

DISABILITY EQUALITY SCOTLAND

(A company limited by guarantee)

Annual Report & Financial Statements

For the year ended

31 March 2023



Working towards Equality, Inclusion and
Participation for Disabled People in Scotland

Company No SC243392



ANNUAL REPORT & FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

CONTENTS

Trustees' Annual Report.....	4 - 13
Independent Examiner's Report	14
Statement of Financial Activities.....	15
Balance Sheet	16
Notes to the Financial Statements.....	17 -24

Introduction from the Convener and Chief Executive, Disability Equality Scotland – a year of change!

During this last year, Disability Equality Scotland has changed internally in what feels like a 360° turnaround. New staff internally, and new Board members at the helm. Yet we have continued to listen to our members and strengthened the alignment of our work to our aims, vision and mission.

Through all the change of the past few years, and this last one especially, Disability Equality Scotland can rely on our members and Access Panels continuing to champion access, inclusion, and equality for all. Not only this, but we as an organisation have increased our visibility with our strategic partners, funders, and stakeholders.

Disability Equality Scotland has been interviewed on BBC Radio Scotland and ITV Borders News.

We have taken significant steps to raise awareness and help grow Disability Equality Scotland. We have identified our members' priority areas to focus on going forward. This has been imperative to the drafting of our new strategic plan which started in this financial year. Priority themes are Accessible Transport, Cost of Living Crisis, Health and Social Care, Social Security Benefits and Climate Change.

We are aware that the landscape has changed for disabled people, and for charitable organisations. As we re-establish ourselves as a nation after the hectic 2-3 years of COVID-19 restrictions, and then the cost-of-living crisis, we know that we need to move forward. The ways that people connect has changed. The manner that funders engage and provide support has dramatically changed. What hasn't changed is the constant need to ensure that all disabled people have the same access, equality, and equity that non-disabled people have living their independent, full and involved lives.

Taking forward the views from Weekly Polls

Our weekly polls enabled us to continue the engagement with a wide number of disabled people. This helped to gather their views and feed this into various Scottish Government consultations, our stakeholders' policy making and much more. This is to ensure that disabled people feel included and that their views are heard and valued.

Engaging Events

We have continued to run engagement events and focus groups over the last year. These have been online as we know that 93% of our members found online easier. We are aware that this doesn't suit everyone. We have taken support and advice to ensure our online meetings can be as accessible as possible.

We are keen to ensure those who have engaged digitally are consistently included going forward, especially those whom meeting in person is a challenge.

Some members are digitally excluded through lack of devices, internet, awareness or choice. We also want to ensure that they are included. Although we are a National Charity and wish to visit as many members as possible, we are conscious also that we have a part to play in Scotland moving towards a net zero culture, and therefore we must consider the impact of our travel.

ANNUAL REPORT & FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

New Board of Directors and staff

We are delighted that we have a new Convenor and Vice Convenor from April 2022, Kayla-Megan Burns, and Carolyn Wilson-Smith. It is with huge appreciation we say thank you to our previous Convenors/Vice Convenors, Linda Bamford and Dorothy McKinney. We also said farewell to a few other board members. A huge thank you to them as well as our current board members. They have all contributed to the success of Disability Equality Scotland by scrutinising and challenging us to remain passionate and focused on our vision.

During the year, we said farewell to some staff who were with the organisation for a long time, namely our CEO and Deputy CEO. This means we also welcomed their replacements, Lyn Pornaro and Douglas Bryce.

We have an opportunity for new sets of eyes to cast over the organisation, as well as new ideas and enthusiasm abound.

This report updates on some of our key achievements over the year and we would like to thank everyone that has been involved in delivering this progress.



Kayla-Megan Burns
Convenor



Lyn Pornaro
Chief Executive Officer

TRUSTEES' ANNUAL REPORT

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

The trustees, who are the directors of the company for the purposes of company law, are pleased to present their report and financial statements together with the independent examiner's report for the year ended 31 March 2023.

