have the power to arrange for investments to be held in the name of a nominee under the control of the Trustees or of a financial expert acting under their instructions and to pay any reasonable fee required.

**Company number** 1633333

**Charity number** 284912

**Charity number (Scotland)** SC039169

**Registered office and operational address** Wenlock Studios, 50-52 Wharf Road, London, N1 7EU

**Trading name** Contact

**Honorary officers** Angela Kitching, Acting Chair; Eleanor Christie, Treasurer

**Bankers** Unity Trust Bank plc, Nine Brindley place, 4 Oozells Square, Birmingham B1 2HB

**Solicitors** Russell-Cooke Solicitors, 2 Putney Hill, Putney, London, SW15 6AB

**Auditors** Sayer Vincent LLP, Chartered accountants and statutory auditors. 110 Golden Lane, London EC1Y 0TG

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#### **Trustees**

The Trustees, who are also directors under company law, who served during the year and up to the date of this report were as follows:

Chris Carr, Chair, retired November 2023  
Angela Kitching, Acting Chair  
Eleanor Christie, Treasurer  
Janet Leach  
Jamileh Tufail  
Gyll Curtis-Machin  
Charles Sladdin  
Sarah Church  
Ben Clarkson  
Kate Fleck joined September 2023  
Laura Riach joined September 2023  
Matt Wynes retired April 2023  
David Duly retired November 2023  
Jamie Holmes retired March 2024

#### **Patrons**

- Patricia Astley
- Josephine Fitzalan-Howard
- Sir Al Aynsley-Green
- Samantha Cameron
- Georgina David
- Henry Hoare
- Ruth, Lady Morris of Kenwood CBE
- Francesca Martinez
- Nigel Nicholls
- Vivienne Parry
- Susan Reizenstein
- Paul Riseborough
- Philippa Russell OBE
- Clare Smyth
- Paul Soames
- Claire Tomalin
- Angus Walker
- Elinor and Dafydd Wigley AM

#### **Chief Executive Officer**

Amanda Batten until March 2023  
Anna Bird joined June 2023

**Introduction from the Interim Chair, Angela Kitching, for the year ended 31 March 2024**

Resilience can be an over-used word – a pat on the back for coping with the impossible – but taking the definition of ‘successfully adapting to difficult or challenging life experiences’ – and we can confidently say families with disabled children have shown great resilience this year.

The continued cost of living crisis, increasing pressures on schools and the NHS, as well as a social care workforce crisis has been felt disproportionately by the families that Contact supports. This has meant we are dealing with enquiries which are increasingly complex, or with families experiencing multiple difficulties at one time.

Contact has remained steadfast in its resolve to support families during times of crisis and this year, the charity was pleased to continue that solid foundation of providing information, advice and support to families with disabled children, regardless of disability or condition.

The figures speak for themselves. This year we helped 413,000 parents with information, advice and support. Across all our services throughout the year 93% of families felt better informed about how to get the support they needed and 96% would recommend Contact's services to others.

We are reaching more families with disabled children than ever before through our information-packed workshops. Our e-commerce venture, Fledglings continues to provide essential products and equipment for disabled children and young people across the UK.

We were delighted to welcome Anna Bird as Chief Executive at Contact in June 2023. Her experience of driving social change at Mind, Scope and the Fawcett Society stands her in good stead when families are crying out for change. We were very grateful to Directors Jenny Jones, Gail Walshe and Rachel Millington, for stepping in as interim chief executives during a period of transition this year.

This year we were delivering a booster year to our strategic plan, Transforming Lives Together, as we wanted to ensure we consolidated the success we had achieved before embarking on a new strategy. We added an ambition to the year's strategy to trial new approaches to strengthen our support and bridge gaps in services, to better meet the escalating needs of families. We have achieved these additional aims.

Contact's financial position remains stable with good operational performance this year. For this, I particularly want to thank all of our supporters, volunteers, individual fundraisers and the many Trusts and Foundations who have enabled us to continue and to expand our work.

I would also like to pass on my heartfelt thanks to the Board of Trustees for their dedicated service, their wisdom and commitment. We said a sad goodbye to Chris Carr who has led Contact commendably over the last six years as Chair. We also bid farewell to David Duly, Jamie Holmes and Matt Wynes. I am very grateful for their loyal and expert tenure. We welcomed new trustees Kate Fleck and Laura Riach who have brought enthusiasm and expertise to our work.

Finally, I want to thank all our staff members without whom Contact couldn't achieve its objectives. They are on the frontline, building the resilience of our families and we are so grateful for their efforts.

Angela Kitching

## **TRUSTEES' REPORT**

At Contact we work in three inter-connected ways.

- We support families with the best possible guidance and information.
- We bring families together to support each other.
- We help families to campaign, volunteer and fundraise to improve life for themselves and others.

This report updates on what we have delivered as a charity in 2023-24 in each area.

### **Strategic report**

#### **Supporting families Contact's impact 2023-24**

In 2023/24 Contact helped 413,000 parents with information, advice and support. The figure is quite a lot higher than last year, and that's mostly because of the growth in engaged website users, though we've also seen impressive growth in newsletter sign-ups; social media; and attendees to group activities such as workshops and events.

This year:

- Our helpline responded to 9,671 enquiries. This includes the Family Finances team responding to 782 benefits enquiries and delivering 332 in-depth call-backs.
- Our teams in the regions, nations and our By Your Side and London teams attended to 5,298 enquiries/1:1 appointments. This includes 719 Listening Ear appointments.
- 9,130 parent carers, 1740 children and young people and 1,676 professionals attended our workshops, events and other group sessions.
- Our By Your Side team supported 1,731 parents in and out of hospital.
- There were 1,299,395 visitors to our website with 545,947 visitors spending time on the advice and support sections of our website.
- We inspired 7,032 parent carers to take campaign action including writing to their MPs, taking part in research, and speaking out in the media.
- Our private Facebook group, a safe space and online community network for parent carers, reached 21,500 members.
- We also had 4,784 new customers to our Fledglings shop.

After accessing Contact's services, families reported:

- 93% feel better informed about how to get the support they need;
- 85% feel more confident;
- 75% feel less isolated;
- 96% would recommend Contact's services to others.

#### **Information, advice and guidance**

The reach and impact of Contact's trusted and accessible information and advice remained impressive throughout 2023/24. As we adapt our model of delivery to reach more families face-to-face, while maintaining an online offer, our reach across different activities remains stable reflecting the sustained quality of Contact's services.

### **Helpline**

Demand for advice and information from our Helpline team remained steady and our team of dedicated parent advisers dealt with almost 9,617 enquiries throughout the year. Our advisers provided a first-rate service to families, advising them on issues including benefits, education, getting a diagnosis and getting support. The challenges families raise through the service continue to rise in complexity.

### **Family Finances**

Our Family Finances team responded to 782 benefits enquiries and made 332 in-depth call-backs for more complex enquiries. As a result of the team's advice, families reported significant improvements to their family's financial situation, with eligible families being better off by an average of **£5,918** a year (£114 per week).

The total annual estimated gain for families this year is **£710,000**.

Our Family Finances team is working hard to support parent carers through the 'Managed Migration' process for Universal Credit (UC). Subject to securing additional funding, we will be increasing the team's capacity in the year ahead to help meet this increased workload.

### **Online**

We continue working to improve access to our online services. We have a new accessibility toolbar on our website called ReciteMe. As a vital source of trusted advice and expertise, we are testing the translation efficacy of ReciteMe to ensure it provides an accurate service. Once this is completed, we hope to roll out the ability to translate our support into thousands of languages. We reached more families online who use our website, podcasts and our new chatbot tool, enabling thousands of families to resolve their queries faster online.

We also held nine extremely popular Facebook Q&As and Facebook Live sessions where parents put their questions directly to our parent advisers about pre-arranged topics enabling us to reach many at one time. Issues covered included parent carers most common concerns like post 16 education, universal credit for young people in education, school transport and exclusions. In addition, we grew our digital engagement with families. Nearly 18,000 people entered a welcome journey this year and more parents than ever before are engaging with us on social media. Our private Facebook page, exclusively for parent carers, now has 21,800 members.

## **Key programmes of support**

### **Listening Ear**

Our Listening Ear service continued to provide vital emotional and practical support.

The parent advisers in our Listening Ear team are all parents of disabled children and young people, plus they have a huge wealth of professional experience. Each appointment is one hour long so we can give parent callers the time and space to talk about their difficulties and frustrations, providing a shoulder to cry on as well as excellent advice and information.

During the year, the team supported 516 individual parent carers, with 719 Listening Ear appointments.

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As a result of being helped by the service:

- 93% of parents said they feel better informed;
- 89% told us they feel more confident;
- 84% feel less isolated;

"Always good to share an experience where the person at the other end does understand what we are going through, the isolation at times can be unbearable and your service does give you hope." Parent carer

"I was very upset when I initially reached out. Just having a person validate my feelings and hear me was fabulous enough. For the first time in months, I feel like I might just have a plan...or the start of one. I definitely feel more informed and confident to take the next steps. Thank you!" Parent carer

### By Your Side

As of May 2023, all our teams were back in hospitals following covid restrictions being lifted. This means we are in children's hospitals in London, Newcastle, Birmingham, Liverpool and Glasgow.

During the year we supported 1,374 families. We also secured increased funding to enable us to expand this much needed and valuable service next year.

After help from the team:

- 99% of parents said they feel better informed about how to get the support they need;
- 85% feel more confident;
- 75% feel less isolated;

"Thanks for all the support and information you have provided. We have now been offered suitably adapted housing to enable my husband and I to continue to support our daughter. She has complex needs, is peg fed and a wheelchair user. I also didn't know our local council could offer help which I have now requested." Parent carer.

"I'm so relieved to talk with you and chat about all the services and support my niece who has a rare and complex condition could receive, I had no idea." Parent carer.

### We Care About Rare

Our work to provide support to families whose children have rare or undiagnosed conditions continued to be a much-valued service. We provided 1:1 advice and support to 997 rare conditions families via our Helpline team. Our medical information web pages had 96,681 visitors throughout the year. These include information about living with a rare condition, the diagnosis process and our A-Z of medical conditions.

Over the course of the year 77 conditions were updated or added to our A-Z with the help of our Medical Advisory Panel.

An additional 30 families with complicated enquiries received in-depth support from our Rare Conditions Officer. This tailored support often involves seeking detailed medical information from our

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network of specialists as well as connecting families with others, sometimes globally, whose child has the same condition.

#### **Hemihelp**

Our HemiHelp team has developed a new animation to help explain hemiplegia and has developed a new education section that will launch soon on our HemiHelp hub. This replaces the previous primary school pack that was very popular but had become outdated and unusable. This is in addition to ongoing hemiplegia-specific advice and support. Each month roughly 1,400 people visit our HemiHelp webpages.

