

Chair report March 2023

Well where do that year go? I can't believe that here we are again ready for another AGM

It has been a year of hard work for most of us. We are still short staffed and unable to open full time because of this, I am still doing the admin and secretarial duties, taking me away from running more activities, but I have had a little light relief from that with having Kit on board who is a great all rounder, prepared to help with everything. He has been supporting members, running activities, coffee bar and shop when needed, and will help with form filling when needed, what a star. We are at the beginning of a new activity together on a Thursday where we will do something different each week, bringing back our mental health day. This will include, yoga, mindfulness, meditation, walks, Groove and photography.

During the last year, we had a few volunteers onboard for short periods, who helped with cooking, this was fantastic because it brought more revenue in and people were enjoying the meals. Lou was doing meal deals for £5 which included a meal with a drink. Unfortunately both volunteers had to move on which left us not able to offer this so often. We then came up with a way to offer it by preparing things in advance. Tuesday afternoon crew would peel potatoes & prepare all salad in readiness for Lou and crew to batch cook on a Wednesday afternoon. We have also finally introduced our fruit/veg/salad boxes at £2 each for individual portions, which we hope will go down well. Meal deals at our parties are always a winner.

The My Community project that is an initiative of Royal Mencap is in full swing. We lost Phil who started it off and he has been replaced by Lynne. She has been busy setting up activities around the town which a few of our members have gotten involved in. They have had a free course with learning how to use a windows tablet, they were allowed to keep the tablet. Then they started a desktop computer course and some got involved in Brave art. The most exciting has been that she was to employ 4 people with a learning disabilities and 2 of our members who are volunteers are now employed by Royal Mencap. These are Jake and Sean. So very well done to those two, we are so proud of you. Lynne has also asked us to apply for seed funding to pay someone to support me with admin and anything else that I need support with.

We have been a little more structured with parties for 2023. We have been combining each months birthdays together and celebrating them all on one day per month. As always they have been so much fun. We have had comedy hour start off a few of them, which has gone down really well. Lou and Marina have headed up a team to cook for the parties, which I keep well a way from, but I do try to head the clearing up patrol. Lou has also continued with leading people with crafts to make decorations for the parties and festive occasions.

For Christmas this year, Lou & Sharon got together with Marina, Jackie and Toni to put on an amazing cooked Christmas dinner for us all. WOW, what an achievement in our small space. We had a production line for Prep, which many of our members helped with. The tables were laid out lovely and there was so much happiness in the room, it was a real family Christmas for our Unity family. The ladies worked so hard, I'm not sure if they want to repeat the experience, but they deserve a medal for what they achieved. When me and Ben set up the Unity Centre, it was always having in mind that we would create a family, and that Christmas dinner showed me that we have achieved that with so many fantastic family orientated volunteers and members.

Another Christmas fun day was our Community Christmas party. We invited people from the community in with their families and Lynne from the My Community project got funding from them to pay for it, this meant it was free for everyone. We did a scavenger hunt for the kids and played games, sent them to the Fort for an activity that they had to video and we had dancing. It was a great success and we loved having everyone in. It is something that we can do annually now.

We didn't manage to do as much fundraising as we had planned to, this was down to several factors. There has been a lot of illness with staff and members, this also caused us to close for 4 days in a row during November and the odd session had to be cancelled. We did manage to have a large fundraiser in September which was led by Jane and Colin who worked really hard to make it a success. We all had fun in the garden of the Mariners pub, with music all day and evening. Our Bang & Crash group showed off their talents and did themselves proud. They were so professional and were loved by everyone there. Many musicians who watched them, told me of their surprise at how good they are. Thank you to all the bands and solo artists that took part to support us and to the photographers and the Mariners pub for all your support. And not forgetting all the people who turned up in support to raise some much needed funds for us.

We have had some very successful quiz nights to raise money, which I am missing. Colin and Jane spent days sorting out the questions, score forms, photo's for the big screen and music, while Lou, Marina and Sharon organized food, which made the very successful nights which everyone loved.

Other than that we did a few Bang & Crash fundraisers in the town Centre and we joined in with Brainwave at their community fundraising day and a stall at the Sparrows Nest on one of their Queens jubilee celebrations.

We had a great time with our own Queens Jubilee celebrations. We were all excited to be doing Bang & Crash plus Groove in the town, but it rained a lot on the day, so we set up a gazebo outside of the centre and Carried on there, as always, there was a lot of fun going on. Lou and the gang made a Queen in a wheelchair who took centre stage in the partying and we went on to party the night away.

