



Social Life Opportunities

Embracing Disability. Empowering Lives

ANNUAL REPORT 2023 - 2024

© Social Life Opportunities (SoLO)
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Overview



Our Charitable Objectives & Vision

SoLO's Charitable Objectives *"To help empower children, young people and adults with learning disabilities to achieve their full potential, to encourage their integration in society and improve their conditions of life in particular by the Service, or assistance in the Service, of facilities for them, their families and carers."*

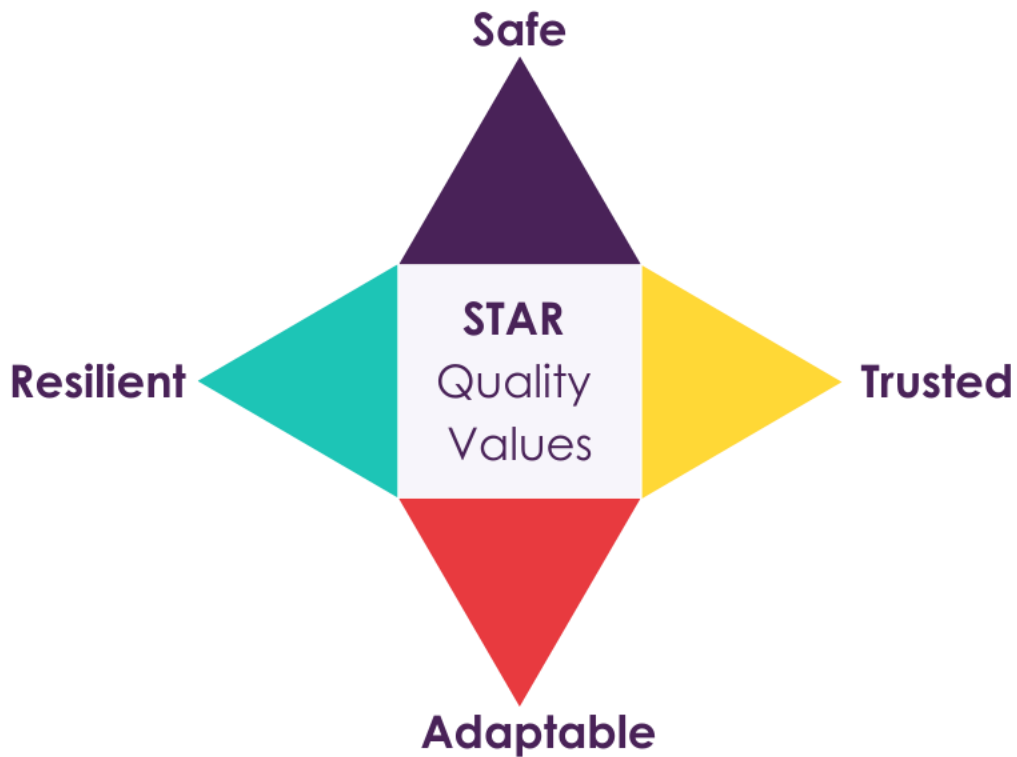
Within SoLO we see people with learning disabilities spending time in an environment that is comfortable, safe, and secure enabling them to be stretched, challenged, and take risks.

We are happy with what we see, but we want more. In the future, we want to ensure that our service users are not excluded from society in institutional settings but are provided with an environment that equips them for the future. We want to give them the skills and experience they need to be able to make choices and take control of their lives. We want to see the lives of our children with learning disability enhanced as they become adults. For adults with a learning disability, we want to provide them with the chance to experience all that life has to offer, have fun and be happy.



Enable our Service Users to realise their full potential with the support and encouragement of a skills and dedicated team, through the development of high-quality opportunities.

Our Values – STAR



SoLO's **STAR Quality values - Safe, Trusted, Adaptable, Resilient** - have continued to underpin everything that happens within SoLO and sustains the positive energy that has continued to focus on the "can" rather than the "can't" – even in the face of challenge.

Our staff team has continued to be adaptable and resilient, enabling us to manage a variety of need and respond to changing situations.

Service Users and their families have trusted SoLO that they will be kept safe whilst enjoying a fun and sociable experience independently from their families. As restrictions have eased, SoLO has been able to adapt its delivery to bring back more services and start easing into the evening services that have been on hold.



Chair's Report

We said and we did in 2023-24 following SoLO's strategy set in the previous year.

Commitment to independence

We have witnessed the heartwarming progress towards independence of those living in our Supported Living houses. Our ongoing review of the houses is to ensure that they are fit for purpose and required action taken.

Aware of the value of our Personal assistants' we aimed to meet the need where possible against a backdrop of recruitment challenges. With support from funders who also acknowledged the need for enhancing pay to recognise the importance of the role, we ensured that this was factored into our budget for 2024/25 and the team are working tirelessly to meet demand.

Growing towards need

Work continues to be in progress regarding other elements of our 3 year strategy. Conversations continue for collaborative working with other providers and bordering local authorities.

SoLO's Children's Team continues to refresh the service with new ideas, listening to what our little and growing people need and want.

SoLO Teamwork

We have witnessed some excellent examples of the SoLO team working together in the best interests of our service users and we have encouraged ongoing learning from these experiences for mutual benefit.

I give thanks for all who have helped achieve this and especially to the Board in their sound, considered decision making. During the audit of our accounts, we were very saddened that our Treasurer, Jon Prior, died suddenly. His unwavering commitment to SoLO over 6 years, strengthened our financial management and everything he did was done in a gentle, supportive way. He was an outstanding Trustee who is very much missed.

Jan Prior
Chair

As we reflect on the past year, I am filled with immense gratitude and pride for what SoLO has achieved.

This year has been remarkable in many ways. We have continued to work behind the scenes to implement new digital systems which has not only enabled staff to continue to support our service users but has also reduced paper usage in our aim to lower the carbon footprint of SoLO.

