



Clifton Children's Society
A Company Limited by Guarantee
Report and Financial Statements
For the Year Ended 31 March 2023

Charity No: 286814

Company No: 01655971



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Trustees' Report

The Trustees present their report together with the financial statements of the charity for the year ended 31 March 2023.

The names of the Trustees (who are directors for the purpose of company law and Trustees for the purpose of charity law) who served during the year and at the date of this report are set out on page 30.

Governing document

The Clifton Children's Society was founded in 1904 and incorporated as a charitable company limited by guarantee on 2 August 1982 and registered as a charity on 12 April 1983. The company was established under Memorandum of Association which set the objects and powers of the Clifton Children's Society and is governed under its Articles of Association. These were amended by special resolution on 8 April 1997, 14 October 1997, 24 August 2000, 28 September 2006, and 5 June 2008. In the event of the company being wound up the members are required to contribute an amount not exceeding £1 each.

On 1st April 2018, the assets and activities of The Centre for Adoption Support and Education (charity number 1153616) were transferred to the Organisation. The Organisation continues the post adoption support work of The Centre. The special resolutions putting this into effect are dated 12 March 2018.

Recruitment and appointment of Trustees

The number of Trustees shall not be less than five but (unless otherwise determined by ordinary resolution) shall be subject to a maximum of 15. At each Annual General Meeting, one-fifth (or the number nearest to one fifth) of the Trustees shall retire from office, those longest in office retiring first and the choice between any of equal service being made by drawing lots.

If at the meeting at which a Trustee retires by rotation, the vacancy is not filled, the retiring Trustee shall, if willing to act, be deemed to have been reappointed unless at the meeting it is resolved not to fill the vacancy or unless a resolution for the reappointment of the Trustee is put to the meeting and lost.

No person other than a Trustee retiring by rotation shall be appointed or reappointed a Trustee at any general meeting unless recommended by the Trustees.

The Trustees provide a broad range of skills. The range of skills offered and needed is regularly reviewed. A Trustee skills audit took place during 2021/22 with a view to assessing the range of experience and skills within the team and identifying any gaps. The audit focussed on the qualities needed for current operations and strategy. Following the audit, a decision was made to recruit a Treasurer Trustee to bring more accountancy and finance expertise to the Board. In support of this exercise and to provide a comprehensive and concise introduction to the organisation, a Trustee Recruitment Pack was developed. The new Treasurer was appointed on 24 February 2022.

A diversity audit of Trustees took place at the same time as the skills audit. The Trustees are keen to ensure they have a Board that is made up of people with different professional expertise, perspectives, and life experiences, recognising that diverse teams have been shown to make better decisions and are more likely to innovate. The results of this audit will be considered during any future recruitment campaigns. It is likely that in 2023 further Trustees will be recruited.

Trustee induction and training

Potential new Trustees attend meetings as observers to familiarise themselves with the Clifton Children's Society. If appointed as a Trustee, they undergo a formal period of induction and training on charity law and governance. In 2017/18 the Trustees and CEO held two developmental workshops which reviewed and shaped the Trustee's roles and responsibilities as members of the Board, and the organisational strategy going forward. Trustees act in accordance with the Clifton Children's Society's code of conduct. Further opportunities for the Trustees to meet outside of the Trustee meetings will be arranged for 2023, to give the space for the board to look at their development and functioning.

Organisation

The Legal and Administrative Information set out on page 30 forms part of this report.

The Trustees manage and direct the Clifton Children's Society's work and meet five times per year. Working groups of Trustees are convened to consider specific issues as needed. The Board has agreed a schedule of delegated authority to the Chief Executive Officer, Emma Simpson (started as interim CEO in April 2022 and permanent CEO in August 2022) who has overall responsibility for the strategic and operational delivery of the work undertaken by Clifton Children's Society.

Objects of the Charity

The Trustees confirm that they have given due consideration to guidance published by the Charity Commission and that the Public Benefit requirements are met. The object of the Clifton Children's Society is to benefit the public through the promotion of the relief of poverty and the welfare of children in need from all backgrounds, cultures, and all faiths or none by:

- Furthering their appropriate care and safety.
- Providing assistance and support to them, their families, and carers.
- Advancing their physical, mental, social, emotional, and spiritual development, respecting their racial, cultural, and spiritual heritage, so that they may grow to full maturity as individuals and members of society.

Vision

A world where every child grows up in a safe loving family.

Activities

Clifton Children's Society (trading as CCS Adoption or 'CCS') is an independently funded, registered charity and Adoption Agency (Voluntary Adoption Agency or 'VAA'). The Organisation works to the highest standards to maintain its strong reputation of putting people and relationships at the heart of what it does, evidenced as an Ofsted 'Outstanding' rated Agency consistently since 2009 (last inspection 2019).

In 2018, the Organisation brought together its existing adoption service, with The Centre for Adoption Support & Education ("The Centre"), allowing us to strengthen, broaden and expand the post Adoption support the Organisation offers families.

The Organisation has continued to concentrate on Adoption work as its method of meeting its objects by building a positive future for children. The ongoing evidence of poor outcomes for children raised in public care confirms the importance of the work undertaken and the public benefit in finding permanent families for children through adoption. Research evidence confirms that children who are raised in adoptive families have better outcomes in the quality of their adult

life than those remaining in public care. The clear public benefit is that these outcomes are a cost-effective use of public funds.

Link to latest research which evidences the value of adoption to society:
<https://cvaa.org.uk/cvaa-publishes-independent-analysis-on-the-value-adoption-brings-to-children-families-and-wider-society/>

The Organisation aims to provide high quality, independent and professional Adoption services recognising the lifelong impact of adoption. CCS works to find and support a wide range of adoptive families for children who need them, with a strong commitment to promote Early Permanency through concurrency and foster-to-adopt placements, which allow for a child joining their potential adoptive family much sooner, thus avoiding delay for children.

CCS offers a comprehensive Adoption service that includes recruiting, training, assessing, and approving adopters, and undertaking family finding activities to create adoptive families. Supporting the child and family throughout the adoption process and offering lifelong Adoption Support as well as providing a Clinical Therapeutic Service. CCS continues to offer a Birth Records and counselling service to adopted people and their birth relatives. These services are offered to children and adults regardless of personal background, faith, gender, ethnicity, culture, or disability. One of the Organisation's values and principals is working in a climate of acceptance and inclusivity and is therefore open to meeting the needs of all adopted children irrespective of their histories and background.

The Organisation is keen to promote partnership collaborating with other stakeholder groups including Local Authorities, Regional Adoption Agencies (RAA), and Education and Health services all within the South West region.

Values

The merger of the Clifton Children's Society and The Centre for Education and Adoption Support in 2017/18 provided the catalyst for Clifton Children's Society to review the purpose and values of the newly combined Organisation, building a strong plan for the future. The Trustees and CEO met for this purpose on 30 April and 24 May 2018, and agreed:

Its core purpose and the driving force behind everything the Organisation does, will be to *"create a positive future for children, by building families and enabling them to grow and thrive."*

To support its purpose, the Organisation will focus and measure itself against four core values and principles:

- **Child Centric** – We will always put the needs of the child first through everything we do.
- **Accepting & Inclusive** – We will be accepting of all and champion inclusivity.
- **Leading & Pioneering** – We will maximise our creativity to pioneer and lead on issues that are close to our heart.
- **Responsible & Sustainable** – We will run our Organisation in a responsible and sustainable way, to ensure the longevity and security for our families.

Adoption, Recruitment & Support

There has been a decrease in the number of enquiries from 232 in 2021/22 to 223. This is due to the continuing competitive market of choices for prospective adopters, particularly with online, accessible information events that have a wider reach across the region. The need to be transparent about the children CCS are being considered for has resulted in people choosing the local RAA for their assessment, especially when they are looking for younger single children.

Social Media continues to be the main marketing platform for attracting prospective adopters. CCS had a significant increase in engagement in January 2023, to the rest of the financial year. This year CCS held 13 information events which were delivered both face to face and online until September 2022, when CCS made the decision to keep all events online, in line with other agencies. These included:

- Two LGBTQ+ events,
- A BAME (Black, Asian and minority ethnic) specific recruitment event.

These have been positive events with an average of 12 households attending each (2021/22 - 9) - 142 in total (2021/22 - 153). The average has gone up from last year and this is because CCS ran fewer events over the year following research undertaken the previous year researching whether CCS should move to more in person events or keep them online. The overall number of attendees has dropped slightly. There continues to be a theme about enquirers presenting with more of their own personal complexities and other VAA's are reporting a similar theme. CCS has also continued to see, following on from 2021/22, a number of attendees who have attended events with the RAA or have submitted an REI (Registration of Expression of Interest) to be told they will be placed on a waiting list. This has resulted in more adopters coming to CCS who are not considering the children CCS are looking to find families for (Priority Children).

This led to 15 prospective adoptive households submitting an REI to formally begin the adoption process (2021/22 - 24), of which 14 were accepted into Stage 1 (2021/22 - 24). CCS also conducted 24 post information day meetings (PICI's) with potential adopters prior to them joining stage one of the process (2021/22, 29).

CCS held the following training in 2021/22:

- 5 Introduction to Adoption Days for adopters (2021/22 - 5)
- 16 Preparation Days for adopters (2021/22 - 16)
- 6 Friends and Family Workshops (2021/22 - 6)
- 5 Safer Care evening sessions (2021/22 - 5)
- 5 Early Permanence Introduction sessions, and (2021/22 - 4)
- 4 Therapeutic Parent Training days (2021/22 - 3)
- 5 Linking and Matching workshops (2021/22 - 5)
- 2 Adopting with an existing child (2021/22 - 2)

All training courses and materials were adapted to be delivered online during the pandemic; however, since the start of 2022 CCS has gradually moved much of this training back to in person. This has included the flexibility to deliver hybrid training where there are both attendees in the room and online. This was introduced to maintain number of attendees benefitting from training should some attendees be unwell or must isolate due to COVID-19. The return of the preparation training to in-person delivery has been extremely positive. It remains part of the plan that some courses may continue to be delivered online such as the Friends and Family Workshop which, through this method of delivery, can reach family members who live all over the world.

CCS Adopter Training feedback

Day 1

6.25 hours (incl. breaks) face to face training, facilitated by CCS training officer (an adoptive parent) and CCS Head of Adoption. During the 18 months surveyed, some training took place online due to COVID-19 restrictions. **85% of respondents attending Day 1 training rated the session 9/10 or higher, with 91% of that group rated the training 10/10.** The lowest score given for Day 1 during the 18-month period surveyed was 8/10.

Attendees said:

"The whole training session was brilliant. I found the wall activity really memorable, and something that I will keep reflecting on. It felt like such a privilege to hear from someone who had recently adopted her two daughters, and I found her story really useful in thinking about the significance of the foster family. I also really enjoyed the breakout sessions which allowed us to get to know the other people in our cohort."

Day 2

6.25 hours (incl. breaks) face to face training, facilitated by CCS training officer and social worker/social worker assistant. During the 18 months surveyed, some training took place online due to COVID-19 restrictions. **83% of respondents attending Day 2 training rated the session 9/10 or higher, with 73% of that group the training 10/10.** The lowest score given for Day 2 during the 18-month period surveyed was 8/10.

Attendees said:

"I wasn't sure what to expect from this training but the knowledge we have brought home with us is so valuable. Jane our trainer had so much knowledge and also having Becky there to share her experience was just amazing. We look forward to many more sessions."

"Although this training was very hard hitting and did make me think about my life as a child, I found Jane to be very empathetic and kind full of information and I took a lot away from this training day."

Day 3

6.25 hours (incl. breaks) face to face training, facilitated by CCS training officer and social worker/social worker assistant. During the 18 months surveyed, some training took place online due to COVID-19 restrictions. **78% of respondents attending Day 3 training rated the session 9/10 or higher, with 70% of that group rating the training 10/10.** The lowest score given for Day 3 during the 18-month period surveyed was 7/10.

Attendees said:

"The work around the film, A Home for Maisie, gave us a real insight in the day-to-day struggles of an adopted child, emotional and therapeutic needs, attachment difficulties, but also an insight into parenting - learning both what seemed to work well, but also what doesn't work, or could be avoided. It gave us so much food for thought and discussion. But also, we felt excited by the challenge and inspired by the impact adoptive parents can have on the life of a child who otherwise could remain in care."

Day 4

6.25 hours (incl. breaks) face to face training, facilitated by CCS training officer and social worker/social worker assistant. During the 18 months surveyed, some training took place online due to COVID-19 restrictions. **82% of respondents attending Day 4 training rated the session 9/10 or higher, with 69% of those rating the training 10/10.** The lowest score given for Day 4 during the 18-month period surveyed was 7/10.

Attendees said:

"As always, the topics/material covered was very useful and thought provoking in areas for our own further research too. We found day 3 to be heavier than day 4 but both gave us lots of new information."

"Considering the training has some very difficult and heavy aspects, Jane did a wonderful job at covering these topics in a measured and calm way."

Early permanence (EP) information session

3 hours (incl. breaks) online training, facilitated by CCS training officer. **87% of respondents attending EP information training rated the session 8/10 or higher.** The lowest score given for EP training during the 18-month period surveyed was 7/10.

Attendees said:

"Myself and my wife were not sure what EP was but after the training we have taken so much away and have a really good understanding. Another great training session from Jane."

"It really helped to understand the impact of EP on the child and make them the focus, as well as start to understand the disruption it can cause the adopters and how to cope with that. I've really learnt from this how important this can be in improving the child attachments."

Safer Care

3 hours (incl. breaks) face to face training, facilitated by CCS training officer and social worker assistant. During the 18 months surveyed, some training took place online due to COVID-19 restrictions. **91% of respondents attending Safer Care training rated the session 9/10 or higher, with 82% of those rating the training 10/10.** The lowest score given for Safer Care training during the 18-month period surveyed was 7/10.

Attendees said:

"I think the evening session about Safer Care was really informative and an eye opener on how small things of affection could be perceived differently from the child, depending on where you are on your adoption journey after the child has been placed with you. The exercise was really helpful as well as we got to debate and see other people's opinion and how they would deal in a similar situation."

"The physical exercise was eye opening and makes you really think about situations in more depth. Definitely a good lesson to learn. Thank you, CCS."

Linking & Matching

1.5 hours online training, facilitated by CCS training officer and social worker. Over the 18 months surveyed, **83% of respondents attending Linking & Matching training rated the session 8/10 or higher.** The lowest score given for Linking & Matching during the 18-month period surveyed was 7/10.

Attendees said:

"It was a very practical session ... so that gave us a much clearer understanding of what we'll actually need to do and think about. It was a really good session."

Therapeutic parenting

4 hours (incl. breaks) now face to face training, facilitated by CCS training officer and social worker. During the six months surveyed (June 22 to December 22), the training was online. **100% of the five respondents who attended Therapeutic training rated the session 10/10.**

Attendees said:

"Really thought-provoking, valuable training again - thanks Jane! Having the opportunity to chat in the breakout room was good as a way of replicating some of the interactions that we would have if the training were done in-person."

