

A young boy with a hearing aid is playing with a colorful coiled spring toy. He is looking up and to the side with a focused expression. The background is blurred, suggesting an outdoor setting. The text is overlaid on the top right of the image.

# Annual Report and Financial Statements 2020

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



**sense**

connecting sight, sound and life



# Contents

From our President	4
Sense's mission	5
Chair's welcome	6
Chief Executive's introduction	7
<b>Report of the Trustees of Sense, The National Deafblind and Rubella Association</b>	<b>8</b>
The services Sense provides	9
Our activities and achievements	10
A big thank you to our support network	19
Our people	24
The governance of Sense, The National Deafblind and Rubella Association	26
Stakeholder statements	28
The Sense Group	29
Sense Group Trustees and senior staff	31
<b>The Strategic Report of Sense, The National Deafblind and Rubella Association Group</b>	<b>33</b>
Sense performance against objectives for 2019/20	34
Sense International performance against objectives for 2019/20	37
Statement of responsibilities of the Council of Sense, The National Deafblind and Rubella Association	40
Principal risks and uncertainties	42
Section 172 Statement	44
Streamlined Energy and Carbon Report	46
Financial review of Sense, The National Deafblind and Rubella Association 2019/20	48
Report on the audit of the financial statements	53
Consolidated statement of financial activities for the year ended 31 March 2020	56
Accounting policies of Sense, The National Deafblind and Rubella Association	60
Notes to the financial statements of Sense, The National Deafblind and Rubella Association for the year ended 31 March 2020	65
<b>Other information</b>	<b>84</b>
Major supporters of Sense in 2019/20	84
Charity information	86

## From our President

**Sense is here for everyone living with complex disabilities. For everyone who is deafblind.**

Living life to the full with complex disabilities can be challenging for each individual and their family. Supporting individuals and families to communicate with one another and to live as independently as possible all require huge effort – and the right specialist support.

Everything Sense does is about supporting individuals to express themselves, to develop their skills and confidence, to make choices and to live a full life. Sense celebrates everyone’s personal achievements – whether that is making their first cup of tea, experiencing the joy of dance, keeping in touch with a friend via social media or moving into a home of their own.

**“Sense celebrates everyone’s personal achievements.”**

There is so much to be proud of, but Sense is never complacent. For every individual who is being supported to fulfil their potential, many more remain isolated and marginalised. For every family that Sense supports, many others are exhausted and overwhelmed. Sense is passionately committed to ensuring that every child and adult with complex disabilities gets the help that they deserve. Your support can help make that vision a reality.

COVID-19 has sent a shockwave across the world. I have been humbled and amazed by the determined resilience and creativity of Sense’s staff and volunteers. At a time when the world is changing so quickly and life has been altered, we have done so much. Everyone has worked so hard.

Thank you.



**Lord Levy**  
President



# 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, our college, 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<sup>1</sup> 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.

## 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 65 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.

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<sup>1</sup> 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.

## Chair's welcome



This has been another year of great progress, creative new practice and innovative development for Sense despite the unprecedented challenges that COVID-19 has presented.

Sense's work is driven by four strategic objectives – which are set out in the report – and as you will see, there have been so many examples of the impact Sense has on the lives of people with complex disabilities and their families.

Last year, more than 14,000 individuals benefitted from our Sense services – ranging from early intervention projects to family get-togethers; an expanded buddying scheme and short break programmes offering young people friendship and fun; we opened seven new supported living schemes where adults are supported to live independently; and our campaigning and influencing work has gained traction with Government – to name just a few of our achievements.

In the early months of 2020 everything changed with the arrival of the COVID-19 virus followed by a national lockdown. This brought enormous challenges to charities like Sense who support some of the most vulnerable people in our community.

**“There have been so many examples of the impact Sense has on the lives of people with complex disabilities.”**

I am very proud to say that – as I have come to expect from Sense – the organisation responded with professionalism, creativity and care. Thanks to the commitment of our staff all of our accommodation services remained open and, at the time of writing, thankfully, none of the people we support in these services have caught the virus.

Other services that support group activities in the community did close temporarily and staff developed numerous and innovative ways to keep in touch and offer support – from offering guidance to families on how children can continue to receive sensory stimulation, to using social video meetings to enable young people to keep in touch with their buddies. Sense has risen to the financial challenges and launched a very successful emergency appeal and we have received some incredibly generous individual donations. We are very grateful for this support.

It will continue to be a challenging time for Sense. We are extremely fortunate to have the passion and commitment of the Sense family and the marvellous generosity of our supporters. I am confident that the year ahead will see further progress for Sense.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Justin Molloy'.

**Dr Justin Molloy**  
Chair

## Chief Executive's introduction



As Chief Executive of Sense, I am privileged to meet many of the individuals we support. I also talk regularly to families and carers and hear about their challenges and joys that they experience.

Since COVID-19, the challenges facing individuals we support and our families have been immense. We have had to face new fears. We have had to learn new behaviours, new ways of working and new ways of communicating with each other. We've had to follow new guidance and regulations.

Sense has endeavoured to handle these challenges with grace, compassion and integrity. We know that we would not have been able to respond to such a challenging situation without our staff and the specialist skills that they hold. This Annual Report updates on the progress we have made against our outcomes. Despite the huge challenges the country faces, there is much to recognise and celebrate at Sense – both for the individuals themselves and for the people who contribute so much to the Sense family.

**“Everything we do at Sense is driven by our values.”**

We are determined to provide a place where everyone belongs, where difference is valued and no one is left out. We bring people together and make connections. Through sharing, learning, working and being creative together we can achieve so much more.

I am honoured to lead such a principled, passionate and innovative organisation – and look forward to reporting on the progress we have made in the years to come.

Thank you.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Richard Kramer". The signature is fluid and includes a long, sweeping underline.

**Richard Kramer**  
Chief Executive

# Report of the Trustees of Sense, The National Deafblind and Rubella Association (including the Directors' Report)





# The services Sense provides

Sense is a national disability charity. We offer 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 art 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), while other services, such as our specialist work with children and young people, are entirely dependent on charitable donations, grants, statutory income and income from trading through our 115 shops.

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

We have outlined below an overview of the many different ways we support people headed under our four strategic goals for 2019–2022.

## 1 Children and families get the best possible start

Vital early intervention for children; advice, support and events for families; pre-school groups; holidays and short breaks; support for young people during the transition to adulthood.

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

Residential and supported living services; day opportunities, holidays and short breaks; and specialist further education for young people aged up to 25 years.

## 3 Individuals are less lonely and more connected with their communities

Buddying services, support in the community, arts, sport and wellbeing activities; and a new way of delivering services, bringing people together – disabled and non-disabled – at our pioneering centre, Sense TouchBase Pears in Birmingham.

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

Policy influencing; public affairs and campaigning; providing information, advice and signposting; public relations and communications.

In the following pages you can read details of our achievements in the year to March 2020 against each of our strategic outcomes, together with case studies to illustrate the impact of our work on individual lives.

# Our activities and achievements

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

Being a parent or carer of a child who is deafblind or has complex disabilities can be challenging. The right support, at the right time, can make all the difference in a child's development. It also strengthens and supports families, helping them to accept and embrace their future lives.

Our specialist children's services support families with children and young people up to the age of 25 who are deafblind/multi-sensory impaired (MSI) and those with a sensory impairment and complex needs.

Sense specialists have the expertise to understand each child's ways of communicating and – in partnership with parents – put together stimulating programmes that will help them to learn and grow in confidence.

Having a disabled brother or sister isn't always easy for the siblings either – however much they love them. They may have to learn to put their own needs on hold to some extent and take on more responsibility than other children do. Sense supports the whole family and always includes brothers and sisters in their activities wherever possible.

### Key achievements

- We supported 1,347 families and delivered **individualised packages of help** to 179 families.
- We organised 58 **family events**, which brought 439 families together for information, support and respite.
- 210 **pre-school group sessions** took place in eight locations across the country.
- We supported 120 children and young people at 20 **specialist health clinics** working in partnership with multi-disciplinary health teams.
- 45 **awareness raising sessions** were delivered to 1,591 people, including professionals and families.
- 65 children and young people benefitted from our **Sense Holidays and Short Breaks**. Altogether, we delivered 18 holidays and short breaks for 104 holiday makers of all ages, with a team of 18 leaders and 101 volunteers. Our 'Good' Ofsted rating was maintained, with the inspector noting that the "young people overcome significant challenges, learn new skills and develop their self-esteem". The growing range of Sense Short Breaks include our highly successful Sense Get Out There (GOT) clubs in Cornwall, Sandwell, Stockport and Warwickshire. GOT Cornwall celebrated ten years of Short Breaks by welcoming HRH the Princess Royal to a celebration in Redruth attended by 200 GOT young people, volunteers, families and guests.
- 26 siblings aged between 5 and 15 years enjoyed an exciting **sibling activity weekend** where they had the chance to make friends, share experiences and try all sorts of challenging activities.

## Meet Simon

When three-year-old Simon\* was diagnosed with visual and hearing impairments his mum Jackie\* contacted Sense for help. Among many difficult questions, his family wanted to know how to help to develop his play and communication skills. They were also having real problems accessing a pre-school group.

Rebecca, a Sense specialist, visited Simon's family for six fortnightly sessions. Through child-led play, Jackie and Rebecca were able to observe the way Simon interacted with the world around him, how he used his remaining vision and hearing and communicated through his body language, facial expressions, movement and by making sounds.

They discussed some practical strategies to encourage and develop his interaction and play. For example, Simon was encouraged to try hand games and hand-under-hand techniques to help him to focus and explore the world around him. He was introduced to burst-pause activities to help him to anticipate and ask for more, as well as action songs and rhymes. He was also supported to associate certain objects with certain activities so that he could anticipate what was going to happen during his day.

**“The passport gave Simon’s parents the confidence to speak up and guide the staff about how to say hello and to prepare him for procedures.”**

Rebecca also created a hospital passport for Simon as his parents were worried that he seemed scared during visits and increasingly did not like people touching his hands. The passport explained to the

medical staff how to make interactions less frightening for Simon and how to help him to anticipate people approaching. The passport gave Simon’s parents the confidence to speak up and guide the staff about how to say hello and to prepare him for procedures.

After Rebecca’s initial visits, she produced a report providing detailed observations and recommendations which were shared with the wider team of health and local authority professionals working with the family – which means that Simon is now being supported in a much more consistent and coordinated way.

**“Simon is now being supported in a much more consistent and coordinated way.”**

Rebecca has also helped the family to tap into local support networks and joined the family at a local pre-school group to explain and show the staff there how Simon can best be supported and involved.

Sense now meets the family roughly every six weeks, either at home or one of our family days. The family greatly value the support they receive and travelled to events at the Sense Family Centres in both north London and Peterborough (before COVID-19). We are also regularly in touch to discuss Simon’s progress and development and to explore new ways to help him – from which toys will help him to use his vision more, to how to adapt the home environment; from how to introduce him to new sign language, to how to encourage him to adapt to his new hearing aids.

\*name changed



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

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 plays a vital role in making sure that people with complex disabilities have the opportunity to make positive changes and influence the way Sense provides services.

We are now in phase two 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 305 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.
  - Seven new supported living schemes opened – including our first supported living services in Wales and Northern Ireland.
  - 94 % of Sense services were rated as 'Good' or 'Outstanding' by the Care Quality Commission, with two services rated as 'Outstanding'. Five services rated as 'Good' had 'Outstanding' features.
- 332 adults fed directly into phase two of our **Working Together for Change programme** through their Person-Centred Review meetings. This ensures that the people we support can influence all aspects of Sense at an individual, local and strategic level.
- 336 adults benefitted from our **Sense Day Opportunities**, supporting adults to develop their communication 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.
  - 177 young people were supported this year, of which 53 were funded through the Education and Skills Funding Agency.
  - A new curriculum was introduced in September 2019, which consists of three pathways: Learning for Living, Foundation Learning and Employability.
  - An eighth Sense College site was opened in Bedford in January 2020 to meet continuing demand for our specialist provision.
- We established a thriving programme of inclusive events, crafts and performances for the community and opened a dedicated arts space at our pioneering multi-purpose centre in Birmingham. **Sense TouchBase Pears** operates as a social enterprise, with a focus on sustainability and creating value for the whole community. We continued to work closely with many partners, including the Arts Council.



## Meet Stephen, Tanvi and Mark

Steven, Tanvi and Mark were thrilled to be the first people to move into a new Sense supported living service at Holly House in 2019 – the first in Northern Ireland. All three have been involved with Sense for some time, so the building has been carefully designed to meet their particular needs and aspirations. It's their home – and the staff are strongly committed to providing the support that each person needs to live as they choose.

Steven had wanted to live more independently for some time and his new room will give him the space to spread his wings, including playing his much-cherished keyboard. "I have got a lot more space, a lot more independence and choice," he says. "All the staff here are very nice and I am able to be myself, have my own car and buy my own shopping. It feels like my home."

**"It's their home – and the staff are strongly committed to providing the support that each person needs to live as they choose."**

Mark is also delighted to have found a home that is right for him at last. After a motorcycle accident left him severely disabled 15 years ago, he struggled to find a living arrangement as no other service was willing to provide the extra level of support he needs. "It was important that I moved to Holly House," he says, "so I could go out more, including doing my own shopping and making my own meals with support. I like having my own spacious ensuite bedroom and I like living here as everyone is nice."

Tanvi is the youngest to make the move to Holly House – and has her own specially adapted flat with a modern bright bedroom, ensuite bathroom and kitchen and her own section of garden where she can get out and explore nature. "Sense and Encircle Housing Association have worked extremely well to adapt the house to the needs of our daughter," says her mum, "and to make the house as comfortable as possible for her complex needs. Sense continues to work in partnership with us to help support our daughter and is always willing to try anything that helps to keep her happy and comfortable."