We have another big gig booked for April 15th "Banged up at The Grit" This will be consisting of a catwalk to sell our many good quality clothes that we've been collecting, music from Bang & Crash and some great artists for the rest of the day and evening. We will also be auctioning off the talents for Lorenzo, Andrew McMeekin photography, Chakra reading from Theresa Lawson and Indian Head massage from Diane Stamp. Along with 2 different raffles. It will be the usual £1 per strip for table top prizes, then. Jac will also auction off 2 consultations of Nutritional therapy & Ben is auctioning 2 parties at The Fort.

Our regular activities are going well, Karaoke is still carrying on each Tuesday morning, we have individual mic's so people don't have to share and Colin, Carol and Jane to support people with signing. Bang and Crash has been a success at the new time of 10am – 12pm. When we do Bang & Crash, Brainwave will join us, they love it, but they don't want to get involved with MMP because going to London to perform is too long a day for them. So we are doing alternate weeks for them to be able to join in.

Thursday is mental health day, then we have Friday as the creative day, with art café in the morning and our new knitting Circle in the afternoon, where the members have knitted squares for a blanket which Marina is sewing together along with knitted triangles for the First light festival. It's fabulous for our members to be involved in that. Some weeks Marina has also been cooking cakes with the members which they enjoy. Our new Saturday event is open mic for anyone to join in with no matter what they

want to do, that's early days, so it will be interesting to see how well that goes. That will be led by me and Kit and then Carol when we're not about.

Our main grant last year was a Sports England grant for Dance for the Jubilee. Myself and Kathy took our groove gang around to different organizations to get them grooving. This was so much fun. We also grooved on the beach. The idea of Kathy being involved is so that she could demonstrate the moves while sitting down because some of our groovers are unable to move around. This was a great idea and worked well. Unfortunately, the reinfection of Covid, meant that we had to cancel a few sessions as the care homes went back into lockdown, but we managed to replace those sessions. Our own Groove team, loved demonstrating to others how to Groove, they got a lot out of it.

We have also joined Hartford university in a research grant. This is a large grant where the university research into people with a learning disability on how art impacts their well being, they are also funding our "Lowestoft community Podcast" project. I will lead this with podcasting with local organizations to talk about their experience of working in our community, plus individuals who have achieved something despite their own struggles. Then we have Ryan Martin, Mark Smith & Dave Bryant, teaming up together to interview and chat with our vulnerable community, they will be choosing who to chat with, recording, filming and editing all by themselves. I have to become an employee of Hartford uni for us to take part in this. It will pay Lorenzo for 11 months, give the Centre £100 per week running costs for the project and is a rolling grant, so if we do well, we can apply for further funding next year, so let's put our best effort in. All participants will get shopping vouchers (yet to be determined for where) as a thank you for joining in. Our regular art café vulnerable members will get first refusal in taking part. There is a limit on how many people can take part.

We have finally made our own membership forms, we have been getting people to fill these in with help. Our regular members with Learning disabilities have been asked to tell us more information about themselves, ie next of kin, meds and any illness that we may need to know, ie fits, diabetic issues, whereas the customers or members aren't vulnerable don't need to let us know that much detail.

We are starting staff appraisals to find out how staff feel about the Centre and their roles with us, these are private and nobody else needs to know what the volunteers are saying. It will help us improve working conditions and making sure that all staff are happy. Plus, it is a requirement when having a staff team

Unity Youth Projects:

Unity Youth Projects is Lowestoft and District Mencap Society's gaming-specialised department. Unity Youth Projects specialises in improving social connectivity and life/social skills through digital/IT-based and modernised projects and activities. It is based in The Fort, a bespoke social and creative space that was opened in December 2019. The Fort provides activities, resources and games for the community, specialising in providing enriching activities that will appeal to local young people. Lowestoft and District Mencap Society and Unity Youth Projects operate with a combined set of accounts, with Unity Youth Projects having its own department, and its own bank account. The existence of Unity Youth Projects allows Lowestoft and District Mencap Society to provide even more diversified and modernised provisions for people with mild to moderate learning disabilities.

The merger between The Unity Center and Fort is complete, we are getting passed some of the teething problems, which mainly centers around grant applications and payments. The Fort is home of Unity

Youth Projects, which developed from Unity gaming which ran from The Centre from when we opened in 2011.