Family & Friends

4 hours (incl. breaks) online training, facilitated by CCS training officer and social worker/social worker assistant. Over the 18 months surveyed, **83% of respondents attending Family & Friends training rated the session 8/10 or higher, with 80% of those rating the training**

9/10 or higher. The lowest score given for Family & Friends training during the 18-month period surveyed was 6/10.

Attendees said:

"The session was incredibly useful. It was great to have the opportunity to formally learn about what my friends are embarking on. Lots of useful information, expertly taught. I also found it very moving and Jane's honesty about her family really helped to embed some of the information. I was glad that there was helpful information about first meetings as that is something I'm keen to get right. I thought the session was very professionally delivered and extremely useful. Jane and Julie seemed fantastic at their jobs. Thank you so much for letting me join."

Adopting with existing siblings

4 hours (incl. breaks) online training, facilitated by CCS training officer and social work.

Panel

During the year, CCS approved 19 families as 'suitable to adopt' against a target of 24 families (2021/22 - 17 approved), and 21 children were placed with families for adoption against a target of 26 (2021/22 - 24 placed). The number of children placed during the year was unexpected and lower than anticipated and significantly lower than CCS had capacity to place. The previous year CCS had experienced a drop in the number of siblings placed, whereas this financial year was much more in line with what was expected.

Throughout 2021/22 the impact of the Practice & Improvement Fund (PIF) project's Early Permanence (EP) training programme and the RAA restructuring has continued to have an impact on the demand for CCS EP placements. This has resulted in CCS advising applicants that if they wish to primarily be considered for EP, they will be waiting for a much longer time if they are approved through CCS. The consequence has been that much lower numbers of adopters have been approved as suitable to take an EP placement, 15% in 2022/23 compared to 23.5% in 2021/22 period (44% in 2020/21). CCS placed one child under an early permanence arrangement in 2022/23 and this was because the foster placement was ending early, rather than as part of the child's plan.

The Adoption Panel, which is constituted in accordance with adoption regulations, meets monthly to approve adopters and provide independent scrutiny of CCS's adoption work. In 2020/21 in response to the pandemic the Adoption Panel moved to an online forum. Currently the plan is that these will remain online. The panel members met in person in November 2022 for training.

The Panel takes responsibility for making a recommendation on each case and determines whether all issues have been appropriately clarified. The Panel has an independent chair and a central list of independent members who have personal/professional experience of adoption. This includes the Agency Medical Adviser, social work professionals and a management representative. All Panel reports are read by the Agency Legal Adviser to quality assure an applicant's legal status to adopt. The Agency Decision Maker for Panel moved back to the CEO after her appointment, following this being held temporarily by Lindy Wootton (Early Permanence Manager), who was suitably qualified and experienced. This diverse group of people speak from a very informed perspective and provide vital scrutiny, quality assurance and validation of CCS's adoption work. Since July 2022, an independent ADM (Agency Decision Maker) has also been recruited to panel to enable this role to be shared and to cover periods of sickness and leave (Liz Pickering).

In total 19 new applications were presented to Panel to be approved as adoptive parents (17 – 2021/22) and all 19 (17 – 2021/22) were approved as 'suitable to adopt'. Nine sets of adopters

who had been approved for more than one year were reviewed because they had not yet been matched with children and remained approved. Two sets of adopters withdrew from the process, one following a disruption of placement.

Adopters' experience of Panel continues to receive positive feedback:

The Panel Chair did a great job at setting the tone and format for the meeting. She laid out how things would go and ensured we were introduced to everyone at the beginning of the meeting, so we understood their purpose.

The way it [panel] was done was great. Everyone introduced themselves, and those who were only viewing, turned off their cameras to make it more relaxed. The separate room link worked well, and feedback came quickly.

All adopters that attended and provided feedback found the experience to be valuable:

It is helpful to understand what the sticking points are - what the experienced panel want to check that you understand or how you feel. One question has led to us having more to think about.

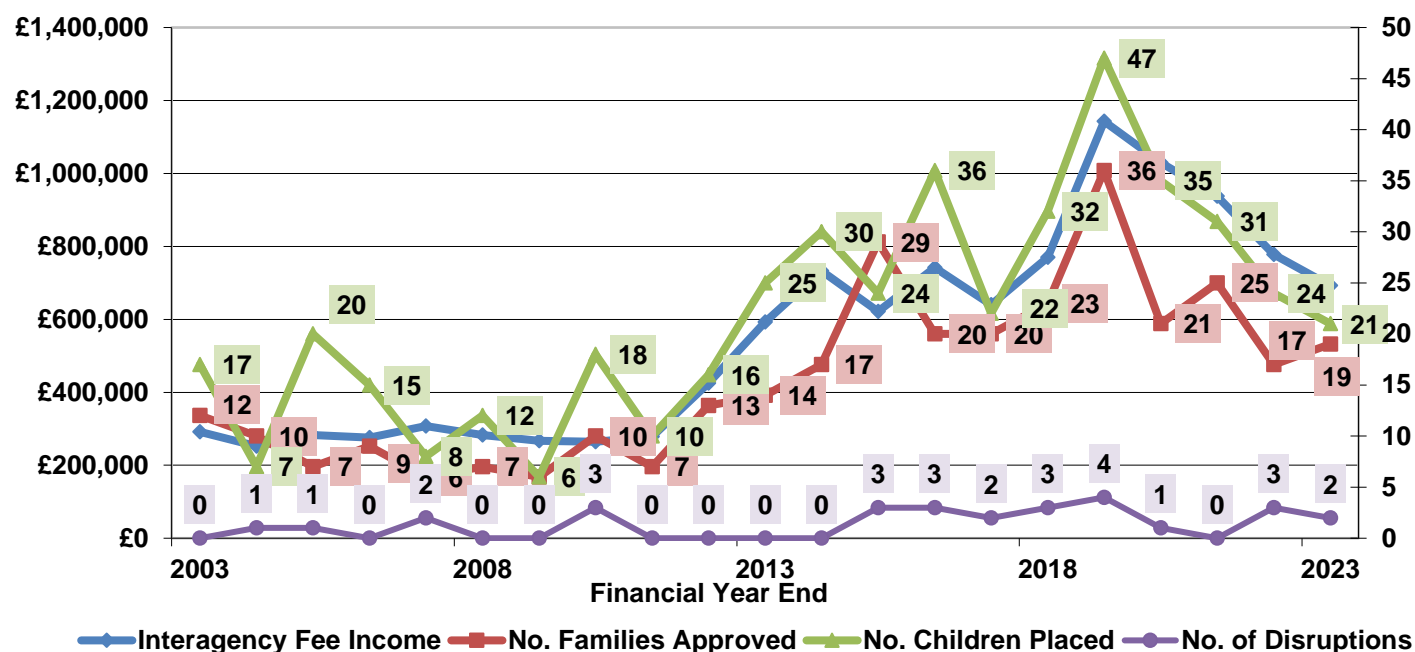
Despite being nervous before hand, yes, I would recommend others to attend. It provides an opportunity for direct engagement with those who are making a decision about you.

The feedback and support were important. The questions the panel had were specific to us e.g., "how will you deal with X" or "please tell us how Y came about". It allowed us to demonstrate to the panel that we support each other and have prepared for adoption.

CCS continues to specialise in recruiting adoptive families for 'priority children' i.e., sibling groups, older children, and children of colour. In 2022/23 CCS saw a rise in the number of sibling placements at CCS with 50% of adopters taking a brother and/or sister group. (2021/22 - 42%). CCS's percentage of LGBTQ+ adopters approved in the financial year is 43%, (2021/22 - 59%). Where BAME children have been placed 19% have one or more adoptive parent who are similar or the same ethnicity (2021/22, 14%).

CCS experienced one adoption disruption in the year 2022/23. This was as placement of two children who returned to foster care within a short period of time following placement.

CCS Adoption Recruitment and Placement Statistics



For all children placed since 1995 CCS's disruption rate is 5.7%; and the disruption rate for 2022/23 is 10.5% (2021/22–12.5%). The smaller number of placements results in the two disruptions (one for each child in the placement) present a much higher percentage than usual. A significant amount of support was provided to the most at-risk adoptive families to ensure that disruptions were minimised. This should be compared to the estimated national disruption rate of 4 -12% as indicated in Julie Selwyn's research in 2014:

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/301889/Final_Report_-_3rd_April_2014v2.pdf

The National adoption landscape over the past 12 months has continued to be impacted by the ongoing changes to planning for children. The independent review of Children's social care highlighted the need for more support to be given to placing children within their own birth family. While this left a gap in considering the needs of children where family placement is not a suitable option and this is yet to be addressed, the impact on care plans for children has been substantial. When combined with the Somerset ruling, the overall outcome has been that fewer children have had a plan for adoption and therefore the number of adoption placements needed has reduced.

Link to Somerset Ruling:

[Somerset ruling: Update briefing | CoramBAAF](#)

The social care review can be found here:

<https://esmeefairbairn.org.uk/latest-news/review-childrens-social-care-england-published/>

The Organisation offers lifelong support to adoptive families. All families, with whom CCS has placed children at any time, are supported through the Organisation's Adoption Support Services according to need.

The 21 children placed in 14 families in 2021/22 received intensive post-placement support, essential during the early stages of joining a new family (2020/21 - 24 children placed in 17 families). As at 31st March 2022, CCS was supporting 22 placements of children awaiting adoption orders (2021/22 - 21). The pandemic caused a significant delay in the courts and therefore Adoption Celebration Hearings were no longer viable, however this has seen a significant shift recently with the number reducing.

In total 110 families were supported on a regular basis during the year (120 - 2020/21), some of which would have been placed/had adoption orders in previous years. The support comes from the social workers, social work assistants, in collaboration with The Centre for Adoption Support and Education (see The Centre below).

From 19 enquiries in total (13 in 2021/22), 13 adopted adults received counselling and an Intermediary and Tracing service, although some of these were from enquiries received in the previous financial year. Over the last year, CCS has been able to offer a service to those waiting since Liz Hancock returned from maternity leave and took on many of these cases. CCS is currently holding a small waiting list, but it is anticipated that this will not be needed by the autumn. The Advice team and Admin are managing the flow of enquiries.

CCS Restructure:

During the financial year, CCS went through two restructure processes (summer 2022 and January 2023) which has resulted in a reduction in staffing across the charity. Over this period the adoption sector across the country experienced a significant drop in the number of children with adoption care plans, this has resulted in VAA's needing to restructure, downsize, consider diversification and in two cases, close (Families for children and Faith in Families). CCS had an interim CEO start in April 2022 and the first key task was to work with the staff and trustees to identify what changes needed to be made to ensure the future sustainability of the charity. Due to the reduction of work available for the charity a restructure was required but also the roles and responsibility of staff needed to be reorganised to ensure a more cohesive staffing group. As SMT and the trustees closely monitored the financial situation a further restructure was required in January 2023. Staff surveys were carried out throughout this year and results can be seen on pages 26-28 of this report, which despite the charity going through significant change, the staff reported improvements on the questions asked on nearly all measures. A decision was made to sell the charities fixed asset/property and move to rented offices. This is ongoing at the end of this financial year. With the post covid hybrid working practice now the norm and with reduced staffing, keeping the current property was not financially suitable and no longer met the needs of the organisation. A really positive office space has been identified, situated amongst other likeminded charities, with lots of additional facilities and at a reduced cost.

The team now has:

One adoption adviser-	19 hours
5 social workers-	3.8 FTE (Full-time equivalent)
2 Social Work Assistants	1.2 FTE
Head of Adoption	1 FTE

This is a significant change to the way the service looked 12 months ago when there were.

2 Practice Manager-	both FT
9 Social Workers-	7 FTE
2 Social Work Assistants	2 FTE
4 Adoption Advisers-	2 FTE
Head of Adoption –	Vacancy 0.9 FTE

This has been a period of change and development for the charity, with changes in staffing, offices and function. Needing to go through a period of change has encouraged the charity to question what resources it uses and how it functions, which has resulted in some refreshing new ways of working. Staff now access CATCH online training (Children & Trauma Community Hub | Learning & Support | CATCH (catchconnect.org)), and the Centre adoption support services are delivered in partnerships with many more organisations rather than in isolation by just CCS, as just two examples. The team have continued to provide an excellent service to families as well as adjusting the way CCS provide these services in line with the reduction in staffing and the change in the adoption landscape.

Following the re structure of CCS as mentioned in the report, the Trustees acknowledge that there has been a period of instability due to the change in the adoption landscape plus the after effects of Covid. The lessons that the Trustees learnt is to be aware of the need to insure that expenditure is controlled within the resources available to the organisation. This has been achieved by close monitoring of the financial performance of the charity and with realistic forecasts and projections over the next 2/3 years. This will also involve being closely aware of the future trends in the adoption process and how this affects CCS and the VAA's generally.

The Trustees are confident, having taken these measures, of organisational change and with the sale of the freehold property and subsequent move to smaller rented accommodation that the financial future of CCS is more sustainable. The Board are determined that with prudent monitoring and control CCS can move forward and continue providing valuable services in supporting children and families in the field of adoption.

The Centre for Adoption Support and Education

The Centre for Adoption Support and Education (The Centre) provides a comprehensive range of specialist post adoption support for children and families. This group support is available for both CCS's adoptive families and those who have adopted with other agencies in the region. Services are provided from the very beginning of their adoption journey, for as long as they need it. Services include support for pre-school children, primary age children, teenagers, parents, and families as well as online courses, workshops and webinars for parents and professionals.

The following services were provided:

Tots Group: The toddler group offers children an important opportunity to play in a safe environment with other adopted children whilst their parents get the chance to make connections with other adoptive families. The main aim of the sessions is to promote and enable attachment through play using a varied range of play activities and themes including music, books, arts/crafts, and cooking, as well as free time to play with toys and explore their world. Experienced Theraplay trained staff help to develop the children's social and emotional needs at the same time as valuing and supporting the significant relationship between them and their parent/s. The sessions run three mornings per week, term time only. During 2022/23 a total of **35 families benefitted** from a place.

- Feedback included *"My attachment with both girls was minimal when we started the group, but it has completely flourished over the past year and the tots' group has been a big part of this. My confidence in being a parent has greatly improved too."*

Prime and A-Team Programmes: A regular programme of activities for young people aged 6-18 years to participate in events with specific content. This included Horsecworld Discovery Programmes, Empire Fighting Chance Boxing Therapy, Bristol Beacon Music Programmes. 36 children have benefited from these extended programmes demonstrating a positive 56% increase from 2021/22.

- Feedback from the young people included: *"They have given her something positive to talk about as she does not experience being successful at things very often particularly in school. She also learnt to work with another child and have some scaffolding to help with negotiations when neither wanted to back down. She was able to have a shared experience with other children so when she has met them subsequently, she has been able to initiate playing together. She has fully engaged with the manual tasks and put a lot of effort into working hard, which was not expected. I think she also felt accepted by the staff and was able to be herself."*

Mums Group: A support group for adoptive mums to talk with others who understand the complexities and challenges faced around adoption. Sessions are monthly, during the evening and facilitated by an Adoption Support Therapist. These ceased in September 2022, as the facilitator left CCS, and a consultation event was held in November 2022 to ascertain the best way forward to relaunch this service in line with the impact model.

