

Literacy Volunteers
(Registered charity, number 1167357)
Financial statements
for the year ended 31 March 2023

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**Literacy Volunteers
Trustees' annual report
for the year ended 31 March 2023**

Full name Literacy Volunteers

Organisation type Charitable incorporated organisation

Registered charity number 1167357

Principal address Woodthorpe Grange, Woodthorpe Drive, Nottingham, NG5 4HA

Trustees

Patricia Harman

Paul Hughes

Mike Collis, Chair, appointed 14 April 2023

Charli Stafford, Treasurer, appointed 5 June 2023

Melanie Cope, appointed 14 April 2023

Mary Steiner, appointed 14 April 2023

Graham Stamper, appointed 14 April 2023

Amita Rehal, appointed 14 April 2023

Cllr Bethan Eddy, appointed 05 June 2023

Lynda Shaw, appointed 5 June 2023

Mike Hoy, appointed 14 April 2023, resigned 25 June 2023

Carol Wilby, resigned 1 May 2023

Christine Wroe, resigned 14 April 2023

Tizzy Gill, resigned 25 March 2023

Gaynor Preston, resigned 25 March 2023

Angela Beere, resigned 25 March 2023

Julia Gunn, resigned 27 February 2023

Jo Gordon, resigned 27 February 2023

Alan Merrett, resigned 30 September 2022

Peter Furnell, resigned 30 September 2022

The new Chairperson Mike Collis is a Chartered Accountant by profession and has spent the past 22 years working in the private equity sector focussing on portfolio management and business performance improvement. Mike is also a Fellow of the Institute of Turnaround and an Honorary Fellow of Nottingham University.

The new Treasurer Charli Stafford is a Chartered Accountant by profession and has spent the past 8 years working in financial audit and plc finance teams with experience of compliance with statutory reporting and technical accounting.

The board of Trustees would like to thank the trustees that have resigned during and since the last financial year for their contribution to the development and success of the Charity.

Independent examiner

John O'Brien, employee of Community Accounting Plus, Units 1 & 2 North West, 41 Talbot Street, Nottingham, NG1 5GL

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Governance and management

The charity is operated under the rules of the CIO – Association constitution registered 25 May 2016.

New trustees are drawn from existing volunteers, member organisations and external candidates with an interest in the work and objectives of Literacy Volunteers. The Board of Trustees must have a minimum of five trustees and a maximum of twelve trustees at any one time.

Prospective trustees must preferably have a skill which will support the Charity. Once they have indicated their interest in the role of trustee a discussion is arranged with one of the team/trustees.

Following this discussion, they will be invited to attend a scheduled Board of Trustees meeting after which, if they are a suitable/eligible appointment they will be invited to join the Board but neither party is under any obligation at this stage. Induction and training for the role is provided. An enhanced DBS check is carried out and their eligibility is checked against Charity Commission guidance.

At the AGM one third of existing trustees must step down in rotation and the trustee who have been appointed for the longest period since their last appointment/reappointment must stand down. Following this the vacancies created on the Board of Trustees are then filled at the AGM. Trustees can stand for re- election and other members can be nominated and elected. We operate under the guidance of our constitution adopted on 25th May 2016 when we became a Charitable Incorporated Organisation, and also in the spirit of our original constitution adopted in May 1996 when we came into existence as Literacy Volunteers in Nottinghamshire Schools.

Strategic review

As a result of the Covid pandemic during 2020 and 2021, Literacy Volunteers was forced to suspend its activities in its schools and community centres. This had a profound impact on its operations with the loss of many of its volunteers and some of the schools deciding not to renew their engagement following the lifting of restrictions on social contact. This led to a reduction in income and forced the Charity to carefully control its overheads. Unfortunately, this precipitated a loss of confidence within the board regarding the long term financial viability of the Charity which in turn resulted in some of the trustees deciding to step down from their position on the board in early 2023.

In response to these challenges, the employees of the Charity commissioned a review of the Charity's finances and what options existed regarding its future. The report found that the Charity had a robust financial state of affairs but recognised that improvements needed to be made in relation to its fund raising activities in order to secure the long term viability and success of the organisation. These conclusions were supported by new budgets and forecasts which showed that there was no significant risk in relation to the ability of the Charity to meet its financial obligations within the foreseeable future.