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

We know that one in two disabled people feel lonely every day. Sense is responding to this challenge by helping people to build their confidence, access new environments and create a sense of connection within their local community.

#### Key achievements

- We have grown our **Sense Buddying** service which now offers young people in four London boroughs the chance to spend one-to-one quality time with a carefully matched volunteer from their local community.
  - Pairs of buddies spent a phenomenal 5,195 hours together having fun, visiting places and sharing hobbies.
  - 77 children and young people have taken part in our projects, and we have recruited, trained and supported 78 volunteer Sense Buddies.
- **Sense Arts** creates inclusive and enriching experiences for people with complex disabilities, with a focus on performance, music and visual arts.
  - We delivered 1,933 arts and wellbeing workshops to 322 people and curated 10 visual arts exhibitions.
  - 1,678 audience members were welcomed to over 26 public performances and events at our innovative centre, Sense TouchBase Pears in Birmingham.
- In August 2019, **Sense Sport** was awarded a £1.3 million grant from Sport England for a three-year project. This has allowed us to expand our sport and physical activity programme to other regions, as well as further influencing and equipping the sports and health sectors to create more sustainable, lifelong opportunities for disabled people to be active.
  - We have delivered over 1,000 sessions in a variety of sports and activities – from cycling and gymnastics to Tai Chi.
  - 2,090 disabled people attended our physical activities and 80 coaches and support staff were upskilled to deliver and facilitate physical activities through six training courses and three innovative pilot projects.



## Meet Andrew

Andrew always loved football but was never encouraged to play. “People have said that I’m disabled and I can’t do anything,” he says. “They laughed at me and I got bullied.”

Not taking exercise wasn’t good for his physical health or his confidence – and when the Sense Sport team set up football sessions in his local area, he was initially reluctant to join. At first, he tried a few simple games, and took breaks when he needed to, but gradually really got into it. His coach noticed this and slowly made the games more intense – and Andrew’s passion just grew.

Not only had Andrew found an activity he liked, his whole lifestyle changed. “I have been eating healthier foods like lettuce and that,” he says. “I stopped eating biscuits and did a 12-week healthy eating class.”

**“Keep active and don’t let your disability put you down. We need to be treated like equal people.”**

As his confidence grew, Andrew started taking more of a leadership role, helping the coach with the sessions booked that day with a number of different organisations. He was finding fitness, purpose and confidence all under one roof.

“I tell other people it’s ok to be disabled,” he says. “Keep active and don’t let your disability put you down. We need to be treated like equal people: I like being who I am.”



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

We are working hard to make sure no one, no matter how complex their disabilities, is isolated, left out or unable to fulfil their potential. But we recognise that we cannot achieve this on our own. It needs society as a whole to know and understand what stops people taking part in life.

We want everyone – people who are deafblind, people with complex disabilities, families, friends, neighbours, employers, colleagues, volunteers, politicians and policy makers – to understand the challenges faced by those of us living with complex disabilities, and be inspired to do something about it. Put simply, we need more people with passion to get behind our vision.

We seek to highlight the vital support Sense provides and provide a platform for those of us who are deafblind or living with complex disabilities to be heard on the matters that are important to us.

### Key achievements

- Our **Policy Team** successfully campaigned for a more joined up approach to the development of policy for disabled people. This led to the establishment of a new Disability Unit based in the Cabinet Office charged with developing a cross-government Disability Policy. We also briefed parliamentarians on diverse issues, including welfare benefits, children's social care and health inequalities.
- **Sense Information and Advice** responded to nearly 3,800 enquiries, providing vital specialist information, guidance and signposting to individuals, families, carers and the professionals who work with them.
- We delivered '**Sense Sign School**', a digital engagement campaign which encourages the public to learn sign language and join the Sense cause. Almost 50k people signed up to the campaign. The online video has been viewed over a million times and the press launch reached 12 million people.
- A '**BBC Lifeline Appeal**' programme highlighted the work of Sense, hosted by our ambassador, Rebecca Front. Over 5 million people saw the broadcast, which focussed on the support we provide to children, and it raised over £20k.
- With Sense's Chief Executive, Richard Kramer, as Vice-Chair, Sense is a leading member of the **Disabled Children's Partnership** (DCP). Working in collaboration with other children and family organisations, we have delivered a series of high-profile campaigns to raise awareness of the needs of disabled children and their families.
- **Sense International's 'Chance To Shine' appeal** was delivered to raise funds for our work in Kenya – match funded by the UK government through UK Aid Match. Publicity for the appeal included partnering up with three influential bloggers with an interest in disability and humanitarian issues.

## Say hello to Sense

One of the barriers that people who are deafblind and have other complex disabilities often face is that politicians and policymakers have never met anyone with their particular needs. In Sense's experience, the most powerful way to address this is for politicians to meet, spend time with and chat to someone who has sensory impairments.

**“The most powerful way to address this is for politicians to meet, spend time with and chat to someone who has sensory impairments.”**

In February, Sense's Policy and Campaigns team hosted a 'Say Hello To Sense' event in the House of Commons where MPs and Peers had the opportunity to meet Catherine, Tony, Maria and Daniel, who all have sensory impairments.



“It was a fantastic day and I thoroughly enjoyed interacting with everyone,” said Catherine, pictured here with Lisa Cameron MP. “I felt confident and passionate about showcasing the work of Sense and the importance of matching deafblind people's varying communication needs.

“Overall, I had a fabulous time mixing with the MPs and Peers from the House of Lords, notably Baroness Tanni Grey-Thompson who has won several gold and silver Paralympic medals. She inspired me to demonstrate my belief in the importance of BSL\* hands-on signing and encouraged me to continue promoting more awareness of this type of communication.”

\*British Sign Language



# A big thank you to our support network

Our fantastic supporters are vital to the work of Sense. Without their continued generosity, we wouldn't be able to deliver the services that provide support and advice to people who have complex disabilities, give them the confidence to develop their talents and offer vital backing to families.

From volunteering to being an active Sense member, part of a branch, taking part in a fundraising event or making a donation, we are hugely grateful for our supporters' incredible generosity – and are amazed at the extraordinary lengths they go to in order to support Sense's vital work. We just couldn't do what we do without their kindness, commitment and passion.

## Volunteering

We were supported by more than 1,800 volunteers across 2019/20, with people giving their time to support us in a variety of roles across England, Wales and Northern Ireland.

Many volunteers raise crucial funds by working in Sense shops and through community fundraising activities. By doing so, they support our engagement activities in local communities, build relationships and increase awareness of the work that Sense does and the difference we make.

Quite simply, much of our work wouldn't be possible without our volunteers. We are hugely grateful to every individual who gives their time, skills, experience, energy and enthusiasm to make a difference. Thank you!



## Members and branches

We have almost 4,900 Sense members who receive our magazine, *Talking Sense*, which is published three times a year. Many Sense members are actively involved in our work, sharing their stories, campaigning, volunteering and fundraising.

There are nine branch groups across the country that enable people with an interest in deafblindness and associated disabilities to learn from and support each other, and to campaign for local services. The branches operate independently of Sense, with each branch linking directly to the Sense service team in their area. The Chief Executive is in regular contact with the branches to seek their feedback and support for delivering our strategy: 'No one left out of life'.

## Fundraising

Income from fundraising is incredibly important to us, as it is the only way we are able to run many of our services.

Our focus is on building long-term relationships with our supporters and partners. In this way we can value the total contribution of every individual, group or organisation to achieve the best possible outcome for the people Sense works with and supports.



## Key achievements

- Our fantastic supporters helped us to raise over £10 million for the work of Sense and Sense International, and we want to thank each and every one of them for their generosity.
- We engaged with more than 744 groups, companies and individuals to raise funds and awareness in local communities across the country.
- Over 750 runners, walkers and cyclists took on a challenge for Sense, raising over £1 million! This included hundreds of runners who took to the streets of London for the Virgin Money London Marathon in April 2019, raising over £860,000. (Sadly, this critical fundraising event did not take place in the current year.)
- We launched the first ever Sense virtual event, Run 53, in February 2020. This pilot event signed up 55 people and had great feedback from our supporters – so we are looking forward to improving and running many more virtual events in the coming year.
- To celebrate Deafblind Awareness Week in June 2019, we put on our biggest series of Sense Walks, where disabled and non-disabled people walked together to raise funds and awareness of our work.
- In April 2019, we launched ‘Moments and Memories’, which gives supporters who have lost a loved one the chance to donate in their memory to Sense. We are hugely grateful to all those who donate in memory of a loved one at what must be a very difficult time.
- We raised £2.68 million from 165 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 raised £3.7 million from supporters who made a regular donation to Sense.
- Over 13,000 people played the Sense Raffle and raised over £240,000 – vital funds that will ensure we can continue to provide help and support for those who rely on us.
- Our 2019 Christmas Appeal featured the stories of two children who have been supported by Sense Children’s Services. The smiles of Luca and Elliot certainly spread some Christmas joy among our supporters, who donated an astonishing £516,878.
- Our trusts and statutory grant donors have also supported some truly innovative work over the past year (they are listed on page 84).

## A heartfelt thanks to Mr Stuart Willison



We are very grateful to Stuart Willison whose generous legacy gift will support Sense Centre Streatley in Luton.

When he was sixteen Stuart lost an eye in a shooting accident, which meant, says his niece Mrs Doreen Anthony, that he always felt compassion for those without sight – and so understood the importance of Sense’s work. He wanted to make sure that his donation would have a lasting impact on his local community.

**“His donation will mean that the centre will be able to build a new accessible training kitchen.”**

His donation will mean that the centre will be able to build a new accessible training kitchen where the people we support can gain invaluable life skills and greater independence. Everyone will be able to enjoy a rich, sensory cooking experience, have fun and learn essential

skills that they will be able to carry forward to the next stage of their lives.

“We are truly grateful to Mr Willison who gave so generously to Sense,” says Sue Larnier-Peet, Vice Principal, Safeguarding, Behaviour and Learner Wellbeing. “This wonderful gift means we can adapt the way we provide specialist support and care for people who are deafblind or living with complex disabilities.

“We look forward to welcoming Doreen and family members to visit and see how Stuart’s gift will help the people we support. On behalf of the entire Sense community, we would like to extend our deepest sympathies to Doreen and Mr Willison’s loved ones. The impact of his gift will be felt by so many and we are forever grateful.”



## Trading

It has been another challenging year on the high street but Sense Trading has continued to aim high. In our 115 Sense Shops, our managers and 1,200 brilliant volunteers have found innovative ways to raise vital funds, build links with their local communities and spread the word about Sense.

### Key achievements

- We have grown the number of shops to 115.
- Our first two shops opened in Wales/Cymru in Llandudno and Rhyl.
- We generated £200,000 income for the Sense International campaign 'Chance to Shine'.
- Our reach and support in local communities continued to grow through our in-store 'Fun Weeks', which raised over £100,000 across the year.



## Our commitment to our supporters and fundraising responsibly

We are committed to best practice in fundraising and marketing. We are members of the Institute of Fundraising, the Direct Marketing Association and registered with the Fundraising Regulator.

Our commitments to you are:

- To communicate in the way that is best for you so if you want to change how we contact you, how often we get in touch, or to stop hearing from Sense, please let us know.
- If you are registered with the Telephone Preference Service or the Mail Preference Service, we will not call or mail you without your express permission.
- We will closely monitor all the agencies who work on our behalf to ensure that they meet our high standards.
- We will not sell or share your personal information with anyone (unless there is some legal requirement to do so).
- We will follow the Code of Fundraising Practice set out by the Fundraising Regulator.
- We follow a clear complaints policy and value your feedback.

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

## We are also committed to fundraise responsibly

Our fundraising is carried out in line with our Sense values, which means that honesty and transparency are central to everything we do.

Maintaining the trust of our supporters is critical. We comply with all legislative and regulatory requirements and ensure that our policies, guidelines and processes are reviewed and updated regularly. We have guidelines in place for fundraising from vulnerable people and we never put pressure on anyone to donate.

In 2019/20 we worked with four professional fundraisers and one commercial participator to support our fundraising. Suppliers and those fundraising on our behalf are closely monitored through regular meetings, and in the event that contracts are not adhered to, then they are brought to an end.

We don't always get it right and last year our Sense Supporter Services Team received 40 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.

No complaints were made to the Fundraising Regulator about Sense during this period. From 1 April 2019 to 31 March 2020 Sense received 57 requests from the general public through the Fundraising Preference Service asking us not to send fundraising communications to them.

## Our people

Our staff are passionate about the people we support and often make personal sacrifices to provide continuity of care, or to keep a shop open as long as possible. We are proud of everything our staff have done to support Sense in these most challenging times.

### Key achievements this year

- **Recruiting the right people** – We have focussed on reducing the time it takes to recruit new staff. Our time to hire stands at 35 days against a target of 31. We have reviewed our approach to onboarding to reduce the number of days that it takes to recruit.
- **An engaged workforce** – We carried out a full staff survey to measure the engagement levels of our staff. 75 % of our staff would recommend Sense as a good place to work. That is a 5 % increase since our last survey and 7 % better than our peers scored. 88 % of our staff understood our new strategy – a 22 % increase since our last survey and 18 % above the benchmark.
- **Retaining good people** – Retaining our talented and committed workforce is a critical factor in Sense's success. In 2019/20, 21 % of new staff left in their first year. This is a significant achievement given that the sector average for first year turnover is 35 %.
- **Listening to our staff** – We have increased the numbers of staff who are members of our Staff Forum. Members of the Staff Forum report that their meetings are more engaging and that it is easier to seek the views of other staff across Sense.

### Equality and diversity

Sense is committed to equality of opportunity, and to promoting and celebrating the diversity of staff, volunteers and the people we work with. Everyone's contribution is valued and we ensure that everybody is given the opportunity to realise their potential.