We also demonstrated our **STAR** Qualities when faced with the closure of our SoLO North Chelmsley Wood base within the local shopping centre. During a very restricted time limit of 13 weeks, we acknowledged the need to continue to run SoLO Daylight North as it is a vital part of SoLO services and swiftly redeveloped our site at Walnut Close.

This included a full remodelling of upstairs and installation of additional bathroom facilities. Whilst this was a difficult transition for some services users the results of the move have been a success and demonstrated the **Resilience** and **Adaptability** of SoLO, with our staff ensuring that our services users are able to **Trust** in SoLO process and feel **Safe** with the changes.

While we celebrate our successes, we also acknowledge the challenges we faced over the previous year which SoLO continued to overcome.

Recruitment: 2023-24 started with the continued challenge of recruitment of new staff, which was felt within all Health and Social Care. Throughout the year SoLO reviewed and refreshed recruitment processes and addressed that staff well-being required innovative approaches and flexibility. As we drew towards the end of the year recruitment increased significantly with many successful candidates joining and making a difference to all those they support.

Resources: Limited funding in certain areas restricted the scale of some initiatives, underscoring the need for diversified funding sources. SoLO's focus on the upcoming year is to review and refresh our fundraising efforts.

None of our achievements would be possible without the unwavering support of our donors, partners, staff, and volunteers. Your dedication and generosity inspire us to strive for greater heights.

Lesley Beer
CEO



Strategy 2023-2026



Strategic Plan 2023-2026

Review, Refresh, Renew

Like many organisations, the focus during the pandemic period was on the safety of our service users and staff and ensuring that SoLO could survive and thrive for the long-term. In 2023, the Trustees and senior staff looked to the future to chart a strategic course that would enable us to better meet the needs of our service users. Our thinking was informed by what our stakeholders and staff told us. The strategy that we developed is guiding SoLO through to 2026 but with a flexibility for change where required and openness to opportunities arising.

STAR Quality Values

Some things never change and for SoLO, our values remain central to serving others and the impact that we know they can have for those we support. Our new strategy is grounded in these values and SoLO will continue to embed these in future planning and delivery.

- **SAFE** – risk assessed, vigilant, fit for purpose
- **TRUSTED** - positive relationships, reliable, responsive, honest
- **ADAPTABLE** – inclusive, person-centred, creative, fun
- **RESILIENT** - learn and change, focus, true to Service User need
- **QUALITY** - value for money, high standards, positive outcomes

In applying these values, between 2023 and 2026 SoLO will continue to develop its services around three core principles below.

1. Commitment to independence

If SoLO has one contribution to make in the world it is the empowerment of disabled children and adults so that they achieve their full potential, living a life of opportunity and choice. We will be exploring the development of services that enable us to do this.

- **Supported Living** – We will continue to develop our expertise and are committed to running our three supported living houses to give our service users the platform for independence that they deserve.
- **Personal Assistance** – We know that this is crucial to enable our service users to engage in their communities, taking advantage of all that they have to offer. We are developing a plan to grow these services further to meet the need that we see.
- **Transition to adult services** – A feature of our success in developing day services is that we now need to consider how best to support the next generation of disabled young people into adulthood. Building on our current services, we are creating a blueprint for the growth/development of our provision.

2. Growing towards the need

- The history of SoLO has been characterised by seeing a need and working out how best we can meet it, in partnership with other agencies. This is how we are looking to the future. We will continue to explore outstanding need and see how we can respond.
- **Adjacent need** – exploring service gaps beyond our core operation in Solihull.
- **Thematic need** – exploring where we may have a contribution to make in developing:
 - Performance arts
 - Sports and healthy lifestyle
 - Employment skills
 - Independent living skills

3. SoLO Teamwork

We make a difference through the skill, commitment and flexibility of our people. We will continue to ensure a strong core skill set which is transferable across all our services.



Empowering Adults with Learning Disabilities



Daytime Opportunities

Aynsley Smith
Service Manager

SoLO offers three daytime services which provide safe, fun, and meaningful activities to develop identified outcomes for Service Users. As part of our new drive to ensure that our services are fit for the future to empower those we serve. Personal development of our service users to encourage their independence and life skills as well as providing social experiences to support people through their lives.

Daylight North is based in Chelmsley Wood (Walnut Close) and Daylight South in Central Solihull at our Fire Station base. Both sites are accessible for those with disabilities and the services cater for those with mild to moderate learning and associated difficulties. Evolve, delivered also from Walnut Close, Chelmsley Wood, provides a facility for those with complex care needs.

During the year SoLO has enabled families who are experiencing difficulties and challenges themselves, to have additional support for the person they and SoLO are supporting. Day services have also worked in conjunction with our Supported living services to develop further independent opportunities including travel, workplace volunteering, paid employment for those who live in our supported living houses.

SoLO embraces innovative ideas from service users and carers for developing our services and to offer greater choice and options that interest individuals.

Our drive for 2024/ 25 will be to support adults with a learning disability, transition into adulthood once leaving education – to gain the skills required to be able to access adult life.



Drop In Services

Aynsley Smith,
Service Manager

The disco has grown tremendously over the last year with attendance of 150+ weekly. Individuals are travelling from surrounding areas including Redditch and Birmingham. Attendees enjoy a fun evening of dancing, chatting, socialising, and making new friends.

Overnight Breaks

Aynsley Smith
Service Manager

In 2023 we continued to run overnight breaks but then took a temporary pause in January 2024 to review, renew and refresh. They recommenced in Spring 2024. The breaks are much loved especially at St Swithin's House which in addition to this, there is an increase in 2-night breaks at the Pioneer Centre. We are also exploring other options to widen our offer.