OBJECTS & ACTIVITIES

We are a national charity working to make life more accessible, equal, and inclusive for disabled people in Scotland.

Our aim is for every disabled person to have the opportunity to participate in a fulfilling life and to enable them to reach their full potential.

This annual report covers progress on Disability Equality Scotland's objectives and activities between 1 April 2022 and 31 March 2023.

Our objectives as set out in our governing document are:

- to promote the benefit of disabled people in Scotland by encouraging communication between disabled people and national and local organisations concerned with the inclusion of disabled people in society.
- to advance the education of the public about disability equality and accessible environments, and to effect positive change in attitude and awareness of disability.

ACHIEVEMENTS & PERFORMANCE

Main Objectives for the Year

Disability Equality Scotland has been involved in many projects, all of which focus on the organisation's principles to:

Improve disabled people's access to participation and engagement in society through increased support, services, and awareness around disability equality.

Improve understanding and reporting of disability hate crime across Scotland.

Promote connectivity between Access Panels and improve access to support for volunteer members in delivering on equality and inclusion-based work.

Increase awareness and knowledge of Access, Inclusion and Equality within the Access Panel Network.

Planning and design professionals will have access to a range of resources, best practice, advice, and solutions aimed at accessibility/inclusive design.

Disabled people will have on-going involvement and further opportunities to provide their views on Accessible Transport in Scotland, contributing to the progress of the Accessible Travel Framework development, review and implementation.

Disabled people, transport operators, staff and other stakeholders will have access to accessible travel guidance, information, and signposting via an Accessible Travel Hub.

There will be a joined-up approach to tackling disability hate crime and negative behaviours towards disabled people on public transport across Scotland.

The following pages are the main areas of work delivered through our funding and contracts:

Inspiring Scotland: Equality and Human Rights Fund

Section 10 Grant Scheme: Access Panel Project

Transport Scotland (Bus, Accessibility and Active Travel Directorate): Accessible Travel Framework review and hate crime training

COVID-19 Public Health Directorate: Face Covering Exemption Card contract

TRUSTEES' ANNUAL REPORT

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

Membership

We work with our members to promote equality for disabled people in Scotland.

We regularly ask our members for their views on many diverse policy issues, which then directly feed into our policy work and government policies, plans and consultation responses. This last year has been no exception.

We make sure members have opportunities to meet and network with relevant audiences. We help members make the right connections.

During the period from 1 April 2022 to 31 March 2023 we had 79 new members join us, resulting in a 5.6% increase in our overall membership, this brought our membership total to 1496 members.

Total Membership: 1496 (1304 Individual, 134 Corporate, 19 Young Members, 39 Access Panels):

Individual members: increased by 4.5%, from 1247 to 1304.

Corporate members: decreased by 13.5%, from 118 to 134.

Access Panels: increased our Access Panel across Scotland to 39.

Young Members: increased by 35%, from 14 to 19.

We undertake a yearly data clean on our database. Checks on the database identified 29 membership records as incomplete, and letters were sent asking them to update their details to be re-added to the database.

Members are at the heart of all our work and projects. Our members have a direct say in what we do and how we do it, inputting ideas and evidence to inform and direct our work and sharing their lived experiences to allow us to identify what changes are required in our pursuit for full access and inclusion for disabled people.

We conduct a yearly survey with our members to understand where we are getting things right and where we can make improvements. The last survey was conducted in August 2022 and received 98 responses.

77% of respondents felt they could contribute their views on topics that affect them through Disability Equality Scotland

65% of respondents felt they could participate in discussions about topics that affect them with support from Disability Equality Scotland

89% of respondents felt they are presented with information in an accessible format which meets their needs

We'll look to improve on these figures by exploring hybrid events for engagement and remind our members that we have alternative formats available.

80% of respondents were satisfied with our weekly poll topics and 94% were aware of our weekly polls

We will continue to communicate what we do with the poll information and to which policy areas the data contributes.

