

APPENDIX 3

OSCR

Scottish Charity Regulator

Independent examiner's report on the accounts v2

Report to the trustees/members of

Charity name

THE SILVER CIRCLE SCIO

Registered charity number

SC 049390

On the accounts of the charity for the period

Period start date

Day

Month

Year

1

4

2023

to

Period end date

Day

Month

Year

31

3

2024

Set out on pages

(remember to include the page numbers of additional sheets)

Respective responsibilities of trustees and examiner

The charity's trustees are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the terms of the Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) 2005 Act and the Charities Accounts (Scotland) Regulations 2006 (as amended). The charity trustees consider that the audit requirement of Regulation 10(1) (d) of the Accounts Regulations does not apply. It is my responsibility to examine the accounts as required under section 44(1) (c) of the Act and to state whether particular matters have come to my attention.

Basis of independent examiner's statement

My examination is carried out in accordance with Regulation 11 of the 2006 Accounts Regulations. An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the charity and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts and seeks explanations from the trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit and, consequently, I do not express an audit opinion on the view given by the accounts.

Independent examiner's statement

In the course of my examination, no matter has come to my attention [other than that disclosed on the attached page*]

1. which gives me reasonable cause to believe that in any material respect the requirements:
 - to keep accounting records in accordance with section 44(1) (a) of the 2005 Act and Regulation 4 of the 2006 Accounts Regulations, and
 - to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and comply with Regulation 9 of the 2006 Accounts Regulations

have not been met, or

2. to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Signed:

Name:

Date:

9/10/24

Relevant professional qualification(s) or body (if any):

Address:

*Please delete the words in the brackets if they do not apply. If the words do apply, set out those matters which have come to your attention on the following page.



The Silver Circle SCIO

SC 049390

Accounts for year ending

31 March 2024

Income & Expenditure

Silver Circle SCIO

For the year ended 31 March 2024

Account	2024
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Income

AHSCP Grant	12500.00
ACTI Grant	8947.22
National Lottery (1 off)	20000.00
Foundation Scotland	5000.00
Grant for DC trip	1444.00
Grant - Mac Robert Trust	10000.00
Donation for DC trip	2500.00
Donation to DC	141.93
Donations to Silver Circle	8,322.13
Kildrummy Grant	2,500.00
Day Centre Members	9,568.70
Day Centre - Monies collected for outings	3,026.35
HVDS Contributions	903.00
Interest Income	1,735.88
Day Centre - Fundraising	909.50
Cash back , raffles & fundraising	2,144.99

Total Income	89,643.70
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Expenditure

Community Bus monthly charge	9,777.11
Community Bus-Print/Phone Costs	60.00
Comm Bus Salary	1,206.40
Day Care Centre - Lunches	10,041.80
Day Centre - Activities plus	2,212.79
Day Centre- Trips that members have paid for	7,952.15
Day Centre - Hall Rental	2,674.00
Day Centre - mileage for trips	107.55
Day Centre - wages	19,087.97
HVDS - Phone	59.40
HVDS - Wages	1,206.40
HVDS Mileage claims	3,135.60
Insurance	997.51
Silver Circle - Monthly software charges for Payroll & Accounting packages	492.00
Silver Circle - Staff Gifts	285.95
Silver Circle - Wages	3,328.00
Silver Circle -Ad -hoc Expenses	218.80
Staff Training	375.00

Total Expenditure	63,218.43
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Profit on Ordinary Activities	26,425.27
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9/10/24

Balance Sheet

Silver Circle SCIO

Year ended 31st March 2024

Account		
Current Assets		
Cash at bank and in hand		
Virgin Money Current Account- THE SILVER CIRCLE SCIO	51,310.88	
Shawbrooks - 60 day Reserve Account	24,898.65	
Petty Cash	20.00	
	76,229.53	
Total Current Assets	76,229.53	
Total Creditors: amounts falling due within one year		
	0.00	
Capital and Reserves		
Current Year Earnings	26,425.27	=profit
Retained Earnings	49,804.26	
Total Capital and Reserves	76,229.53	0.00

