



sense

Sense Group Annual Report and Financial Statements 2025

Sense, the National Deafblind
and Rubella Association:

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

Sense: Registered number 1825301

Registered charity number: 289868



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¹ form the Strategic Report of the Trustees

Introduction from our Chair



Mark Cammies

I am honoured to be the new Chair of Sense, having succeeded Dr Justin Molloy in December 2024. Firstly, I would like to thank Justin for his leadership over the seven years he was Chair. As a result of his incredible leadership, as well as that of those other Trustees who stood down during the year, Sense has continued to grow and develop during a particularly challenging time. I am delighted to build on Justin's great work at Sense and continue to grow the organisation as a force for positive change. I am fortunate to be working with a great mix of new and experienced Trustees on the Board to take this work forward.

I must also thank Richard Kramer OBE, who stood down as our Chief Executive in January this year. Richard led Sense since 2018 with such skill and commitment, and he was a great loss to the organisation. However, following a robust selection process, we were very lucky to appoint James Watson-O'Neill as our new Chief Executive who joined us in February 2025. James brings a wealth of senior leadership experience in the charity sector, as well as a real passion for the cause, and I know we will continue to grow from strength to strength under his leadership.

There is so much to celebrate looking back at our work over the last year, and so much to look forward to in the year ahead. I am proud to present this report, which provides a comprehensive overview of the year at Sense and highlights our achievements across our strategic outcomes, including exceeding our targets in many areas.

In 2024/25 we reached over 5,232 children and families offering early intervention, play services and tailored support, as well as continuing our development of Sense Hubs across the UK, including the completion of a new hub in Belfast. The hub offers day opportunities, a specialist children's nursery, early intervention services, arts, sports, and wellbeing programs, and state-of-the-art sensory rooms. We have helped to combat loneliness through holidays, virtual buddy programs, arts workshops and active lifestyle sessions, as well as continuing our work around awareness and advocacy. And, of course, we continued to support disabled people with complex needs to live independently, pursue their goals and be part of their communities through our accommodation services, day opportunities, community services and our colleges.

Looking to the future, 2025/26 is another exciting year for Sense as we celebrate our 70th anniversary. I am particularly excited about the development of our new strategy and three-year plan, which will set out our new vision, purpose and goals for the future.

I look forward to working with you all as we continue to work together towards a world without limits for disabled people with complex needs.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Mark Cammies'.

Mark Cammies
Chair of Sense

Report of the Trustees of Sense



About Sense

Our vision and mission

Our vision is a world where no disabled person, no matter how complex their needs, is left out, isolated, or unable to fulfil their potential.

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

Who we are

We believe that every disabled person with complex needs should have the opportunity to connect with others and be included in the world. We use our knowledge and expertise to deliver personalised, creative and flexible support at every stage of life, no matter how complex someone's needs.

Who we support

Sense supports disabled people with complex needs, including deafblindness. From the first weeks of life, through the major milestones of adulthood, we want to ensure disabled people and their families are supported to fully live every stage of their life.

There are 1.6 million disabled people with complex needs in the UK, most of whom need significant or high-level care in their daily lives.

What we do and how we do it

Sense supports disabled people with complex needs from the first weeks of life, through all the major milestones of adulthood. No matter how complex someone's needs, we provide support in people's homes, in centres and in residential services across the country.

We also offer practical information, advice and support to carers and families, enabling them to build the resilience to thrive, not just survive.

With Sense, children can develop new ways to communicate and play, adults can build confidence and find a place in their community, and families can feel seen, supported and valued.



Our strategic outcomes: plans and achievements

Outcome 1: Children and families get the best possible start

Being a parent or carer of a disabled child who is deafblind or who has complex needs can be challenging. In many cases, parents can struggle to communicate and connect with their child, especially if the child expresses themselves in a unique way. Getting the right support, at the right time, can make all the difference to a child's development. It also strengthens and supports families, helping them accept and embrace their future lives.

Key achievements

Across all our charitable programmes, Sense reached 5,232 children and their families this year.

We continued to grow the **Sense Early Intervention and Play** service in Birmingham, Bristol, Loughborough and North Wales, offering Connect and Play sessions for 3,560 disabled children with complex needs, aged 0-8 years, and their families.

These services support the vital contribution that free play makes to a child's development. By offering activities ranging from sensory stories to outdoor forest schools, we helped children find new ways to connect, communicate and play.

We continued to deliver the **Sense Toy and Tech** service, which helps parents looking for specialist assistive technology to try before they buy, supporting them to find the right toys and equipment to help their child learn and communicate.

Our service for **multi-sensory impaired (MSI) children and young people** continues to provide tailored extra support for 1,672 children and young people aged 0-25 nationally. This includes specialist one-to-one support at

home or in nursery/school, early years groups, family events, parent/carer information and wellbeing sessions, and bespoke training.

The team reached children and families through face-to-face and virtual activities, supporting them to communicate with each other and access education. They also led and attended professional events across the country to raise awareness and share knowledge of deafblindness and MSI, reaching over 1,163 professionals.

Families had told us they wanted a 'one stop shop' to access support for their children/young people and themselves all in one go, including activities for their children and siblings, information for parents, and a chance to connect with others. This led us to plan our first family conference!

The day was packed with engaging activities for the children and young people we support, including immersive story telling, crafts, messy play and interactive sessions using resonance boards. Siblings joined together for a fun-filled day, starting with immersive story telling before going offsite on a bell boating adventure. And, while their children were engaged in activities, parents had the opportunity to step back and take some time for themselves through Sense Arts wellbeing activities.

We also established new **Sense Active** events across some of our regions and our 'Summer of Sport' engagement took place in summer 2024. This was a one-off activity due to the number of sports competitions that took place in 2024 (for example the 'Euros' football championship, Wimbledon, and Paralympic Games) and enabled us to reach and support more new young people.

Families have continued to tell us they appreciate how Sense has supported them to access trips away and events in their communities. The cost of living and extra financial barriers they face would make these trips impossible otherwise. We supported more new children and young people in our **holidays programme** and received excellent feedback from families on the quality of support.

Supporting someone to deal with their parents' relationship breakup

When the parents of a young person we support were going through an amicable separation, we supported him to understand and navigate the situation.

We developed a social story – a personalised story to help explain the situation – to help him understand things like whose house he would be at and how he could express where he wanted to go. We also included the emotion attached to the situation and reinforced that it's ok to be sad. The story explained it was nobody's fault and he would feel differently in time, as the new normal became routine.

We also worked with the parents and gave them a template for a weekly schedule that used Velcro and laminated pictures so it could be updated. This gave the young person instant and up-to-date information about where he would be and who he would be with during the coming week. He understood the information in this format and it helped him deal with this major life event. In a short space of time, this support helped him show less negative emotion and anxiety, and become much more relaxed.

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

We believe that everyone has a right to live a fulfilling life and play an active part in their community, including through equal access to work, education and training. With the right support – reflecting people's aspirations and needs – we can ensure no one is left out or unable to fulfil their potential.

Key achievements

Our target for this year was to reach 75 new adults across **services that are commissioned**, for example by local authorities and integrated care boards (ICBs). We significantly exceeded this target, with 132 new adults benefiting from our support, including across our supported living, college, residential care and day services.

We've continued to develop our **Sense Hubs** across the UK and our new hub in Belfast was finished in March. It's bright and airy, with welcoming and inspiring spaces to offer a range of services for disabled people, families, and the wider community. The hub offers day opportunities for disabled adults, where people can try new things and make new connections. It will be home to a specialist children's nursery and is also the base for a new early intervention service for disabled children with complex needs from 0-8 years old, enhancing existing support for deafblind children. There will be a new arts, sports and wellbeing programme offered from the hub itself, as well as out in the community in partnership with local providers. The project attracted over £600,000 of fundraised capital, which helped us include state-of-the-art sensory rooms for both children and adults, along with a safe and accessible outdoor play area. There are several fully kitted-out activity rooms, a music room, a living skills kitchen and a technology suite.

In 2024/25 more people made use of the online resources on the Sense website and we achieved our annual target of 4,000 digital downloads. This is due to the collaborative efforts of our digital marketing team, who are constantly reviewing and improving signposting within the website to ensure easy redirection to the right content.

Supporting a person to understand more about taking his prescribed medicine

We helped a young man in supported living understand more about the medication he was prescribed and the process he needed to follow to take it safely with ongoing support from staff.

The manager of the service was involved in developing a written protocol for the staff team to follow. We also produced versions of the protocol and process in Easy Read and Widgit formats for the young man to follow.

The risk was low, as the goal was simply to support his understanding of the process, while staff still supported him to take his medication. But the benefits for the young man were great. By increasing his understanding, he was able to be more involved in his medication and understand more about his health needs. This helped him take more responsibility for keeping himself healthy, and improved his self-esteem and independence. It also helped support his numeracy and literacy skills and showed his ability to learn at home. In the future, there may be an aspiration for him to take his medication completely independently.

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

We know that many disabled people, across all stages of life, feel lonely. This is a very common experience among the people we support. We respond to this challenge by supporting people to build confidence, access new environments, create a sense of connection within their local community and find a route out of loneliness.

Key achievements

This year we helped people and families combat loneliness, learn new skills and make connections through a range of activities.

We hosted a wider range of **Sense Holidays** than in previous years, creating more opportunities for people and their families to take a break. In all, 40 people benefited from being able to go on a memorable accessible holiday with our support. Our main holiday programme hosted five holidays, venturing to Gloucester, North Yorkshire and Blackpool, thanks to 44 wonderful volunteers.

We also worked alongside the Deafblind International Network to enable six Deafblind holidaymakers, and their supporters, to visit a four-day event in Scotland. The event brought people together from all over Europe, including Germany, Norway, Denmark and Ireland.

We supported **250 siblings and young carers** through our services. Based on feedback from young people and parents, we continued to offer monthly wellbeing sessions, facilitated by qualified counsellors. Specific group sessions were aimed at teenagers, with sessions ranging from revision tips to CV writing. Siblings were supported to develop peer-to-peer friendships, and we ran another successful residential trip for 29 siblings, supported by Forward Carers. We also continued to run our sibling service at Sense Hub Loughborough.

The **Sense Virtual Buddy** programme created opportunities for 166 people to connect virtually, learn new skills, have fun and form fantastic friendships.

Our **Arts and Wellbeing programme** expanded significantly in year two of our National Portfolio grant from Arts Council England, delivering 351 days of workshops (our target was 259) and reaching 360 new disabled people with complex needs.

We delivered 27 public events focused on music, dance, visual arts and wellbeing activities. These engaged 5,960 audience members – almost double our annual target – and showcased the impact of disability arts in care. This work continues to embed inclusive arts practice across our services and raise awareness through artist-led events and cultural partnerships.

Throughout 2024-25, we delivered 2,347 **Sense Active** sessions to support individuals in their journey toward more active lifestyles, with a

combined attendance of 21,808 across all sessions. We reached over 2,000 individuals, including 1,073 new participants who joined this year. In addition, we delivered 35 workshops to equip 517 sports professionals with valuable knowledge and practical skills. These achievements mark a meaningful step toward our goal of reaching 5,000 people by 2027, reinforcing our commitment to long-term community impact.

Helping someone to be independently mobile

When a resident of one of our supported living services – who was used to walking independently with a cane – fell in the local community, her injury meant she had a long period of staying at home. Afterwards, she no longer wanted to go to her usual shops and community venues without a member of staff to support her. She would often become distressed while out, especially when faced with steps and kerbs.

We supported her to complete a mobility assessment. It seemed she had lost confidence in her own ability to find her way around, even though she had known her local area for many years. As well as her injury, some of the places she used to go to had closed, including the bank she visited to withdraw her own money.

With a lot of support and encouragement, as well as some bespoke mobility training, she began to use her cane more confidently. We also supported her to re-establish old mobility routes and create new ones, for example to her new bank.

After regaining confidence in her cane and routes, her self-esteem recovered and she started to access her local community independently again. This has also meant she continued to be physically mobile, which may have been at risk without the encouragement to stay independent and active.

Helping someone to meet others

We all want to find that ‘someone special’ in life and ‘J’ is no different. For years they got out and about in their community, meeting people and experiencing life. Feeling they wanted

Our progress continues to be strengthened by our involvement in Sport England’s System Partners work, which supports innovation, collaboration, and the delivery of inclusive physical activity opportunities across communities.

Our **employment programme** supported 442 disabled people and employers, including providing access to training, volunteering and work preparation.

to take things further, they asked their home manager if they could try speed dating.

No one in the home had tried anything like this in the past, but the home manager had a Sense Individuality, Sexuality and Relationships Advisor to call on for support.

‘J’ brought a trusted member of their home’s team to sessions with the advisor, to talk through the details. We researched local opportunities, gathered information and made plans. This included supporting them to fill out the application forms and pay fees, as well as learn how to use Google Maps to plan the route, research car parking, and plan their schedule for the day, including what time they’d have a shower, eat and leave the house. They had a trial run along with their trusted support to test out all the plans and timings, and to learn about the layout of the venue.

