



Sense Group Annual Report and Financial Statements 2021

Sense, The National Deafblind and Rubella Association (Sense), Sense International and Helping Sense Limited



sense

connecting sight, sound and life

Contents

From our President	3
Introduction from the Chair and the Chief Executive	4
Report of the Trustees of Sense, the National Deafblind and Rubella Association	5
Sense – Who We Are	6
A Brief Overview of Sense Services	7
Managing through the Pandemic	8
Our Four Strategic Outcomes	9
Quality & Safeguarding	13
Fundraising	13
Our Volunteers	15
Our People	15
The Governance of Sense, The National Deafblind and Rubella Association	17
Public Benefit	19
The Sense Group	20
Sense Group Trustees and Senior Staff	21
The Strategic Report of Sense, the National Deafblind and Rubella Group	23
Sense Performance Against Objectives 2020/21	24
Sense objectives for 2021/22	29
Sense International Performance against objectives for 2020/21	30
Sense International objectives for 2021/22	35
Section 172 Statement	35
Statement of the responsibilities of the Council of Sense, the National Deafblind and Rubella Association	37
Internal Financial Controls	38
Anti-Bribery Policy	38
Financial Review of Sense, the National Deafblind and Rubella Association 2020/21	39
Principal risks and uncertainties	42
Energy & Carbon Report 2020/21	44
Report on the audit of the financial statements	46
Consolidated Statement of financial activities for the year ended 31 March 2021	49
Accounting Policies	53
Notes to the Financial Statements of Sense, the National Deafblind and Rubella Association, for the year ended 31 March 2021	57
Other Information	78
Major supporters of Sense in 2020/21	78
Charity Information	80



From our President

Over the last financial year Sense has continued to offer much-needed services to children, adults and families with disabilities, for whom the pandemic has been extremely difficult and challenging.

We know that this pandemic has impacted on those who already struggle the most. We are painfully aware of families with disabled sons or daughters struggling at home; the adults we support with additional health conditions; explaining to someone in our homes why they can't go to the park or see their family; disabled people experiencing loneliness every day.

We know that need has increased during this period and there has been a great impact on the children, adults and families that we support. We have kept the people we support safe throughout the last eighteen months. We have developed new forms of virtual support. We have also embraced new ways of supporting each other. We have shared this with our supporters, who have responded so generously to our COVID-19 emergency appeal.

I believe that change and innovation can follow periods of crisis like this as we collectively start to rebuild. Sense has taken the time to look at its strategy and has explored how we can increase our reach and impact in the next period, whilst learning the lessons from the pandemic. It is rooted in the hopes and aspirations of the children, adults and families we support. It sets Sense on a path of growth, to build our capacity to develop new and innovative services and to make a tangible difference in the communities in which we operate.

Thank you.

The Lord Levy
President



Introduction from the Chair and the Chief Executive

What marks COVID-19 out from other crises that we may have experienced is that it has been systemic. Almost nothing has been left untouched by it. Our home lives and work lives have converged and our personal and professional concerns have often become one and the same. It has also become the catalyst of what will be one of the most challenging economic environments most of us have ever had to work in.

That is why we have been so humbled and amazed on a daily basis by the determined resilience and creativity of our staff and volunteers and the people we support and their families. We have been delivering high-quality and safe services during this time and the support we have provided has been incredible. We have been forced to rewrite our approach to supporting adults in our accommodation services and moved many of our other services online. We have seen greater collaboration between our teams, bringing together specialist skills from different areas of the organisation, moving staff online, and supporting people in new and innovative ways.

At a time when the world is changing so quickly and life has been altered, we have done so much. We launched a new supporter engagement campaign, Sense Sign School, and new virtual events and products – not only did that give us a welcome break from the doom and gloom, but it also gave us reassurances that despite current adversity, we are moving forward and doing new things.

However, we know that many individuals that Sense supports remain vulnerable to the long-term fallout from the COVID-19 crisis so, we will campaign and engage with government to help ensure their needs are met.

The new National Disability Strategy is a start in addressing the inequalities that disabled people face every day, but it isn't going to deliver the transformational change needed for disabled people. It doesn't champion the case for more investment in social care, nor how to tackle health inequalities or provide additional support services, such as short breaks for disabled children and their families. We will push government to ensure that disabled people are at the heart of their new strategy and as it progresses, we want to see clear channels for disabled people to be part of a continuing dialogue and when necessary are able to hold government to account.

Dr Justin Molloy
Chair of Sense

Richard Kramer
Chief Executive, Sense & Sense International

Report of the Trustees of Sense, the National Deafblind and Rubella Association (including the Director's Report)



Sense – Who We Are

Sense is a national disability charity that supports children and adults who are deafblind or have complex disabilities to communicate, experience the world, and fulfil their potential. We also have an international arm, Sense International, which works in eight countries round the world.

Sense offers personalised support in our residential and supported living services; in the community and across our centres, holidays and short breaks; and provide opportunities for children and adults to take part in arts and sport activities across the country.

We are here for everyone who needs us, for as long as they need us, providing early intervention for children, helping young people access education, and supporting the transition into adulthood and beyond. As well as providing practical support, we also offer information to families and we campaign for the rights of people with complex disabilities to take part in life.

We work with a range of partners to deliver our services, including local authorities, housing associations, healthcare professionals, schools, and art and sport organisations.

Some of our services are funded by Local Authorities and Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs) whilst others, such as our specialist work with children and young people, are entirely dependent on charitable fundraising and income from trading through our 115 shops.

All of our different services are tailored to the needs of each individual.

Sense's mission

Our mission is to remove barriers to communication so that everyone has the opportunity to live their life to the full.

What we believe

Our vision is of a world where no one, no matter how complex their disabilities, is left out, isolated, or unable to fulfil their potential.

What we do

We provide expert support that's tailored to the individual needs of each person who has complex disabilities or is deafblind. That might be through our centres, holidays and short breaks, or in people's homes. In addition to practical support, we also offer information to families, and campaign for the rights of people with complex disabilities to take part in life.

Who we support

We are here for every person living with complex disabilities* that make it a challenge to communicate, access information and take part in life.

We are specialists in providing the individual, tailored support people need to lead a fulfilling life.

*Complex disabilities – or complex needs – are descriptions used for a person who lives with two or more disabilities and requires high levels of support with aspects of their daily life.

How we support

We know that, with the right support, it is possible for every person to make sense of their world and the world around them, no matter how complex their disabilities.

We help people to communicate and express themselves – be it through speech or sign, touch or movement, gesture or sound, art or dance.

For 66 years, Sense has developed an unrivalled depth of knowledge, skill and expertise to help people overcome the barriers to communication. We help people develop the skills to enjoy everyday things like having a conversation, enjoying friendships and living independently.

We offer personalised and flexible services that are built around the specific needs of each individual. That means we support people in their home and in the community, in their education and transition to adulthood, and through our holidays, arts, sports and wellbeing programmes.

We also offer practical support to families, including information, advice, short breaks and family events.

We campaign to change laws and government policies where necessary to ensure that everyone, no matter how complex their disabilities, can communicate, access information, and take part in life.

A Brief Overview of Sense Services

We reach **13,000** children who are deafblind or have complex needs and their families each year

We support almost **3,000** children through our specialist and operational services

We support **335** people in our accommodation services in our **71** registered care services and **23** supported living services in England, Wales and Northern Ireland.

112 children and young people attended our GOT (Get Out There) groups in 5 areas of England. The groups are a combination of local authority commissioned services and charitably funded activities.

We support **674** people through our day services, attending our **9** resource centres, or using Communicator Guides, Interveners and other community services.

There are **226** people receiving services through our nine college sites, **117** of them supported by social care funding and **109** through Education funding.

94% of our services are judged by CQC to be good or outstanding.

We supported **3,042** number of people through our information and advice line last year.

Nearly **6,000** people have benefitted from support through our Sense Connect services designed to tackle loneliness and social isolation and almost 5,000 took part in our Arts, Sport and Well-being programmes.

902,000 customers visited our **115** shops in the five months they were open last year.

Our Policy Team engaged with civil servants and government ministers to champion the needs of people with complex disabilities, from a position of being a social care provider able to directly represent them.

We kept the experiences of families and disabled people in the media, and ran **2** campaigns; the 'Forgotten Families' campaign highlighted the experience of families caring for adults, and the impact of cuts to services, while the 'Left Out of Life' campaign aimed to tackle isolation and loneliness amongst disabled people.

Managing through the Pandemic

The COVID-19 pandemic has further highlighted and added to the inequalities that disabled people face. Many disabled people have told us that they feel forgotten, that their lives are seen as being of less value and that their communities have closed up to them.

The pandemic has been incredibly difficult for disabled people in so many ways. Inequalities include inaccessible information, lack of access to supermarkets and online delivery slots, the impact on mental health and barriers to social care. For many disabled people, their support has been reduced during the pandemic and this doesn't reflect the risk and impact of the virus - disabled people make up six out of ten of all COVID-19 deaths.

Most of the children and adults we work with use sign language, gestures and touch to communicate. They need expert support to express themselves, and they have been hard hit by lockdown and social distancing. Families have felt exhausted as they have cared for their children without the informal and formal support they need. Children have missed vital therapies and other support.

Social care providers have faced huge challenges in responding to COVID-19. Front line workers have not been sufficiently recognised. Obtaining PPE has been fraught. Getting testing for staff has been a struggle.

In response to COVID-19, Sense acted quickly to protect disabled people, staff, volunteers and the public. We put plans in place to protect our frontline workers, shut our offices, and moved to homeworking wherever possible. We closed all our charity shops, cancelled major fundraising events and closed our Family Centres, Colleges and Day Centres. We also stopped face-to-face Buddying sessions, postponed our Holiday programme, and moved as much of our support as possible online.

At very short notice, our services developed new procedures and ways of working. We looked at how they work with others and how people we care for could stay in touch with family and friends. In our accommodation services, our overwhelming priority was to keep the people we support as safe and as well protected from the virus as we could. In order to limit the number of staff going in, they worked longer hours and the use of agencies was minimised.

Sense frontline staff continued to provide expert care throughout, but the loss of structure and routine is a major challenge for the people we support. Social and community links vanished overnight and, as a result, we've seen an increase in peoples' anxiety and distress. PPE presented significant challenges for disabled people who lip read or use facial expressions to communicate. Many activities for people in accommodation needed to be re-thought due to lockdown, as external contact was so limited. There are lots of examples of activities provided remotely, including seated yoga, drumming to music, exercise through dance.

Sense put in place a suite of virtual sessions alongside our regular phone and email contact. We hosted groups and events online, and membership of our private Facebook group for parents and carers doubled and became a one-stop-shop for information and advice.

Our teams collaborated in new ways to make sure that people with complex disabilities can keep doing the things that matter to them. We set up Buddying sessions for young people on Zoom, sent out art boxes and sensory packs by post, and created an online timetable of accessible activities for Sense support workers to use. We've also created a virtual Befriending Service led by trained volunteers to help disabled people feel less lonely.

We have raised our profile in the press with hard hitting campaigns including our 'Forgotten Families' campaign and 'Left out of Life' which highlighted the impact of loneliness on disabled people.

Our Events Team responded at pace to launch new virtual events, and in June we launched our own Emergency Appeal, which has performed well.

Sense staff have shown remarkable creativity and resilience to make all this happen. And working in this way is teaching us new things and allowing us to reach more people and tackle some of the barriers we often face, so online services will form part of how we deliver our services from now on.

Our Four Strategic Outcomes

Our Strategy – No One Left Out of Life – has four strategic outcomes. These four brief stories about the people we work with, illustrate some of the ways in which we are able to support people.

Outcome 1: Children and families get the best possible start

Zach and Luca's story

Zachary has always been amazing with his little brother, Luca. As a mother, I couldn't be prouder of him, but I always felt a pang of guilt that I could never spend as much time with him as I do with Luca.

Luca was born with CHARGE syndrome which is a rare genetic condition that affects his vision, hearing, and balance. Sense and other organisations have been there for Luca, but it always left me wondering, who's there for Zach?

The first lockdown was very upsetting for Zach as all the things that he relied on for his own well-being had been taken away. When Sense called to offer online sessions particularly for the siblings of people with complex disabilities, we snapped up the opportunity.

Sense is the only organisation to provide specific support for Zach as a sibling, through their Sense Connect programme. He can be quite shy and doesn't really talk a lot, so we were nervous about how he would take to the sessions.

Speaking to the other siblings has given him so much confidence to honestly express how he feels. No matter how caring his other friends are, speaking to peers in the same situation as himself really opened his eyes. It really struck us when, one day, he said that he felt sad that he would never be able to talk or play football with his brother. This took us by surprise, but we reassured him that it's OK to feel sad. It's important for him to know that it is not a negative thing to talk about Luca.

That moment alone filled him with so much confidence. Now, he chats with us and other people. My boys mean the absolute world to me, and I love them both equally. The love they have for each other fills my days with wonder and hope. Having Sense and the other siblings there for Zach has changed him profoundly and helped me feel less guilty about the time I spend with him.

Faye, Luca and Zac's mum





Outcome 2: Adults are supported to live and learn at every stage of their lives

Fernando's story

Fernando had lost the spark that made him so bright before Sense got involved. His spirit had died down. Growing up, I looked up to him as my older brother. He was so full of confidence that seemed to disappear as his vision and hearing started to go.

When he was born, the doctors thought that he was fine and sent him home with our mum. Having already had children, she could see that Fernando was different and it wasn't until he was about one that the doctors recognised that he had a disability. But they couldn't give a diagnosis. Our mother was pregnant with me at the time, and they encouraged her to terminate the pregnancy. Thankfully, they didn't.

Having sisters and a brother around him encouraged Fernando to try new things no matter what anyone might say. He loved working out and riding his bike. After school, he got a job where he worked for over 20 years. But we could all see that his vision, hearing and mobility were deteriorating, and he had to stop working. As the years went on, he became more and more withdrawn.

Spending time at a Sense Centre has been the best thing for Fernando. At home, communication can be a struggle but, there, he's in an environment where he can communicate fluently. He started to shine again!

When lockdown hit and that was taken away from him, we all really struggled. He started to spend more time in his room and not want to interact. The Sense staff were fantastic and arranged visits to see him and speak to him. We don't know what we would have done without that. Now he's back at the centre and he is as happy as ever. The only difficulty is explaining why he can't go seven days a week!

Carole, Fernando's sister



Outcome 3: Individuals are less lonely and more connected with their communities

Natalie's story

My name is Natalie. I am 38 years old and the mother of two girls.

I also have Usher syndrome, a condition that means I am deaf and visually impaired.

We're all likely to experience loneliness at some point in our lives. But having a disability means that you are more likely to be lonely.

The causes of loneliness among disabled people are complex. But they all stem from one thing – a sense of disconnection. When I received my diagnosis through the post, I immediately felt disconnected from my friends, family, and the world I knew. A ray of hope came when my Sense Communicator Guide put me in touch with Lianne, who had also just been diagnosed with Usher. Speaking to someone who understood was a major turning point and we are now the best of friends.

During the pandemic, local community groups have been closed and the places I used to feel relatively comfortable going to are no longer there. The safety measures that have been introduced have also made life more challenging.

I have enjoyed going out for walks with my baby in her pushchair, but I find it difficult to maintain the two-metre distance with other people in the street because of my vision. It makes me so scared of hitting someone or bumping into anyone and I am worried that in doing so I will hurt myself, my baby or other people.

Thanks to Sense's campaigning work, I have been able to share my story with the nation in the hope that people understand the difficulties of disabled people and want to change the world for the better. None of us want to feel like a burden and a little understanding goes a long way.

Outcome 4: Society has increased awareness of the impact of our work and is inspired to take action



A close shave

Not one, but two people raised more than £1,000 by having a very close shave.

December saw David Ashdown, an HGV driver from Bedworth shaving off his Santa beard and hair.

David had been growing his beard and hair since last March with the plan to shave it off just before Christmas to raise money for Sense. He has been named by his friends and family as Bedworth town's very own Santa Claus.

David is an avid angler and well known in the local community. He has received support from Lanes Fishing Tackle shop and fellow anglers in the area. The big shave was held, following social distancing guidelines, at Max Cuts Barbers in the town, with his family there to support him.

David has been supporting Sense for years and was motivated to do the festive fundraising challenge after learning more about the disproportional impact the pandemic has had on disabled people and their families.

David said: "I wanted to put a smile on everyone's faces for Christmas after what has been a dismal year. I've had great support from Lanes Fishing Tackle and other anglers and really want to raise as much as possible for this amazing charity."

In January, Helen Jones shaved her head. She was inspired to take on the challenge for Sense because of her own experience with hearing loss and as a Cochlear Implant wearer.

She says the challenge was to develop her confidence in showing off her implant.

She said: "I felt confident about the head shave. The challenge for me is having my Cochlear Implant on show."

Helen began to slowly lose her hearing sixteen years ago and was fitted with a bone-anchoring hearing aid, called a Cochlear Implant, after several operations.

Over the years she has experienced times of isolation and feelings of vulnerability which resulted in her often hiding her Cochlear Implant which is visible on the side of her head.

Lockdown, and hearing other disabled people's experiences of isolation, inspired her to take on this challenge and fundraise to support the work of Sense.

We are very grateful to David and Helen, and to everyone who takes action to raise money for, or support Sense in other ways.

Quality and Safeguarding

We have continued to maintain the highest levels of quality and safety of our services throughout the COVID-19 pandemic. We have had to adapt our approaches to quality assurance and respond to the challenges presented by the pandemic. We have ensured that the health and safety measures, infection control arrangements and necessary restrictions imposed by government have been introduced to keep the people we support, their families and our staff safe.

Our services are of the highest quality, as recognised by our regulators, with 94% of our services registered with the Care Quality Commission in England rated as 'Good' or 'Outstanding'. We also provided high levels of assurance to regulators on our response to the pandemic, through their Emergency Support Framework and targeted Infection, Prevention and Control inspections.

We developed new virtual approaches to reviewing the quality of our services and our independently chaired Quality Board has continued to meet to monitor quality and compliance throughout the pandemic. The Board has recognised the outstanding work of our frontline staff in keeping people safe and continuing to provide high quality, person centred support; the Board also recognised the strength of leadership and management of the organisation in responding to the situation.