PA Services

Liv Dance
Assistant Service Manager

Personal Assistants provide a vital 1:1/2:1 support to many with disabilities and demand for the service over the last year has outstripped the number of Personal Assistants/Support Workers both nationally and within SoLO. SoLO has worked creatively to maximise the use of its Support Workers to meet the need and continues to think of innovative opportunities.

It is a strength of SoLO that PAs and their Service Users can integrate both within SoLO activities and other community activities. Service Users take the lead where possible identifying what they would like to do whilst being guided and supported by the PA to achieve their wishes and embed where possible life skills and independence whether they are accessing SoLO's services or activities within the community.

Service Users value the friendships they develop with PAs, and it has been very evident this year that PAs who frequently work across all SoLO's services and get to know a wide range of Service Users, will go the extra mile to support, especially if someone is going through a difficult time.



Empowering Children and Young People with Learning Disabilities



Children's Services

Alison Kaufmann & Eve Ralph
Head of Operations & Service Manager

SoLO have continued to deliver targeted short breaks for children and young people with disabilities as part of the Solihull Council contract. We have maintained provision of popular and much-loved activities but as part of our Review, Renew, Refresh strategy implementing new activities based on current need and wishes from feedback and surveys.

We work closely with Solihull Council in monitoring progress, with other providers to ensure variety and choice is available and with local schools and community groups to share information.

We provide children with a range of support, meeting mild/moderate and complex/higher support needs with specialist staff and a range of internal and external activities with the emphasis on fun experiences and development of skills, as well as giving their parents/carers some much needed respite.

In house activities provide a safe and secure environment with themed activities that are tailored to each child.

External activities this year have included trips to the cinema, bowling, laser quest, trampoline and soft play centres, and day trips to children's farms and theme parks.



Supporting Individuals to live independently



Supported Living

Alison Kaufmann
Head of Operations

SoLO's supported living service has continued to provide person centred support for the eight individuals living in our shared supported living housing. Its tenants have thrived with developing new skills and independence. We have strong core staff teams and Supports Workers have a clear person-centred ethos that embraces stepping back and encouraging the person to achieve as much as possible independently.

Successes to evidence SoLO's approach are in abundance this year and many independent living skills have been achieved as tenants are developing personal skills and getting more involved in mainstream community where opportunities are grasped and engaged with.

- Independent travelling
- Volunteering - supporting at local church groups, and voluntary work experience with and without staff support
- Gaining confidence to access community independently e.g. Litter picking independently
- Paid employment
- Accessing varied support services within the community – such as attending SoLO Day services, Forward Day services and Newlands Bishop Farm
- Joining and developing social groups within SoLO and other providers and creating a community social network
- Maintaining their homes effectively – understanding what household tasks need to be done and choosing when and how they carry these out, with active support
- Growth in confidence and resilience
- Self-administration and management of their own medication

Service Users of SoLO's office team including managers have taken the opportunity to supplement the support worker team to widen their knowledge and understanding of SoLO's Service Users whilst enhancing their lives engaging with the tenants. This collaborative approach across all SoLO's 3 Supported Living houses has ensured sharing of good practice and consistency across the services. Staff teams are working closely with social care teams and learning disability professionals to help our tenants understand their own disability and the impact this has on their lives. One tenant has been involved on delivering her own training to the staff team to help them understand how autism affects her anxiety and how staff can support her to manage this.

During this year, attentive staff responded with urgency to signs of health concerns of one of our tenants which resulted in a cancer diagnosis. We provided physical and emotional support throughout the diagnosis and chemotherapy treatment and worked closely with a multi-disciplinary team of social care and NHS professionals to ensure the right support was provided.

Frequent emergency hospital admissions to QE and Heartlands came with acknowledgements by social care and NHS staff about the excellent support that SoLO provided during this time. Staff were also supported to help them through the emotional impact of the cancer and treatment, and they maintained the "spirit of SoLO" in ensuring that his needs were met. Fortunately, he was given all clear in Feb 24 and is now being monitored.



Funding & Fundraising



With no professional fundraisers involved, SoLO is guided by the Charities (Protection and Social Investment) Act 2016 and CC20 Charity Fundraising: a guide to trustee duties. No complaints have been received in this reporting period and no direct marketing takes place. A fundraising log is kept, and funding bids are managed and monitored for spend so that reports can be made to funders.

Direct fundraising efforts, understandably, have been more difficult to achieve during this period of economic uncertainty but SoLO have continued to be supported by various organisations and individuals throughout the year.

SoLO has benefited from fundraising events such as:

- ✓ Shirley Lions Santa Sleigh
- ✓ Harlequinade Drama Group
- ✓ Wren Hall
- ✓ Sing Bentley Heath Choir
- ✓ Olton Golf Club

Donations of edible gifts are always welcome and those received in the form of Easter eggs and selection boxes from National Grid/Asda/Next/Tesco along with gift hampers from Next which were handed to SoLO's children, young people, and adults throughout our services.

A total of **£5,012** was received from individual donors to help SoLO empower people to lead independent lives.



Activities

The organisation is constituted under its Memorandum & Articles of Association, amended in 2014. SoLO's Board of Trustees has ultimate responsibility for the governance and strategic direction of the charity and to ensure that the provision offered by SoLO benefits the public, with learning and other associated disabilities, who receive those services.

It aims to ensure that SoLO adheres to its objectives and values and is compliant as-required by statutory regulatory bodies. To achieve this, the Board receives and reviews the Financial Accounts, Risk Register and Quality Assurance.

At its monthly Board meeting, it is updated on all areas of SoLO's operation through report mechanism and the CEO is responsible for sharing areas of concern with the Board from incidents or complaints, highlighting areas of good practice through compliments. The Board is not risk averse in its approach to considering new opportunities to support its service users. It considers the risks carefully and requires risks to be managed appropriately. SoLO's trustees are all volunteers.