We had a great group outing to the Hippodrome circus for the Christmas Spectacular, which was an experience. Everyone who attended had a great time. It isn't easy for us to do outings like this, we don't always have the staff available, which makes it difficult to plan.

Finally I have to mention the Buisness plan. The Landlord wants to sell the buildings, he has offered it to us for a reduced price, which we still can't afford, but putting together a business plan will allow us to apply for funding for the finance to purchase. It has taken a lot of time to put the plan together as it isn't something that comes naturally to me, but it is finally done, so here's hoping that the next chapter of our Unity family life will go in the direction that we really want it to.

Jacs
Chairwoman

**Registered Charity
233331**

**Lowestoft and District Mencap Society incorporating Unity Youth
Centre**

**Report of the Trustees and unaudited financial statements for the
year ended**

30-Sep-22

**SGH Services
4 Bodiam Way
Carlton Colville
Lowestoft
NR33 8DN**

**Lowestoft and District Mencap Society
incorporating Unity Youth Centre
Report of the Trustees
for the year ended 30th September 2022**

The trustees present their report with the financial statements of the charity for the year ended 30th September 2022.

The trustees have adopted the provisions of the Statement of Recommended Practice 2015 (SORP2015) Accounting and reporting issued in January 2015

REFERENCE AND ADMINISTRATIVE DETAILS

Registered Charity number 233331

Principal Address

The Unity Centre
Unit 1
6 Milton Road East
Lowestoft
NR32 1NT

Trustees

Mrs J Guyton	Chair
Mr C Rose	Resigned
Ms G Czajka	Treasurer
Mr C Rose	resigned 13/09/22
Ms L Abel	
Ms J Craig	Appointed 13/09/22
Mike Adamski	Nominated - appointment pending

Independent Examiner

Mrs S Hyde ACMA
SGH Services
4, Bodiam Way
Carlton Colville
Lowestoft
NR33 8DN

STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

The Charity is controlled by its governing document, a deed of trust, and constitutes an unincorporated charity.

**Lowestoft and District Mencap Society
incorporating Unity Youth Centre**

The Charity is governed by a model constitution for branches of MENCAP.
The model constitution was adopted by the branch on 16th November 2007.
This was revised on 30th September 2019.

Independent examiner's report to the Trustees of Lowestoft and District Mencap Society

Independent examiner's report to the trustees of Lowestoft and District Mencap Society

I report to the Charity Trustees on my examination of the accounts of the Lowestoft and District Mencap Society (the Trust) for the year ended 30th September 2022

Responsibilities and basis of report

As the charity trustees of the Trust you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 (The Act)

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

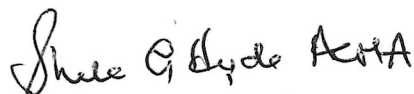
Independent examiner's statement

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

1. Accounting records were not kept in respect of the Trust as required by section 130 of the Act; or
2. the accounts do not accord with those records; or
3. the accounts do not comply with the applicable requirements concerning the form and content of accounts set out in the Charities (Accounts and Report) regulations 2008 other than any requirement that the accounts give a true and fair view which is not a matter considered as part of the independent

I confirm that there are no other matters to which your attention should be drawn to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Sheila Hyde
SGH Services
4 Bodiam Way
Carlton Colville
Lowestoft
Suffolk
NR33 8DN



25/06/2023

Lowestoft & District Mencap Society including Unity Youth Centre**Registered number:****233331****Balance Sheet****as at 30th September 202**

	Notes	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Total funds 30-09-22	Total funds 30-09-21
Fixed assets					
Tangible assets		1	2	3	3
Current assets					
Stocks					
Debtors					
Cash at bank and in hand		-	-	48,322	25,334
Creditors					
		-	-	-	-
Net Assets		48325		48325	25337
FUNDS					
Unrestricted		48325		48,325	24,523
Restricted					814
		48325		48,325	25,337

Signed



Chairman

Date

24-7-2023



(Giselle Czajka)

Treasurer

24/7/23

**Lowestoft and District Mencap Society
Incorporating the Unity Youth Project**

**Statement of Financial Activities
for the year ended 30th September 2022**

	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Total Funds ye 30-09-22	Total Funds ye 30-09-21
INCOME & ENDOWMENTS FROM				
Donations				
Trading activities Mencap	16855		16855	
Trading activities Fort Shop	14637		14637	5,819
Grants	44658	10850	55508	37,329
Other Income	548		548	1,567
TOTAL	76698	10850	87548	44,715
EXPENDITURE ON				
Charitable activities	72216	24668	96884	41,835
NET INCOME/EXPENDITURE	4482	-13818	-9336	2,880
FUNDS BROUGHT FORWARD MENCAP	24522	815	25337	22,457
FUNDS INTRODUCED UNITY YOUTH PROJECT	9985	13003	22988	-
TOTAL FUNDS CARRIED FORWARD	48325	0	48325	25,337

Lowestoft and District Mencap Society Incorporating the Unity Youth Project

Notes to the accounts

1 Accounting policies

Basis of preparation

The accounts have been prepared under the historical cost convention and in accordance with FRS 102, The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (as applied to small entities by section 1A of the standard).