Safeguarding has continued to be a priority for Sense and the pandemic has presented additional challenges about how we respond to concerns about safety and potential abuse. Our Safeguarding Board has continued to meet to review our policies and procedures; and to provide assurance on our response to safeguarding incidents.

We have maintained high levels of training and awareness of safeguarding for our staff and volunteers, in addition to developing accessible and easy read information for the people we support to keep themselves safe and report concerns.

Our Working Together for Change approach of listening to the experiences of the people we support and using this information to improve our services, continues to be embedded and rolled out across the organisation. An example of this is the new easy read policies which have been produced to enable people to understand their own health needs; and we have also developed improved training and resources on identity, sexuality and relationships.

Fundraising

Sense is funded not only by contracted services, but also by fundraising which provides our charitable services.

This has been a year like no other for the people we support and the supporters who make our work possible. We would like to thank everyone that has supported Sense, giving their time, money and voice to our vital work. This has been a critical time for Sense and the people we work with, many of whom have been and continue to be disproportionately impacted by the effects of the pandemic.

People's enormous generosity through this time meant that we raised over £9.59million for the work of Sense and Sense International. **We want to thank everyone for your great generosity.**

- That includes almost £4.1million received from 177 supporters who made the very special decision to remember Sense in their wills. We extend our heartfelt sympathy and thanks to their loved ones.
- We engaged with more than 833 groups, companies and individuals to raise funds and awareness of Sense's vital work, in local communities across the country.
- Support from Sense's individual supporters and the public for our Emergency Appeal during Spring and Summer 2020, raised an amazing £793,000!
- Our 2020 Supporter Christmas Appeal, which featured a story of nine-year old Bethany who has CHARGE Syndrome and is supported by Sense Children's Services, raised more funds than ever before,

with the total of £483,000.

- In total, the support from individuals to Sense's Christmas activities totalled nearly £800,000, as well as gaining support from 23,000 new donors responding across our mailed appeals and television activity.

We're extremely grateful to all the Trusts, Foundations, Businesses and Statutory partners who have shown that they care deeply about the impact of the pandemic on people with complex disabilities, their families, and everyone who works and volunteers at Sense.

With emergency funding streams being announced almost daily, we worked at pace to help leading grant makers understand the threats posed by COVID-19 and the difference we could make by working together.

The fundraising team submitted more than 500 requests for support and secured an unprecedented £3.1m, which meant that Sense could mitigate some of the worst impacts of the pandemic: avoiding redundancies, bringing back specialist staff from Furlough, tackling loneliness, investing in arts and sports activities, and supporting the wellbeing of our frontline workers.

We're proud to recognise and thank our major supporters on pages 78–79 of this report. We look forward to working with all our partners and new supporters in the coming year, to take more action and help people with complex disabilities to thrive.

Our commitment to fundraise responsibly

We are committed to follow best practice in fundraising and marketing. We are members of the Institute of Fundraising and registered with the Fundraising Regulator whose Code of Practice we follow.

Maintaining the trust of our supporters is critical – that is why honesty and transparency is at the heart of everything we do.

We adhere to all legislative and regulatory requirements and ensure that our policies, guidelines and processes are regularly reviewed. We have very strict guidelines about fundraising from vulnerable people and we never put pressure on anyone to donate.

In 2020/21 Sense worked with four professional fundraisers to support our fundraising. We closely monitor our supplier partners and those that fundraise on our behalf, to ensure the highest standards are maintained.

We work extremely hard to ensure supporters and the public have a positive experience of Sense, but we do not always get it right and we take all complaints and concerns seriously and value your feedback. You can find our complaints policy on the Sense website.

Over the last year the Supporter Services Team received 49 complaints. We always respond quickly to requests to change the way in which we contact people and ensure that we manage our supporters' personal details in a respectful and secure manner. We also review our data management procedures on a regular basis.

We are registered with the Fundraising Regulator to ensure that we are transparent, respectful and that we champion best practice and adhere to regulation. During the reporting period, Sense received 65 requests through the Fundraising Preference Service asking us not to send fundraising requests. No complaints were made to the Fundraising Regulator about Sense during this period.

If you would like to talk to us about fundraising, please contact our Sense Supporter Services Team on supporterservices@sense.org.uk or 0300 330 9257.

Our Volunteers

We have been supported by more than 1,400 volunteers across 2020/21. We have been very thankful for the great contributions which they have made to Sense.

There has been a decrease in the number of volunteers supporting Sense this year because of the closure of our shops during the pandemic. At the same time, we created new opportunities for volunteers to get involved, such as our Virtual Buddying service, which matches a disabled person with a volunteer to socialise online, creating friendships to tackle social isolation and loneliness. Other volunteers have adapted the way in which they provide support; turning their hand from face-to-face activities to virtual activities, continuing to provide vital support to those who need it.

Our dedicated volunteers, who help in our charity shops across England and Wales, have continued to support us whilst our shops closed and re-opened three times over last year. Volunteers in our Sense shops and through community fundraising activities have continued to raise crucial funds, support our engagement activities in local communities, build relationships and increase awareness of the work that Sense does and the difference we make.

We are hugely grateful to every person who gives their time, skills, experience, energy and enthusiasm to make a difference. Seeing how our volunteers have continued to support us over the last year has been inspiring. **Thank you!**

Our People

Our staff have gone to incredible lengths this year to keep the people we support safe from Coronavirus. There have been many stories of personal sacrifice – in some instances managers and staff moved into accommodation-based services for extended periods, so that they could help reduce the risk of COVID-19 for vulnerable people with complex communication needs.

We are so very proud of everyone who has worked so hard for Sense this year.

Our key achievements this year:

A focus on staff wellbeing: we put considerable energy into supporting the individual and collective wellbeing of our staff across Sense. We delivered workshops and drop-in sessions that reached over 1,500 staff, and included support around building resilience, avoiding burnout and helping staff working at home to feel less isolated.

Sense launched a new initiative, Sense Gigs, which brought together different staff across Sense to hear motivating external speakers, and to collectively look outwards, during this extended pandemic.

A focus on Equality, Diversity and Inclusion: In the aftermath of the murder of George Floyd, Sense held two all-staff events attended by 500 staff across both sessions. We spoke in an open and honest way about our thoughts and feelings and experiences of racism. We developed an anti-racism plan in response to the death of George Floyd and the need to address the racism facing the Black Community, which also applies to Asian and Minority Ethnic Communities.

We created a dedicated role of Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Lead, who has helped us to develop and take forward our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion strategy. This was launched in May 2021 and runs until 2023.

A focus on pay and benefits: We took the decision to top up pay to normal rates for staff furloughed during the pandemic. We subsequently completely reviewed our pay and benefits offer, rationalising our pay structure. We also improved our staff benefits and now have a discount package in place for all of our workers.

A focus on new starters: At a time when it is difficult to recruit experienced staff we launched our Supported Induction offer. Our Workplace Coaching team have been supporting individuals and their managers to progress quickly and qualitatively through their induction. Anecdotal reports show that this service has made a real difference to new starter engagement, but we are conducting an evidence-based review and plan to grow the service so that every new starter can access this support.

A focus on an engaged workforce: we work hard to ensure that our staff feel a connection to our wider work. We consulted extensively on our refreshed strategy carrying forward Sense's experience of the pandemic. As a result, our leaver data shows us consistently ahead of industry benchmarks. Our staff are engaged in our work - manager turnover is 3% lower than our peers. In fact, turnover is better than the industry benchmark in all categories.

A focus on listening to staff: we have significantly increased representation on our Staff Forum which has met twice as often during the pandemic. We've focused on topics which staff think are important, including projects on, for example, domestic abuse and menopause.

Senior management pay

Sense is a complex organisation which works across England, Wales and Northern Ireland. Our workforce is engaged not only in health and social care, providing specialist personalised support to help people communicate and make the most of their potential, but also education, campaigning and supporter engagement work, while our retail arm runs over 100 shops in England and Wales.

Our sister organisation, Sense International, works with partners in East Africa, parts of Asia, South America and Eastern Europe.

Salaries for the Chief Executive and the Executive Team are set and reviewed by the Remuneration Committee, a sub-committee of our Board of Trustees (Council). The benefits available are in line with other employees, and pay is externally benchmarked in a similar way.



The Governance of Sense, The National Deafblind and Rubella Association

During 2020/21 and up to the adoption of the annual report and financial statements by Council: there have been 14 Trustees, some of whom were in post for part of the year. Trustees are also (for the purposes of company law) Directors of Sense, The National Deafblind and Rubella Association. Their names are set out later in this report.

Currently Trustees can be co-opted to our Council or elected at the Annual General Meeting (AGM) and can serve two terms of four years. Those co-opted can be reappointed annually up to a maximum of eight years.

Council usually meets four times a year and Trustees are expected to attend all Council meetings. In 2020/21, due to the Pandemic, Council met nine times.

Sub-committees

Four sub-committees support the Council in its work: Finance and Audit, Remuneration, Nominations and the Engagement sub-committees. Each sub-committee has written Terms of Reference, which are reviewed as necessary and included in the Governance Handbook. Council appoints the members of the sub-committees annually and receives either the minutes from their meetings, or reports of their activities, with any recommendations.

Finance and Audit sub-committee

The Finance and Audit sub-committee's main purposes are to:

- Ensure that financial resources are deployed appropriately in furtherance of the charity's strategic objectives.
- Monitor and review the effectiveness of Sense's internal and external auditing procedures and outcomes.
- To report to and advise Sense Council on all matters within the purview of the Committee

Committee membership comprises at least three Trustees, in addition to the Chair (the Honorary Treasurer). Apart from Trustees, the Committee can co-opt new members who they feel will bring relevant financial expertise.

The Chief Executive and the Group Director of Finance and Resources attend the meetings.

Nominations sub-committee

The role of the Nominations sub-committee is to: identify skills gaps in Council membership, oversee the recruitment process of Council members and recommend prospective Trustees to Council for election or co-option, ensuring that, once appointed, they have an appropriate induction. Membership of the sub-committee comprises at least one other Trustee in addition to the Chair. The Head of Governance attends the meetings.

Prospective Trustees are interviewed by the Nominations sub-committee and, if successful, their appointment is recommended to Council. With the agreement of the Chair, nominees are invited to a Council meeting as an observer, following which, with the agreement of Council, they are co-opted, until standing for election at the next AGM.

New Trustees receive a comprehensive induction pack. An appropriate induction plan is also put in place, which involves meetings with senior staff, internal and external training as necessary, and visits to Sense's services as appropriate.

Remuneration sub-committee

The Remuneration sub-committee ensures that Sense's remuneration strategy for members of the Executive Team, and its implementation, is perceived by all stakeholders to be transparent, fair and effective; that total remuneration is commensurate with personal and corporate performance and market expectations; and that overall packages enable Sense to recruit suitably skilled, qualified and experienced people.

The Terms of Reference of the Committee were updated in 2017. The membership comprises the Chair, Vice-Chair and Treasurer, with a quorum of two. The Chief Executive is a non-voting ex officio member but is not present for discussions regarding his own remuneration.

Engagement sub-committee

This new sub-committee was approved by Council in March 2020 to help deliver a key component of Sense's current strategy – driving an increase in awareness of the organisation and raising charitable funds.

The Engagement sub-committee is responsible for advising Council about fundraising and marketing matters, monitoring the implementation of the Engagement Strategy, providing oversight of key activity, campaigns and outcomes and making recommendations about plans and activities.

The Committee has at least one member in addition to the Chair and can co-opt external members. The meetings are attended by the Group Director of Engagement.

Executive Team

Sense Council delegates day-to-day operational management of the organisation to the Chief Executive. The broad areas of delegation for which he is accountable have been agreed by Council and are set out in the Governance Handbook.

To ensure these responsibilities are discharged effectively, the Chief Executive is responsible for appointing, managing and developing senior staff to take direct responsibility for these areas, and for putting in place appropriate reporting and assurance mechanisms.

The Executive Team meets regularly and includes the Chief Executive, Group Director of Operational Services, Group Director of Finance & Resources, Group Director of Engagement, five other functional Directors and the Head of Governance.

The Articles of Association for Sense, The National Deafblind and Rubella Association

Council agreed in June 2021 to revised Articles which included updated Objects, set out on page 20, making it clear that while Sense primarily supports and works with people who are deafblind, we also work with people with a range of complex disabilities. The Articles of Sense were last comprehensively reviewed in 2011.

A number of other changes were made, including changing the name 'Council' to the 'Board of Trustees', Chairman to Chair and giving the Board of Trustees the power to appoint Trustees and to report this to the AGM, if one is held.

Trustees can still serve two four-year terms. The Chair can serve two four-year terms which can be extended by the Board for two more years, to a maximum of 10 years.

The new Articles were adopted by an Extraordinary General Meeting (of company members) held on July 27th 2021 on condition that the Charity Commission consented to the amendment of the Objects.

The Governance Handbook

In addition to the areas covered above (Terms of Reference and delegated matters), the 'Governance Handbook' also includes sections on our values, commitment to diversity, the appointment of Trustees, and role profiles for the Chair, Vice Chair and Treasurer, other Trustees; the Trustee induction process; the Trustee Code of Conduct; the Trustee conflict of interest policy; and Council's agenda cycle. An updated version (the 7th) was last approved by Council in June 2020.

The Charity Governance Code

The Code, which was updated in December 2020, specifies that the Boards of large charities should publish brief statements in the annual report on three areas:

Principle 4: Describing the charity's approach to risk.

This can be found on page 42.

Principle 5: Explaining how the board is reviewed.

In December 2020, Council decided that there would be an internal review, which took place in April 2021, through a comprehensive survey which went to all Trustees and the members of the Executive Team who attend Council. The results were reported to Council in June 2021. These were positive, with an overall conclusion that Council operates well as a team, in a positive and transparent atmosphere and takes decisions well.

An action list was also approved, which included the need for Council to have a deeper understanding of the needs of the people which Sense supports and that future recruitment should take account not only of skills and experience, but also diversity across all of the protected characteristics.

Principle 6: Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

Council had previously agreed a commitment to a diverse board with a reasonable balance across various areas including gender, age, involvement of people with complex disabilities or their family members, and people from various professional backgrounds and to work to achieve greater diversity.

One of the questions asked in the Governance Review was about increasing the diversity of Trustees. There was general agreement about the need to recruit Trustees with a 'lived experience' of disabilities and that there is an under-representation of people from minority ethnic backgrounds.

As mentioned elsewhere in this report, an Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) lead has been appointed and gave a presentation to Council on the launch of the new EDI Strategy in June 2021. This will be taken forward over the coming months in relation to Council and to the organisation as a whole.

Public benefit

Trustees have referred to the information contained in the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit. The information contained in this report about our services and achievements gives clear examples of how our work is beneficial and brings public benefit. Our objectives for next year show that Sense will continue to provide public benefit in line with our objects.

Stakeholder Statements

The information about engagement with our employees and other stakeholders is given in the Section 172 Statement on p54.

Working together

Our Patron: HRH The Princess Royal

The Sense Group comprises two discrete legal entities: Sense and Sense International, in addition to the subsidiaries as set out below.

Both Sense and Sense International are registered charities and companies limited by guarantee, with their own Boards and Memorandum and Articles. The objects of both charities are similar and refer to supporting people who are deafblind and have sensory impairments.

Our shared vision is a world where no one who is deafblind or has complex disabilities is isolated, left out, or unable to fulfil their potential. Each organisation runs its own activities to work towards this vision.

Information about Sense International is given below, but additional details can be found in their own annual report and financial statements.

Sense is the trading name for Sense, The National Deafblind and Rubella Association, which is a registered charity (charity number: 289868) and a company limited by guarantee (company number: 01825301). It is governed by its Articles of Association.

Sense works primarily in England, Wales and Northern Ireland. It is the Corporate Trustee of the Royal School for Deaf Children (Birmingham). It is the sole member of Sense International and Sense4Enterprise Limited, and also holds 100% of the issued share capital of Helping Sense Limited.

Its objects throughout 2020/21 have been: 'To support and promote the interests of persons who are deafblind or who have a hearing or vision impairment, including those with any additional impairments or persons who are suffering from the congenital effects of rubella'. The Objects of Sense International are similar.

The objects approved by members in July 2021 and awaiting formal consent from the Charity Commission are:

"3 Objects

The objects for which the Charity is established (the "Objects") are to:

3.1 primarily support and promote the interests of persons who are deafblind or have multi-sensory impairments;

3.2 and to support persons who, by virtue of having a learning disability or one or more mental or physical impairments, or sensory impairment(s), require care and/or communication support

(together, the "beneficiaries")."

Sense International is a registered charity (charity number: 1076497), a company limited by guarantee (company number: 03742986) and is governed by its own Memorandum and Articles of Association. It works on a global basis, raising the needs of people with deafblindness and working with partner organisations in India, Bangladesh, Nepal, Peru, Romania, Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda. Sense is the only member of Sense International.

Sense also has a number of subsidiaries:

Helping Sense Limited is Sense's trading company (company number: 02214430). It is governed by its own Memorandum and Articles of Association, and its main activity is the sale of goods through Sense's charity shops. All profits from its activities are donated to Sense.

Sense4Enterprise Limited (company number: 08112973) is a registered company limited by guarantee, set up to enable Sense to take forward social enterprise activities.

The Royal School for Deaf Children (Birmingham) is a registered charity (charity number: 528908). The Charity Commission granted a linking order permitting its activities to be reported within Sense's report without the need to file its own separate annual report and financial statements. It is governed by its trust deed but does not operate in its own right.

This is the consolidated annual report and financial statements for all the Sense organisations. Sense International publishes its own annual reports and financial statements that describe its activities and finances in more detail.

Sense Group Trustees and senior staff

Sense Council members from 1 April 2020 to the present

Dr Justin Molloy (Chair) (RC)

Gillian Wood (Vice Chair), (Chair NC, RC)

Andrew Pearson (Chair of F&A) (EC, RC, TB)

Saeed Ahmed (Appointed February 2021)

George Aivazoglou (EC Chair)

Natalie Assad (NC)

Ashling Barvé (re-elected 2020) (QB)

Graham Callister (re-elected 2020)

Mythily Katsaris (re-elected 2020) (F&A)

Mark Cammies (F&A, EC, TB)

Simon Jones (Chair of the College Governing Body) (F&A)

Benedict Leigh (re-elected 2020)

Desmond Lucy (resigned Sept 2020)

Brian Symington

Key (to the initials shown above)

Sub-Committees of Council

EC – Engagement Committee

F&A Finance & Audit Committee

RC Remuneration Committee

Other Internal Boards of which Trustees are members

QB Quality Board

TB Trading Board

During this year there were four female and ten male Trustees/Directors.