Trustees

SoLO's Memorandum & Articles allow for up to twelve trustees and the aim is to ensure a diversity of skills, experience, and people, using an audit tool to achieve this balance. New trustees are elected on to the Board by existing Trustees.

The current Board skills include finance, health, care, carer experience, strategic management, risk management and IT. The Trustee Board uses its networks to bring in pro-bono support. The CEO is responsible for operational delivery of the Board's strategic objectives.

The CEO meets with the Chair regularly as required and key staff attend Board meetings as required to contribute and report specifically on their areas of work. To ensure delivery and compliance to the Board's duties and regulatory requirements a workplan is in place and operational work is reviewed and audited.

Induction and Training

New Trustees take part in the SoLO induction process and join appropriate SoLO training. They are equipped with information about their role and responsibilities and encouraged to visit services to meet with staff and service users to see at first-hand SoLO's operational delivery.

Remuneration

The Board is responsible for reviewing remuneration for all staff on an annual basis. A review matrix is used to scan the environment, benchmarking salaries against the market and financial position of the organisation.

Public Benefit

In developing and undertaking the charity's activities, Trustees have due regard to the guidance published by the Charity Commission regarding public benefit.



Financial Review



Going Concern

The political environment in the UK and fragility throughout the world generally, creates a background of economic fragility. Having reviewed the financial forecast through to September 2024, the Board is satisfied that the charity can continue to provide its services during these ongoing challenging times.

Net Income

In line with the reduced income and regular reviewing of expenditure, this has resulted in an operational surplus of **£2,878**.

Incoming Resources

Income from Fundraising events has fallen by **18%**.

Incoming resources from charitable activities include income from local authority grants and service level agreements. Income also includes payments made by service users in respect of certain services, these payments being funded from individual personal budgets.

Resources Expended

Charitable activities cost of **£2,241,414** relate principally to the cost of running our **34** activities and increased provision of Supported Living for the benefit of our service users. They also included the depreciation, rent and other costs associated with our buildings.

Assets

The netbook value of fixed assets has increased by **£13,940** due to investment in premises.

Fund and Reserves

Restricted funds consist of income received which can be used only for the purposes stated by the donor. At year-end, the balances on restricted funds amounted to **£18,715**, all of which relate to expenditure on fixed assets and equals the net book value of these assets.

Designated funds are unrestricted funds which Trustees have set aside for particular purposes. At year end, the balances on these funds were **£NIL** which relate to expenditure on fixed assets financed by reserves. The balance equals the net book value of these assets.

General funds or reserves amount to **£636,790**. Trustees reviewed the reserves policy during the year and hold reserves to fund:

- Shortfalls in income where this does not reach expected levels
- Unexpected expenditure
- Working capital

Trustee policy is to aim to hold liquid reserves equivalent to a minimum of 3 months of future costs, excluding depreciation. This would be in the region of £400K. Currently, the actual figure is **£346,370** and work is continuing to build the reserves. As part of the strategic development of the charity, the reserves policy is revisited annually.

Investment Policy

The prime objective of Trustees is to safeguard the value of the charity's assets and a secondary objective is to earn best interest on cash deposits. All material funds of the charity, except for reserves, are expendable within twelve months of receipt. The policy for investment is to retain funds as cash and place them on deposit, with a number of financial institutions, on notice terms of up to 120 days.

Risks

Trustees have identified, through the risk management process, the following key risks and have identified corresponding mitigating actions to address. These and other risks are reviewed quarterly, and mitigating actions considered to determine proportionality and effectiveness.

Risks are monitored regularly, and new risks added when they arise. The corporate risk register is the vehicle used to ensure risks are managed and trustees assured.

Risk	Mitigating actions
We may not be able to increase our reserves in the financial year which will impact on the future development of the organisation.	This remains a static risk as withdrawal of social care funding whilst not in budget will have an overall negative impact on the general reserves position. Mitigating actions will include seeking new funding sources to increase sustainability.
Recruitment difficulties for staffing throughout Health and Social Care sector resulting in need for Personal Assistants to support vulnerable children and adults.	Constant review of market and salary analysis to support recruitment drive. Focus on recruiting Personal Assistants in line with local authority drive to increase the support for individuals.
Minimum wage increase will impact on project costs and recruitment for 2024/25	Budgets prepared with all viable options for staffing costs as well as increase of subscriptions to counter this increase.

Statement of Trustee Responsibilities

Trustees as Directors of Social Life Opportunities (SoLO) are responsible for preparing the Annual Report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

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

- Select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently
- Observe the methods and principles in the Charities SORP 2015 (IFRS 102)
- Make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent
- State whether applicable accounting standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements
- Prepare the financial statements on going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to assume that the company will continue in business.

Trustees are responsible for keeping adequate accounting records that disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the 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 company and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

Insofar as Trustees are aware:

There is no relevant information of which the Charity's auditors are unaware and Trustees have taken all steps that they ought to have taken to make themselves aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the auditors are aware of that information.

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

In preparing this report, Trustees have taken advantage of the small companies' exemptions provided by Section 415A of the Companies Act 2006.

This report was approved and signed on behalf of the Trustees by:
Jan Prior (Chair)



01/11/2024

Report of the Independent Auditors to the Directors of Social Life Opportunities (SoLO) for the year ended 31 March 2024

Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of Social Life Opportunities (SoLO) (the 'charitable company') for the year ended 31 March 2024 which comprise the Statement of Financial Activities, the Balance Sheet, the Statement of Cashflows and notes to the financial statements, including significant accounting policies. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards, including Financial Reporting Standard 102 (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

In our opinion the financial statements:

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

Basis for opinion

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

Conclusions relating to going concern

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

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

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

Other information

The other information comprises the information included in the Trustees report, other than the financial statements and our auditor's report thereon. The trustees are responsible for the other information contained within the Trustees report. Our opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and, except to the extent otherwise explicitly stated in our report, we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon. Our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements or our knowledge obtained in the course of the audit or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If we identify such material inconsistencies or apparent material misstatements, we are required to determine whether this gives rise to a material misstatement in the financial statements themselves. If, based on the work we have performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, we are required to report that fact.