#### **Parent workshops**

Our parent workshops proved to be more popular than ever before this year. We offer the workshops online and in person providing valuable information and a chance for parents to meet others in a similar situation. It's an area of growth at Contact and this year we held 692 workshops attended by 5,955 parents and 798 professionals. Topics included Educational Support, Understanding your Child's Behaviour, Support for your Child's Anxiety, Speech, language and communication and managing your child's sleep. They also included 37 Brighter Beginnings workshops targeted to parents of young children, with a total attendance of 686 parent carers.

#### **Fledglings**

Our e-commerce venture Fledglings has worked hard to increase the number of products available to families. Fledglings now deliver straight from the supplier to the customer, which has enabled us to increase the number of available products to 11,012. The equipment and specialist clothing we supply is often not available anywhere else and families can find everything that they need in one place. In 2023/24, we fulfilled 7,744 orders from parent carers of disabled children, an increase of 24% from the previous year. Fledglings also delivered a number of innovative projects during the year funded by trusts and foundations and corporates including a lending library in Nottingham.

#### **Autism Peer Education Programmes**

Contact is proud to be a pan-disability charity. But many of the families we support have autistic children and we are delighted to be part of the Autism peer education programme, commissioned by NHS England and led by the National Autistic Society.

Throughout the year we worked in London and the Midlands with our partner Ambitious About Autism to build knowledge and understanding of autism. We also worked to empower families and carers to advocate for autistic people they support. Everything the programme does is informed by or co-produced with autistic people, families and carers. And all our sessions are run by Peer Educators who are parents or carers of autistic people.

#### **London, nations and the regions**

During the year our teams in the regions, nations and London responded to 3,205 enquiries, either by telephone, e-mail or face-to-face appointments.

#### **London**

Across our London teams we are seeing increased demand for family support.



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We were delighted to receive three-year funding to support **Lewisham** families with financial advice from City Bridge Foundation. This includes a three-year evaluation project to look at the impact of our London family support services, particularly around marginalised groups. We utilised our bridging fund from designated funds to cover a funding gap while we awaited confirmation of City Bridge funding.

Unfortunately, we were unsuccessful in the re-tender for our **Wandsworth** service, so our office closed in August 2023, after over 40 years supporting families. We continue to offer some family events to maintain our connection with families in the borough and are looking at ways of getting our vital services back there.

We continue to support **Lambeth** families with information advice and support, as well as hosting the parent carer forum. Our two-year contract has been extended on a rolling basis and will retender in mid-2024. We have secured new funding to provide a fun day for parents and we are about to start delivery on a new one-year project in conjunction with Lambeth Family Hubs funding to support parents of children aged 0-2.

Our **Ealing** team continue to deliver a huge volume of in-depth support to some of our most vulnerable families, over 80% of whom are from BAME backgrounds and some who are refugees and asylum seekers. We have increased our pool of volunteer translators and now offer support in five languages. The project is now our largest project in London with a team of eight part-time staff.

Our Helping Hand project, which supports families on the waiting list for a neurodevelopmental assessment, in the boroughs of **Ealing, Hounslow and Hammersmith & Fulham continued to provide vital support**. We are delighted that through this work we have been able to secure funding for a two-year pilot project in Hounslow and we will be setting up a new office in the borough in 2024.

### Nations

Our Nations teams in Scotland, Northern Ireland and Wales provide information, guidance and support to parent carers and groups in their region. Devolved services and governments mean this information differs to the rest of the UK and so needs dedicated expertise.

### Northern Ireland

Our *Preparing Parents for Transition* programme is in its third and final year. Working with two mainstream schools and two special schools, the team has supported 120 parents with workshops, peer support sessions and opportunity fairs highlighting new opportunities and options for their young people. In this final year we continue to support parents and are also developing new transition resources for parents as a legacy to the project that will support other parents across Northern Ireland in future.

### Scotland

By Your Side Scotland supports families with children at Queen Elizabeth Children's Hospital Glasgow. Our parent adviser has responded to 554 different enquiry issues of advice since April 2023. Often the enquiries will take many calls and research once the parent adviser has met with the parents at the stand. We work in partnership with the Office for Rare Conditions and Family Fund to ensure we have a holistic approach to our service for families.

## **Wales**

This was the first year of Contact Cymru's Better Together through Sport project. The project aims to provide sporting opportunities for disabled children and young people in Wales. Due to a lack of access and social stigma, those opportunities are often not there, and we want to turn the tide on that. During the year we provided eight sporting days with one session in the morning and one in the afternoon attended by 105 disabled children and 89 parents (57 families) who made new friendships and connections. Following the events, 97% of parents said they felt less isolated and 77% felt more confident to do it again. Children's feedback showed that 100% of respondents said they had fun, tried new activities, and made friends.

## **Connecting families**

Contact was founded on the idea that parents are the best source of support to other parents and through building connections we can reduce isolation. Contact was started by a group of parent carers who came together to share their common challenges, joys and expertise. And today we continue to bring families together in multiple ways including family events, workshops, online and through our rare conditions work.

## **Family events**

This year we held 100 family events attended by 1,424 children and young people and 1,288 parent carers. These included sports days, trips to the beach, visits to the zoo and soft play, relaxed cinema screenings, as well as activities such as trampolining. They also included some parent-only activities such as online yoga to promote wellbeing and give carers the chance to recharge their batteries. The events are organised by our London teams and through our Better Together programme, which has been funded by the Masonic Charitable Foundation, to run activities in Wales and the Midlands.

One parent carer said: "We are very restricted on the things we can do together as a family for all sorts of reasons, so events like this are the perfect opportunity for us to enjoy something together alongside other families who understand and don't judge."

## **Online communities**

We continue to run private Facebook groups for parent carers, which offer a safe space for families to network, share ideas and information. This in turn creates a sense of community and helps to reduce isolation. This year the Contact Facebook group grew to more than 21,000 members and our HemiHelp group has almost 6,200 members. We moderate both groups, which allows us to give additional support and advice where needed.

"I'm a member of the Contact Facebook group and find the online discussions and advice really useful. It makes me feel that I'm not alone as a carer and as a volunteer for a local online group for carers I often find myself signposting Contact as a place online where information and support is trusted, helpful and understanding." Parent carer and member of our closed Facebook group.

## **Parent Participation**

Contact continues to provide support, advice and training for Parent Carer Forums. We provide a core offer of support for each Parent Carer Forum, including a dedicated Parent Carer Participation Adviser, who forums can access via phone and email to help them run their forum.

These parent-led groups, which are active in each of the 151 local authorities in England, are vital to ensure that disabled children and their families aren't ignored, overlooked or forgotten.

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There are now 127,921 forum members, a huge increase of 17,370 in just one year. It is testament to the forums' strength that they are still attracting members despite the increased pressures on parents.

The Parent Participation team provided 5,798 hours of support during the year and delivered 10 online learning sessions during the year with a total of 315 live attendances and 1,303 online views.

Together with the National Network of Parent Carer forums we ran our annual face to face conference, which this year took place in Newcastle. We had 186 in person, and 55 virtual attendees on the day. During the same month Contact ran a Participation Matters month to highlight the fantastic impact and work Forums do.

A parent carer told us: "As always, we receive an excellent service from Contact, and we cannot praise them enough for all they do for us. The grants team go over and above to help as well as our advisor who is just wonderful, we could not want for better support."

#### **Rare conditions groups**

Contact continued to build support for families whose children have rare conditions throughout the year. Thanks to funding from the Pears Foundation, we did this by providing grants to parent-led rare conditions groups helping to build knowledge, skills, and a network of support. In the first year, it is estimated that the grants given out impacted 41,900 people affected by rare conditions.

In addition to the grant giving, we also provided workshops, in-person events and monthly newsletters to rare condition groups. We hosted an online conference and are developing a resource toolkit to help groups build their skills and resilience to support families.

"Thank you so much, it has all been so great - inspiring and informative." Parent carer.

## **Working with families to take action for others**

#### **Policy, Campaigns and Media**

During the year we inspired 7,032 family carers to take action for others, including writing to their MPs, meeting government ministers and speaking out in the media.

We secured over 100 mentions in the press with equivalent advertising value of £1.8 million, raising awareness of the issues affecting families with disabled children.

This year we were proud to support two wonderful parent-led campaigns. This ensured we put the voices of families with seriously ill and disabled children at the forefront of our campaign work.

Despite the challenges of political uncertainty and continued austerity our policy and campaign work helped secure significant changes this year.

#### **Child Trust Funds**

80,000 disabled young people are at risk of being locked out of their savings. Parent Andrew Turner began a campaign after realising that his son could not access the money set aside for him in his Child Trust Fund due to his lack of mental capacity to manage his own finances.

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Contact has been supporting and amplifying Andrew's campaign, ensuring parents in similar situations know what their options are and campaigning for a fairer process.

We were part of a new alliance to campaign on the issue alongside a legal firm and representatives from the finance industry led by Andrew.

Together we galvanised campaign supporters to take action, secured media coverage from the BBC and financial campaigner Martin Lewis to raise awareness, and there was a Westminster Hall Debate on the issue.

### **Free School Meals**

160,000 eligible disabled children have been missing out on their free school meal due to their disability or sensory needs.

Parent Natalie Hay recognised the discrimination that was taking place and began campaigning on the issue during lockdown. At the start of 2023 Contact joined the campaign and helped to amplify it through our networks.

During the year we secured media coverage on the issue and a Westminster Hall debate. Natalie Hay crowdfunded to take legal action against the government. It culminated in the government conceding that discrimination could be taking place and agreeing to update its free school meals guidance. The guidance now includes new sections making clear that most disabled children should be offered an alternative such as a supermarket voucher if they can't access a free school meal in the regular way. This will benefit many low-income families who have been missing out on the equivalent of £570 of financial help.

Contact continues to highlight the issue to our parent carer audiences, providing clear advice on how to claim their child's food vouchers and template letters. We have also provided webinars for schools.

### **Poverty**

Families with disabled children are at greater risk of living in poverty due to the difficulties of juggling work and caring. In addition, they have been disproportionately affected by the cost-of-living crisis.

Ahead of the March budget we shone a spotlight on the continuing struggles some families are experiencing to pay their energy bills. Families of children with complex needs who require electrical equipment for their care, continue to experience sky high bills.

We worked with another extraordinary family – Samantha and her son Lewis – who wrote to the Chancellor of the Exchequer asking for a social tariff to help families like theirs – it received the support of 3,000 other families. Samantha and Lewis' story was featured in a powerful film shown on the BBC. Although it didn't get the response it deserved from the government, we are determined to continue pressing ministers and opposition parties to take action on energy bills for families running hospital equipment in their home.