Following the year end, the Charity has made several new appointments to strengthen the board from a diverse range of backgrounds and experience. With a renewed sense

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of vigour and purpose, the board is confident that together with the staff, a capable team has been assembled to promote the growth and success of the Charity.

Within a short period of time, the team has developed a new corporate identity and website which will be launched in the near future which will help to modernise the look and feel of Literacy Volunteers. Work is also being done on creating new presentations and marketing collateral to reach out to corporate sponsors which will shine a light on the amazing work the charity carries out in the communities it serves. A new fund raising sub-committee is also being established which will energise the Charity's efforts to engage with its supporters and volunteers to improve our fund raising activities.

Literacy Volunteers aims initially to restore the same number of volunteers it had before the outbreak of the pandemic and reach out and reengage with the schools where contact was lost. The Charity also aims to grow and expand on its Early Years programs to provide vital early intervention support to younger children. From there, Literacy Volunteers aims to grow and help to meet the ever increasing need for our support and services in promoting literacy and the life opportunities of young children in our communities.

Objectives and activities

To advance the education of children, adults and families by helping those experiencing difficulties in acquiring literacy, communication and social skills.

Summary of the main activities undertaken for the public benefit

Literacy Volunteers aims to develop and promote speech, language, communication, confidence, self-esteem, literacy, strategies for learning in the home and a genuine interest in reading for pleasure. We seek to advance the education of children in particular, by helping those experiencing difficulties in acquiring literacy skills. We do this in primary schools and early years' settings and we use a number of evidence based programmes and projects.

In our primary schools' volunteers programme, we recruit, train, vet and support volunteers to support the development of reading confidence of children.

We also deliver our Learning to Love Books programme - our unique storytelling, songs and rhymes sessions - in libraries, schools and early years' settings such as nurseries and children's centres. This programme has grown considerably during the year with continued support from the Small Steps Big Changes, A Better Start Initiative.

Literacy Volunteers has continued to plan and deliver sessions, both in primary schools and the community, to help tackle the social disadvantage and lack of opportunities often caused by poor literacy skills.

The Schools Team

In primary schools throughout Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire we have engaged with children who may be at risk of disengaging with education, have found it difficult to stay fully involved in the classroom environment, may have English as a second language, may be lacking in confidence and communication skills, and

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be experiencing low levels of home support. Our aim is to deliver support in a creative and fun way to help all the children we work with to enjoy reading and learning from books whilst improving their confidence and self-esteem.

The Early Years Team

Our Early Years programme, Learning to Love Books, has moved into its sixth year of delivery. Early reading interventions have had consistently large impacts, as is clear from the results from the impact evaluations from 13 countries that have that accrued over the past ten years (World Bank).

Early literacy is the foundation for a successful education and a fulfilling life. Developing strong literacy skills in the early years has numerous benefits that can positively impact individuals and communities.

We have delivered our programme to over 80 families across Nottingham City, with weekly Storytelling sessions in St Ann's and Hyson Green libraries every week. This project has helped to build the confidence of parents/carers so they can more fully support their child's development at home. During the sessions they have learned more effective ways to communicate with others, developed new language and literacy skills and enjoyed lots of fun time too.

The project is funded primarily by Small Steps Big Changes, but we have also secured additional funds from St James Place, The Jones 1986 Trust and Winifred Eileen Kemp Trust to enable to extend the project and reach a wider range of families.

80% of the families who attend our Storytelling sessions do not attend any other group with their child/ren.

100% of the families attending rated the groups as 'excellent' for helping their children learn new words from stories and rhymes, and reported they now felt more confident and enjoyed sharing a story with their child/ren more (Autumn / Winter parent/carer survey 2022). Feedback has been terrific with comments such as "We really love these groups. I bring my daughter who has special needs, and the group has helped her a lot", "I love the diversity of the group", "My daughter is more confident" and "It really helps children's speech and social skills".