9/10/24



The Silver Circle SCIO Trustees' Annual Report

1st April 2023 to
31st March 2024



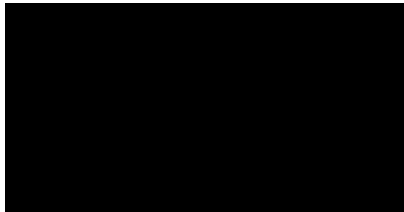
Charity contact information



The Silver Circle SCIO

Scottish Charity Number: SC049390

Address:



Telephone

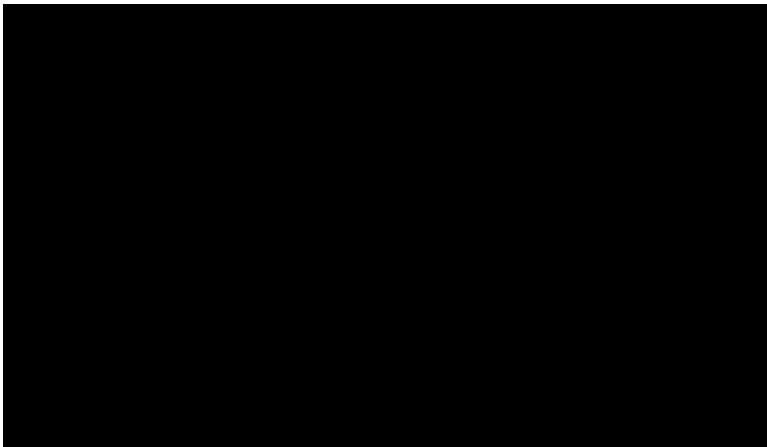


Email

secretary@silvercircle.org.uk

Trustees (as at 31st March 2024)

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.
- 7.
- 8.





Chair's Introduction

It is hard to believe but, having first registered as a charity in March 1997, the Silver Circle has now provided support and help to some of the most vulnerable and isolated in our community for 26 years.

This year it continued to run efficiently, with a good number of members attending the day centre each week. [REDACTED] work tirelessly thinking of new ideas and activities; finding guest speakers; organising visits from local musicians, Highland dancers and school children; and keeping in touch with those unable to attend by calling and making home visits. All essential to address the charity's prime concern to combat the effects of social isolation and loneliness in our rural community.

Nothing, however, stands still. The charity's operations evolve to meet changing demands. We have welcomed new volunteers, who are already demonstrating their enthusiasm and capability, and [REDACTED] the day centre's cook for many years, has moved on. We wish her and her family well and are pleased that Louise Youngston agreed to take over providing the delicious lunches our day centre members enjoy each week.

The Silver Circle continues to provide drivers for hospital visits, an essential service in the remote area which we serve. Our weekly community bus remains an important means of travel for those wishing to shop farther afield than Bellabeg or Glenkindie.

Despite council funding being halved last year we remain a stable organisation. The local community has rallied to support us with grants and donations and by attending our fundraising events. We take this as a sign that our services are valued by those we serve and I would like to thank everyone who has supported us over the past year.

My thanks also go to everyone who helps make the Silver Circle the successful organisation it is: our staff and volunteers, without whom none of our services would work, and our trustees who labour behind the scenes, organising and raising funds.

Thank you all

[REDACTED]



Introduction

The Silver Circle was first registered as a Scottish charity in March 1997 and restructured as The Silver Circle SCIO in September 2019. This is the fifth Trustees' Annual Report of the Silver Circle SCIO, covering the charity's activities for period from 1st April 2023 until the financial yearend on 31st March 2024.

Objectives and Activities

The purposes of the Silver Circle SCIO are *"the development, promotion, funding and provision of such services as may from time to time be of benefit to those residents of Upper Donside as may have need by reason of age, ill-health, infirmity, disability or other necessitous circumstance."*

The charity's activities are geographically restricted to residents of Upper Donside; broadly the communities (from West to East) of Corgarff, Rough Park/ Strathdon/ Bellabeg, Glenkindie/ Towie, Kildrummy and Lumsden, together with the adjacent glens Carvie, Nochty and Buchat.

Whilst the charity supports all members of these communities, its principal focus is the support of their more elderly and socially isolated members. The charity's activities revolve around the provision of services to develop companionship and facilitate daily living. These take the form of a weekly social day centre, a weekly community bus and a volunteer driving scheme for hospital and other health appointments.