During the year we also highlighted the injustices of the Universal Credit system which is less generous for many families with disabled children.

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"I feel less isolated and alone 'in society' and positive that there is an intelligent national body supporting parents and fighting for disabled children's rights that is being respected and heard by every government and across the country - its integrity shines out!" Parent carer.

### Strategic developments

#### Contact strategy 2020-2024: Transforming Lives Together

Our vision is that every family with a disabled child feels valued, supported, confident and informed. In order to make progress towards this, our strategy sets out the following ambitions for 2020-2024:

- To double the number of families we support through our high-quality information and advice services.
- To build a sustainable funding model which is more responsive to families' needs.

To achieve these ambitions, we set out five aims, and delivered against an implementation plan for each one over the course of the year.

1. We will be the first charity for families to turn to when they find out their child has a disability.
2. We will double the number of families we support through our high-quality information and advice service.
3. We will drive social change, raise more money, and support more people – by helping families feel more connected to Contact.
4. Families will shape our work, so that they get the local help they need in the ways that work best for them.
5. We will develop a sustainable business model that ensures Contact is here for families with disabled children long into the future.

The plan is underpinned by two key drivers: digital transformation and co-production with families.

We have now completed the fourth year of our four-year strategy and are delighted to have met all our objectives.

A summary of progress against our ambitions made in 2022-24 is outlined below.

#### **1. Double the number of families we support through our high-quality information and advice services**

We met our target of doubling the number of families we support through our high-quality information and advice services last year and were delighted to maintain this level of support this year.

This growth has come from extending our digital options for families, with the aim of meeting simpler enquiries online. Digital information and advice services such as our chatbot, video content and benefit calculators allow us to deliver one-to-many families, which in turn allows Parent Advisers to focus on more complex enquiries and the most in-need families.

Our podcast content has been particularly popular, such as our series talking families through filling in the DLA form – section by section. Live Chat and Chatbot have also absorbed more regular enquiries. We also identify top issues and run live Q&As on Facebook to support more families struggling with the same topics. This year we also launched our Instagram account which has enabled us to share our information and advice with over 2,000 followers.

With pressures increasing on families, this strategy has proved vital in enabling us to grow to meet need and to triage enquiries effectively. However, demand remains high.

## **2. Build a sustainable funding model, that is more responsive to families' needs**

Our financial stability is enabling us to continue to invest in new lottery and individual giving income streams. Our income diversification has also been boosted this year by two legacy donations. The Contact lottery continues to grow, and digital recruitment has been particularly strong. Contact currently has 2,911 active lottery players at the end of this financial year. And this year 14 Contact lottery players have won the £1,000 prize. We are very pleased that many of the winners were parent carers.

Our Business Development team continues to have success in growing Contact's commercial offer and expertise and research partnerships. This year the team developed a marketing brochure to help build connections with organisations who will pay for our services.

### **Booster year for our strategy**

Last year the board agreed to add a booster year to our 3-year strategy, Transforming Lives Together, to enable Contact to consolidate the achievements of the past year and account for the year when Covid led to our emergency response and the decision to pause some of the strategic objectives.

It was agreed that the final 4<sup>th</sup> year of the strategy needed a new, additional focus to meet the growing needs of families. And we are pleased that we met the additional outcomes during the year. We did this by:

- Piloting a volunteer scheme to support completion of Disability Living Allowance (DLA) forms.
- Building capacity to support families with high levels of complexity and distress.
- Strengthening our information, advice, and support for families in the devolved nations with the recruitment of a Nations social media and information officer.
- Operating a bridging fund of £150,000 over two years to protect continuity of key services based on agreed criteria. This means there is £75,000 allocated in 2023-24 to support transition of existing services to new funding, showing our commitment to do all we can to support families and colleagues where funding is at risk.
- Continued investment in our Innovation Fund, which enables staff to test innovative projects which support Contact's strategy resulted in a wide range of new projects. These included a business development marketing brochure, testing and learning how AI can support our work and devising and introducing Parent Participation Month to celebrate the work of parent carer forums.

## **Looking forward**

### **New strategy development**

This year with the arrival of our new Chief Executive and the ending of our strategy, Transforming Lives Together, we began developing Contact's next organisational strategy.

Working with strategic consultant, Lucent, from October-January 2024 we undertook the discovery phase of developing a new strategy for Contact, gathering insights from staff, parent carers and other key stakeholders to look at our current strengths, weaknesses and opportunities for our new strategy.

While we are developing our next long-term vision, mission and aims for the financial year ending March 2025 we have created a clean one-year plan, budget and KPIs. This will be the Foundation year of our next strategy to help us build the foundations we need for our future work.

We expect to have a clear articulation of our vision, mission and strategic objectives outlined in a new strategy by autumn 2024.

### **Financial Review**

The total incoming resources increased by 9.07% in the financial year to £9,345k (2022/23: £8,498k).

Unrestricted income was £4,986k (2022/23: £4,416k) and contributed to 53% of total income (2022/23: 51%). Unrestricted income includes contract income of £2,839k (2022/23: £2,959k) which is spent on deliverables stipulated within the contracts.

Unrestricted income from donations and legacies has significantly increased to £1,195k (2022/23: £797k). The two exceptional legacy gifts amounting to £456k, and increases in income from the Contact lottery and major donors ensured that unrestricted income continued to grow.

Restricted income was £4,359k (2022/23: £4,082k) and includes conduit funding in relation to parent forum grants of £2,677k (2022/23: £2,660k).

Total expenditure increased by 1.72% to £9,368k (2022/23: £9,208k). Unrestricted expenditure was £5,066k (2022/23: £4,792k) and restricted expenditure was £4,302k (2022/23: £4,415k) and recognises the outgoing conduit funding for the Parent Carer Forum grants.

The unrestricted net expenditure position before gains or losses on investments was £(80)k, and compares favourably to the prior year position of £(376)k.

The improvement in the unrestricted net expenditure position is primarily due to the receipt towards the end of the financial year of exceptional unrestricted legacy income of £366k in relation to the sale proceeds of a property, and £90k relating to legacy income from the sale of shares from a trust.

## Contact a Family (trading as Contact)

### Trustees' annual report

#### For the year ended 31 March 2024

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Total unrestricted expenditure in the financial year of £5,066k (2022/23: £4,792k) continued to recognise the investment of designated funds in income growth and diversification, service expansion and continuity, and strategic development initiatives at a level of £280k (2022/23: £240k).

Whilst overall support costs of £927k (2022/23: £931k) are in line with prior year, the costs for the current year do not include the relocation costs incurred in the prior year due to the move to the new office location, but include the additional investment in senior interim resources and professional services costs to support the charity during a period of transition, and inflationary cost increases including the annual staff salary reviews.

The level of unrestricted funds at the financial year end was £5,114k (2022/23: £4,913k).

The unrestricted funds comprise of designated funds of £3,445k (2022/23: £3,543k) and general funds of £1,668k (2022/23: £1,370k).

The general funds balance includes the profit on investments in the financial year of £374k (2022/23: loss on investments of £(200)k).

The general funds balance after excluding the spend from the designated funds and the impact of the movement in the value of investments is £1,294k has decreased by £(275)k compared to the prior year level of £1,569k.

The impact of the exceptional nature of the legacy income on the financial results and general funds balance is being taken into consideration when forecasting unrestricted income streams and in assessing the sustainability of the underlying operational financial position of the charity.

As the new organisational strategy of the charity is developed and evolves there will remain a focus on the sustainability of the charity's individual activities to further inform the future income generation and fundraising strategy, and on operational and delivery cost management and the effective and impactful utilisation of the designated funding reserves.



## Contact a Family (trading as Contact)

### Trustees' annual report

For the year ended 31 March 2024

#### Designated Funds

Analysis of Designated Funds			<u>2021</u>	<u>2022</u>	<u>2023</u>	<u>2024</u>
			<u>£'000</u>	<u>£'000</u>	<u>£'000</u>	<u>£'000</u>
Property fund			2,500	2,500	2,500	2,500
Income diversification and growth and strategic development			1,000	883	643	461
Working capital risk			1,000	1,000	-	-
Service continuity and expansion			-	-	400	301
Obligations under contract			181	0	0	0
Organisation and infrastructure - to support the new strategic development process						183
Total Designated Fund			4,681	4,383	3,543	3,445

Following the sale of Contact's City Road building in January 2021, a sum of £4,681k was allocated to designated reserves. £3,750k of the proceeds were transferred to the CCLA Charities Ethical Investment Fund.

The allocation included the establishment of a designated property fund at a level of £2,500k, and the designation of funds to invest in income diversification and growth, service delivery and continuity, and organisational development.

At the end of the financial year the level of designated reserves was £3,445k of which £2,500k remains designated in the Property Fund.

This fund was established in recognition of the importance of allowing sufficient time for the office space requirements of the charity in the mid to long term to be reassessed in the context of investment strategy and future property needs, especially due to the move to hybrid working as the Covid pandemic restrictions were lifted.

In the short term, the charity has leased office space to support a hybrid working pattern and to accommodate the on-site Contact Helpline team.

The future investment of the Property Fund is also to be reviewed by Trustees in the context of the development and implementation of the new strategy and the future sustainability of the charity.

The balance of designated reserves of £945k at the end of the financial year is to be invested over a period of the next 18 – 24 months. The key areas of investment during this period will be in the acquisition of new Contact lottery players, the acquisition of new regular givers, in a legacy giving programme, and in strategic and organisational development initiatives. In addition, Contact is investing in research and insight projects to further inform strategic decision-making, the development of programmes of work in the devolved nations and policy and campaign activities.

A further £280k of designated funds was invested during the financial year, with £181k allocated from the income diversification and growth funds, primarily in relation to the growth of individual giving income streams, digital marketing initiatives and the development of the new strategy. A further £99k of designated funds was invested in service delivery and expansion initiatives to support both existing

## **Contact a Family (trading as Contact)**

### **Trustees' annual report**

#### **For the year ended 31 March 2024**

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and future key services including those delivered in the devolved nations.

Also in the financial year, a further £183k was allocated to designated reserves from the exceptional legacy income received towards the end of the financial year to invest in organisational and infrastructure projects to support the new strategic development and implementation process.

#### **Restricted Funds**

Restricted income increased to £4,359k (2022/23: £4,082k). Income from donations from corporate donors increased by £101k. Government grants increased to £3,337k (2022/23: £3,101k) as the value of a grant from NHS Ealing CCG and other government bodies increased. These increases were offset by a decrease in restricted income from Major Donors to £195k (2022/23: £250k) and in the national Lottery Community Fund to £142k (2022/23: £184k).