73% of respondents felt they benefit from being a member with Disability Equality Scotland

75% of our members agree we represent the views of disabled people in Scotland

We will ask members in the next year to indicate areas of importance for further exploration. We'll also continue to look for innovative ways to increase the benefits of membership with Disability Equality Scotland.

We will also promote the survey in different formats, such as Easy Read, to increase the number of respondents from our membership and provide different avenues throughout the year for members to feed back.

Disability Equality Scotland Newsletter and Open Door Magazine

Over the past year, the monthly newsletter has been an important channel for distributing key public health information to our members forever changing Covid-19 situation as well as winter flu and respiratory viruses. We have also been able to share information on the work we have been undertaking. This included cost of living support, various information and engagement opportunities for members through consultations, surveys and events. Examples of partners we worked with to gather content included:

Health and Social Care Alliance
I Am Me
Lead Scotland
Legal Services Agency
Motability
NHS 24
Oxfam Scotland
Scottish Fire and Rescue
Police Scotland
See Me
Sense Scotland
Social Security Scotland
Zero Waste Scotland

Our Open Door Magazine is our members' magazine. In the last year, we published a bumper edition theme on Accessible Transportation.

We share our communications with members, Scottish Ministers, key partners and stakeholders, highlighting and promoting our work widely.

Face Covering Exemption Card Campaign

There are situations where some people are unable to, or it would be inappropriate for them, to wear a face covering. The reasons why someone might be exempt are explained on the face covering exemptions page <https://exempt.scot/face-covering-exemptions/>

Since the introduction of the mandatory wearing of face coverings, and considering Disability Equality Scotland's members' concerns raised through our weekly poll on the subject, we were very happy to work with the Scottish Government to introduce a national exemption card. The card is available through our dedicated website www.exempt.scot The project was launched to the public in late October 2020.

During the first two weeks of the campaign, we received over 1,150 calls to the helpline and nearly 28,000 applications in total. This moved to a digital download version only in line with demand in September 2021.

For the reporting year 01 April 2022 - 31 March 2023, 9,213 cards were downloaded.

We continue to evaluate the impact the card has produced via a feedback survey. A full report and analysis will be completed at the end of project in the next financial year. However it is clear to see that the success of the scheme has allowed disabled people to be more confident when visiting venues as we moved out of compulsory wearing of face coverings.

Disability Webinars

Our webinars help to bring disabled people together with experts on different topics as well as providing an opportunity to meet with other disabled people. During the period April 2022 to March 2023, we delivered five Disability Webinars across the following topics:

- Social Security Scotland Consultation: Consultation on their new disability payments, what will be required and how disabled people can apply/move from Personal Independent Payment.
- A Fair and Just Scotland for all: encouraging disabled people to share their voices around Scotland being a fair and just country.
- Building Regulations: updates on building regulations and specifically those that affect disabled people.
- Accessible Travel to discuss our review of the Accessible Travel Framework and hear barriers and/or progress of this from disabled people's views.
- Accessible Travel Hub feedback – raising awareness of the Accessible Travel Hub and ensure this is relevant and up to date for disabled people.

TRUSTEES' ANNUAL REPORT

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

Each event welcomed an average of 42 delegates (local disabled people, local authority staff, statutory bodies, MSPs, local private companies and third sector organisations).

Our webinars help to bring disabled people together with experts on different topics and gives an opportunity to mix with other disabled people. The webinars encourage disabled people to engage with us as an organisation and help to create new memberships.

Inclusive Communication Hub

www.inclusivecommunication.scot

We have continued to advocate for the adoption of the principles of Inclusive Communication via the Inclusive Communication Hub. The Inclusive Communication Hub has experienced steady growth through on-going content development and sustained promotion with key partner organisations, such as Sense Scotland, Sight Scotland, Scottish Commission for People with Learning Disabilities and Scottish Government.

On World Braille Day (4 January 2023) we launched our #JoinTheDots Braille Labelling campaign in partnership with Oban and District Access Panel and Sight Scotland. As part of the campaign, we are asking for a statutory duty to be placed on businesses and retailers to provide braille labels on food products detailing the name of the item and the use by/sell by dates. This is an essential requirement for blind and partially sighted people, which would allow visually impaired individuals to safely identify, buy and use food items in both retailers and when at home.