We use the Equality & Human Rights Commission's nine protected characteristics to focus our ongoing equality and diversity work. The Equality and Diversity Group is taking an active role in progressing our equality and diversity agenda, making sure that it is embedded into all policies and day-to-day activities across Sense.

We welcome applications for posts from talented people from all sections of the community who share our values and the belief that no one, no matter how complex their disabilities, should be isolated, left out or unable to fulfil their potential.

We are a Disability Confident Employer, which means that we will interview all disabled applicants who meet the minimum essential criteria for a job vacancy.

There is a network for disabled staff and we ensure that all staff, including those who become disabled during their employment, are able to learn and progress.

### Senior management pay

Sense is a complex organisation that provides a unique range of services in England, Wales and Northern Ireland. We are engaged in activities that range from hands-on care service provision to campaigning, fundraising and retail operations through our shops. 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 they receive are in line with other employees and pay is externally benchmarked in a similar way.





“We are proud of everything our staff have done to support Sense in these most challenging times.”

# The governance of Sense, The National Deafblind and Rubella Association

During 2019/20 and up to the adoption of the annual report and financial statements by Council there have been 16 Trustees, some of whom were in office for only 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.

Trustees can either be co-opted to Council or elected at the Annual General Meeting (AGM) and, except in what Council deems to be exceptional circumstances, serve two terms of four years. Those co-opted can be reappointed annually up to a maximum of eight years.

Council meets four times a year and Trustees are expected to attend all Council meetings.

## Sub-committees

Four sub-committees support the Council in its work: Finance and Audit, Remuneration, Nominations and the Engagement sub-committee. Each sub-committee has written Terms of Reference, which are reviewed as necessary and included in the Governance Handbook. This is a comprehensive document that is regularly reviewed. Changes were last agreed by Council in June 2020. 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 to support the charity's strategic objectives.
- Monitor and review the effectiveness of Sense's internal and external auditing procedures and outcomes.

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. One co-opted member, Simon Jones, was formally appointed as a Trustee in December 2019. 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, they 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 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 bring attention to 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 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

Council delegates day-to-day operational management to the Chief Executive. The broad responsibilities 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 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, Treasurer and other Trustees; the Trustee induction process; the Trustee Code of Conduct; the Trustee conflict of interest policy; and Council's agenda cycle.

## The Charity Governance Code

The Code 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.  
Council will consider what form of review is necessary this year.
- Principle 6: Explaining the Board's approach to diversity.  
Council has agreed that: "We are committed to having a diverse board and we have a reasonable balance across various areas including gender, age, involvement of people with complex disabilities, parents and people from various professional backgrounds. We will continue to work to achieve greater diversity."

## Stakeholder statements

### Employee stakeholder engagement statement

Trustees take a keen interest in issues relating to Sense's employees, who contribute to the success of the organisation and our strategy. Council receives reports with a people dashboard at every meeting. There are more details in the Section 172 Statement on page 44 and in the section on 'Our people' on page 24.

### Other stakeholder engagement statement

As noted in the Section 172 Statement on page 44, our key stakeholders are the people we support, their families and carers. Our Trustees include individuals with a lived experience of our cause, including family members and disabled people. This means that the interests of the people who Sense support are at the heart of decisions taken by Council.

Our supporters and volunteers are also key stakeholders. A Supporter Engagement Strategy has been agreed by Council and progress is regularly monitored. A new Council sub-committee focussing on supporter engagement has also been set up to assist with this work. A Volunteer Strategy was developed this year.

Sense has nine branches in different parts of the country that involve families or individuals with complex disabilities. The Chief Executive meets them quarterly and reports back to Council.

The Council has not discussed any issues relating to particular suppliers this year.

## 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 are: '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'. These are similar to the objects of Sense International.

**Sense International** is a registered charity (charity number: 1076497), a company limited by guarantee (company number: 03742986) and governed by its own Memorandum and Articles of Association. It works on a global basis, supporting 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 other 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. The 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.

**Coventry Society for the Blind** was a dormant charitable company (previous company number: 02280756) that was dissolved on 14 April 2019. It was removed from the Register of Charities on 8 January 2020 (previous charity number: 700656).

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



# Sense Group Trustees and senior staff

## Council members from 1 April 2019 to the present

### Sense

Dr Justin Molloy (Chair) (R)

Gillian Wood (Vice-Chair and Chair of the Nominations Committee) (F&A, R)  
(Chair of Governors, Sense College, from September 2019 to June 2020)

Nicholas Keegan (Treasurer and Chair of the Finance and Audit Committee, stood down  
December 2019)

Andrew Pearson (Treasurer and Chair of the Finance and Audit Committee, appointed December  
2019) (R, E)

Natalie Assad

George Aivazoglou (Chair of the Engagement sub-committee, appointed December 2019)

Ashling Barvé

Graham Callister

Mark Cammies (F&A, E)

Simon Jones (appointed as a Trustee December 2019) (Chair of Governors, Sense College, from  
September 2020)

Mythily Katsaris (F&A)

Benedict Leigh

Desmond Lucy (N)

David Reeves (Chair of Governors, Sense College, until September 2019) (Stood down December  
2019)

Brian Symington (co-opted from Sense Northern Ireland)

Susan Turner (also a Trustee of Sense International) (Stood down as a Trustee of Sense in  
December 2019)

### Key

E – Engagement sub-committee

F&A – Finance and Audit sub-committee

N – Nominations sub-committee

R – Remuneration sub-committee

During this year there were five female and eleven male Trustees/Directors.

### Sense International

Sunil Sheth (Chairman)

Pankaj Shah (Treasurer until September 2019 when he stood down)

Robin Heber-Percy (stood down in September 2019)

Dean Lumer  
Verity Stiff  
Susan Turner  
Richard Cooper  
Nicholas Corby  
Maria Arce Moreira  
Sunil Shah (Treasurer from September 2019)  
Lauren Watters (appointed September 2019)  
Rex Shah (appointed September 2019)  
Lucy Roberts (appointed September 2019)  
During the year there were six female and seven 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

**Jonathan Monk** Director of Operational Programmes (appointed November 2019)

**Tony Colson** Director of ICT (appointed November 2019)

In the year there were four 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 2020



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



# Sense performance against objectives for 2019/20

Our key achievements against each of our strategic outcomes are given in the Trustees' Report together with case studies illustrating the impact we have achieved during the year. Please see pages 9–20 for a fuller picture.

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, Sense has adapted quickly and developed creative and innovative ways to provide our services and continue to be there for people living with complex disabilities during lockdown.

## Strategic outcome 1 – Children and families get the best possible start

**Key objective: Giving families the right support, at the right time, to strengthen and support them**

Last year, we delivered individualised packages of specialist support to 179 families and supported 1,347 families through 58 family events and 210 pre-school group sessions across the country. Working in partnership with multi-disciplinary health teams, we supported 120 children and young people attending specialist health clinics.

Sixty-five children enjoyed a Sense Holiday or Sense Short Break, benefitting both them and their families. And there was an exciting activity weekend for siblings.

In response to the COVID-19 lockdown, we adapted our services, and found new ways to continue to support and keep in touch with families both online and offline.

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

**Key objective: Supporting adults to develop skills, confidence and independence to get the most out of life**

We opened seven new supported living services, including our first supported living services in Northern Ireland and Wales. In total we supported 305 individuals in our residential and supported living services. A total of 336 people benefitted from our Sense Day Opportunities and we established a thriving programme of inclusive events, crafts and performances and opened a dedicated arts space at Sense TouchBase Pears.

In January 2020, we opened an eighth Sense College site in Bedford to meet continuing demand for our specialist education provision. We launched a new curriculum in September 2019 and, in total, 177 young people aged 16–25 years followed one of our education programmes. In response to COVID-19 we launched a Home Learning Programme in March to support the ongoing learning of our students.

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

**Key objective: Helping people to build confidence, access new environments and create a sense of connection with their local community to find a route out of loneliness**

Sense Buddying across London has enabled 77 children and young people to spend one-to-one

quality time with a carefully matched volunteer from their local community, who is trained and supported by Sense. The service was adapted during the COVID-19 lockdown so that Sense Buddies could continue to connect with each other online.

We delivered 1,933 Sense Arts and Wellbeing workshops to 322 people and curated 10 visual arts exhibitions. There were more than 26 public performances and events at Sense TouchBase Pears.

An award of £1.3 million from Sport England means we have been able to expand the number of people Sense Sport is reaching through our 'Active Together' programme for people with complex disabilities in South East and South West England, Yorkshire, London and the West Midlands. We delivered over 1,000 sessions in a variety of sports and activities, attended by over 2,000 disabled people, and trained 80 coaches and support staff so that they can provide activities that are accessible to people with complex disabilities.

Over the year we worked in partnership with over 70 organisations, which will lead to improved local provision and to strategic changes in the sports and health sector. In response to COVID-19 we moved our buddying service and our arts, sport and physical activity programmes online.

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

**Key objective: Help society as a whole know and understand the experience of the people we support and inspire everyone to do something about it**

We significantly extended the reach of our awareness raising activity during the year. In November, a 'BBC Lifeline Appeal' programme hosted by our ambassador, the actress Rebecca Front, highlighted the work of Sense in supporting children and their families. It was seen by over five million people and raised over £20,000. We developed an innovative digital engagement campaign – 'Sense Sign School' – encouraging the public to learn sign language and join the Sense cause. It launched during lockdown, with almost 50,000 people signing up, the online video being viewed over a million times and the press launch reaching 12 million people.

Our public policy and campaigning activities led to the launch of the new Disability Unit in the Cabinet Office, which we had been calling for. We delivered a series of campaigns throughout the year with the Disabled Children's Partnership, highlighting the funding gap in disabled children's services, and more recently the pressures on families during the pandemic.

### Sense objectives for 2020/21

We will continue to pursue the Strategic Outcomes of our strategy for 2019/22, 'No one left out of life'.

- Children and families get the best possible start.
- Adults are supported to live and learn at every stage of their lives.
- Individuals are less lonely and more connected with their communities.
- Society has increased awareness of the impact of our work and is inspired to take action.



# Sense International performance against objectives for 2019/20

Sense International is a global charity supporting people with deafblindness in Bangladesh, India, Kenya, Nepal, Tanzania, Peru, Romania 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 that 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.

## The impact of COVID-19

The COVID-19 pandemic began to disrupt our activities in some countries in February 2020 and by March all country teams had to cancel or postpone events, stop advocacy meetings and home visits to children with deafblindness, and re-think, re-plan and re-budget.

Sense International swiftly introduced and advised all staff of safety precautions, mobilised staff and partners to contact people with information on how to stay safe, promoted accessible information and worked to get food parcels and hygiene equipment to families and tried to connect them to local support schemes.

## Strategic objectives

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

This has been another successful year for Sense International, with strong progress being made across all work themes and countries.

### 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.

#### Vision and hearing screening and early intervention

The sooner a 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 early screening can make a huge difference. We train health workers and enable parents to understand and communicate with their child and work with them at home to boost their child's progress.

#### Key achievements

- **India:** 3,596 babies were screened for vision and hearing impairment and 573 young children are benefitting from our early intervention services.

- **Tanzania:** Over 8,400 children were screened for vision and hearing impairments at four early intervention units based in government health centres.
- **Uganda:** 19,627 children have been screened and 157 are receiving therapy services at the facility or at home.

### **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.

This may be home-based, centre-based or in a mainstream school where a child receives support from a learning support assistant.

### **Key achievements**

- **Bangladesh:** We worked with ten partner organisations across the country to provide education and livelihood support to 804 children and young adults. In total, 171 children with deafblindness received education in a mainstream school near their home.
- **Peru:** 249 teachers and professionals from a range of settings received training about topics, including dual-sensory impairment, adapting the curriculum, lesson planning and adoption of best practice.
- **Uganda:** We completed the Inclusive Education Project funded by Porticus. During this two-year project, 200 children were supported to learn at home using the community-based education curriculum and 193 teachers were upskilled to support students with deafblindness.

### **Vocational training and livelihoods**

Young people with deafblindness want to be as independent as possible, learning vocational skills and earning a living or contributing 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 business. We provide links to advisers and local business support schemes.

### **Key achievements**

- **Kenya:** Through the 'InBusiness' project 12 micro-entrepreneurs and their families were trained and linked to an adviser and lead business partner.
- **Romania:** We worked with 25 vocational skills teachers to explore how digital technology can best support their students.

## **Strategic objective 2: Improved knowledge and understanding of deafblindness**

We want to understand more about the challenges facing people with deafblindness and the effectiveness of our interventions. Research provides 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**

- **Kenya:** Research in Nairobi County showed that many government programmes aiming to increase employment levels among youth with disabilities are ineffective – and that young

women with disabilities are doubly discriminated against, because of their gender.

- **Tanzania:** Research demonstrated to the government of Tanzania that our Teaching Assistant model is effective – and made recommendations for increased support from the government.
- **Uganda:** Research into the cost of a family caring for a child with deafblindness/multi-sensory impairment demonstrated that it is more expensive for many reasons, including the costs of specialised medical and educational support and unemployment.

### Strategic objective 3: Voice of people with deafblindness is heard

We support people with deafblindness to speak out about the challenges they face and the changes they want to see through training, networking and providing opportunities to meet with decision-makers. We also support groups of parents of children with deafblindness.

#### Key achievements

- **Bangladesh:** As a result of local level advocacy meetings, people with deafblindness in Bogura District have been issued with disability identity cards and included in social services' interest-free loan schemes.
- **Nepal:** We provided training for the Board of the Deafblind Association of Nepal and supported the establishment of networks of people with deafblindness and their parents in Morang and Rupandehi.
- **Peru:** We supported the establishment of a new association of persons with deafblindness.

### Strategic objective 4: Rights are recognised and realised

We advocate for change based on the UN Convention of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, and other UN Conventions such as the Convention on the Rights of the Child. We raise awareness among people with deafblindness, their families, communities and governments that everyone has rights to health care, education, decent work, social protection, inclusion and participation.