#### **Reserves policy and performance**

The Trustees have reserves in order to provide some financial security, to fund working capital and to enable the charity to cope with setbacks or take advantage of opportunities. The free reserves comprise general funds excluding the net book value of tangible fixed assets funded by unrestricted funds and excluding the movement in valuation of investment funds.

The target reserve levels represent the free reserves of the charity which are readily available to be spent on charitable activities. The policy is reviewed with reference to the assessment of risk relating to individual income streams for programmes of work, the maintenance of essential services, expenditure commitments and any potential liabilities.

In 2023/24, Trustees have decided to set the free reserves level between £1.2m and £1.4m.

Unrealised gains on investments of £374k are not included in the trustees' review of general reserves due to continuing volatility in the financial markets.

Excluding the designated reserves movements and the unrealised gains and losses on investments, the level of general reserves at the end of the current financial year was £1,294k (2022/23: £1,569k).

#### **Investments**

CCLA were appointed as investment managers in February 2021. Following the sale of the building in 2021, £3.75m was transferred to the CCLA Charities Ethical Investment Fund. This fund aims for long term return comprising of both capital growth and distributions. It has a wider range of ethical restrictions, including avoiding tobacco companies, alcohol producers and companies with significant involvement in armaments, fossil fuel extraction, gambling and pornography. The fund is benchmarked against market comparators. The performance of these funds is monitored by the Business Affairs Committee.

Investments with a fair value of £4,181k are included in the balance sheet. There was an unrealised gain in the value of the investment of £374k reflecting the overall improvement in the financial markets over the course of the financial year.

### **Going Concern**

In recognition of the stable position that the charity is in in terms of unrestricted reserves and cash, primarily due to the designated funding reserve established as a result of the sale of the building in 2021, it is considered that there continues to be no material uncertainties about the charity's ability to continue as a going concern for the 12 months following the approval of the financial statements.

### **Risk Management**

The significant risks facing Contact are reviewed every six months by the Board and more regularly by the senior management team and committees of the Board, and a risk analysis and rating is produced. The most significant risks identified in the financial year were as follows:-

- Unsecured restricted funding targets do not yield the target return due to the existing and anticipated statutory and restricted funding landscape changing, and the impact of holding the current high levels of reserves.
- Impact of inflation on costs.
- Planned sustainable unrestricted income streams are not successful and do not yield the target returns.
- Leadership transition at a senior management team level and to a new Chair of Trustee Board in the coming financial year.
- IT security in terms of ransomware attack and data being compromised with a negative impact from an operational and financial cost perspective.

The Trustees review these risks on an on-going basis through the committees of the Board and satisfy themselves that adequate systems and procedures are in place to manage the risks identified. Where appropriate, risks are covered by insurance. The following framework dictates how we mitigate the identified risks:

- Formulating detailed fundraising plans and having regular financial reviews, together with a system of phased expenditure to enable responsible budget management;
- Maintaining reserves in line with the charity's reserves policy, and providing informed and timely reporting in relation to the investment strategy for designated reserves and the timeline for this investment;
- Funding application bids incorporate real costs including higher than anticipated cost of living salary increases, and the close monitor the impact of the cost-of-living pressures on individual donors;
- Regular monitoring of contracts and work delivery programmes;
- A clear structure of delegated authority and control;
- Investment in a comprehensive set of enhanced system security and IT security awareness training initiatives has been made.

## **Contact a Family (trading as Contact)**

### **Trustees' annual report**

#### **For the year ended 31 March 2024**

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In assessing risk, the Trustees recognise that some areas of our work require the acceptance and the management of risk, if our key objectives are to be achieved.

The Trustees believe the above approach is adequate in managing the risks of the organisation.

#### **Objects of the charity**

1. The Memorandum of Association incorporated in 1982 has the objects "to promote the education, welfare and benefit of the disabled, more specifically, but not limited to, caring for children and young people with any form of disability or special need.

To support parents and families who care for a disabled child or young person by:

- a) providing access to good quality advice and information, broad ranging appropriate support and contact with other families which will lead to positive outcomes;
- b) influencing changes in policy and practice in order to substantially improve the quality of lives of parents and families and their children.

#### **Structure, governance and management**

2. Members of the charity guarantee to contribute an amount not exceeding £1 to the assets of the charity in the event of winding up. The total number of such guarantees at 31 March 2024 was 34.
3. On 1 December 2004 Contact entered into a transfer of charitable undertakings with the Lady Hoare Trust which is a registered charity number 1067492 and a company limited by guarantee number 3482560. Following the merger a governance review commenced and new Standing Orders were adopted by the Trustees. These Standing Orders were reviewed by the Trustees in 2021.
4. On 1 April 2018 Contact entered into a transfer of charitable undertakings with HemiHelp which was a registered charity (number 1085349) and a company limited by guarantee (number 4156922).

This charity was closed on 14 May 2019.

5. On 4 January 2019 Contact entered into a transfer of charitable undertakings with Fledglings Family Services which is a registered charity (number 1112618) and a company limited by guarantee (number 4592971).
6. With regard to the recruitment of new Trustees, the Standing Orders state that "The Board should ensure that the recruitment process is open to all sections of the community, and should consider open advertising and a range of other recruitment methods to attract a wide range of candidates. Candidates should be interviewed formally and appointed on merit." In line with this, new Trustees have been recruited via an open and competitive recruitment process during the

## Contact a Family (trading as Contact)

### Trustees' annual report

#### For the year ended 31 March 2024

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year. Our Board Member Induction, Support and Development policy outlines a process to support new Trustees and ensure they are provided with sufficient information to enable them to fulfil their duties.

7. Trustees are elected by the Members at the Annual General Meeting for a three-year term. Trustees can be appointed during the year but must be elected at the subsequent Annual General Meeting. The Standing Orders set out a maximum of three consecutive terms for Trustees, however it is anticipated that the norm will be only two terms, and three terms would only be used in exceptional circumstances.
8. As well as meeting regularly as a full Board, the Trustees have also established a number of committees and councils, each with their own Terms of Reference and each reporting back to the Board:
  - a) A Business Affairs Committee to take delegated responsibility for overseeing all financial and business aspects of Contact to ensure short and long-term viability, and to report back to the Board accordingly.
  - b) A Governance Strategy and People Committee to take delegated responsibility for ensuring effective and efficient governance over Contact. This includes identifying and proposing new members to the Board and to oversee all people and administrative support activity that supports the work of Contact.
9. The Trustees approve the overall strategy of the organisation and delegate the operational management, development and administration of the charity to the Chief Executive. The SMT are comprised of the Chief Executive, the Director of Finance & Resources, the Director of Family Support, the Director of Income Generation, Director of Participation and Regional Development, and the Director of Advice, Communications and Engagement. The SMT is responsible for the day to day running of the organisation, in line with the agreed strategy, and makes recommendations to the Board of Trustees. All Trustees give their time voluntarily and receive no benefits from the charity. Any expenses reclaimed from the charity are set out in note 8 to the financial statements. Contact Trustees are covered by trustee indemnity insurance. A safeguarding lead trustee who works with the trained safeguarding review group. A declarations of interest register is maintained and monitored.
10. Although not part of the overall governance structure of the charity, there is also a Medical Advisory Panel (MAP). The MAP was established to support Contact in its provision of medical information to families of disabled children and professionals who work with them. The MAP assist in ensuring the accuracy and validity of medical information produced and provided via the website, publications and enquiries.
11. Staff salaries are benchmarked and increased by inflation on an annual basis.

#### Statement of responsibilities of the Trustees

The Trustees (who are also directors of Contact for the purposes of company law) are responsible for preparing the report of the Trustees and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

## Contact a Family (trading as Contact)

### Trustees' annual report

#### For the year ended 31 March 2024

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Company law requires the Trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charitable company and of the incoming resources and application of resources, including the income and expenditure, of the charitable company for that period. In preparing these financial statements, the Trustees are required to:

- a) select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- b) observe the methods and principles in the Charities SORP;
- c) make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- d) state whether applicable UK Accounting Standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements; and
- e) prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charitable company will continue in operation.

The Trustees are responsible for keeping adequate accounting records that disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charitable company and enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 2006, the Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005 and the Charities Accounts (Scotland) Regulations 2006 (as amended). They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charitable company and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

In so far as the Trustees are aware: there is no relevant audit information of which the charitable company's auditors are unaware; and the Trustees have taken all steps that they ought to have taken to make themselves aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the auditors are aware of that information.

The Trustees are responsible for the maintenance and integrity of the corporate and financial information included on the charitable company's website. Legislation in the United Kingdom governing the preparation and dissemination of financial statements may differ from legislation in other jurisdictions.

#### **Public benefit focus on ensuring that the activities achieve the charitable aims**

The Trustees review the organisation's objectives and activities on a quarterly basis each year in line with the implementation of the 2020-2023 Strategy and 2023-2024 booster year. The annual report reviews what Contact has achieved and the outcomes of its work during the 2023-2024 booster year. The Trustees report the success of each key activity and the benefits that they have brought to those groups of people the organisation is set up to help. The review also helps ensure the organisation's aims, objectives and activities remain focused on its stated purposes.

We have referred to the guidance contained in the Charity Commission's general guidance on public benefit when reviewing our aims and objectives and in planning our future activities. In particular, the Trustees consider how planned activities will contribute to the aims and objectives they have set.

## **Contact a Family (trading as Contact)**

### **Trustees' annual report**

#### **For the year ended 31 March 2024**

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All charitable activities of Contact focus on the support of parents and families who care for a disabled child and are undertaken to further the charitable purposes for the public benefit.

#### **UK Bribery Act 2010**

Contact commits to a policy of zero-tolerance of bribery in any form. The Board of Trustees and the Senior Management Team commit to and oversee the implementation of a policy of zero-tolerance, recognising that bribery is contrary to fundamental values of integrity, transparency and accountability and undermines organisational effectiveness.

Bribery risk assessment forms part of Contact's overall and ongoing risk management process.

#### **Fundraising review**

The majority of Contact's fundraising is conducted by paid Contact staff. Contact is registered with the Fundraising Regulator. A third party, CFP Lottery and Raffles Ltd is commissioned to administer the Contact Lottery.

Contact's fundraising team and CFP Lottery and Raffles Ltd comply with fundraising and Gambling Commission regulations and the Code of Fundraising Practice set by the Fundraising Regulator. Contact's society lottery is registered with Hackney Council under registration number SSL/2023/005.

No areas of non-compliance have been identified. There were no complaints received on fundraising activities in 2023/24. In this financial year, Contact engaged the services of Formunauts One, a face-to-face fundraising agency, for the purpose of recruiting regular monthly individual givers.

#### **Charity Governance Code**

Trustees are continually reviewing the principles of the Charity Governance Code and applying these principles.