As part of the campaign, a Scottish Parliament petition was created. We have utilised the Inclusive Communication Hub to promote the key campaign messages and signposting to the Scottish Parliament petition: www.inclusivecommunication.scot/braille-campaign

We created a dedicated resources page which signposts to information and guidance about the response to the pandemic that is being produced in accessible formats, such as audio, British Sign Language (BSL) and easy read.

Easy Read Translation Service

www.disabilityequality.scot/easy-read-service

Disability Equality Scotland provides a professional and sector-leading Easy Read service as part of our commitment towards improving access to information for all.

Easy Read is an accessible format that makes written information easier to understand by using simple, jargon free language, shorter sentences and supporting images.

In this reporting period we have completed 131 Easy Read projects for key partners and funders. By producing Easy Read documents, we provide disabled people with the chance to interact and engage with relevant topics and have their views heard. We are encouraged that the Scottish Government continues to recognise the need for Easy Read. We have had a steady increase of Easy Read requests over the last 12 months, which is very encouraging and this appears to be continuing into the new financial year.

Easy Read Training

The overall aim of the Easy Read Training course is to help professionals produce best practice easy read information that works for their audience. We continued to deliver our course as well as consistently improve and update this.

Delivery of the course ensured that we could continue to deliver this online. The training sessions have been designed to be interactive, with practical exercises and plenty of opportunities for discussion. We tailor the training course for each client's needs, discussing what they hope to get out of the course in advance.

The training course is now available at cost and proving to be very successful. Disability Equality Scotland has, in the reporting period:

- delivered 11 Easy Read public courses
- registered with the CPD Standards Office and submitted our course for accreditation.
- We have delivered Easy Read training to 37 organisations across Scotland and the rest of the UK

TRUSTEES' ANNUAL REPORT

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

Since the launch of the public Easy Read training courses, there has been a good demand for courses from a range of organisations in Scotland. Some organisations are choosing to send multiple staff, and some have asked delegates to report back to their teams. Importantly, 100% of trainees would recommend the training to a friend or a colleague.

In addition, 100% of trainees have reported an increase in their Easy Read knowledge and skills and 95% have increased their confidence and awareness of accessible information. Beyond Easy Read, many trainees say they will be more mindful of their general communications in the future.

Weekly Polls

www.yoursayondisability.scot

Our weekly polls are a way of gathering feedback from our members on issues that affect everyone. We have conducted 48 poll questions covering various issues including:

- A New National Park for Scotland
- COVID – social isolation
- Transport Scotland Accessible Travel Framework (series)
- Single Use Plastic Cups - Communicating the Charge
- Winter Energy Blackouts
- Hate Crime Charter
- Face Coverings
- International Day of Disabled People
- Social Isolation and Loneliness Over Winter
- National Entitlement Card
- LEZ Blue Badge Exemptions
- NHS Strikes/Stress; Employment Barriers
- DES 20th Anniversary; The 'A Scotland that Cares' Campaign
- Adult Disability Payment (series)
- Energy Price Cap
- Restricting Alcohol Advertising and Promotion
- Dental Care

Our polls have contributed to the following consultation responses:

- Braille Labelling
- Disability Commissioner Bill
- Charges on Single-use Drinks Cups
- an Equality Impact Assessment in reviewing the NHS 24 Breathing Space resources

They have also supported:

- Scottish Government on the Public Sector Equality Duty, specifically relating to Inclusive Communication and its adoption throughout public sector

- a series of meetings as part of the Plastic Straws Advisory Group to finalise plastic straw exemption regulations along with helping to develop a communications toolkit.

TRUSTEES' ANNUAL REPORT

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

Weekly polls have received praise and recognition from key stakeholders and contributed to developing legislation, service improvement, consultations, Equality Impact Assessments (EqIAs) and influenced policy and guidance relating to disabled people.