We have nothing to report in this regard.

Opinion 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 for the fiscal year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements; and
- the Trustee's Report has been prepared in accordance with applicable legal requirements.

Matters on which we are required to report by exception

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

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

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

- the trustees were not entitled to take advantage of the small companies exemption from the requirement to prepare a strategic report or in preparing the directors' report.

Responsibilities of trustees

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

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

Our 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 a Report of the Independent Auditors that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with ISAs (UK) will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

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

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 trustees and other management and from our commercial knowledge and experience;

- we focused on specific laws and regulations which we considered may have a direct material effect on the financial statements or the operations of the company, including Charities Act 2011, taxation legislation, data protection, anti-bribery, employment, environmental and health and safety legislation;
- we focused on specific laws and regulations which we considered may have a direct material effect on the financial statements or the operations of the company; and
- we assessed the extent of compliance with the laws and regulations identified above through making enquiries of management and inspecting legal correspondence.

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; and
- considering the internal controls in place to mitigate risks of fraud and non-compliance with laws and regulations.

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 accounting estimates 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 meeting of those charged with governance;
- enquiring of management as to actual and potential litigation and claims; and
- reviewing correspondence with HMRC and other relevant parties.

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/auditorsresponsibilities. This description forms part of our Report of the Independent Auditors.

Use of our report

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


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Jeremy Kitson BA FCA
Prime
Corner Oak
1 Homer Road
Solihull
West Midlands
B91 3QG

01/11/2024

Statement of Financial Activities for year ended 31 March 2024

	Note	Unrestricted Funds 2024 £	Restricted Funds 2024 £	Total Funds 2024 £	Total Funds 2023 £
Income from:					
Donations	2	5,012	-	5,012	12,300
Charitable Activities	3	2,231,992	-	2,231,992	2,113,514
Other Trading Activities	4	13,681	-	13,681	22,864
Investment		1,416	-	1,416	794
Total Income		2,252,102	-	2,252,102	2,149,472
Expenditure on:					
Raising Funds	5	7,809	-	7,809	7,781
Charitable Activities	6	2,240,437	977	2,241,414	2,126,986
Total Expenditure		2,248,247	977	2,249,224	2,134,767
Net Income / (expenditure) and net movement of funds		3,855	(977)	2,878	14,705
Reconciliation of Funds:					
Total funds Brought Forward - at 1st April 2023		614,220	19,692	633,912	619,207
Total Funds Carried Forward - at 31st March 2024		618,075	18,715	636,790	633,912
All Income and expenditure derives from continuing activities				-	

Balance Sheet as at 31 March 2024

Registered Number 5025939

	Note	2024		2023	
		£	£	£	£
Fixed Assets					
Tangible assets	11		290,420		276,480
Current assets					
Debtors	12	334,106		216,996	
Cash at bank and on hand	13	189,338		282,481	
Total Current Assets		523,444		499,477	
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year					
	14	(177,074)		(142,045)	
Net current assets			346,370		357,432
Net assets			<u>636,790</u>		<u>633,912</u>
Funds					
	15				
Restricted funds			18,715		19,692
Unrestricted funds - Designated funds			(9,397)		0
Unrestricted funds - General funds			627,472		614,220
Total funds			<u>636,790</u>		<u>633,912</u>

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the special provisions relating to companies subject to the small companies regime within Part 15 of the Companies Act 2006.

The financial statements were approved by the Trustees and signed on their behalf by:

Jan Prior
Chair



Date 01/11/2024

Rehana Begum-Ali
Treasurer



Statement of Cash Flow as at 31 March 2024

<i>Statement of Cash Flows</i>	2024	2023
	£	£
Cash flow from operating activities	(70,245)	(20,929)
Net cash flow from operating activities	(70,245)	(20,929)
Cash flow from investing activities		
Payments to acquire tangible fixed assets	(24,314)	(20,689)
Interest Received	1,416	794
Net Cash flow from investing activities	(22,898)	(19,895)
Net (decrease) / increase in cash and cash equivalents	(93,142)	(40,824)
Cash and cash equivalents at 1st April 2023	282,481	323,305
Cash and cash equivalents at 31st March 2024	189,339	282,481
Cash and cash equivalents consists of:		
Cash at bank and in hand	111,296	132,396
Short term deposits	78,043	150,085
Cash and cash equivalents at 31st March 2024	189,339	282,481

Notes to the Financial Statements

1 Summary of Significant Accounting Policies

1.1 Basis of Preparation of financial statements and general information

Social Life Opportunities is a charitable company limited by guarantee incorporated and is also a registered charity in England and Wales. The registered office is 38 Walnut Close, Chelmsley Wood, Birmingham, B37 7PU. In the event of the charity being wound up, the liability in respect of the guarantee is limited to £1 per Service User of the charity. The registered office and details of the charity's operations are included in the trustees' report.

The charity constitutes a public benefit as defined by FRS102. The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard application in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) the Charities Act 2011, the Companies Act 2006 and UK Generally Accepted Practice. The functional currency of the charity is sterling and the figures have been rounded to the nearest pound sign.

1.2 Fund Accounting

Unrestricted funds are available for use at the discretion of the Trustees in furtherance of the charitable objectives of the charity. Designated funds are unrestricted funds which the Trustees have designated for a particular project or purpose. The policy for determining each designated fund is set out in the notes to the financial statements. Restricted funds are funds subject to specific restrictions imposed by donors or funds which have been raised by the charity for specific purposes. The purpose and use of each restricted fund is set out in the notes to the financial statements.