#### Key achievements

- **India:** We worked with the Census Office on identification of persons with deafblindness as well as data requests. Positive outcomes included that the Commissioner in Delhi State addressed the need for certification of people with deafblindness and for special educators.
- **Nepal:** We met with Ministries and local government and prepared a draft definition of deafblindness in the Nepali language.
- **Romania:** We gave input to the new national Strategy for People with Disabilities 2021/27 led by the National Authority for People with Disabilities.
- **Uganda:** After years of advocacy by SI Uganda, the Government of Uganda finally began vaccinating children against rubella, which is a major cause of deafblindness. The Ministry of Health reached 18,770,706 children, representing pretty much all those in the target age group.

# Statement of 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 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 (2015);
- 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 the case of each Director in office at the date the Trustees' Report is approved, that:

- (a) so far as the Trustee is aware, there is no relevant audit information of which the company's auditors are unaware; and
- (b) 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.



## 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 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.

## Internal financial control

The Council has overall responsibility for ensuring that the charity has appropriate systems of controls, 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 three-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.
- Crowe UK continues to be our internal auditor. Their annual programme is agreed by the Finance and Audit sub-committee, and the outcomes of the audits are reported to the sub-committee 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.

## 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, and for reporting on this to the Finance and Audit sub-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 its 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 corporate risk register at each of its quarterly meetings.

The table shows the key areas of risk that featured on the corporate risk register considered by Council in June 2020. Brexit and the defined benefit pension scheme were on the risk register throughout 2019/20.

<b>COVID-19</b>	We need to respond to the pandemic, which has impacted on every element of Sense.	Established a COVID-19 Group to oversee our work and lead on strategy; clear and consistent leadership; regular review of cashflows and budgets, regular review of operational areas across the charity; establishment of a Finance Group to control all discretionary spending decisions; implemented a communication programme; review of health and safety and HR policies and procedures; scenario planning on strategy and priorities; set up an emergency appeal; strengthened controls around expenditure and cash flow forecasting.  All these areas are ongoing and subject to change. We respond to all eventualities and scenarios; take the organisation with us on key areas; and develop a strategy for the next period.
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<p><b>Brexit – especially a disorderly no deal Brexit</b></p>	<p>Possible disruption to the supply of medicines in the event of a no deal Brexit. Brexit is likely to lead to difficulties in recruitment as freedom of movement within the EU ends, reducing the pool of available applicants. It may also result in existing staff deciding to relocate and could impact on the availability of supplies. Any consequent depreciation of the pound would effectively reduce the value of funding for Sense International and push up import prices. Any consequent recession could lead to further government spending cuts.</p>	<p>Management keep up to date with developments.</p> <p>Potential impact on recruitment and retention is closely monitored.</p> <p>Sense International are keeping funds in Euros and in operating currencies.</p>
<p><b>Defined benefit pension liability</b></p>	<p>The pensions liability increases to a level that the charity cannot fund in the longer term.</p>	<p>Membership to active members was closed in 2014 and a deficit reduction plan has been put in place, which fixes annual cash payments for the next three years.</p> <p>The liability is continually reviewed. Sense has the opportunity to crystallise the cessation value if the deficit drivers – discount rates, investment returns and mortality – improve in its favour.</p>

The Sense International risk register is considered by the Sense International Board at each of its meetings. The risk that Sense International’s fundraising team in the UK and the in-country teams fail to reach targets has been deemed a significant risk throughout 2019 and 2020. It is mitigated by the adoption of a realistic fundraising strategy, by a focussed team of fundraisers concentrating on Sense International, and by the close involvement of Trustees in fundraising efforts. However, the fundraising environment both in the UK and in-country has become more difficult as a result of the pandemic.

More detail on the risks identified by Sense International can be found in their Annual Report and Accounts.

## Section 172 Statement

This is the first Section 172 Statement to be made by Sense. We have set out how the Trustees have carried out their duties in relation to Section 172 (of the Companies Act 2006) where they are of strategic relevance.

As noted elsewhere in this strategic report, 2019/20 was the first year of our new three-year strategy, 'No one left out of life'. This was adopted in March 2019 after substantial consultation with staff, stakeholders and discussion with Trustees, both at away days and with a nominated group of Trustees, before it was formally approved by Council. The Council receives reports on progress of the strategy at every meeting.

### The likely consequence of any decision in the long-term

Both our Council of Trustees and the Executive Team are responsible for the success and long-term future of Sense, a responsibility which underlies all others. This statement shows how the duties of Section 172 of the Companies Act 2006, which have particular relevance to Sense over the period of this annual report, have been exercised by the Trustees/Directors.

### Interests of employees

The Trustees' Report includes an important section on 'Our people' on page 26, which, among other things, sets out our achievements for last year and our goals for 2020/21.

Sense carried out a staff survey in 2019, which was discussed by our Trustees.

There were many positive results, e.g. 86 % felt proud to work for Sense, 88 % understood the new strategy, 86 % felt that Sense services are high quality and safe, 95 % were clear about their whistleblowing responsibilities.

A People Dashboard is considered at every Council meeting. This contains key indicators on Recruitment, Retention, Reward and Recognition. It also monitors our approach on equality and diversity, staff wellbeing and our pay and benefits offer, and makes recommendations.

### Relationships with other stakeholders

Our key stakeholders are the children and adults we support in our services and their families and carers (more information is given in the Trustees' Report). Relationships with individuals and families are central to our work, whether people live in a residential or supported living service, attend our college or a day opportunity, have a buddy through Sense, go on a Sense Holiday or Short Break, or take part in sport or arts activities. Sense staff work closely with them to provide the best support necessary to help that person achieve a fulfilling life.

COVID-19 has impacted on all these activities. We have updated Trustees regularly about how we have kept people safe in our services and how we have reconfigured our services, including providing virtual support to children, adults and families.

Sense has nine branches which involve families and people with complex disabilities. The Chief Executive held four meetings with branches in 2019/20 with two additional meetings in April and May 2020 to discuss the COVID-19 crisis. Sense has disabled people and family members on its Board of Trustees. This ensures that the interests of the people who Sense supports are at the heart of our decision-making.

Other key stakeholders are our supporters and volunteers. The Council took a decision in March 2019 that we would move away from a traditional fundraising approach to one which embraces supporter engagement at its core. We want to encourage people to interact with Sense more often and for longer and to support us in different ways. This was developed over 2019/20 and Trustees have continued to monitor the success of this strategy. In March 2020, the Council agreed to a new Engagement sub-committee, to assist with and monitor progress with the strategy.

As decisions about suppliers are delegated to the Executive Team, these were not considered by Council during this year.

## **Impact of Sense's operations on the community and the environment**

The impact of Sense's operations on the community we support is positive. In agreeing our priorities in the 2019/22 strategy, Trustees were clear that Sense should continue to campaign for better rights and services for disabled people, in conjunction with other charities.

Our 115 retail shops work closely with the local communities in which they are located. We talk to community groups about Sense and run 'fun weeks' during the year. This is reported to Council through the Finance and Audit committee.

Sense TouchBase Pears in Birmingham is a multi-purpose building that provides support and services for disabled people in the heart of the local community. We run community events, arts and wellbeing sessions and a library, café and conferences and events from the building.

Sense does not undertake any activities that would cause environmental damage. Sense is aware of the need to keep our use of utilities and CO<sub>2</sub> emissions to a minimum. Sense's Environmental Policy will be reviewed in 2021.

Please also see our Streamlined Energy and Carbon Report on page 46.

## **Maintaining a reputation for high standards of business conduct**

Our good reputation is fundamental to the success of the organisation. Our Quality and Safeguarding Boards have an external Chair and some specialist external members. The Chair formally reports to Council annually on its activities and the progress of Sense's work on quality, and how Sense's services provide good standards of care. We have clear safeguarding processes and ensure that training is of a high standard.

We also maintain high standards in terms of general business practice. Sense Finance and Audit committee (which reports to Council) approves an annual internal audit programme, receives reports of all audits and monitors subsequent action plans.

The Council receives a Compliance Report at every meeting, which includes a summary of any regulatory issues, progress with Company confirmation statements, annual returns, Health & Safety incidents and policy developments.

## **Act fairly between members of the company**

There were 1,054 company members at the time of the AGM in December 2019.

The meeting is conducted in line with our Articles and members receive the Notice of our Annual General Meeting (AGM) and can appoint proxies to vote on their behalf if they are unable to attend that meeting.

# Streamlined Energy and Carbon Report

The table below gives a summary of our energy usage and greenhouse gas emissions in 2019/20.

## Sense – GHG emissions and energy use data period for 1 April 2019 to 31 March 2020

Energy/activity	Scope – GHG protocol corporate standard	kWh	tCO2e (gross)	% of total
Combustion of natural gas	Scope 1 (Direct emissions)	4,542,355	835.1	29.9
Combustion of oil	Scope 1 (Direct emissions)	103,470	25.5	0.9%
Transport own vehicles (diesel)	Scope 1 (Direct emissions)	2,339,808	572.4	20.5
Transport own vehicles (petrol)	Scope 1 (Direct emissions)	181,256	42.4	1.5
	<b>Scope 1 – Totals</b>	<b>7,166,889</b>	<b>1,475.4</b>	<b>52.8</b>
Electricity	Scope 2 (Energy indirect)	4,128,433	1,055.2	37.8
Transport – employee-owned vehicles business travel	Scope 3 (Other indirect)	1,105,555	263.2	9.4
Totals (Gross)		<b>12,400,877</b>	<b>2,793.8</b>	<b>100</b>
Buildings intensity ratio (kWh/m <sup>2</sup> & tCO <sub>2</sub> /m <sup>2</sup> )		322	<b>0.070</b>	
Transport intensity ratio (kWh/FTE)		2,176	<b>0.527</b>	

## Company information

Sense is a registered charity, no. 289868. Registered as a company limited by guarantee in England & Wales, no. 01825301. Registered office at 101 Pentonville Road, London N1 9LG.

## The reporting period

1 April 2019 to 31 March 2020.

## 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 and 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 and diesel) purchased.
- **Transport (Business mileage employee own vehicles)** – Individual employee expense claim records for business mileages during the reporting period.

In calculating the emissions we have used the UK Government conversion factors for company reporting of greenhouse gas emissions, conversion factors 2019:

<http://www.ukconversionfactorscarbonsmart.co.uk/>

## 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 ratio based on our number of employees (FTE).

## Energy efficiency action

The Executive of Sense has decided that a more strategic approach will be taken with regard to its property portfolio going forward.

As part of this approach and in line with having a strategic asset management plan in place, key performance indicators are being prepared to measure property performance both in building terms, and in how the property performs operationally.

As part of the 'property' KPIs, existing data is being collected on energy usage and presented on a cost/metre<sup>2</sup> basis. This will enable us to highlight our worst performing properties in terms of energy use and give us the ability to direct funding for energy conservation projects on an informed basis.

In parallel to this, the organisation is intending to prepare a Property Environmental and Energy policy, and the Estates business plan indicates this will be completed in early 2021.

Currently opportunities are taken to include energy measures in any refurbishment schemes, and these include the use of LED lighting, improved controls, added insulation and the use of high efficiency boilers.

Recently a business case was prepared for extensive energy works at our Crayford centre (Trading HQ) and works were subsequently completed including improved insulation levels, installation of double glazed uPVC windows, added heating controls, LED lighting and a high efficiency gas boiler. Early indications show an approximate 50% saving in energy use.

As an organisation we are keen to replicate this approach in our other properties to reduce our carbon footprint and energy use, along with the associated revenue savings.

## Assurance and verification

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

# Financial review of Sense, The National Deafblind and Rubella Association 2019/20

## Overview

Group net income was £0.5m (2019: £2.4m) on revenues of £69.9m (2019: £66.9m). The decrease is attributable to a more challenging environment in Trading and increased payroll costs in accommodation, day and community services.

The effects of the COVID-19 pandemic were felt towards the end of the year across all income streams but particularly in Trading following the decision to temporarily close all shops in March 2020. This had a negative impact on Trading income in the last few weeks of the year.

After a loss of £3.8m (2019: gain of £2.3m) reflecting movements in the defined benefit pension scheme liability, net assets fell by £3.3m (2019: increase of £4.7m) to £31.7m.

## Financial highlights

### Group

Income increased by £3.0m to £69.9m (2019: £66.9m), mainly driven by increased accommodation, day services, colleges and community services where revenues rose by £2.9m. The planned increase in supported living accommodation, with 56 additional beds brought on stream during the year, was responsible for most of this improvement.

Fundraised income rose slightly in the year to £10.2m (2019: £9.9m).

Expenditure increased by £4.7m to £69.5m (2019: £64.8m). The costs of delivering services increased by £4.3m to £53.1m (2019: £48.8m). In response to UK-wide difficulties in the recruitment of support workers and after a benchmarking exercise, we improved our hourly pay for staff, over and above the National Living Wage which itself rose by 4.9% in April 2019.

The cost of raising funds reduced slightly, but Trading expenditure increased by £0.4m to £10.8m (2019: £10.4m) reflecting the increase in the National Living Wage from April 2019.

### Sense International

Sense International income increased by £0.6m to £2.5m (2019: £1.9m) with £0.3m generated by fundraising and £0.3m through international programmes. The cost of generating funds was in line with the previous year but expenditure on delivering programmes increased by £0.5m to £2.0m (2019: £1.5m).

### Impact of COVID-19

Because of the lockdown and social distancing measures, we have faced significant disruption across all areas since March 2020. Most day services and colleges have been either fully or partially closed for at least some of this time and we had to reconfigure services and introduce virtual programmes to deliver children services and arts, sports and wellbeing activities. Service commissioners have, in the main, continued to fund our services so reduced activity in our accommodation, day services, colleges and community services has not led to significant reductions in income.