Sense International Board from 1 April 2020 to the present

Sunil Sheth (Chair)

Sunil Shah (Treasurer)

Maria Arce-Moreira

Richard Cooper

Nicholas Corby

Dean Lumer

Lucy Roberts

Raaxeet Shah

Verity Stiff

Susan Turner (stepped down 15 September 2020)

Lauren Watters

Gillian Wood (appointed 15 September 2020)

During the year there were six female and six male Trustees/Directors.

Sense Executive Team

Richard Kramer Chief Executive (also Chief Executive of Sense International)

Kris Murali Deputy Chief Executive (Resigned May 2020)

Maria Horton Group Director of Operations

Catherine Still Group Director of Finance and Resources (Appointed May 2020. Previously Director of Finance)

Chris Jarrett Group Director of Engagement (Appointed May 2020. Previously Director of Engagement)

Alison Marshall Director of Sense International

Adrian Darkin Director of Trading

Alison Bennett Director of Human Resources (resigned June 2021)

Emma Evans People Director (appointed August 2021)

Jonathan Monk Director of Operational Programmes

Tony Colson Director of ICT

In the year there were five female Directors and six male Directors.

The Trustees' Report, was approved by order of the Council and signed on its behalf by;



Dr Justin Molloy, Chair

22 September 2021



The Strategic Report of Sense, the National Deafblind and Rubella Association Group

Sense performance against objectives for 2020/21

In last year's annual report, we said that we would continue to pursue the four Strategic Outcomes of our Strategy for 2019-22.

We set out below the major activity for each one in 2020-21.

Refreshing our Strategy

We made the decision to revise our existing strategy in light of what we have learned over the past 12 months. We have developed our priorities for the future, building on the important lessons and ways of working from the last period.

The focus of the revised strategy is not only on 'what' we do but 'how' we deliver our aspirations. We will collectively agree how we can increase our reach, impact and income over the period 2021-2025.

We will report on progress with these through some key performance indicators for the next year which are set out at the end of this section.

Below we report on some of the things we have achieved under each of the strategic outcomes during this past year.

Strategic outcome 1: Children and families get the best possible start

The COVID-19 pandemic disproportionately, adversely affected the families of children and young people who are deafblind or have complex disabilities. Families lost much of the support they rely on and felt isolated and abandoned. Parents and carers reported a significant increase in pressure and concern about the physical safety and emotional health of their whole family.

Sense adapted our work so that we could meet their needs. We found new ways to run accessible activities, to increase families' confidence using new technology and enabled people to connect with each other online. We were successful in securing grants from the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) and the National Lottery Community Fund, and also grants from other charitable trusts to expand our online support for children and families, to provide essential guidance, activities and virtual events for the whole family. These services have been described as a 'lifeline' by many families and have provided consistent and meaningful support throughout the pandemic.

Key Achievements:

- We supported 2,456 children, young people and families
- We organised 52 online family events, which brought 510 families together for information, support and activities
- 266 families received specialist technology and equipment to enable them to access online support
- We supported 220 children and young people at 10 specialist health clinics working in partnership with multi-disciplinary health teams
- 15 awareness raising sessions were delivered to 396 people, including professionals and families
- 104 siblings and young carers accessed dedicated support to take part in activities to make friends, share experiences and have a break for themselves through our online activities

Strategic outcome 2: Adults are supported to live and learn at every stage of their lives

In 2020/1 and since, our dedicated staff have worked hard through the pandemic to ensure that everyone in our services was safe and supported.

Sense believes passionately that each person with a complex disability should be able – as far as possible – to choose the support and lifestyle that is right for them. All Sense specialist services are built around each individual's needs and preferences so that they are supported to live the life they choose.

Our Sense Users Reference Group (SURG) gives the adults we support the opportunity to share their views, ideas and experiences of Sense and our services. It has played a vital role throughout the pandemic ensuring that the voice of people who use services is heard through regular virtual meetings.

In addition to SURG, Sense now has its first Experts by Experience group who will be undertaking audits and influencing the quality of services.

We are now in phase three of Working Together for Change, an important programme that ensures we take into account the needs, wishes and aspirations of the people we support.

Key achievements

- We supported 335 adults in our **Sense residential and supported living services** through which individuals with complex disabilities are supported to run their day-to-day lives as they wish and to be as independent as possible.
- Sense has opened a new supported living service in Dover. The scheme for nine individuals is ready for occupation and Sense is working with commissioners to identify suitable tenants.
- Sense was selected as the preferred provider for an acquisition in Devon. Twenty individuals live in the scheme and we have been delighted to welcome them into the Sense family.
- 94% of Sense services were rated as 'Good' or 'Outstanding' by the Care Quality Commissions, with two services rated as Outstanding. Five services rated as 'Good' had 'Outstanding' features. During 2020/21, due to COVID-19, only non-graded infection control inspections have been undertaken which did not identify any actions.
- We work with 193 commissioners and in 2020/21 we started 28 new contracts with Clinical Commissioning Groups and Local Authorities; 11 for providing residential or supported living services, 9 for community services and 8 for our colleges.
- Almost 600 adults benefitted from our **Sense Day Opportunities** supporting adults to build connections, develop their communication skills, life skills and independence; connect with other people; express themselves through arts and crafts; and take part in sport and exercise – all supported by our skilled and specialist staff.
- **Sense College** continues to grow providing 16 to 25-year olds with specialist education programmes at eight of our Sense Centres.
- In September 2020, Sense acquired a college in the East Midlands, Sense College Loughborough. The college is a wonderful opportunity for Sense to grow our programmes and work has begun to integrate it into the existing Sense provision.

Strategic outcome 3: Individuals are less lonely and more connected with their communities

Before the pandemic, half of all disabled people felt lonely every day, rising to 75% of disabled young people. National lockdowns, shielding and social distancing have made this sense of isolation and loneliness even worse.

Sense has responded to this challenge by moving our services online to provide much needed support to tackle the loneliness and isolation people were experiencing as a result of the restrictions and the closure of services. The national programme is called Sense Connect and offers online and face to face opportunities for people to connect with others, make friends and take part in activities.

Initially funded for six months from the Government Tackling Loneliness Grant and now continued through other grants, Sense Connect has meant that we have been able to reach even more people living with complex disabilities and their families.

Key achievements:

- Nearly 6,000 people have benefitted from our support through Sense Connect.
- We received unprecedented interest from volunteers wanting to be involved in our virtual buddies project during the pandemic
- Over 100 children and young people, up to the age of 25, have accessed our 'Get Out There' short breaks and social groups across the country
- Our highly valued holidays programme was cancelled during 2020 as a result of the pandemic – plans are underway for the return of holidays during summer 2021.

Arts, Sport and Wellbeing Programme

In addition to this, our well-established Sports, Arts and Wellbeing Programme has also managed to switch their many activities from face to face to digital.

Arts and Wellbeing

- 1,352 Arts and Wellbeing boxes were sent to people homes.
- We reach over 1,500 virtually, with 172 live sessions via Zoom.
- These sessions have included puppetry and theatre, dance, sound bathing, music, pottery, visual arts, textiles, sculpture, mosaic, and performance.
- We also launched the Sense Arts Connect manifesto and The Zara Show Podcast. We collaborated with several deaf/disabled & neurodivergent artists to create a robust model of accessible digital delivery and are one of the only arts/care originations creating work for hearing and vision impaired online audiences. We delivered this as training to a number of arts originations and continue to build our profile.
- As part of the Sense Connect funding, we were able to recruit an additional arts and wellbeing coordinator and work more closely with Sense's buddying, children's services, and the sibling programme.

Sports Programme (which is funded by Sport England)

We reached 3,326 people with 349 live sessions via zoom for activities like Tai Chi, Yoga, Boxing, Drumming to Music & Dance were run.

29 'on demand' YouTube videos were created so that people could take part in activities at a time to suit them. They included seated Yoga, table tennis, multi-sports skills, and dance.

120 sports activity kits were sent out to people's homes. These are designed to support people to be active at home during lockdown, and in their local parks and open spaces. Our 'mini games' toolkit has provided people with ideas of how to be active with limited equipment, or by using every-day household

objects. Our 'sensory walks' toolkit includes advice on planning walks, tips on encouraging mindfulness and suggested sensory activities.

In March 2021 we expanded our sports provision to the South West Region, appointing a Sport & Physical Activity Co-ordinator who is connecting Sense services, and individuals in the community who can benefit from our programme with opportunities to be active.

We have also launched a research report looking at the role of support workers in supporting people to be active and have an action plan to upskill and build confidence in the support staff network at Sense.

The Arts, Sport and Well-being Activity finder

Having moved all activity online, throughout 2021, we sent fortnightly mail outs telling people what was available. These were downloaded 4,875 times. However, as it had limitations, we decided to create a permanent online 'home' for all activities, so the people we support could dip in and out at a time/date/location that suited them. We developed this with partners, practitioners and coaches across the disability, sports and arts sectors, and launched it on our website in April 2021.

The Activity Finder currently lists over one hundred activities tailored to the different needs of people with complex disabilities, and can be used by families, carers or support staff. Content ranges from inclusive yoga to sound baths. The Finder includes written activity sheets, pre-recorded videos and booking for live sessions for a huge variety of ASW opportunities.

Strategic outcome 4: Society has increased awareness of the impact of our work and is inspired to take action

Key Achievements:

Our Campaigns

We launched a digital engagement campaign, '**Sense Sign School**' at the start of the first lockdown, and over eighty thousand people took part in free British Sign Language lessons from teacher 'Mr Tyrese' -15-year old Tyrese Dibba, from Birmingham, who is deaf, has been supported by Sense since he was a child, and played a major part in the campaign, teaching the classes. In recognition of his role, Tyrese has been given the Pride of Birmingham award.

We kept the experiences of families and disabled people in the media, from features on testing in care homes for Channel 4 News, to face coverings and why not everyone can wear one, for BBC Breakfast.

Our '**Forgotten Families**' campaign highlighted the experience of families caring for adults, and the impact of cuts to services. It was picked up by national news and this prompted over a thousand people to sign our letter calling on government to reintroduce support for disabled adults and their families.

The '**Left Out of Life**' campaign aimed to tackle isolation and loneliness amongst disabled people. Sixty thousand people saw our campaign film, featuring a voiceover by disabled actress Cherylee Houston, highlighting the barriers preventing disabled people from fully participating in society. Following national press coverage of the campaign, over eight thousand people signed up to our pledge promising to do their part to tackle the issue, learning everyday actions which will help. The campaign is now currently focused on local communities, encouraging venues and social activities to become more accessible.

'**Sense Awards**' recognises the achievements of people with complex disabilities and the staff, carers, family members, volunteers and fundraisers that support them. Because of COVID-19 we had to cancel the physical ceremony, but we still celebrated our outstanding winners online and it proved to be one of our most popular and engaging activities of the year on social media.

Policy Achievements

Throughout the year, coronavirus has dominated much of the policy and public affairs agenda. Sense championed the needs of people with complex disabilities from a position of being both a provider of social care services and an organisation representing those with complex disabilities and their families. Our engagement with civil servants, ministers and decision makers has resulted in the outcomes below:

- **Services have been delivered safely and provided vital support for people with complex disabilities and their families** after we made the case for focussing on the breadth of services that support people with complex disabilities, rather than just elderly people. As a result, Sense services (staff and residents) are able to access testing, vaccinations and funding to enable them to continue to deliver vital support safely and in new ways.
- **Parents of disabled children/family carers received recognition for the valuable role that they play:** they are now able to access the COVID-19 vaccination as a priority group.
- **Disabled children and adults have legal rights to care and support:** their legal rights have been reinstated and it is no longer permissible for local authorities to delay assessing or meeting needs.

Our profile with parliamentarians has also increased and we had many more meetings with MPs and ministers, mentions in parliament and questions tabled on our behalf, than ever before.

Progress with Our Digital Strategy

We quickly developed a new digital strategy which enables us to increase engagement with our work externally, while also helping us to collaborate across internal business functions. Some highlights of this are:

- The Sense website traffic rose 60% in 2020-21, powered by the Sense Sign School campaign and the transfer of many of our services to a virtual model.
- Interest in our online resources to make activities more inclusive, such as sensory walks, trebled.
- Our activity picker, allowing people to choose online arts, sports and wellbeing activities, proved an instant success.
- Income through the website doubled as our supporters turned to online channels to help keep our services running.
- We also saw real growth in Sense's social media community, up 145%. A significant proportion of this came from our Instagram profile growing to over 5,000 followers.

Sense Objectives for 2021–22

Next year we will continue to work to achieve the 4 Strategic Outcomes from our refreshed Strategy for 2021-26 – No one Left out of Life.

In particular, we will work to achieve the following:

Strategic outcome 1: Children and families get the best possible start

- Increase the number of children and families we support by 50%
- Launch a new national programme to support children and families to get the best possible start
- Double the number of siblings and young carers that benefit from regular and dedicated activities for themselves.

Strategic outcome 2: Adults are supported to live and learn at every stage of their lives

- Increase income for our commissioned services by £750k.
- Partner with 10 organisations to ensure that more adults with complex disabilities receive support.

Strategic outcome 3: Individuals are less lonely and more connected with their communities

- 3 x increase in the number of children, young people and adults supported by a volunteer buddy
- Launch a national programme of inclusive dance
- Identify and start development on the first of our new hubs and identify the second one.

Strategic outcome 4: Society has increased awareness of the impact of our work and is inspired to take action

- 10% increase in the number of supporters
- 40% increase in digital engagement across the website and social engagement
- Increase the number of volunteers across our activities by 30%

Sense International performance against objectives for 2020-21

Strategic report for the year ended 31 March 2021

Sense International is a global charity supporting people with deafblindness in Bangladesh, India, Kenya, Nepal, Peru, Romania, Tanzania and Uganda. Children and adults with deafblindness in these countries struggle to access the healthcare, education, vocational training and opportunities to participate in their community which they have a right to.

We provide expertise, training and support to local organisations, to enable children and adults with deafblindness to communicate, develop self-care, study at home or at school and learn skills to generate an income. We also advocate to governments to make changes to laws, policies and practices so people with deafblindness can thrive.

COVID-19

The COVID pandemic affected all our teams during this year. Our activities have been constantly adapted to the changing needs of the people with deafblindness we support, the changing public health situation in the countries we operate in, and the changing priorities of donors.

Despite some of our activities being severely curtailed, particularly home-visits to children with deafblindness, we have mobilised staff and partners to contact the people with deafblindness we support, and their families, with information on how to stay safe, worked to get food parcels and hygiene equipment to families, worked to connect families to local support schemes where these exist and have been advocating to governments for people with deafblindness to be included in national response plans. We have also fed into government guidance to make it more disability inclusive, for example, plans to re-open schools.

Four strategic objectives

Sense International has four strategic objectives:

- Ensure quality services.
- Improved knowledge and understanding of deafblindness.
- The voice of people with deafblindness is heard.
- Rights are recognised and realised.

Strategic objective 1 – Ensure quality services

Across Sense International we strive to demonstrate the benefits of increasing access to high quality services for people with deafblindness, including working with government ministries to encourage learning and sustainability. We work across three themes: screening and early intervention, inclusive education and vocational skills and livelihoods.

Screening and Early Intervention

The sooner any baby with visual and/or hearing impairment is identified, and given the support they need, the more likely they are to develop to their full potential.

We demonstrate to Ministries of Health how screening can identify impairment at an early stage, and the huge difference that professional early years support and therapy can make. We train health workers and enable parents to understand and communicate with their child, as well as working with them at home to boost their child's progress towards achieving their developmental milestones.

Key achievements

India: Early intervention screening and services were disrupted in the year due to the pandemic. However over 2000 children were screened for sensory impairments with more than 600 children receiving early intervention services, including 5 with deafblindness and multi-sensory impairments.

Kenya: A new sensory screening and early intervention project started in Garissa and Kwale Counties in October 2020, targeting 55,000 children to be screened for sensory impairments and 124 children and their families supported through early intervention therapy. In 2020-21 the construction of four early intervention units started, sensory screening and therapy equipment was sourced and 169 health workers were trained on disability and sensory screening.

Tanzania: More than 10,000 children were screened for sensory impairments with 85 being identified with deafblindness and other complex disabilities being supported with early intervention therapy services and assistive devices.

Uganda: Between April and September almost 7000 children were screened for sensory impairments with 50 children being identified with deafblindness and other complex disabilities and supported with early intervention therapy and assistive devices.

Inclusive Education

Every child has the right to an education. We work with families, schools, colleges, partner organisations, government institutions and Ministries of Education, to enable learners with deafblindness to fulfil their potential, by getting the educational support that they need.

This may be home-based, centre-based or in a mainstream school where the child receives support from a learning support assistant. We do what is needed to enable children with deafblindness to learn – from training parents and teachers, to providing specialist technology and adapting school facilities, curricula and learning materials.

Key achievements

Bangladesh: We worked with 10 partner organisations across the country to provide education and livelihood support to 695 children and young adults. Much activity was through mobile phone rather than face-to-face due to pandemic. In addition, we provided cash support to the families which allowed them to survive the pandemic.

India: More than 1700 children received centre based, home based and online services during the year and almost 1000 teachers were trained on appropriate teaching techniques for children with deafblindness studying in mainstream schools. A further 4200 educators, parents and other professionals were trained on deafblindness through 17 national webinars. Parents and caregivers were trained through a three-month online course and 115 paramedical and medical professionals were also trained helping to address some of the barriers to education for children with deafblindness.