1.3 Incoming resources

All incoming resources are included in the Statement of Financial Activities when the charity is entitled to the income and that amount can be measured reliably and it is probable that the income will be received. The following policies are applied to specific categories of income.

- (a) Voluntary income received by way of donations is included in the Statement of Financial Activities when receivable
- (b) Interest is included when receivable
- (c) Incoming resources from grants and contracts which are related to performance and specific deliverables are included in the Statement of Financial Activities as the

charity earns the right to the income by its performance. Grant income received during the year that relates to a subsequent financial period is carried forward as a creditor in the balance sheet and shown as deferred grant income

(d) Donated services or equipment are included in the Statement of Financial Activities at their fair value where the economic benefit is probable, it can be measured reliably, and the charity has control over the item. Fair value is the price the charity estimates it would pay in the open market for such services or equipment. The equivalent amount is recognised as expenditure in the Statement of Financial Activities or is capitalised as a fixed asset

(e) The value of services provided by volunteers, including trustees, has not been included in line with the SORP (FRS102)

1.4 Resources expended

Expenditure is recognised on an accrual's basis. Resources expended include attributable VAT which cannot be recovered. Expenditure is recognised where there is a legal or constructive obligation to make payments to third parties, it is probable that settlement will be required, and the amount of the obligation can be measured reliably.

Charitable expenditure comprises these costs incurred by the charity in the delivery of its activities and services for its beneficiaries. It includes both costs which can be allocated directly to such activities and those costs of an indirect nature required to support them. Support costs include office costs, governance costs and administrative payroll costs. Support costs have been allocated to activities in the ratio of direct salaries.

1.5 Pension Contributions

The charity operates a defined contribution pension's scheme. The assets of the scheme are held separately from those of the charity in an independent administered fund. Contributions are expensed as they become payable.

1.6 Fixed assets and depreciation

Asset additions costing less than £1,000 are not capitalised.

Tangible fixed assets are held at cost less accumulated depreciation and impairment losses. Depreciation is provided at rates calculated:

- IT equipment over the period of 3 years
- Freehold Purchase over the period of 50 years
- Leasehold improvements over the period of the lease
- Fixtures and fittings over periods between 3 and 5 years
- Motor vehicles over 7 years

1.7 Debtors and creditors receivable / payable within one year

Debtors and creditors with no stated interest rate and receivable or payable within one year are recorded at transaction price. Any losses arising from impairment are recognised in expenditure.

1.8 Concessionary loans

Concessionary loans include receivables / payable to a third party which are interest free or below the market interest rates and are made to advance charitable purposes. The loan is measured at a cost less impairment.

1.9 Operating leases

Payments under operating leases are charged to the statement of financial activities on a straight-line basis over the period of the lease.

1.10 Going Concern

The financial statements have been prepared on a going concern basis as the trustees believe that no material uncertainties exist.

The trustees have considered the level of funds held and the expected level of income and expenditure for 12 months from authorising these financial statements.

The budgeted income and expenditure are sufficient with the level of reserves for the charity to be able to continue as a going concern.

This consideration has taken into accounts the continued expected impact of Covid- 19 on the Charity, as far as it can be determined, and the Trustees remain satisfied that the going concern principle remains appropriate.

1.11 Judgement and key sources of estimation uncertainty

The following judgements have been made in the process of applying the above accounting policies that have had the most significant effect on amounts recognised in the financial statements.

Donations in kind – a judgement has been made as to the fair value of donations in kind, based on an understanding of the local market for these items/s.

Depreciation rates – a judgement has been made as to the estimated useful life of assets and, therefore, the rate of depreciation. The estimate is made based on best practice and knowledge of the usage of such assets in the charity.

There are no key assumptions concerning the future and other key sources of estimation uncertainty at the reporting date that have a significant risk of causing material adjustments to the carrying amounts of assets and liabilities within the new fiscal year.

1.12 Financial Instruments

The Charity holds only basic Financial Instruments. The financial assets and financial liabilities of the Charity are as follows:

Debtors – trade and other debtors are basic financial instruments and are debt instruments measured at amortised cost as detailed in Note 12. Prepaid expenses are not financial instruments.

Liabilities – concessionary loans, trade creditors, accruals and other creditors will be classified as financial instruments and are measured at amortised cost as detailed in Note 14.

Taxation and social security are not included in the financial instruments' disclosure.

Deferred income is not deemed to be a financial liability, as in the cash settlement has already taken place and there is simply an obligation to deliver charitable s rather than cash or another financial instrument.

1.13 Government Grants Accounts policy

Grants are included in the Statement of Financial Activities on a receivable basis.

The balance of income received for specific purposes but not expended during the period is shown in the relevant funds on the Balance Sheet.

Where income is received in advance of meeting any performance related conditions there is not unconditional entitlement to the income and its recognition is deferred and included in creditors as deferred income until the performance-related conditions are met. Where entitlement occurs before income is received, the income is accrued.

2. Donations and Legacies

	2024	2023
	£	£
Other Donations and Legacies	5,012	12,300
	5,012	12,300

3. Income from Charitable Activities

	Unrestricted Funds 2024	Restricted Funds 2024	Total Funds 2024	Total Funds 2023
	£	£	£	£
Grants and service level agreements				
Solihull MBC Children's Services	292,406	-	292,406	303,757
Solihull MBC Infection Control and Workforce	-	-	-	39,298
Solihull Clinical Commissioning Group	15,000	-	15,000	15,000
Oulton Ladies Golf Club	12,000	-	12,000	-
Eveson Trust	-	-	-	10,000
Bailey Thomas	-	-	-	2,333
Solihull Chamber of commerce	8,949	-	8,949	-
Knowle and Dorrige Lions	-	-	-	2,000
Total grants and service level agreements	328,355	-	328,355	372,388
Service User Income	1,903,637	-	1,903,637	1,741,126
Total Income from Charitable Activities	2,231,992	-	2,231,992	2,113,514

Income related to restricted charitable activities **£NIL** (2023: £12,783) and income relating to unrestricted charitable activities **£2,314,572** (2023: £2,100,731).