Sense TouchBase Pears has been closed to the public, unable to host conferences and meetings, and the café has been closed. All charity shops were closed from 24 March to 22 June and major UK fundraising events such as the London Marathon have been cancelled.

In contrast, Individual Giving and Legacies have held up well and Sense has been successful in accessing funding from trusts and major donors to support charitable activity during this period. These positives have helped to significantly offset the loss of income from events.

Sense has accessed all the available support from government, particularly the furlough scheme, which has supported our Trading arm while its retail shops were closed. Retail grants, rates reductions and rent holidays have all been secured in order to keep costs down while income was negligible.

Operational services have been able to access additional Government funds to offset the increased costs of PPE and higher staff absence through sickness. Fortunately, our services have seen no cases of COVID-19 although vacancies have been harder to fill because of social restrictions.

Expenditure has been kept under very tight control through a newly formed finance committee, which has driven efficiencies and improvements where possible and appropriate. We have kept a close control of cashflow and reduced discretionary expenditure across the organisation.

Our retail shops reopened on 22 June and sales have been encouraging and have increased every week. We will go ahead with the planned opening of three new shops in Wales over the coming months.

Sense is confident that all areas of activity and service delivery will be preserved and resume when appropriate. While COVID-19 will inevitably have an effect on financial performance in the current year, the measures taken mean that it will not pose a threat to the organisation's long-term financial viability.

## Loughborough College

In July 2020, Sense agreed to purchase the operating assets of the RNIB college in Loughborough (and transfer responsibility for delivery of its Information and Advice Service) for aggregate consideration of £1.525m. Sense will continue to run the facility as a college, which will add approximately £2.5m of annualised revenues. The purchase was funded from existing cash reserves.

This purchase will improve our net income and provides a number of opportunities for further growth.

## Pensions

In addition to current defined contribution or money purchase pension schemes, Sense is a legacy member of the Local Pensions Partnership (LPP), formerly the London Pension Fund Authority (LPFA), a public sector defined benefit pensions scheme and a traditional pension body for local authorities.

Sense closed membership of the scheme to new entrants in 2003. In 2014 the remaining active members agreed to leave the scheme and join the existing defined contribution scheme. This transfer took effect in October 2014 and as a result Sense has no remaining active members in the LPP scheme.

No further service liabilities are being incurred for active members. We continue to discuss options

with LPP to either fix a cessation value and leave the scheme completely or to make continuing payments to reduce the historic deficit. Because of the past and present employees who are 'deferred' members (i.e. no longer active but not yet a pensioner), Sense must account for its share of the assets, liabilities and net deficit of the LPP scheme, as explained in detail in note 11.

The deficit measured under FRS 102 Accounting standards increased by £3.8m during the year driven by the reduction in scheme assets (reflecting COVID-19 impacted stock markets at 31 March 2020) and actuarial changes in liabilities.

## Net movement in funds and fund balances

The Group saw a net decrease in funds of £3.3m in the year (2019: increase of £4.7m), including a £3.8m pension loss (2019: pension gain of £2.3m). The underlying increase in funds before pension liability movements was £0.5m (2019: £2.4m).

Of the Group's closing funds of £31.7m, £28.4m are unrestricted (Sense: £28.2m and Sense International: £0.2m) and £3.3m are restricted (Sense: £2.1m and Sense International: £1.2m).

As last year, we have identified general funds of £10.3m (2019: £10.3m) including £4.4m for the maintenance and improvement of the Group's residential accommodation, and £0.4m has been earmarked for the support of Sense International in 2020/21. Funds have been transferred into designated reserves to support specific investment in future property development (£1.5m), infrastructure investment (£1.0m), Sense TouchBase Pears support (£1.0m) and pension deficit reduction payments (£2.0m).

## Cash flow

Continuing operations absorbed £0.7m (2019: generated an inflow of £4.6m) reflecting a £2.9m increase (2019: £3.4m decrease) in trade debtors and other working capital items. Since April 2020 trade debtors have decreased to £3.3m following focus on maximising cash balances.

Net capital expenditure was £2.9m (2019: £2.0m) and bank loan repayments were £0.5m (2019: £0.5m).

Net cash outflow was £4.3m (2019: £2.2m outflow, including an outflow of £3.9m from divestment of Sense Scotland). Cash and cash equivalents fell from £16.4m to £12.2m including deposits of £4.0m (2019: £2.0m). The term bank loan balance fell to £8.8m (2019: £9.3m).

## Reserves policy

The Trustees review the reserves policy each year. The target level for reserves has been calculated by each member of the Sense Group to suit their individual needs and circumstances.

In each case, the target set will:

- Provide sufficient working capital for budgeted operational commitments.
- Fund responsive action in the event of a significant financial downturn.
- Manage the relocation of the people who use our services in the unlikely event of the closure of the organisation.

In addition, Trustees take account of any risks that might impact on the level of reserves required. They include:

- Time needed to implement an operational response to any significant reductions in income.

- Dependence on and the reliability of individual income streams.
- Robustness of internal reporting and response methods.
- Potential for variation in cash flow forecasts.

Sense has a target of £14.5 million of unrestricted funds. In addition, we have plans to improve many of our services and to assist the people we support to remain in their own homes by making adaptations as necessary.

As at 31 March 2020, general (unrestricted) funds were £28.0m, well above target, restricted funds were £3.3m and endowment funds were £0.4m.

Sense International set a target of holding unrestricted reserves equivalent to six months' expenditure to provide sufficient working capital for budgeted operational commitments and to fund responsive action in the event of a significant financial downturn. At 31 March 2020, restricted reserves totalled £1.2m and unrestricted reserves totalled £0.2m, which was equivalent to only four weeks' expenditure (2019: £0.7m and £0.5m respectively, equivalent to fourteen weeks' expenditure).

In 2019, Sense International adopted a three-year fundraising strategy focussed on raising income, particularly unrestricted income. This is expected to increase unrestricted reserves over the next two years. In addition, restricted reserves at the end of the year were higher than usual as a result of advance project funding. This will reduce the requirement to use unrestricted funds to meet the costs of programme offices over the next two years.

Group designated reserves were £10.0m (2019: £10.3m) reflecting commitments to fund ongoing pension deficit reduction payments, business development projects, and plans to invest in systems to support new and more efficient business models.

## Investment strategy

As at 31 March 2020, almost all investments were held in the form of deposits with major UK banks.

### Investment aims

Cash is invested to minimise the risk of loss while ensuring liquid resources are available to meet future cash needs.

The only non-cash investments held have been donated to Sense and are held until it is viable for them to be sold.

### Risk appetite

We recognise that investments cannot be risk free but we have an appetite only for very low risk investments.

### Ethical investments

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

## Independent auditors

A resolution to reappoint PricewaterhouseCoopers LLP as auditors to the company will be proposed at the AGM.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Molloy', is positioned above the text of the Chair's statement.

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

**Dr Justin Molloy, Chair**

22 September 2020

# Report on the audit of the financial statements

## Independent auditors' report to the members of Sense, The National Deafblind and Rubella Association

### 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 2020 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 and Company balance sheets as at 31 March 2020; the Consolidated statement of financial activities, the Consolidated summary income and expenditure account and the Consolidated cash flow statement for the year ended 31 March 2020; 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 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

We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters in relation to which ISAs (UK) require us to report to you when:

- the Trustees' use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements is not appropriate; or

- the Trustees have not disclosed in the financial statements any identified material uncertainties that may cast significant doubt about the group's and parent charitable company's ability to continue to adopt the going concern basis of accounting for a period of at least twelve months from the date when the financial statements are authorised for issue.

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

## 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 the responsibilities described above and our work undertaken in the course of the audit, ISAs (UK) require us also to report certain opinions and matters as described below.

### **Strategic Report and Trustees' Report**

In our opinion, based on the work undertaken in the course of the audit the information given in the Trustees' Report, 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 Trustees' Annual Report 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 Trustees' Annual Report. 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 responsibilities of the Council of Sense, The National Deafblind and Rubella Association set out on page 40 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.

A further description of our responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements is located on the Financial Reporting Council's website at: [www.frc.org.uk/auditorsresponsibilities](http://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.

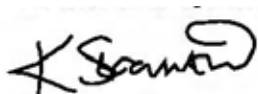
### **Other required reporting**

#### **Companies Act 2006 exception reporting**

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

- we have not received 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.



Kevin Strauther (Senior Statutory Auditor)  
for and on behalf of PricewaterhouseCoopers LLP  
Chartered Accountants and Statutory Auditors, *Birmingham*  
22 September 2020

# Consolidated statement of financial activities for the year ended 31 March 2020

	Note	Unrestricted Funds £000s	Restricted Funds £000s	Endowment Funds £000s	Total 2020 £000s	Total 2019 £000s
<b>Income</b>						
Donations and legacies	1,2	8,271	1,886	-	10,157	9,935
Charitable activities	1,2	47,035	1,474	-	48,509	45,658
Trading		10,635	-	-	10,635	10,753
TouchBase Pears		367	-	-	367	264
Investment income	3	44	2	-	46	43
Other	4	161	-	-	161	229
<b>Total income</b>		<b>66,513</b>	<b>3,362</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>69,875</b>	<b>66,882</b>
<b>Expenditure</b>						
Generating funds	5	4,146	16	-	4,162	4,293
Charitable activities		50,069	3,022	9	53,100	48,797
Trading		10,777	-	-	10,777	10,335
TouchBase Pears		1,213	119	-	1,332	1,300
Other		102	-	-	102	86
<b>Total expenditure</b>		<b>66,307</b>	<b>3,157</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>69,473</b>	<b>64,811</b>
Net gain on sale of tangible fixed assets	7	102	-	-	102	300
<b>Net income/(expense)</b>		<b>308</b>	<b>205</b>	<b>(9)</b>	<b>504</b>	<b>2,371</b>
Transfers between funds	18	(227)	227	-	-	-
<b>Net incoming resources before pension revaluations</b>		<b>81</b>	<b>432</b>	<b>(9)</b>	<b>504</b>	<b>2,371</b>
Actuarial (loss)/gain on defined benefit pension scheme	11	(3,769)	-	-	(3,769)	2,306
<b>Net movements in funds</b>	8	<b>(3,688)</b>	<b>432</b>	<b>(9)</b>	<b>(3,265)</b>	<b>4,677</b>
<b>Reconciliation of movement in funds</b>						
Fund balance brought forward at 1 April		31,707	2,833	387	34,927	42,574
Net (decrease)/increase in funds		(3,688)	432	(9)	(3,265)	4,677
Divestment of Sense Scotland	6	-	-	-	-	(12,324)
<b>Fund balances carried forward at 31 March</b>	18,19	<b>28,020</b>	<b>3,265</b>	<b>378</b>	<b>31,663</b>	<b>34,927</b>

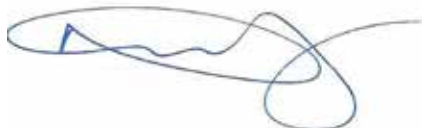
The net income of unrestricted funds is analysed between the general fund, designated funds and pension deficit in note 18.



## Consolidated balance sheet – as at 31 March 2020

	Notes	31 March 2020 £000s	31 March 2019 £000s
<b>Fixed assets</b>			
Tangible assets	12	30,841	30,567
Investments	13	1	1
<b>Total fixed assets</b>		<b>30,842</b>	<b>30,568</b>
<b>Current assets</b>			
Stocks of goods for resale		347	251
Debtors	14	9,796	6,581
Investments	15	4,000	2,000
Cash at bank and in hand		8,153	14,425
<b>Total current assets</b>		<b>22,296</b>	<b>23,257</b>
Creditors (amounts falling due within one year)	16	(6,480)	(6,140)
<b>Net current assets</b>		<b>15,816</b>	<b>17,117</b>
<b>Total assets less current liabilities</b>			
		<b>46,658</b>	<b>47,685</b>
Creditors (amounts falling due after more than one year)	17	(8,383)	(8,801)
<b>Net assets excluding pension liability</b>		<b>38,275</b>	<b>38,884</b>
Defined benefit pension scheme liability	11	(6,612)	(3,957)
<b>Net assets</b>		<b>31,663</b>	<b>34,927</b>
<b>Represented by:</b>			
General fund (including pension reserve of £6,612,000 adverse [2019: £3,957,000 adverse])	18,19	18,323	21,415
Designated funds	18,19	9,697	10,292
Restricted funds	18,19	3,265	2,833
Endowment fund	18,19	378	387
<b>Total funds</b>		<b>31,663</b>	<b>34,927</b>

The notes on pages 65 to 82 form part of these financial statements.

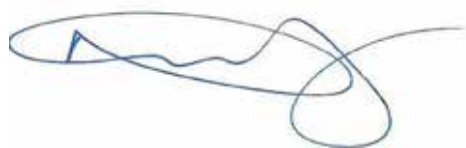


Andrew Pearson, Treasurer  
 Approved by the Council on 22 September 2020  
 Registered company number: 01825301

## Company balance sheet – as at 31 March 2020

	Notes	31 March 2020 £000s	31 March 2019 £000s
<b>Fixed assets</b>			
Tangible assets	11	30,839	30,565
Investments	13	30	31
<b>Total fixed assets</b>		<b>30,869</b>	<b>30,596</b>
<b>Current assets</b>			
Stocks of goods for resale		347	251
Debtors	14	9,688	6,497
Investments	15	4,000	2,000
Cash at bank and in hand		6,713	13,089
<b>Total current assets</b>		<b>20,748</b>	<b>21,837</b>
Creditors (amounts falling due within one year)	16	(6,383)	(5,969)
<b>Net current assets</b>		<b>14,365</b>	<b>15,868</b>
<b>Total assets less current liabilities</b>			
Creditors (amounts falling due after more than one year)	17	(8,343)	(8,801)
<b>Net assets excluding pension liability</b>		<b>36,891</b>	<b>37,663</b>
Defined benefit pension scheme liability	11	(6,612)	(3,957)
<b>Net assets</b>		<b>30,279</b>	<b>33,706</b>
<b>The funds of the charity</b>			
General funds (including pension reserve of £6,612,000 adverse [2019: £3,957,000 adverse])	18,19	18,139	21,211
Designated funds	18,19	9,697	10,009
Restricted income funds	18,19	2,065	2,099
Endowment fund	18,19	378	387
<b>Total funds</b>		<b>30,279</b>	<b>33,706</b>

The notes on pages 65 to 82 form part of these financial statements.