A lot of activities took place to help them explore what happens during speed dating sessions, how they would communicate with the other participants and the selection process on the day. They were also supported to explore what qualities and interests they were looking for in their ideal person, and to learn about feelings and emotional resilience to guard against potential disappointment or rejection.

They headed off on their exciting adventure, had a lot of fun and handled the situation with great skill, in part thanks to the support of their chosen member of staff who had been involved consistently in the whole process. They had great fun, enjoyed their evening and returned with lots to talk about.

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

Sense has been standing up for disability rights for 70 years. We support disabled people and their families to fight for change on a local and national level.

Key achievements

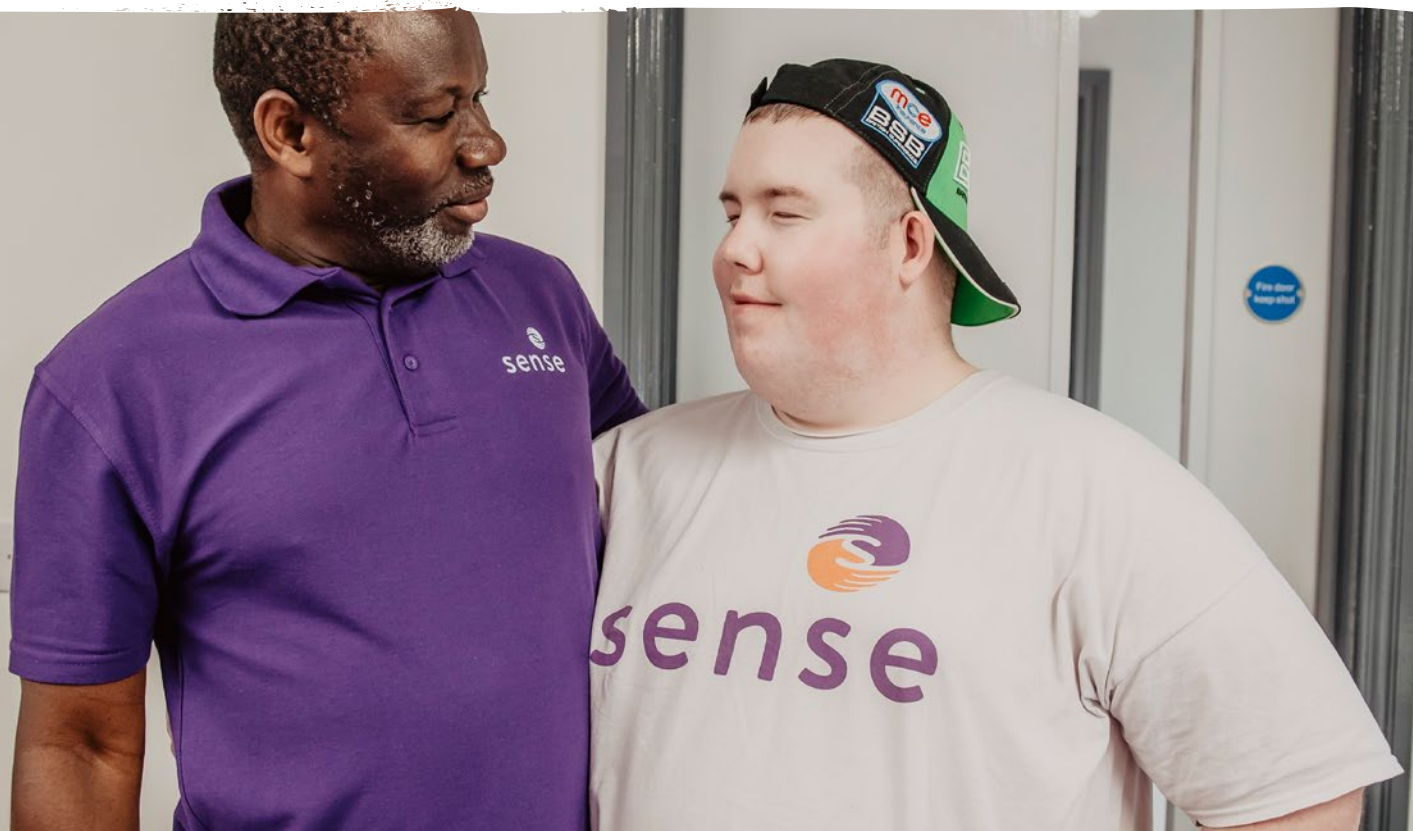
We carried out a lot of work towards our goal of becoming a **Disability Confident Leader**, with the accreditation being awarded in early 2025/26. Becoming a Disability Confident Leader means not only meeting a high standard of inclusive employment practices, but championing them publicly. It demonstrates that we have taken steps to recruit, retain and promote disabled talent, while influencing others to do the same.

We launched a new **campaigning and influencing** strategy during 2024/25, which contributed to

seeing a steady base-level increase in the number of people that say they have heard of Sense.

We successfully launched our **volunteer strategy** in 2024/25 and achieved significant progress on key priorities. We remain committed to making volunteering more impactful, accessible and engaging, and we're working to ensure our 1,900 volunteers, and those who support them, have the tools and resources they need.

Our new volunteer strategy is guiding us towards improving the volunteer experience and developing new volunteer opportunities, as well as supporting trading to deliver sales growth. As part of the launch, we held sessions for our people to find out more about the main objectives and answer any volunteering questions. Our volunteers now have access to a new portal where they can access a range of discount codes, online vouchers and cashback. We've also made the Headspace App available to Virtual Buddy volunteers, allowing them access to an incredible range of resources, such as mindfulness and meditation tools to support mental wellbeing. We're pleased with the uptake from volunteers and believe these resources will help our volunteers reduce stress, improve focus, and enhance their overall wellbeing.



Plans for 2025/26

Looking to the future

Throughout 2025/26, we'll continue to deliver our services focused on the four outcomes outlined in this report. However, we are also using 2025/26 to develop our future strategy and three-year plan.

To shape both of these, we've listened carefully to around 1,500 people – including disabled people with complex needs, family carers, supporters, other charities and our people. Their insight and experiences have guided us every step of the way.

What we have heard is clear. We must:

- Clarify our purpose and direction.
- Involve disabled people with complex needs more meaningfully across our work.
- Make braver, more strategic decisions about how we use our resources.
- Deliver greater, more visible impact for disabled people with complex needs and their families.

Many disabled people with complex needs and their families have told us the support they receive from Sense has been 'life-changing'. But they also shared a stark contrast. Too often, in other areas of life, the support simply isn't there. Barriers are put up at every turn and many feel isolated or alone.

The chance to be in control, make friends, live a long and healthy life, try something new, feel included or travel freely remains out of reach for far too many. We've heard difficult and distressing stories of abuse and discrimination. We've heard about lives shaped by growing financial hardship, as vital benefits are reduced and the rising cost of living continues to hit disabled people with complex needs hardest. Many told us that things have never felt more difficult.

From these conversations came a clear and urgent call for change. For a social movement that breaks down barriers, shifts public attitudes, and transfers power to disabled people with complex needs.

Disabled people with complex needs told us they must be heard and listened to. This means greater choice and control over every aspect of life: who supports them, where they live, and how decisions are made.

The feedback we have received will be central to shaping our new strategy and our bold, inclusive vision for the future. Our Board of Trustees will approve our new strategy at their September 2025 meeting and we'll use the second half of 2025/26 to use this to develop our new three-year plan. The feedback we've received will be central to shaping it, as it reflects the knowledge, experiences, and aspirations of the people who know Sense best. The new three-year plan will be approved by Trustees in March 2026, ready for implementation in 2026/27.



Sense International: performance against objectives for 2024/25

Sense International supports children and adults with deafblindness in Bangladesh, India, Kenya, Nepal, Peru, Romania, Tanzania and Uganda. People with deafblindness in the countries we work in are more likely to live in poverty and be unemployed, with lower educational outcomes than other people with disabilities. They face multiple barriers, including lack of access to healthcare, education, vocational training and opportunities to participate in their community. Lack of accessible information and communication makes it extremely difficult for them to voice their issues.

Sense International had three strategic objectives for 2024/25:

- **Innovate:** People with deafblindness are included in national systems.
- **Inform:** People with deafblindness, and the people who support them, have more information, skills and knowledge.
- **Influence:** People with deafblindness are recognised in laws, policies and budgets.

Innovate

We innovate and show how people with deafblindness can be included in national systems such as healthcare, education and vocational training. We work in partnership with governments, partner organisations, parents and others, and take a life cycle approach, identifying children with deafblindness as early as possible. Then we support them throughout their life, from education through to employment, in family and community life.

This year, **55,770** children were screened for deafblindness across our countries. **6,007** children with deafblindness were supported to access education. **1,565** young people were supported with vocational training or opportunities to earn across our eight countries.

Inform

We share information and train people with deafblindness, their families and carers, health workers, educators and other professionals, communities and decision-makers, so that people with deafblindness get better support.

Across all countries, **17,373** people were trained to support people with deafblindness.

In February 2025, we successfully launched the **Global Deafblindness Resource Hub**, co-hosting the global launch with Google at the Google Discovery Accessibility Centre. The launch was attended by 180 participants from 20 countries in person and online. The Resource Hub, funded by Nelumbo Foundation, is a platform that brings together – for the first time – a range of resources from across the eight countries we work in. It offers a ‘one stop shop’ for people with deafblindness and their support networks to understand and connect with information, local signposted services and networks. We continue to develop the Resource Hub with accessible information and resources, and currently have resources in seven languages – English, Nepali, Romanian, Spanish, Bangla, Hindi and Swahili.

Influence

We raise our voices to ensure the promises and commitments of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD), and other international human rights legal instruments, are realised for people with deafblindness. Together with our partners and collaborators – including organisations of people with deafblindness – we advocate for change in policy, programmes and services. Sense International **India** contributed to the civil

society report on accessibility, commissioned by the Supreme Court of India, and its note on access to education for people with deafblindness was included in the final report submitted to the Supreme Court. More than 117 people with deafblindness participated in the consultation, providing inputs on their access to schools.



Sense International: plans for 2025/26

In 2025/26, we will continue to implement the refreshed five-year strategy we put in place in 2022/23. We'll deliver work on early intervention, inclusive education and vocational training and livelihoods, alongside advocacy, training and knowledge sharing, so that people with deafblindness are meaningfully included in systems and societies. A few of our priorities for 2025/26 include:

- Sense International will begin work on developing our new strategy for 2027/28 onwards. This will include how we can become more locally led as an organisation, with a view to ensuring that power, agency and ownership of the work we do sits with local partners, people and the communities we work with. Consultations with local and UK teams and Trustees, as well as local communities, are planned in 2025/26.
- In Tanzania, we will begin a five-year programme called 'Collective Action on Disability Rights', funded by the Norwegian government through Atlas Alliance and Signo Foundation. The programme aims to empower persons with disabilities and their representative organisations (OPDs) to claim their rights, improve their lives, and hold governments accountable for implementing inclusive policies in line with the UN CRPD. We'll focus on improving access to quality inclusive pre-primary, primary and secondary education for girls and boys with disabilities.
- We will further strengthen our Global Inclusive Education programme, ensuring more children with deafblindness have access to education, and people with deafblindness have access to information and resources through our Global Deafblindness Resource Hub. In 2025/26 we look forward to the local launches of the Hub in all our countries.
- We will be closing out our FCDO-funded Disability Inclusive Development and Inclusive Futures programme, as the programme comes to an end. We'll be publishing and sharing the insights and experience we gained from almost seven years of implementing inclusive education, business and livelihoods programmes.

Quality, inclusion and safeguarding

Quality

CQC 'Good' ratings have reduced from 94 % (2023) to 90 % (2024) to 84 % (2025), which may be an indication of the new CQC assessment framework and not having been inspected for a number of years. 6 % of services are rated Outstanding and 10 % are rated Requires Improvement. We endeavour to continue to learn lessons from previous inspections and through addressing trends in our internal audits. The number of CQC-registered services has also reduced from 52 to 49. There was one closure, one transferred to another provider, and one merged into another service.

Our services in Northern Ireland and Wales remain 'assured' by the Regulation and Quality Improvement Authority (RQIA), and Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW) respectively.

Our independently-chaired **Quality Board** continues to meet quarterly to review evidence of quality assurance across our services and agree recommendations from quality audits that are carried out by the compliance team.

There is an annual schedule of **monthly compliance and focused audits**, which are completed by the operations managers. The audits are analysed by the compliance team and identified trends are shared and addressed with the Head of each operational region. In some cases, online meetings are used to share experience and discuss the identified trends and lessons learned.

Over the last year, we have introduced an **Operations Support Network**. Online sessions provide an opportunity for networking and information sharing between quality and operations teams. There is a mix of mandatory upskilling sessions and voluntary spotlights sessions, with guest speakers from across our operational services on a variety of topics. These have included professional curiosity, safeguarding, and delegated healthcare tasks.

