

## **Hand of Solace**

**Scottish Charity No — SC048192**

### **Annual Report and Financial Statements For the year ended 31 May 2025**

Trustees' Annual Report For the year ended 31 May 2025.

The trustees have pleasure in presenting their report together with the financial statements for the year ended 31 May, 2025.

#### **Reference and Administrative Information**

**Charity name:**

Hand of Solace

**Charity no:**

SC048192

**Address:**

41 Regent Quay  
AB11 5BE, Aberdeen,  
Scotland.

**Current Trustees**



#### **1.0 Structure, Governance and Management Constitution**

Hand of Solace is a Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation (a SCIO) based in Aberdeen Scotland. The charity has a single tier structure and as such the trustees are the members of the charity management board which continues to meet as and when required. Trustees are elected at the annual general meeting which is held in June every year. Trustees who resign as per this policy may be re-elected. There must be a minimum of three and a maximum of 4 trustees.

#### **2.0 Objectives and Activities Charitable purposes**

We will empower people with the skills, knowledge, self-confidence/esteem and experience to overcome the

barriers that hinder them from living a fulfilling life. We are doing this in order that they can sustain positive mental and physical health and well-being. Through supporting young /older people to become more social, independent and self-confident, discriminating factors such as mental ill-health; physical ill-health and disability, poverty etc will be overcome. Through our Drug and Alcohol project, we aim to support members of BME who are affected by drug/alcohol use to become more self-confident and aware of community resources/support available to them and supporting them to overcome associated barriers. Through volunteering with us, volunteers gain a sense of belonging within their community and are able to gain self-confidence/esteem, skills and experience which may help them to access proper employment.

## **2.1 Activities:**

Our current activities are aimed to reduce isolation and loneliness among disadvantaged /marginalized people in Aberdeen through activities that will promote social integration, diversity, good health and well-being.

This year our extended 'We Move Project' has now been completed in March 2025 and our Children and Families Drug and Alcohol Support Service has also been completed in January 2025. The current projects we run have helped us to bridge existing gaps of the needs of our community and is enabling us to offer our service users a more holistic support.

### **Our Organizational Mission:**

Our Organization Mission is: To give a hand of support and Empowerment.

### **What we have done:**

- We have completed the 7th year of our befriending services: (Young People's Service -ages 5-16 years) and (Elderly Support Service – for ages 60 and above).
- We completed our "Children and Families Drug and Alcohol Support (CAFDAAS)" Service.
- We completed our "We Move Project."
- We have completed the first year of "HOS Peers Support Group".
- We have completed the first year of our "Aberdeen Black Ethnic Women Service (ABEWS)".

## **3.0 Our befriending service for young people (Young People's Service):**

This service supports young people aged 5-16 in Aberdeen from poor and deprived background who have experienced disadvantaged situations and challenges.

The Befriending Service is aimed to enable young people feel included and confident by involving and supporting them to access local activities.

97 percent of the young people we support this year are from the Black and Minority Ethnic group.

87% of our young people reported improved emotional, psychological, and physical wellbeing. We also saw clear improvement in our young people engaging and maintaining positive relationship with their befrienders. 11 young

people we supported who were 12-16 years old demonstrated being more independent using our organisation established indications.

This service continues to experience increase in number of referrals beyond the target for the year which is 24 young people. Within the last one year, the service has supported a total of 35 young people in Aberdeen.

#### **4.0 Our befriending service for Older People (Elderly Support Service):**

This service, which was started in July 2018, is aimed at older people (60 years and above) who

- have no close family or friends
- lost contact with family/ friends or they live far away
- have recently experienced bereavement
- are experiencing discrimination/inequality/stigmatization
- lack the ability to use local transport
- experience language or cultural barriers

Hand of Solace befriending service aims to provide companionship to older people

All older people we support experience mental health issues. 85 percent of older people we support through the 'Elderly Support Service' are over 75 years and all the older people we currently support live on their own. 75 percent of older people we are currently supporting are from BME and the majority do not understand the local language. Majority of the older people we support have underlying health conditions and 40 percent are disabled, normally limited in movement hence the benefit of having befriender come in from time to time to reduce loneliness.

The service currently supports 29 older people in Aberdeen. In the past 12 months, it has supported 38 older people in Aberdeen.