Kenya: We developed the Learning Support Assistants (LSAs) curriculum, guidelines and training manual and trained 99 LSAs through the Kenya Institute of Special Education enabling 99 children with deafblindness and other complex disabilities to be identified and enrolled in mainstream education. A further 163 children with deafblindness and other complex disabilities received home-based education. We trained 254 education professionals on disability and inclusive education for children with deafblindness and other complex disabilities. Handwashing stations distributed to 75 schools, food and medicine distributed to over 300 families, training on soap making delivered in nine schools. Accessible COVID 19 information was produced and distributed.

Nepal: We set up a resource class in a community school in Rupandehi enrolling 6 children with deafblindness. Work has also been done on selecting another community school for an additional resource class. Once operational, school enrolment campaigns will be conducted in both districts. Currently, we are supporting 66 children and young adults with deafblindness to attend school.

Peru: 235 educational professionals were trained in specialised teaching methods for learners with deafblindness (including 81 teachers in Bolivia). Three new sensory rooms established in special education schools with staff trained in sensory stimulation approach. new referral system was developed

and launched to ensure improved access to inclusive education for students with deafblindness.

Romania: E-Sense educational software platform launched to support teachers and parents of learners with sensory impairments and testing began with partner schools.

Tanzania: We conducted a capacity assessment of special primary schools to support learners with deafblindness/multi-sensory impairments. We also started the process of rolling out the Orbit Reader 20 for learners with vision impairments in partnership with the Tanzania Institute of Education, the Ministry of Education and Kilimanjaro Blind Trust.

Uganda: The new Holistic Early Childhood Development (ECD) for children with complex disabilities project was launched enabling access to holistic ECD services that address health, nutrition, safety, protection, stimulation and care needs of 300 children with deafblindness.

Vocational training and livelihoods

Young people with deafblindness want to be as independent as possible. They want to learn vocational skills and earn a living or contribute to the household income. We support them through the different stages of this process, enabling them to join a vocational training centre, become an apprentice, or make a plan and start up their own business. We provide links to advisers and local business support schemes.

Key achievements

Bangladesh: Working in partnership with Jhikargacha Development Organization (JDO), we provided training to caregivers and persons with deafblindness on Poultry and Cattle rearing for income generation.

India: About 750 adults with deafblindness and multiple disabilities received centre based, home based and online support in vocational skills, including financial support to start income generating activities or to rebuild their businesses during the pandemic.

Tanzania: We trained 36 youths with deafblindness and other complex disabilities on business development, bookkeeping and safeguarding. They were also supported with small grants to set up their own businesses.

Peru: We supported 45 young people with deafblindness and their families in Arequipa, Cusco and Lima to develop business plans and launch their enterprises with some seed funding provided, alongside advocacy to the Ministry of Labour to support development of a vocational training model.

Kenya: We supported 12 young people with deafblindness, micro-entrepreneurs, with training, guidance and grants for to develop small scale businesses. During the COVID-19 lockdown in Kenya we also provided them with accessible information, personal protective equipment and additional grants to diversify and further develop their businesses.

Uganda: We developed and printed vocational skills resource books to support the vocational curriculum for learners with deafblindness and other complex disabilities. We also trained 12 Instructors from 6 vocational training centres and established 4 community based vocational institutions. 20 communicator guides were also trained on use of tactile and basic communication skills.

Strategic Objective 2: Improved knowledge and understanding of deafblindness

We are always seeking to understand more about the challenges facing people with deafblindness and the effectiveness of our interventions. Research provides us with valuable evidence which we use to advocate to governments for improvements in their implementation of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

Key achievements

Bangladesh: We have raised awareness of the rights of people with deafblindness, in the community and schools and developed a video on hygiene practice and health, circulated through local cable channels.

India: Contributed to the Mudra Institute of Communications, Ahmedabad (MICA) study on the impact of COVID-19 on persons with deafblindness.

Nepal: We contributed to research on experiences of persons with disabilities by the Institute of Development Studies during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Peru: Learning from the Latin America Children's Trust (LACT) Education programme documented and shared with Ministry of Education and regional education officials.

Romania: We held the International conference "Deafblindness during the pandemic" online with over 200 participants sharing learning and experiences from life during the pandemic for people with deafblindness, their families, teachers and support workers. We conducted an online survey of 18 special schools on children and young people with sensory impairments and their internet usage to feed into design of materials for the Sensi-Online Safety for Children with Sensory Impairments project and for wider use.

Tanzania: We conducted an assessment of 10 resource hubs to support learners with deafblindness and complex disabilities resulting in Sense International Tanzania being requested by the Ministry of Education to support the harmonisation of the draft syllabus in line with competence-based standards.

Kenya: In partnership with the Action Network for Children with Disabilities we launched the monitoring report on implementation of the early years competence-based curriculum for learners with diverse disabilities. The launch meeting was attended by 50 Government, Non-Government and civil society institutions. Our report of the Rapid Response Fund project in Kenya that was implemented in a response to COVID-19 includes recommendations for disability inclusion in emergency response work, particularly deafblindness and other complex disabilities.

Uganda: We showcased the Orbit Reader 20 technology at the Teacher Instructor Education and Training department (TIET) third teacher education symposium that was organised by the Ministry of Education.

Strategic Objective 3: Voice of people with deafblindness is heard

Disability activists say "nothing about us without us" and it is right that people living with deafblindness should be the ones speaking out about the challenges they face and the changes they want to see.

We support people with deafblindness to speak out through training, networking and providing opportunities to meet with decision-makers. We also support groups of parents of children with deafblindness. While caregivers cannot speak on behalf of their children, they appreciate support to advocate to the government for social protection, access to services and educational opportunities for their children.

Key achievements

Bangladesh: Two regional network meetings were attended by 30 young adults with deafblindness.

India: We encouraged adult deafblind network members to participate in discussions, surveys and consultations. Many of them are engaged with Deafblind International Youth Network and their efforts ensured deafblind inclusion in the Commonwealth Network of Children and Youth with Disabilities (CCYDN). In addition, the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) issued advice using inputs from these recommendations. Our young achiever in sports, Pushpa has been chosen by CNN, the international news agency, to showcase her achievements and challenges as a young adult with deafblindness through a short movie.

We have enhanced online engagement of people with Deafblindness and their families and they have started interacting with officials to resolve issues related to disability pension, ration and medicine support during lockdown. They are actively participating in webinars, roundtable discussions, Right to Information (RTI) workshops and policy consultations and participated in state advocacy meetings

attended by disability commissioners and directors from state departments of education, health and social welfare.

Nepal: We organised a national workshop for 44 adults with deafblindness and 19 parents. We also continue to work with Society of Deafblind Parents (SDBP) and Deafblind Association Nepal to ensure the voices of the persons with deafblindness and their parents are heard.

Romania: 22 children and young people took part in national campaign on right of people with disabilities and an online advocacy groups of young people with deafblindness was established.

Tanzania: We supported the Tanzanian Association of the Deafblind (TASODEB) with an organisational capacity assessment and the development of a capacity strengthening plan.

Uganda: We continued to support the National Association of the Deafblind Uganda (NADBU) and the Ugandan Parents of Deafblind Children Association in particular with management and communication skills training.

Peru: we supported the establishment of a new association called the Asociación De Sordociegos Unidos Del Peru (ASCUP), formed by people with deafblindness and family members.

UK: we continue to work with the World Federation of the Deafblind.

Looking ahead

We want more people with deafblindness speaking out, so we will continue to strength the groups and networks which support this.

Strategic objective 4: Rights are recognised and realised

We advocate for change based on the UN Convention of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD) and other UN Conventions such as the Convention on the Rights of the Child. We raise awareness among people with deafblindness, their families and communities to increase understanding that everyone has rights to health care, education, decent work, social protection, inclusion and participation. We advocate with governments for progressive realisation of these rights, pushing for better implementation of the UNCRPD at all levels, so that people with deafblindness can live, learn and thrive.

Key achievements

Bangladesh: Sense International India organized participation of panel of adults with deafblindness in side events of 59th session of the UN Commission for Social Development.

India: We advocated for change and progressive realisation of rights of people with deafblindness at state, national and international levels through representation and participation of persons with deafblindness and their families. We've successfully leveraged our special consultative status at United Nations to get visibility at UN High Level Political Forum. Our written and oral statements were published and presented during this and other UN events.

We held national webinars around Helen Keller Day and World Disability Day with representation from National institutes. We participate in the State Planning Commission task force of Chattisgarh state and in Delhi state advisory committee to state disability commissioner.

Romania: We responded to the call for consultations on the new national Strategy for People with Disabilities 2021-27 led by the National Authority for People with Disabilities, highlighting the importance of specifically mentioning deafblindness as a distinct disability and met with Ministry of Labour officials and the President of the National Authority of People with Disabilities to discuss criteria for recognition of deafblindness in legislation.

Uganda: We organised stakeholder engagement which successfully ensured that specific provisions on deafblindness were included in the draft National Disability Policy.



Sense International – Objectives for 2021/22

In 2021/22 we will continue to further the objectives set out in our strategy - 'Realising Rights: From Isolation to Inclusion':

- Strategic objective 1 - Ensure quality services with a focus on early years (screening and early intervention), inclusive education for school-age learners and vocational training and livelihoods for young people.
- Strategic Objective 2 - Improved knowledge and understanding of deafblindness.
- Strategic Objective 3 - Voice of people with deafblindness is heard, including work to support national associations of people with deafblindness.
- Strategic Objective 4 - Rights are recognised and realised, including advocacy at all levels.

Section 172 Statement

Sense is required by the Companies Act 2006 to make an annual statement about how Directors have 'promoted the success of the company' having regard to the following matters set out in Section 172 of that Act:

a) The likely consequences of any decision in the long term.

This particularly informed our decision-making when the Board reviewed the acquisition in the year of a College in the East Midlands, previously owned by the RNIB, and the acquisition after the year end of a residential service operated by another charity in Devon.

b) The interests of the company's employees,

Our Trustees receive an update report on HR related matters at all scheduled meetings. This includes

reports of Staff Forum meetings (consultation with employee representatives).

The decision to furlough a large number of employees in April 2020 and to top-up their pay to 100% for a defined period, exemplifies the approach Council takes to valuing Sense staff.

c) The need to foster the company's business relationships with suppliers, customers and others

Our key stakeholders are the children and families we support. Council receives reports about Sense's services at every meeting. This has been of particular importance in the last 18 months, in terms of the action being taken to make sure that the people we care for are kept safe.

Other important stakeholders are our supporters and volunteers. Council receives regular updates about progress with our Supporter Engagement strategy.

In terms of business relationships, there have been reports on discussions with Banks and with the LPP Pensions scheme, both to Finance & Audit Committee and to Council.

d) The impact of the company's operations on the community and the environment

Sense fosters good community relationships wherever we have services and shops. One of the key ways of doing this is through our shops in England and Wales which have Facebook pages linked to local community groups to share Sense's activities, campaigns and news. The shops run fun weeks throughout the year with in-store activities for customers and the general public. This enables them to engage with and experience Sense, through learning about the people we support, sensory activities and ways to support the charity. Shops also actively promote the benefits to their communities of the environmental impact of recycling their items, that would otherwise have gone to landfill.

These activities are reported to the 'Trading Board', which is attended by the Chair of the Finance & Audit Committee and another Trustee.

Unfortunately, our shops were closed for five months in 2020/21 because of lockdowns.

e) The desirability of the company maintaining a reputation for high standards of business conduct

The reputation of Sense is critical to our long-term future.

Trustees discuss our safeguarding policies and the Quality and Safeguarding Boards, which have an external chair and members, make annual reports to Council.

Sense has a Whistleblowing Policy which allows access to an independent external organisation. Were it to be invoked, the Finance & Audit Committee has the responsibility for monitoring the impact of the Policy throughout the organisation and to ensure that any issues raised are dealt with effectively.

f) The need to act fairly as between members of the company

There are almost 1,000 company members. They were all informed of the AGM, which was held in December 2020, and the Extraordinary General Meeting held in July 2021 to approve the proposed Articles of Association. Members were able to appoint proxies if they were unable to attend in person. Both meetings were called by Council and attended by Trustees.

Statement of the responsibilities of the Council of Sense, The National Deafblind and Rubella Association

The Trustees (who are also directors of Sense, The National Deafblind and Rubella Association for the purposes of company law) are responsible for preparing the Trustees' Annual Report (including the Strategic Report) and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and regulation.

Company law requires the Trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year. Under that law the trustees have prepared the financial statements in accordance with United Kingdom Accounting Standards, comprising FRS 102 "The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland", and applicable law (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice). Under company law the Trustees must not approve the financial statements unless they are satisfied that they give a true and fair view of the state of the affairs of the charitable company and the group and of the incoming resources and application of resources, including the income and expenditure, of the charitable company/group for that period. In preparing these financial statements, the trustees are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- observe the methods and principles in the Statement of Recommended Practice: Accounting and Reporting by Charities (2019);
- make judgments and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- state whether applicable UK Accounting Standards, comprising FRS 102, have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements; and
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charitable company will continue in business.

The Trustees are responsible for keeping adequate accounting records that are sufficient to show and explain the charitable company's transactions and disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charitable company and the group and enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 2006. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charitable company and the group and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

The Trustees are responsible for the maintenance and integrity of 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 accordance with Section 418, directors' reports shall include a statement, in the case of each director in office at the date the directors' report is approved, that:

- so far as the Trustee is aware, there is no relevant audit information of which the charitable company and the group's auditors are unaware; and
- they have taken all the steps that they ought to have taken as a Trustee in order to make themselves aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the company's auditors are aware of that information.

Internal financial controls

The Council has overall responsibility for ensuring that the charity has appropriate systems of control, both financial and otherwise, in place. The systems of internal control are designed to provide reasonable assurance against material misstatement or loss. They include:

- A five-year strategic plan and an annual budget approved by Council. A number of matters are specifically reserved for the Council's approval.
- Regular consideration of financial results, variance from budgets, non-financial performance indicators and benchmarking reviews by the Finance and Audit sub-committee and Council.
- The annual internal audit programme was suspended in 2020/21 due to the pandemic. It is currently being reviewed and will be agreed by the Finance and Audit sub-committee. Outcomes of the audits are reported to the subcommittee with action plans.
- The development of policy documents covering all major strategic and operational activities. The Executive Team reviews these with appropriate regularity and consultation.

Anti-bribery Policy

Sense has an anti-bribery policy which sets out the definition of bribery and makes it the responsibility of all employees and Trustees to prevent and report any bribery issues. If necessary, this can be through using Sense's whistleblowing procedure which provides a number of possible contacts, including an external organisation.



Financial Review of Sense, the National Deafblind and Rubella Association 2020-21

Overview

This review focuses on the year ended 31 March 2021 and reflects the effect of the coronavirus virus pandemic on Sense's finances. The year saw two national and prolonged closures of our charity shops, as well as partial closures before Christmas, and activity in our accommodation, day, education and community services was severely curtailed for the whole year. In fundraising, we were forced to cancel many of our high-income generating events, providing a challenge to replace lost income.

However, Sense responded strongly to the challenge, and despite losing ground on trading activity in the year, we were able to secure alternative much needed funds, which enabled us to continue providing services as far as was possible given the restrictions.

Reflecting the outstanding response to our emergency fundraising appeal, the Group reported a healthy surplus. Although opportunities to invest that surplus in services during the year were limited because of national restrictions, the Group has developed a three-year plan to invest in innovation and growth of service delivery in future years. We aim to increase the number of individuals whose lives we touch tenfold in the next three years, by driving innovation and testing new solutions and we will need to maintain our focus on fundraising in order to sustain this ambitious direction of travel.

In September 2020 Sense acquired the operating assets of Loughborough College from RNIB, outsourcing delivery of our Information and Advice service at the same time, for an aggregate consideration of £1.525m.

Group net income before an actuarial loss on the defined benefit pension scheme was £5.1m (2020: £0.5m): after the pension scheme loss of £4.2m (2020: £3.8m) the movement in funds was £0.9m (2020: loss of £3.3m).

Cash and cash equivalents increased by £7.4m (2020: decrease of £3.8m) leaving a cash and equivalents balance of £19.6m (2020: £12.2m). The liability on the defined benefit pension scheme was £10.0m (2020: £6.6m).

Reserves increased to £32.6m (2020: £31.7m) of which £3.4m (2020: £3.3m) are restricted.

We remain in a strong position to deliver our current strategy and to invest in our long-term sustainability.

Financial Highlights

The main effect of the national COVID-19 lockdowns during the year was on our charity shops were able to open for only 40% of normal trading days in the year. As a result, income from trading reduced to £4.5m (2020: £10.6m). In response, retail staff were furloughed on a number of occasions during the year and Sense took advantage of the national grants available for retail businesses.

Our shops reopened fully on 12th April 2021 and trading levels since then have been very encouraging and consistently better than we had expected. We are continuing our programme of opening new shops throughout the current year.

Success in fundraising efforts meant that income from donations and legacies increased sharply to £13.7m (2020: £10.2m) partly driven by legacy income of £4.1m (2020: £2.7m).

Income from service delivery remained stable in the year despite the temporary closure of some services because of the pandemic and was boosted by income of £1.5m from Loughborough College following its acquisition in the year.

Other income comprises furlough grants claimed in the year of £2.6m (2020: nil) and retail grants of £1.9m (2020: nil) and infection control grants of £0.9m (2020: nil).

Operational services were able to access additional government funds to offset the additional cost of infection control measures and the purchase of PPE.

Expenditure remained stable or decreased as lockdowns restricted work to maintain and invest in our estate and travelling and office costs fell. Charitable expenditure rose by £1.3m (2020: nil) following the acquisition of Loughborough College in September 2020.

Support costs increased in the year reflecting investment in IT equipment and support so that all office-based staff could work from home safely, comfortably and effectively.

Sense International

Income fell slightly to £2.32m (2020: £2.48m) as a result of lower income from fundraising events and from the charity shops which Sense operates for Sense International's benefit. Total expenditure was £2.46m (2020: £2.29m). The proportion of expenditure spent on charitable activities was unaltered at 89% (2020: 89%).

Acquisition of operations of The Otterhayes Trust

In January 2021 Sense agreed to the transfer of the operating and property assets of The Otterhayes Trust, an independent charity running a supported living and residential site located in Devon, for consideration of £0.5m. The transfer was completed on 14th April 2021 and will strengthen our net income and asset base and provide resources and expertise to the site for the positive development of the service for the individuals it supports.