Numbers decreased slightly in this financial year with a total of 17 adoptive mums benefitting from attending the group over a six-month period.

- Feedback included: *"A place to feel normal and not alone. The ability to cope when it's been so hard in a safe space to say unsafe stuff. A place for sharing of experiences and learning from each other in a supportive, non-judgemental environment full of warmth."*

Dads Group: An opportunity for adoptive Dads to share and talk about particular issues, to hear the thoughts of others and discuss strategies. Sessions are monthly, during the evening and facilitated by an Adoption Support Therapist. These ceased in September 2022, as the facilitator left CCS, and a consultation event was held in November 2022 to ascertain the best way forward to relaunch this service in line with the impact model. A total of 15 adoptive dads benefitted from these sessions over a 6-month period.

- Feedback included: *"Feeling like you're not alone and other people are going through similar experiences so you can focus on the positive and know there's always hope."*

LGBTQ+ Coffee Mornings: An award-winning social group for anyone who has started their adoption journey with any agency. Families and prospective adopters meet once per month on a Saturday morning. A total of 25 families have benefitted from this service.

- Feedback included: *"The coffee mornings have been an incredible support for us throughout our adoption journey. It's now a solid part of our monthly routine and we rarely miss one. It's amazing to have a safe space dedicated to children and their LGBTQ+ adoptive parents alike - something that's rare and very special. Within just over per year, we've made some great friends who we're proud and so happy to say are now part of our support network. Thank you for running such a brilliant group -*

we hope it will continue so that future adopted children and their LGBTQ+ adopters can benefit as we have."

Single Adopter Catch-Up: This service (introduced in August 2020) gives single adopters the opportunity to meet for an informal chat about family life, managing wellbeing and the day-to-day challenges that come with being a single adoptive parent. Virtual sessions were offered monthly, and numbers have remained consistent with 10 families benefitting from the service, the same figure as 2021/22.

- Feedback included *"Having a specific single adopters' group is essential. Our issues are different - we can't 'tag team' and need different strategies. Income is often very low - it's a different scene from 2 parent adoption."*

Support Through Early Permanence (STEP): A group for current, past, or imminently prospective Early Permanence (EP) carers. The group continues to offer six-weekly virtual sessions and oversee a closed Facebook group. Coordination and support of the EP Network Support List and a STEP Facebook group continues via the Centre Coordinator. These various support forums are accessed and valued by EP carers right across the South West Adoption Consortium (SWAC) as ways of sharing experiences and providing peer support for each other, and the number of EP carers accessing support through all three platforms has increased over the year. Adoption West have appointed a member of staff to actively support Early Permanence carers and to encourage a higher engagement of these services.

Parent and Family Support Groups: These groups have included Wild and Free Forest School, Create and Connect parent art group and Family Funday Sundays. 62 families have benefitted from one or more of these services.

- Feedback included: *"It was lovely to reconnect with other adopted families in a safe and supportive environment and strengthening relationships and friendships."*

Holiday Hub Summer Programme: A new initiative to offer school holiday activities to school age adopted children in collaboration with Bristol City Council's Holiday Activities and Food Programme. By organising a range of fun activities, the purpose is to make sure adopted children and young people are entertained, active, educated and fed during school holidays and experience opportunities to spend time together in a non-judgmental and safe environment. 31 children benefitted from the pilot programme, many of which attended multiple sessions.

Feedback included:

- *"R had a great time and despite being nervous about not knowing anyone did amazingly well and loved it, she was full of praise for the leaders and is very excited about the nest activity."*
- *"The sessions offered a great opportunity to try something new without the pressure of signing up for an entire course which can feel a little overwhelming. It also provided an opportunity to meet with other adopted children."*

Workshops and Training for Adopters: Families have access to CATCH, an online training and support package that enables families to develop their skills and learn at a pace that is comfortable for them and enhances their stage 1 and 2 experience and supports throughout post adoption.

Chargeable services have been introduced for some groups during financial year 2022/23 which has generated a small income of £3,160. The strategic plan is to increase the number of chargeable services available throughout 2023/24.

Therapeutic Support Service

The main income stream for the Therapeutic Service continues to be the Adoption Support Fund (ASF). Changes effecting the Therapy Team include a new model of delivery with the appointment of a Post Adoption Support Manager to oversee Therapy and Centre services and all therapists working as an associate model. CCS continue to support the service with a Therapy Coordinator and part time Therapy Administrator.

Consultations

Throughout 2022/23 38 consultations were completed by associate Clinical Psychologists (2021/22 - 41).

Feedback included – *“Always helpful and caring, I felt listened to.”*

Clinical Assessments

The service continued to offer one assessment slot per month to families and completed clinical assessments for 11 families (2021/22 - 17).

The clinical assessments are completed by Dr Jude Courtney and Dr Helen Kirkaldie.

Therapeutic Interventions

48 packages of therapeutic support to adoptive families were completed (2021/22 – 64).

Feedback included – “Your voice has been reason, comfort and encouragement throughout our time working together, and we will miss you a ridiculous amount. Your unshakeable support, your empathy and your ideas have been beyond value to us and, no doubt, to the girls.”

Therapeutic Training

Hearts and Minds Parenting Programme: The 8-week training programme ran three times, in May 2022, September 2022 and January 2023. This has been the most successfully attended year thus far for H&M's and recorded the following number of parental beneficiaries on each programme. 32 families attended (2020/21 – 23 families attended), 10 families in May; 11 families in September; and 11 families in January.

Feedback included – “I'll be repeating your words in my head forever and endeavour to use the Hearts & Minds training every day.”

Adoption Support Fund

In February 2021, the Government confirmed that the ASF would continue to offer invaluable support to adoptive and special guardianship families up to March 2025. This has enabled the team to plan and deliver services for the next financial year and beyond.

South West Adoption Consortium (SWAC)

Membership

CCS continues to be the host agency for SWAC, which is a membership consortium comprising of three local Regional Adoption Agencies (Aspire Adoption, Adoption West, Adopt South West), one Local Authority (Cornwall) and five Voluntary Adoption Agencies, (SSAFA, CCS, PACT,

Action for Children and Barnardo's). PACT joined SWAC in November 2022 shortly after Families for Children closed in August 2022, so the number of VAAs in SWAC remains the same.

Funding

Members fund the service through the membership fee, depending on the size of the agency determined by the number of full-time equivalent (FTE) staff in the agency. The fee is agreed each year by the end of January for the following financial year.

Staffing

After many years of working for SWAC, both the SWAC administrator and SWAC social work lead retired at the end of August 2022. An Interim Project Lead was appointed from 12th September 2022 until the end of March 2023, with a temporary contract of seven hours per week. The remit of the role was to keep the existing SWAC commitments to running best practice groups and facilitating matching across the region until more long-term appointments were made and the ongoing role of SWAC could be reviewed.

Administrative support of up to five hours per week was provided by CCS from within their existing resources. In January 2023, the Interim Project Lead was given a one-year extension to the original contract, taking SWAC through to 31st March 2024. It was agreed by the members that the hours for the Project Lead role should increase to 10 hours per week from 1st April 2023, with five hours per week administrative support provided by CCS.

SWAC Terms of Reference

New terms of reference for SWAC were agreed at the SWAC Governance Board held on 21st April 2023 to provide a clearer focus and direction for SWAC, reflecting the changes in adoption nationally and regionally in recent years. SWAC was originally set up in 2000, when adoption services were delivered through the 15 local authorities in the region. Since 2017, local authorities in the region have, with different start dates, been setting up and delegating responsibility for adoption services to RAAs, although the local authorities involved retain ultimate responsibility for the funding and functioning of the RAA. Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly currently remain outside of the RAA programme but are working towards joining Adopt South West.

The revised Terms of Reference reflect the changed role of SWAC. They state that SWAC now exists to:

- Facilitate family finding and matching of children across all adoption agencies in the South West region, whether statutory or voluntary.
- Provide a focus and conduit for communication between all adoption agencies within the South West region through the timely sharing of information and promotion of best practice in adoption and permanence.
- Provide a hub in the South West region to facilitate good communication at national & regional level in relation to adoption and permanence.
- Promote positive working relationships and the sharing of best practice between the statutory and voluntary adoption sectors in the region.
- Act as focal point to access funding and as a steering group for projects which will provide opportunities to develop and improve adoption practice.
- Identify and promote workforce development across all agencies in SWAC.
- Identify and provide a collective response to common challenges in adoption and permanence across the SWAC agencies.

Consortium Structure

The new Terms of Reference also clarified and formalised the structure of the consortium, setting up a Governance Board and an Operational Management Board.

The SWAC Governance Board

The strategic priorities and funding arrangements for SWAC are determined at the SWAC Governance Board. Governance Board meetings are held every two months to include the SWAC Project Lead and the Heads of Service of the participating agencies. Each agency has an equal vote in deciding funding, appointing the SWAC Lead and agreeing priorities. A rolling chair for the two monthly Governance Board meetings is appointed from among the Heads of Service for a 12-month period in line with the financial year.

SWAC Operational Management Board

SWAC Operational Managers meet every two months and form the operational arm of SWAC, implementing the work plan agreed by the Governance Board. Membership of the Operational Management Board is for each agency to decide, dependent on the structure within their agency, but those attending are likely to be at service manager or team manager level and should reflect that the work plan for the Operational Management Board will cover all aspects of adoption work.

Services Provided

SWAC is committed to coordinating and facilitating the following core meetings and services for all member agencies to promote communication, positive working relationships, and the sharing of best practice:

- SWAC Governance Board meetings every two months.
- SWAC Operational Management Board meetings every two months.
- SWAC Best Practice Meetings for practitioners in member agencies every two months. There are separate meetings for recruitment and assessment workers, adoption support workers, family finders, panel administrators, intermediary and access to adoption records workers, those supporting birth relatives. These meetings will be held virtually, and notes taken for circulation within a week of each meeting. They will either be chaired by the SWAC Project Lead or by a nominated practitioner from a SWAC agency.
- Meetings three times per year for panel chairs, with a further meeting held jointly with panel advisers.
- Meetings three times per year with panel advisers, with a further meeting held jointly with panel chairs.
- SWAC/Coram/BAAF meetings, three times per year for those working with special guardians and other kinship carers.
- SWAC/Coram/BAAF meetings, three times per year for those working in adoption and permanence.
- A minimum of six open sessions for anyone working in SWAC agencies on topics of interest across all work roles, to take the form of a presentation followed by questions and discussion.
- Safeguarding training to be provided at least once per year, open to all those working in SWAC agencies.
- In addition to the above, meetings of medical advisers across the SWAC region are coordinated by the medical advisers themselves, with assistance from the SWAC Project Lead if requested.

To facilitate family finding and matching for children with adoption plans across agencies in the region, SWAC will set up and coordinate:

- Monthly virtual children's profile meetings for children for whom an interagency placement has been agreed.
- The delivery of three face to face Adoption Exchanges per year.
- The circulation of Individual children's profiles and adopters' profiles across agencies as and when requested.

SWAC Activity 2022/23

Adoption Exchange took place on 14th May 2022 at which Adopt South West and Adoption West attended to profile children. Aspire sent profiles of children to be shared but did not attend in person. 20 prospective adoptive families were invited from across the region. No other Exchange Days were held in 2022-3 because of the change of staffing and limited staffing resources through the rest of the year. One which had been planned for the end of March 2023 was moved to 3rd April 2023.

Also, in the period up to 12th September 2022, a series of workshops run by Julia Feast on Post Commencement Adoptions was offered to SWAC members, with a good take up of places from across the agencies.

Between 12th September 2022 and the end of December 2022, eight best practice meetings were held for different groups of professionals which were attended by a total of 52 people. In addition, SWAC facilitated two workshops with CoramBAAF on adoption, Special Guardianship, and kinship care which a further 12 people attended.

Between 1st January 2023 and 31st March 2023, 14 best practice meetings for different groups of professionals were held, and a further two SWAC CoramBAAF sessions were facilitated. A further innovation was to run monthly virtual open sessions for anyone in a SWAC agency. Three of these open sessions were run between January 2023 and the end of March 2023. The topics for these were as follows- Learning from the serious case review in to the death of a child placed for adoption in Cumbria; Working with birth children in assessments; Adoption support, building resilience in adoptive families. A total of 231 professionals in total attended these sessions. The sessions take the form of a presentation followed by questions and discussion.

From the beginning of December 2022, monthly virtual children's profiling events have been held by the SWAC Project Lead at which the three RAAs and Cornwall profile children for whom they are seeking placements outside of their agencies. Each of the SWAC agencies send a representative from their recruitment and assessment teams to the virtual meeting, to take back information about those children into their agencies to share with colleagues who are supporting their waiting families.

Leading, innovating and influencing policy and practice:

Early Permanence (EP): In early 2022 CCS continued to play a lead role in both National and Regional forums. This included meetings and dialogue with the EP Lead at the DFE (Department for Education). As the EP role at CCS had no external funding during the restructure of CCS in the summer of 2022 this role and project ended. CCS remains committed to EP for children however as an individual charity CCS could not sustain this project without external funding. At this time, the RAA's in the South West had received some funding from the DFE for an EP Project lead (Alexandra Lucas) who then lead on the ongoing development of EP throughout the South West, which began towards the end of 2022 funded until August 2023. CCS has been involved with this project lead and continues to promote EP as it evolves and develops.

In 2022 CCS successfully applied for renewal of the Early Permanence Quality Mark. CCS is once again the first agency to achieve this renewal status and remains one of only five agencies across the country to have achieved this award.

CCS continues to run a number of EP Support groups and networks; The six-weekly Support Through EP (STEP) group, which continues to meet virtually in response to user feedback.

Up to July 2022 CCS continued to run Introduction to EP courses for its prospective adopters and jointly delivers the full EP Day training with Adoption West. From July 2022 Adoption West continued to deliver the full day of EP training and CCS adopters continue to be able to attend this.

Sharing Stories (our Life Story Work service): Life Story Work (LSW) has been further integrated into the post adoption support offered to families. All adopters are contacted at key points early in their adoption journey (Panel Approval, Matching Risk Assessment stage and four months into placement) to help support and equip them to undertake Life Story Work. Until the summer of 2022 CCS families continued to access Sharing Stories for casework, consultations, advice, and support. In the summer of 2022, this project ceased due to lack of any external funding for this project. CCS remains committed to life story work and the social work team continue to provide advice and guidance to all CCS families

OFSTED Inspection

The Organisation was inspected by OFSTED in February 2019 and given the overall quality rating of "Outstanding", as in the previous three inspections (2015, 2012 & 2010). The OFSTED inspection team found the Organisation to be "Outstanding" in all three areas it considered:

- 'Overall experiences and progress of service users.'
- 'How well young people and adults are helped and protected;' and
- 'The effectiveness of leaders and managers.'