We have also taken the opportunity to raise the importance of our members views from poll as evidence in Scottish Parliament Committees, Cross Party Groups and in Parliamentary Questions. We also share this evidence in various strategic Stakeholder groups.

Scottish Parliament Cross Party Groups

- Disability: From June 2021, Disability Equality Scotland took on the Secretariat role for the Cross- Party Group on Disability, convened by Jeremy Balfour MSP, and co-convened by Pam Duncan- Glancy MSP. We are fortunate to continue to have a positive working relationship with both MSPs and we have opportunity to influence the agenda items discussed in this forum, helping to keep pertinent issues for our members on the table.
- Sustainable Transport: Disability Equality Scotland is a non-MSP Group Member.
- Deafness: Disability Equality Scotland is a non-MSP Group Member.

Disability Hate Crime

www.disabilitysafety.scot

The Disability Safety Hub launched in October 2018 to coincide with National Hate Crime Week. This hub has two main aims:

- To raise awareness of disability hate crime, helping disabled people to understand what a hate crime is.
- The Hub also wants to help disabled people to report hate crime and shows the different ways you can do this.

On this Hub you will find helpful resources, including case studies and videos of disabled people talking about their own experiences of hate crime.

In response to COVID-19, we adapted content on the Disability Safety Hub to reflect guidance and resources, which were being produced to provide support to people during the pandemic. We developed our own mental wellbeing guide, which signposts to relevant resources, including the SAMH 'Mental Health Information Hub'. We also developed a new resource category that is dedicated to scam awareness in response to the increase in scam related crime during the pandemic.

Accessible Travel

www.accessibletravel.scot

The Accessible Travel Hub has continued to receive positive levels of engagement, which has been achieved through on-going updates from transport providers on the measures they have introduced to make transport more accessible and safer for disabled people. Members of Transport Scotland's Accessible Travel Framework Steering group also provide content for the hub to promote shared learning.

We continued to utilise the Accessible Travel Hub to promote the Hate Crime Charter and were delighted to have continued support from the Community Transport Association (CTA), ZetTrans Regional Transport Partnership and the Mobility and Access Committee for Scotland (MACS).

These logos were added to the Hate Crime Charter supporter's page: <https://accessibletravel.scot/supporters/> on the Hub. We now have 25 Supporters of the Hate Crime Charter and we look to increase this in the coming year.

We spent time working with Police Scotland to relaunch our Hate Crime Charter specifically for Transportation and this was occurred during National Hate Crime week in October 2022. Resources were created and delivered to all transportation organisations who signed up to the Charter. This enables them to share posters and stickers of various sizes in vehicles, in waiting areas etc. These were very popular, and we continue to raise the profile of disability hate crime.

TRUSTEES' ANNUAL REPORT

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

We worked with Police Scotland on creating Hate Crime training and in the new financial year this will be rolled out to a number of transportation companies.

Access Panel Network

Access Panels are the community experts when it comes to improving accessibility in the built environment. Their lived experience puts them in a unique position to provide advice and support to a wide range of organisations and bodies across society. Access Panels are primarily made up of volunteers, the majority of which are disabled people, or care for a disabled person.

They meet on a regular basis, usually monthly, to discuss issues in their local community, which affect disabled people, and work towards removing barriers to independent living in their communities to ensure disabled people have access to the same choice, dignity and control as others in our society.

There are currently 39 active Access Panels across Scotland, from Harris and Orkney to the Scottish Borders and everywhere in between. Panel membership varies between 5 and 150 disabled members, and it is estimated that there are around 1000 Access Panel members in total across Scotland. Not all members are actively involved volunteers, and many contribute in other ways towards their panel, by sharing information, or participating in consultations; other members may simply wish to be kept informed of disability work in their area.

As Access Panels have typically grown organically around the needs of their locality, they vary greatly in their focus and remit. They are primarily committed to improving access and equality in its widest form which means access to the physical environment, Education, Housing, Health, Transport, Leisure & Recreation and Social Justice amongst other areas.