#### **Referrals:**

Our Service users incorporate members of the local community from diverse background. Older people continue to be referred to the service through Self-Referral, Aberdeen City Council Social Work (Care Managers), our local GP Surgeries, Scottish Association of Mental Health (SAMH), and other relevant third sector organizations.

#### **5.0 Our "We Move Project"-**

Within the past year, Hand of Solace 'We Move project' supported children and young people from Black Ethnic Community in Aberdeen, to engage in a social action to address issues that matters to them. The project supported 35 young Black Children in Aberdeen and is now completed.

## **6.0 Our “CAFDAAS”-**

Hand of Solace CAFDAAS work with children and their families in Aberdeen City especially those from Black and Minority Ethnic communities and those on asylum to identify and tackle issues causing indulgence in drug and alcohol misuse. The service offered support to help children and their relevant family members manage their well-being and access the support they needed. This Project have now completed .

## **7.0 ABEWS-**

Hand of Solace “Aberdeen Black Ethnic Women Service” is a support service where black women emotional, mental and physical struggle may be supported through- one to one support, social interaction and sharing and learning from each other with the support of a dedicated staff. Majority of women we support through the service have experienced domestic violence and needed a non-judgmental space where they may meet, learn and share experiences with women who shares similar culture and experience as them.

The service runs a weekly one to one support session where black women in Aberdeen going through difficulty such as domestic violence, family issues etc. may book a session to discuss and be supported by a dedicated staff.

Through the year, Hand of Solace ABEWS promotes social integration by arranging group activities where Black women in Aberdeen may have the opportunity to physically meet and socialize, engage in activities that promote their self-confidence and esteem and further learn from other women.

## **8.0 HOS Peers Support Group:**

Through HOS peers Support Group, our young people have the opportunity to meet with other young people aside from their matched befrienders who supports them on a one-to-one basis. The peers support group gives our young people a chance to air and share their ideas and experiences with other young people who share similar experience as them. It gives them an opportunity to learn coping mechanisms and feel more confident from learning and hearing other young people discuss their ideas and experiences. Our Peers Support Group holds on Saturdays at Mile End School Aberdeen.

## **9.0 Staffing**

All the charity management work is being carried out by members of the management board (who are unpaid volunteers). This year, the organisation has used 2 part time staff, 3 sessional staff and one full time Service Coordinator.

### **Volunteers:**

The service started in March 2018 with 7 Volunteers of which 4 were Trustees. We currently have 64 Volunteers working across our services.

## **10.0 Office Space:**

Hand of Solace continue to be based at 41 Regent Quay Aberdeen. This is a city center location which is accessible to our service users and multidisciplinary teams we work with.

## **11.0 Learnings and Challenges:**

All our befriending services are progressing well. All our services are running at the highest limits. The Elderly Befriending Service and our “Aberdeen Black Ethnic Women Group (ABEWOG) currently runs a waiting list.

In the last year, the management at Hand of Solace have reviewed our young people services support processes to ensure it meets up with GIRFEC, the Scottish National approach which is designed to support the wellbeing of children and young people.

Our befriending service and our Peers Support Group where we support our young people clearly underpins the GIRFEC principles, where we support young people to become -nurtured, active, respected, responsible, included, safe, healthy and achieving, to help them to become -Successful Learners, Confident Individuals, Effective Contributors and Responsible Citizens.

Over these 7 years of existence, the charity continues to improve in its method of documentation, flexibility, resilience, organizing and running of the activities of its services.

Our young people’s service continues to be inclusive of young people’s family. This is a step the organisation management took in response to our service feedback in the past few years which had shown that working alongside our young people and their family may be more beneficial to the young people we support.

This year as growing organisation, we have engaged and worked alongside other organisations (both local and national) whose charitable aims and objectives align with ours. Having worked with the British Science Association over one year, one of our management members have been made a community leader for Aberdeen City. This responsibility helped us to introduce science based informal activities to our young people services which our young people did positively engage in and said they liked.

Being a Black led organisation running activities majorly for BME, our organisation and our service users experience racial inequality much often. Last year, our management engaged with Corra Foundation National Drug Mission Learning Network where we spoke in the event on Racial Inequality alongside members of the Scottish Drug Forum.

We continue to maintain regular and due communication with our projects funders, and this helps us to keep track of all our services and ensure we are still meeting up with initial established outputs.