The inspection is a comprehensive review of the work of the Organisation over the previous three years involving all aspects of the work undertaken, including recruitment of adopters, preparation and approval process, how matching and linking are undertaken, particularly how the Organisation focuses its work on those children waiting for adoptive families, and all aspects of adoption support. Attention is also directed at how the Organisation contributes to regional and national initiatives to improve adoption services. The inspection included consideration of policies and procedures, data, gathering views from service users including young people in adoptive families, feedback from partner agencies who have placed children with CCS families and views of outcomes from local authorities where specific contracted services are delivered.

The inspector commented:

"Adopters receive excellent preparation, support, and training prior to adopting their child. They benefit from the extensive training and support provided by the agency that comprehensively prepares them for their parenting role" and

"The agency offers a range of imaginative and creative clubs and activities for adopted children and their parents that are provided in the agency's children's centre and in the community. Children and their parents benefit from taking part in after-school clubs, forest club, holiday activities and a tots' and parents' club" and

"Really impressed with the organisation, CCS is streaks ahead of other agencies," and

"Leaders and managers have an ambitious vision for the agency. They succeed in providing a centre of excellence that provides high-quality adoption services to parents and children. There is a shared sense of purpose from all the staff and expert knowledge of how to achieve very positive outcomes for adopted children and their parents. There are many innovative and creative projects successfully being undertaken by the agency that are further improving outcomes for adopted children."

The full inspection report (Unique Reference Number SC048462) may be accessed online at: <http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/Ofsted-home/Inspection-reports>

Grants and External Contracts

Adoption West Centre SLA: Adoption West has contracted CCS to deliver the activities provide at The Centre for the benefit of RAA adoptive families so that they benefit from the wide range of high-quality services on offer. The CEO and Post Adoption Support Practice Manager meet with the Adoption West Director and business manager several times per year to review the contract and service delivery.

Future developments at CCS Adoption

It is known that the adoption climate often moves in cycles, with the numbers of children versus the number of adopters varying and switching over which is greater or lesser than the other. In the year 2022-2023 it is evident that the greater number of adopters versus the lower number of children has had a significant impact across the sector, and is a continuation of the previous two years. Different factors have affected this such as the pandemic (increase in adopters) and courts practice (significant increase in Special Guardianship orders and reduced placement order for adoption). However, this picture is not static and there are early indications that the number of children with Best Interest Decisions (which mostly lead to placements orders) is increasing and the number of adopters waiting reducing. This would put the charity in the position of being able to more quickly place children with our adopters, and for it to make business sense to increase our pool of adopters, whilst remaining focused on those who wish to adopt priority children.

The income from the Adoption Support Fund looks to remain fairly stable with certainty of these funds being available until March 2025. Income from fundraising remains reliant on each years individual activity, other than fundraising income that is provided over several years from some grant providers or individual donors.

The charity continues to consider various areas for diversification, however the charity has been cautious in not estimating any of this income in the 2023-24 budget. It is unclear if one or more areas of diversification will proceed but they are being kept under constant review by SMT and the trustees.

Marketing

Marketing activity at CCS focuses on four key areas. To provide information to those considering adoption which then enables them to make contact with CCS at the start of their adoption journey. Secondly to provide information to all adoptive families about the adoption support services we provide through The Centre and how they can access them. Thirdly to inform the audience of matters to do with CCS internally as a charity. Fourthly to provide information to the audience about the external wider adoption landscape, such as links to research, policy, books, events etc.

Website

The original developers of the site (Eckhomedia) provide hosting and support.

Giorgia (CCS's Marketing officer) continues to manage and update the website's content and develops new pages and posts as needed. New blog posts have been added, such as "How to choose an adoption agency in the UK," two new adoption stories, and the CVAA article about the differences between VAAs and RAAs.

In 2022/23 website traffic went down by 6.57% of users (24,030 vs 25,720 in the previous financial year). However, there has been an increase in conversion of 7.02%, in which the Info Pack downloads went up from a total of 187 in 2021/2022, to 789 in the current financial year. Talk with an Adopter goal also went up, by 180%; whereas Enquire about Adoption went down by 2.83%, Contact Us by 10.64% and Event Booking by 13.60%.

Eventbrite

CCS has started to use Eventbrite to advertise Information Events which will hopefully lead to an increase in bookings. Eventbrite gives CCS the chance to appear when people type "Adoption Information Events" into a search engine. This is being used for bookings alongside telephone and email bookings linked with the events on the Facebook Page.

Email marketing

The newsletter is distributed using Mailchimp and it focuses on updates on CCS, Centre events, Fundraising and Adoption Support.

A process is underway to keep the number of subscribers up to date, adding adopters as soon as they are approved. Previously Giorgia had added contacts from the CCS Adopters to the CCS & The Centre audience, which were missing.

The fortnightly newsletter for existing CCS and Centre adopters is currently distributed to 849 addresses. The average open rate of this email stands at around 54%. Giorgia has started to change the subject of the newsletter to attract more clicks and use the email lists to promote specific Centre activities with standalone emails e.g., Hearts and Minds, and Holiday Hub Activities.

Ads

The organisation continues to use the services of a small digital agency for the management of the CCS Google PPC (pay-per-click) ads and social media adverts on Facebook.

CCS currently pay for the following types of advertising: Facebook Ads, Google Search Ads, Google Display & Remarketing Ads and Google Videos. CCS will also start running ads on Instagram for a 3-month trial.

Social Media

CCS are switching to more video content, using as much real content as possible from unidentified videos and pictures that adopters send and from The Centre events. This creates more engagement since it's more authentic, parents see their children and interact more. With these videos, CCS have started creating and posting Reels on Instagram and Facebook, to also expand the library of reusable material.

The CCS Facebook page has 1,414 followers (53 more than last year), The Centre Facebook page has 379 followers (100 more compared to the last financial year), the CCS Twitter account has 1,517 followers and the CCS Instagram account has 485 followers (171 more than last year). Content is posted at a rate of one or two posts per day on Facebook and Twitter and twice per week on Instagram, plus Instagram stories. Facebook reach experienced a drop of 32.2% compared to last year, whereas Instagram, on the other side, had an increase of 135.7%.

CCS have stopped using Buffer to schedule content around social media and have started using Meta Business Suite and Scheduled Tweets instead, as the two are free and work quite well.

Campaigns

During this financial year CCS have seen three main campaigns:

- In May 2022 CCS shared the "Adopter Choice" Campaign, which saw testimonies of people who adopted through a VAA. One of the CCS adopters took part in this campaign, which had a clear purpose of trying to encourage prospective adopters to consider VAA rather than not realising they had a choice.
- In June 2022 "A Life Less Ordinary" campaign was released by You Can Adopt, in which videos were about children interviewing adoptive parents. This campaign covered the

theme of adopting siblings, older, mixed heritage and with additional needs children. The purpose of this campaign was to highlight the range of children who are "harder to place" and wait longer, therefore encouraging prospective adopters to consider adopting these children.

- Lastly, in October 2022, during National Adoption Week, a campaign by You Can Adopt has been launched focusing on the theme of identity and contact. The purpose of this was to combat the negative view that many have about adoption in relation to the severance of the ties between birth family and adopted children/people, to recognise that contact is a growing and key area of modern adoption.

Print

CCS regularly circulate flyers about the Information Events to the Eastside Community and St. Werburghs Centre. The next step would be to find and contact more community centres around Bristol that agree on pinning CCS flyers on their notice boards.

CCS has been engaging with a graphic designer, who offers competitive rates. He has just produced an update of the CCS Children's Guide.

National Adoption Recruitment Steering Group (NARSG)

CCS continue to take part and contribute to initiatives and campaigns from the NARSG which has taken the place of First4Adoption in leading and coordinating government investment in adoption recruitment. The campaigns are delivered by Freuds in London.

Fundraising

The Organisation is dependent on fundraising to finance the post-adoption support services provided through The Centre.

Fundraising activities included:

- Applications to Trusts and Foundations
- Community fundraising
- Individual giving
- Corporate giving
- Legacies

The Organisation does not buy or sell data, engage in telephone fundraising, cold mailing or outsource fundraising to external organisations. The decision not to engage in the aforementioned is taken to protect vulnerable people and members of the public from unacceptable behaviour related to fundraising, such as: unreasonable intrusion into a person's privacy; unreasonable persistent and undue pressure on a person to give money or donation in kind.

CCS had a Fundraising Coordinator in post until July 2022, and for the rest of the year other staff (and Trustees) at CCS took on the role of coordinating the fundraising activities. 3-monthly meetings were regularly held to ensure the ongoing necessary fundraising activities continued. Adopters and volunteers have also completed various fundraising challenges, make the verbal appeal in parishes for the Organisation's Annual Appeal and help with fundraising administration. All volunteers are provided with an induction detailing the values and principles of the Organisation. The Organisation is registered with the Fundraising Regulator and uphold 'The Code of Fundraising Practice' developed by the regulator. In the year there were no complaints received concerning the operation of the fundraising activities undertaken.

Volunteers have helped CCS in various ways throughout this year, such as writing grant applications, attending events, completing challenges, and setting up Friends of CCS, which resulted in lots of volunteers helping run our first ever Winter Fayre.

In 2022/23, the Organisation had a fundraising target of £71,800. This was a reduced target compared to the previous year's target of £150,00 as only 38% had been achieved in 2021/22.

In 2022/23 due to a range of factors CCS was much more successful in its fundraising efforts. However, the pressure to bring in these substantial sums each year is significant, and CCS needs to constantly be active in its' fundraising activities. Thanks to the generosity of CCS supporters, and in particular an individual donor, the Organisation raised a total of £97,004, 135% of the target.

Trusts and Foundations:

There continued to be strong competition for Trusts and Foundation grants however following a number of good applications by a fundraising consultant CCS were able to achieve £28,200 income in 2022/23.

Grants and donations were received from: Leonard Laity Storate Charitable Trust, Burges Salmon Charitable Trust, Basil Brown Charitable Trust, National Lottery Community Fund, Quartet Community Foundation, Dandia Charitable Trust, Bristol City Council (Holiday activities and food programme), The Lake House Foundation, Bristol Masons Trust Grant, Sir H Hood's Charitable Trust, and Square Food Foundation.

Individual Giving: The Organisation received £45,725 (including Gift Aid) in individual donations.

The Organisation has a small number of regular donors, some of whom have supported CCS for many years. Donations were received in response to the CEO Christmas Letter (alongside the sale of Christmas cards), 'In Memory' donations, donations from ongoing appeals, and donations as a direct result of engagement with the Centre.

To demonstrate fairness and transparency, the Organisation does not accept donations from (or raised by) prospective adopters until they have received their adoption order.

In the Autumn of 2022, CCS met with Dr Gareth Rees who having heard about the extent and quality of the work achieved at CCS donated £20,000 with a pledge of a further £10,000 annual donation for the following three years. Dr Gareth Rees has chosen to donate this money to CCS in memory of his wife Dr Corinne Rees, who worked as a paediatrician in the area, particularly with children in the care system and who had been adopted, she had also worked with CCS for a number of years.

Community Fundraising:

Donations from the Clifton Catholic Diocese contribute significantly to the Organisation's community fundraising income. The Organisation has a long relationship with the Diocese who continue to support through annual appeals, crib collections and parishioner donations. Donations totalling £4,867 were received in 2022/23; this is significantly less than previous years as the Diocese's annual appeal collection was cancelled in 2022 due to reduced income of parishes because of the pandemic. The Diocese kindly agreed to reinstate the annual appeal for 2023 in April.

In total, £13,984 was received through community fundraising. Community fundraising activities included: Church appeals, supporter and staff-led events, individual sporting and challenge events, individual collection boxes, lifestyle giving and 200 club memberships (supporters who take part in a bi-monthly draw).

Fundraising

A group of CCS staff and Trustees collaborated with a keen adopter on a fundraising project called 'Friends of CCS.' Together, the 'Friends of CCS' CCS have organised fundraising activities i.e., clothing donations, non-uniform days, wreath making during the Christmas period. A large Winter Fayre was also arranged for December 2022, where many adoptive families enjoyed the Christmas activities and the opportunity to meet up together after many had not seen each other since before the pandemic. This event raised £1,482, plus a donation from M&G.

An Instagram page was created which has 75 followers. CCS's marketing officer consistently posts about the Friends of CCS events on social media, website and newsletter.

Corporate giving

The organisation received a £9,721 in total via corporate donors, fundraising events, or collections. These included: Wessex Garage, M&G Community Fund, Co-op Bank (Broadmead) and Rightway Environmental.

Legacies: The organisation received legacy donation of £500 in 2022/23.

The External landscape of Adoption.

The number of children with plans for adoption has continued to gradually decrease, whilst at the same time the number of approved adopters nationally has remained at a higher level. The

surplus of adopter therefore has meant a continuation of a there being more adopters waiting longer post approval before they are matched. The RAA's were formed a few years ago and appear to be functioning well as organisations. They have placed more of the children from their Local Authorities with their own adopters and therefore over 2022 there was a decrease in the number of children's profiles that could be viewed by VAA's. however, in early 2023 the number of children profiles increased, and CCS and other VAA saw an increase in family finding activity for CCS adopters.

Emma Simpson rejoined CCS as interim CEO in April 2022 and as permanent CEO in August 2022. Emma sits as the VAA representative of the Adoption West Board and is an active member of the CVAA CEO group and the Buckfast CEO group.

Staffing

Over the previous financial year there had been some significant changes in the staffing and some key roles remained vacant in April 2022 in the 'then' structure, namely CEO, Head of HR, Business Development Manager and Head of Adoption. The trustees were aware of the impact of these vacancies and were working hard to fill these key posts.

In April 2022, the interim CEO first task was to review the financial situation and sustainability of the charity and consider a staffing restructure to make the necessary changes for the long-term security of the charity. The aim was to reduce overall expenditure and resource the organisation in line with current and projected income according to child placements, ASF income, fundraising and any other sources of income. A new structure was designed which reduced the senior management team (some of the vacant roles were removed from the new structure) and reducing the FTE in areas that were over resourced due to the reduction of work because of the changing external adoption climate. The restructure also gave the opportunity to explore ways to increase staff development and opportunities to line manage within CCS, thus aiding staff retention for the future and retaining key skills and experience.

A consultation and subsequent selection process took place with the outcome of staff being mapped to suitable alternative roles, redundancy or continuing in existing roles.

The Social Work Practice Manager roles were reduced from two to one, one of the Practice Managers successfully secured the role of Head of Adoption, a role that had previously been vacant. Two Senior Adoption Social Workers were appointed to newly created Consultant Adoption Social Workers roles taking on line management responsibilities for the Advice service and Social Work Assistants.

The advice team was reduced from four to two people. The EP Project Lead and Sharing Stories roles were removed from the structure, with these services being incorporated into existing social work and associate therapist roles.

The Social Work Administration function was reduced considerably. The restructure gave the opportunity to look at existing processes and change ways of working to become more efficient, with reduced handoffs and increased ownership; increasing skills and knowledge through completing tasks from beginning to end rather than working on specific sections of the adoption process.

The Therapeutic Services Lead and Head of Centre roles were combined, creating a new Post Adoption Support Manager aligning the Therapy and Centre services resulting in joined up services and a drive towards a cost neutral, sustainable service. The therapeutic services model

was changed to operate fully with associates with no therapists employed directly by CCS. This has both reduced expenditure and increased the flexibility in types of therapy that can be offered.