Summary

Literacy Volunteers is experiencing some exciting changes and the board with a new sense of direction and ambition is very confident regarding its future and ongoing development.

Here at Literacy Volunteers we are very grateful for generous support from many organisations and individuals. These include:

Nottinghamshire County Council
Nottingham City Council
Small Steps Big Changes
Gonalston Open Gardens
Sherwood Funeralcare
Sir John Eastwood Foundation

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Winifred Eileen Kemp Trust
GT Littlefair Trust
Forman Hardy Charitable Trust
St James Place Charitable Foundation
Jones 1986 Charitable Trust
The Bookcase at Lowdham
Councillor Kate Foale
Councillor Gordon Wheeler
Councillor Mike Quigley
The Renewal Trust
Brian O'Neill
Alison Fowler
Ian Kilby
Paul Marriott
The Cumberland Trust
Charles Littlewood Trust
National Literacy Trust
Penguin Books
Nosy Crow
Barrington Stoke
Breeze Corporate Finance Ltd
Clearwater International
Literacy Capital Asset Management LLP
Fullbrook Thorpe Investments LLP
Bishopsgate Corporate Finance
Browne Jacobson LLP
Co-operative Funeral Care

Public benefit statement

The Trustees confirm that they have complied with the duty in section 17 of the Charities Act 2011 to have due regard to the Charity Commission's general guidance on public benefit, 'Charities and Public Benefit'.

Summary of the main achievements during the period

Planned and started to deliver a more creative promotional strategy to attract and recruit more volunteers to deliver sessions in schools.

The Schools Team supported Literacy Volunteers to return to face to face sessions with children in primary schools (70 volunteers by March 2022).

The Early Years Team resumed face to face Learning to Love Books storytelling and craft sessions for 50 families living in the communities of Hyson Green and St Anns. The project has delivered over 1,000 book boxes to 150 children and their families.

Secured additional funding from Nottinghamshire County Council to deliver face to face workshops for new and existing Literacy Volunteers to strengthen the volunteer experience.

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Identified new educational projects and partnerships including Nottingham Trent University.

Financial review

Following the improvement post-pandemic in the prior financial year, a number of challenges were experienced during the year ended 31 March 2023. School subscriptions increased to £38,779 but a significant reduction in grants and donations was incurred. Overall costs were down year on year as cost reductions related to the restructuring of the staff team at the start of the year crystallised. Cash assets at the end of the year totalled £98,035.

Following the challenges noted in the strategic report, a full financial review was carried out and new budgets and forecasts put in place to support the charity's objectives and grow in the next financial year.

The charity's policy on reserves

The Board recognises its responsibility in maintaining its reserves to include the required redundancy payments due to staff in the event of the closure of the Charity and to cover the costs incurred in any closure period likely to amount to a quarter's running costs in addition to a sum held for one term's salary expenditure and small amount to finance expenditure during a closure period. This is good practice for any charity.

Following the review for this financial year, the trustees have designated the sum of £34,500 as a reserve to cover our liabilities should closure become necessary.

The trustees will always strike a balance between trying to retain some level of reserves and the need to invest in the delivery of our objectives i.e. the promotion of reading for pleasure and the benefit this has in raising literacy levels in children. To address this, the trustees intend to focus on increasing fundraising receipts as part of their strategic goals for the current financial year.

Finally, it is important to note that the trustees review their reserves annually (following a review of the charity's position and the external environment) in order to account for changes in either area.

Financial risks

We have decided that the following risks are worth noting:

- Small Steps Big Changes 3-year funding comes to an end in July 2023 for Early Years. The 2023/23 budget has income from SSBC, The Provincial Grand Lodge of Nottinghamshire, The Jones 1986 Charitable Trust and the Coop in Sherwood to fund this project. The costs for this project are salaries to run the story sessions and support families, and books and materials for the Storyboxes that are mailed out. Our focus for the coming year is to secure unrestricted funding of £25,000 which will enable us to continue to run the project from September 2024 – July 2025.
- We have previously concluded that we cannot pass on the full costs of recruiting and training volunteers to the schools we support. The evidence we have shows that

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although schools tolerate some small increases in the subscriptions they pay, school budgets will not cover the charge we would have to make to fully recover our costs, even though the service is highly valued. We have secured funding from Nottingham County Council for the next 3 years. As such we have, for the last twenty years, worked to keep our overheads as low as we possibly can. Focus on fundraising will be key in order to continue to bridge this shortfall although over the last couple of years, it has become increasingly difficult to raise this via traditional routes used by the charity previously.