Reserves

The Trustees regularly review free reserves to ensure that there are adequate funds to support all the activity that Sense Group undertakes. This review takes into consideration maintenance of the property assets required to provide a service to the people we support, planned development projects and a contingency for unforeseen events.

Maintenance of the fixed assets we utilise to provide accommodation and other building-based services to our beneficiaries, along with planned development projects, are allowed for within designated reserves to earmark adequate funding. This year designated reserves are £10.5m (2020: £9.7m) reflecting planned investments in service delivery and achieving the strategic plan.

We consider unforeseen risks when setting a minimum level of free reserves. We define free reserves as unrestricted reserves minus fixed assets (offset by any long-term borrowings taken out to support the purchase of those assets) minus any designated reserves. The pension deficit is excluded from this calculation as the liability, which is reassessed annually, is a long term one and a long term deficit reduction plan has been agreed with the funds administrators.

Free reserves at March 2021 were £6.3m (2020: £2.9m).

After considering various scenarios and the risks to our income streams, the Trustees consider that minimum free reserves are £3.6m: we are therefore well above that target.

Going Concern

The financial statements show that our cash and reserves position means that we are able to fund our revenue expenditure together with pension fund deficit reduction payments and bank loan repayments. The Trustees have reviewed budgets and forecasts which consider future activity and the risks that might threaten those forecasts. Together with our risk management policies, the strong reserves position allows the Trustees to conclude that the organisation will continue to meet its liabilities as they fall due for at least 12 months from the date of this report and that therefore it is appropriate to continue to prepare the financial statements on a going concern basis.

Pensions

In addition to ongoing defined contribution pension schemes, Sense is a legacy member of the Local Pensions Partnership (LPP), formerly the London Pension Fund Authority, a public sector provider of defined benefit pensions and a traditional pension body for local authorities. Sense closed membership of the LPP scheme to new entrants in 2003 and has since been working to manage the actuarial risk that all defined benefit schemes bring.

In 2014 remaining active members were asked to voluntarily leave the scheme and join the defined contribution scheme offered for all other employees. This transfer took effect in October 2014 and Sense has no remaining active members in the LPP scheme and no further service liabilities are being incurred for active members.

We continue to review options with LPP on when to request a cessation value and leave the scheme completely and in the meantime will continue with a long-term repayment plan which is reviewed every three years. Nevertheless, the considerable number of past and present employees who are pensioners or 'deferred' members (i.e. no longer active members but not yet drawing their pension) means that Sense must account for its share of the deficit of the LPP scheme as explained in detail in note 11.

The deficit, calculated under FRS 102 accounting rules, increased in the year from £6.6m to £10.0m, despite a deficit reduction payment of £0.9m. The deficit increase of £3.4m was made up of two components:

- The value of assets increased by £5.6m because of a strong recovery in the market value of investments from values at March 2020
- Liabilities increased by £9.0m driven by a reduction in the discount rate assumption and higher assumed future pension increases, offset by more favourable demographic and experience assumptions

Investment Strategy

Funds are invested to minimise the risk of loss while ensuring liquid resources are available to meet future cash needs. As at March 2021, surplus funds were held in the form of short-term fixed interest deposits with major UK banks.

Risk appetite

We recognise that no investments can be entirely risk free if we are to achieve our stated investment aims but we have an appetite only for very low risk investments.

Ethical investments

Where relevant, Sense aims to hold ethical investments that are consistent with its charitable objectives.

Principal Risks and Uncertainties

The Council has delegated day-to-day responsibility for the management of risks to the Chief Executive and the Executive Team.

The Executive Team is responsible for the identification and assessment of risk, including those monitored on departmental risk registers, and for reporting on this to the Finance and Audit committee. The Executive Team is also responsible for developing risk mitigation strategies and controls and for implementing actions to minimise or reduce risk to acceptable levels. The risk register is regularly considered at Executive Team meetings.

The Finance and Audit sub-committee is responsible for overseeing the establishment and maintenance of good practice in this area and for reporting to the Council at each of its meetings. In addition, the Council reviews the overall risk register at each of its quarterly meetings.

At the end of last year Council and Finance and Audit Committee asked that the Executive Team revise the Register in order to:

- Adjust the scoring system so that the effect of mitigating actions and controls can be clearly seen and the biggest residual net risks are better identified.
- Update departmental risk registers, with red risks being flagged to the Executive Team for discussion as part of the strategy.
- Include on the main risk register risks that are owned by individual functional areas but which would benefit from collective scrutiny.
- Include risks around major systems and processes which might be becoming out of date and not fit for purpose and so driving timely action.
- Specifically include Sense International, digital, systems and processes, people/recruitment and data security on the main risk register.

The new risk register was agreed by the Finance and Audit Committee at its July 2021 meeting. It is organised in broadly the same way as previously but is more focussed and better reflects current activity. There were no net risks rated as red in terms of impact and likelihood after controls and mitigating actions were taken into account.

COVID, which continues to be a major risk, and two risks with high ratings after mitigation are discussed below:

Uncertainty/ Risk	Possible Consequences	Controls being Implemented
COVID-19 Additional lockdowns that would impact on recovery/full recovery from the pandemic and damage our future income streams	<p>Lockdowns impact on the safety of individuals we support and sustainability of income streams.</p> <p>Commissioners may reduce funding and put at risk sustainability of services.</p> <p>Supporters may not give at the same level and there may be no more emergency funding streams available from central government.</p> <p>Charity shops have to shut again and fixed operating costs would lead to further losses in the Trading division</p>	<p>We have established mechanisms in place to oversee our work and lead on strategy; clear and consistent leadership; regular review of cashflows and budgets, regular review of operational areas across charity; establishment of an (internal) Finance Committee and relevant sub groups, implemented a communication programme; review of health and safety and HR policies and procedures; scenario planning on strategy and priorities;</p>

Uncertainty/ Risk	Possible Consequences	Controls being Implemented
<p>Staff - We fail to have the rewards, training, selection processes or appeal to improve recruitment and retention</p>	<p>We might fail to attract the right talent and skills and fail to train those we do attract properly.</p> <p>Poor retention would mean our recruitment activity is high and expensive, and the turnover would be disruptive to service delivery making it difficult to achieve strategic goals in all areas without a committed and engaged workforce</p>	<p>We have an approach to reward and constantly review benefits.</p> <p>We have an L&D strategy ready to approve.</p> <p>We are investing in an intranet project and a new HR data system. We are improving recruitment processes.</p> <p>We may need to consider more retention measures over the coming months.</p>
<p>Income falls - leading to net deficit for the year.</p>	<p>Income and margins would decline and we would not achieve key financial targets.</p> <p>This could lead to a deficit for the year, impacting on our overall financial position and reserves.</p> <p>Bank loan covenants might be breached.</p>	<p>Strong reporting of management information and forecasts of cash flows mean the Executive Team can foresee problems and take proactive action to address a shortfall in income.</p> <p>The cost base is closely monitored and the Finance Committee challenge spend and target savings wherever possible. An Efficiency Group has been established to focus on several operational areas including fees, voids, and use of agency staff.</p>

Energy and Carbon Report 2020/21

The table below summarises energy usage and greenhouse gas emissions in 2020/21 compared to the previous year.

SENSE - GHG Emissions and Energy Use Data for Period 1 April 2020 to 31 March 2021

Energy/Activity	Scope - GHG Protocol Corporate Standard	Period 2020/21			Variance v 2019/20		
		kWh	tCO2e (gross)	% of Total	kWh	tCO2e (gross)	Varn %
Combustion of Natural Gas	Scope 1 (Direct Emissions)	4,720,980	868.0	42.7%	178,625	32.9	3.9%
Combustion of Oil	Scope 1 (Direct Emissions)	169,215	41.7	2.0%	65,745	16.2	63.6%
Transport Own Vehicles (Diesel)	Scope 1 (Direct emissions)	1,204,731	289.8	14.2%	-1,135,077	-282.5	-48.5%
Transport Own Vehicles (Petrol)	Scope 1 (Direct emissions)	71,359	16.4	0.8%	-109,897	-26.0	-60.6%
	Scope 1 - TOTALS	6,166,285	1,215.9	59.7%	-1,000,604	-259.5	-14.0%
Electricity	Scope 2 (Energy Indirect)	3,129,097	729.5	35.9%	-999,336	-325.7	-24.2%
Transport - employee-owned vehicles business travel	Scope 3 (Other indirect)	381,391	89.1	4.4%	-724,164	-174.1	-65.5%
TOTALS (Gross)		9,676,772	2,034.5	100.0%	-2,724,105	-759.3	-22.0%
Buildings Intensity Ratio (kWh/m ² & tCO ₂ /m ²)		174	0.035		-149	-0.035	-46.2%
Transport Intensity Ratio (kWh/FTE & tCO ₂ /FTE)		972	0.232		-1,204	-0.295	-55.3%

Emission Changes v 2019/20

It is recognised that due to the pandemic it has been an exceptional year and recorded reductions are mainly due to reduced activity. The increase in gas usage is believed to be due to the slightly colder year. Whilst oil is a small proportion of energy use, the high increase is believed to be due to the recording of data by bulk deliveries only and as such may not represent a true figure of actual consumption during the year.

The Reporting period

The report covers the period from 1 April 2020 to 31 March 2021.

Organisational Boundaries

We have used the Financial Control model as the basis to calculate our emissions, including everything that we own and operate within England & Wales.

Quantification and Reporting Methodology

We have followed the UK HM Government "Environmental Reporting Guidelines: Including streamlined energy and carbon reporting guidance March 2019". We have also used the GHG Reporting Protocol Corporate Standard.

Data has been gathered from the following sources:

Gas Combustion – Supplier invoices including a minor quantity of supplier estimated meter readings based on historical direct comparison and pro-rata extrapolation.

Oil Combustion – Supplier delivery quantities (litres) for all fuels.

Electricity - Supplier invoices including a minor quantity of supplier estimated meter readings based on historical direct comparison and pro-rata extrapolation.

Transport – Own Fleet – Finance records for litres of fuel (Petrol & Diesel) purchased.

Transport – Business Mileage employee own vehicles – Individual employee expense claim records for business mileages during the reporting period. We have then used the “average car: unknown fuel” factors to calculate kWh & tCO₂e.

In calculating the emissions we have used the UK Government conversion factors for company reporting of greenhouse gas emissions, conversion factors 2020:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/greenhouse-gas-reporting-conversion-factors-2020>

Intensity Ratios

For all our property energy usage we have chosen a ratio based on the Floor Area GIA.

For our transport energy usage we have chosen a ration based on our number of employees (FTE).

Energy Efficiency Action

The pandemic has curtailed some of the plans we originally had in place. However, we are progressing our more strategic approach to asset management planning, particularly in terms of reducing our carbon footprint and energy consumption.

Gross internal floor areas have now been captured from our CAD drawings for all properties and our database has been populated with all utilities information including electricity, gas, and water consumption. This will enable us to highlight those properties that are inefficient in terms of energy use. It is intended that a dedicated budget be provided to undertake energy reduction projects identified using this information and fulfilling the appropriate business case criteria.

The organisation has acquired over 10 new shops during this period. As part of the fit-out of these properties we have included as part of the standard design brief LED lighting and enhanced heating controls.

Finally, the Pandemic has accelerated our approach to ‘agile’ working. A new policy has been introduced around this concept, and projects are in design stage to enable our IT infrastructure and office accommodation to further support this going forward. A consequence of this will be more efficient use of office space, and a corresponding reduction in travel. This will have a commensurate reduction in our carbon output and energy use.

Assurance & Verification

This report and the verification of the data was undertaken by an external independent CIBSE qualified Low Carbon Consultant and ESOS Lead Assessor.

Report on the audit of the financial statements

Opinion

In our opinion, Sense, The National Deafblind and Rubella Association's group financial statements and parent charitable company financial statements (the "financial statements"):

- give a true and fair view of the state of the group's and of the parent charitable company's affairs as at 31 March 2021 and of the group's and parent charitable company's incoming resources and application of resources, including its income and expenditure, and of the group's cash flows for the year then ended;
- have been properly prepared in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice (United Kingdom Accounting Standards, comprising FRS 102 "The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland", and applicable law); and
- have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006.

We have audited the financial statements, included within the Annual Report and Financial Statements (the "Annual Report"), which comprise: the consolidated balance sheet and company balance sheet as at 31 March 2021; the consolidated statement of financial activities, the consolidated summary income and expenditure account and the consolidated cash flow statement for the year then ended; the accounting policies; and the notes to the financial statements.

Basis for opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK) ("ISAs (UK)") and applicable law. Our responsibilities under ISAs (UK) are further described in the Auditors' responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements section of our report. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

Independence

We remained independent of the group and parent charitable company in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in the UK, which includes the FRC's Ethical Standard and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements.

Conclusions relating to going concern

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 group's and the parent charitable company's ability to continue as a going concern for a period of at least twelve months from the date on which the financial statements are authorised for issue.

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.

However, because not all future events or conditions can be predicted, this conclusion is not a guarantee as to the group's and parent charitable company's ability to continue as a going concern.

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

Reporting on other information

The other information comprises all of the information in the Annual Report other than the financial

statements and our auditors' report thereon. The trustees are responsible for the other information. Our opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and, accordingly, we do not express an audit opinion or, except to the extent otherwise explicitly stated in this report, any form of assurance thereon.

In connection with our audit of the financial statements, our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements or our knowledge obtained in the audit, or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If we identify an apparent material inconsistency or material misstatement, we are required to perform procedures to conclude whether there is a material misstatement of the financial statements or a material misstatement of the other information. If, based on the work we have performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, we are required to report that fact. We have nothing to report based on these responsibilities.

Based on our work undertaken in the course of the audit, the Companies Act 2006 requires us also to report certain opinions and matters as described below.

Strategic Report and Report of the Trustees

In our opinion, based on the work undertaken in the course of the audit the information given in the Report of the Trustees, including the Strategic Report, for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements; and the Strategic Report and the Report of the Trustees have been prepared in accordance with applicable legal requirements.

In addition, in light of the knowledge and understanding of the group and parent charitable company and their environment obtained in the course of the audit, we are required to report if we have identified any material misstatements in the Strategic Report and the Report of the Trustees. We have nothing to report in this respect.

Responsibilities for the financial statements and the audit

Responsibilities of the trustees for the financial statements

As explained more fully in the Statement of the responsibilities of the Council, 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 in accordance with the applicable framework and for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view. The trustees are also responsible for such internal control as they determine is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, the trustees are responsible for assessing the group's and parent 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 group and parent charitable company or to cease operations, or have no realistic alternative but to do so.

Auditors' responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

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

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.

Based on our understanding of the group and charitable company/industry, we identified that the principal risks of non-compliance with laws and regulations related to the Charities Act 2011, and we considered the extent to which non-compliance might have a material effect on the financial statements. We also considered those laws and regulations that have a direct impact on the financial statements such as the Companies Act 2006. We evaluated management's incentives and opportunities for fraudulent manipulation of the financial statements (including the risk of override of controls), and determined that the principal risks were related to the posting of inappropriate journal entries and the manipulation of key accounting judgements and estimates. Audit procedures performed included:

- enquiry of management and the Council of Trustees, including consideration of known or suspected instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations and fraud;
- reading minutes of meetings of the Council of Trustees and its subcommittees, including the finance and audit committee;
- identifying and testing journal entries, including journal entries posted with unusual account combinations to cash or revenue; and
- assessing financial statement disclosures, and testing to supporting documentation, for compliance with applicable laws and regulations.

There are inherent limitations in the audit procedures described above. We are less likely to become aware of instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations that are not closely related to events and transactions reflected in financial statements. Also, the risk of not detecting a material misstatement due to fraud is higher than the risk of not detecting one resulting from error, as fraud may involve deliberate concealment by, for example, forgery or intentional misrepresentations or through collusion.

A further description of our responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements is located on the FRC's website at: www.frc.org.uk/auditorsresponsibilities. This description forms part of our auditors' report.

Use of this report

This report, including the opinions, has been prepared for and only for the charity's members as a body in accordance with Chapter 3 of Part 16 of the Companies Act 2006 and for no other purpose. We do not, in giving these opinions, accept or assume responsibility for any other purpose or to any other person to whom this report is shown or into whose hands it may come save where expressly agreed by our prior consent in writing.

Other required reporting

Companies Act 2006 exception reporting

Under the Companies Act 2006 we are required to report to you if, in our opinion:

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

We have no exceptions to report arising from this responsibility.



Daniel Chan (Senior Statutory Auditor)
for and on behalf of PricewaterhouseCoopers LLP
Chartered Accountants and Statutory Auditors
Birmingham

22nd September 2021

Consolidated Statement of financial activities for the year ended 31 March 2021

	Note	Unrestricted Funds £000s	Restricted Funds £000s	Endowment Funds £000s	Total 2021 £000s	Total 2020 £000s
Income						
Donations and legacies	1	10,583	3,068	-	13,651	10,157
Charitable activities	1	49,738	1,452	-	51,190	48,509
Trading		4,475	-	-	4,475	10,635
COVID-19 grants	4	5,360	-	-	5,360	-
Investment income	3	120	6	-	126	46
Other income	4	415	11	-	426	528
Total income		70,691	4,537	-	75,228	69,875
Expenditure						
	5					
Raising funds		3,965	45	-	4,010	4,162
Charitable activities		49,722	4,484	9	54,215	53,100
Trading		10,856	5	-	10,861	10,777
Other		1,247	-	-	1,247	1,434
Total expenditure		65,790	4,534	9	70,333	69,473
Net gain on sale of tangible fixed assets	7	155	-	-	155	102
Net income/(expense)		5,056	3	(9)	5,050	504
Transfers between funds	18	(171)	171	-	-	-
Net income		4,885	174	(9)	5,050	504
Actuarial loss on defined benefit pension scheme	11	(4,163)	-	-	(4,163)	(3,769)
Net increase/ (decrease) in funds	8	722	174	(9)	887	(3,265)
Reconciliation of movement in funds						
Fund balances brought forward at 1 April		28,020	3,265	378	31,663	34,928
Net increase/ (decrease) in funds		722	174	(9)	887	(3,265)
Fund balances carried forward at 31 March	18,19	28,742	3,439	369	32,550	31,663

The net income of unrestricted funds is analysed between the general fund, designated funds and pension deficit in note 18.