At the end of the restructure in the summer of 2022, the interim CEO secured the position on a permanent basis and along with the newly appointed Head of Adoption formed a new Leadership team which brought a period of stability in Leadership.

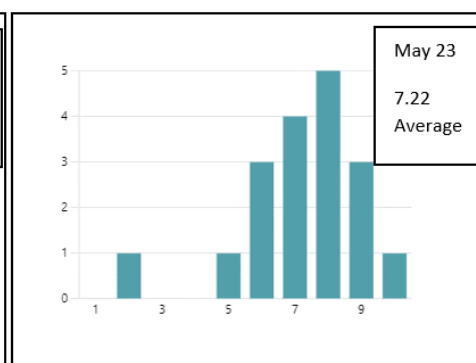
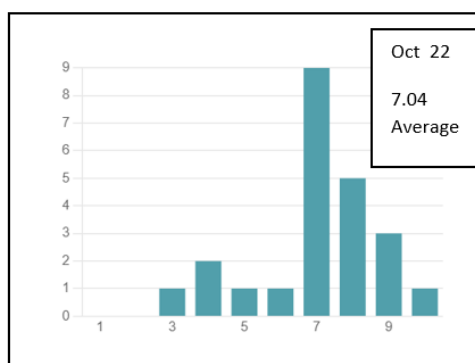
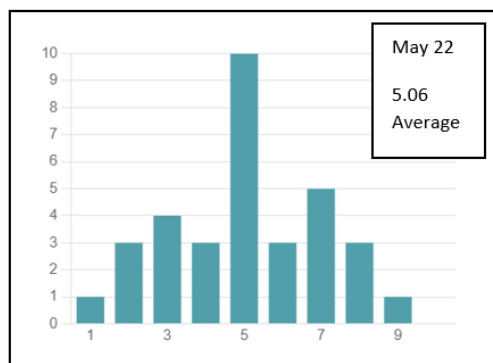
While the outcome had delivered considerable reduction in expenditure, projections of future income and expenditure showed the need to reduce costs further if the future of CCS was to be more secure. In December 2022 staff were notified of the need to reduce staffing levels even further and voluntary redundancy was offered organisation wide. The resulting five voluntary redundancies (Practice Manager, two Senior Social Workers, one children's activity worker and a Social Work Administrator) along with natural attrition and mapping staff into suitable roles meant there were no further compulsory redundancies.

Despite the considerable changes in structure and reduced staffing levels, sickness absence levels remained stable and close monitoring of staff engagement and wellbeing through surveys has shown increased levels of employee engagement at the end of the financial year.

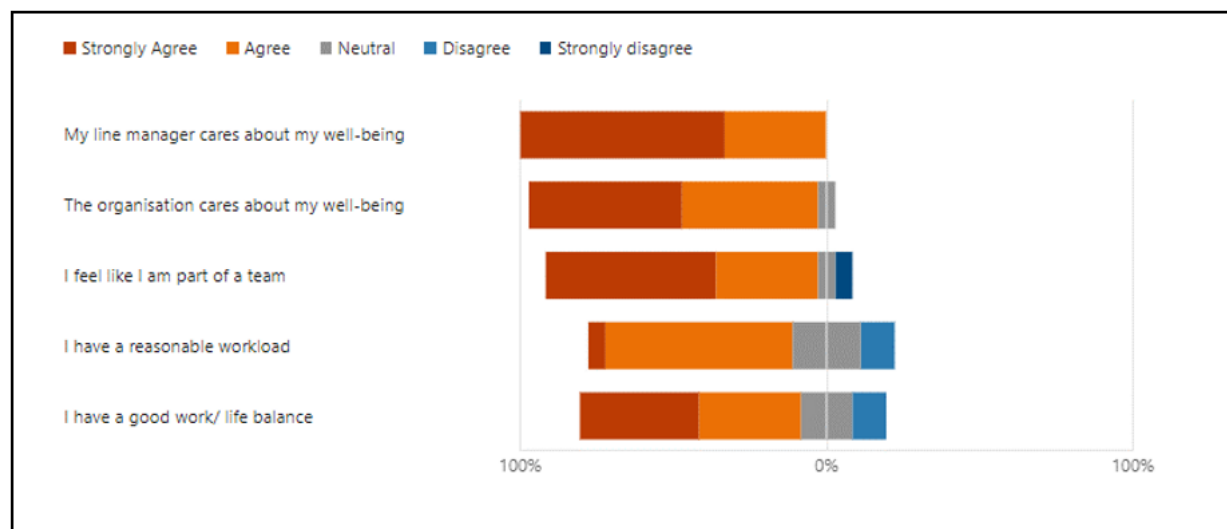
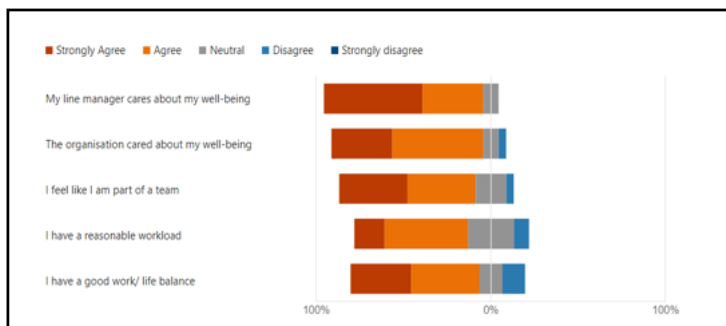
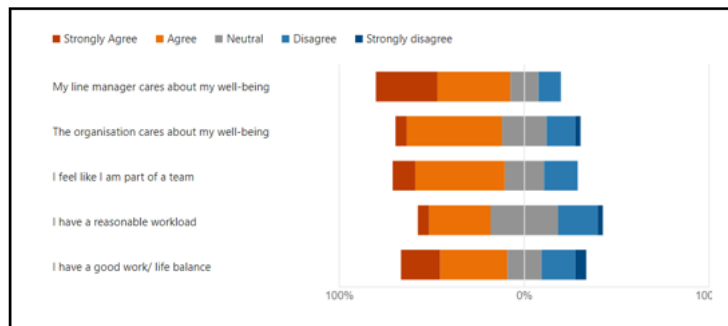
Results of staff Survey – comparison from May 2022, October 2022, and May 2023

Analysis from Staff Surveys May 2022, October 2022 and May 2023

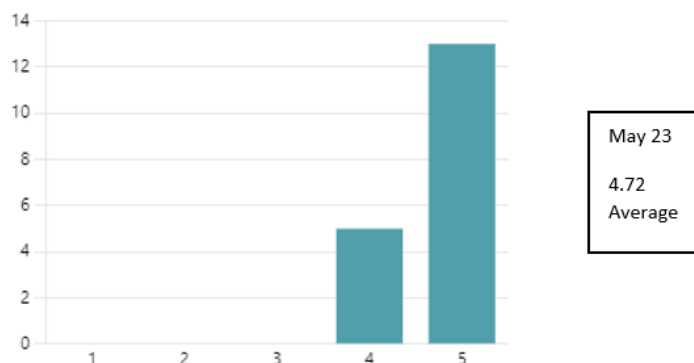
Q. How would you have rated your job satisfaction at CCS?



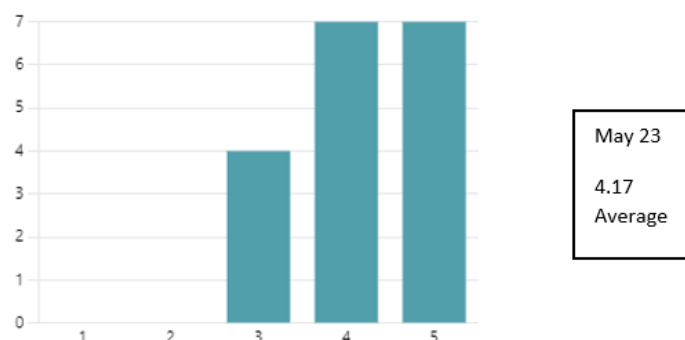
Q. Please rate the following statement comparison, May 22, October 22 and May 23



Q. How would you rate the communication about the changes that have been made at CCS since December grading 1-5?



Q With the changes happening how connected to your team are you feeling, grading 1-5?



GDPR Compliance

CCS continues to update and review policies and procedures to make sure they are GDPR compliant. New staff receive GDPR training, and the full staff team receive refresher training every two years – next due in the autumn of 2023.

Environmental and Sustainable Development

The Organisation continues to consider where it can be more environmentally sustainable in its practices and its use of resources. A hybrid working policy was introduced in September 2022 which brought clarity to the staff about the agencies expectations of the post pandemic way of working. This alongside many more virtual meetings with Local Authorities has meant that staff continue to travel significantly less than they did pre-pandemic. The appropriateness of services to families being delivered face to face or online continues to be carefully considered and reviews. Post-pandemic much of the adopter training has moved back to face to face, where as some of the support groups and parenting courses (Hearts and Minds) remain online as this works better for families.

Financial information

The Clifton Children's Society's financial results for the year to 31st March 2023 are set out in detail in the attached financial statements.

The income of £1,069,222 (2021/22 - £1,138,491) includes donations of £52,888 (2021/22 - £24,390). One legacy was received in the year (2021/22 - none).

Interagency and other fees totalled £752,719 (2021/22 - £809,636).

The interagency fee is a payment made by a Local Authority for the placement of children in their public care with an adoptive family recruited by the CCS. The fee is a figure agreed by the Consortium of Voluntary Adoption Agencies as representing a contribution to the costs incurred in recruiting, preparing, and supporting adoptive families.

From the 1st June 2018 the recommended Interagency Fee was increased following detailed analysis by the Consortium of Voluntary Adoption Agencies (CVAA) and negotiations with The Association of Directors of Children's Services (ADCS) and the Local Government Association (LGA). The analysis and discussions were initiated because the value of the interagency fee has been eroded by inflation and reduced in real terms.

As advised by CVAA CCS has used the uplifted fee structure to apply to all placements from 1st June 2018. To prevent any future erosion of the fee, it will be increased on the 1st April each year based on the Consumer Prices Index including owner-occupier's Housing costs (CPIH) measure of inflation for the preceding calendar year as published by the Office for National Statistics. This annual increase has been applied for placements from 1st April 2022.

The fees represent payment for work conducted over the previous months or even years. The timing of the placement of children for adoption will be dependent on a variety of factors, most importantly the needs of the child. This means that there may be fluctuations in the level of interagency fees receivable in the short term. The Organisation prudently only accounts for these fees when they are receivable.

Therefore, it is always necessary to consider figures in relation to a longer time span, typically three years or more.

Expenditure for the year to 31st March 2023 was £1,289,157 (2022 - £1,694,282).

As of 31st March 2023, the Organisation's net assets were £933,162 (2022 - £1,153,097). There was a net decrease in funds of £219,935 (2021 - decrease of £555,791).

CEO – Pay remained the same as the previous CEO's pay (in addition to percentage pay rise that was agreed by trustees for all staff in October 2022 and backdated to April 2022). CEO was appointed to the permanent post in September 2022. The CEO post was advertised and taken on for 4 days a week rather than 5 days a week in order to reduce the charities expenditure and in line with the shrinking staffing group of the charity.

Post-Balance Sheet Events

Sale of 162 Pennywell Road, Easton

In November 2022, the trustees agreed to engage a commercial estate agent to market the offices at Pennywell Road for either lease or sale. This decision was reached for the following reasons:

- Two organisational restructures have resulted in a reduced number of staff. Along with the introduction of hybrid ways of working, the large capacity of the building is now too great for the staff team.
- Increases in running costs, maintenance and repair costs.
- Generation of cash to combat the reduction in cash reserves due to two years of deficits.

In June 2023, the sale of the offices was agreed by the trustees for a sale price of £652,000. The legal process began in June and the final sale of the office was completed on 19th October 2023.

Lease of offices at The Park, Knowle West

An operating lease for a new office at The Park in Knowle West was entered into on 4th April 2023. The term of this lease started on 1st June 2023 and ends on 31st May 2024. Thereafter the lease can be terminated by giving six months-notice of termination. The total cost of this lease is £23,459. There is no impact on the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2023.

Investment policy

The Trustees' policy is to invest funds in short term or immediate access deposits.

Reserves policy

The Trustees have a policy of maintaining Free Reserves (Net assets allocated to unrestricted reserves and those of the 'Reserve Policy' Designated Fund less Fixed Assets allocated to unrestricted reserves) at a level of six months expenditure out of unrestricted and designated funds; at this level, the Trustees feel they would be able to provide uninterrupted services.

The six months expenditure chosen for this is that of the first six months of the current financial year (2023/24). The target free reserves level is £504,589 in line with the policy above. Total free reserves at the year-end were £394,158, the total of the Reserves Policy designated fund, and general unrestricted funds not committed to fixed assets (see Note 16).

The actual free reserves were therefore below the target level. Having reviewed the forecast Income and Expenditure for the year to 31st March 2024 and actual Income and Expenditure for the three months to 30th June 2023 the Trustees are confident the free reserves are at a level to provide uninterrupted services.

The Trustees' policy is to hold this amount in a Designated 'Reserves Policy' Fund. The value of this Fund will be updated each year to reflect the value required by the reserves policy.

There is a restricted reserve for post adoption support. This reserve has come about through the existence of a separate fee, in addition to the Interagency Fee, called the Post Adoption Support Module, which was charged on placements between April 1997 and March 2011. An exercise was undertaken in 2018 to ascertain the original value of the individual Post Adoption Support Modules that make up this reserve. After doing so it was agreed that the remaining balance of this fund be calculated based on providing one year of Social Worker support to each child based on 24 hours per year at £25 per hour.

In addition to the restricted reserve, the Trustees have a designated post adoption support reserve. The purpose of this reserve is to ensure that, in the circumstances of the adoption service being no longer financially viable, that an appropriate proportion of the charity's assets are devoted to continuing to provide a level of post adoption support in the most suitable way available at the time. This reserve would function in tandem with the restricted reserve in this

case. The balance of this fund is also calculated based on providing one year of Social Worker support to each child based on 24 hours per year at £25 per hour. This reserve will be increased annually in line with the number of children placed and average salary expenditure.

Risk Review

The Risk Register should be reviewed on a quarterly basis during the year in line with the Risk Management Policy.

1. The core business model is reliant on the Interagency Fee

The interagency fee is the largest source of income for the Organisation and changes to this could pose a risk to the income forecast in the future, acknowledging that significant initial investment in undertaking assessments is not always recouped.

The CEO is active in representing the work of the Organisation within the Consortium of Voluntary Adoption Agencies (CVAA), and the Regional Adoption Agency, which is vital in maintaining negotiations in the sector regarding the fee and placement activity.

2. The income from Adoption Support Fund (ASF) does not meet the expenditure of running the Therapeutic Service

The ASF is the funding source for the majority of the Therapeutic Service. In early 2022 the Government announced that the Adoption Support Fund would continue for a further three years to end of March 2025. This provides a level of security that the Therapeutic Service has been lacking in previous years. However, whilst the ASF income per clinical package covers the delivery of the package, there is insufficient surplus to cover the other expenditure of running the service, such as the administrative and management costs involved.