#### **Strategy update**

In the previous financial year the Board agreed to add a booster year to the 3-year strategy, Transforming Lives Together to consolidate the achievements of the past years and to enable additional focus on meeting the growing needs of families, including building capacity to support families with high levels of complexity and distress, strengthening the information, advice and support for families in the devolved nations and the operation of a bridging fund to support the transition of existing services to new funding arrangements.

Further details of the booster year 2023-2024 strategy are included within the Trustee Report.

Following the arrival of the new Chief Executive and the successful conclusion of the booster year of the Transforming Lives Together strategy, Contact's next organisational strategy is being developed.

A discovery phase is underway, gathering insights from staff, parent carers and other key stakeholders to look at current strengths, weaknesses and opportunities for the new strategy.

## **Contact a Family (trading as Contact)**

### **Trustees' annual report**

#### **For the year ended 31 March 2024**

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While the next long-term vision, mission and aims for 2024-2025 is being developed a one-year plan, budget and KPIs has been put in place and will be the Foundation year of the next strategy to help build the foundations required for the charity's future work.

#### **Further Information**

The Trustees warmly thank all our donors, volunteers and advisers for their valuable help during the year. We also thank our staff for the commitment and skills that they bring to all the varied tasks inherent in running Contact.

Auditor Sayer Vincent LLP were re-appointed as the charitable company's auditors during the year and have expressed their willingness to continue in that capacity.

BY ORDER OF THE BOARD

Angela Kitching

Chair (acting)

Date: 17 September 2024

Contact Wenlock Studios

50-52 Wharf Road

London N1 7EU



## Independent auditor's report

### To the members of

#### Contact a Family (trading as Contact)

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### Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of Contact a Family (trading as Contact, the 'charitable company') for the year ended 31 March 2024 which comprise the statement of financial activities, balance sheet, statement of cash flows 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 FRS 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
- Have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006, the Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005 and regulation 8 of the Charities Accounts (Scotland) Regulations 2006 (as amended)

### 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 Contact a Family's (trading as Contact) 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 other information comprises the information included in the trustees' annual report, other than the financial statements and our auditor's report thereon. The trustees are responsible for the other information contained within the annual report. 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

## **Independent auditor's report**

### **To the members of**

#### **Contact a Family (trading as Contact)**

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statements or our knowledge obtained in the course of 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 the audit:

- The information given in the trustees' annual report, for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements; and
- The trustees' annual report, has been prepared in accordance with applicable legal requirements

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

In the 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 trustees' annual report.

We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters in relation to which the Companies Act 2006 and the Charities Accounts (Scotland) Regulations 2006 (as amended) require us to report to you if, in our opinion:

- Adequate accounting records have not been kept, or returns adequate for our audit have not been received from branches not visited by us; 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; or
- The directors were not entitled to prepare the financial statements in accordance with the small companies regime and take advantage of the small companies' exemptions in preparing the trustees' annual report and from the requirement to prepare a strategic report.

### **Responsibilities of trustees**

As explained more fully in the statement of trustees' responsibilities set out in the trustees' annual report, 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**

We have been appointed as auditor under section 44(1)(c) of the Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005 and under the Companies Act 2006 and report in accordance with regulations made

## **Independent auditor's report**

### **To the members of**

#### **Contact a Family (trading as Contact)**

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under those Acts.

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 are set out below.

### **Capability of the audit in detecting irregularities**

In identifying and assessing risks of material misstatement in respect of irregularities, including fraud and non-compliance with laws and regulations, our procedures included the following:

- We enquired of management and the business affairs committee, which included obtaining and reviewing supporting documentation, concerning the charity's policies and procedures relating to:
  - Identifying, evaluating, and complying with laws and regulations and whether they were aware of any instances of non-compliance;
  - Detecting and responding to the risks of fraud and whether they have knowledge of any actual, suspected, or alleged fraud;
  - The internal controls established to mitigate risks related to fraud or non-compliance with laws and regulations.
- We inspected the minutes of meetings of those charged with governance.
- We obtained an understanding of the legal and regulatory framework that the charity operates in, focusing on those laws and regulations that had a material effect on the financial statements or that had a fundamental effect on the operations of the charity from our professional and sector experience.
- We communicated applicable laws and regulations throughout the audit team and remained alert to any indications of non-compliance throughout the audit.
- We reviewed any reports made to regulators.
- We reviewed the financial statement disclosures and tested these to supporting documentation to assess compliance with applicable laws and regulations.
- We performed analytical procedures to identify any unusual or unexpected relationships that may indicate risks of material misstatement due to fraud.
- In addressing the risk of fraud through management override of controls, we tested the appropriateness of journal entries and other adjustments, assessed whether the judgements made in making accounting estimates are indicative of a potential bias and tested significant transactions that are unusual or those outside the normal course of business.

Because of the inherent limitations of an audit, there is a risk that we will not detect all irregularities, including those leading to a material misstatement in the financial statements or non-compliance with

## **Independent auditor's report**

### **To the members of**

#### **Contact a Family (trading as Contact)**

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regulation. This risk increases the more that compliance with a law or regulation is removed from the events and transactions reflected in the financial statements, as we will be less likely to become aware of instances of non-compliance. The risk is also greater regarding irregularities occurring due to fraud rather than error, as fraud involves intentional concealment, forgery, collusion, omission or misrepresentation.

A further description of our responsibilities is available 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 and section 44(1)(c) of the Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005. 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.

Jonathan Orchard (Senior statutory auditor)  
11 November 2024

for and on behalf of Sayer Vincent LLP, Statutory Auditor  
110 Golden Lane, LONDON, EC1Y 0TG

Sayer Vincent LLP is eligible to act as auditor in terms of section 1212 of the Companies Act 2006

Contact a Family (trading as Contact)

Statement of financial activities (incorporating an income and expenditure account)

For the year ended 31 March 2024

	Note	Unrestricted £	Restricted £	2024 Total £	Unrestricted £	Restricted £	2023 Total £
<b>Income from:</b>							
Donations and legacies	2	1,195,030	167,415	<b>1,362,445</b>	797,283	63,206	860,489
Charitable activities	4						
Supporting families – central information,		1,075,132	155,280	<b>1,230,412</b>	983,865	269,127	1,252,992
Supporting families locally		564,824	972,031	<b>1,536,855</b>	502,665	691,167	1,193,832
Bringing families together		2,011,491	2,999,505	<b>5,010,996</b>	2,008,932	2,958,141	4,967,073
Helping families take action for others		10,214	65,000	<b>75,214</b>	1,110	100,000	101,110
Investments		129,359	–	<b>129,359</b>	122,447	–	122,447
<b>Total income</b>		<b>4,986,050</b>	<b>4,359,231</b>	<b>9,345,281</b>	<b>4,416,302</b>	<b>4,081,641</b>	<b>8,497,943</b>
<b>Expenditure on:</b>							
Raising funds		713,737	–	<b>713,737</b>	797,363	–	797,363
Charitable activities							
Supporting families – central information,		1,239,256	188,283	<b>1,427,539</b>	1,164,208	366,579	1,530,787
Supporting families locally		573,452	1,038,314	<b>1,611,766</b>	419,460	1,035,145	1,454,605
Bringing families together		2,389,699	2,983,602	<b>5,373,301</b>	2,366,767	2,915,884	5,282,651
Helping families take action for others		150,188	91,854	<b>242,042</b>	44,472	97,738	142,210
<b>Total expenditure</b>	5	<b>5,066,332</b>	<b>4,302,053</b>	<b>9,368,385</b>	<b>4,792,270</b>	<b>4,415,346</b>	<b>9,207,616</b>
<b>Net income / (expenditure) before net gains / (losses) on investments</b>		<b>(80,282)</b>	<b>57,178</b>	<b>(23,104)</b>	<b>(375,968)</b>	<b>(333,705)</b>	<b>(709,673)</b>
Net gains / (losses) on investments	13	374,002	–	<b>374,002</b>	(199,756)	–	(199,756)
<b>Net income/(expenditure) for the year</b>	7	<b>293,720</b>	<b>57,178</b>	<b>350,898</b>	<b>(575,724)</b>	<b>(333,705)</b>	<b>(909,429)</b>
<b>Transfers between funds</b>		<b>(92,753)</b>	<b>92,753</b>	<b>–</b>	<b>–</b>	<b>–</b>	<b>–</b>
<b>Net movement in funds</b>		<b>200,967</b>	<b>149,931</b>	<b>350,898</b>	<b>(575,724)</b>	<b>(333,705)</b>	<b>(909,429)</b>
<b>Reconciliation of funds:</b>							
Total funds brought forward		4,912,929	428,226	5,341,155	5,488,653	761,931	6,250,584
<b>Total funds carried forward</b>	18a	<b>5,113,896</b>	<b>578,157</b>	<b>5,692,053</b>	<b>4,912,929</b>	<b>428,226</b>	<b>5,341,155</b>

All of the above results are derived from continuing activities. There were no other recognised gains or losses other than those stated above. Movements in funds are disclosed in Note 18a to the financial statements.

# Contact a Family (trading as Contact)

## Balance sheet

Company no. 01633333

As at 31 March 2024

	Note	£	2024 £	£	2023 £
<b>Fixed assets:</b>					
Tangible assets	12		20,455		31,723
Listed investments	13		4,180,712		3,806,709
			<u>4,201,167</u>		<u>3,838,432</u>
<b>Current assets:</b>					
Stock		80,580		85,174	
Debtors	14	742,515		800,965	
Short term deposits		-		272,000	
Cash at bank and in hand		1,283,927		1,109,633	
			<u>2,107,022</u>	<u>2,267,772</u>	
<b>Liabilities:</b>					
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	15	616,136		765,049	
			<u>1,490,886</u>	<u>1,502,723</u>	
<b>Net current assets</b>			<u>1,490,886</u>	<u>1,502,723</u>	
<b>Total net assets</b>			<u>5,692,053</u>	<u>5,341,155</u>	
<b>The funds of the charity:</b>	18a				
Restricted income funds			578,157		428,226
Unrestricted income funds:					
Designated Fund		3,445,419		3,543,398	
General funds		1,668,477		1,369,531	
			<u>5,113,896</u>	<u>4,912,929</u>	
<b>Total charity funds</b>			<u>5,692,053</u>	<u>5,341,155</u>	

Approved by the trustees on 17 September 2024 and signed on their behalf by

Angela Kitching  
Chair (Acting)

Eleanor Christie  
Treasurer

Contact a Family (trading as Contact)

Statement of cash flows

For the year ended 31 March 2024

	Note	2024 £	£	2023 £	£
<b>Cash flows from operating activities</b>					
<b>Net cash used in operating activities</b>			(227,065)		(780,494)
<b>Cash flows from investing activities:</b>					
Dividends, interest and rents from investments		129,359		122,447	
Proceeds from the sale of fixed assets		–		–	
Purchase of fixed assets		–		(33,803)	
Transfer from/ (to) short-term deposits		272,000		(272,000)	
<b>Net cash provided by/(used in) investing activities</b>			401,359		(183,356)
<b>Change in cash and cash equivalents in the year</b>			174,294		(963,850)
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the year			1,109,633		2,073,483
<b>Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the year</b>			1,283,927		1,109,633

**1 Accounting policies**

**a) Statutory information**

Contact a Family (Trading as Contact) is a charitable company limited by guarantee and is incorporated in United Kingdom.