- Nottingham County Council provide us with grace and favour offices and facilities at Woodthorpe Grange. If they were in future unable to continue with this arrangement, we would have to find alternative premises and source our own facilities. This could significantly add to our cost base.
- If there was a resurgence of Covid-19, or other public health emergency, were to force the shutdown or closure of primary schools, we would be seriously impacted. Without significant intervention, e.g. through government funding, we would be unable to cover our central costs following a loss of subscription income.

Signed on behalf of the charity's trustees:

Signed  Date 03/08/23
Mike Collis, Trustee

**Independent examiner's report to the trustees of
Literacy Volunteers
for the year ended 31 March 2023**

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of Literacy Volunteers (the charity) for the year ended 31 March 2023.

Responsibilities and basis of report

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

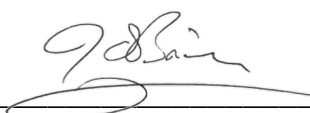
I report in respect of my examination of the charity's accounts carried out under section 145 of the 2011 Act and in carrying out my examination I have followed all the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the Act.

Independent examiner's statement

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

1. accounting records were not kept in respect of the charity as required by section 130 of the Act; or
2. the accounts do not accord with those records.

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

Signed  Date 04/08/2023
John O'Brien MSc, FCCA, FCIE
Employee of Community Accounting Plus

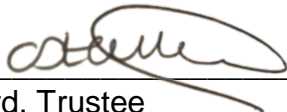
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Receipts & payments account
for the year ended 31 March 2023

2022				2023
Total		Unrestricted	Restricted	Total
Funds		Funds	Funds	Funds
£	Note	£	£	£
Receipts				
90134	Grants & donations	2 15688	24288	39976
27625	Subscriptions	38779	-	38779
-	Fundraising	4914	-	4914
<u>117759</u>	Total receipts	<u>59381</u>	<u>24288</u>	<u>83669</u>
Payments				
18734	Activities & materials	543	14131	14674
-	Advertising	33	52	85
-	DBS fees	54	-	54
-	Equipment, repairs & renewals	150	-	150
678	Independent examination fee	696	-	696
1641	Insurance	1385	-	1385
997	Payroll services	720	-	720
37	Prizes	-	-	-
827	Professional fees	354	-	354
787	Publications & subscriptions	343	-	343
76508	Salaries, NI & pension	35839	17962	53801
549	Staff training	17	100	117
102	Stationery & office supplies	192	193	385
50	Sundry payments	-	-	-
943	Telephone, internet & postage	67	334	401
420	Training & support	171	-	171
1188	Travel & subsistence	3308	104	3412
567	Volunteer resources	8	649	657
<u>104028</u>	Total payments	<u>43880</u>	<u>33525</u>	<u>77405</u>
13731	Net receipts/(payments)	15501	(9237)	6264
78040	Cash funds at start of this period	69942	21829	91771
<u>91771</u>	Cash funds at end of this period	<u>85443</u>	<u>12592</u>	<u>98035</u>

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Statement of assets and liabilities
at 31 March 2023

2022			2023
£		Note	£
	Cash assets		
91708	Bank accounts		97972
<u>63</u>	Cash in hand		<u>63</u>
<u>91771</u>			<u>98035</u>
	 Other monetary assets		
<u>133</u>	Prepayment - Insurance		<u>115</u>
<u>133</u>			<u>115</u>
	 Liabilities		
<u>(696)</u>	Creditors	3	<u>(1040)</u>
<u>(696)</u>			<u>(1040)</u>

These financial statements are accepted on behalf of the charity by:

Signed  _____ Dated 03/08/2023
Charli Stafford, Trustee

Literacy Volunteers
Notes to the accounts
for the year ended 31 March 2023

1. Receipts & payments accounts

Receipts and payments accounts contain a summary of money received and money spent during the period and a list of assets and liabilities at the end of the period. Usually, cash received and cash spent will include transactions through bank accounts and cash in hand.