3. Fundraising for the Costs of The Centre

The Centre was previously funded by a grant from its founder. The organisation became financially responsible for The Centre in 2018/19 and has funded activities partly through fundraising and partly through a cross-subsidy from the core business of CCS.

The Fundraising Strategy will now focus on Trusts and Foundations, prioritising Return on Investment.

4. Data protection & complying with GDPR.

The Organisation deals with sensitive and complex personal data daily, and recognises it is essential to comply with data protection and GDPR. Risks here include compromising the safety of beneficiaries, a negative impact on the Organisations reputation and resulting fines. This is managed by a comprehensive GDPR compliance process including regular, mandatory training for all staff.

5. Reduction in the number of placement opportunities

There is a trend where Courts are favouring the making of Special Guardianship Orders over Adoption Orders. This has been exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic, as the Courts operate virtually and have a huge backlog of cases. In addition, wherever possible RAAs are operating an agenda of self-sufficiency, placing children with their prospective adopters.

Social Work Managers meet regularly with Adoption West Family Finding Manager, and with Local Authorities in other parts of the country.

6. Change in leadership & restructure of the organisation creating uncertainty.

The CEO leaving the organisation in April 2022 without the opportunity for a new permanent CEO to be recruited and other senior management staff has resulted in a loss of experience & skills, contact base and corporate knowledge.

An additional strain on the wellbeing of staff has result for those taking on increased workloads to cover aspects of those positions whilst positions are vacant, and staff in general considering current uncertainty.

The plan for the organisational restructure presents certain HR risks to the organisation such as, employment disputes, claims for stress, unfair dismissal, equality & diversity issues, and low morale.

By March 2023, the organisation had gone through two restructures (Summer 2022 and January 2023) and although staff experienced significant change, the overall impact was what was required for the sustainability of the charity. The expenditure of the charity has been brought more in line with its income, although still a deficit budget for 2023/24 it is significantly less than the last two years. The Charity is also keen to explore diversification and other sources of income, whilst keeping a clear focus on inter agency fees as its main source of income.

Trustees

The Trustees are a skilled, cohesive team comprising Sally Lockwood who is a retired Social Worker and Counsellor; Catherine Graham, retired Primary School Teacher; Peter Golding, solicitor; Julie Cooke, retired social worker, who was a specialist in adoption and fostering for many years; Celia Balbernie, retired team manager of Families First Gloucestershire; Richard Tidswell, director of Business Doctors; Nikolas Thompson, manager in Responsible Business & Inclusion for Lloyds Banking Group; and Stephen Lord, General Manager for a security company.

Stephen Allen, accountant, continues his valuable role as an Associate Trustee, and as Company Secretary up to 25th October 2021.

Legal and Administrative InformationConstitution

The Clifton Children's Society which has been in existence since 1904, initially as the Clifton Rescue Society, was incorporated on 2 August 1982 as the Catholic Children's Society (Diocese of Clifton), a company limited by guarantee and a registered charity governed by its Memorandum and Articles. On 5 June 2008, the Trustee body passed a resolution to change the name to Clifton Children's Society, to reflect and reaffirm its roots within the Clifton Diocese.

Charity No 286814 Company No 01655971

Patrons: Jenny Urquhart, Artist

Directors and Trustees: The following served as directors and Trustees during the year and since the year end:

Sally Lockwood, Chair
Catherine Graham, Vice Chair
Andrew Stephen Lord, Treasurer
Celia Balbernie
John Evans, resigned 15/08/2022.
Julie Cooke
Nikolas Thompson
Peter Golding
Richard Tidswell

Key Management Personnel: Margaret Pitts (to 06/04/2022)
Emma Simpson (from 28/04/2022)

Registered Office: CCS Adoption, The Park Centre, Daventry Road, Bristol, BS4 1DQ

Auditor: Randall & Payne LLP, Chargrove House, Shurdington Rd, Shurdington, Cheltenham GL51 4GA

Bankers: National Westminster Bank, 44 Caledonia Place, The Mall, Clifton, Bristol BS99 5AJ

CAF Bank, 25 Kings Hill Ave, Kings Hill, West Malling ME19 4JQ

Solicitors: Carbon law Partners, Library Building, Sun Street, Tewkesbury, GL20 5NX

Chief Executive Officer: Margaret Pitts (to 06/04/2022)
Emma Simpson (from 28/04/2022)

Statement of Trustees' responsibilities

The Trustees (who are also directors of Clifton Children's Society for the purposes of company law) are responsible for preparing the Trustees' Report (incorporating the directors' report) and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards, including Financial Reporting Standard 102: The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (United Kingdom Accepted Accounting Practice).

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 income and expenditure, of the charitable company for that period. In preparing these financial statements, the Trustees are required to:

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

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. 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 make themselves aware of that information.

Auditors

A resolution will be put to the Annual General Meeting that Randall & Payne LLP be reappointed auditors to the Clifton Children's Society for the coming year.

Small company provisions

This report has been prepared in accordance with the special provisions for small companies under Part 15 of the Companies Act 2006.

Sally Lockwood
Chair of Trustees
By order and on behalf of the Trustees

Date:

Independent auditor's report to the members of Clifton Children's Society**Opinion**

We have audited the financial statements of Clifton Children's Society (the "Charity") for the year ended 31 March 2023 which comprise the Statement of Financial Activities, the Balance Sheet, the Cash Flow Statement and notes to the financial statements, including a summary of significant accounting policies. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards, including Financial Reporting Standard 102: The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

This report is made solely to the Charity's members, as a body, in accordance with Chapter 3 of Part 16 of the Companies Act 2006. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the Charity's members those matters we are required to state in 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 Charity's members as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.

In our opinion, the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the state of the Charity's affairs as at 31 March 2023 and of 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.

Basis for opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with international Standards in 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 Charity 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 directors' use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements is appropriate.

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

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

Other information

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

In connection with our audit of the financial statements, our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements, or our knowledge obtained in the audit or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If we identify such material inconsistencies or apparent material misstatements, we are required to determine whether there is a material misstatement in the financial statements or a material misstatement of the other information. 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 the 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' report (incorporating the strategic report and the directors' report) for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements; and
- the Trustees' report (incorporating the strategic report and the directors' report) have been prepared in accordance with applicable law requirements.

Matters on which we are required to report by exception.

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

- sufficient accounting records have not been kept;
- the financial statements are not in agreement with the accounting records and returns;
- certain disclosures of Trustees' remuneration specified by law are not made; or
- we have not obtained all the information and explanations necessary for the purposes of our audit.

Responsibilities of Trustees

As explained more fully in the Trustees' responsibilities statement, the Trustees 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 they 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 Charity'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 Charity or to cease operations, or have no realistic alternative but to do so.

Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with ISAs (UK) will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

Our approach to identifying and assessing the risks of material misstatement in respect of irregularities, including fraud and non-compliance with laws and regulations, was as follows:

- the engagement partner ensured that the engagement team collectively had the appropriate competence, capabilities and skills to identify or recognise non-compliance with applicable laws and regulations;
- we identified the laws and regulations applicable to the charity through discussions with directors and other management, and from our knowledge and experience of the sector;
- we focused on specific laws and regulations which we considered may have a direct material effect on the financial statements of the operations of the company, including the Companies Act 2006, taxation legislation and data protection, anti-bribery, employment, environmental and health and safety legislation;
- we assessed the extent of compliance with the laws and regulations identified above through making enquiries of management and inspecting legal correspondence; and
- identified laws and regulations were communicated within the audit team regularly and the team remained alert to instances of non-compliance through the audit.

We assessed the susceptibility of the charity's financial statements to material misstatement, including obtaining an understanding of how fraud might occur, by:

- making enquiries of management as to where they considered there was susceptibility to fraud, their knowledge of actual, suspected and alleged fraud;
- considering the internal controls in place to mitigate risks of fraud and non-compliance with laws and regulations; and
- understanding the design of the charity's remuneration policies.

To address the risk of fraud through management bias and override of controls, we:

- performed analytical procedures to identify any unusual or unexpected relationships;
- tested journal entries to identify unusual transactions;
- assessed whether judgements and assumptions made in determining the accounting estimates set out in the accounting policies were indicative of potential bias; and
- investigated the rationale behind significant or unusual transactions.

In response to the risk of irregularities and non-compliance with laws and regulations, we designed procedures which included, but were not limited to:

- agreeing financial statement disclosures to underlying supporting documentation;
- reading the minutes of meetings of those charged with governance;
- enquiring of management as to actual and potential litigation and claims; and
- reviewing correspondence with HMRC, relevant regulators and the company's legal advisors.

There are inherent limitations in our audit procedures described above. The more removed that laws and regulations are from financial transactions, the less likely it is that we would become aware of non-compliance. Auditing standards also limit the audit procedures required to identify non-compliance with laws and regulations to enquiry of the directors and other management and the inspection of regulatory and legal correspondence, if any.

Material misstatements that arise due to fraud can be harder to detect than those that arise from error as they may involve deliberate concealment or collusion.

A further description of our responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements is located on the Financial Reporting Council's website at www.frc.org.uk/apb/scope/private.cfm This description forms part of our auditor's report.

Ryan Moore CA (Senior Statutory Auditor)

For and on behalf of Randall & Payne LLP
Statutory Auditors
Chargrove House
Shurdington Rd
Shurdington
Cheltenham
GL51 4GA

Date:

Statement of Financial Activities
(Including Income and Expenditure Account)

Company Number: 01655971

Year Ended 31st March 2023

		Unrestricted General Funds	Unrestricted Designated Funds	Restricted Funds	Total Funds	Total
		2023 £	2023 £	2023 £	2023 £	2022 £
Income from :	Notes					
Donations, legacies and grants	2	38,389	25,100	27,821	91,310	81,183
Charitable activities	2	939,409	32,783	-	972,192	1,046,988
Other trading activities	2	4,578	-	100	4,678	8,738
Investment income	2	1,042	-	-	1,042	1,582
Total income	2	983,418	57,883	27,921	1,069,222	1,138,491
Expenditure on :						
Promotional and fundraising activities		18,144	-	-	18,144	64,118
Charitable Activities						
Adoption		860,403	-	-	860,403	1,124,494
The Centre for Adoption Support		46,762	57,883	31,395	136,040	162,059
Therapeutic Services		274,570	-	-	274,570	343,611
Total expenditure	3	1,199,879	57,883	31,395	1,289,157	1,694,282
Net Expenditure for the year	4	(216,461)	-	(3,474)	(219,935)	(555,791)
Transfers between funds	15	99,827	(99,827)	-	-	-
Net movement in funds for the year		(116,634)	(99,827)	(3,474)	(219,935)	(555,791)
Reconciliation of Funds						
Fund balance brought forward	15	203,632	847,416	102,049	1,153,097	1,708,888
Fund balances carried forward	15	86,998	747,589	98,575	933,162	1,153,097

The Statement of Financial Activities includes all gains and losses recognised in the year. All income and expenditure derives from continuing activities.

The notes on pages 42 to 58 form part of these accounts.

Prior year fund comparatives are in note 8.

Clifton Children's Society

Balance Sheet as at 31st March 2023

Company Number: 01655971

	Notes	£	2023 £	£	2022 £
FIXED ASSETS					
Tangible assets	9		524,571		535,560
Intangible assets	10		4,058		6,101
			<u>528,629</u>		<u>541,661</u>
CURRENT ASSETS					
Debtors	11	188,180		282,366	
Investments	12	2,224		3,540	
Cash at bank and in hand		405,498		574,908	
			<u>595,902</u>	<u>860,814</u>	
CREDITORS: Amounts falling due within one year	13	189,603		245,266	
NET CURRENT ASSETS			<u>406,299</u>	<u>615,548</u>	
TOTAL ASSETS LESS CURRENT LIABILITIES			<u>934,928</u>	<u>1,157,209</u>	
CREDITORS: Amounts falling due after more than one year	14		<u>1,767</u>	<u>4,112</u>	
NET ASSETS			<u>933,161</u>	<u>1,153,097</u>	
UNRESTRICTED FUNDS					
General Funds	15,16		86,998		203,632
Designated Funds	15,16		747,589		847,416
			<u>834,587</u>	<u>1,051,048</u>	
RESTRICTED FUNDS	15,16		<u>98,575</u>	<u>102,049</u>	
TOTAL CHARITY FUNDS			<u>933,162</u>	<u>1,153,097</u>	

The accounts have been prepared in accordance with the special provisions for small companies under Part 15 of the Companies Act 2006

The notes on pages 42 to 58 form part of these accounts.

The financial statements were approved by the Board of Trustees on 17th October 2023 and were signed on its behalf by :

S Lockwood

Chair

Statement of Cash Flows for the year ended 31st March 2023

Company Number: 01655971

	<u>2023</u>	<u>2022</u>
	£	£
Cash used in operating activities	<u>(168,498)</u>	<u>(279,982)</u>
Non-operational cash flows:		
Investing activities :		
Payments for tangible fixed assets	(3,269)	(11,156)
Transfer of investments to/(from) bank	1,316	84,164
Investment income	<u>1,042</u>	<u>1,582</u>
	<u>(911)</u>	<u>74,590</u>
	<u>(911)</u>	<u>74,590</u>
Net Cash Outflows for the year	<u>(169,409)</u>	<u>(205,392)</u>
Cash and bank balances at the beginning of the year	<u>574,908</u>	<u>780,300</u>
Cash and bank balances at the end of the year	<u><u>405,499</u></u>	<u><u>574,908</u></u>

Notes to the Cash Flow Statement

Reconciliation of net movement in funds to net cash flow from operating activities

Statement of Financial Activities: Net movement in funds	(219,935)	(555,791)
Investment income	(1,042)	(1,582)
Depreciation	14,258	14,099
Amortisation	2,043	2,043
(Decrease) / Increase in creditors	(58,008)	(52,728)
Decrease / (increase) in debtors	94,186	313,977
	<u>(168,498)</u>	<u>(279,982)</u>

Cash Flow Restrictions

Charity law prohibits the use of net cash inflows on any endowed or other restricted fund to offset net cash outflows on any fund outside its own objects, except on special authority. In practice, this restriction has not had any effect on cash flows for the year.

The notes on pages 42 to 58 form part of these accounts.

Notes forming part of the Financial Statements

For the Year Ended 31st March 2023

1. Accounting Policies

The principal accounting policies are summarised below. The accounting policies have been applied consistently throughout the year and in the preceding year.

Basis of Accounting

The Financial Statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention and in accordance with the Companies Act 2006 and the Statement of Recommended Practice: Accounting and Reporting by Charities (Charities SORP (FRS102)).

The Charity is a public benefit entity as defined under FRS102.