Structure, Governance and Management

Governing document

The Silver Circle SCIO is governed by a constitution that closely follows the two-tier model constitution promulgated by the Scottish Council for Voluntary Organisations.

Copies of the constitution are available on application to the Secretary.



Membership

Membership of the SCIO is open to anyone over 16 who is prepared, able and willing to commit his or her time on a voluntary basis to further the aims of and to participate in the activities of the charity. There is no membership fee. As of March 2024, the charity had 32 members.

In addition, membership is open to persons, organisations or trusts who commit to funding the charity. This category of membership enjoys the same rights as volunteer members. As of March 2023, the charity had no such members.

Trustee recruitment and appointment

Any member may stand for election as a trustee (Article 27.1 of the constitution). The Board encourages any member willing to act as a trustee to contact the Secretary and to put their name forward for election. The Board may appoint any member as a trustee (Article 27.2) and may also appoint non-members who are either (i) nominated by a member who has provided material funding to the organisation, or (ii) has specialist experience and/or skills which could be of assistance to the Board (Article 28.1). The former mechanism is intended to afford funding agencies a mechanism to oversee the activities of the charity, the latter to ensure the charity has access to the expertise it requires.

The constitution provides that all trustees retire at each AGM, however they are deemed to be re-elected unless either (i) other members stand for election, thereby requiring an election be held; or (ii) he or she has advised the Board that they do not wish to be re-appointed.

At the Annual General Meeting held on 26th July 2023 [REDACTED] [REDACTED] resigned; the remaining trustees were deemed reelected. [REDACTED] [REDACTED] offered their services as trustee and were elected unopposed. [REDACTED] [REDACTED] intimated his intention to remain a trustee but to step down as Treasurer at an appropriate juncture.

At a meeting of the trustees held on 22nd September 2023 Mr Tauber repeated his intention to resign as treasurer by the financial year end, suggesting that [REDACTED] might be willing to take over if approached. [REDACTED] and was co-opted onto the Board at the subsequent



trustees' meeting held on 8th December 2023 with the plan of taking over as Treasurer as of 31st March 2024.

Management

Management of the charity is divided between the Board of Trustees and a management committee comprising the trustees and staff – currently the day centre organiser and her assistant, the Hospital Voluntary Driving Scheme (HVDS) co-ordinator, the administrator/bookkeeper and community bus co-ordinator. Both the Board and the management committee meet regularly, typically as consecutive sessions.



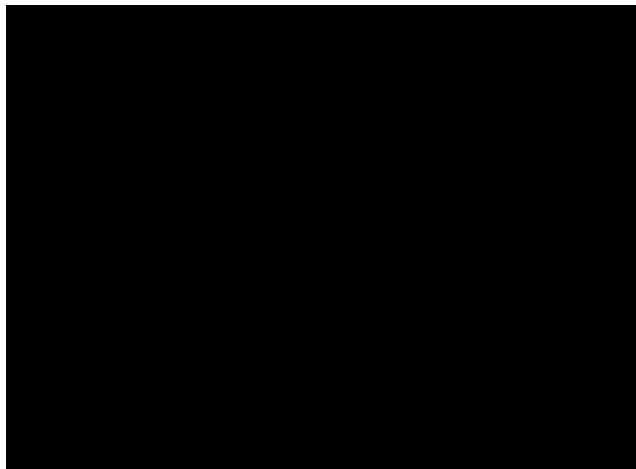
Achievements and Performance

Day Centre

The day centre had 31 clients “on the books” during the year, with an average weekly attendance of eighteen. The DCO and ADCO are supported by five regular volunteers plus volunteer drivers.

In addition to a programme of activities including crafts, art, quizzes, bingo, gardening in pots and gentle exercise, day centre members have been entertained by a number of musicians and local dancers. We are most grateful to them for contributing their time to entertain the members.

Members enjoyed a wonderful Coronation Celebration. Local creative writer [REDACTED] captured memories of the previous Coronation from members, from which she wrote our very own Coronation Poem.



Invited speakers spoke on Simply Heraldry, crime reduction and the Cairngorms beavers project.

[REDACTED] the new owner of Kildrummy and Glenkindie estates, kindly visited to speak of his ambitions for renaturalising them.