Consolidated balance sheet – as at 31 March 2021

	Notes	31 March 2021 £000s	31 March 2020 £000s
Fixed assets			
Tangible assets	12	30,253	30,841
Investments	13	1	1
Total fixed assets		30,254	30,842
Current assets			
Stock		376	347
Debtors	14	9,207	9,796
Investments	15	4,000	4,000
Cash at bank and in hand		15,586	8,153
Total current assets		29,169	22,296
Creditors (amounts falling due within one year)	16	(8,926)	(6,480)
Net current assets		20,243	15,816
Total assets less current liabilities			
Creditors (amounts falling due after more than one year)	17	(7,913)	(8,383)
Net assets excluding pension liability		42,584	38,275
Provisions - pension	11	(10,034)	(6,612)
Net assets		32,550	31,663
Represented by:			
General fund	18,19	28,238	24,935
Pension provision	18,19	(10,034)	(6,612)
Designated funds	18,19	10,538	9,697
Restricted funds	18,19	3,439	3,265
Endowment fund	18,19	369	378
Total funds		32,550	31,663

The notes on pages 57 to 77 form part of these financial statements.

The financial statements on pages 49 to 77 were approved by Council on 22 September 2021 and signed on its behalf by:



Andrew Pearson, Treasurer
Registered company number 1825301

Company balance sheet – as at 31 March 2021

	Notes	31 March 2021 £000s	31 March 2020 £000s
Fixed assets			
Tangible assets	11	30,189	30,839
Investments	13	30	30
Total fixed assets		30,219	30,869
Current assets			
Stock		376	347
Debtors	14	8,938	9,688
Investments	15	4,000	4,000
Cash at bank and in hand		14,487	6,713
Total current assets		27,801	20,748
Creditors (amounts falling due within one year)	16	(8,807)	(6,383)
Net current assets		18,994	14,365
Total assets less current liabilities			
Creditors (amounts falling due after more than one year)	17	(7,872)	(8,343)
Net assets excluding pension liability		41,341	36,891
Provisions - pension	11	(10,034)	(6,612)
Net assets		31,307	30,279
The funds of the charity			
General fund	18,19	28,184	24,751
Pension provision	18,19	(10,034)	(6,612)
Designated funds	18,19	10,538	9,697
Restricted funds	18,19	2,249	2,065
Endowment fund	18,19	370	378
Total funds		31,307	30,279

The notes on pages 57 to 77 form part of these financial statements.

The financial statements on pages 49 to 77 were approved by Council on 22 September 2021 and signed on its behalf by:



Andrew Pearson, Treasurer
Registered company number 1825301

Consolidated summary income and expenditure account – for the year ended 31 March 2021

	2021	2020
	£000s	£000s
Income from continuing operations	75,257	69,930
Total expenditure of continuing operations	(69,983)	(69,094)
Operating surplus	5,274	836
Gain on disposal of tangible fixed assets	155	102
Interest receivable and similar income	126	46
Interest payable and similar charges	(310)	(344)
Net interest and administration costs of defined benefit scheme	(195)	(136)
Net income for the year	5,050	504

Consolidated cash flow statement – for the year ended 31 March 2021

	2021	2020
Note	£000s	£000s
Net cash inflow/ (outflow) from operating activities	10,134	(659)
Investing activities – investments		
Interest received	125	46
Interest paid	(310)	(344)
Investing activities – capital expenditure		
Purchase of tangible fixed assets	(2,612)	(3,003)
Proceeds from sale of tangible fixed assets	556	133
	7,893	(3,827)
Financing activities		
Bank loan repayments	(460)	(445)
Increase / (decrease) in cash and cash equivalents	7,433	(4,272)
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of year	12,153	16,425
Cash and cash equivalents at the end of year	19,586	12,153

Accounting policies of Sense, the National Deafblind and Rubella Association

Statement of compliance

The financial statements have been prepared in compliance with United Kingdom Accounting Standards, including Accounting and Reporting for Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice, which is applicable to charities preparing their financial statements in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (effective 1 January 2020) (Charities SORP FRS 102), the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the United Kingdom and the Republic of Ireland (FRS 102), and the Companies Act 2006.

In October 2020, a revised SORP was issued which is applicable to accounting periods commencing on or after 1 January 2020. The Directors have adopted the revised SORP for the first time in these financial statements which has had no impact on these financial statements other than certain additional or amended disclosures in the financial statements.

The company has taken advantage of the exemption in section 408 of the Companies Act from presenting its individual statement of financial activities.

The net income of the charity for the year was £1,028,260 (2020: Deficit £3,426,335).

Public benefit entity

The charity meets the definition of a public benefit entity under FRS 102.

Preparation of the financial statements on a going concern basis

The financial statements show that cash and reserves are at a healthy level, meaning that revenue expenditure including annual pension contributions and loan repayments can be comfortably covered in the future. The Trustees have reviewed budgets and forecasts which consider future activity and have also taken account of the risks that might threaten the expected position, with particular reference to the experiences of the pandemic year.

Trustees have also reviewed the risk register in detail during the year including a review of risk mitigation strategies. Together with our risk management policies, our strong reserves position allows the Trustees to conclude that the organisation will continue to meet its liabilities as they fall due for at least 12 months from the date of this report and therefore it is appropriate to prepare the financial statements on a going concern basis.

Group financial statements

These financial statements consolidate the results of the charity and its wholly owned subsidiaries: Sense International, Helping Sense Limited, and Sense4Enterprise Limited.

Income recognition

All income is recognised when the charity is legally entitled to the income and the amount can be quantified with reasonable accuracy.

Fees and allowances receivable for residential care and similar services are accounted for in the period in which the service is provided. Trading income represents goods supplied to customers at invoiced amounts and is recognised at point of sale. Legacy income is recognised on a receivable basis when it is probable that legacy income will be received and the value of the incoming resources can be measured with sufficient reliability.

Grants are recognised when the charity is legally entitled to the income and the amount can be quantified with reasonable accuracy. Grants received in advance with donor-imposed conditions that specify a time period in which the expenditure of resources can take place are accounted for as deferred income and recognised as a liability. Voluntary income is accounted for when received except when the income is related to major events. Non-cash donations, other than goods donated for sale through shops, are stated at an estimate of their value to the charity.

Expenditure

All expenditure, including any irrecoverable VAT, is accounted for on an accruals basis and has been classified under headings that aggregate all costs related to that category.

The cost of generating funds is the cost of organising fundraising events and activities and the cost of operating the charity's shops. The costs of charitable activities include all expenditure directly relating to the objects of the charity. Support costs have been apportioned to the relevant charitable activity on the basis of salary costs incurred.

Governance costs (internal and external audit, strategic costs and Trustees' expenses) are included in support costs.

Expenditure relating to redundancy and termination benefits is recognised once the decision to terminate has been made, it is probable that termination will occur, and the amount of the obligation can be measured.

Job Retention grant income

Sense applied for support through the Government Job Retention Scheme during the year. The grant was applied for as it became due, according to the claim cycle. Monies received are shown as income and gross payroll cost as expenditure. Accruals are made for grants claimed but outstanding at year end under this scheme.

Retail Leisure and Hospitality grant income

Sense applied for support through the Government Retail, Hospitality and Leisure Grant Fund during the year in respect of the charity shops. Grants received are recognised as State Aid to the maximum permissible under UK legislation in any financial period. This grant has been recognised in other income (see note 4 below). No monies in respect of this grant were due or accrued for at 31 March.

Adult Social Care Infection Control Fund grants

The Adult Social Care Infection Control Fund supports adult social care providers, including those with whom the local authority does not have a contract, to reduce the rate of COVID-19 transmission in and between care homes and support wider workforce resilience. Sense was eligible to claim this grant in respect of accommodation services. Income from this fund is shown in income, and the costs the grant covers are shown in expenditure. The grant is used to pay for additional infection control measures which include the cost of additional staffing including agency staff. Grants are only recognised in

income when returns have been made to, and accepted by, the distributing local authority as satisfactory proof that the grant has been spent in accordance with the stated criteria.

Tangible fixed assets and depreciation

Tangible fixed assets are stated at historic purchase cost less accumulated depreciation. Cost includes the original purchase price of the asset and the costs attributable to bringing the asset to its working condition for its intended use.

Using the following methods, depreciation is calculated so as to write off the cost of tangible fixed assets in equal annual instalments over their estimated useful economic lives at the following annual rates:

Freehold property	2%
Short leasehold properties and long leasehold improvements	Over the remaining life of the lease
Furniture, fixtures and fittings	12.5% to 25%
Motor vehicles	25%

Freehold land is not depreciated. Assets under construction are not depreciated until they are available for use. Individual fixed assets costing £500 or less are not capitalised.

Leases

Operating lease rentals are charged to the statement of financial activities in equal amounts over the term of the lease.

Stock

Stock relates to new and second-hand items purchased for sale through the shops, valued at the lower of cost or net realisable value. Other items, including donated goods and Sense merchandise are valued at nil, as their intrinsic value is immaterial or not possible to quantify.

Recognition of liabilities

Liabilities are recognised when an obligation arises to transfer economic benefits as a result of past transactions or events.

Dilapidations Provision

A provision is made for dilapidations in respect of leasehold properties, principally charity shops. The provision reflects an estimate of future costs to make good leased property upon the expiry of each lease and the elapsed period of the lease at the year end. Any excess provision is released on expiry of the individual property lease.

Pension costs

The Group operates defined contribution schemes for all staff. Contributions are charged to the statement of financial activities in the period in which they are payable.

Pension costs in respect of the Teachers' Pension Scheme (TPS), which is a multi-employer defined benefit scheme, are accounted for as a defined contribution scheme and are charged to the statement of financial activities in the period in which they are payable.

Pension costs in respect of the Local Pensions Partnership (LPP), a defined benefit pension scheme closed to new members, are accounted for in accordance with FRS 102. As a result, the impacts of actuarial assumptions and amendments to benefits in respect of past service, expected investment return on assets of the fund and interest on pension liabilities, are charged to the statement of financial activities in the year.

Differences between actual and expected returns on assets during the year, together with differences arising from changes in the assumptions underlying the present value of scheme liabilities and experience of gains and losses arising on scheme liabilities, are also recognised in the statement of financial activities. The difference between the market value of assets and the present value of future pension liabilities is shown as a net liability on the balance sheet.

Fixed assets: subsidiary undertakings

Investments in subsidiary undertakings are stated at cost but are written down to their realisable value if it is considered there has been a permanent diminution in their value.

Foreign currency

Assets and liabilities denominated in foreign currencies have been translated at the rate of exchange prevailing at the balance sheet date. Exchange differences are recognised within net income/ (expenditure).

Fund accounting

General funds are unrestricted funds that are available for use at the discretion of the Trustees in furtherance of the general objectives of the charity. Designated funds are those that have been allocated by the Trustees for particular purposes as detailed in the funds note. Restricted funds are funds that are to be used in accordance with specific instructions imposed by the donors or which have been raised by the charity for particular purposes. The costs of raising and administering such funds are charged against the specific fund.

Endowment funds represent those assets that must be held permanently by the charity, principally properties. Any capital gains or losses arising form part of the fund. Depreciation of endowed property is charged against the fund.

Investment income and gains are allocated to the appropriate fund.

Creditors and provisions

Creditors and provisions are recognised where the charity has a present obligation resulting from a past event that will probably result in the transfer of funds to a third party and the amount due to settle the obligation can be measured or estimated reliably. Creditors and provisions are normally recognised at their settlement amount after allowing for any trade discounts due.

Cash at bank and in hand

Cash at bank and cash in hand includes cash and short-term highly liquid investments with a short maturity of three months or less from the date of acquisition or opening of the deposit or similar account.

Debtors

Trade and other debtors are recognised at the settlement amount due after any trade discount offered. Prepayments are valued at the amount prepaid net of any trade discounts due. Specific bad debts are recognised and provided for as appropriate.

Principal accounting estimates and judgements

In the application of these accounting policies, management is required to make judgments, estimates and assumptions about the carrying amounts of assets and liabilities that are not readily apparent from other sources. The estimates and associated assumptions are based on historical experience and other factors that are considered to be relevant. Actual results may differ from those estimates, and the estimates, along with their underlying assumptions, are continually reviewed. The matters below are considered to be the most important in understanding the judgments that are involved in preparing the financial statements and the uncertainties that could impact the amounts reported.

The following have been identified as a principal accounting estimate:

Actuarial assumptions in respect of the defined benefit pension scheme

The liability arising from the defined benefit pension scheme is estimated based on a number of key assumptions which are disclosed in note 11.

These assumptions have been reviewed by the Group's actuaries and auditors.

State Aid

A cap of £1.955m has been assumed to be the maximum State Aid (or subsidy) which can be recognised in the year to 31 March 2021 and the financial statements reflect this. The majority of State Aid received in the year was in connection with the Retail, Leisure and Hospitality Grant in respect of the charity shops.

Notes to the financial statements of Sense, the National Deafblind and Rubella Association, for the year ended 31 March 2021

1. Income

Donations and legacies	2021	2020
	£000s	£000s
Fundraising	9,591	7,430
Legacies	4,060	2,727
Total	13,651	10,157

Income from charitable activities	2021	2020
	£000s	£000s
Care and Support Midlands	10,401	10,080
Care and Support East	11,015	13,075
Care and Support South	11,287	10,114
Care and Support North	9,147	7,588
Care and Support Northern Ireland	2,880	2,447
Care and Support Wales	1,559	1,376
Education and development programmes	3,512	2,176
International programmes	959	795
Arts and wellbeing programmes	224	514
Holidays and volunteering	200	329
Adult specialist services	4	9
Children's specialist services	2	6
Total	51,190	48,509

2. Grants receivable included within charitable activities

	2021	2020
	£000s	£000s
Sense	2,306	1,297
Sense International	959	795
Total	3,265	2,092

All grants given for a specific purpose have been spent entirely on that purpose.

3. Investment income

	2021	2020
	£000s	£000s
Bank interest	126	46

4. Covid-19 Government Support Grants and Other income

Covid-19 Government support grants

	2021	2020
	£000s	£000s
Job Retention Scheme	2,624	-
Retail Leisure and Hospitality Grant	1,869	-
Adult Social Care Infection Control Fund	867	-
Total	5,360	-

Other income

Other income is mainly derived from training, advice and consultancy provided to organisations and charities concerned with disability. It also includes income in relation to Sense Touch Base Pears which is mainly rental of office and conference space.

5. Expenditure

Activity	Direct costs	Apportioned support costs	2021	2020
	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s
Fundraising	3,824	191	4,015	4,162
Trading	10,276	585	10,861	10,777
TouchBase Pears	1,132	6	1,138	1,331
Care and Support Midlands	10,080	836	10,916	9,738
Care and Support East	9,858	900	10,758	10,680
Care and Support South	10,428	1,008	11,436	11,532
Care and Support North	7,654	752	8,406	8,691
Care and Support Northern Ireland	2,428	229	2,657	2,536
Care and Support Wales	1,526	143	1,669	1,513
Adult specialist services	585	66	651	742
Education and development programmes	1,543	290	1,833	2,232
International programmes	2,014	178	2,192	2,048
Arts and wellbeing programmes	588	53	641	553
Holidays and volunteering	825	63	888	1,002
Children's specialist services	612	58	670	475
Campaigns, publicity and awareness	1,030	79	1,109	1,031
Quality assurance and development	347	38	385	328
Other	108	-	108	102
	64,858	5,475	70,333	69,473

5. Expenditure (continued)

Analysis of apportioned support costs

Activity	Facilities £000s	Manage't £000s	HR £000s	Finance £000s	Govern'e £000s	Comms £000s	2021 £000s	2020 £000s
Fundraising	10	15	60	66	1	63	215	205
Trading	-	-	43	-	-	-	43	43
TouchBase	-	-	2	2	-	2	6	18
Care and Support Midlands	45	65	260	287	2	272	931	873
Care and Support East	49	69	280	310	3	293	1,004	1,037
Care and Support South	55	78	314	347	3	328	1,125	1,017
Care and Support North	41	58	234	259	2	245	839	811
Care and Support Northern Ireland	12	18	71	78	1	75	255	232
Care and Support Wales	8	11	44	49	-	46	158	136
Adult specialist services	4	5	21	22	-	22	74	76
Education programmes	16	22	90	100	1	94	323	190
International programmes	-	154	-	-	24	-	178	176
Arts and wellbeing programmes	3	4	18	18	-	17	60	47
Holidays and volunteering	3	5	20	22	-	21	71	70
Children's specialist services	3	4	19	20	-	19	65	54
Campaigns, publicity and awareness	4	5	25	27	-	26	87	91
Quality assurance and development	2	2	13	13	-	11	41	34
	255	515	1,514	1,620	37	1,534	5,475	5,110

6. Discontinued operations

There were no discontinued operations during the year.

7. Gains on sale of tangible fixed assets and investments

	2021 £000s	2020 £000s
Net gain on sale of tangible fixed assets	155	102

8. Net movements in funds

The net movement in funds is stated after charging:

	2021 £000s	2020 £000s
Audit fee Group	62	54
Audit fee Subsidiaries	6	10
Auditors – non audit fees	15	-
Depreciation – tangible assets	2,799	2,698
Operating lease rentals	4,157	3,656
Interest payable on bank loans	310	344

9. Employee remuneration

	2021	2020
	£000s	£000s
Wages and salaries	40,849	39,025
Social security costs	2,970	2,822
Termination and redundancy payments	55	26
Pension costs - defined contribution schemes	1,732	1,484
Pension costs - defined benefit scheme (see note 11)	936	1,283
	46,542	44,640

The average monthly number of employees – excluding volunteers – was 2,555 (2020: 2,446).

Sense Group employees earning over £60,000 were as follows:

	2021	2020
	Number	Number
£60,000 - £70,000	6	4
£70,000 - £80,000	2	3
£80,000 - £90,000	2	3
£90,000 - £100,000	2	-
£110,000 - £120,000	-	1
£120,000 - £130,000	1	1

Pension contributions for these employees were as follows:

	2021		2020	
	£000s	No.	£000s	No.
Defined contribution schemes	41	13	37	11

The aggregate remuneration of 10 key management personnel (2020: 9) as listed in the Trustees' Report, was £793,634 (2020: £680,271) before pension contributions of £41,211 (2020: £61,547).