Preparation of accounts on a going concern basis

Along with other similar charities and organisations, the organisation has been subject to the current economic uncertainty. The Organisation has realised a large deficit in the 2021/2022 and 2022/2023 financial years. During the 2022/2023 two substantial organisational restructures have taken place. This has reduced the staff numbers by 50% since the 2021/2022 year. This was required in order to reduce the overall expenditure, and provide a structure that the organisation needs for its long-term sustainability. This has been the main focus of the CEO. The Trustees have chosen to prepare the financial statements on a going concern basis. The Trustees are of the opinion this is the most appropriate basis based on the forecasts of income and expenditure and cash flow. Further in details in Note 23.

Fund Accounting

Unrestricted funds are available for use at the discretion of the Trustees in furtherance of the general objectives of the charity.

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

Restricted funds are subjected to restrictions on their expenditure imposed by the donor.

Income recognition policies

Items of income are recognised and included in the accounts when all of the following criteria are met:

- The charity has entitlement to the funds.
- Any performance conditions attached to the items of income have been met or are fully within the control of the charity.
- There is sufficient certainty that receipt of the income is considered probable and the amount can be measured reliably.
- Receipt of a legacy is only considered probable when the amount can be measured reliably and the charity has been notified of the executors' intention to make a distribution.

Expenditure

Expenditure is recognised in the period in which it is incurred. This includes attributable VAT which cannot be recovered.

Costs of raising funds comprise the costs associated with attracting voluntary income and the costs of fundraising.

Charitable expenditure comprises those costs incurred by the charity in the delivery of activities and services for its beneficiaries. It includes both costs that can be allocated directly to such activities and those costs of an indirect nature necessary to support them.

Governance costs include those costs associated with meeting the constitutional and statutory requirements of the charity and include the audit fee and costs linked to the strategic management of the charity. They have been included within support costs.

All costs are allocated between the expenditure categories of the SoFA on a basis designed to reflect the use of the resource. Costs relating to a particular activity are allocated directly, others are apportioned on an appropriate basis.

Notes forming part of the Financial Statements

For the Year Ended 31st March 2023

1. Accounting Policies (Continued)

Depreciation

Depreciation of fixed assets is calculated to write off their cost or valuation less any residual value over their estimated useful lives as follows : -

- Office Equipment	33 1/3% on reducing balance
- Freehold Buildings (excluding land)	2 % on cost

Expenditure on items of less than £1,000 are not capitalised but written off as repair and maintenance.

Amortisation - Website

Website development has been capitalised to the extent that it is probable that future economic benefits attributable to the website are likely which will benefit to the charity. The asset is being amortised over its estimated useful life of 4 years. The management reviews the carrying value of this asset annually for impairment.

Pension Contributions & Employee Benefits

Employees of the charity may join TPT defined contribution pension schemes which are funded by contributions from employees and the charity as employer. The contributions are expensed in the period to which they relate.

In the past the charity and its employees contributed to TPT Growth Plan 1,2 and 3. These schemes are multi-employer, defined benefit schemes accounted for as a defined contribution schemes (see Note 22 for the full details of these plans). Full provision has been made for the expected additional liability of the charity in respect of these plans. This liability is reviewed annually and the liability is restated each year at its Net Present Value.

The cost of any unused holiday entitlement is recognised in the period in which the employee's services are received.

Debtors

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

Bank

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 to the deposit or similar account. Any cash held with a notice period of over three months are classified as investments.

Creditors

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 discounts due.

Notes forming part of the Financial Statements

For the Year Ended 31st March 2023

2. Income

	Unrestricted General 2023 £	Unrestricted Designated 2023 £	Restricted 2023 £	Total 2023 £	Total 2022 £
Collection boxes	91	-	-	91	473
Church collections	4,269	-	-	4,269	5,437
Gift Aid and donations	21,160	25,100	1,453	47,713	18,480
School collections	547	-	268	815	-
Grants	11,822	-	26,100	37,922	56,793
Donations Legacies and Grants	38,389	25,100	27,821	91,310	81,183
Interagency fees	692,987	-	-	692,987	777,431
Local authority contracts	-	29,063	-	29,063	-
Centre activity fees	-	3,020	-	3,020	-
Other fees	26,949	700	-	27,649	32,205
Therapeutic Services Income	219,473	-	-	219,473	237,352
Charitable activities	939,409	32,783	-	972,192	1,046,988
200 Club	1,794	-	-	1,794	1,883
Other fundraising	2,784	-	100	2,884	6,855
Other trading activities:	4,578	-	100	4,678	8,738
Deposit interest	1,042	-	-	1,042	1,582
Investment income	1,042	-	-	1,042	1,582
Total income	983,418	57,883	27,921	1,069,222	1,138,491

Prior year income comparatives are on note 8.

Notes forming part of the Financial Statements

For the Year Ended 31st March 2023

3. Expenditure

	Staff Costs (note 5) £	Direct Costs £	Support costs (see below) £	Total 2023 £
<u>Raising funds</u>				
Promotion and fundraising activities	8,570	5,667	3,907	18,144
<u>Charitable Activities</u>				
Adoption	622,534	40,715	197,154	860,403
The Centre for Adoption Support	92,792	10,809	32,439	136,040
Therapeutic Services	233,098	8,945	32,527	274,570
	<u>948,424</u>	<u>60,469</u>	<u>262,120</u>	<u>1,271,013</u>
	<u>956,994</u>	<u>66,136</u>	<u>266,027</u>	<u>1,289,157</u>

Prior Year Comparatives

	Staff Costs (note 5) £	Direct Costs £	Support costs (see below) £	Total 2022 £
<u>Raising funds</u>				
Promotion and fundraising activities	44,381	8,433	11,304	64,118
<u>Charitable Activities</u>				
Adoption	832,762	53,317	238,415	1,124,494
The Centre for Adoption Support	113,579	11,603	36,877	162,059
Therapeutic Services	277,382	12,464	53,765	343,611
	<u>1,223,723</u>	<u>77,384</u>	<u>329,057</u>	<u>1,630,164</u>
	<u>1,268,104</u>	<u>85,817</u>	<u>340,361</u>	<u>1,694,282</u>

Support Costs

Support costs and overheads were allocated between charitable activities and promotional and fund raising activities as follows :

Cost Type

**Basis of
Apportionment**

Marketing
Operations
Staff costs (note 5)
Agency, staff development and training
Office costs
Governance and finance
Premises and depreciation
Systems and IT

Usage
Usage
Staff time
Staff time
Staff time
Staff time
Staff time
Staff time

Support costs are as follows :

	Raising Funds <u>2023</u> £	Charitable Activities <u>2023</u> £	Total <u>2023</u> £	Raising Funds <u>2022</u> £	Charitable Activities <u>2022</u> £	Total <u>2022</u> £
Marketing	796	7,164	7,960	1136	10,226	11,362
Operations	33	1,622	1,655	56	2,750	2,806
Staff costs	1,956	161,044	163,000	5543	173,263	178,806
Agency, staff development and training	60	4,899	4,959	381	11,912	12,293
Office costs	317	26,120	26,437	843	26,340	27,183
Governance and finance	72	5,915	5,987	747	23,354	24,101
Premises and depreciation	465	38,270	38,735	1781	55,659	57,440
Systems, IT & Amortisation	208	17,086	17,294	817	25,553	26,370
	<u>3,907</u>	<u>262,120</u>	<u>266,027</u>	<u>11,304</u>	<u>329,057</u>	<u>340,361</u>

Notes forming part of the Financial Statements

For the Year Ended 31st March 2023

4. Net Income / (Expenditure) for the year

This is stated after charging :

	<u>2023</u>	<u>2022</u>
	£	£
Depreciation - Owned Assets	14,258	14,099
Amortisation - Website	2,043	2,043
Audit Fees	6,900	6,300
Operating leases land and buildings	-	17,318
Discounting of pension contributions	122	192
	<u>122</u>	<u>192</u>

5. Staff Cost and Numbers

	<u>2023</u>	<u>2022</u>
	£	£
Staff Costs were as follows :		
Salaries and fees	997,772	1,280,364
Social security costs	72,661	103,561
Pension costs - current contributions (see Note 21)	46,915	62,985
Pension expenses (see Note 22)	2,634	-
Income and expenditure impact of the Growth Plan (see Note 22)	12	(18,360)
	<u>1,119,994</u>	<u>1,428,550</u>

Staff costs are apportioned as follows :

	<u>2023</u>	<u>2022</u>
	£	£
Promotional and fundraising activities	10,526	49,924
Expenditure on charitable activities	1,109,456	1,396,986
Discounting of pension contributions	12	(18,360)
	<u>1,119,994</u>	<u>1,428,550</u>

The number of employees whose total employment benefits (excluding employer pension costs) for the year were in excess of £60,000 fall within the bands as follows:

	<u>2023</u>	<u>2022</u>
	£	£
£60,000 - £69,999	<u>0</u>	<u>1</u>

The average monthly head count was 39 staff (2022 - 50) and the average monthly number of full time equivalent employees (including casual and part time staff) during the year was 26 (2022 - 36)

Total key management personnel benefits amounted to £56,854 (2022 - £67,670)

Non-statutory severance payments of £ nil (2022: £31,182) were made in the period.

Statutory severance payments of £48,804 (2022: £ nil) were made in the period.

6. Taxation

No liability to UK Corporation Tax arose for the year ended 31st March 2023 or for the year ended 31st March 2022.

Notes forming part of the Financial Statements

For the Year Ended 31st March 2023

7. Prior Year Fund Comparatives

	Unrestricted General Funds	Unrestricted Designated Funds	Restricted Funds	Total Funds
	<u>2022</u>	<u>2022</u>	<u>2022</u>	<u>2022</u>
	£	£	£	£
<u>Income from</u>				
Donations, Legacies and Grants	30,124	3,133	47,926	81,183
Charitable activities	810,223	236,765	-	1,046,988
Other trading activities	8,738	-	-	8,738
Investment income	1,582	-	-	1,582
<u>Total income</u>	850,667	239,898	47,926	1,138,491
<u>Expenditure on</u>				
Raising funds	64,118	-	-	64,118
Charitable Activities				
Adoption	1,048,436	76,058	-	1,124,494
The Centre for Adoption Support	28,988	62,698	70,373	162,059
Therapeutic Services	56,173	287,438	-	343,611
<u>Total expenditure</u>	1,197,715	426,194	70,373	1,694,282
<u>Net Income / (Expenditure) for the year</u>	(347,048)	(186,296)	(22,447)	(555,791)
<u>Transfers between funds</u>	321,158	(321,158)	-	-
<u>Net movement in funds for the year</u>	(25,890)	(507,454)	(22,447)	(555,791)
<u>Reconciliation of Funds</u>				
<u>Fund balances brought forward</u>	229,522	1,354,870	124,496	1,708,888
<u>Fund balances carried forward</u>	203,632	847,416	102,049	1,153,097

Notes forming part of the Financial Statements

For the Year Ended 31st March 2023

8. Prior Year Income Comparatives

	Unrestricted General Funds	Unrestricted Designated Funds	Restricted Funds	Total Funds
	<u>2022</u>	<u>2022</u>	<u>2022</u>	<u>2022</u>
	£	£	£	£
Collection boxes	473	-	-	473
Church collections	5,437	-	-	5,437
Gift Aid and donations	16,418	-	2,062	18,480
School collections	-	-	-	-
Legacies receivable	-	-	-	-
Grants	7,796	3133	45,864	56,793
Donations Legacies and Grants	30,124	3,133	47,926	81,183
Interagency fees	777,431	-	-	777,431
Local authority contracts	-	-	-	-
Other fees	29,392	2,813	-	32,205
Therapeutic Services Income	3,400	233,952	-	237,352
Charitable activities	810,223	236,765	-	1,046,988
200 Club	1,883	-	-	1,883
Other fundraising	6,855	-	-	6,855
Other trading activities:	8,738	-	-	8,738
Deposit interest	1,582	-	-	1,582
Investment income	1,582	-	-	1,582
Total income	850,667	239,898	47,926	1,138,491

Notes forming part of the Financial Statements**For the Year Ended 31st March 2023****9. Tangible Fixed Assets**

Cost	Freehold Property £	Office Equipment £	Total £
At 1st April 2022	570,847	106,354	677,201
Additions	3,269	-	3,269
Disposals	-	-	-
At 31st March 2023	<u>574,116</u>	<u>106,354</u>	<u>680,470</u>
Depreciation			
At 1st April 2022	58,612	83,029	141,641
Charge for the year	6,483	7,775	14,258
Disposals	-	-	-
At 31st March 2023	<u>65,095</u>	<u>90,804</u>	<u>155,899</u>
Net Book Values			
At 31st March 2023	<u>509,021</u>	<u>15,550</u>	<u>524,571</u>
At 31st March 2022	<u>512,235</u>	<u>23,325</u>	<u>535,560</u>

10. Intangible Fixed Assets

Cost	Website £
At 1st April 2022	8,172
Additions	-
At 31st March 2023	<u>8,172</u>
Amortisation	
At 1st April 2022	2,071
Charge for the year	2,043
At 31st March 2023	<u>4,114</u>
Net Book Values	
At 31st March 2023	<u>4,058</u>
At 31st March 2022	<u>6,101</u>

Notes forming part of the Financial Statements
For the Year Ended 31st March 2023
11. Debtors: Amounts falling due within one year

	<u>2023</u>	<u>2022</u>
	£	£
Trade debtors	155,150	195,724
Accrued income	10,342	51,327
Other Debtors	1,933	6,738
Prepayments	20,755	28,577
	<u>188,180</u>	<u>282,366</u>

12. Investments

	<u>2023</u>	<u>2022</u>
	£	£
Bank deposit accounts requiring more than 3 months notice of withdrawal	<u>2,224</u>	<u>3,540</u>

13. Creditors : Amounts falling due within one year

	<u>2023</u>	<u>2022</u>
	£	£
Trade creditors	23,339	39,702
Taxation and social security	13,931	27,635
Other creditors	510	1,683
TPT Growth Plan recovery plan	2,357	2,357
Accruals	40,001	76,435
Deferred income	109,465	97,454
	<u>189,603</u>	<u>245,266</u>

Deferred income reconciliation

Balance brought forward	97,454	145,739
Amounts released to the statement of financial activities	(90,003)	(138,213)
Amounts deferred in the year	102,014	89,928
Balance carried forward	109,465	97,454

Interagency Fees are made of two parts. Part 1 corresponds to two-thirds of the total fee, and Part 2 the final third. When a placement is made the full fee is invoiced. Part 1 is recognised immediately as this covers the work up to the day of placement. Part 2 funds 12-months of post-placement support and a pro-rata amount is recognised monthly. If an adoption order is made within these 12 months then the balance is recognised immediately. The majority of the deferred income consist of the pro-rata amount of the Part 2 of the interagency fees which have not yet been recognised as the funded work is yet to be delivered. The minority of the deferred income consists of funds specific to the delivery of therapeutic support to named children & families. These are recognised at the point when therapeutic support is delivered, else the funds are deferred. The balance of the deferred income consists of SWAC membership fees and event registration income.