Members had the pleasure of a number of outings: trips to the theatre to see the Best Exotic Marigold Hotel; to the Speyside Railway for lunch on the train; to Cullen for lunch with a visit to Christie’s garden centre; a tour at Lochnagar Distillery; and outings to the cinema to see The Great Escaper.

The day centre continued its intergenerational work with a number of visits from Strathdon School and Towie School and Nursery pupils. This included bingo, bunny drives, sing-a-longs and Coronation and Burns celebrations.



Community Bus

The Friday community bus, operated by Mid Deeside Community Trust, ran throughout the year with a minimal number of cancellations due to bad weather. A total of 50 journeys were made: 25 to Huntly, 17 to Alford and eight to Ballater. The average number of passengers on each trip was eight and the average distance was a little over 112 miles. The direct cost of operation of the bus (i.e. excluding Silver Circle administrative overheads) for the year was about £11,800¹, which equates to approximately £30 per passenger per trip.

Hospital Voluntary Driving Scheme

The HVDS continues to operate smoothly. During the year 77 drives were made covering a total of 5,299 miles. Of these trips, 35 were made to appointments in Aberdeen and eight to the Strathdon Medical Centre, the balance being evenly split between Alford/ Aboyne and Huntly/ Inverurie/ Banchory. The direct cost of operation was £3,650², against which contributions of £923 were received from patients. The cost to the charity of the service was therefore slightly over 51p/ mile driven.

The Trustees are grateful to all our volunteer drivers for their commitment to the HVDS, without which it could not continue to operate.

¹ This differs slightly from the accounts published in the report because of the timing of expenditures and receipts. The accounts are prepared on a cash basis, meaning they include the March 2023 invoice which was received and paid in April 2023 but exclude that for March 2024, which will appear in the 2024/25 accounts.

² Again, this differs from the published accounts because of the timing of expenditures and receipts. The accounts reflect mileage driven in March 2023 that was paid in April and do not include March 2024 mileage claims.



Fundraising

The charity's local fundraising continued with stalls at the Corgarff Picnic and the Lonach games, a successful Coronation event and a family ceilidh. A total of £3,704 was raised from these events.

The charity is indebted to the trustees and volunteers who organised them and all those who took part or contributed.

Donations

The Silver Circle has been most fortunate to receive over £9,700 in donations over the course of the past year, about 10% of its total income. These donations were all from local people and organisations that appreciate the role the charity plays in the community and wished to support it directly. The trustees are most grateful to all donors, small and large.



Financial Review

After the shock of the cut in funding from Aberdeenshire Health and Social Care Partnership reported last year the charity's financial situation has stabilised. This is largely due to the effort of the Treasurer, [REDACTED] who is retiring from the role and to whom thanks are owed for his sterling work over the past years.

Income and expenditure were broadly in line with the trustee's budget for 2023/24. Costs increased in line with inflation to approximately £63,000. The shortfall in AHSCP funding was mostly met by a one off grant of £10,000 from the MacRobert Trust. The charity has recently received a grant of £20,00 from the National Lottery Community Fund, which will fill a substantial element of the funding gap for the next two years.

The receipt of this grant at the very end of the financial year is the principal reason why the annual accounts show a significant "profit" of £26,400 to be carried forward to the 2024/25 fiscal year. This "profit" is an artefact of the cash basis of accounting; had the grant been received on 1st April rather than 31st March the accounts would have been much closer to breakeven. A similar scenario arose last year with the receipt of a £2,500 "Keeping the Doors Open" grant from Age Scotland, which although spent on rent during this year was received and banked in March 2023 and thus is not shown as a major grant (i.e. £2,500 or over) in this year's accounts.

The £6,400 balance of this year's "profit" can be attributed to increased fundraising and the exceptional generosity of donors.

As reported last year, the difficulty of finding grants is not to be underestimated as the majority of grant making bodies prefer to support capital or project expenditure rather than operational costs. The application success rate remained low with approximately one in five applications succeeding. This remains a major drain on the time of the Treasurer and Secretary.

The current round of AHSCP funding lasts until March 2025. Looking forward the trustees are uncertain as to whether any funding will be available thereafter. If grants are to be awarded it is expected that the application process will commence in the latter part of 2024 and that competition between organisations supported by AHSCP will be tight.