### **Challenges:**

As the need for the services of the organization continues to grow in Aberdeen (which is evident by the amount of referral our services get every year where we are therefore keeping a waiting list), it becomes more challenging as we now offer places based on place on the waiting list and need assessment rather than meeting minimum requirement for the service. The management believes that there may be room for HOS to accept more service users to our services if we may be able to access additional funding to expand the services -which may mean employing additional staff, recruiting more volunteers (volunteers’ expenses and Volunteers training cost) and other management/organizational cost.

In the absence of this additional funding, organization will therefore continue to operate at our current limit to ensure the services runs smoothly.

#### **12.0 Plans for future:**

Hand of Solace shall be proceeding into the 8th year of its service. The need for all our projects is still very high and hence all our services are sustainable. The across board feedback our services received from our service users- including parents in January 2024 was positive. We continue to thank our volunteers, management, and staff for all their effort to ensuring the smooth running of our services through the year especially for being resilient and coping through changes to ensure great service provision. We thank our service users who always offer their time to provide service feedback as it is a great support towards the organisation continued planning and review of the services.

Funding for the organisation charitable activities shall continue to be via local fundraising and charitable grants from government and organisation.


#### **13.0 Training for Volunteers:**

The core trainings are as follow; however, we continue to offer few other trainings to our volunteers which is based on identified need:

- The Organizational Induction
- Child Protection Training
- Adult Support and Protection Training
- Core Befriending Training.
- Drug Awareness


#### **14.0 Reserve Policy:**

The Management Committee continues to examine the charity's requirements for reserves considering the main risks to the organisation. The management has currently reviewed the organization reserve policy whereby the unrestricted funds not committed or invested should not fall below £9,000.00. The reserves are needed to meet the minimum of one full month's service expenses and contracted staff cost. The management committee are confident that at this level they would be able to have a space to initiate the current service ending in the event of a significant drop in funding. The present level of free reserves available to the charity is £11209 which is a reasonably above this target level. Although the strategy is to continue to build reserves through planned operating surpluses, the Management Committee understands we are at a threshold where the reserve may easily drop below the target level. In the short term the Management Committee has also considered the extent to which existing activities and expenditure could be curtailed, should such circumstances arise. Currently our restricted fund is well suited to run the services we offer as we currently have in place-secured multiyear funding towards some of our services.



Chair of the Board of Trustees  
On behalf of Hand of Solace Board of Trustees  
10<sup>th</sup> of September, 2025

## 15.0 Statement of Receipts and Payments for the year ended 31 May 2025

	Enter charity name below					Enter SC No. below	
	Hand of Solace					48192	
	Receipts and payments accounts						
	For the period from	Period start date			to	Period end date	
	Day	Month	Year		Day	Month	Year
	01	June	2024		31	May	2025

Section A Statement of receipts and payments						
	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Expendable endowment funds	Permanent endowment funds	Total funds current period	Total funds last period
	to nearest £	to nearest £	to nearest £	to nearest £	to nearest £	to nearest £
<b>A1 Receipts</b>						
Donations						43,000
Legacies					-	
Grants	1,650	100,343			101,993	91,375
Receipts from fundraising activities	250				250	1,700
Gross trading receipts					-	
Income from investments other than land and buildings					-	
Rents from land & buildings					-	
Gross receipts from other charitable activities					-	31,355
					-	
<b>A1 Sub total</b>	<b>1,900</b>	<b>100,343</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>102,243</b>	<b>167,430</b>
<b>A2 Receipts from asset &amp; investment sales</b>						
Proceeds from sale of fixed assets					-	
Proceeds from sale of investments					-	
<b>A2 Sub total</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>Total receipts</b>	<b>1,900</b>	<b>100,343</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>102,243</b>	<b>167,430</b>
<b>A3 Payments</b>						
Expenses for fundraising activities	75	-			75	50
Gross trading payments					-	-
Investment management costs					-	
Payments relating directly to charitable activities	41,320	100,712			142,032	166,232
Grants and donations					-	
Governance costs:					-	
Audit / independent examination	300				300	300
Preparation of annual accounts					-	
Legal costs					-	
Other					-	
					-	
<b>A3 Sub total</b>	<b>41,695</b>	<b>100,712</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>142,407</b>	<b>166,582</b>
<b>A4 Payments relating to asset and investment movements</b>						
Purchases of fixed assets					-	
Purchase of investments					-	
<b>A4 Sub total</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>Total payments</b>	<b>41,695</b>	<b>100,712</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>142,407</b>	<b>166,582</b>
<b>Net receipts / (payments)</b>	<b>(39,795)</b>	<b>(369)</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>(40,164)</b>	<b>848</b>
<b>A5 Transfers to / (from) funds</b>					-	
<b>Surplus / (deficit) for year</b>	<b>(39,795)</b>	<b>(369)</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>(40,164)</b>	<b>848</b>