Incidents of behaviour continue to be recorded and analysed centrally using digital systems. This enables our continuous focus on **positive behaviour support** and steers effective decision-making, based on the six core strategies of the Restraint Reduction Network (RRN). This is now part of Sense Behaviour Management policy and positive behaviour support training continues to be delivered to front line staff. Maybo remains the training provider in England, Wales and parts of Northern Ireland, and MAPA is delivered to a small number of staff in one home in Northern Ireland by the trust's request.

We continue to invest in **reducing restrictive practice** and have funded a place on the RRN Diploma in Practise Leadership in Reducing Restrictive Practices. The Quality and Practice manager was one of the first 50 people in the country to complete this and the learning is being used to inform our positive behaviour support strategy.

After the success of the pilot of the **Capable Environment Standards Audit Tool** (to assess both the quality of provision and possible causes of behaviours of concern), our operational services identified areas of improvement and things to celebrate. The audit is now being rolled out across our wider operational services.

Inclusion

The **Sense User Reference Group (SURG)**, made up of disabled people with complex needs who provide feedback on our services, had a vacancy which has been filled. The group continued to meet virtually and in person. They talked to local police about keeping safe in their home and the community, spoke to the strategic lead about their lived experience to inform the Sense strategy, and discussed climate change and moving house. The group also shared ideas for the Sense 70th anniversary events during 2025.

We've expanded our team of **Experts by Experience (EXE)** to four experts. The team have interviewed people we support from across our accommodation services, supported quality audits and attended Quality Board meetings, as well as being involved in stakeholder panel interviews for new Directors across Sense, and a leadership team day. The experts have also worked in partnership with our practice, media and campaigns, recruitment and policy teams. Feedback from the experts and the teams they have worked with is available on request.

The output from Working Together for Change (WTFC) (part of our yearly feedback process) was shared to the strategic leads across Sense. The collation and analysis of the information gave us a clear picture of what is working and what is not. The key themes to emerge and be discussed will be merged with the output of the Capable Environment Standards Audit Tool (see the section on Quality) and used to build action plans for 2026.

Safeguarding

Our independently-chaired **Safeguarding Board** continues to meet regularly to review policies, processes and procedures. It also makes recommendations, including monitoring levels of training and awareness across the whole of Sense. Our compliance team supports with safeguarding queries, concerns and issues that are raised across our operational services.

Our ongoing commitment to the principles of **Making Safeguarding Personal**, has led us to:

- Implement care file notes used in colleges, for our wider operational services. This enables us to analyse any low-level recurring concerns and raise safeguarding referrals if required.
- Increase partnership with the Ann Craft Trust, attending their annual conference in November and quarterly safeguarding network meetings.
- The Fairer Futures project, our partnership with Vamos Theatre, who delivered workshops for two groups of people supported by Sense on the topic 'Understanding Abuse'.
- Involvement in the National Safeguarding Network's fifth national Safeguarding Awareness Week, which took place in November 2024 focusing on 'Working in Partnerships'. Sense provided an overview and keynote speech on the Fairer Future project to over 100 professionals and others attending the Ann Craft AGM.
- Receive increased queries or requests for support through our safeguarding portal on the Sense website.
- Delivery of an online facilitated workshop on professional curiosity, attended by over 120 Sense employees (see the section on Quality).



Fundraising

So much of our work would be impossible without our supporters, and the amazing people that have donated time and money, fundraised, or left money in their Will for Sense. This year, the generosity of our supporters meant we raised £15,870,000 for the work of Sense and Sense International. This was thanks to:

- **243** supporters who left us **£3,905,970** through special bequests to remember Sense in their Will. We extend our heartfelt sympathy and thanks to their loved ones.
- **1,063** further people who enquired about leaving a gift in their Will, after seeing our TV and online advertising.
- **1,154** people who signed up for a new regular gift through our successful face-to-face fundraising activity.
- Over **18,000** new people who gave a gift following our campaigns and appeals on TV, in newspapers and magazines, and online.
- **Over 800** people who ran, cycled and trekked for Sense, raising over **£1,100,000**.
- **124** people who chose to fundraise through swimming, bake sales, head shaves, donations in lieu of birthday or anniversary gifts and more, raising **£52,000**.
- Over **300** fundraisers either setting up an in-memory tribute page or organising a funeral collection, collectively raising **£63,000**.
- **130** Sense shops that took part in four fun weeks of fundraising to raise **£75,000**.
- **148** local businesses, groups and associations that kindly donated to us, raising **£127,000**.

Our commitment to fundraise responsibly

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

We are committed to following best practices in fundraising and marketing. We're members

of the Chartered Institute of Fundraising and registered with the Fundraising Regulator, whose Code of Practice we follow.

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

In 2024/25, we worked with four external professional fundraisers to support our fundraising work. We closely monitor our supplier partners and those that fundraise on our behalf to ensure the highest standards are maintained.

We work extremely hard to ensure supporters and the public have a positive experience of Sense, but we recognise we don't always get it right. You can find our complaints policy on the Sense website (**Our complaints policy - Sense**) – we take all complaints and concerns seriously and value the feedback this provides.

During 2024/25, our supporter services team received 79 complaints (2023/24 – 75 complaints). We always respond quickly to requests to change the way we contact people, and we ensure that our supporters' personal details are managed respectfully and securely. We also review our data management procedures regularly.

During the reporting period, we received 54 requests through the Fundraising Preference Service, asking us not to send fundraising requests and these were removed from our mailing lists. No complaints were made to the Fundraising Regulator about Sense during this period.

If you would like to talk to us about fundraising, please contact us at: supporterservices@sense.org.uk or 0300 330 9257



Our volunteers

In 2024/25, our 1,900 volunteers continued to play a vital role across Sense, supporting our shops, services, activities and virtual programmes with dedication and passion.

In October 2024, we launched our new volunteer strategy, which focuses on three key objectives: enhancing the volunteer experience, developing new roles, and supporting trading to increase sales growth. This has already begun to create a more inclusive culture, with volunteers more actively involved in our work.

We've expanded the range of volunteer opportunities available, introducing new roles such as gardening volunteers and administrative support. This has made it easier for more people to get involved in ways that reflect their interests and skills.

In our shops, over 1,400 volunteers continue to make a significant contribution by driving sales, raising awareness of Sense, and building connections in their local communities. Over the past year, we've also worked to simplify and improve the recruitment process and role structures within retail, helping more people to join and thrive.

Sense Virtual Buddying remains a powerful way to reduce loneliness and isolation. This year, we made important improvements to the programme, focusing on making it more efficient and providing a better experience for volunteers.

Alongside this, we began work to improve how we gather and use volunteer data, and continued to embed our recruitment systems and training to strengthen consistency and support across all volunteer involvement.

Our people

In 2024/25, our talented and dedicated people, comprising 2,890 employees and 1,900 volunteers as of 31 March 2025, continued to ensure that our services remained safe and secure. Everyone, from those directly involved in looking after the people we support, to those raising funds in our shops or working in office functions, played a vital role.

How we supported our people

This year we continued to develop our wellbeing offering, with our mental health first aiders now established and supporting our people across Sense.

In direct response to our employee engagement survey, we delivered a different benefits package for all employees, together with an improved Employee Assistance Programme (EAP). We also introduced a mortgage advice service, in addition to a new voluntary Health Care Cash Plan and refreshed Cycle to Work Scheme.

We invested in our managers through the introduction of people management workshops, to provide them with upskilling and refresher opportunities to support their teams well.

Recruiting new talent

We continue to use digital campaigns to raise awareness of vacancies at Sense and encourage a diverse range of applications, as well as using traditional advertising and job boards to attract candidates.

Our applicant tracking system continues to enable faster, more efficient recruitment and welcoming of new employees. Over 350 hiring managers are now trained to use it.

Engaging and communicating with our people

Our intranet, Sense Engage, continues to evolve and be further embedded into our work culture and practices. This year, we used it to share news, team information, policies and links to our systems. It helps our people find contact information for colleagues, comment on blogs or articles and access our employee benefits.

Equality, diversity and inclusion

Our four employee diversity networks – disability, ethnic diversity, LGBTQ+ and wellbeing networks – continue to provide a safe space for our people to meet, as well as promote an inclusive culture.

We've continued to use staff stories to raise awareness of cultural dates and religious festivals, and 'toolbox talks' for our teams to facilitate and have open conversations, as well as providing signposting information.

We've recruited an accessibility lead to provide practical support, advice and guidance for managers and disabled people, to enhance accessibility for employees at Sense.

We've improved our data collection for equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) data from 74 % of our people to 85 %. This has provided better insight and understanding of protected characteristics and associated trends within our workforce, informing reporting such as our annual pay gap review.

The implementation of systems and processes continues to enhance our ability to identify and analyse trends within our data. These improvements have been instrumental in achieving reductions in our pay gaps.

In addition to our statutory requirements for reporting our gender pay gap, we continue to report on disability and ethnicity pay gaps for our people:

- Gender – Mean: 7.11 % (down 1.71 % from 8.82 %)
- Disability – Mean: 0 % . As an organisation we are proud to continue our yearly performance of reporting a favourable -1.57 % median disability pay gap
- Ethnicity – Mean: 7.3 % (down 0.5 % from 7.8 %)

More detail and a fuller explanation of our pay gaps are given in our pay gap reporting, published on our website – **Diversity pay at Sense 2024 - Sense.**

Chief Executive/senior management pay

The salary of the Chief Executive is set and reviewed by the Nominations and Remuneration committee, which is a subcommittee of our Board of Trustees. The benefits available are in line with those of other employees. The review of the pay of the chief officers' group is carried out, and set, in line with the overall pay award for all other employees.

The governance of Sense

During the year 2024/25, and up to the approval of the annual report and financial statements by the Board, there have been 14 Trustees, some of whom were in post for part of the year. Trustees are also (for the purposes of company law) Directors of Sense, The National Deafblind and Rubella Association. Their names are set out within the section 'The Sense Group' later in this report.

Under the current Articles, Trustees are appointed by the Board of Trustees and can serve two terms of four years.

The Board of Trustees (the Board) usually meets four times a year and Trustees are expected to attend all Board meetings.

Sub-committees

The Board is supported by three committees: Finance and Audit, Engagement and Nominations, and Remuneration. Each committee has written Terms of Reference, which are reviewed as necessary and included in the Governance Handbook. The Board appoints the members of the committees annually and receives either the minutes from their meetings, or reports of their activities, with any recommendations.

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.

Chief officers' group

The Board delegates day-to-day operational management of the organisation to the Chief Executive. The broad areas of delegation, for which the Chief Executive is accountable, have been agreed by the Board 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 chief officers' group meets regularly and includes the Chief Executive, chief financial and commercial officer, chief fundraising and marketing officer, chief operating officer, chief people officer, chief social change officer, chief strategy and governance officer and chief technology officer, as well as the Chief Executive of Sense International.

The Charity Governance Code

The Charity Governance Code specifies that the boards of large charities should publish a brief statement in their annual report on how they use the code under the seven principles.

In 2024, the Charity Governance Code steering group undertook public consultation to make sure the Code remains relevant and useful, and a new version is expected to be launched later in 2025. The code covers seven principles:

1. **Organisational purpose**
2. **Leadership**
3. **Integrity**
4. **Decision-making risk and control**
5. **Board effectiveness**
6. **Equality, diversity and inclusion**
7. **Openness and accountability**

We have detailed our approaches to 'Organisational purpose' (pages 5 and 21), 'Leadership' (page 22), 'Integrity' (as noted within our Governance Handbook) and 'Openness and accountability' within the information provided within this report. To note the three outstanding principles:

Principle 4: Decision making, risk and control

As detailed on page 19, Sense has a robust governance structure. Led by the needs of the organisation, Trustees meet quarterly as a Board and, in addition, will sit on various other committees to provide oversight and decision making within the remit of each committee. Otherwise, decisions will be taken as recommended actions to the full Board of Trustees.

Principle 5: Board effectiveness

The last internal Board review, which took place in 2021, concluded that the Board operates very efficiently, creating a positive and transparent working atmosphere and making decisions well as a team.

In the period 2024/25, four Trustees were recruited, and a skills review followed. In early 2025, the Board and its committees reviewed their Terms of Reference and will complete further recruitment in 2025/26 as necessary to address any skill gaps. It is also planned to conduct a full governance review in 2026/27, as part of the new three-year plan.

Principle 6: Equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI)

The Board is committed to having a diverse membership, with a reasonable balance across areas including race, gender, age, involvement of disabled people with complex needs or their family members, and people from various professional backgrounds.

In 2024/25 we advertised the vacancies for Trustees in a variety of forums to attract representation of people from minority ethnic backgrounds and specifically noted the importance of recruiting Trustees with a lived experience of disability. Two disabled Trustees were appointed as a result.

The Board continues to receive updates on the progress of the EDI strategy and, by extending the software package for recruitment to volunteers, we will be gathering data for all volunteers – including Trustees – in the future.

Working together

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 in England and Wales, with their own Boards and Memorandum and Articles. The objects of both charities are similar, in referring 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 needs 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 its own annual report and financial statements.