10. Remuneration of members of Council

Trustees of Sense received no remuneration during the year (2020: £nil).

Trustees are reimbursed travel and subsistence expenses for attending meetings and duties directly related to their duties as Trustees. In 2021, one (2020: nine) Trustee was reimbursed expenses of £70 (2020: £5,469).

11. Pensions

The Group provides defined contribution pension schemes for current employees.

In addition, the Group has ten employees who are members of the Teachers' Pension Scheme (TPS). The TPS is a multi-employer defined benefit pension scheme. Since the Group is unable to identify its share of the assets and liabilities of the scheme, contributions to the TPS are accounted for as if it was a defined contribution scheme.

The Group participates in the Local Pensions Partnerships (LPP), formerly London Pension Fund Authority (LPFA), a scheme which provides benefits based on final pensionable pay in respect of employees' past service. The assets of the scheme are held separately from those of the participating employers and are

mainly invested in equity investments and Government Securities. The most recent triennial actuarial valuation of the LPP was as at 31 March 2019.

In the year to 31 March 2021, the Group made agreed deficit reduction payments of £0.936 million (2020: £1.25 million). There was nothing outstanding at 31 March 2021 (2020: £nil).

Pension liabilities measured in accordance with FRS 102 were:

	2021 £'000	2020 £'000
LPP scheme		
Market value of assets	44,237	38,602
Present value of liabilities	(54,143)	(45,095)
LPP scheme - net deficit	(9,906)	(6,493)
Present value of an unfunded pension obligation	(128)	(119)
Net pension fund liabilities	(10,034)	(6,612)

Financial assumptions

The principal assumptions used to calculate LPP scheme liabilities were as follows:

	At 31 March 2021 % pa	At 31 March 2020 % pa
Rate of inflation – RPI	3.2	2.7
Rate of inflation – CPI	2.8	1.9
Rate of increase for pensions in payment	2.8	1.9
Discount rate	2.0	2.4

Life expectancy assumptions from age 65 were as follows:

	2021 Years	2020 Years
Retiring today		
- Men	21.9	21.2
- Women	23.8	23.8
Retiring in 20 years		
- Men	23.0	22.6
- Women	25.5	25.3

The post-retirement mortality assumptions are as follows:

2021: The post-retirement mortality tables have been constructed based on Club Vita analysis. These base tables are then projected using the CMI_2020 Model, allowing for a long-term rate of improvement of 1.25% p.a.

2020: The post-retirement mortality tables have been constructed based on Club Vita analysis. These base tables are then projected using the CMI_2018 Model, allowing for a long-term rate of improvement of 1.25% p.a.

Scheme assets

The assets attributable to the Group in the LPP were:

	Value at 31 March 2021	Value at 31 March 2020
	£'000	£'000
Equities	24,035	20,833
Target return funds	10,412	9,946
Infrastructure	3,749	2,813
Property	4,025	3,832
Cash	2,016	1,178
	44,237	38,602

The actual investment return (on a bid value to bid value basis) for the year to 31 March 2021 was 15.6% (2020: 0%).

Equity investments in plan assets are quoted and valued at their bid price at March 2021.

Reconciliation of the present value of scheme liabilities

	2021	2020
	£'000	£'000
Opening defined benefit obligation	45,214	44,505
Interest cost	1,048	1,098
Benefits paid	(1,249)	(1,161)
Experience gain/ (loss) on defined benefit obligation	(710)	2,415
Change in financial assumptions	10,444	(3,000)
Change in demographic assumptions	(469)	1,364
Unfunded pension payments	(7)	(7)
Closing defined benefit obligation	54,271	45,214

Reconciliation of fair value of scheme assets

	2021	2020
	£'000	£'000
Opening fair value of fund assets	38,602	40,548
Interest on assets	903	1,015
Return on assets less interest	5,095	(1,166)
Other actuarial losses	-	(1,831)
Administration expenses	(50)	(53)
Contributions by the employer	943	1,257
Benefits paid	(1,256)	(1,168)
Closing fair value of fund assets	44,237	38,602

The following components of the pensions charge have been recognised as operating costs in the

statement of financial activities:

	2021	2020
	£'000	£'000
Net interest	145	83
Administration expenses	50	53
Total cost	195	136

Re-measurements in other comprehensive income

	2021	2020
	£'000	£'000
Return on fund assets in excess of / (below) assumption	5,095	(1,166)
Other actuarial losses	-	(1,831)
Changes in demographic assumptions	469	(1,364)
Changes in financial assumptions	(10,444)	3,000
Experience gain / (loss) on defined benefit obligation	710	(2,415)
Total actuarial loss recognised	(4,170)	(3,776)
Deficit reduction payments made	7	7
Net actuarial loss	(4,163)	(3,769)

Sensitivity analysis of scheme liabilities

The following table sets out the impact of changes in the discount rates on the present value pension obligation and projected service cost and a one year age rating adjustment to the mortality assumption.

	£'000	£'000	£'000
Adjustment to discount rate	+0.1%	0%	-0.1%
Present value of total obligation	53,279	54,271	55,283
Projected service cost	-	-	-
Adjustment to mortality age rating assumption	+1 year	None	-1 year
Present value of total obligation	56,756	54,271	51,899
Projected service cost	-	-	-

12. Tangible assets

Group	Freehold property £000s	Long leasehold improvements £000s	Short leasehold improvements £000s	Furniture, fixtures and fittings £000s	Motor vehicles £000s	Total £000s
Cost						
At 1 April 2020	25,093	3,887	2,796	18,184	3,610	53,570
Additions	20	-	900	1,430	262	2,612
Disposals	(344)	-	(50)	(2,009)	(295)	(2,698)
At 31 March 2021	24,769	3,887	3,646	17,605	3,577	53,484
Accumulated depreciation						
At 1 April 2020	3,519	749	1,795	13,812	2,854	22,729
Charge for the year	445	62	237	1,737	318	2,799
Disposals	(63)	-	(46)	(1,908)	(280)	(2,297)
At 31 March 2021	3,901	811	1,986	13,641	2,892	23,231
Net book amounts						
At 31 March 2021	20,868	3,076	1,660	3,964	685	30,253
At 31 March 2020	21,574	3,138	1,001	4,372	756	30,841

Company	Freehold property £000s	Long leasehold improvements £000s	Short leasehold improvements £000s	Furniture, fixtures and fittings £000s	Motor vehicles £000s	Total £000s
Cost						
At 1 April 2020	25,093	3,887	2,796	18,159	3,568	53,503
Additions	20	-	900	1,423	203	2,546
Disposals	(344)	-	(50)	(2,010)	(296)	(2,700)
At 31 March 2021	24,769	3,887	3,646	17,572	3,475	53,349
Accumulated depreciation						
At 1 April 2020	3,519	749	1,795	13,790	2,811	22,664
Charge for the year	445	62	237	1,736	313	2,793
Disposals	(63)	-	(46)	(1,908)	(280)	(2,297)
At 31 March 2021	3,901	811	1,986	13,618	2,844	23,160
Net book amounts						
At 31 March 2021	20,868	3,076	1,660	3,954	631	30,189
At 31 March 2020	21,574	3,138	1,001	4,369	757	30,839

13. Fixed asset investments

Group	2021 £000s	2020 £000s
UK listed investments (at market value)	1	1

Company	2021 £000s	2020 £000s
Paid up shares: 100% (2020: 100%) holding in Helping Sense Limited	30	30

The company owns 100% of the ordinary share capital of Helping Sense Limited, which is incorporated in England and Wales, and exists to raise funds for the company. There is no readily available market value for the company and accordingly it is accounted for at cost.

The Trustees believe that the carrying value of the investment is supported by the underlying net assets. (Note 29).

14. Debtors

Group	2021 £000s	2020 £000s
Trade debtors	4,360	5,693
Accrued income	1,430	1,837
Prepayments	2,401	1,838
Taxation recoverable	161	147
Other debtors	855	281
	9,207	9,796

Company	2021 £000s	2020 £000s
Trade debtors	4,360	5,693
Accrued income	1,232	1,742
Prepayments	2,390	1,829
Amounts owed by group undertakings	140	205
Taxation recoverable	161	147
Other debtors	655	72
	8,938	9,688

Trade debtors are shown net of bad and doubtful debt provisions of £197,738 (2020: £226,000).

15. Current asset investments

Group and Company	2021	2020
	£000s	£000s
Bank deposits	4,000	4,000

16. Creditors (amounts falling due within one year)

Group	2021	2020
	£000s	£000s
Bank loans	470	459
Trade creditors	1,681	2,001
Taxation and social security	711	666
Deferred income	1,002	591
Accruals and deferred income	5,062	2,763
	8,926	6,480

Company	2021	2020
	£000s	£000s
Bank loans	470	459
Trade creditors	1,675	2,000
Taxation and social security	711	666
Deferred income	997	586
Accruals and deferred income	4,954	2,672
	8,807	6,383

17. Creditors (amounts falling due after more than one year)

Group	2021	2020
	£000s	£000s
Bank loans	7,873	8,343
Other creditors	40	40
	7,913	8,383

Company	2021	2020
	£000s	£000s
Bank loans	7,872	8,343

The bank loan, which funded the construction of TouchBase Pears, is with Lloyds Bank PLC. The loan is unsecured and repayable in instalments over 16 years to 2035. Interest is fixed on the first £7 million drawdown at 4.17% for the first eight years. Interest on the remaining drawdown is variable, based on a margin of 2% above three-month LIBOR.

17. Creditors (amounts falling due after more than one year) (continued)

Repayments fall due as follows:

	2021	2020
	£000s	£000s
Within one year	470	459
Second to fifth year	2,005	1,960
After five years	5,867	6,383
	8,342	8,802

At 31 March 2021 the Group had no obligations under finance leases (2020: £nil).

18. Movement of funds

Group	Balance at 1 April 2020	Income	Expenditure	Transfers	Balance at 31 March 2021
	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s
Unrestricted funds					
General fund, excluding pension deficit	24,935	70,792	(66,186)	(1,303)	28,238
Designated funds	9,697	54	(345)	1,132	10,538
Pension deficit (note 11)	(6,612)	-	(3,422)	-	(10,034)
Total unrestricted funds	28,020	70,846	(69,953)	(171)	28,742
Restricted funds					
Cymru Fundraising Fund	16	6	-	-	22
TouchBase Pears Aspirations	26	-	-	-	26
Dual Sensory Impairment Clinic	23	-	(23)	-	-
Touchbase Wales General Donations	18	3	(20)	-	1
Community Connections	108	-	-	-	108
Student Fund - Newton Court 1-4	22	1	-	-	23
Student Fund - 53a Shipdham Rd	18	-	-	-	18
Children's Services	-	171	(46)	-	125
Children's Services: South East	-	61	(7)	-	54
Children's Services: South West	16	6	(11)	-	11
Sport England - Active Together	195	207	(288)	-	114
Arts & Wellbeing: TBP Inclusive	43	50	(32)	-	61
Southeast: Sense @ Keech	57	-	-	-	57
Anne Wall Centre (TBSE)	24	-	2	-	26
Cafe 55 -Providence Court	41	-	6	-	47
Big Lottery Fund Grant	30	172	(140)	-	62
Children's Services North	-	18	(1)	-	17
Cornwall GOT Project	38	1	(1)	-	38
Cymru general donations	18	-	-	-	18
Deafblind Studies	6	-	-	-	6
Needs and Numbers Survey	56	(1)	-	-	55
Northern Ireland Day Centre	77	31	(1)	-	107

Group	Balance at 1 April 2020	Income	Expenditure	Transfers	Balance at 31 March 2021
	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s
Northern Ireland Lottery guide dogs	45	31	(12)	-	64
Northern Ireland Out Of Schools Club	91	26	(25)	-	92
Northern Ireland Special Donations	145	20	(33)	-	132
Northern Ireland specialist services	31	-	-	-	31
Social Prescribing Service	36	-	(36)	-	-
Stevenage Special Donations	32	-	(1)	-	31
TBP day centre equipment appeal	39	(25)	-	-	14
The Big Give	3	-	(3)	-	-
The Devon Group Fund	29	2	(30)	-	1
TouchBase Restricted Fund	4	1	-	-	5
Volunteering: London transitions	74	61	(89)	-	46
Wolverhampton Children's Services	35	-	-	-	35
Woodside Fund	13	-	(13)	-	-
Children's Services Midlands	-	32	(26)	-	6
DoH Health and Wellbeing Alliance	-	20	(20)	-	-
TouchBase Wales Lottery Grant	-	100	(65)	-	35
Woodside – Capital (*)	12	-	21	-	33
NI Mallusk Nursery (*)	15	30	(19)	-	26
GOT Group Warwickshire (*)	15	30	(9)	-	36
Andlaw House (*)	19	-	20	-	39
SE Barnet Day Service Special Donations (*)	20	-	(20)	-	-
NI Outreach Worker (*)	20	-	-	-	20
Woodside – Operations (*)	24	1	18	-	43
Arts and Wellbeing: Digital Programme	-	55	(27)	-	28
Arts Council: TBP Studio Development #2	-	25	-	-	25
Children in Need Next Steps Programme	-	29	(27)	-	2
Children's Services: Sweeney Foundation	-	50	(17)	-	33
DHSC: COVID-19 Support	-	345	(345)	-	-
Loneliness Fund (DCMS)	-	500	(500)	-	-
NLCF Covid-19 Grant	-	510	(510)	-	-
Pears Grant – Promoting Wellbeing	-	40	(32)	-	8
Woodside IT Equipment (*)	5	16	(21)	-	-
Other	526	154	(212)	-	468
Sense International					
Nelumbo Stiftung Education	251	173	(217)	-	207
Romania – In-country Income	73	50	(22)	-	101
FCDO UK Aid Match Kenya	20	107	(41)	-	86
Comic Relief Uganda	-	117	(38)	-	79

* - balance previously disclosed in other

Group	Balance at 1 April 2020	Income	Expenditure	Transfers	Balance at 31 March 2021
	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s
Nelumbo Stiftung Early Intervention Uganda	-	75	-	-	75
FCDO UK Aid Match Bangladesh	41	64	(37)	-	68
Latin American Children's Trust	50	50	(39)	-	61
Thomas Cook Children's Charity	82	-	(22)	-	60
NLCF Uganda	120	27	(88)	-	59
My Turn to Learn Appeal	144	28	(114)	-	58
Enabel Vocational	181	1	(133)	-	49
Tanzania Adults Vocational	36	68	(59)	-	45
Porticus Uganda 2020-21	-	51	(16)	-	35
Kilimanjaro Blind Trust Africa Uganda	9	38	(18)	-	29
The Batchworth Trust (Nepal)	12	12	-	-	24
Tanzania Early Intervention	26	84	(89)	-	21
Jersey Overseas Aid Nepal	9	98	(90)	-	17
Australian Embassy Tanzania	22	-	(6)	-	16
Tanzania HDIF	14	40	(45)	-	9
Romania Orange E-Sense	16	30	(41)	-	5
FCDO Rapid Response Fund Kenya 2020	-	123	(123)	-	-
FCDO UK Aid Direct Kenya	3	142	(145)	-	-
FCDO UK Aid Direct Kenya Co-funding	-	11	(11)	-	-
FCDO (UK Aid Match) Kenya Early Intervention	-	74	(74)	-	-
DID TO35	-	92	(92)	-	-
Else Krone Fresenius	-	24	(24)	-	-
Allan & Nesta Ferguson Fdn	-	24	(24)	-	-
Tanzania Holding Fund	-	1	(86)	85	-
Uganda Holding Fund	-	2	(55)	53	-
Kenya Holding Fund	-	14	(30)	16	-
Peru Holding Fund	-	-	(26)	26	-
Other	91	138	(134)	(9)	86
Total Restricted	3,265	4,537	(4,534)	171	3,439
Endowment					
Property	378	-	(9)	-	369
Total Endowment	378	-	(9)	-	369
Total Funds	31,663	75,383	(74,496)	-	32,550

Company	Balance at 1 April 2020	Income	Expenditure	Transfers	Balance at 31 March 2021
	£'000s	£'000s	£'000s	£'000s	£'000s
Unrestricted funds					
General fund, excluding pension deficit	24,751	70,573	(66,008)	(1,132)	28,184
Designated funds	9,697	54	(345)	1,132	10,538
Pension deficit (note 11)	(6,612)	-	(3,422)	-	(10,034)
Total unrestricted funds	27,836	70,627	(69,775)	-	28,688
Restricted funds					
Cymru Fundraising Fund	17	6	-	-	23
TouchBase Pears Aspirations	26	-	-	-	26
Dual Sensory Impairment Clinic	23	-	(23)	-	-
Touchbase Wales General Donations	18	3	(20)	-	1
Community Connections	108	-	-	-	108
Student Fund - Newton Court 1-4	22	1	-	-	23
Student Fund - 53a Shipdham Rd	18	-	-	-	18
Children's Services	-	171	(46)	-	125
Children's Services: South East	-	61	(7)	-	54
Children's Services: South West	15	6	(11)	-	10
Sport England - Active Together	195	207	(288)	-	114
Arts & Wellbeing: TBP Inclusive	43	50	(32)	-	61
Southeast: Sense @ Keech	56	-	-	-	56
Anne Wall Centre (TBSE)	23	-	2	-	25
Cafe 55 -Providence Court	41	-	6	-	47
Big Lottery Fund Grant	30	172	(140)	-	62
Children's Services North	-	18	(1)	-	17
Cornwall GOT Project	38	1	(1)	-	38
Cymru general donations	18	-	-	-	18
Deafblind Studies	6	-	-	-	6
Needs and Numbers Survey	56	(1)	-	-	55
Northern Ireland Day Centre	77	31	(1)	-	107
Northern Ireland Lottery guide dogs	45	31	(12)	-	64
Northern Ireland Out Of Schools Club	91	26	(25)	-	92
Northern Ireland Special Donations	145	20	(33)	-	132
Northern Ireland specialist services	31	-	-	-	31
Social Prescribing Service	36	-	(36)	-	-
Stevenage Special Donations	32	-	(1)	-	31
TBP day centre equipment appeal	39	(25)	-	-	14
The Big Give	3	-	(3)	-	-
The Devon Group Fund	29	2	(30)	-	1
TouchBase Restricted Fund	4	1	-	-	5
Volunteering: London transitions	75	61	(89)	-	47
Wolverhampton Children's Services	35	-	-	-	35
Woodside Fund	13	-	(13)	-	-
Children's Services Midlands	-	32	(26)	-	6
DoH Health and Wellbeing Alliance	-	20	(20)	-	-

Company	Balance at 1 April 2020	Income	Expenditure	Transfers	Balance at 31 March 2021
	£'000s	£'000s	£'000s	£'000s	£'000s
TouchBase Wales Lottery Grant	-	100	(65)	-	35
Woodside – Capital (*)	12	-	21	-	33
NI Mallusk Nursery (*)	15	30	(19)	-	26
GOT Group Warwickshire (*)	15	30	(9)	-	36
Andlaw House (*)	19	-	20	-	39
SE Barnet Day Service Special Donations (*)	20	-	(20)	-	-
NI Outreach Worker (*)	20	-	-	-	20
Woodside – Operations (*)	24	1	18	-	43
Arts and Wellbeing: Digital Programme	-	55	(27)	-	28
Arts Council: TBP Studio Development #2	-	25	-	-	25
Children in Need Next Steps Programme	-	29	(27)	-	2
Children's Services: Sweeney Foundation	-	50	(17)	-	33
DHSC: COVID-19 Support	-	345	(345)	-	-
Loneliness Fund (DCMS)	-	500	(500)	-	-
NLCF Covid-19 Grant	-	510	(510)	-	-
Pears Grant – Promoting Wellbeing	-	40	(32)	-	8
Woodside IT Equipment (*)	5	16	(21)	-	-
Other	527	154	(212)	-	469
Total Restricted	2,065	2,779	(2,595)	-	2,249
Endowment					
Property	378	-	(8)	-	370
Total Endowment	378	-	(8)	-	370
Total Funds	30,279	73,406	(72,378)	-	31,307

* - balance previously disclosed in other

Individual funds listed are those with opening balances, annual income or annual expenditure that exceed £20,000. 'Other funds' are those with opening balances, annual income and annual expenditure of less than £20,000.