Incoming Resources

All incoming resources are included on the statement of Financial Activities when the Charity is legally entitled to the income and the amount can be quantified with reasonable accuracy.

Resources expended

Expenditure is accounted for on an accruals basis and has been classified under headings that aggregate all cost related to the category. Where costs cannot be directly attributed to particular headings they have been allocated to activities on a basis consistent with the use of resources.

Tangible fixed assets

Depreciation is provided at the following annual rates in order to write off each asset over its estimated useful life.

Freehold buildings	over 50 years
Leasehold land and buildings	over the lease term
Plant and machinery	over 5 years
Fixtures, fittings, tools and equipment	over 5 years

Taxation

The charity is exempt from tax on its charitable activities

Fund Accounting

Unrestricted funding can be used in accordance with the charitable objectives at the discretion of the trustees.

Restricted funds can only be used for particular restricted purposes within the objects of the charity. Restricted Funds arise when specified by the donor or when funds are raised for particular restricted purposes.

Further explanation of the nature and purpose of each fund is included in the notes to the financial statements.

2 Other Trading Activities

	30/09/2022	30/09/2021
Food & drink takings	10553	2518
Gaming Takings		
Bric-a-Brac Takings	6033	2771
Centre Events		
Other	70872	39246
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	87458	44715
	<hr/>	<hr/>

Lowestoft and District Mencap Society Incorporating the Unity Youth Project

Notes to the accounts

3 Trustees remuneration and benefits

A total of £19037 was paid to 3 trustees for managing activities during the year.
£19760 was paid during the year ended 30th September 2021.

4 Staff costs	30/09/2022	30/09/2021
Wages and salaries	7648	7740
Staff	1	2

No employee received emoluments in excess of £60,000

5 COMPARATIVES FOR THE STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES

	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Total Funds
Grants	28254	9075	37329
Other trading activities	5819		5819
Other income	247	1320	1567
Insurance claim			
Total	34320	10395	44175

EXPENDITURE ON

Chariabie Activities	18,938	11,897	41,835
----------------------	--------	--------	--------

NET INCOME/EXPENDITURE

15,382	(12,502)	2,880
--------	----------	-------

Total funds brought forward

9,140	13,317	22,457
-------	--------	--------

TOTAL FUNDS CARRIED FORWARD

24,522	815	22,457
--------	-----	--------

6 TANGIBLE FIXED ASSETS COST

	Furniture and fittings	Computers	Vehicles	Total
As at 1st October 21	28,011	9,491	650	38,152

As at 30th September 2022	28,011	9,491	650	38,152
---------------------------	--------	-------	-----	--------

DEPRECIATION

As at 1st October 21	28010	9490	649	38149
----------------------	-------	------	-----	-------

As at 30th September 2022	28010	9490	6490	38149
---------------------------	-------	------	------	-------

NET BOOK VALUE

As at 1st October 21	1	1	1	3
----------------------	---	---	---	---

As at 30th September 2022	1	1	1	3
---------------------------	---	---	---	---

7 CREDITORS AMOUNTS FALLING DUE WITHIN ONE YEAR

	30/09/2022	30/09/2021
Other creditors	-	-

Lowestoft and District Mencap Society Incorporating the Unity Youth Project

Notes to the accounts

8 MOVEMENT IN FUNDS

	AT 1/10/21	NET MOVEMENT	at 30/09/21
Unrestricted funds			
General funds	17522	23803	41325
Closure reserve	7000		7000
	<u>24522</u>	<u>23803</u>	<u>48325</u>
 Restricted Funds			
Big Lottery Fund Grant	815	-815	0
	<u>25337</u>	<u>22988</u>	<u>48325</u>
TOTAL FUNDS			

9 RELATED PARTY DISCLOSURES

There were no related party transactions for the year ended 30th September 2022.