Andrew Pearson, Treasurer

Approved by the Council on 22 September 2020

Registered company number: 01825301

## Consolidated summary income and expenditure account – for the year ended 31 March 2020

	2020 £000s	2019 £000s
Income from continuing operations	69,930	67,139
Total expenditure of continuing operations	(69,094)	(64,525)
Operating surplus	836	2,614
Gain on disposal of tangible fixed assets	102	300
Interest receivable and similar income	46	43
Interest payable and similar charges	(344)	(357)
Net interest and administration costs of defined benefit scheme	(136)	(229)
<b>Net income for the year</b>	<b>504</b>	<b>2,371</b>

## Consolidated cash flow statement – for the year ended 31 March 2020

	Note	2020 £000s	2019 £000s
<b>Net cash (outflow)/inflow from operating activities</b>	23	(659)	4,567
Divestment of cash balance of Sense Scotland		-	(3,931)
<b>Investing activities – investments</b>			
Investment income received		46	43
Interest paid		(344)	(357)
<b>Investing activities – capital expenditure</b>			
Purchase of tangible fixed assets		(3,002)	(2,813)
Sale of tangible fixed assets: income		133	767
		(3,827)	(2,360)
<b>Financing activities</b>			
Banks and other loans repaid		(445)	(499)
<b>Decrease in cash and cash equivalents</b>		<b>(4,272)</b>	<b>(2,223)</b>
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of year		16,425	18,648
<b>Cash and cash equivalents at the end of year</b>		<b>12,153</b>	<b>16,425</b>

# 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 2019) (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 2019, a revised SORP was issued which is applicable to accounting periods commencing on or after 1 January 2019. 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.

## 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 Trustees have reviewed the charity's and Group's forecasts, including assessment of a severe but plausible downside scenario in relation to the impact of COVID-19 in assessing the adoption of the going concern basis of accounting in preparing the annual financial statements. Based on these assessments the Trustees consider that the going concern basis remains appropriate.

## 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, e.g. the Virgin Money London Marathon, where income received for the event in advance is deferred and only recognised in the financial year the event takes place. 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.

## 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.

## Stocks

Stocks of goods for resale are 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.

## 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: securities

Quoted securities are valued at market value based on the Stock Exchange Daily Official list or similar recognised market value. Realised and unrealised gains and losses on sale or revaluation of investments are taken to the statement of financial activities in the period in which they arise.

## 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 has been identified as a principal accounting estimate:

### Sleep-in contingent liability

Following the ruling by the Court of Appeal that minimum wage rates do not apply to sleep-ins, no provision for any liability was included in the statutory accounts for 2018/19. Although this decision has subsequently been appealed, the result is, as yet, unknown. If the previous ruling is overturned, organisations may be liable to pay six years of underpayments. The Group has paid staff in line with minimum wage rates since April 2017 and so, at the end of March 2020, the maximum period of liability would be three years. It is estimated that this would represent a liability of approximately £0.45m.

No liability is provided for in these accounts.

## **Sense Scotland divestment**

Sense and Sense Scotland legally separated on 8 May 2018. These financial statements are presented on the basis that Sense had relinquished effective control of Sense Scotland by 1 April 2019. This judgment is based on a number of factors, including the cessation of involvement in Sense Scotland Trustee meetings and operational matters, including budget setting and the timing of approval of divestment by Sense Council, among others.

Sense Scotland's figures have therefore been excluded from these consolidated accounts for the whole of the comparative 2019/20 financial year.

## **Actuarial assumptions in respect of the defined benefit pension scheme**

The figures included relating to the pension scheme are based on a number of key assumptions, which are disclosed in note 11.

These assumptions have been agreed with the Group's actuaries and auditors.



# Notes to the financial statements of Sense, The National Deafblind and Rubella Association for the year ended 31 March 2020

## 1. Income

Donations and legacies	2020 £000s	2019 £000s
Fundraising	7,430	7,588
Legacies	2,727	2,347
<b>Total</b>	<b>10,157</b>	<b>9,935</b>

Income from charitable activities	2020 £000s	2019 £000s
Care and Support Midlands	10,080	9,905
Care and Support East	13,075	13,217
Care and Support South	10,114	9,919
Care and Support North	7,588	6,713
Care and Support Northern Ireland	2,447	1,948
Care and Support Wales	1,376	1,018
Education and development programmes	2,176	1,803
International programmes	795	541
Arts and wellbeing programmes	514	362
Holidays and volunteering	329	220
Adult specialist services	9	22
Children's specialist services	6	(10)
<b>Total</b>	<b>48,509</b>	<b>45,658</b>

## 2. Grants receivable

	2020 £000s	2019 £000s
Sense	1,297	1,748
Sense International	795	527
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,092</b>	<b>2,274</b>

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

## 3. Investment income

	2020 £000s	2019 £000s
Bank interest	46	43

## 4. Other income

Other income is mainly derived from training, advice and consultancy provided to organisations and charities concerned with sensory impairment.

## 5. Total resources expended

Activity	Direct Costs £000s	Support Costs £000s	2020 £000s	2019 £000s
Fundraising	3,957	205	<b>4,162</b>	4,293
Trading	10,734	43	<b>10,777</b>	10,334
TouchBase Pears	1,313	18	<b>1,331</b>	1,300
Care and Support Midlands	8,865	873	<b>9,738</b>	8,790
Care and Support East	9,643	1,037	<b>10,680</b>	11,597
Care and Support South	10,515	1,017	<b>11,532</b>	11,121
Care and Support North	7,880	811	<b>8,691</b>	6,756
Care and Support Northern Ireland	2,304	232	<b>2,536</b>	1,857
Care and Support Wales	1,377	136	<b>1,513</b>	1,172
Adult specialist services	666	76	<b>742</b>	729
Education and development programmes	2,042	190	<b>2,232</b>	1,812
International programmes	1,872	176	<b>2,048</b>	1,536
Arts and wellbeing programmes	506	47	<b>553</b>	532
Holidays and volunteering	932	70	<b>1,002</b>	683
Children's specialist services	421	54	<b>475</b>	531
Campaigns, publicity and awareness	940	91	<b>1,031</b>	1,262
Quality assurance and development	294	34	<b>328</b>	420
Other	102	-	<b>102</b>	86
	<b>64,363</b>	<b>5,110</b>	<b>69,473</b>	64,811

### Analysis of apportioned support costs

Activity	Facilities £000s	Manage't £000s	HR £000s	Finance £000s	Govern'e £000s	Comms £000s	2020 £000s	2019 £000s
Fundraising	15	14	67	64	2	43	<b>205</b>	200
Trading	-	-	43	-	-	-	<b>43</b>	38
TouchBase	1	1	6	6	-	4	<b>18</b>	19
Care and Support Midlands	63	60	285	274	9	182	<b>873</b>	845
Care and Support East	75	71	338	326	10	217	<b>1,037</b>	1,142
Care and Support South	74	70	331	319	10	213	<b>1,017</b>	1,114
Care and Support North	59	56	264	255	8	169	<b>811</b>	681
Care and Support Northern Ireland	17	16	76	73	2	48	<b>232</b>	180
Care and Support Wales	10	9	44	43	1	29	<b>136</b>	106
Adult specialist services	5	5	25	24	1	16	<b>76</b>	78
Education programmes	14	13	62	59	2	40	<b>190</b>	162
International programmes	-	159	-	-	17	-	<b>176</b>	164
Arts and wellbeing programmes	3	3	15	15	-	10	<b>47</b>	44
Holidays and volunteering	5	5	23	22	1	14	<b>70</b>	65
Children's specialist services	4	4	17	17	1	11	<b>54</b>	56
Campaigns, publicity and awareness	7	6	30	28	1	19	<b>91</b>	121
Quality assurance and development	2	2	11	11	1	7	<b>34</b>	45
	<b>354</b>	<b>494</b>	<b>1,637</b>	<b>1,536</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>1,022</b>	<b>5,110</b>	5,060

## 6. Discontinued operations

The divestment of Sense Scotland was legally completed on 9 May 2018. Sense Group had not had effective control of Sense Scotland prior to this date and it is assumed that this was the case on 1 April 2018.

The operations in Scotland have not been consolidated into these accounts from 1 April 2018. No consideration flowed from the divestment and there was no profit or loss made on divestment.

## 7. Gains on tangible fixed assets and investments

	2020 £000s	2019 £000s
Net gain on sale of tangible fixed assets	102	300

## 8. Net movements in funds

The net movement in funds is stated after charging:

	2020 £000s	2019 £000s
Auditors' remuneration – audit services	55	53
Depreciation – tangible assets	2,698	2,492
Operating lease rentals	3,656	3,267
Interest payable on bank loans	344	357

## 9. Employee remuneration

	2020 £000s	2019 £000s
Wages and salaries	39,051	35,935
Social security costs	2,822	2,575
Pension costs for defined contribution schemes	1,484	1,099
Pension costs for defined benefit schemes	1,283	1,298
	<b>44,640</b>	<b>40,907</b>

The average number of employees – excluding volunteers – was 2,446 (2019: 2,304).

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

	2020 Number	2019 Number
£60,000–£70,000	4	2
£70,000–£80,000	3	3
£80,000–£90,000	3	2
£110,000–£120,000	1	1
£120,000–£130,000	1	1

Pension contributions for these employees were as follows:

	2020		2019	
	£000s	No.	£000s	No.
Defined contribution schemes	37	11	36	9

The aggregate remuneration of the Group's key personnel, as listed in the Trustees' Report, was £921,044 (2019: £712,494) before pension contributions of £72,627 (2019: £69,087).

## 10. Remuneration of members of Council

Trustees of Sense received no remuneration during the year (2019: £nil).

Trustees are reimbursed travel and subsistence expenses for attending meetings and duties directly related to their duties as Trustees. In 2020, nine (2019: ten) Trustees were reimbursed expenses of £5,469 (2019: £5,128).

## 11. Pensions

The Group provides defined contribution pension schemes for employees.

In addition, the Group has ten employees in 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 London Pensions Partnerships (LPP), formerly London Pension Fund Authority (LPFA), Superannuation 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 2020, the Group made deficit reduction payments of £1.25 million (2019: £1.25 million). There was nothing outstanding at 31 March 2020 (2019: £nil).

Pension liabilities measured in accordance with the requirements of FRS 102 were:

	2020 £'000	2019 £'000
<b>LPP scheme</b>		
Market value of assets	38,602	40,548
Present value of liabilities	(45,095)	(44,371)
LPP scheme net deficit	(6,493)	(3,823)
Present value of unfunded obligation	(119)	(134)
<b>Net pension fund liabilities</b>	<b>(6,612)</b>	<b>(3,957)</b>

### Financial assumptions

The financial assumptions used to calculate LPP scheme liabilities under FRS 102 were as follows:

	At 31 March 2020 % p.a.	At 31 March 2019 % p.a.
Rate of inflation – RPI	2.7	3.4
Rate of inflation – CPI	1.9	2.4
Rate of increase for pensions in payment	1.9	2.4
Discount rate	2.4	2.5

Life expectancy assumptions from age 65 were as follows:

	2020 Years	2019 Years
Retiring today		
- Men	21.2	21.8
- Women	23.8	23.7
Retiring in 20 years		
- Men	22.6	23.8
- Women	25.3	25.7

The post-retirement mortality assumptions are as follows:

- 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.
- 2019: The post-retirement mortality tables adopted are the S2 tables with a 100 % multiplier for males and 101 % multiplier for females. These base tables are then projected using the CMI 2018 Model, allowing for a long-term rate of improvement of 1.75 %.

## Scheme assets

The assets attributable to the Group in the LPP were:

	Value at 31 March 2020 £'000	Value at 31 March 2019 £'000
Equities	20,833	22,060
Target return funds	9,946	10,813
Infrastructure	2,813	2,443
Property	3,832	3,813
Cash	1,178	1,419
	<b>38,602</b>	<b>40,548</b>

The actual investment return (on a bid value to bid value basis) for the year to 31 March 2020 was 0 % (2019: 9 %).

The equity investments that are held in plan assets are quoted and are valued at their bid price as at 31 March 2020.