Sense is the trading name of Sense, The National Deafblind and Rubella Association, which is a registered charity in England and Wales (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. The Objects approved in 2021 are set out in Article 3 as follows:

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

- 3.1 – primarily support and promote the interests of persons who are deafblind or have multi-sensory impairments; and
- 3.2 – to support persons who, by virtue of having a learning disability or one or more mental or physical impairments,

or sensory impairment(s), require care and/or communication support (together, the “beneficiaries”).

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

Sense is the only member of Sense International.

Sense has the following 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. Any profits from its activities are donated to Sense.

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

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

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

Sense Group Trustees and senior staff

Members of the Board from 1 April 2024 to the present

Dr Justin Molloy (Chair) (Resigned 12 December 2024)

Mark Cammies (Chair)

Saeed Ahmed (Resigned 20 August 2024)

Ben Cooper

Vivienne Hoskins

Simon Jones (Treasurer)

Mythily Katsaris (Resigned 5 February 2025)

Jeremy Larsson (Appointed 12 December 2024)

Alicia McDonnell (Appointed 12 December 2024)

Phil Robertshaw (Appointed 12 December 2024)

Steve Simper (Appointed 12 December 2024, resigned 19 February 2025)

Brian Symington

Nathan Taylor

Mark Westwell

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

Sense chief officers' group

Emma Evans – chief people officer

Jack Lowman – chief social change officer

Kavita Prasad – chief executive of Sense International

Dave Rutt – chief technology officer

Catherine Still – chief finance and commercial officer

James Watson-O'Neill – chief executive

In the year, there were three female and three male chief officers.

Charity information and professional advisers

Registered address

Sense and Sense International

101 Pentonville Road
London, N1 9LG

Tel: 0300 330 9250

Email:

facilities@sense.org.uk

Websites:

www.sense.org.uk

www.senseinternational.org.uk

Sense Northern Ireland

Sense Family Centre

The Manor House
51 Mallusk Road
Newtownabbey
County Antrim, BT36 4RU

Tel/text:

028 9083 3430

Email:

nienquiries@sense.org.uk

Sense Cymru

TouchBase Wales

Caerphilly Business Park
Van Road
Caerphilly, CF83 3ED

Ffôn/tel:

0300 330 9280

Testud/text:

0300 330 9282

Email:

cymruenquiries@sense.org.uk

Sense: Registered number

1825301

Registered charity number:

289868

Professional advisers

Independent auditors

HaysMac LLP

10 Queen Street Place
London, EXC4R 1AG

Bankers

National Westminster Bank PLC

Tavistock House
Tavistock Square
London, WC1H 9JA

Solicitors

Wilsons Solicitors LLP

Alexandra House
St John Street
Salisbury, SP1 2SB

Trowers & Hamlins LLP

3 Bunhill Row
London, EC1Y 8YZ

Insurance advisers

Willis Towers Watson

8 First Street
Floor 6
Manchester, M15 4RP

Section 172 statement

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

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

This is a fundamental consideration in relation to any major decisions made by the Board. This year, the Board continued to focus heavily on the national increase in the cost of living and the effects it has had on the people we support and how we operate.

b) The interests of the company’s employees

This year, we continued to develop our wellbeing offering to our people, with our mental health first aiders now established and supporting our people across Sense.

In direct response to our employee engagement survey, we delivered an updated benefits package for all employees, together with an improved Employee Assistance Programme (EAP). We also introduced a mortgage advice service, in addition to a new voluntary Health Care Cash Plan and refreshed Cycle to Work Scheme.

We invested in our managers through the introduction of people management workshops to provide them with upskilling and refresher opportunities to support their teams well.

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

Our key stakeholders are the people we support across all our services and their families. We regularly communicate with our suppliers. Other important stakeholders are our supporters and volunteers. We continue to work with other charities in our sector and the

Board and Engagement sub-committee are regularly updated about these relationships.

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

One of the key aims of our services is to enable the people we support to feel part of their local communities. Our trading arm also builds strong community links through our shops, which act as important ambassadors for Sense. The shops hold fun weeks, enabling members of the public to take part in activities and to learn more about Sense and the people we support. The shops also sell items which would otherwise go to landfill – an important contribution to the environment (and in line with Sense’s Environment Policy).

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

The good reputation of Sense, both of our services and our business relationships, is critical to our long-term future. Our services are scrutinised not only by our quality team, but by the Quality and Safeguarding Boards, which both have an external Chair and members, with direct input from Trustees. We also have a Whistleblowing Policy in place, giving access to an independent external organisation. The Finance and Audit sub-committee has responsibility for monitoring the impact of the Policy.

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

All members of the Board receive the same information as each other and have access to all papers, minutes and background information. All committees provide an update to each board meeting to ensure that all their discussions and decisions are transparent and open. In addition, all board members have an open invitation to attend any committee meeting they are not a member of.

Internal financial controls

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

- A strategic plan and an annual budget approved by the Board. A number of matters are specifically reserved for the Board'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 the Board.
- The development of policy documents covering all major strategic and operational activities. The chief officers group 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 Sense's Whistleblowing procedure, which provides a number of possible contacts, including an external organisation.

Financial review of Sense 2024/25

Summary of the year

In common with many charities, conditions were challenging for Sense in 2024/25, with a particular pressure on trading margins, which had a significant effect on the overall financial performance. As a result, the Group made a loss of £2,310k in the year. This is consistent with the loss of £2,193k recorded in 23/24, with reserves reducing further as a result.

As in previous years, costs rose as a direct result of the increase in National Living Wage from £10.42 to £11.44 (9.8%) and this affected all areas of activity. We were able to offset this increase to a limited extent with fee increases from commissioners for social care services, but this was much more difficult in our shops and programmes, and inevitably this affected operating profit.

Whilst increased costs affected the whole organisation, sales in our shops were lower year on year. This is unprecedented at Sense and added to the challenges of finding additional income to offset the additional costs. In response to these pressures, restructuring activity was undertaken in order to improve efficiency and secure savings for the future, and this included some shop closures. We started the year with 137 shops and ended it with 132.

However, income from fundraising was substantially higher than the previous year, which meant that Sense was able to support, not only all planned programme activity, but also speak up clearly in the national disability rights debate.

Despite the financial pressures, Sense continued to deliver services in line with the strategy and began to invest in technology for the future, with expenditure on a new fundraising customer relationship management (CRM) system and investment in digital and data talent.

Whilst another year of losses is not helpful, the Group has still increased reserves overall in the last four full years following the pandemic, despite increasing costs.

The Group remains free of borrowings or long-term debt and has an extensive property portfolio. Having exited the legacy pension fund in 2023, there is also no longer any liability attached to pension obligations.

The loss in the year, combined with capital investment in buildings and technology, led to a decrease in cash in the year, with the Group finishing on £6.6 million (2024: £10.1m), with a stable cash position.

Sense Group £ks	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	Total
Income	82,521	86,527	94,976	101,863	365,881
Expenditure	(78,099)	(90,191)	(97,169)	(104,173)	(369,640)
Net income / (loss)*	4,422	(3,664)	(2,193)	(2,310)	(3,759)
Movement into / (out of) reserves**	12,875	5,337	(2,193)	(2,310)	13,695

*before pension liability/cessation movements

**including pension liability/cessation movements

Income

Income generated rose in the year by £6.9m to £101.9m (2024: £95.0m).

Income £ks	2023/24	2024/25	Movement
Donations and legacies	£13,977	£15,870	£1,893
Charitable activities	£64,406	£69,953	£5,547
Trading	£15,750	£15,251	-£499
Investment income	£471	£297	-£174
Other income	£372	£492	£120
Total income	£94,976	£101,863	£6,887

Income from charitable activities increased by £5.5m, mainly as a result of inflationary fee increases secured to offset the increase in National Living Wage.

Donations and legacies income increased as a result of higher income from philanthropy and grants, partially to support the purchase of our new hub in Belfast, which will be operational during 2025.

Trading income reduced slightly in the year as a result of lower sales and some shop closures, which took place towards the end of the year. Year-on-year sales reduced across our shop estate.

The decrease in investment income relates to lower cash balances, and the increase in other income reflects an increase in rental income received.

Expenditure

Expenditure increased by £6.7m to £104.2m (2024: £97.5m).

Expenditure £ks	2023/24	2024/25	Movement
Raising funds	£6,399	£6,855	£456
Charitable activities	£73,677	£78,746	£5,069
Trading	£16,584	£17,735	£1,151
Other	£813	£839	£26
Total expenditure	£97,473	£104,175	£6,702

This increase was largely driven by the increase in National Living Wage, which – at 9.7% – accounted for £5.1m of the overall cost increases. The majority of the additional cost was incurred in charitable activities, as that is where the majority of colleagues work. Costs in trading also increased because of restructure activity, as well as the increase in employment costs.

Balance sheet

The consolidated balance sheet shows a reduction in reserves of £2.3m to £46.2m (2024: £48.5m), with restricted reserves increasing by £0.6m to £3.7m (2024: £3.1m).

There was an increase in fixed assets of £1.3m to £37.1m (2024: £35.8m), which reflects the investment in capital projects in the year of £5.2m. Of these, the major projects were investment in our fundraising CRM to support more effective income generation and the purchase of our Belfast Hub, which will open for service delivery during 2025.

With working capital consistent year on year, the operating loss, coupled with the capital investment, drove a reduction in cash of £3.5m to £6.6m (2024: £10.1m). Operating activities generated cash of £1.2m in the year (2024: £0.04m), with a small positive movement on working capital and increased depreciation charges linked to capital investment.

Reserves

Total reserves reduced in the year to £46.3m, down £2.3m from £48.6m, with restricted reserves increasing from £3.1m in 2024 to £3.8m in 2025. Of the £5m designated in March 2024, £1.0m was for technology investment, which has been spent on the fundraising CRM, and £1.2m was reserved specifically for the Belfast Hub, which has also been spent. In-year activity to support further development in services and technology has been budgeted and will be funded from unrestricted reserves.

The Trustees regularly review free reserves to ensure there are adequate funds to support all the activity Sense Group undertakes. This review reflects the need to maintain a considerable property estate in order to continue to provide the high quality of services to the people we support, to fund investment projects to grow services and to ensure an adequate contingency is maintained for unforeseen events.

In March 2025 Trustees have agreed to release all designated reserves (2024: £5

million) in anticipation of agreeing our new strategy, which will identify new areas for investment and development.

We also consider unforeseen risks when setting a minimum level of free reserves. We define free reserves as unrestricted reserves, minus fixed assets, minus any designated reserves. Free reserves at March 2025 were £5.3 million (2024: £4.6 million), reflecting the investment made in fixed assets offset by releasing designated reserves.

Sense Group free reserves £ks	Mar 25	Mar 24
Unrestricted reserves	42,494	45,437
Minus fixed assets	(37,150)	(35,843)
Minus designated reserves	-	(5,000)
Total free reserves	5,344	4,594

After considering various scenarios and the risks attached to each of our income streams, the Trustees consider that minimum free reserves of £4.5 million are required (2024: £4.2 million). Trustees therefore consider our reserves to be in excess of our minimum target.

Going concern

The closing position at March 2025, detailed in the financial statements for the year, combined with forecasts based on agreed activity over the near period, shows that Sense will be able to fund foreseeable operational and capital

expenditure. It remains the case that Sense has eliminated all long-term debt and significant liabilities, including the pension liability. The Trustees have reviewed budgets and forecasts which consider future activity and the risks that might threaten those forecasts.

Sense Group provides a letter of support to Sense International, which pledges to provide financial support to Sense International if it is unable to operate as a going concern and to settle its liabilities as they fall due. This is reviewed as part of the going concern analysis.

Together with our risk management policies, the strong reserves position and no indebtedness allows the Trustees to conclude that the organisation will continue to meet its liabilities, as they fall due, for at least 12 months from the date of this report and that therefore it is appropriate to continue to prepare the financial statements on a going concern basis.

Ethical investments

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



Principal risks and uncertainties

The Board has delegated day-to-day responsibility for the management of risks to the Chief Executive and chief officers' group.

The chief officers' group is responsible for the identification and assessment of risk, including those identified on departmental risk registers, and for reporting on this to the Finance and Audit committee. The chief officers' group 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 reviewed each month by the chief officers' group, and the departmental

risk registers are reviewed by each chief officer for their areas. The chief officers' group agree which department-specific risks should be included on the corporate risk register.

The Finance and Audit committee is responsible for overseeing the establishment and maintenance of good practice in this area, and for reporting to the Board at each of its meetings when the corporate risk register is reviewed.