The registered office address is Wenlock Studios Unit G.07, 50–52 Wharf Road, London, N1 7EU

**b) Basis of preparation**

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with 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) – (Charities SORP FRS 102), the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) and the Companies Act 2006.

Assets and liabilities are initially recognised at historical cost or transaction value unless otherwise stated in the relevant accounting policy or note.

In applying the financial reporting framework, the trustees have made a number of subjective judgements, for example in respect of significant accounting estimates. Estimates and judgements are continually evaluated and are based on historical experience and other factors, including expectations of future events that are believed to be reasonable under the circumstances. The nature of the estimation means the actual outcomes could differ from those estimates. Any significant estimates and judgements affecting these financial statements are detailed within the relevant accounting policy below.

**c) Public benefit entity**

The charitable company meets the definition of a public benefit entity under FRS 102.

**d) Going concern**

The trustees consider that there are no material uncertainties about the charitable company's ability to continue as a going concern.

There are no significant uncertainties around future funding which the Trustees believe will impact on the organisation continuing as a going concern.

The trustees do not consider that there are any sources of estimation uncertainty at the reporting date that have a significant risk of causing a material adjustment to the carrying amounts of assets and liabilities within the next reporting period.

**e) Income**

Income is recognised when the charity has entitlement to the funds, any performance conditions attached to the income have been met, it is probable that the income will be received and that the amount can be measured reliably.

Income from government and other grants, whether 'capital' grants or 'revenue' grants, is recognised when the charity has entitlement to the funds, any performance conditions attached to the grants have been met, it is probable that the income will be received and the amount can be measured reliably and is not deferred.

For legacies, entitlement is taken as the earlier of the date on which either: the charity is aware that probate has been granted, the estate has been finalised and notification has been made by the executor(s) to the charity that a distribution will be made, or when a distribution is received from the estate. Receipt of a legacy, in whole or in part, is only considered probable when the amount can be measured reliably and the charity has been notified of the executor's intention to make a distribution. Where legacies have been notified to the charity, or the charity is aware of the granting of probate, and the criteria for income recognition have not been met, then the legacy is a treated as a contingent asset and disclosed if material.



**1 Accounting policies (continued)**

**e) Income (continued)**

Income received in advance of the provision of a specified service is deferred until the criteria for income recognition are met.

Rental income is recognised in the financial statements in the period it relates to.

Lottery income is received and recognised weekly from a third party. The amount recognised is the player payment less prizes paid. Service charges include a player set up fee and a management fee calculated on income which is recognised in expenditure as it is incurred.

**f) Donations of Special Events, services and facilities**

Donated professional services and donated facilities are recognised as income when the charity has control over the item or received the service, any conditions associated with the donation have been met, the receipt of economic benefit from the use by the charity of the item is probable and that economic benefit can be measured reliably. In accordance with the Charities SORP (FRS 102), volunteer time is not recognised so refer to the trustees' annual report for more information about their contribution.

On receipt, donated Special Events, professional services and donated facilities are recognised on the basis of the value of the gift to the charity which is the amount the charity would have been willing to pay to obtain services or facilities of equivalent economic benefit on the open market; a corresponding amount is then recognised in expenditure in the period of receipt.

**g) Interest receivable**

Interest on funds held on deposit is included when receivable and the amount can be measured reliably by the charity; this is normally upon notification of the interest paid or payable by the bank.

**h) Fund accounting**

Restricted funds are to be used for specific purposes as laid down by the donor. Expenditure which meets these criteria is charged to the fund.

Unrestricted funds are donations and other incoming resources received or generated for the charitable purposes.

Designated funds are unrestricted funds earmarked by the trustees for particular purposes.

**i) Expenditure and irrecoverable VAT**

Expenditure is recognised once there is a legal or constructive obligation to make a payment to a third party, it is probable that settlement will be required and the amount of the obligation can be measured reliably. Expenditure is classified under the following activity headings:

- Costs of raising funds relate to the costs incurred by the charitable company in inducing third parties to make voluntary contributions to it, as well as the cost of any activities with a fundraising purpose
- Expenditure on charitable activities includes the costs of delivering services, undertaken to further the purposes of the charity and their associated support costs
- Other expenditure represents those items not falling into any other heading

Irrecoverable VAT is charged as a cost against the activity for which the expenditure was incurred.

**1 Accounting policies (continued)**

**j) Allocation of support costs**

Resources expended are allocated to the particular activity where the cost relates directly to that activity. However, the cost of overall direction and administration of each activity, comprising the salary and overhead costs of the central function, is apportioned on the following basis which are an estimate, based on staff time, of the amount attributable to each activity.

Governance costs are the costs associated with the governance arrangements of the charity. These costs are associated with constitutional and statutory requirements and include any costs associated with the strategic management of the charity's activities.

Governance costs are re-allocated to each of the activities on the following basis which is an estimate, based on staff time, of the amount attributable to each activity

**k) Operating leases**

Rental charges are charged on a straight line basis over the term of the lease.

**l) Tangible fixed assets**

Items of equipment are capitalised where the purchase price exceeds £1,000. Depreciation costs are allocated to activities on the basis of the use of the related assets in those activities. Assets are reviewed for impairment if circumstances indicate their carrying value may exceed their net realisable value and value in use. Major components are treated as a separate asset where they have significantly different patterns of consumption of economic benefits and are depreciated separately over its useful life.

Depreciation is provided at rates calculated to write down the cost of each asset to its estimated residual value over its expected useful life. The depreciation rates in use are as follows:

● Computer equipment	3 years
● Fixtures fittings and equipment	4 to 12 years
● Software development	4 years

**m) Listed investments**

Investments are a form of basic financial instrument and are initially recognised at their transaction value and subsequently measured at their fair value as at the balance sheet date using the closing quoted market price. Any change in fair value will be recognised in the statement of financial activities. Investment gains and losses, whether realised or unrealised, are combined and shown in the heading "Net gains/(losses) on investments" in the statement of financial activities. The charity does not acquire put options, derivatives or other complex financial instruments.

**n) Investment assets**

Investment properties are measured in the balance sheet at fair value. Investment properties are not depreciated. Any change in fair value is recognised in the statement of financial activities. The valuation method used to determine fair value will be stated in the notes to the accounts.

**o) 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.

**p) Cash at bank and in hand**

Cash at bank and cash 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 opening of the deposit or similar account. Cash balances exclude any funds held on behalf of service users.

**1 Accounting policies (continued)****q) Creditors and provisions**

Creditors and provisions are recognised where the charity 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.

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

**r) Pensions**

The charity operates a stakeholder auto-enrolment workplace pension scheme and matches employee pension contributions up to a maximum of 5% of their salaries. The costs to the charity are recognised as they are incurred.

**s) Grants payable**

Grants payable are made to third parties in furtherance of the charity's objects. Grants are accounted for when either the recipient has a reasonable expectation that they will receive a grant and the trustees have agreed to pay the grant without condition, or the recipient has a reasonable expectation that they will receive a grant and that any condition attaching to the grant is outside of the control of the charity.

Provisions for grants are made when the intention to make a grant has been communicated to the recipient but there is uncertainty about either the timing of the grant or the amount of grant payable.

**2a Income from donations and legacies (current year)**

	Unrestricted £	Restricted £	2024 Total £
Gifts	405,272	11,013	416,285
Legacies	456,000	13,000	469,000
Charitable Trusts	85,151	–	85,151
Major Donors	158,910	–	158,910
Corporate	37,591	135,366	172,957
Special Events	52,106	8,036	60,142
	<u>1,195,030</u>	<u>167,415</u>	<u>1,362,445</u>

In March 2024 Contact received unrestricted legacy income of £366,000 in relation to the sale of a property, and £90,000 in relation to the sale of shares in a trust.

**2b Income from donations and legacies (prior year)**

	Unrestricted £	Restricted £	2023 Total £
Gifts	297,999	13,595	311,594
Legacies	6,500	–	6,500
Charitable Trusts	61,045	–	61,045
Major Donors	105,669	–	105,669
Corporate	15,363	33,881	49,244
Special Events	310,707	15,730	326,437
	<u>797,283</u>	<u>63,206</u>	<u>860,489</u>

Contact a Family (trading as Contact)

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2024

3a Income from government grants (current year)

	Unrestricted £	Restricted £	2024 Total £
Department for Education	–	2,816,341	2,816,341
Scottish Government	–	85,050	85,050
Northern Ireland Executive	–	5,832	5,832
London Borough of Ealing	–	65,705	65,705
London Borough of Lambeth	–	24,173	24,173
London Borough of Wandsworth	–	5,833	5,833
NHS Ealing CCG	–	135,000	135,000
Other government bodies	7,609	199,469	207,078
Total	7,609	3,337,403	3,345,012

3b Income from government grants (prior year)

	Unrestricted £	Restricted £	2023 Total £
Department for Education	–	2,817,588	2,817,588
Scottish Government	–	85,050	85,050
Northern Ireland Executive	–	23,327	23,327
London Borough of Ealing	–	5,710	5,710
London Borough of Lambeth	–	14,660	14,660
London Borough of Wandsworth	–	14,000	14,000
London Borough of Lewisham	–	49,873	49,873
Greater London Authority	–	50,203	50,203
NHS Ealing CCG	–	30,000	30,000
Other government bodies	3,302	10,378	13,680
Total	3,302	3,100,789	3,104,091

## Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2024

## 4a Incoming resources from charitable activities (current year)

	Supporting families – central information, advice and support £	Supporting families locally £	Bringing families together £	Helping families take action for others £	2024 Total £	2023 Total £
<b>Restricted:</b>						
Government grants (note 3)	–	587,898	2,749,505	–	3,337,403	3,100,789
National Lottery Community Fund (NLCF)	–	142,427	–	–	142,427	184,381
Charitable trusts	45,280	236,706	170,000	65,000	516,986	483,108
Major Donors	110,000	5,000	80,000	–	195,000	249,930
Other	–	–	–	–	–	227
Total restricted incoming resources from charitable activities	155,280	972,031	2,999,505	65,000	4,191,816	4,018,435
<b>Unrestricted:</b>						
Contractual income						
– SEN and Disability Reforms support	625,077	–	2,011,491	–	2,636,568	2,588,660
– NHS England	–	–	–	–	–	41,500
– London Borough of Wandsworth	–	95,893	–	–	95,893	224,611
– London Borough of Lambeth	–	80,197	–	–	80,197	75,641
– Northern Ireland Health Board	–	26,624	–	–	26,624	28,285
Government grants	–	–	–	7,609	7,609	3,302
National Lottery Community Fund (NLCF)	–	–	–	–	–	23,055
Business Development – other	15,068	341,857	–	–	356,925	156,570
Business Development – Alder Hey	–	2,100	–	–	2,100	28,083
Business Development – Durham	–	18,153	–	–	18,153	22,224
Trading Income	434,987	–	–	–	434,987	303,531
Publication income	–	–	–	2,605	2,605	1,110
Total unrestricted incoming resources from charitable activities	1,075,132	564,824	2,011,491	10,214	3,661,661	3,496,572
<b>Total incoming resources from charitable activities</b>	<b>1,230,412</b>	<b>1,536,855</b>	<b>5,010,996</b>	<b>75,214</b>	<b>7,853,477</b>	<b>7,515,007</b>

Contact a Family (trading as Contact)

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2024

4b Incoming resources from charitable activities (previous year)

	Supporting families – central information, advice and support £	Supporting families locally £	Bringing families together £	Helping families take action for others £	2023 Total £
<b>Restricted:</b>					
Government grants (note 3)	50,203	342,445	2,708,141	–	3,100,789
National Lottery Community Fund (NLCF)	–	184,381	–	–	184,381
Charitable trusts	98,924	114,184	170,000	100,000	483,108
Major Donors	120,000	49,930	80,000	–	249,930
Other	–	227	–	–	227
Total restricted incoming resources from charitable activities	269,127	691,167	2,958,141	100,000	4,018,435
<b>Unrestricted:</b>					
Contractual income					
– SEN and Disability Reforms support	621,228	–	1,967,432	–	2,588,660
– NHS England	–	–	41,500	–	41,500
– London Borough of Wandsworth	–	224,611	–	–	224,611
– London Borough of Lambeth	–	75,641	–	–	75,641
– London Borough of Lewisham	–	–	–	–	–
– Northern Ireland Health Board	–	28,285	–	–	28,285
Government grants	3,302	–	–	–	3,302
National Lottery Community Fund (NLCF)	23,055	–	–	–	23,055
Business Development – other	32,749	123,821	–	–	156,570
Business Development – Alder Hey	–	28,083	–	–	28,083
Business Development – Durham	–	22,224	–	–	22,224
Trading Income	303,531	–	–	–	303,531
Publication income	–	–	–	1,110	1,110
Total unrestricted incoming resources from charitable activities	983,865	502,665	2,008,932	1,110	3,496,572
<b>Total incoming resources from charitable activities</b>	<b>1,252,992</b>	<b>1,193,832</b>	<b>4,967,073</b>	<b>101,110</b>	<b>7,515,007</b>

## 5a Analysis of expenditure (current year)

	Charitable activities						2024 Total £	2023 Total £
	Cost of raising funds £	Supporting families – central information, advice and support £	Supporting families locally £	Bringing families together £	Helping families take action for others £	Governance costs £		
Direct costs	645,216	1,268,510	1,399,533	4,846,408	216,226	65,351	<b>8,441,244</b>	8,276,983
Support costs								
HR	10,050	19,758	21,799	75,487	3,368	–	<b>130,462</b>	67,093
Finance	22,100	43,455	47,943	166,021	7,407	–	<b>286,926</b>	205,077
IT	8,623	16,952	18,703	64,767	2,890	–	<b>111,935</b>	162,688
Rental Costs	7,976	15,681	17,301	59,917	2,673	–	<b>103,548</b>	103,545
Management	12,815	25,195	27,797	96,251	4,295	–	<b>166,353</b>	277,437
Monitoring and Evaluation	1,923	28,091	67,770	26,637	3,496	–	<b>127,917</b>	114,793
	<b>708,703</b>	<b>1,417,642</b>	<b>1,600,846</b>	<b>5,335,488</b>	<b>240,355</b>	<b>65,351</b>	<b>9,368,385</b>	<b>9,207,616</b>
Governance costs	5,034	9,897	10,920	37,813	1,687	(65,351)	–	–
<b>Total expenditure 2024</b>	<b>713,737</b>	<b>1,427,539</b>	<b>1,611,766</b>	<b>5,373,301</b>	<b>242,042</b>	<b>–</b>	<b>9,368,385</b>	<b>9,207,616</b>

Total support costs recognise an increase in expenditure relating to support services provided by Finance and HR, including the investment in senior interim resources internally and the extension of a service agreement with an external employee relations advisor, to support the organisation during a period of transition.

Contact a Family (trading as Contact)

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2024

5b Analysis of expenditure (previous year)

	Charitable activities						2023 Total £
	Cost of raising funds £	Supporting families – central information, advice and support £	Supporting families locally £	Bringing families together £	Helping families take action for others £	Governance costs £	
Direct costs	722,981	1,357,777	1,273,568	4,747,065	126,584	49,008	8,276,983
Support costs							
HR	5,770	10,837	10,165	39,311	1,010	–	67,093
Finance	17,638	33,125	31,070	120,156	3,088	–	205,077
IT	13,992	26,278	24,648	95,320	2,450	–	162,688
Rental Costs	8,906	16,725	15,688	60,668	1,559	–	103,545
Management	23,861	44,812	42,033	162,552	4,178	–	277,437
Monitoring and Evaluation	–	33,317	50,008	28,865	2,603	–	114,793
	793,148	1,522,871	1,447,180	5,253,937	141,472	49,008	9,207,616
Governance costs	4,215	7,916	7,425	28,714	738	(49,008)	–
<b>Total expenditure 2023</b>	<b>797,363</b>	<b>1,530,787</b>	<b>1,454,605</b>	<b>5,282,651</b>	<b>142,210</b>	<b>–</b>	<b>9,207,616</b>



Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2024

6 Grant making

	Grants to institutions £	Support costs £	2024 £	2023 £
<b>Cost</b>				
DCMS Parent Carer Forums	2,700,667	38,160	<b>2,738,827</b>	2,676,481
Pears/DCMS Rare Conditions Group	170,000	67,762	<b>237,762</b>	233,859
	<u>2,870,667</u>	<u>105,922</u>	<u>2,976,589</u>	<u>2,910,340</u>

Under the Community Challenge programme Pears Foundation and the Department of Culture, Media and Sport funded grants to small parent carer support groups such as rare conditions groups and Parent Carer Forums.

Grant funding to enable the strategic involvement of parent carers in local area strategic decision making & policy development.

Parent Carer Forum (PCF). Throughout the year, 2024: 157 (2023: 156) organisations received full or partial grants totalling £2,700,667 (2023: £2,635,543 net of £40,938 support costs).

Rare Conditions: Throughout the year, 2024: 20 (2023: 20) organisations received full or partial grants totalling 2024: 170,000 (2023: £178,500 net of £55,359 support cost). No group received more than £8.5k, and these are within direct costs in note 5.

7 Net income / (expenditure) for the year

This is stated after charging:

	2024 £	2023 £
Depreciation	<b>11,268</b>	2,080
Operating lease rentals:		
Property	<b>62,202</b>	82,187
Other	<b>31,183</b>	105,983
Auditor's remuneration (excluding VAT):		
Audit	<b>18,800</b>	15,020
Other services	<b>3,300</b>	3,100

8 Analysis of staff costs, trustee remuneration and expenses, and the cost of key management personnel

Staff costs were as follows:

	2024 £	2023 £
Salaries and wages	<b>3,065,179</b>	2,948,266
Social security costs	<b>302,482</b>	302,216
Employer's contribution to defined contribution pension schemes	<b>97,714</b>	94,587
	<u><b>3,465,375</b></u>	<u>3,345,069</u>

The following number of employees received employee benefits (excluding employer pension costs) during the year between:

	2024 No.	2023 No.
£60,000 – £69,999	<b>1</b>	2
£70,000 – £79,999	<b>3</b>	–
£80,000 – £89,999	–	–
£90,000 – £99,999	–	1
> £100,000	–	–

The total employee benefits including pension contributions of the key management personnel were £428,946 (2023: £437,895). Redundancy costs were £10,698 (2023: £3,448).

Interim Directors of Finance and Resources were appointed during the year. The total cost of the related agency spend was £85,129 (2023: 23,265).

The charity trustees were not paid or received any other benefits from employment with the charity in the year (2023: £nil). No charity trustee received payment for professional or other services supplied to the charity (2023:£nil). Charity trustees are covered by indemnity insurance.

Trustees' expenses represents the cost of travel and subsistence totalling £884 (2023: £553) incurred by three (2023: three) members relating to attendance at meetings of the trustees.

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2024

9 Staff numbers

The average number of employees (head count based on number of staff employed) during the year was as follows:

	2024 No.	2023 No.
Raising funds	6	7
Supporting Families Locally	40	41
Supporting Families – Central	20	21
Policy and Communications	7	7
Bringing Families Together	18	17
Support	6	5
Governance	2	2
	<b>99</b>	<b>100</b>

10 Related party transactions

Contact received donations totalling £1,000 (2023: £3,000) from one trustees (2023: four). The trustees receive no benefit from donations made to the charity. There are no other related party transactions to disclose for 2024 (2023: none).

11 Taxation

The charitable company is exempt from corporation tax as all its income is charitable and is applied for charitable purposes.

12 Tangible fixed assets

	Fixtures, fittings and equipment, software development £	Total £
Cost or valuation		
At the start of the year	33,803	<b>33,803</b>
At the end of the year	<b>33,803</b>	<b>33,803</b>
Depreciation		
At the start of the year	2,080	<b>2,080</b>
Charge for the year	11,268	<b>11,268</b>
At the end of the year	<b>13,348</b>	<b>13,348</b>
Net book value		
At the end of the year	<b>20,455</b>	<b>20,455</b>
At the start of the year	<b>31,723</b>	<b>31,723</b>

## Notes to the financial statements

## For the year ended 31 March 2024

## 13 Listed investments

	2024 £	2023 £
Fair value at the start of the year	3,806,709	4,006,465
Additions at cost	–	–
Disposal proceeds	–	–
Net gain / (loss) on change in fair value	374,003	(199,756)
	<b>4,180,712</b>	<b>3,806,709</b>
Fair value at the end of the year	<b>4,180,712</b>	<b>3,806,709</b>

Investments comprise:

	2024 £	2023 £
UK Common investment funds	4,180,712	3,806,709
	<b>4,180,712</b>	<b>3,806,709</b>

Following the disposal of the City Road property, cash from the sale was transferred into investments.