16.0 Statement of Balances

		Hand of Solace				48,192	
Section B Statement of balances							
Categories	Details	Unrestricted funds to nearest £	Restricted funds to nearest £	Expendable endowment funds to nearest £	Permanent endowment funds to nearest £	Total current period to nearest £	Total last period to nearest £
B1 Cash funds	Cash and bank balances at start of year	51,004	11,294			62,298	
	Surplus / (deficit) shown on receipts and payments account	(39,795)	(369)			40,164	
						-	
	Cash and bank balances at end of year	11,209	10,925	-	-	22,134	
	(Agree balances with receipts and payments account(s))	-	-	-	-	80,328	- 848



## 17.0 Expenditures 2024/2025

Expenditures as at 31 May 2025				
	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Total current period	Total last period
	to nearest £	to nearest £	to nearest £	to nearest £
Rent	4,525	475	5,000	5,000
Insurance	190	200	390	320
Rates and water	160	50	210	170
Phone Subscription	1,260	260	1,520	1,260
Lights and Heat	980	290	1,270	1,560
Website and broadband	1,840	600	2,440	3,200
Staff Cost	27,300	33,700	61,000	85,901
Accountancy/ Independent Examiner Cost	80	210	290	300
Office Supplies	780		780	920
Postage and Printing and supplies	260		260	470
Office Furniture and Fitting	975		975	170
Cleaning and Waste Disposal	230		230	70
Professional Membership Fee	160		160	150
Sundry Expenses	80		80	70
Volunteers Expenses	2,360	6,200	8,560	6,400
Repairs	420		420	480
Bank charges	20		20	40
Fundraising Expenses	75		75	50
Volunteers Training		9,700	9,700	9,400
Project Service Cost		49,027	49,027	50,651
<b>Total</b>	<b>41,695</b>	<b>100,712</b>	<b>142,407</b>	<b>166,582</b>

## 18.0 Grants: 2024/2025

## Grants as at 31 May 2025

[illegible]

## APPENDIX 3



		<b>Independent examiner's report on the accounts</b>						v2
Report to the trustees/members of	Charity name	Hand of Solace						
	Registered charity number	SC048192						
	On the accounts of the charity for the period	Period start date				Period end date		
	Day	Month	Year		Day	Month	Year	
	01	June	2024	to	31	May	2025	
Set out on pages	7 -10						(remember to include the page numbers of additional sheets)	
Respective responsibilities of trustees and examiner	<p>The charity's trustees are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the terms of the Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) 2005 Act and the Charities Accounts (Scotland) Regulations 2006 (as amended). The charity trustees consider that the audit requirement of Regulation 10(1) (d) of the Accounts Regulations does not apply. It is my responsibility to examine the accounts as required under section 44(1) (c) of the Act and to state whether particular matters have come to my attention.</p>							
Basis of independent examiner's statement	<p>My examination is carried out in accordance with Regulation 11 of the 2006 Accounts Regulations. An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the charity and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts and seeks explanations from the trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit and, consequently, I do not express an audit opinion on the view given by the accounts.</p>							
Independent examiner's statement	<p>In the course of my examination, no matter has come to my attention</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>which gives me reasonable cause to believe that in any material respect the requirements: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>to keep accounting records in accordance with section 44(1) (a) of the 2005 Act and Regulation 4 of the 2006 Accounts Regulations, and</li> <li>to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and comply with Regulation 9 of the 2006 Accounts Regulations</li> </ul> </li> </ol> <p>have not been met, or</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.</li> </ol>							
Signed:					Date:	October 15, 2025		
Name:	[Redacted]							
Relevant professional qualification(s) or body (if any):	[Redacted]							
Address:	[Redacted]							
	[Redacted]							
	[Redacted]							

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

APPENDIX 3

Disclosure section

Only complete if the examiner needs to highlight material problems.

Give here brief details of any items that the examiner wishes to disclose

None