## Reconciliation of the present value of scheme liabilities

	2020 £'000	2019 £'000
Opening defined benefit obligation	44,505	53,693
Adjustment for divestment of Sense Scotland	-	(9,427)
Revised opening defined benefit obligation	44,505	44,266
Interest cost	1,098	1,182
Benefits paid	(1,161)	(1,027)
Experience loss on defined benefit obligation	2,415	-
Change in financial assumptions	(3,000)	1,883
Change in demographic assumptions	1,364	(1,792)
Unfunded pension payments	(7)	(7)
<b>Closing defined benefit obligation</b>	<b>45,214</b>	<b>44,505</b>

## Reconciliation of fair value of scheme assets

	2020 £'000	2019 £'000
Opening fair value of fund assets	40,548	44,864
Adjustment for divestment of Sense Scotland	-	(7,882)
Revised opening fair value of fund assets	40,548	36,982
Interest on assets	1,015	1,001
Return on assets less interest	(1,166)	2,390
Other actuarial losses	(1,831)	-
Administration expenses	(53)	(48)
Contributions by the employer	1,257	1,257
Benefits paid	(1,168)	(1,034)
<b>Closing fair value of fund assets</b>	<b>38,602</b>	<b>40,548</b>

The following components of the pensions charge have been recognised in the statement of financial activities in the year to 31 March 2020:

	2020 £'000	2019 £'000
Net interest	83	181
Administration expenses	53	48
<b>Total cost</b>	<b>136</b>	<b>229</b>

## Re-measurements in other comprehensive income

	2020 £'000	2019 £'000
Return on fund assets (below)/in excess of interest	(1,166)	2,390
Other actuarial losses	(1,831)	-
Changes in demographic assumptions	(1,364)	1,792
Change in financial assumptions	3,000	(1,883)
Experience loss on defined benefit obligation	(2,415)	-
<b>Total actuarial (loss)/gain recognised</b>	<b>(3,776)</b>	<b>2,299</b>
<b>Deficit reduction payments made</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>7</b>
Net actuarial (loss)/gain	(3,769)	2,306

## 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	44,390	45,214	46,054
Projected service cost	-	-	-
Adjustment to mortality age rating assumption	+1 year	None	-1 year
Present value of total obligation	46,728	45,214	43,749
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
<b>Cost</b>						
At April 2019	24,977	3,887	2,547	16,027	3,436	50,874
Additions	116	-	249	2,169	469	3,003
Disposals	-	-	-	(12)	(295)	(307)
<b>At 31 March 2020</b>	<b>25,093</b>	<b>3,887</b>	<b>2,796</b>	<b>18,184</b>	<b>3,610</b>	<b>53,570</b>
<b>Accumulated depreciation</b>						
At 1 April 2019	3,074	687	1,577	12,166	2,803	20,307
Charge for the year	445	62	218	1,647	325	2,697
Disposals	-	-	-	(1)	(274)	(275)
<b>At 31 March 2020</b>	<b>3,519</b>	<b>749</b>	<b>1,795</b>	<b>13,812</b>	<b>2,854</b>	<b>22,729</b>
<b>Net book amounts</b>						
<b>At 31 March 2020</b>	<b>21,574</b>	<b>3,138</b>	<b>1,001</b>	<b>4,372</b>	<b>756</b>	<b>30,841</b>
At 31 March 2019	21,903	3,200	970	3,861	633	30,567

Company	Freehold property £000s	Long leasehold improvements £000s	Short leasehold improvements £000s	Furniture, fixtures and fittings £000s	Motor vehicles £000s	Total £000s
<b>Cost</b>						
At 1 April 2019	24,976	3,887	2,547	16,004	3,395	50,809
Additions	117	-	249	2,167	468	3,001
Disposals	-	-	-	(12)	(295)	(307)
<b>At 31 March 2020</b>	<b>25,093</b>	<b>3,887</b>	<b>2,796</b>	<b>18,159</b>	<b>3,568</b>	<b>53,503</b>
<b>Accumulated depreciation</b>						
At 1 April 2019	3,074	687	1,577	12,143	2,761	20,243
Charge for the year	445	62	218	1,647	324	2,696
Disposals	-	-	-	(1)	(274)	(275)
<b>At 31 March 2020</b>	<b>3,519</b>	<b>749</b>	<b>1,795</b>	<b>13,790</b>	<b>2,811</b>	<b>22,664</b>
<b>Net book amounts</b>						
<b>At 31 March 2020</b>	<b>21,574</b>	<b>3,138</b>	<b>1,001</b>	<b>4,369</b>	<b>757</b>	<b>30,839</b>
At 31 March 2019	21,901	3,200	970	3,861	633	30,565

## 13. Investments

Group	2020 £000s	2019 £000s
Fixed asset investments:		
UK listed investments (at market value)	1	1

Company	2020 £000s	2019 £000s
Fixed asset investments:		
UK listed investments (at market value)	-	1
Paid up shares: 100 % (2019: 100 %) holding in Helping Sense Limited	30	30
	<b>30</b>	<b>31</b>

Sense owns 100 % of the ordinary share capital of Helping Sense Limited, which is incorporated in England and Wales, and exists to raise funds for Sense, The National Deafblind and Rubella Association. 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.

## 14. Debtors

Group	2020 £000s	2019 £000s
Trade debtors	5,693	3,022
Accrued income	1,837	1,319
Prepayments	1,838	1,965
Taxation recoverable	147	147
Other debtors	281	128
	<b>9,796</b>	<b>6,581</b>

Company	2020 £000s	2019 £000s
Trade debtors	5,693	3,022
Accrued income	1,742	1,247
Prepayments	1,829	1,959
Amounts owed by group undertakings	205	29
Taxation recoverable	147	147
Other debtors	72	93
	<b>9,688</b>	<b>6,497</b>

Receivables are shown net of bad debt provisions of £226,000 (2019: £218,000).

## 15. Current asset investments

Group and Company	2020 £000s	2019 £000s
Bank deposits	4,000	2,000



## 16. Creditors (amounts falling due within one year)

Group	2020 £000s	2019 £000s
Bank loans	459	445
Trade creditors	2,001	1,841
Taxation and social security	666	619
Deferred income	591	993
Accruals and other creditors	2,763	2,242
	<b>6,480</b>	<b>6,140</b>

Company	2020 £000s	2019 £000s
Bank loans	459	445
Trade creditors	2,000	1,839
Taxation and social security	666	619
Deferred income	586	864
Accruals and other creditors	2,672	2,202
	<b>6,383</b>	<b>5,969</b>

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

Group	2020 £000s	2019 £000s
Bank loans	8,343	8,801
Other creditors	40	-
	<b>8,383</b>	<b>8,801</b>

Company	2020 £000s	2019 £000s
Bank loans	8,343	8,801

The bank loan, which funded the construction of TouchBase Pears, is with Lloyds Bank PLC. The loan is unsecured and repayable in instalments over 17 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.

Repayments fall due as follows:

	2020 £000s	2019 £000s
Second to fifth year	1,960	1,908
After five years	6,383	6,893
	<b>8,343</b>	<b>8,801</b>

At 31 March 2020 the Group had no obligations under finance leases (2019: £nil).

## 18. Movement of funds

Group	Balance at 1 April 2019 £000s	Income £000s	Expenditure £000s	Transfers £000s	Balance at 31 March 2020 £000s
<b>Unrestricted funds</b>					
General fund, excluding pension deficit	25,372	66,610	(67,182)	117	24,935
Designated funds	10,292	6	(257)	(344)	9,697
Pension deficit (note 10)	(3,957)	-	(2,655)	-	(6,612)
<b>Total unrestricted</b>	<b>31,707</b>	<b>66,616</b>	<b>(70,076)</b>	<b>(227)</b>	<b>28,020</b>
<b>Restricted funds</b>					
Cymru Fundraising Fund	60	11	(55)	-	16
TouchBase Pears Aspirations	26	-	-	-	26
Pears College Expansion	10	100	-	(110)	-
Sports England Programme	-	83	(83)	-	-
Dual Sensory Impairment Clinic	23	-	-	-	23
Touchbase Wales General Donations	46	8	(30)	(6)	18
Community Connections	-	108	-	-	108
Student Fund – Newton Court 1–4	21	1	-	-	22
Student Fund – 53a Shipdham Rd	20	-	(2)	-	18
Children’s Services	-	44	(44)	-	-
Children’s Services: South East	-	81	(81)	-	-
DFE National Grant Prospectus	21	(21)	-	-	-
Children’s Services: South West	6	79	(69)	-	16
Sport England – Active Together	-	393	(198)	-	195
Arts & Wellbeing: TBP Inclusive	-	50	(7)	-	43
Southeast: Sense @ Keech	5	53	(1)	-	57
Anne Wall Centre (TBSE)	24	-	-	-	24
Café 55 – Providence Court	33	8	-	-	41
Big Lottery Fund Grant	45	145	(160)	-	30
Children’s Services North	-	47	(47)	-	-
Cornwall GOT Project	37	3	(2)	-	38
Cymru General Donations	117	(99)	-	-	18
Deafblind Studies	7	-	(1)	-	6
FEAS Fund	28	(28)	-	-	-
Fidelity Revenue Grant	61	-	(61)	-	-
Holidays Fund	-	71	(71)	-	-
Needs and Numbers Survey	56	-	-	-	56
Northern Ireland Day Centre	74	4	(1)	-	77
Northern Ireland Lottery Guide Dogs	32	31	(18)	-	45
Northern Ireland Out Of Schools Club	107	8	(24)	-	91
Northern Ireland Special Donations	132	26	(13)	-	145
Northern Ireland Specialist Services	31	-	-	-	31
Pears Revenue Grant	50	50	(100)	-	-
Social Prescribing Service	36	-	-	-	36
Stevenage Special Donations	32	-	-	-	32
TBP Activity Coordinator	23	-	(23)	-	-
TBP Day Centre Equipment Appeal	45	-	(6)	-	39
The Big Give	3	-	-	-	3
The Devon Group Fund	42	9	(22)	-	29
TouchBase Restricted Fund	-	4	-	-	4
Volunteering: London Transitions	67	106	(99)	-	74
Wickers Aid Trust	50	-	(50)	-	-
Wolverhampton Children’s Services	35	-	-	-	35
Woodside Fund	9	4	-	-	13
Woodside Special Donations	62	(62)	-	-	-
Other	624	157	(122)	(3)	656

Group	Balance at 1 April 2019 £000s	Income £000s	Expenditure £000s	Transfers £000s	Balance at 31 March 2020 £000s
<b>Sense International</b>					
Nelumbo Stiftung Education	-	259	(8)	-	251
Enabel Vocational	-	214	(33)	-	181
My Turn to Learn	192	20	(68)	-	144
Big Lottery Uganda	109	192	(180)	-	121
Thomas Cook Children's Charity	-	91	(9)	-	82
Romania – In-country Income	36	38	(1)	-	73
Latin American Children's Trust	53	46	(49)	-	50
UK Aid Match Bangladesh	22	72	(52)	-	42
Tanzania Adults Vocational	-	60	(24)	-	36
Tanzania Early Intervention	34	111	(119)	-	26
Australian Embassy Tanzania	-	33	(11)	-	22
UK Aid Match Kenya	-	20	-	-	20
Romania Orange E-Sense	-	33	(17)	-	16
Kenya Ford Foundation	27	-	(12)	-	15
Tanzania – HDIF	-	158	(144)	-	14
Porticus Uganda	80	-	(67)	-	13
Guernsey Overseas Aid Uganda	-	40	(28)	-	12
Maria Marina Foundation Peru	35	22	(46)	-	11
Kenya Open Society Initiative E. Africa	-	38	(28)	-	10
Jersey Overseas Aid Nepal	-	95	(86)	-	9
Kilimanjaro Blind Trust Africa Uganda	-	27	(18)	-	9
Jersey Overseas Aid Bangladesh	7	51	(53)	-	5
VOICE Kenya	-	23	(19)	-	4
UK Aid Direct Kenya	-	63	(60)	-	3
Rubella Appeal	45	-	(45)	-	-
UK Aid Match Bangladesh	40	-	(40)	-	-
UK Aid Direct Kenya Co-Funding	-	21	(21)	-	-
Kenya Task Order 6	-	29	(29)	-	-
Kilimanjaro Blind Trust Africa	-	37	(37)	-	-
Finding Grace Appeal	-	20	(20)	-	-
Tasodeb Capacity Building	-	33	(33)	-	-
Kenya Holding Fund	-	1	(87)	86	-
Tanzania Holding Fund	-	-	(121)	121	-
Peru Holding Fund	-	-	(44)	44	-
Romania Holding Fund	-	-	(68)	68	-
Other	53	40	(89)	28	32
<b>Total restricted</b>	<b>2,833</b>	<b>3,361</b>	<b>(3,156)</b>	<b>227</b>	<b>3,265</b>

Group	Balance at 1 April 2019 £000s	Income £000s	Expenditure £000s	Transfers £000s	Balance at 31 March 2020 £000s
<b>Endowment</b>					
Property	387	-	(9)	-	378
<b>Total Endowment</b>	<b>387</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>(9)</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>378</b>
<b>Total Funds</b>	<b>34,927</b>	<b>69,977</b>	<b>(73,241)</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>31,663</b>

Company	Balance at 1 April 2019	Income	Expenditure	Transfers	Balance at 31 March 2020
<b>Unrestricted funds</b>					
General fund, excluding pension deficit	25,168	62,839	(63,437)	181	24,751
Designated funds	10,009	6	(257)	(61)	9,697
Pension deficit (note 10)	(3,957)	-	(2,655)	-	(6,612)
<b>Total unrestricted</b>	<b>31,220</b>	<b>62,845</b>	<b>(66,349)</b>	<b>120</b>	<b>27,836</b>
<b>Restricted funds</b>					
Cymru Fundraising Fund	60	11	(54)	-	17
Touchbase Pears Aspirations	26	-	-	-	26
Pears College Expansion	10	100	-	(110)	-
Sports England Programme	0	83	(83)	-	-
Dual Sensory Impairment Clinic	23	-	-	-	23
TouchBase Wales General Donations	46	8	(30)	(6)	18
Community Connections	-	108	-	-	108
Student Fund – Newton Court 1–4	21	1	-	-	22
Student Fund – 53a Shipdham Rd	20	-	(2)	-	18
Children’s Services	-	44	(44)	-	-
Children’s Services: South East	-	81	(81)	-	-
DFE National Grant Prospectus	21	(21)	-	-	-
Children’s Services: South West	5	79	(69)	-	15
Sport England – Active Together	-	393	(198)	-	195
Arts & Wellbeing: TBP Inclusive	-	50	(7)	-	43
Southeast: Sense @ Keech	4	53	(1)	-	56
Anne Wall Centre (TBSE)	23	-	-	-	23
Café 55 – Providence Court	33	8	-	-	41
Big Lottery Fund Grant	45	145	(160)	-	30
Children’s Services North	-	47	(47)	-	-
Cornwall GOT Project	37	3	(2)	-	38
Cymru General Donations	117	(99)	-	-	18
Deafblind Studies	7	-	(1)	-	6
FEAS Fund	28	(28)	-	-	-
Fidelity Revenue Grant	61	-	(61)	-	-
Holidays Fund	-	71	(71)	-	-
Needs and Numbers Survey	56	-	-	-	56
Northern Ireland Day Centre	74	4	(1)	-	77
Northern Ireland Lottery Guide Dogs	32	31	(18)	-	45
Northern Ireland Out Of Schools Club	107	8	(24)	-	91
Northern Ireland Special Donations	132	26	(13)	-	145
Northern Ireland Specialist Services	31	-	-	-	31
Pears Revenue Grant	50	50	(100)	-	-
Social Prescribing Service	36	-	-	-	36
Stevenage Special Donations	32	-	-	-	32
TBP Activity Coordinator	23	-	(23)	-	-
TBP Day Centre Equipment Appeal	45	-	(6)	-	39
The Big Give	3	-	-	-	3
The Devon Group Fund	42	9	(22)	-	29
TouchBase Restricted Fund	-	4	-	-	4
Volunteering: London Transitions	68	106	(99)	-	75
WickersAid Trust	50	-	(50)	-	-
Wolverhampton Children’s Services	35	-	-	-	35
Woodside Fund	9	4	-	-	13
Woodside Special Donations	62	(62)	-	-	-
Other	625	157	(121)	(4)	657
<b>Total Restricted</b>	<b>2,099</b>	<b>1,474</b>	<b>(1,388)</b>	<b>(120)</b>	<b>2,065</b>
<b>Endowment</b>					
Property	387	-	(9)	-	378
<b>Total Endowment</b>	<b>387</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>(9)</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>378</b>
<b>Total Funds</b>	<b>33,706</b>	<b>64,319</b>	<b>(67,746)</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>30,279</b>

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

A number of funds have been designated including £4.4 million for the maintenance and improvement of the Group's residential accommodation. £350,000 has been earmarked for the support of Sense International in 2020/21.