## 14 Debtors

	2024 £	2023 £
Trade debtors	436,314	593,788
Other debtors	28,862	27,376
Prepayments	41,411	42,324
Accrued income	235,927	137,477
	<b>742,515</b>	<b>800,965</b>

## 15 Creditors: amounts falling due within one year

	2024 £	2023 £
Trade creditors	168,242	214,155
Taxation and social security	144,843	125,205
Other creditors	69,118	76,488
Accruals	142,512	130,552
Deferred income	91,421	218,649
	<b>616,136</b>	<b>765,049</b>

## 16 Deferred income

	2024 £	2023 £
Balance at the beginning of the year	218,649	344,250
Amount released to income in the year	(218,649)	(344,250)
Amount deferred in the year	91,421	218,649
Balance at the end of the year	<b>91,421</b>	<b>218,649</b>

## 17a Analysis of net assets between funds (current year)

	General unrestricted £	Restricted £	Total funds £
Tangible fixed assets	20,455	–	20,455
Listed investments	4,180,712	–	4,180,712
Net current assets	912,729	578,157	1,490,885
Net assets at the end of the year	<b>5,113,896</b>	<b>578,157</b>	<b>5,692,053</b>

## 17b Analysis of net assets between funds (prior year)

	General unrestricted £	Restricted £	Total funds £
Tangible fixed assets	31,723	–	31,723
Listed investments	3,806,709	–	3,806,709
Net current assets	1,074,497	428,226	1,502,723
Net assets at the end of the year	<b>4,912,929</b>	<b>428,226</b>	<b>5,341,155</b>

## Notes to the financial statements

## For the year ended 31 March 2024

## 18a Movements in funds (current year)

	At the start of the year £	Income and gains £	Expenditure and losses £	Transfers £	At the end of the year £
<b>Restricted funds:</b>					
Core funding for Scotland	-	85,050	(97,099)	12,049	-
Core funding for Northern Ireland	-	11,663	(36,168)	24,504	-
Supporting families in Ealing	11,266	262,671	(256,415)	-	17,522
Supporting families in Wimbledon	-	11,323	(9,367)	-	1,956
Supporting families in Lambeth	-	8,840	(4,247)	-	4,593
Alder Hey	-	61,770	(36,540)	-	25,230
NHS England	-	67,999	(30,389)	-	37,610
Better Together	-	11,801	(11,801)	-	-
Motability	-	89,196	(6,976)	-	82,220
City Bridge Trust	-	75,550	(67,912)	-	7,638
Autism in Schools project	-	10,800	(5,444)	-	5,356
Hemihelp	30,080	24,849	(41,478)	56,200	69,651
Welfare rights helpline	23,578	74,500	(85,700)	-	12,378
Early years SEN and disabilities	-	90,782	(90,782)	-	-
Brighter Beginnings	82,519	94,633	(116,245)	-	60,907
Wales Family Events	250	25,000	(24,291)	-	959
Rare Conditions	3,322	24,300	(27,538)	-	84
Covid Response	6,832	-	(6,832)	-	-
Listening Ear	-	16,080	(5,692)	-	10,388
Pears/ DCMS Grants	24,641	250,000	(239,672)	-	34,969
-Strengthening support networks (Wales)	4,803	4,000	(8,803)	-	-
NI Preparing for Transition – National Lottery CF NI	8,135	91,528	(96,020)	-	3,643
By your side	18,051	57,800	(75,499)	-	352
DFE Parent Carers Grants	-	2,702,203	(2,642,440)	(59,763)	-
DfE parent carer forum grants	-	-	-	-	-
- Contact-led forums	49,935	28,961	(97,160)	59,763	41,499
South Tees & Darlington Family Support	38,671	-	(8,765)	-	29,906
Wellbeing Project Wales	3,820	1,000	(125)	-	4,695
Lambeth Parent Carer Forum	13,601	15,333	(13,006)	-	15,928
Scotland	2,661	17,500	(20,161)	-	-
Policy	72,901	65,000	(83,683)	-	54,218
Other funds Digital	1	-	-	-	1
Other funds Northern Ireland	3,739	39,098	(27,929)	-	14,908
Volunteering	29,420	40,000	(27,875)	-	41,545
<b>Total restricted funds</b>	<b>428,226</b>	<b>4,359,231</b>	<b>(4,302,053)</b>	<b>92,753</b>	<b>578,157</b>
Designated Fund	3,543,398	-	-	(97,979)	3,445,419
General funds	1,369,531	5,360,052	(5,066,332)	5,226	1,668,477
<b>Total unrestricted funds</b>	<b>4,912,929</b>	<b>5,360,052</b>	<b>(5,066,332)</b>	<b>(92,753)</b>	<b>5,113,896</b>
<b>Total funds</b>	<b>5,341,155</b>	<b>9,719,283</b>	<b>(9,368,385)</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>5,692,053</b>

## Purpose of Designated Funds

				£
Property Fund	2,500,000	-	-	2,500,000
Income diversification	643,398	-	181,667	461,731
Service continuity & expansion	400,000	-	99,312	300,688
Organisational development and infrastructure	-	183,000	-	183,000
				<u>3,445,419</u>

## Property Fund

The fund was set aside to invest in a smaller replacement office property following the sale of the former office premises.

The requirements for office space in the medium to long term are currently being assessed in the context of the organisational development and investment strategies of the Charity.

## Income Diversification

Funds have been designated to invest in the development and implementation of the Contact lottery and new acquisition methods for regular givers. There has also been investment in the development of a legacy programme, and in digital marketing initiatives. The current and future financial year will see investment in the development of the new strategy for the organisation, including brand review and impact measurement.

## Service continuity &amp; expansion

Funds have been designated to continue to build capacity to support families with high levels of complexity and stress.

There has also been investment in strengthening information, advice and support for families in the devolved nations, and to operate a bridging fund to protect continuity of key services such as By Your Side, Listening Ear and Brighter Beginnings / Early Years whilst future funding arrangements are considered.

## Notes to the financial statements

## For the year ended 31 March 2024

## 18a Movements in funds (current year) continued

Organisational development and infrastructure

During the financial year a further £183,000 of funds were designated to invest in organisational development initiatives and infrastructure projects, to support the strategic development and implementation process.

## 18b Movement in funds (prior year)

	At the start of the year £	Income and gains £	Expenditure and losses £	Transfers £	At the end of the year £
<b>Restricted funds:</b>					
Core funding for Scotland	-	100,268	(100,268)	-	-
Core funding for Northern Ireland	5,218	23,327	(28,545)	-	-
Supporting families in Ealing	177,947	78,910	(245,591)	-	11,266
Wellbeing	33	-	(33)	-	-
Fledglings	-	53,573	(53,573)	-	-
Hemihelp	27,107	31,597	(28,624)	-	30,080
Welfare rights helpline	45,516	73,700	(95,638)	-	23,578
Early years SEN and disabilities	-	116,078	(116,078)	-	-
Brighter Beginnings	175,829	43,614	(136,524)	-	82,919
Wales Family Events	-	250	-	-	250
Rare Conditions	7,143	27,500	(31,321)	-	3,322
Covid Response	5,110	3,000	(1,278)	-	6,832
Listening Ear	3,720	45,324	(49,044)	-	-
Pears/ DCMS Grants	-	258,500	(233,859)	-	24,641
-Strengthening support networks (Wales)	14,519	96,199	(105,915)	-	4,803
NI Preparing for Transition – National Lottery CF NI	22,545	81,462	(95,872)	-	8,135
By your side	56,718	61,458	(100,125)	-	18,051
DFE Parent Carers Grants	-	2,676,481	(2,498,340)	(178,141)	-
– Contact-led forums	33,792	-	(161,998)	178,141	49,935
South Tees & Darlington Family Support	46,798	-	(8,127)	-	38,671
Wellbeing Project Wales	-	7,908	(4,088)	-	3,820
Lambeth Parent Carer Forum	3,468	45,916	(35,783)	-	13,601
Scotland	-	26,500	(24,239)	-	2,261
Policy	70,639	100,000	(97,738)	-	72,901
Other funds Digital	57,597	50,203	(107,799)	-	1
Other funds Northern Ireland	8,232	-	(4,493)	-	3,739
Volunteering	-	30,000	(580)	-	29,420
Lewisham Neighbourhood Community Infrastructure	-	49,873	(49,873)	-	-
<b>Total restricted funds</b>	<b>761,931</b>	<b>4,081,641</b>	<b>(4,415,346)</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>428,226</b>
Designated Fund	4,383,123	-	(239,725)	(600,000)	3,543,398
General funds	1,105,530	4,416,302	(4,752,301)	600,000	1,369,531
<b>Total unrestricted funds</b>	<b>5,488,653</b>	<b>4,416,302</b>	<b>(4,992,026)</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>4,912,929</b>
<b>Total funds</b>	<b>6,250,584</b>	<b>8,497,943</b>	<b>(9,407,372)</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>5,341,155</b>
<b>Purpose of Designated Funds</b>					
Property Fund					£ 2,500,000
Income diversification					643,398
Working capital risk					-
Service continuity & expansion					400,000
					<u>3,543,398</u>

## 19 Reconciliation of net income / (expenditure) to net cash flow from operating activities

	2024 £	2023 £
Net income / (expenditure) for the reporting period (as per the statement of financial activities)	(23,104)	(709,673)
Depreciation charges	11,268	2,080
Dividends, interest and rent from investments	(129,359)	(122,447)
(Increase)/decrease in stocks	4,594	19,464
(Increase)/decrease in debtors	58,450	91,827
Increase/(decrease) in creditors	(148,913)	(61,745)
<b>Net cash provided by / (used in) operating activities</b>	<b>(227,065)</b>	<b>(780,494)</b>

**20 Operating lease commitments payable as a lessee**

The charity's total future minimum lease payments under non-cancellable operating leases are as follows for each of the following periods

	Property		Equipment	
	2024	2023	2024	2023
	£	£	£	£
Less than one year	64,068	61,393	–	17,270
One to five years	46,965	103,140	–	–
	<u>111,033</u>	<u>164,533</u>	<u>–</u>	<u>17,270</u>

**21 Contingent Asset**

In February 2022 Contact were informed a legacy. The legacy was dependant on the sale of a property, and was noted as a contingent asset for the financial year ending 31 March 2023 at an estimated value of £400,000. In March 2024 Contact received £366,000 as an unrestricted legacy following the completion of the property sale.

**22 Legal status of the charity**

The charity is a company limited by guarantee and has no share capital. The liability of each member in the event of winding up is limited to £1.