The major risks currently on the risk register, along with the principal controls applied to those risks, are as follows:

Uncertainty/risk	Possible consequences	Controls in place
Sense systems are compromised by a cyber attack.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Sense systems are unavailable, impacting on service delivery. ● Loss of significant financial sums through deception or extortion. ● There is severe reputational impact, with regulatory and contractual implications. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Investment in cyber security systems. ● Independent Chief Information Security Officer support from expert. ● Internal cyber security training.
Trading fails to generate sustainable income.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Trading becomes loss making and financially unsustainable. ● Costs of exit impact adversely on Sense's finances. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Cost reduction restructure implemented. ● Programme of shop closures agreed. ● Strategic review of trading completed.
Safeguarding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Individuals put at risk of harm. ● Significant reputational risk. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Independently chaired Quality & Safeguarding Board reports to Trustees. ● Significant internal structure with a head of safeguarding in place. ● Digital services safeguarding policy in place. ● Compulsory internal training for all staff in place.

Environmental impact

In 2024-25, Sense generated 2,632.7 tCO₂e of carbon emissions; an increase of 210.5 tCO₂e from the previous year.

Gas, electric and oil (scope 1&2) emissions increased because of a bigger national building floor area (57,719m²), but also more accurate metering data, meaning Sense has a truer reflection of energy consumption. To date, 95 % of our meters have been upgraded to smart meters, and we remain committed to transitioning the remaining units. The supporting associated software will provide Sense with enhanced capability for energy consumption analysis.

Sense has successfully submitted the compliance notification for ESOS Phase 3 before 5 June 2024, undertaking a thorough evaluation of the recommendations, and implementing actions where deemed appropriate and cost-effective to do so. Some of these innovative activities include:

Touch Base South-East in Barnet

Replacing the old boiler plant with new, highly efficient condensing boilers, including insulating exposed pipework, a new burner management system (BMS) and associated controls.

Loughborough College

Installation of new efficient condensing boilers and associated thermostatic controls, separating hot water systems from low-temperature hot water systems and providing energy training to staff.

Kings Norton Old Coach House and Otterhayes House in Devon

The installation of new photovoltaic solar panel systems.

Other comments

Company transport emissions fell by 6.1 % for diesel vehicles and 12.9 % for petrol vehicles, as a result of a reduced fleet from 174 vehicles to 158 vehicles. Scope 3 grey fleet emissions reduced by 7 % to 196.1 tCO₂e, because of less travel across our fixed locations. Overall, Sense is looking for innovative ways to reduce vehicle travel, including the use of tablets to conduct virtual audits, without the need to physically visit sites as often.

In the next financial year, Sense is completing further energy audits on our freehold assets to identify sustainability opportunities. We are committed to changing all our electricity meters to enable comprehensive analysis of power consumption, thereby supporting well-informed decision-making in relation to future energy reduction initiatives. The installation of these meters ensures that Sense is strategically positioned well in advance of the Market-wide Half-Hourly Settlement (MHHS) transition, scheduled for implementation in 2027.

This report allows Sense to comply with the UK government regulations, while promoting responsible environmental stewardship, transparency in reporting, energy efficiency and carbon reduction. The table below shows Sense's carbon emissions, compared to the previous financial year:

Energy/Activity	Scope - GHG Protocol Corporate Standard	Period 2024/25			Period 2023/24			Variance 2024/25 v 2023/24				
		kWh	tCO2e (gross)	% of Total	kWh	tCO2e (gross)	% of Total	kWh	tCO2e (gross)	tCO2e Varn %	kWh Varn %	
Scope 1												
Combustion of Natural Gas	Scope 1 (Direct Emissions)	4,768,519	966.6	36.71%	4,260,094	766.8	33.25%	508,425	199.8	26%	11.90%	
Combustion of Oil	Scope 1 (Direct Emissions)	359,569	93.4	3.55%	310,241	77.6	3.36%	49,328	15.8	20%	15.90%	
Transport Own Vehicles (Diesel)	Scope 1 (Direct emissions)	1,656,903	430	16.33%	1,763,840	423.3	18.36%	-106,937	6.7	2%	-6.10%	
Transport Own Vehicles (Petrol)	Scope 1 (Direct emissions)	570,060	132.1	5.02%	654,140	143.9	6.24%	-84,080	-11.8	-8%	-12.90%	
Scope 1 - TOTALS		7,355,052	1,622.10		6,988,315	1,411.60		366,737	210.5		5.20%	
Scope 2												
Electricity	Scope 2 (Energy Indirect)	4,601,749	814.5	30.94%	3,301,599	683.7	29.65%	1,300,150	130.8	19%	39.40%	
Scope 3												
Transport - employee-owned vehicles business travel	Scope 3 (Other Indirect)	730,222	196.1	7.45%	920,882	210.7	9.14%	-190,660	-14.6	-7%	-20.70%	
TOTALS (Gross)		12,687,023	2,632.70	100.00%	11,210,796	2,306.00	100.00%	1,476,227	326.8	14%	13.20%	

In calculating the emissions, we have used the UK Government conversion factors for company reporting of greenhouse gas emissions, conversion factors 2025:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/greenhouse-gas-reporting-conversion-factors-2025>

Methodology

Sense has compiled this report for the accounting period 1 April 2024 to 31 March 2025, following the UK HM Government 'Environmental Reporting Guidelines: Including streamlined energy and carbon reporting guidance June 2023'. We have also used the GHG Reporting Protocol Corporate Standard.

Energy data has been gathered from the following sources:

- Gas combustion – Supplier invoices, including a minor quantity of supplier-estimated meter readings
- Electricity – Supplier invoices, including a minor quantity of supplier-estimated meter readings.
- Transport – Own fleet – Finance records for litres of fuel (petrol & diesel) purchased.
- Staff vehicle grey fleet – Finance records for claimed mileage from each vehicle. As the diesel / petrol split was unknown, a weighted average was applied.

Statement of the responsibilities of the Board of Trustees of Sense

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 and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and regulation.

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

- Select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently.
- Observe the methods and principles in the Statement of Recommended Practice: Accounting and Reporting by Charities (2019).
- Make judgments and estimates that are reasonable and prudent.
- State whether applicable UK Accounting Standards, comprising FRS 102, have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements.
- 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, disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charitable company and the Group, and enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 2006. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charitable company and the Group, and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

The Trustees are responsible for the maintenance and integrity of the charitable company's website. Legislation in the United Kingdom governing the preparation and dissemination of financial statements may differ from legislation in other jurisdictions.

In accordance with Section 418, Directors' reports shall include a statement, in the case of each Director in office at the date the Directors' report is approved, that:

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

The Trustees' Report, which includes the strategic report as required by company law, was approved by order of the Board of Trustees and signed on its behalf by;



Mark Cammies

Chair

Date: 23 September 2025

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

Report on the audit of the financial statements

Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of Sense, The National Deafblind and Rubella Association for the year ended 31 March 2025 which comprise the Consolidated statement of financial activities, Consolidated balance sheet, Company balance sheet, Consolidated summary income and expenditure account, Consolidated cash flow and notes to the financial statements, including a summary of significant accounting policies. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards, including Financial Reporting Standard 102 The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

In our opinion, 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 2025 and of the Group's and parent charitable company's net movement in funds, including the income and expenditure, for the year then ended;
- have been properly prepared in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice; and
- have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006.

Basis for opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK) (ISAs (UK)) and applicable law. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements section of our report. We are

independent of the Group in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in the UK, including the FRC's Ethical Standard, and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

Conclusions relating to going concern

In auditing the financial statements, we have concluded that the Trustees' use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements is appropriate.

Based on the work we have performed, we have not identified any material uncertainties relating to events or conditions that, individually or collectively, may cast significant doubt on the Group's ability to continue as a going concern for a period of at least twelve months from when the financial statements are authorised for issue.

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

Other information

The Trustees are responsible for the other information. The other information comprises the information included in the 'Report of the Trustees', and the 'Introduction from our Chair' sections within the annual report. Our opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and, except to the extent otherwise explicitly stated in our report, we do not express any form of assurance conclusion 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 such material inconsistencies or apparent material misstatements, we are required to determine whether there is a material misstatement in 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 in this regard.

Opinions on other matters prescribed by the Companies Act 2006

In our opinion, based on the work undertaken in the course of the audit:

- the information given in the Report of the Trustees (which includes the strategic report and the directors' report prepared for the purposes of company law) for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements; and
- the strategic report and the directors' report included within the Report of the Trustees have been prepared in accordance with applicable legal requirements.

Matters on which we are required to report by exception

In the light of the knowledge and understanding of the Group and the parent charitable company and its environment obtained in the course of the audit, we have not identified material misstatements in the Report of the Trustees (which incorporates the strategic report and the directors' report).

We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters in relation to which the Companies Act 2006 requires us to report to you if, in our opinion:

- adequate accounting records have not been kept by the parent charitable company; or
- the parent charitable company financial statements are not in agreement with the accounting records and returns; or

- certain disclosures of Trustees' remuneration specified by law are not made; or
- we have not received all the information and explanations we require for our audit.

Responsibilities of Trustees for the financial statements

As explained more fully in the Trustees' responsibilities statement set out on page 33, 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 and for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view, and for such internal control as the Trustees 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 the 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 or the parent charitable company or to cease operations, or have no realistic alternative but to do so.

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

Irregularities, including fraud, are instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations. We design procedures in line with our responsibilities,

outlined above, to detect material misstatements in respect of irregularities, including fraud. The extent to which our procedures are capable of detecting irregularities, including fraud is detailed below:

Based on our understanding of the Group and the environment in which it operates, we identified that the principal risks of non-compliance with laws and regulations related to the reporting requirements of the Charities SORP, FRS 102 and Companies Act 2006. We considered the extent to which non-compliance might have a material effect on the financial statements. We also considered those laws and regulations that have a direct impact on the preparation of the financial statements such as the Companies Act 2006 and the Charities Act 2011, and consider other factors such as income tax, payroll tax and sales tax.

We evaluated management's incentives and opportunities for fraudulent manipulation of the financial statements (including the risk of override of controls) and determined that the principal risks were related to posting inappropriate journal entries to revenue and management bias in accounting estimates. Audit procedures performed by the engagement team included:

- Inspecting correspondence with regulators and tax authorities;
- Discussions with management including consideration of known or suspected instances of non-compliance with laws and regulation and fraud;
- Evaluating management's controls designed to prevent and detect irregularities;
- Identifying and testing journals, in particular journal entries posted with unusual account combinations, postings by unusual users or with unusual descriptions; and
- Challenging assumptions and judgements made by management in their critical accounting estimates

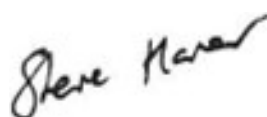
Because of the inherent limitations of an audit, there is a risk that we will not detect all irregularities, including those leading to a material misstatement in the financial statements or non-compliance with regulation. This risk increases the more that compliance with a law or regulation

is removed from the events and transactions reflected in the financial statements, as we will be less likely to become aware of instances of non-compliance. The risk is also greater regarding irregularities occurring due to fraud rather than error, as fraud involves intentional concealment, forgery, collusion, omission or misrepresentation.

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. This description forms part of our auditor's report.

Use of our report

This report is made solely to the charitable company's members, as a body, in accordance with Chapter 3 of Part 16 of the Companies Act 2006. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the charitable company's members those matters we are required to state to them in an Auditor's report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the charitable company and the charitable company's members, as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.



Steve Harper
(Senior Statutory Auditor)

For and on behalf of
HaysMacLLP,
10 Queen Street Place
London EC4R 1AG

Statutory Auditor Date:
29 September 2025

Financial statements



Consolidated statement of financial activities for the year ended 31 March 2025

	Note	Unrestricted Funds £000s	Restricted Funds £000s	Endowment Funds £000s	Total 2025 £000s	Total 2024 £000s
Income						
Donations and legacies	1	11,315	4,555	-	15,870	13,977
Charitable activities	1	68,860	1,093	-	69,953	64,406
Trading	1	15,251	-	-	15,251	15,750
Investment income	2	293	4	-	297	471
Other income	3	492	-	-	492	372
Total income		96,211	5,652	-	101,863	94,976
Expenditure						
	4					
Raising funds		6,850	5	-	6,855	6,399
Charitable activities		74,200	4,546	-	78,746	73,677
Trading		17,735	-	-	17,735	16,584
Other		839	-	-	839	813
Total expenditure		99,624	4,551	-	104,175	97,473
Net gain on sale of tangible fixed assets	5	2	-	-	2	304
Net (decrease) / increase before transfer between funds		(3,411)	1,101	-	(2,310)	(2,193)
Transfers between funds	18	468	(468)	-	-	-
Net (decrease) / increase after transfer between funds		(2,943)	633	-	(2,310)	(2,193)
Reconciliation of movement in funds						
Fund balances brought forward	18	45,085	3,126	352	48,563	50,756
Net (decrease) / increase in funds	18	(2,943)	633	-	(2,310)	(2,193)
Fund balances carried forward	18	42,142	3,759	352	46,253	48,563

The net income of unrestricted funds is analysed between the general fund and designated funds.