4. Other trading activities

During the year The Charity received funds from Fundraising Events **£2,735** (2023: £3,331) as well as funds generated from Letting of Premises **£10,946** (2023: £11,589) and refunds/compensation in the year for **£NIL** (2023: £7,944)

5. Cost of raising funds - Unrestricted

	2024 £	2023 £
Salary Costs	5,675	5,628
Other Direct Costs	715	474
Support Costs (note 7)	1,420	1,679
	7,809	7,781

6. Costs of Charitable Activities

	Adult's Services 2024	Children's Services 2024	Independent Living 2024	Total 2024	Total 2023
	£	£	£	£	£
Salaries	241,801	61,893	293,284	596,977	268,630
Sessional Staff	606,051	83,938	348,848	1,038,837	1,212,807
Premises	50,006	20,355	46,863	117,224	113,463
Member Activities	51,275	11,254	6,233	68,761	55,793
Transport of Members	545	492	2,809	3,845	5,095
Volunteer Expenses	106	247	-	354	35
Bad Debt	225	25	-	250	20,566
Depreciation	3,813	2,308	-	6,121	8,586
Support Costs (note 7)	212,169	36,493	160,689	409,352	442,011
	1,165,990	217,006	858,725	2,241,721	2,126,986

Cost of restricted charitable activities **£NIL** (2023: £25,712) and cost of unrestricted charitable activities **£2,243,217** (2023: £2,101,274).

	2024	2023
	£	£
7. Support Costs		
Salaries	208,215	236,289
Legal	10	-
Premises Costs	35,994	69,299
Insurance	8,931	6,156
Staff Costs	36,930	12,418
Communication Costs	9,458	14,722
Computer Costs	41,717	41,138
Publicity Costs	5,265	16,265
Depreciation	4,253	5,967
Training Costs	8,392	10,659
Auditor's remuneration - Governance Cost	10,000	9,126
Other Office Costs	-	19,972
Cost of generating funds	41,606	1,679
	410,771	443,690

Support costs have been allocated to activities in the ratio of direct salaries as follows

	2024	2023
Cost of generating funds (note 5)	1,420	1,679
Cost of charitable activities - Adults (note 6)	212,169	217,856
- Children's (note 6)	36,493	52,984
- Independent Living (note 6)	160,689	171,171
	410,771	443,690

8. Net Expenditure

This is stated after charging

	2024	2023
	£	£
Depreciation of tangible fixed assets (note 11)	10,374	14,552
Auditor's remuneration	10,000	9,126
Operating Lease Cost	33,632	33,632

9. Staff Costs

	2024	2023
	£	£
Staff costs were		
Salaries	1,732,785	1,590,710
Social security costs	111,245	110,037
Pension	27,479	24,286
	1,871,508	1,725,033

The charity employed on average **116** staff (2023:146) of whom **76** (2023: 65) were employed on a sessional part time basis.

The charity operates the auto enrolment pension scheme and makes the minimum contribution of **3%** (2023: 3%) to this scheme, there are **95** employees (2023: 98) within the scheme.

No employee received remuneration amounting to more than £60,000 in either year.

The pensions costs charge represents contributions payable by the charity to the fund and amounted to **£27,479** (2023: £24,286) Contributions totalling **£13,114** (2023: £12,071) were payable to the fund at the balance sheet date and are included in creditors.

10. Trustee and Key Management Personnel remuneration and expenses

No trustee received any remuneration during either year.

During the year no trustees were reimbursed for out of pocket expenses. (2023: NIL).

Related Trustee Party Transactions include: 1 trustee son received support through the choir project a voluntary project with no member contribution required.

The Charity purchased trustee indemnity insurance at a cost of **£996** (2023: **£996**) included in governance costs.

The total amount of employee benefits paid to Key management personnel were **£92,051** (2023: **£91,324**) for the year. Key management personnel are those persons having authority and responsibility for planning, directing, and controlling the activities of the entity, directly or indirectly, including any directors (whether executive or otherwise) of the entity.

Related Employee Party Transactions include : Alison Kaufmann Head of Operations, Sibling Gross Salary **£23,558** for working as a Support Worker (2023: **£20,302**)

11. Tangible Fixed Assets

	IT Equipment	Freehold Property	Leasehold Improvements	Fixtures and Fittings	Motor Vehicle	Total
Cost	£	£	£	£	£	£
At 1st April 2023	69,166	335,604	99,085	109,385	42,000	655,240
Capital expenditure for the year	7,447	-	-	16,867	-	24,314
At 31st March 2024	76,613	335,604	99,085	126,253	42,000	679,554
Depreciation						
At 1st April 2023	68,102	78,726	99,085	90,847	42,000	378,760
Charge for the year	977	7,743	-	1,654	-	10,374
At 31st March 2024	69,079	86,469	99,085	92,501	42,000	389,134
Net Book Value						
At 31st March 2024	7,534	249,135	-	33,751	-	290,420
At 31st March 2023	1,064	256,878	-	18,538	-	276,480

12. Debtors

	2024	2023
	£	£
Trade Debtors	273,887	178,911
Prepaid expenses	7,219	7,980
Other Debtors	53,000	30,105
	334,106	216,996

13. Cash at Bank and On Hand

	2024	2023
	£	£
Bank deposit accounts	78,043	150,085
Bank current accounts	109,210	130,309
Cash	2,086	2,087
	189,338	282,481