Community Transport Funding

The community bus and hospital voluntary driving scheme are partially funded by Aberdeenshire Community Transport Initiative, which provided a grant of approximately £8,950 for FY 2023/24. This will be reduced to £7,210 in 2024/25

In round numbers the combined cost of operating the Community Bus and HVDS (after receipts) was some £14,900. If the community bus continues to run weekly and uptake of the HVDS continues at present levels, the ACTI grant will meet approximately one half of the cost going forward.

When it was first decided to run a Community Bus it was never intended that it should be a free service; affordable, certainly, but not necessarily free. Equally, the HVDS was established to make affordable transport available to those who needed, not necessarily to unduly subsidise it. That the community bus has, in fact, offered free transport is attributable to the initial funding regime. When the community bus service started fares were set but the Silver Circle did not charge holders of free bus passes – essentially everyone. Instead it was reimbursed under the community transport regime then in place. The service also benefited from Mid Deeside Community Trust's provision of a volunteer driver. The cost was substantially lower and the fares received by the Silver Circle largely covered the cost of hiring the bus itself. The service thus operated on a near break-even basis to the Silver Circle and, even when the funding model changed and the "free bus pass" regime ended, it remained a relatively small part of the Silver Circle's overall budget.

Since the pandemic, however, Mid Deeside Community Trust has been unable to provide a volunteer driver and it has been necessary to pay for one. This has resulted in a 65% increase in the cost of provision, with driver costs now amounting to some 40% of the total.

In the face of reduced ACTI funding and the general difficulty of obtaining grant support for operating costs of any kind, when considering the budget for 2024/25 the Trustees took the difficult decision to request a contribution from passengers of £5 per trip from users of the Community Bus and to raise the suggested contributions for HVDS journeys to £5 (Strathdon Medical Centre), £10 (Alford/ Aboyne), £15 (Huntly/Inverurie/Banchory) and £20 (Aberdeen). Had these contributions been requested over the past year the operating deficit would have been reduced by some £2,300.



Notwithstanding these increases, the Trustees wish to make it absolutely clear that contributions should remain voluntary and that no one should be dissuaded from using either service because of cost. Arrangements can be agreed for those in need, particularly if requiring repeated trips to Aberdeen for radio/ chemo-therapy or other reasons.

Bankers

The Silver Circle holds its current account with Virgin Money. Its reserve account is a Shawbrook Bank CAF 60-day notice account.

Income

The Silver Circle's accounts are prepared on a cash basis. Although it appears that income has increased substantially from £59,600 (FY 2022/23) to £89,644, this is primarily the result of the receipt in March 2023 of a £20,000 grant from the National Lottery Community Fund to meet spending in 2024/25 and 2025/26.

	<u>2023/24</u>	<u>2022/23</u>
1) Major Grants		
a) Aberdeenshire Health and Social Care Partnership (i)	£12,500	£15,625
b) Aberdeenshire Community Transport Initiative (ii)	£8,947	£7,140
c) National Lottery	£20,000	£10,000
d) Foundation Scotland (iii)	£5,000	£5,000
e) MacRobert Trust	£10,000	-
f) Community Psychiatric Nurses Association (1994)	£4,000	-
g) Wills Bros Civil Engineering Limited	-	£2,500
	£60,447	£40,265
2) Major Donations		
a) [REDACTED] / Kildrummy Estate	£2,500	-
b) Lonach Highland and Friendly Society	£4,500	-
	£7,000	-



3) Other income:

a)	Services provided to clients		
i)	Lunches and Teas	£8,618	£7,491
ii)	Hospital Driving Contributions	£ 923	£1,484
iii)	Contributions to Outings	£3,026	£602
		£12,567	£9,577
b)	Other Grants and Donations:		
i)	Small grants (iv)	£1,444	£2,501
ii)	Private donations (v)	£2,728	£4,705
		£4,172	£7,206
c)	interest (inc. cash back)	£1,754	£581
d)	Fundraising	£3,704	£1,971
TOTAL INCOME		£89,644	£59,600

Notes to the statement of Income:

- i. AHSCP funds are restricted to the provision of the Day Centre and related services.
- ii. ACTI funds are restricted to the provision of community transport, principally the Community Bus and the Hospital Volunteer Driver Scheme.
- iii. The Greencoat Kildrummy, Lumsden and Towie Community Fund, commonly known as the Kildrummy Wind Farm Fund is administered by Foundation Scotland.
- iv. Includes a grant from Upper Donside Community Trust.
- v. Includes donation from the AF Wallace Charitable Trust. the Wallace Highlanders and collections *in memoriam*.