2. Grants & donations

	Unrestricted	Restricted	Total
	£	£	£
Cllr Foyle, Divisional Fund (NCC)	200	-	200
Co-operative Funeral Care	-	100	100
G T Littlefair Trust Fund	480	-	480
Local Giving	159	-	159
Mr Brian Clarke O'Neill	600	-	600
Nottinghamshire County Council	10900	-	10900
Payroll Giving	204	-	204
Sir John Eastwood Foundation	1000	-	1000
SSBC	-	13188	13188
St James Place	-	2500	2500
Sundry donations	145	-	145
The Forman Hardy Charitable Trust	-	1000	1000
The Jones 1986 Charitable Trust	-	7000	7000
The Renewal Trust	-	500	500
Winifred Eileen Kemp Trust	2000	-	2000
	15688	24288	39976

3. Creditors

	£
Independent examination fee	732
Salaries, NI & pension (HMRC)	179
Salaries, NI & pension (NEST)	129
	1040

4. Trustees' remuneration

Trustees received no expenses, remuneration or benefits in this period.

5. Related party transactions

There were no related party transactions in this period.

6. Premises

The premises are provided by the local authority.

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7. Funds analysis

	Opening balance £	Receipts (Payments) £		Transfers £	Closing balance £
Restricted funds					
Learning to Love Books (SSBC6)	10380	-	(10380)	-	-
Learning to Love Books (Boots)	4404	-	(4279)	-	125
Learning to Love Books (Capital One)	1385	-	-	-	1385
Let's Meet and Learn Together	5000	-	(5000)	-	-
Warsop Book Boxes	660	-	(451)	-	209
Learning to Love Books (SSBC7)	-	13188	(12433)	-	755
Black Lives Matter Books	-	100	(80)	-	20
Schools (The Jones 1986 Trust)	-	4000	-	-	4000
Schools (Forman Hardy Trust)	-	500	-	-	500
Early Years (Forman Hardy Trust)	-	500	(500)	-	-
Early Years (St James Place)	-	2500	-	-	2500
Early Years (The Jones 1986 Trust)	-	3000	-	-	3000
Early Years (Renewal Trust)	-	500	(402)	-	98
	21829	24288	(33525)	-	12592
Unrestricted funds					
General fund	69942	59381	(43880)	(34500)	50943
<u>Designated funds</u>					
Reserves	-	-	-	34500	34500
	69942	59381	(43880)	-	85443

The transfer from the General fund to the Reserves fund represents a sum the trustees have designated as a reserve to cover liabilities should closure become necessary.

The specific purposes for which the funds are to be applied are as follows:
 Early Years Programme - Learning to Love Books (SSBC6, SSBC7, Boots Charitable Trust, Capital One, Forman Hardy Trust, St James Place, The Jones 1986 Trust & Renewal Trust) - to run our early years (0-4) storytelling sessions and Story Box project. Each Story Box contained a book, flash card for learning new words and a selection of fun resources for parents to support the home learning environment.

Let's Meet and Learn Together (Nottinghamshire County Council Covid Partnership Social Recovery) - to plan and deliver a series of meetings to recruit new volunteers and for existing volunteers to meet together face-to-face and share learnings.

Warsop Book Boxes (Nottinghamshire County Council, Councillor's Discretionary Fund, Councillor Bethan Eddy) - to deliver Story Boxes to years 2 and 6 in a local primary school.

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Schools (Forman Hardy Trust & The Jones 1986 Trust) - to deliver support in a creative and fun way to help all the children we work with to enjoy reading and learning from books whilst improving their confidence and self-esteem.

8. Glossary of terms

Creditors: These are amounts owed by the charity, but not paid during the accounting period.

Prepayments: These are services that the charity has paid for in advance, but not used during the accounting period.

Restricted funds: These are funds given to the charity, subject to specific restrictions set by the donor, but still within the general objects of the charity.