14. Creditors: amounts falling due within one year

	2024	2023
	£	£
Trade creditors	50,630	23,298
Taxation and social security	23,868	26,274
Deferred income	8,409	10,933
Other creditors (charge card/pension)	16,273	17,810
Accruals	77,893	63,730
Total current liabilities	177,074	142,045
Deferred Income	2024	2023
	£	£
Deferred Income as 1st April 2023	10,933	33,670
Amount released from previous year	(10,933)	(33,670)
Incoming resources deferred in the year	8,410	10,933
Deferred Income as 31st March 2024 - which relates to grants which are for 24/25	8,410	10,933

15. Statement of fund movements

	1st April 2023	Incoming resources	Resources expended	At 31st March 2024
	£	£	£	£
General Funds	614,220	2,252,099	2,238,847	627,472
Designated Funds				
Restructuring	-	-	-	-
Fixed Assets	-	-	9,397	(9,397)
Total Unrestricted Funds	614,220	2,252,099	2,248,244	618,075
Restricted Funds				
Fixed Assets *	19,692	-	977	18,715
Workforce retention	-	-	-	-
Bailey Thomas Grant	-	-	-	-
Total Restricted Funds	19,692	-	977	18,715
Total Funds	633,912	2,252,099	2,249,221	636,790

* The fixed asset fund represents the Net Book Value of assets purchased with restricted funds.

15a. Prior Year Statement of fund movements – 2022/23

	1st April 2022	Incoming resources	Resources expended	At 31st March 2023
	£	£	£	£
General Funds	584,963	2,136,689	2,107,432	614,220
Designated Funds				
Restructuring	-	-	-	-
Fixed Assets	1,623	-	1,623	-
Total Unrestricted Funds	586,586	2,136,689	2,109,055	614,220
Restricted Funds				
Fixed Assets *	32,621	-	12,929	19,692
Children In Need	-	10,450	10,450	-
Solihull CCG - Project B	-	2,333	2,333	-
Total Restricted Funds	32,621	12,783	25,712	19,692
Total Funds	619,207	2,149,472	2,134,767	633,912

16. Analysis of net assets between funds

	Unrestricted Funds 2024	Restricted Funds 2024	Total Funds 2024	Total Funds 2023
	£	£	£	£
Tangible fixed assets	271,705	18,715	290,420	276,480
Net current assets	346,370	-	346,370	357,432
Net Assets	618,075	18,715	636,790	633,912

16a. Prior Year Analysis of net assets between funds – 2022/23

	Unrestricted Funds 2023	Restricted Funds 2023	Total Funds 2023	Total Funds 2022
	£	£	£	£
Tangible fixed assets	256,788	19,692	276,480	270,343
Net current assets	357,432	-	357,432	348,864
Net Assets	614,220	19,692	633,912	619,207

17. Commitments

Operating Lease Commitments

Total future minimum lease payments under non-cancellable operating leases are as follows:

In less than 1 year
Between 1 and 5 years
Over 5 Years

Total annual operating lease commitments

	Office Equipment		Land and Buildings	
	2024	2023	2024	2023
	£	£	£	£
In less than 1 year	2,158	3,696	33,940	33,940
Between 1 and 5 years	-	2,772	101,820	135,760
Over 5 Years	-	-	-	-
Total annual operating lease commitments	2,158	6,468	135,760	169,700

In addition to the leases disclosed above, the charity has three leases for property, which expire between 2028 and 2030, which provide supported living accommodation for service users. The service user occupants pay a rental to the charity. The terms of the lease provide that the monthly rent payable by the charity to the landlord is the rental received from the occupants less any sums payable for utilities, council tax and upkeep of the property or, in the event that this net income is negative, then £nil.

Capital Commitments

At the year end there were capital commitments contracted for of £NIL (2023: £NIL).

18. Reconciliation of net (expenditure) / income to net cash flow from operating activities

	2024	2023
	£	£
Net income	2,878	14,705
Interest Receivable	(1,416)	(794)
Depreciation and impairment of tangible fixed assets	10,374	14,552
Decrease/(Increase) in debtors	(117,110)	8,546
(Decrease) in creditors	35,029	(57,938)
Net cash flow from operating activities	(70,245)	(20,929)

19. Analysis of changes in net debt

	At Start of year	Cash Flows	Other non-Cash changes	At end of year
	£	£	£	£
Cash	282,481	(93,141)	-	189,340
HMRC Time to Pay arrangement falling due within 1 year	-	-	-	-
Total	282,481	(93,141)	-	189,340

19a. Prior Year Analysis of changes in net debt – 2022/23

	At Start of year	Cash Flows	Other non-Cash changes	At end of year
	£	£	£	£
Cash	323,305	(40,824)	-	282,481
HMRC Time To Pay arrangement falling due within 1 year	(9,647)	9,647	-	-
Total	313,658	(31,177)	-	282,481

Company Information

Trustees	Jan Prior - Chair Jonathan Prior – Treasurer to 17 May 2024. Ceased as trustee 17 May 2024 Paul Beech Andrew Gilyead Henry Griffiths Rehana Begum – Treasurer from 17 May 2024 Jayne Hume
Company Secretary	Lesley Beer
Chief Executive Officer	Lesley Beer
Registered Office and Operational Address	38 Walnut Close Chelmsley Wood Birmingham B37 7PU
Telephone	0121 779 3865
Email	Info@sololifeopportunities.org
Website	www.sociallifeopportunities.org
Bankers	Lloyds Bank Solihull B91 3AN United Trust Bank Ltd London SW1 4TE Nationwide PO Box 3, 5-11 George's Street, Douglas, Isle of Man
Auditor	Prime Accountants Group Corner Oak 1 Homer Road Solihull West Midlands B91 3QG

Social Life Opportunities (SoLO) is a Company Limited by Guarantee Number 05025939 and a Registered Charity Number 1102297

The governing documents of the organisation are the Memorandum and Articles of Association