Funds have been transferred into designated reserves to support specific investment in future property development (£1.5 million), infrastructure investment (£1 million), Sense TouchBase Pears support (£1 million) and pension deficit reduction payments (£2 million).

### 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 major restricted funds are:

### 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 the 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 wellbeing.

### 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 £000s	Designated funds £000s	Restricted funds £000s	Endowment funds £000s	Total funds £000s
Tangible fixed assets	30,463	-	-	378	30,841
Fixed asset investments	1	-	-	-	1
Net current assets	2,854	9,697	3,265	-	15,816
Long-term liabilities	(8,383)	-	-	-	(8,383)
Pension liability	(6,612)	-	-	-	(6,612)
<b>Total</b>	<b>18,323</b>	<b>9,697</b>	<b>3,265</b>	<b>378</b>	<b>31,663</b>

Company	Unrestricted funds £000s	Designated funds £000s	Restricted funds £000s	Endowment funds £000s	Total funds £000s
Tangible fixed assets	30,461	-	-	378	30,839
Fixed asset investments	31	-	-	-	31
Net current assets	2,602	9,697	2,065	-	14,364
Long-term liabilities	(8,343)	-	-	-	(8,343)
Pension liability	(6,612)	-	-	-	(6,612)
<b>Total</b>	<b>18,139</b>	<b>9,697</b>	<b>2,065</b>	<b>378</b>	<b>30,279</b>

## 20. Capital commitments

As at 31 March 2020, the Group had capital commitments of £57,928 (2019: £23,858).

## 21. Contingent liabilities

A contingent liability of £1,196,000 (2019: £1,196,000) arises from grants received from the Department of Health and Leeds Healthcare towards the development of 12 Hyde Close, Barnet; 138 Bradford Road, Leeds; and 509 Leeds and Bradford Road, Leeds, which may be repayable in certain circumstances: these circumstances were not met in 2019/20.

Sense, Sense International and Helping Sense Limited are members of a group VAT registration. Under the Value Added Tax Act 1983, all the members of a VAT group are jointly and severally liable for any tax due during the period of their membership. As part of the divestment, Sense Scotland left the VAT group on 1 April 2019.

As disclosed in Note 28, one of the Company's subsidiaries has 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 the subsidiary at the year-end were £91,000 (2019: £63,000).

## 22. Operating lease commitments

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

Group	2020		2019	
	Land and buildings £000s	Other £000s	Land and buildings £000s	Other £000s
Operating leases which expire:				
Within one year	3,222	-	2,945	7
In two to five years	9,178	-	8,879	1
After five years	7,246	-	4,783	-
	<b>19,646</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>16,607</b>	<b>8</b>

Company	2020		2019	
	Land and buildings £000s	Other £000s	Land and buildings £000s	Other £000s
Operating leases which expire:				
Within one year	3,222	-	2,945	7
In two to five years	9,178	-	8,879	1
After five years	7,246	-	4,783	-
	<b>19,646</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>16,607</b>	<b>8</b>

## 23. Reconciliation of net incoming resources to net cash inflow from operating activities

	2020 £000s	2019 £000s
Net incoming resources before revaluation	504	2,371
Difference between pension charge and cash contributions	(1,114)	(1,021)
Investment income received	(46)	(43)
Interest paid	344	357
Depreciation	2,698	2,492
Profit on sale of fixed assets	(102)	(300)
Increase in stocks	(95)	(103)
(Increase)/decrease in debtors	(3,215)	3,980
Increase/(decrease) in creditors	367	(504)
Divestment of Sense Scotland working capital	-	(2,663)
<b>Net cash (outflow)/inflow from operating activities</b>	<b>(659)</b>	<b>4,566</b>

## 24. Reconciliation of net cash flow to movement in net liquid resources

	2020 £000s	2019 £000s
Decrease in cash in the year	(4,272)	(2,223)
Cash outflow from loans and lease financing	445	894
Changes used in cash flows	<b>(3,827)</b>	<b>(1,329)</b>
Net liquid resources at 1 April	7,179	8,508
Net liquid resources at 31 March	3,352	7,179

## 25. Analysis of changes in net liquid resources

	At 1 April 2019 £000s	Cash flows £000s	Non-cash changes £000s	At 31 March 2020 £000s
Cash at bank and in hand	14,425	(6,272)	-	8,153
Current asset investments	2,000	2,000	-	4,000
Debt due within one year	(435)	445	(468)	(458)
Debt due after one year	(8,811)	-	468	(8,343)
	<b>7,179</b>	<b>(3,827)</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>3,352</b>



## 26. 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 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 a Trustee of Sense International, Sunil Shah, was also a Director in the year. The loan is unsecured, interest free, and repayable in five equal annual instalments from March 2023.

As permitted under FRS 102 Related Party Disclosures, transactions with subsidiaries are not disclosed.

## 27. 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.

## 28. Subsidiary companies

The Sense Group comprises three legal entities in addition to the company itself. One is a wholly controlled charitable company subsidiary:

- Sense International is registered in England as a charity (charity number: 1076497) and as a company limited by guarantee (company number: 03742986).

The subsidiary has similar aims and objectives to the parent charity, Sense. 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 for the year ended 31 March 2020 are shown below:

### Sense International

	2020 £000s	2019 £000s
Incoming resources	2,476	1,894
Resources expended	(2,295)	(1,752)
<b>Net movement in funds</b>	<b>181</b>	<b>142</b>
Assets	1,632	1,421
Liabilities	(248)	(219)
<b>Net assets</b>	<b>1,384</b>	<b>1,202</b>

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 for the year ended 31 March 2020 is shown below:

## Helping Sense Limited

	2020 £000s	2019 £000s
Turnover	3,281	3,776
Cost of sales	(440)	(618)
Gross profit	2,841	3,158
Operating expenses	(2,841)	(3,073)
<b>Net profit</b>	-	85
Assets	35	118
Liabilities	(5)	(3)
<b>Net assets</b>	30	115

## Sense4Enterprise Limited

	2020 £000s	2019 £000s
Incoming resources	262	244
Resources expended	(290)	(265)
<b>Net movement in funds</b>	(28)	(21)
Assets	-	-
Liabilities	(91)	(63)
<b>Net liabilities</b>	(91)	(63)

The Company has guaranteed the liabilities of the following subsidiaries in order that they qualify for the exemption from audit under Section 479A of the Companies Act 2006 in respect of the year ended 31 March 2020:

- Sense4Enterprise Limited

## 29. Post balance sheet event

In July 2020 the Group agreed to purchase the operating assets of the RNIB college in Loughborough for a sum of £1.525m which also included the provision of information and advice services for 3.5 years. Sense will continue to run the college as a college facility, thus increasing the education spaces that can be provided. The purchase was funded from existing cash resources.



## Major supporters of Sense in 2019/20

### Sense

Anne Hess  
Arts Council of England  
Audrey Earle Charitable Trust  
BBC Children in Need  
Birkdale Trust for Hearing Impaired Ltd  
Brian Callaway  
Brian Lay  
Cantiacorum Foundation  
Catriona Guinness  
Cecil Rosen Charitable Trust  
Christian Purslow  
Christopher Sharp  
Dance Hub  
David Brewer  
Edgar Wilkins  
Elizabeth Reis  
Ernest Hecht Charitable Foundation  
F R Choudhury  
Fowler Smith and Jones Trust  
Gertrude Gourvitch Charitable Trust  
Gordon Garrett  
Graham and Mary Stacy Trust  
Gregory Fattorini  
Grow Wild  
Hatfield Davis Trust  
Helen Robertson Charitable Trust  
Jesus Hospital Charity  
John and Diana Crabtree  
John Buckenham  
Joseph Strong Frazer Trust  
Keith Codling  
Levy Family Charitable Trust  
London Stock Exchange Group Foundation  
Marion Morris  
Merchant Taylors' Company Trusts  
Michael Heartley  
Order of Red Cross of Constantine  
Outdoors For All  
Payne Gallwey 1989 Charitable Trust  
Pears Foundation  
Peter Murray Smith  
Peter Storrs Trust  
Price Parry Charitable Trust  
R Brewer  
Richard Thomson  
Roger Eaton  
Rose Francis  
Smith Charitable Trust  
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 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 G M C 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 Michael Marsh Charitable Trust  
The P F Charitable Trust  
The Patrick and Helena Frost Foundation  
The Pilkington Charities Fund  
The Princess Anne's Charities Trust  
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 William Kenneth Hutchings Charitable Trust  
The Wixamtree Trust  
Williams Family Foundation  
Winifred Eileen Kemp Trust

### Sense International

Australian Government Direct Aid Programme  
Department for International Development  
(UK Aid)  
Enabel, the Belgian Development Agency  
(funded by the European Union)  
European Union (Erasmus+ Programme)  
Eleanor Rathbone Charitable Trust  
Forefront Foundation Ltd  
Guernsey Overseas Aid and Development  
Commission  
Independent Franchise Partners  
Jersey Overseas Aid  
Kilimanjaro Blind Trust Africa (KBTA)  
Latin American Children's Trust  
Mr Pradip Dhamecha  
Mr Rupin and Mrs Madhavi Vadera  
Nelumbo Stiftung  
Old Mutual International Trust Company  
The Alchemy Foundation  
The Batchworth Trust  
The Beatrice Laing Trust  
The Bryan Guinness Charitable Trust  
The Coles-Medlock Foundation  
The Grace Trust  
The Hemraj Goyal Foundation  
The Henhurst Charitable Trust  
The Hugh Symons Charitable Trust  
The Ireland Roddan Trust  
The James Tudor Foundation  
The Lady More Charitable Trust  
The Lord Dolar Popat Foundation  
The Lynn Foundation  
The National Lottery Community Fund  
The Open Society Initiative for East Africa  
The Princess Anne's Charities  
The Rhododendron Trust  
The Saga Charitable Trust  
The S M B Trust  
The St Mary's Charity  
The Shanta Foundation  
The Souter Charitable Trust

The Spear Charitable Trust  
The Tony and Audrey Watson Charitable Trust  
The Tula Charitable Trust Limited  
The Ulverscroft Foundation  
The Walter Guinness Charitable Trust  
The Worshipful Company of Spectacle Makers Charity  
Voice Grant Facility  
Ward Family Charitable Trust

## Charity information

### Registered address for Sense

101 Pentonville Road, London, N1 9LG  
**Tel:** 0300 330 9250 or 020 7520 0999  
**Textphone:** 0300 330 9252 or  
0207 520 0959  
**Fax:** 0300 330 9251 or 020 7520 0958  
**Email:** reception@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 or 020 7520 0972  
**Textphone:** 0300 330 9252 or  
020 7520 0959  
**Textphone:** 0300 330 9256 or  
020 7520 0972  
**Fax:** 0300 330 9251  
**Email:** info@sense.org.uk

### Professional advisers to Sense

#### Independent auditors

PricewaterhouseCoopers LLP  
One Chamberlain Square, Birmingham,  
B3 3AX

#### Bankers

National Westminster Bank PLC  
Tavistock House, Tavistock Square, London,  
WC1H 9JA

Lloyds Banking Group plc  
33 Old Broad Street, London, EC2N 1HZ

#### Solicitors

Anthony Collins Solicitors LLP  
134 Edmund Street, Birmingham, B3 2ES

#### Insurance advisers

Willis Towers Watson  
Belvedere, 12 Booth Street, Manchester,  
M2 4AW

#### Pension fund advisers

Hymans Robertson  
20 Waterloo Street, Glasgow, G2 6DB

#### Internal auditors

Crowe Clark Whitehill LLP  
St Bride's House, 10 Salisbury Square,  
London, EC4Y 8EH



## Sense and Sense International

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**Tel:** 0300 330 9250

**Fax:** 0300 330 9251

**Text:** 0300 330 9252

**Email:** [info@sense.org.uk](mailto:info@sense.org.uk)

**Website:** [www.sense.org.uk](http://www.sense.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](mailto: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](mailto:cymruenquiries@sense.org.uk)