Consolidated balance sheet as at 31 March 2025

	Notes	31 March 2025 £000s	31 March 2024 £000s
Fixed assets			
Tangible assets	10	37,150	35,843
Total fixed assets		37,150	35,843
Current assets			
Stock		499	666
Debtors	12	10,659	11,253
Investment	13	-	4,000
Cash at bank and in hand		6,610	6,144
Total current assets		17,768	22,063
Creditors (amounts falling due within one year)	14	(8,649)	(9,319)
Net current assets		9,119	12,744
Total assets less current liabilities		46,269	48,587
Creditors (amounts falling due after more than one year)	15	(16)	(24)
Net assets		46,253	48,563
Represented by:			
General fund	17	42,142	40,085
Designated funds	17	-	5,000
Restricted funds	17	3,759	3,126
Endowment fund	17	352	352
Total funds		46,253	48,563

The notes on pages 46 to 65 form part of these financial statements.

The surplus / (deficit) of the parent charity before consolidation was (£2,612K) (2024: £2,503k).

The financial statements on pages 38 to 65 were approved by the Board of Trustees on 23 September 2025 and signed on its behalf by:

ST Jones

Simon Jones
Treasurer

Registered company number 1825301

Company balance sheet as at 31 March 2025

	Notes	31 March 2025 £000s	31 March 2024 £000s
Fixed assets			
Tangible assets	10	37,142	35,823
Investments	11	30	30
Total fixed assets		37,172	35,853
Current assets			
Stock		499	666
Debtors	12	10,462	11,368
Investments	13	-	4,000
Cash at bank and in hand		5,653	5,098
Total current assets		16,614	21,132
Creditors (amounts falling due within one year)	14	(8,567)	(9,154)
Net current assets		8,047	11,978
Total assets less current liabilities		45,219	47,831
Creditors (amounts falling due after more than one year)		-	-
Net assets excluding pension liability		45,219	47,831
Net assets		45,219	47,831
The funds of the charity			
General fund	17	42,021	39,755
Designated funds	17	-	5,000
Restricted funds	17	2,846	2,724
Endowment fund	17	352	352
Total funds		45,219	47,831

The notes on pages 46 to 65 form part of these financial statements.

The financial statements on pages 38 to 65 were approved by the Board of Trustees on 23 September 2025 and signed on its behalf by:

ST Jones

Simon Jones
Treasurer

Registered company number 1825301

Consolidated summary income and expenditure account for the year ended 31 March 2025

	2025 £000s	2024 £000s
Income	101,566	94,505
Total expenditure of operations	(104,175)	(97,473)
Operating (deficit)/surplus	(2,609)	(2,968)
Gain/(Loss) on disposal of tangible fixed assets	2	304
Interest receivable and similar income	297	471
Net (expense)/income for the year	(2,310)	(2,193)

Consolidated cash flow statement for the year ended 31 March 2025

	Note	2025 £000s	2024 £000s
Cash flows from operating activities			
Net cash (outflow)/inflow from operating activities	24	1,163	39
Cash flows from Investing activities:			
Interest received		297	471
Proceeds from the sale of tangible fixed assets		169	574
Purchase of tangible fixed assets		(5,163)	(5,607)
Net cash provided by (used in) investing activities		(4,697)	(4,562)
Cash flows from financing activities:			
Repayments of borrowing		-	-
Net cash provided by (used in) financing activities		-	-
Change in cash and cash equivalents in the reporting period (including short term deposits)		(3,534)	(4,523)
Change in cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the reporting period (including short term deposits)		10,144	14,667
Change in cash and cash equivalents at the end of the reporting period (including short term deposits)	27	6,610	10,144

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.

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 budgets and forecasts which consider future activity and have also taken account of the risks that might threaten the expected position. Trustees have reviewed the forecasts in the light of severe and plausible downsides such as loss of retail income or inadequate fee increases to cover increased costs and conclude that revenue and capital expenditure will be covered even if such adverse circumstances occur. Trustees have also reviewed the risk register in detail during the year including a review of risk mitigation strategies. Given the risk management policies and strong reserves position, the Trustees believe that the organisation will continue to meet its liabilities as they fall due for at least 12

months from the date of this report. The Trustees have concluded that there are no material uncertainties with regards to the going concern assumption therefore it is appropriate to prepare the financial statements on a going concern basis.

Group financial statements

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

Income recognition

Income is recognised when the charity is legally entitled to the income, and the amount can be quantified with reasonable accuracy and receipt is probable.

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 income from the sale of goods to customers and is recognised at the point of sale, which is when the risks and rewards of ownership are transferred to the customer, and the income can be measured reliably.

Legacy income is recognised on a receivable basis or when it is probable that legacy income will be received and the amount 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 which include 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.

Donations are recognised as income when received, except when the income is related to

major events, when income is deferred until the event takes place. This is most notable in the case of the London Marathon, which takes place in April with any income received in advance of the event deferred. 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 raising funds represents the cost of organising fundraising events and activities. Trading costs cover the operating costs of the charity's shops. The cost of charitable activities includes all expenditure directly relating to the objects of the charity. Support costs are apportioned to the relevant charitable activity based on salary costs incurred, income raised or another relevant basis of allocation.

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

Cost allocation

Support costs not attributable to a single activity are allocated or apportioned on a basis consistent with identified cost drivers for that cost category. Cost drivers utilised include head count, direct costs, and estimation and judgement is exercised in applying cost drivers to cost categories.

Tangible fixed assets

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. Company policy is to capitalize items above £500 in cost.

Freehold land is not depreciated.

Assets under construction are included under the relevant fixed asset category in note 20. These assets appear at cost to date and are not yet subject to depreciation.

Intangible assets

Amortisation is provided so as to write off the cost of the assets in equal instalments over the estimated useful life of the asset. The amortisation rates used to achieve this are:

Software: 25 % per annum

Depreciation and amortisation

Depreciation is calculated 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 %

Leases

Operating lease rentals are expensed in equal amounts over the term of the lease.

Stock

Stock relates to new and second-hand goods purchased for sale through the shops, valued at the lower of cost or net realisable value. Donated goods and Sense merchandise are valued at nil as their intrinsic value is immaterial.

Recognition of liabilities

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

Provisions - Dilapidations

Provision is made for dilapidations in respect of leasehold properties, principally charity shops. The provision reflects an estimate of the costs to make good the leased property at the expiry of the lease and the elapsed period of the lease at the year end. On expiry of a lease, and if we are exiting the property, any expenditure in excess of the accumulated provision is recognised in the Statement of Financial Activity.

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 become due.

Pension costs in respect of the Teachers' Pension Scheme (TPS), 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 become due.

Fixed assets: subsidiary undertakings

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

Foreign currency

Assets and liabilities denominated in foreign currencies are translated at the rate of exchange prevailing at the balance sheet date.

Exchange differences are recognised within net income/(expenditure).

Allocation of funds

General funds represent 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 must be used in accordance with specific instructions imposed by the donors, or which have been raised by the charity for particular purposes. Where allowable and directly attributable, the relevant costs of administering and delivering the restricted activity are charged to the fund.

Endowment funds represent assets that must be held permanently by the charity, principally properties. Any capital gains or losses arising on sale of those assets' forms 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 held in current accounts, petty cash, and short-term highly liquid investments with a maturity of three months or less from the date of acquisition or opening of the deposit or similar account.

Financial instruments

Sense has financial assets and financial liabilities of a kind that qualify as basic financial instruments. Basic financial instruments are initially recognised at transaction value and subsequently measured at amortised cost using the effective interest method. Financial assets held at amortised cost comprise cash at bank and in hand, together with trade and other debtors and accrued income. Financial liabilities held at amortised cost comprise trade and other creditors and accruals.

Investment

Investments include cash held on deposit for terms of between three months and one year.

Sense had no investments at March 2025 (March 2024: £4 million in deposit accounts).

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.



Notes to the financial statements of Sense, the National Deafblind and Rubella Association, for the year ended 31 March 2025

1. Income

Donations and legacies	2025	2024
	£000s	£000s
Donations	11,960	9,763
Restricted	4,380	3,264
Unrestricted	7,580	6,499
Legacies	3,910	4,214
Restricted	165	-
Unrestricted	3,745	4,214
Total	15,870	13,977

Charitable activities	2025	2024
	£000s	£000s
Care and Support Midlands	14,392	13,572
Care and Support East	13,577	12,556
Care and Support South	15,669	14,714
Care and Support North	11,055	10,339
Care and Support Northern Ireland	3,679	3,334
Care and Support Wales	2,905	2,212
Education and development programmes	7,657	6,585
International programmes	961	956
Arts and wellbeing programmes	3	10
Holidays and volunteering	37	126
Adult specialist services	9	-
Children's specialist services	9	2
Total	69,953	64,406

Income from Donation and Legacies includes grants received for a specific purpose which have been spent entirely on that purpose as follows:

	2025	2024
	£000s	£000s
Sense	1,909	1,850
Sense International	960	960
Total	2,869	2,810

1. Income (cont'd)

Trading	2025	2023
	£000s	£000s
Sale of goods	14,374	14,843
Gift Aid	740	740
Fundraising	87	132
Rent received	50	35
Total	15,251	15,750

2. Investment income

	2025	2024
	£000s	£000s
Bank interest	297	471

3. Other income

	2025	2024
	£000s	£000s
Other income		
Miscellaneous income	492	372

Miscellaneous income: Rental of office and conference space income at Sense Touch Base Pears and Pentonville Road.

4. Expenditure 2024/25

Activity	Direct Costs £000s	Apportioned Support Costs £000s	2025 £000s
Fundraising	6,540	315	6,855
Trading	17,692	43	17,735
TouchBase Pears	661	6	667
Care and Support Midlands	16,678	1,383	18,061
Care and Support East	12,616	1,290	13,906
Care and Support South	14,385	1,481	15,866
Care and Support North	10,247	1,113	11,360
Care and Support Northern Ireland	3,527	378	3,905
Care and Support Wales	2,893	296	3,189
Education and development programmes	2,548	666	3,214
International programmes	2,848	99	2,947
Arts and wellbeing programmes	1,156	88	1,244
Holidays and volunteering	507	51	558
Adult specialist services	64	6	70
Children's specialist services	1,192	122	1,314
Campaigns, publicity and awareness	1,713	151	1,864
Quality assurance and development	1,120	128	1,248
Other	172	-	174
Total	96,559	7,616	104,175

Analysis of apportioned support costs 2024/25

Activity	Facilities £000s	Management £000s	People £000s	Finance £000s	Governance £000s	Comms £000s	2025 £000s
Fundraising	18	16	95	103	2	81	315
Trading	-	-	43	-	-	-	43
TouchBase	-	-	2	2	-	2	6
Care and Support Midlands	79	70	417	452	7	358	1,383
Care and Support East	74	65	389	422	6	334	1,290
Care and Support South	85	75	447	484	7	383	1,481
Care and Support North	64	56	336	364	5	288	1,113
Care and Support Northern Ireland	22	19	114	123	2	98	378
Care and Support Wales	17	15	89	97	1	77	296
Education programmes	38	34	201	218	3	172	666
International programmes	-	92	-	-	7	-	99
Arts and wellbeing programmes	5	4	27	29	-	23	88
Holidays and volunteering	3	3	15	17	-	13	51
Adult specialist services	-	-	2	2	-	2	6
Children's specialist services	7	6	37	40	1	31	122
Campaigns, publicity and awareness	9	8	45	49	1	39	151
Quality assurance and development	7	6	39	42	1	33	128
Total	428	469	2,298	2,444	43	1,934	7,616

4. Expenditure 2023/24

Activity	Direct Costs £000s	Apportioned Support Costs £000s	2024 £000s
Donations	6,089	310	6,399
Trading	16,542	43	16,585
TouchBase Pears	482	9	491
Care and Support Midlands	15,028	1,365	16,393
Care and Support East	11,477	1,174	12,651
Care and Support South	14,345	1,513	15,858
Care and Support North	9,389	1,026	10,415
Care and Support Northern Ireland	3,062	322	3,384
Care and Support Wales	2,297	230	2,527
Education and development programmes	2,547	534	3,081
International programmes	2,453	145	2,598
Arts and wellbeing programmes	1,191	92	1,283
Holidays and volunteering	962	89	1,051
Adult specialist services	81	9	90
Children's specialist services	1,079	113	1,192
Campaigns, publicity and awareness	1,652	149	1,801
Quality assurance and development	1,120	121	1,241
Other	433	-	433
Total	90,229	7,244	97,473

Analysis of apportioned support costs 2023/24

Activity	Facilities £000s	Management £000s	People £000s	Finance £000s	Governance £000s	Comms £000s	2024 £000s
Donations	20	14	98	99	2	77	310
Trading	-	-	43	-	-	-	43
TouchBase	1	-	3	3	-	2	9
Care and Support Midlands	88	62	432	434	9	340	1,365
Care and Support East	76	54	371	373	8	292	1,174
Care and Support South	98	69	479	481	10	376	1,513
Care and Support North	66	47	325	326	7	255	1,026
Care and Support Northern Ireland	21	15	102	102	2	80	322
Care and Support Wales	15	11	73	73	1	57	230
Education programmes	35	24	169	170	3	133	534
International programmes	-	103	-	-	42	-	145
Arts and wellbeing programmes	6	4	29	29	1	23	92
Holidays and volunteering	6	4	28	28	1	22	89
Adult specialist services	1	-	3	3	-	2	9
Children's specialist services	7	5	36	36	1	28	113
Campaigns, publicity and awareness	10	7	47	47	1	37	149
Quality assurance and development	8	6	38	38	1	30	121
Total	458	425	2,276	2,242	89	1,754	7,244