Expenditure

Total expenditure for the year was £63,218 (2022/23 £50,234), comprising.

	<u>2023/24</u>	<u>2022/23</u>
1) Staff costs (i)	£25,204	£22,146
2) Administrative costs (ii)	£997	£689
3) Insurances (iii)	£998	£885
4) Provision of Services		
a) Day Centre (iv)	£22,988	£19,012
b) Community Bus (v)	£9,837	£3,790
c) Hospital Driver Scheme (vi)	£3,195	£3,713
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	(£63,218)	(£50,234)
Income	£89,644	£59,600
PROFIT / (LOSS) FOR YEAR	£26,425	£9,366

Notes to the statement of Expenditure:

- i. The Silver Circle employs five part time staff: the Day Centre Co-ordinator and her assistant, the Hospital Voluntary Driving Scheme co-ordinator, the Community Bus Co-ordinator and a Bookkeeper/ Administrative Assistant. The costs include training and incidentals.
- ii. The principal administrative costs relate to audit services; the provision of web-based bookkeeping and other IT; and printing and postage.
- iii. The charity carries Employer's and Third-Party Liability insurances with Aviva.
- iv. Includes hall rental; provision of refreshments and luncheon; cost of activities (craft materials, expenses incurred by visiting artists/ speakers expenses etc.); and transport for outings.
- v. Hired from Mid Deeside Community Trust. The significant increase is attributable to the retirement of Mid Deeside's volunteer driver.
- vi. The charity reimburses volunteer drivers at the HMRC accepted rate of 45p/ mile.



Reserves

Policy

The trustees' policy is to maintain reserves sufficient to meet six months operations, a period felt sufficient to seek alternative funding or to reorganise the charity's operations should funding from current sources cease or be substantially reduced.

Position

Current assets stand at £76,229. The Silver Circle expenses equipment so this sum does not include the current value of tangible assets, which have no residual value. The sum includes the £20,000 National Lottery grant for 2024/25 and 2025/26 and thus can be expected to diminish over the coming years.

Reserves are split approximately 2:1 between operating and reserve accounts. The reserve account stands at c. £25,000 which at present levels of expenditure is slightly less than five months' operation. £10,000 of the £20,000 received from the National Lottery should, however, be considered reserves (and may be transferred to the reserve account) bringing reserves to £35,000 – within the trustees' six month objective.

The trustees have determined that the balance of the sum carried forward after allocation of the Community Fund grant to FY 2024/25 and 2025/26 should be retained in the operating account to meet inflationary rises.

Deficits

The charity asks those who use its services to contribute if they are able to do so. For many years this has principally been a contribution to the cost of lunch and outings at the day centre and towards HVDS mileage. As set out above, in future a contribution towards the cost of the community bus will be requested. Should it be necessary to draw on reserves for an extended period the trustees will balance an increase in such contributions against the impact that might have on clients, opportunities for fundraising and the ability of the charity to obtain new grant aid.



Future Plans

Over the past year the charity has operated under a degree of uncertainty. At their meeting of 5th March 2024 the trustees approved a budget for 2024/25 of £65,000 (approximately in line with this year's expenditure) showing a deficit against reasonably predicted grant and other income of £14,500 – about 1/5th of cash assets. The trustees have reasonable confidence that the anticipated deficit can, however, be filled through a combination of further grant applications and fundraising.

Further, having met with the chair and chief executive of AHSCP last summer, the trustees now have a better understanding of the constraints AHSCP face. This contact has already produced demographic data useful in framing the impact the charity has in the local community and the trustees are optimistic that they can draft a viable grant application for the three years commencing April 2025. Whether such an application will result in sufficient, sustainable, long term funding is essentially a question of the resources AHSCP have to distribute and how many other organisations are seeking them. It remains entirely possible that AHSCP's grant to the Silver Circle will be reduced further in real terms.



Declaration

Signed on behalf of the charity trustees:

David Bp

Print name

[Redacted]

Designation

Secretary

Date

29th August 2024