14. Creditors : Amounts falling due after more than one year

	<u>2023</u>	<u>2022</u>
	£	£
Other Creditors - TPT Growth Plan recovery plan	1,767	4,112
	<u>1,767</u>	<u>4,112</u>

TPT Growth Plan recovery plan

TPT recovery plan payments are explained in detail in Note 22, payments are the expected to fall due as follows: (the liability in the accounts is shown at Net Present Value)

	<u>2023</u>	<u>2022</u>
	£	£
Within one year	2,357	2,357
Between one and five years	1,964	4,112
In five years or more	-	-
	<u>4,321</u>	<u>6,469</u>

Notes forming part of the Financial Statements
For the Year Ended 31st March 2023
15. Funds
Designated Funds

	At 1st April 2021 £	Income £	Expendi- ture £	Transfer £	At 31st March 2022 £	Income £	Expendi- ture £	Transfer £	At 31st March 2023 £
Reserves Policy	807,679	-	-	(190,663)	617,016	-	-	(112,427)	504,589
Post Adoption Support	217,200	-	-	13,200	230,400	-	-	12,600	243,000
The Centre for Adoption Support Therapeutic Services	32,703	5,833	27,269	(11,267)	-	57,883	57,883	-	-
	37,500	233,952	287,438	15,986	-	-	-	-	-
Early Permanence	20,000	113	16,642	(3,471)	-	-	-	-	-
Sharing Stories	46,000	-	46,000	-	-	-	-	-	-
Post-Adoption Support Project	193,788	-	48,845	(144,943)	-	-	-	-	-
	<u>1,354,870</u>	<u>239,898</u>	<u>426,194</u>	<u>(321,158)</u>	<u>847,416</u>	<u>57,883</u>	<u>57,883</u>	<u>(99,827)</u>	<u>747,589</u>

Restricted Funds

	At 1st April 2021 £	Income £	Expend- ture £	At 31st March 2022 £	Income £	Expend- ture £	At 31st March 2023 £
Post Adoption Support	88,200	-	-	88,200	-	-	88,200
Adoption Support (Legacy fund)	6,967	-	620	6,347	-	750	5,597
Family Grants	7,130	-	1,500	5,630	-	2,148	3,482
The Centre Project	443	6,862	6,863	442	27,921	27,921	442
Sylvia Adams Grant	4,361	16,428	20,213	576	-	576	-
Adoption West Grant	16,541	24,636	41,177	-	-	-	-
COVID-19 Support Grants	854	-	-	854	-	-	854
	<u>124,496</u>	<u>47,926</u>	<u>70,373</u>	<u>102,049</u>	<u>27,921</u>	<u>31,395</u>	<u>98,575</u>

Notes forming part of the Financial Statements**For the Year Ended 31st March 2023****16. Analysis of Net Assets between Funds**

	<u>2023</u>				<u>2022</u>			
	Unrestricted General Funds	Unrestricted Designated Funds	Restricted Funds	Total Funds	Unrestricted General Funds	Unrestricted Designated Funds	Restricted Funds	Total Funds
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
Fixed Assets	197,429	243,000	88,200	528,629	223,061	230,400	88,200	541,661
Other Net Assets	(110,431)	504,589	10,375	404,533	(19,429)	617,016	13,849	611,436
Total Funds	86,998	747,589	98,575	933,162	203,632	847,416	102,049	1,153,097

The reason for the establishment of the restricted and designated funds for post adoption support is explained in Note 17. As it is anticipated that the need for drawing on these reserves would only arise when general reserves have been exhausted the post adoption support restricted and designated fund are represented by that portion of the value of The Clifton Children's Society's Freehold Property. In the event that The Clifton Children's Society ceases to receive adequate income the restricted and designated funds would be applied for the provision of providing The Clifton Children's Society's commitment to lifelong post adoption support. The fixed assets of the charity were not donated to the charity in a restricted or designated fashion; however they are best reflected within restricted and designated funds as these funds are only likely to be utilised once the fixed assets of the charity have been liquidated.

Total free reserves for the year are considered to be £394,158, the total of the Reserves Policy designated fund, and general unrestricted funds not committed to fixed assets.

17. Purpose of Restricted and Designated Funds

Post Adoption Support Restricted and Designated Fund

Following placement and subsequent adoption The Clifton Children's Society has certain ongoing legal and moral obligations to the children adopted through the charity. These obligations can continue for up to 100 years. Although it is not possible to accurately predict the level of finance or timing that will be required to meet these obligations having reviewed the potential future liability it is apparent that this fund needs to be regularly (at least annually) reviewed and maintained to reflect these future liabilities.

The restricted fund arose in respect of placements between 1997 and March 2011 when a Post Adoption Support fee was paid in addition to the Interagency Fee. The balance on the fund has been calculated based on providing one year of Social Worker support to each relevant adoptee based on 24 hours per year at £25 per hour.

In addition to the restricted fund the Trustees have designated a post adoption support reserve. The purpose of this reserve is that in the circumstances that the agency is no longer able to continue to provide post adoption support, that an appropriate portion of the charities assets are devoted to continuing to provide a level of post adoption support in the most suitable way available at the time. The reserve would function in tandem with the restricted reserve in this case. The balance of this fund is also calculated based on providing one year of Social Worker support to each adoptee based on 24 hours per year at £25 per hour. This reserve will increase annually in line with the number of children placed and average salary expenditure.

Adoption Support Legacy Fund

The Clifton Children's Society received a restricted legacy during 2015/16 of £10,000 this is used to provide therapeutic life story work and to support adopted children in education.

Family Grants

These are funds received on the condition that they will be expended on assisting families in need.

Reserves Policy Fund

As explained in more detail in The Trustees' Report (see page 23) The Trustees have a reserves policy of maintaining free reserves at a level of 6 months expenditure. This is to help ensure continuity of service as the timings of income are uncertain.

The Centre for Adoption Support

The restricted fund was created with grants and donations received restricted for the benefit of The Centre for Adoption Support

This designated fund is a fund designated to help ensure the continuity of The Centre for Adoption Support service whilst further funding is sought.

17. Purpose of Restricted and Designated Funds (Cont.)

Post-Adoption Support Project

As a result of the reviews of The Centre and the social work service a proposal was presented to the board to strengthen the capacity of the social work team and to widen the reach of The Centre services. This designated fund was created by the board agreements to fund this two year proposal.

Sylvia Adams Grant

These funds were received from the Sylvia Adams Charitable Trust following a successful grant application to provide funding for the Tot's Group and to provide Theraplay Training for appropriate staff members

Adoption West Grant

These funds were received from Adoption West as part of a Post Adoption Support service agreement to provide funding for the activities delivered by The Centre for Adoption Support

Therapeutic Service

The funding received for Therapeutic Services is insufficient to deliver the full service that families require and so a designated fund has been established to meet the expected financial needs.

Early Permanence Fund

This fund is to help ensure the continuity of the delivery of the activities of the Early Permanence Hub after The Practice and Improvement Fund round 2 grant came to an end in August 2019.

Sharing Stories

This fund is to help ensure the continuity of The Sharing Stories Project after The Practice and Improvement Fund round 2 grant came to an end in August 2019.

COVID-19 Support Grants

This represents three grants funds that were received in direct response to the COVID-19 pandemic resulting from successful grant applications.

£445,431 was received through the Department for Education, to fund 75% of salaries for Adoption, Adoption Support and Therapeutic Services.

£9,999 was received from the Big Lottery to provide focussed Adoption Support to those families most affected by the pandemic.

£26,230 was received through the COVID-19 Adoption Support Fund to provide Adoption Support activities, and Therapeutic Services to families in the Adoption West RAA area.

18. Contingent Liabilities

The Trustees' of the charity recognise it has an ongoing and moral obligation to the children adopted through the charity. These obligations can continue for up to 100 years, with no accurate predictable information available in relation to timing and amounts involved. Refer to the details of the Post Adoption Support Funds in note 17.

Notes forming part of the Financial Statements

For the Year Ended 31st March 2023

19. Related Parties

The Clifton Children's Society is managed and controlled by the directors/trustees. None of the directors/trustees received any remuneration for their services.

During the year The Clifton Children's Society paid fees of £ nil (2022 - £ nil) to related parties of the trustees.

Expenses of £ nil (2022 £ nil) were reimbursed to the Trustees.

The Trustees, key management and related parties made donations to the charity during the year of £160 (2022 - £335).

No other related party transactions occurred in the year or in the prior year other than those reported in this note and elsewhere in the accounts.

The charity relies on the goodwill and generosity of professionals involved as Trustees, Committee and Panel Members giving of their time voluntarily to support the work of the organisation.

20. Pension Costs

The Clifton Children's Society's employers' and employees' pension contributions are paid into TPT's Growth Plan Series 4 and Flexible Retirement Plan. These are both Defined Contribution Plans. The employer contribution rate is 6% and the employee contribution rate is 5%.

Employees can make Additional Voluntary Contributions.

The employer contributions made during 2022/23 were £46,915 (2021/22 - £62,985)

The employee contributions made during 2022/23 were £50,200 (2021/22 - £64,057)

21. The Growth Plan

In the past The Clifton Children's Society has paid pension contributions into TPT's Growth Plan series 1,2 and 3. These plans have been closed to new contributions since at least 30th September 2013.

The Scheme is a multi-employer scheme which provides benefits to some 638 non-associated participating employers. The Scheme is a defined benefit scheme in the UK. It is not possible for The Clifton Children's Society to obtain sufficient information to enable it to account for The Scheme as a defined benefit scheme. Therefore it accounts for The Scheme as a defined contribution scheme.

The Scheme is subject to the funding legislation outlined in the Pensions Act 2004 which came into force on 30th December 2005. This together with documents issued by the Pensions Regulator and Technical Actuarial Standards issued by the Financial Reporting Council, set out the framework for funding defined benefit occupational pension schemes in the UK.

The Scheme is defined as a 'last man standing arrangement'. Therefore The Clifton Children's Society is potentially liable for other participating employers' obligations if those employers are unable to meet their share of The Scheme deficit following withdrawal from the scheme. Participating employers are legally required to meet their share of the scheme deficit on an annuity purchase basis on withdrawal from The Scheme.

A full actuarial valuation for The Scheme was carried out at 30th September 2020. This valuation showed assets of £800.3 million, liabilities of £831.9 million and a deficit of £31.6 million. To eliminate this funding shortfall, the Trustee has asked the participating employers (638) to pay additional contributions to the scheme as follows:

Deficit contributions

From 1st April 2022 to 31st January 2025, £3,312,000 per annum payable monthly and increasing by 3% on each 1st April.

Unless a concession has been agreed with the Trustee the term to 31 January 2025 applies.

Note that the scheme's previous valuation was carried out with an effective date of 30 September 2017. This valuation showed assets of £794.9m, liabilities of £926.4m and a deficit of £131.5m. To eliminate this funding shortfall, the Trustee asked the participating employers to pay additional contributions to the scheme as follows:

Deficit contributions

From 1st April 2019 to 31st January 2025, £11,243,000 per annum payable monthly and increasing by 3% on each 1st April.

Notes forming part of the Financial Statements**For the Year Ended 31st March 2023****21. The Growth Plan (Cont.)**

The recovery plan contributions are allocated to each participating employer in line with their estimated share of the Series 1 and Series 2 liabilities.

Where the scheme is in deficit and The Clifton Children's Society has agreed a deficit funding arrangement The Clifton Children's Society recognises a liability for this obligation. The amount recognised is the net present value of the deficit reduction contributions payable under the agreement that relates to the deficit. The net present value is calculated using the discount rate detailed in these disclosures. The unwinding of the discount rate is recognised as a finance cost.

	31/03/2023	31/03/2022	31/03/2021
	£	£	£
Present Value of provision	4,124	6,469	33,241

Reconciliation of opening and closing provisions

	2023	2022
	£	£
Provision at start of year	6,469	33,241
Unwinding of discount factor	122	192
Deficit contribution paid	(2,357)	(8,412)
Remeasurements - impact of any change in assumptions	(110)	(149)
Remeasurements - amendments to the contribution schedule	-	(18,403)
Provision at end of year	<u>4,124</u>	<u>6,469</u>
Income and expenditure impact		
Interest expense	122	192
Remeasurements - impact of any change in assumptions	(110)	(149)
Remeasurements - amendments to the contribution schedule	-	(18,403)
	<u>12</u>	<u>(18,360)</u>

Assumptions

	31/03/2023	31/03/2022	31/03/2021
Rate of discount % per annum	5.52%	2.35%	0.66%

The discount rates shown above are the equivalent single discount rates which, when used to discount the future recovery plan contributions due, would give the same results as using a full AA corporate bond yield curve to discount the same recovery plan contributions.

Notes forming part of the Financial Statements

For the Year Ended 31st March 2023

21. The Growth Plan (Cont.)

Deficit Contribution Schedule

The following schedule details the actual contributions payable by The Clifton Children's Society each year.

Year ending 31st March	<u>2023</u> £	<u>2022</u> £	<u>2021</u> £
Year 1	2,357	2,357	8,412
Year 2	1,964	2,357	8,664
Year 3		1,964	8,924
Year 4			7,660
Year 5			
Year 6			
	<u>4,321</u>	<u>6,678</u>	<u>33,660</u>

If The Clifton Children's Society ceased to participate in the scheme there would be a debt on withdrawal payable TPT have estimated this debt on withdrawal as at 30th September 2022 to be £52,008 (30th September 2021 £84,442). As there are no plans to withdraw from the scheme this liability has not been accounted for.

Plan expenses

Previously, the deficit contributions paid by employers included an allowance to cover the running costs of the Plan; these include TPT's internal administration costs as well as external advisory costs and pension levies. For the 2017 valuation the allowance was £3.6m p.a.

Following consultation with the Employers Committee, it has been agreed that the expenses for running the Plan should be accounted for separately from deficit contributions. This approach is more transparent and has the benefit to employers of reducing the value of deficit contributions that must be disclosed in employer accounts for the purposes of FRS102.

The total amount of expenses paid by employers each year remains broadly unchanged. Rather than these being included in the deficit contributions paid, expenses will in future be shown and charged for separately. The annual expenses charge from 1 April 2022 is £3.7m per annum and will increase by 3% each year. The expenses contribution will be reviewed again at the 2023 valuation.

It was also agreed that, like the deficit contributions, the Plan expenses will continue to be allocated based upon each employer's percentage share of liabilities.

22. Post-Balance Sheet Events

Sale of 162 Pennywell Road, Easton

In November 2022, the trustees agreed to engage a commercial estate agent to market the offices at Pennywell Road for either lease or sale. This decision was reached for the following reasons:

- Two organisational restructures have resulted in a reduced number of staff. Along with the introduction of hybrid ways of working, the large capacity of the building is now too great for the staff team.
- Increases in running costs, maintenance and repair costs.
- Generation of cash to combat the reduction in cash reserves due to two years of deficits.

In June 2023, the sale of the offices was agreed by the trustees for a sale price of £652,000. The legal process began in June.

The final sale of the office was completed on 19th October 2023.

There is no impact on the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2023.

Lease of offices at The Park, Knowle West

An operating lease for a new office at The Park in Knowle West was entered into on 4th April 2023.

The term of this lease started on 1st June 2023 and ends on 31st May 2024. Thereafter the lease can be terminated by giving six months notice of termination. The total cost of this lease is £23,459.

There is no impact on the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2023.