5. Net gain/ (loss) on sale of tangible fixed assets

	2025 £000s	2024 £000s
Net gain / (Loss) on sale of tangible fixed assets	2	304

6. Net (decrease) / increase in funds

The net movement in funds is stated after charging/(crediting):

	2025 £000s	2024 £000s
Audit fee – Group	85	138
Audit fee – Subsidiaries	16	8
Auditors – Subsidiary tax review fees	9	9
Depreciation of tangible fixed assets	3,690	2,703
Operating lease rentals	5,332	4,960

7. Employee remuneration

	2025 £000s	2024 £000s
Wages and salaries	64,114	59,915
Social security costs	5,044	4,523
Pension costs - defined contribution schemes	2,580	2,456
Pension costs - defined benefit scheme (see note 9)	73	51
Total	71,811	66,945

The average monthly number of employees - excluding volunteers - was 2,956 (2024: 2,851)

Employees earning over £60,000 fell into the following bandings:

	2025 Number	2024 Number
£60,000 – £70,000	21	19
£70,000 – £80,000	10	7
£80,000 – £90,000	1	1
£90,000 – £100,000	2	3
£100,000 – £110,000	3	3
£110,000 – £120,000	2	1
£150,000 – £160,000	1	-
£160,000 – £170,000	-	1

Pension contributions for these employees were as follows:

	2024 £000s	No.	2023 £000s	No.
Defined contribution schemes	93	35	54	11

The aggregate remuneration of the 8 key management personnel (2024: 8) listed in the Trustees' Report, was £854,699 (2024: £831,502) before pension contributions of £68,870 (2024: £61,016), and National Insurance contributions of £107,906 (2024: £104,706).

8. Remuneration of members of Trustee Board

No Trustees received any remuneration during the year (2024: £nil).

Four Trustees (2024: One) were reimbursed travel and subsistence expenses for attending meetings and duties directly related to their duties as Trustees. Costs reimbursed were £982 (2024: £204).

9. Pensions

The Group provides defined contribution pension schemes for current employees.

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

10. Redundancy

During the year, the charity undertook a restructuring process to align with its operational and strategic priorities. As a result, redundancy costs of £224,000 (2024: £nil) were incurred in respect of 50 redundancies across the organisation. These costs are included within staff costs in note 7.

11. Tangible assets

Group	Freehold property £000s	Long leasehold improvements £000s	Short leasehold improvements £000s	Furniture, fixtures and fittings £000s	Motor vehicles £000s	Intangible asset £000s	Total £000s
Cost							
At 1 April 2024	27,729	4,508	5,527	24,364	3,258	440	65,826
Additions	1,377	-	215	2,692	167	712	5,163
Disposals	-	-	(108)	(563)	(191)	-	(862)
At 31 March 2025	29,106	4,508	5,634	26,493	3,234	1,152	70,127
Accumulated depreciation							
At 1 April 2024	5,225	1,004	2,680	18,354	2,720	-	29,983
Charge for the year	507	104	575	2,241	263	-	3,690
Disposals	-	-	(98)	(415)	(183)	-	(696)
At 31 March 2025	5,732	1,108	3,157	20,180	2,800	-	32,977
Net book amounts							
At 31 March 2025	23,374	3,400	2,477	6,313	434	1,152	37,150
At 31 March 2024	22,504	3,504	2,847	6,010	538	440	35,843

Company	Freehold property £000s	Long leasehold improvements £000s	Short leasehold improvements £000s	Furniture, fixtures and fittings £000s	Motor vehicles £000s	Intangible asset £000s	Total £000s
Cost							
At 1 April 2024	27,729	4,508	5,527	24,352	3,189	440	65,745
Additions	1,377	-	215	2,690	167	712	5,161
Disposals	-	-	(108)	(563)	(191)	-	(862)
At 31 March 2025	29,106	4,508	5,634	26,479	3,165	1,152	70,044
Accumulated depreciation							
At 1 April 2024	5,225	1,004	2,680	18,347	2,666	-	29,922
Charge for the year	507	104	575	2,238	252	-	3,676
Disposals	-	-	(98)	(415)	(183)	-	(696)
At 31 March 2025	5,732	1,108	3,157	20,170	2,735	-	32,902
Net book amounts							
At 31 March 2025	23,374	3,400	2,477	6,309	430	1,152	37,142
At 31 March 2024	22,504	3,504	2,848	6,005	522	440	35,823

12. Fixed asset investments

Company	2025 £000s	2024 £000s
Holding in Helping Sense Limited	30	30

The company owns 100% of 30,000 ordinary shares of £1 each share capital of Helping Sense Limited, which is incorporated in England and Wales, (Company registration 2214430) and exists to raise funds for the company. There is no readily available market value for the company and accordingly it is accounted for at cost. The Trustees believe that the carrying value of the investment is supported by the underlying net assets (note 29.)

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

13. Debtors

Group	2025 £000s	2024 £000s
Trade debtors	5,196	6,286
Prepayments	2,001	2,128
Accrued income	2,858	1,890
Other debtors	373	619
Taxation recoverable	231	330
Total	10,659	11,253

Company	2025 £000s	2024 £000s
Trade debtors	5,196	6,286
Prepayments	1,987	2,113
Accrued income	2,594	1,731
Other debtors	264	588
Taxation recoverable	231	330
Amounts owed by Group undertakings	190	320
Total	10,462	11,368

Trade debtors are shown net of bad and doubtful net provisions of £150k (2024: £124k)

14. Current asset investments

Group and Company	2025 £000s	2024 £000s
Bank deposits	-	4,000

15. Creditors (amounts falling due within one year)

Group	2025	2024
	£000s	£000s
Trade creditors	2,443	3,111
Taxation and social security	1,123	1,077
Deferred income	1,029	1,028
Accruals	4,054	4,103
Total	8,649	9,319

Group	Balance 31 March 2024	Released to income and expenditure	New income deferred	Balance 31 March 2025
Deferred income	1028	(1028)	1029	1,029

Deferred income represents income received or invoiced in advance of the provision of services or events, and will be recognised in the Statement of Financial Activities in the period to which it relates.

Company	2025	2024
	£000s	£000s
Trade creditors	2,442	3,111
Taxation and social security	1,123	1,077
Deferred income	1,015	955
Accruals	3,987	4,011
Total	8,567	9,154

Company	Balance 31 March 2024	Released to income and expenditure	New income deferred	Balance 31 March 2025
Provisions or dilapidations	959	(959)	1,015	1,015

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

Group	2025	2024
	£000s	£000s
Other creditors	16	24
Total	16	24

17. Provisions for liabilities and charges

Group and Charity

	Balance 31 March 2024	Charged to Income and Expenditure	Utilised	Balance 31 March 2025
Provisions or dilapidations	953	243	(99)	1,097

18. Movement of funds 2024-25 (Group)

Group	Balance at 1 April 2024	Income	Expenditure	Transfers	Balance at 31 March 2025
	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s
Unrestricted funds					
General fund, excluding pension	40,085	96,213	(99,624)	5,468	42,142
Designated funds	5,000	-	-	(5,000)	-
Total unrestricted funds	45,085	96,213	(99,624)	468	42,142
Restricted funds					
Cafe 55 - Providence Court	60	-	-	-	60
Children's Services	-	407	-	(407)	-
Children's Services: East	-	74	-	(74)	-
Children's Services: South East	8	76	-	(55)	29
Children's Services: City Bridge (MSI London)	-	53	(22)	(9)	22
Community Connections	76	-	-	(76)	-
Employment and Benefits Staff	112	82	(56)	(49)	89
Hadley Centre (Operations)	80	15	-	-	95
Lottery Guide Dogs	52	-	-	(52)	-
Northern Ireland Day Centre	108	-	-	(54)	54
Northern Ireland Special Donations	188	5	(11)	(170)	12
Stables and riding	59	8	-	-	67
TBSE, Hyde Close, Barnet	57	10	(3)	-	64
Warren Farm Rd	378	-	(3)	-	375
Belfast Hub Capital Fund	159	411	-	-	570
Arts & Wellbeing: Esmee Fairbairn (ASW Salaries)	75	-	(75)	-	-
DSCR (Nourish) Project	-	85	-	-	85
SCL Capital Fund	77	-	-	-	77
Early Intervention: Reaching Communities	32	477	(412)	-	97
Arts & Wellbeing: Arts Council (NPO)	-	250	(250)	-	-
Sport: Sport England System Partner	55	565	(620)	-	-
Other Sense	706	559	(349)	234	1,150
CareTech Foundation EI TZ 3Y 22-25	14	45	(59)	-	-
Hollyhock Foundation Nepal	-	52	(31)	-	21
Comic Relief Uganda 2024-2027	-	70	(40)	-	30
Hear The World Foundation	-	78	(78)	-	-
Romania in Country	120	74	(52)	-	142
Tanzania DID TO51	-	360	(360)	-	-
Else Krone Fresenius	-	80	(55)	-	25
DID TO45 Bangladesh Education	-	182	(182)	-	-
Peru KJCF Feb 2024- Jan 2027	60	69	(51)	-	78
Tanzania Holding Fund	-	1	(52)	52	-
Uganda Holding Fund	-	6	(89)	83	-
Kenya Holding Fund	-	3	(65)	62	-
DID TO53 Nepal	-	205	(205)	-	-

18. Movement of funds 2024-25 (Group) cont'd

Group	Balance at 1 April 2024	Income	Expenditure	Transfers	Balance at 31 March 2025
	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s
Restricted funds cont'd					
DID T050 Kenya	-	113	(113)	-	-
Deaf Child Worldwide (Kenya)	32	29	(61)	-	-
Nelumbo Stiftung Early Intervention (Uganda)	100	118	(140)	-	78
Phase 2 MTN Telecoms (Uganda)	12	180	(170)	-	22
Nelumbo Stiftung Education Phase 2	262	549	(476)	-	335
John Lewis Foundation	100	(9)	(86)	-	5
Other Sense International	144	370	(385)	48	177
Total restricted	3,126	5,652	(4,551)	(468)	3,759
Endowment					
Property	352	-	-	-	352
Total endowment	352	-	-	-	352
Total funds	48,563	101,865	(104,175)	-	46,253

18. Movement of funds 2023-24 (Group)

Group	Balance at 1 April 2023	Income	Expenditure	Transfers	Balance at 31 March 2024
	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s
Unrestricted funds					
General fund, excluding pension	39,136	89,951	(92,891)	3,889	40,085
Designated funds	8,500	8	(325)	(3,183)	5,000
Pension (note 9)	-	-	-	-	-
Total unrestricted funds	47,636	89,959	(93,216)	706	45,085
Restricted funds					
Big Lottery Fund Grant	42	43	(66)	-	19
Cafe 55 -Providence Court	58	2	-	-	60
Children's Services	-	321	-	(321)	-
Children's Services: South East	1	82	-	(74)	9
Community Connections	105	-	-	(29)	76
Employment and Benefits Staff	82	90	(49)	(11)	112
Hadley Centre (Operations)	65	15	-	-	80
Holidays Fund	102	56	-	(158)	-
Lottery Guide Dogs	64	(12)	-	-	52
Needs and Numbers Survey	55	(8)	-	-	47
Northern Ireland Day Centre	114	-	-	(5)	109
Northern Ireland Out Of Schools Club	95	149	(152)	-	92
Northern Ireland Special Donations	181	16	(9)	-	188
Sport England - Active Together	104	-	(104)	1	1
Virtual Buddying	-	51	-	(51)	-
Warren Farm Rd	202	176	-	-	378
Woodside - Operations	60	7	-	(67)	-
CSS Cymru Fund	150	3	-	(21)	132
Belfast Hub Capital Fund	-	155	-	-	155
Arts & Wellbeing: Esmee Fairbairn (ASW Salaries)	-	88	(77)	-	11
Children's Services: Midlands	-	78	-	(78)	-
Early Intervention: Reaching Communities	-	334	(321)	19	32
Arts & Wellbeing: Arts Council (NPO)	-	250	(208)	3	45
Sport: Sport England System Partner	-	692	(487)	-	205
Siblings & Young Carers Programme	-	61	-	(61)	-
Other Sense	875	840	(1098)	(38)	655
Active Citizens Romania	27	51	(64)	-	14
CareTech Foundation EI TZ 3Y 22-25	-	71	(57)	-	14
Comic Relief Uganda 2020	111	67	(181)	-	(3)
Romania in Country	135	59	(73)	-	121
Uganda iHelp Project	51	22	(53)	-	20
UK Aid Match Kenya 2020	85	-	(56)	-	29
Kenya Holding Fund	-	4	(101)	97	-