Unrestricted funds

General fund

This represents the accumulated reserves of the charity that are available for use at the discretion of the Trustees.

Designated funds

Designated funds total £10.5m (2020: £9.7m).

Designated funds include £3.8 million for the maintenance and improvement of the Group's residential accommodation, two years' of contributions to Sense International (£0.7m), for the support and development of Sense Touch Base Pears centre (£1.0m) and a full year of pension deficit reduction payments (£1.0m).

Future strategic plans will be funded from reserves and Trustees have designated funds for the

following projects: £1.5m for business acquisitions, £1.0m for infrastructure development and £1.0m for investment in the current financial year on innovation projects. In addition, £0.5m has been designated for the acquisition of the assets and activity of the Otterhayes Trust which took place during April 2021.

Pension deficit

See note 11 for the calculation of the estimated deficit on the defined benefit scheme.

Restricted funds

Sense is reliant on the support of individuals, corporations, trusts, other charities and state bodies in order to deliver our activities. Monies that are received for an express purpose are restricted to that purpose.

The principal restricted funds are considered to be:

Sense TouchBase Pears

This is a facility in Selly Oak, Birmingham which was completed at the end of 2018. This multi-purpose building provides capacity for day services, office space for Sense staff and recently opened Sense college, as well as offering a hub and facilities for community use and commercial hire.

Community Connections

A legacy to reduce social isolation for adults with sensory impairments, connect people in Wales to their local community, to build connections with others, share experiences, improve confidence and well-being.

Sport England

A three-year project to build on our foundations of supporting people with complex disabilities to get active.

Sense Holidays fund

Money donated to enable children and adults to participate in holidays, supported by volunteers.

Big Lottery Fund (Uganda)

A three-year grant was received from the Big Lottery Fund to improve the livelihoods of people with deafblindness in Uganda.

Big Lottery Fund (Peru)

A three-year grant was received from the Big Lottery Fund to improve opportunities for people with deafblindness in Peru.

Finding Grace appeal

Monies raised by the appeal to match the funding provided by the Department for International Development (DFID). This fund is for establishing early intervention services for infants born with or acquiring sensory impairments in Kenya and Uganda.

Endowment funds

These are properties given to the charity for its use. The movement on the fund is depreciation of the fixed assets.

Transfers between funds

Other transfers between funds represent either transfers from unrestricted funds to cover shortfalls of restricted funds or transfers from restricted funds to cover related expenditure paid by unrestricted monies.

19. Analysis of net assets between fund balances

Group	Unrestricted funds	Designated funds	Restricted funds	Endowment funds	Total funds
	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s
Tangible fixed assets	29,884	-	-	369	30,253
Fixed asset investments	1	-	-	-	1
Net current assets	6,266	10,538	3,439	-	20,243
Long-term liabilities	(7,913)	-	-	-	(7,913)
Pension liability	(10,034)	-	-	-	(10,034)
Total	18,204	10,538	3,439	369	32,550

Company	Unrestricted funds	Designated funds	Restricted funds	Endowment funds	Total funds
	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s
Tangible fixed assets	29,819	-	-	370	30,189
Fixed asset investments	30	-	-	-	30
Net current assets	6,207	10,538	2,249	-	18,994
Long-term liabilities	(7,872)	-	-	-	(7,872)
Pension liability	(10,034)	-	-	-	(10,034)
Total	18,150	10,538	2,249	370	31,307

20. Capital commitments

As at 31 March 2021, the Group had capital commitments of £5,689 (2020: £57,928).

21. Contingent liabilities

Sense, Sense International and Helping Sense Limited are members of a group VAT registration. Under the Value Added Tax Act 1983, all members of a VAT group are jointly and severally liable for any tax due during the period of their membership.

As disclosed in Note 29, two of the Company's subsidiaries, Helping Sense Limited and Sense4Enterprise Limited, have taken advantage of the exemption available under Section 479 of the Companies Act 2006 in respect of the requirement for audit. As a condition of the exemption, the Company has guaranteed the year-end liabilities of the relevant subsidiaries until they are settled in full. The liabilities of one of the subsidiaries (Sense4Enterprise Limited) at the year-end were £107,000 (2020: £91,000). The Trustees are satisfied that this does not impact on the going concern position of the Group and believe that this is an accurate and robust guarantee. The other subsidiary (Helping Sense Limited) had assets of £30,000 (2020: £30,000) at 31 March.

22. Operating lease commitments

Future minimum lease payments under non-cancellable operating leases as set out below:

Group and Company	2021		2020	
	Land and buildings	Other	Land and buildings	Other
	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s
Operating leases which expire:				
Within one year	3,132	-	3,222	-
In two to five years	9,329	-	9,178	-
After five years	6,385	-	7,246	-
	18,846	-	19,646	-

23. Reconciliation of net income to net cash inflow / (outflow) from operating activities

	2021	2020
	£000s	£000s
Net income before revaluation	5,050	504
Defined benefit pension scheme deficit reduction payments	(741)	(1,114)
Investment income received	(125)	(46)
Interest paid	310	344
Depreciation	2,799	2,698
Profit on sale of fixed assets	(155)	(102)
Increase in stock	(29)	(95)
Decrease/ (increase) in debtors	589	(3,215)
Increase in creditors	2,436	367
Net cash inflow/ (outflow) from operating activities	10,134	(659)

24. Reconciliation of net cash flow to movement in net cash

	2021	2020
	£000s	£000s
Increase / (decrease) in cash in the year	7,433	(4,272)
Bank loan repayments	459	445
Changes generate from / (used in) cash flows	7,892	(3,827)
Net cash at 1 April 2020/2019	3,352	7,179
Net cash at 31 March	11,244	3,352

25. Analysis of changes in net debt

	At 1 April 2020	Cash flows	Non-cash changes	At 31 March 2021
	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s
Cash at bank and in hand	8,153	7,433	-	15,586
Current asset investments	4,000	-	-	4,000
Debt due within one year	(458)	459	(471)	(470)
Debt due after one year	(8,343)	-	471	(7,872)
	3,352	7,892	-	11,244

26. Analysis of cash and cash equivalents

	2021	2020
	£'000	£'000
Cash at bank and in hand	15,586	8,153
Current asset investments	4,000	4,000
	19,586	12,153

27. Related party transactions

In some cases, the Group provides services to children or family members of the Trustees and Board members of the charity. These services are provided as part of the contracts agreed with funding authorities on the same commercial terms as with any other service user.

During the previous year Sense International a subsidiary of the group entered into a loan of £40,000 which was received from Dandyllion Consulting Limited, a company of which Sunil Shah, a trustee of Sense International, was a Director in the year. The loan is unsecured, interest free, and repayable in five equal annual instalments from March 2023.

Balances with subsidiaries are disclosed below;

	31 March 2021	31 March 2020
	Debtor/(Creditor)	Debtor/(Creditor)
	£	£
Sense International	36,536	115,836
Helping Sense Limited	(31)	(4,503)
Sense4Enterprise Limited	107,541	93,585

Support for Sense International

During the year, the company made a donation of £350,000 (2020: £40,777) to Sense International.

For much of the year to March 2021 five shops run by the company designated as Sense International shops were closed due to the pandemic and made a loss. Accordingly there was no donation in the year from Sense in respect of net profit generated by these shops (2020: £122,861). In addition, in the year ended 31 March 2020, the company donated the proceeds of sales in all its shops donated as part of the Chance to Shine Appeal for Sense International, amounting to £199,223. These amounts are included in donations and legacies.

Helping Sense Limited made a donation to the company of nil (2020: £85,108 in relation to profits made in the previous year).

28. Note on company status

Sense is a company limited by guarantee and has no share capital. The liability of the members is limited by guarantee. The members have undertaken to contribute such amount not exceeding one pound each as may be required in the event of the charity being wound up.

29. Subsidiary companies

The company has three wholly owned subsidiaries including Sense International which is registered in England as a charity (charity number: 1076497) and as a company limited by guarantee (company number: 03742986).

Sense is connected to the Royal Coventry Society for the Blind. The Charity Commissioners directed in a letter dated 04 June 2003 that this Charity should be reported as part of Sense, The National Deafblind and Rubella Association. There have been no activities separately undertaken by this Charity.

Sense International has similar aims and objectives to the company. All activities have been consolidated on a line-by-line basis into the statement of financial activities.

A summary of the results of the subsidiary are shown below:

Sense International

	2021	2020
	£000s	£000s
Income	2,320	2,476
Expenditure	(2,455)	(2,295)
Net movement in funds	(135)	181
Assets	1,439	1,632
Liabilities	(191)	(248)
Net assets	1,248	1,384

Sense also has two wholly owned subsidiaries that are not registered charities.

Sense owns the whole of the issued share capital of Helping Sense Limited, a company registered in England (company number: 2214430) that is used for non-primary purpose trading activities, namely the support of shop sales of purchased goods and the organisation of fundraising activities. The net profit of the subsidiary is gifted to the company. Sense4Enterprise Limited (company number: 8112973) is a company limited by guarantee and a social enterprise and is used for income generating activities related to Sense TouchBase Pears and other resources. The net profit of Sense4Enterprise Limited will be gifted to the charity.

A summary of the results of these subsidiaries is shown below:

Helping Sense Limited

	2021	2020
	£000s	£000s
Turnover	1,273	3,281
Cost of sales	(306)	(440)
Gross profit	967	2,841
Operating expenses	(967)	(2,841)
Net profit	-	-
Assets	35	35
Liabilities	(5)	(5)
Net assets	30	30

Sense4Enterprise Limited

	2021	2020
	£000s	£000s
Income	124	262
Expenditure	(137)	(290)
Net movement in funds	(13)	(28)
Assets	-	-
Liabilities	(107)	(91)
Net liabilities	(107)	(91)

The Company has guaranteed the liabilities of Sense4Enterprise Limited and Helping Sense Limited to entitle them to exemption from audit under Section 479A of the Companies Act 2006 in respect of the year ended 31 March 2021.

30. Post balance sheet events

On 14 April 2021, Sense acquired the assets and ongoing trading activity of Otterhayes Trust for a consideration of £526,894 settled by the assumption of bank loans which have subsequently been repaid. The fair value of the net assets acquired significantly exceeds the consideration paid and will be reflected in the accounts in the current year.

On 15th September 2021 Sense repaid £2,301,000 of the loan detailed in note 17 above.

Other information

Major supporters of Sense in 2020/21

Sense

Alex de Winton
Arts Council England
Audrey Earle Charitable Trust
BBC Children In Need
Birkdale Trust for Hearing Impaired Ltd
Cameron Homes
Cantiacorum Foundation
Catherine Paul
Cecil Rosen Charitable Trust
Dance Hub
Department of Health & Social Care
Erica Wax
Ernest Hecht Charitable Foundation
Fowler Smith and Jones Trust
Garfield Weston Foundation
Gertrude Gourvitch Charitable Trust
GMC Trust
Graham and Mary Stacy Trust
Graham Stacy
Grow Wild
Hatfield Davis Trust
Helen Robertson Charitable Trust
Jesus Hospital Charity
John Crabtree
Joseph Strong Frazer Trust
London Stock Exchange Group Foundation
Merchant Taylors' Company Trusts
Order of Red Cross of Constantine
Outdoors For All
Pamela Coate
Payne Gallwey 1989 Charitable Trust
Pears Foundation
Peter Storrs Trust
Price Parry Charitable Trust
Roger Eaton
Smith Charitable Trust
Sport England
Stanley Fink
Stuart and Joanna Riley
Sweeney Foundation
The 29th May 1961 Charitable Trust
The Annette Duvollet Trust
The Ballinger Charitable Trust
The Barbour Foundation
The Bartle Family Charitable Trust
The Beatrice Laing Trust
The Belsize Trust
The Blair Foundation
The Camelia Trust
The Charles Wolfson Charitable Trust
The CHEAR Foundation
The City Bridge Trust
The David Family Foundation
The D'Oyly Carte Charitable Trust
The E F Rathbone Charitable Trust
The Edward Cadbury Charitable Trust
The Essex Youth Trust
The Eveson Charitable Trust
The Gale Family Charity Trust
The Geoffrey Watling Charity
The Hadley Trust
The Helen Jean Cope Trust
The J & M Britton Charitable Trust
The J S Trust
The John Pinto Foundation
The Joyce Mary Mountain Will Trust
The Michael Marsh Charitable Trust
The National Lottery Community Fund
The P F Charitable Trust
The Patrick and Helena Frost Foundation
The Pilkington Charities Fund
The Princess Anne's Charities
The R Farquhar Oliver Trust
The Roger & Douglas Turner Charitable Trust
The Roselands Trust
The Sheila Hasler Charitable Trust
The Sir John Eastwood Foundation
The Skylarks Endowment Fund
The Strangward Trust
The Tanner Trust
The Thomas Farr Charity
The Thomas J Horne Memorial Trust
The Violet Helen Dixon Charitable Trust
The Vision Foundation
The Weinstock Fund
The William Kenneth Hutchings Charitable Trust
The Wixamtree Trust
The Wolfson Foundation
Tim Watts
Williams Family Foundation
Winifred Eileen Kemp Trust

Sense International

Comic Relief (directly to Sense International Uganda)

Dorfred Charitable Trust

Enabel, the Belgian Development Agency (funded by the European Union) (directly to Sense International Kenya)

Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO)

Green Hall Foundation

Guernsey Overseas Aid and Development Commission

Hollyhock Charitable Foundation

James Tudor Foundation

Kilimanjaro Blind Trust Africa (KBTA)

Latin American Children's Trust

Love is Kindness Charitable Trust

Medicor Foundation

Members of the Sense International Ambassador Circle

Mrs J B Wood's Charitable Trust

Nelumbo Stiftung

Old Mutual Trust Fund

Rhododendron Trust

Rupin and Madhavi Vadera

Souter Charitable Trust

Stavros Niarchos Foundation

The Allan and Nesta Ferguson Charitable Trust

The Band Aid Charitable Trust

The Beatrice Laing Trust

The Batchworth Trust

The Blackwood Engineering Trust

The British and Foreign School Society

The Carmen Butler-Charteris Trust

The Cumber Family Charitable Trust

The Else Kröner-Fresenius-Stiftung

The Grace Trust

The Jersey Overseas Aid Commission

The National Lottery Community Fund

The Open Society Initiative for East Africa (directly to Sense International Kenya)

The Tony and Audrey Watson Charitable Trust

Uganda Society for Disabled Children (funded by UN Women's Peace and Humanitarian Fund)

Ulverscroft Foundation

Charity information

Registered address

101 Pentonville Road, London, N1 9LG

Tel: 0300 330 9250

Email: facilities@sense.org.uk

Sense Information and Advice

For details about the support and services Sense offers – and information about complex disabilities – please contact the Sense Information and Advice service on:

Tel: 0300 330 9256

Textphone: 0300 330 9256 or 020 7520 0972

Email: info@sense.org.uk

Sense and Sense International

101 Pentonville Road London, N1 9LG

Tel: 0300 330 9256

Textphone: 0300 330 9256 or 020 7520 0972

Email: facilities@sense.org.uk

Websites: www.sense.org.uk

www.senseinternational.org.uk

Sense Northern Ireland

Sense Family Centre

The Manor House

51 Mallusk Road

Mallusk

County Antrim, BT37 9AA

Tel/text: 028 9083 3430

Fax: 028 9084 4232

Email: nienquiries@sense.org.uk

Sense Cymru

TouchBase Wales

Caerphilly Business Park Van Road

Caerphilly, CF83 3ED

Ffôn/tel: 0300 330 9280

Ffacs/fax: 0300 330 9281

Testud/text: 0300 330 9282

Email: cymruenquiries@sense.org.uk

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Salisbury SP1 2SB

Trowers & Hamblins LLP

3 Bunhill Row

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Anthony Collins Solicitors LLP

134 Edmund Street,

Birmingham, B3 2ES

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Manchester, M2 4AW

Sense: Registered company number 1825301

Registered charity number 289868