18. Movement of Funds 2023-24 (Group) Cont'd

Group	Balance at 1 April 2023	Income	Expenditure	Transfers	Balance at 31 March 2024
	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s
Restricted funds cont'd					
MTN Telecoms (Uganda)	-	162	(149)	-	13
FCDO Disability Inclusive Development	-	713	(713)	-	-
Nelumbo Stiftung Education Phase 2	-	457	(195)	-	262
John Lewis Foundation	-	100	-	-	100
KJCF (Peru) 2	-	64	(5)	-	59
Other Sense International	9	57	(39)	12	39
Total restricted	2,773	5,316	(4,257)	(706)	3,126
Endowment					
Property	351	1	-	-	352
Total endowment	351	1	-	-	352
Total funds	50,760	95,276	(97,473)	-	48,563

18. Movement of funds 2024-25 (Company)

Company	Balance at 1 April 2024 £000s	Income £000s	Expenditure £000s	Transfers £000s	Balance at 31 March 2025 £000s
Unrestricted funds					
General fund, excluding pension	40,197	93,795	(97,683)	5,712	42,021
Designated funds	5,000	-	-	(5,000)	-
Total unrestricted funds	45,197	93,795	(97,683)	712	42,021
Restricted funds					
Cafe 55 -Providence Court	60	-	-	-	60
Children's Services	-	407	-	(407)	-
Children's Services: East	-	74	-	(74)	-
Children's Services: South East	8	76	-	(55)	29
Children's Services: City Bridge (MSI London)	-	53	(22)	(9)	22
Community Connections	76	-	-	(76)	-
Employment and Benefits Staff	112	82	(56)	(49)	89
Hadley Centre (Operations)	80	15	-	-	95
Lottery Guide Dogs	52	-	-	(52)	-
Northern Ireland Day Centre	108	-	-	(54)	54
Northern Ireland Special Donations	188	5	(11)	(170)	12
Stables and riding	59	8	-	-	67
TBSE, Hyde Close, Barnet	57	10	(3)	-	64
Warren Farm Rd	378	-	(3)	-	375
Belfast Hub Capital Fund	159	411	-	-	570
Arts & Wellbeing: Esmee Fairbairn (ASW Salaries)	75	-	(75)	-	-
DSCR (Nourish) Project	-	85	-	-	85
SCL Capital Fund	77	-	-	-	77
Early Intervention: Reaching Communities	32	477	(412)	-	97
Arts & Wellbeing: Arts Council (NPO)	-	250	(250)	-	-
Sport: Sport England System Partner	55	565	(620)	-	-
Other	706	559	(349)	234	1,150
Total restricted	2,282	3,077	(1,801)	(712)	2,846
Endowment					
Property	352	-	-	-	352
Total endowment	352	-	-	-	352
Total funds	47,831	96,872	(99,484)	-	45,219

Individual funds listed are those with opening balances, annual income or annual expenditure that exceed £50,000 and accounts for 60 % of the overall restricted fund.

18. Movement of funds 2023-24 (Company)

Company	Balance at 1 April 2023	Income	Expenditure	Transfers	Balance at 31 March 2024
	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s
Unrestricted funds					
General fund, excluding pension	38,618	90,030	(93,149)	4,256	39,755
Designated funds	8,500	7	(325)	(3,182)	5,000
Pension (note 9)	-	-	-	-	-
Total unrestricted funds	47,118	90,037	(93,474)	1,074	44,755
Restricted funds					
Big Lottery Fund Grant	42	43	(66)	-	19
Cafe 55 -Providence Court	58	2	-	-	60
Children's Services	-	321	-	(321)	-
Children's Services: South East	1	82	-	(74)	9
Community Connections	105	-	-	(29)	76
Employment and Benefits Staff	82	90	(49)	(11)	112
Hadley Centre (Operations)	65	15	-	-	80
Holidays Fund	102	56	-	(158)	-
Lottery Guide Dogs	64	(12)	-	-	52
Needs and Numbers Survey	55	(8)	-	-	47
Northern Ireland Day Centre	114	-	-	(5)	109
Northern Ireland Out Of Schools Club	95	149	(152)	-	92
Northern Ireland Special Donations	181	16	(9)	-	188
Sport England - Active Together	104	-	(104)	1	1
Warren Farm Rd	202	176	-	-	378
Woodside - Operations	60	7	-	(67)	-
CSS Cymru Fund	150	3	-	(21)	132
Belfast Hub Capital Fund	-	155	-	-	155
Arts & Wellbeing: Esmee Fairbairn (ASW Salaries)	-	88	(77)	-	11
Children's Services: Midlands	-	78	-	(78)	-
Early Intervention: Reaching Communities	-	334	(321)	19	32
Arts & Wellbeing: Arts Council (NPO)	-	250	(208)	3	45
Sport: Sport England System Partner	-	692	(487)	-	205
Siblings & Young Carers Programme	-	61	-	(61)	-
Other Sense	1,197	441	(445)	(272)	921
Total restricted	2,677	3,039	(1,918)	(1,074)	2,724
Endowment					
Property	351	1	-	-	352
Total endowment	351	1	-	-	352
Total funds	50,146	93,077	(95,392)	-	47,831

Individual funds listed are those with opening balances, annual income or annual expenditure that exceed £50k.

'Other funds' are those with opening balances, annual income and annual expenditure of less than £50k.

18. Movement of funds (cont'd)

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

There are no designated funds at March 2025 (March 2024: £5.0 million). Funds have been transferred to unrestricted funds in anticipation of the completion of the new organisation strategy which will refresh strategic outcomes and provide a basis for future designation of reserves.

Restricted funds

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

The principal restricted funds are considered to be:

Sport England

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

Children's services

Money donated to support children & young people who are Deafblind/multi-sensory impaired.

Northern Ireland day centre

Commissioned day service opportunities for disabled adults with complex needs.

Northern Ireland special donations

An accumulation of donations / fundraised funds raised locally for services in Northern Ireland.

Holidays

Donations and fundraised income to support accessible holidays for disabled people with complex needs.

Warren Farm Road

A legacy donation restricted to be used against costs at the Warren Farm Road Care Home.

Arts Council

A multi-year grant under the Arts Council England NPO (National Portfolio Organisations) Programme towards our Arts & Wellbeing service.

Early Intervention – Reaching Communities

A three-year project for the Early Intervention Connect and Play Project funded by the National Lottery Community Fund (NLCF) Reaching Communities Fund.

Endowment funds

These are properties given to the charity for its use. The movement on the fund represents the depreciation charge in the year.

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 2024-25

Group 2025	Unrestricted funds £000s	Designated funds £000s	Restricted funds £000s	Endowment funds £000s	Total funds £000s
Tangible fixed assets	36,798	-	-	352	37,150
Net current assets	5,363	-	3,756	-	9,119
Long-term liabilities	(16)	-	-	-	(16)
Total	42,145	-	3,756	352	46,253

Company 2025	Unrestricted funds £000s	Designated funds £000s	Restricted funds £000s	Endowment funds £000s	Total funds £000s
Tangible fixed assets	36,790	-	-	352	37,142
Fixed asset investments	30	-	-	-	30
Net current assets	5,201	-	2,846	-	8,047
Total	42,021	-	2,846	352	45,219

20. Analysis of net assets between fund balances 2023-24

Group 2024	Unrestricted funds £000s	Designated funds £000s	Restricted funds £000s	Endowment funds £000s	Total funds £000s
Tangible fixed assets	35,483	-	-	352	35,835
Net current assets	4,626	5,000	3,126	-	12,752
Long-term liabilities	(24)	-	-	-	(24)
Total	40,085	5,000	3,126	352	48,563

Company 2024	Unrestricted funds £000s	Designated funds £000s	Restricted funds £000s	Endowment funds £000s	Total funds £000s
Tangible fixed assets	35,471	-	-	352	35,823
Fixed asset investments	30	-	-	-	30
Net current assets	4,254	5,000	2,724	-	11,978
Total	39,755	5,000	2,724	352	47,831

21. Capital commitments

At 31 March 2025 the Group had capital commitments of £0k (2024: £555k).

22. Contingent liabilities

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

23. Operating lease commitments

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

Group and Company	2025	2024
	Land and buildings £000s	Land and buildings £000s
Operating leases which expire:		
Within one year	4,062	3,985
In two to five years	12,940	13,055
After five years	10,793	10,907
Total	27,795	27,947

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

	2025	2024
	£000s	£000s
Net income/(expenditure)	(2,310)	(2,193)
Interest received	(297)	(471)
Depreciation charges	3,689	3,421
Profit/(loss) on sale of fixed assets	(2)	(305)
(Increase)/decrease in stock	167	30
(Increase)/decrease in debtors	594	(828)
Increase/(decrease) in creditors	(678)	385
Net cash provided by (used in) operating activities	1,163	39

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

	2025 £000s	2024 £000s
(Decrease)/increase in cash in the year	(3,534)	(4,523)
Bank loan interest repayments	-	-
Changes generated from cash flows	(3,534)	(4,523)
Net cash at start of year (including short term deposits)	10,144	14,667
Net cash at end of year	6,610	10,144

26. Analysis of changes in net funds 2024-25

	At 1 April 2024 £000s	Cash flows £000s	Non-cash changes £000s	At 31 March 2025 £000s
Cash at bank and in hand	6,144	466	-	6,610
Current asset investments	4,000	(4,000)	-	-
Total	10,144	(3,534)	-	6,610

26. Analysis of changes in net funds 2023-24

	At 1 April 2023 £000s	Cash flows £000s	Non-cash changes £000s	At 31 March 2024 £000s
Cash at bank and in hand	5,667	477	-	6,144
Current asset investments	9,000	(5,000)	-	4,000
Total	14,667	(4,523)	-	10,144

27. Analysis of cash and cash equivalents

	2025 £'000	2024 £'000
Cash at bank and in hand	6,610	6,144
Current asset investments	-	4,000
Total	6,610	10,144

Current asset investments are fixed term deposits for a term of one year or less.

28. Related party transactions

The Group provides services to children or family members of some 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. These transactions happen at arm's length.

Balances with subsidiaries are disclosed below:

	31 March 2025 Donation Provided	31 March 2025 Debtor/(Creditor)	31 March 2024 Debtor/(Creditor)
	£000s	£000s	£000s
Sense International	300	69	215
Helping Sense Limited		(30)	(30)
Sense4Enterprise Limited		151	135

In financial year 2024/25 Sense provided £300k donation to Sense International, also paid 5% commission of £160k to Helping Sense Limited from total Gift Aid Sense.

29. Subsidiary companies

Sense International - Company registration number 3742986

	2025	2024
	£000s	£000s
Income	3,580	3,135
Expenditure	(3,261)	(2,817)
Net movement in funds	319	318
Assets	1,353	1,271
Liabilities	(167)	(404)
Net assets	1,186	867

Helping Sense Limited - Company registration number 2214430

	2025	2024
	£000s	£000s
Turnover	1,385	5,436
Cost of sales	(731)	(838)
Gross profit	654	4,598
Operating expenses	(654)	(4,598)
Net profit	-	-
Assets	30	30
Net assets	30	30

Sense4Enterprise Limited - Company registration number 08112973

	2025	2024
	£000s	£000s
Income	156	314
Expenditure	(172)	(322)
Net movement in funds	(16)	(8)
Liabilities	(151)	(134)
Net liabilities	(151)	(134)

30. Consolidated statement of financial activities for the year ended 31 March 2024

	Note	Unrestricted Funds £000s	Restricted Funds £000s	Endowment Funds £000s	Total 2024 £000s	Total 2023 £000s
Income						
Donations and legacies	1	9,763	4,214	-	13,977	12,875
Charitable activities	1	63,295	1,111	-	64,406	59,154
Trading	1	15,750	-	-	15,750	13,708
Investment income	2	469	2	-	471	299
Other income	3	372	-	-	372	491
Total income		89,649	5,327	-	94,976	86,527
Expenditure						
	4					
Raising funds		6,399	-	-	6,399	5,580
Charitable activities		69,420	4,257	-	73,677	69,667
Trading		16,584	-	-	16,584	13,917
Other		813	-	-	813	1,081
Total expenditure		93,216	4,257	-	97,473	90,245
Net gain on sale of tangible fixed assets	5	304	-	-	304	52
Net (decrease)/increase before transfer between funds		(3,263)	1070	-	(2,193)	(3,666)
Transfers between funds	17	706	(706)	-	-	-
Net (expense)/income before pension settlement		(2,557)	364	-	(2,193)	(3,666)
Settlement of defined benefit pension scheme		-	-	-	-	(2,675)
Actuarial gain on defined benefit pension scheme		-	-	-	-	11,676
Net gain on settlement of defined benefit pension scheme		-	-	-	-	9,001
Net (decrease)/increase in funds		(2,557)	364	-	(2,193)	5,335
Reconciliation of movement in funds						
Fund balances brought forward	17	47,642	2,762	352	50,756	45,425
Net (decrease)/increase in funds	17	(2,557)	364	0	(2,193)	5,335
Fund balances carried forward	17	45,085	3,126	352	48,563	50,760