Access Panels have told us that they have continued to ensure that accessibility remains at the forefront of people's minds, even as we continue to work remotely. Despite the challenges of remote working for the past few years, we have seen an increase in Access Panels activities. With new Access Panels joining the network, this increases the representation for disabled people's voices to be heard.

Disability Equality Scotland continued to see increased attendance at the yearly Access Panel Conference. Feedback suggested that this was because many disabled people didn't need to spend hours travelling to and from the event and could instead join from the comfort of their own homes.

Our new Access Panel Hub was launched this year. It includes features our Access Panel members requested such as a members' area, news and blog section and general information around Access Panels.

The forum is a closed group with the facility for panel members to post questions, updates and improve peer support across the network. All Access Panels are encouraged to contribute to the forum, as well as the news and blog section.

We remain aware of the fact that public transport still isn't accessible for disabled people, and we will work with the Access Panels to make sure that remote working isn't used as a substitute for a poorly accessible transport infrastructure.

Access Panel Grant Overview and Progress

The Access Panel Grant is a fund designed to help increase the capacity and outreach of Access Panels right across Scotland. The majority of Access Panels are staffed solely by volunteers who are passionate about increasing access and social inclusion for disabled people in their community.

Specifically, the Access Panel Grant has enabled Access Panels to remain incredibly active and continue their vital work even throughout lockdown, by using this grant in inventive and resourceful ways. Naturally, we have seen a decrease in the amount claimed for things like travel expenses and room hire but an increase in the number of claims for things like ICT equipment, software packages, Zoom subscriptions, and closed captioning services.

Access Panels have still been active in their local communities and as such have needed access to these vital funds to ensure they can carry out their work. Access Panels have continued to ensure that premises are accessible and used the Access Panel Grant to help support their access auditing activities.

TRUSTEES' ANNUAL REPORT

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

With support from Disability Equality Scotland, Access Panels have successfully moved their activity online where possible, continuing to provide crucial input to proposed changes to their local area.

Likewise, increased engagement opportunities with elected representatives and their local Councils through video conferencing software has also been made possible through the Grant and technical support and guidance from Disability Equality Scotland. 2022's Annual Access Panel Conference also took place online, with record attendance from a greater geographical spread of Panels and partners.

Both Disability Equality Scotland and the Access Panel Network will build on this experience in increasing engagement through promoting digital participation and skills building; however, face-to-face interaction is still critical for building partnerships and relationships, so we look forward to meeting again soon.

Staffing

Our staff team have continued to work effectively and efficiently from home and in the office this last year. Our operational outcomes continue to align with our growing strategic aspirations, and our success is down to the commitment, talents and diversity of our staff. That is why we value and develop our employees to succeed in their careers, as well as contribute to our success.

We aim to provide good jobs at a fair pay and purposeful work, along with the structure and skills to make a difference.

FINANCIAL REVIEW

The total income for the charity this year is £410,454 (2022: £395,304). The total expenditure for the year was £376,609 (2022: £328,192) with Staff costs of £251,828 (2022: £234,594) being the main items of spending.

Principal risks

A number of policies are in place within Disability Equality Scotland to minimise risk, and in relation to safeguarding staff, volunteers and members. These policies are part of the day to day working of the charity and are subject to review on an ongoing basis.

Reserves policy

The trustees consider that six months of annual expenditure is an appropriate level of reserves to hold to meet the day to day running costs of the charity. This amounts to £169,270. The total funds held at the end of the financial year is £182,015 (2022: £148,170) of which £136,920 (2022: £88,053) is unrestricted reserves. The trustees continue to strive to ensure the resilience of the charity and to secure further funding. This involves that future funding is at cost recovery as well as diversifying funding streams.

Future plans

For this next year we will continue to grow on the success of our Easy Read Translation service and Easy Read Training course delivery. Through our restricted funding we plan to:

- Listen to our members and stakeholders and ensure our work responds to their asks and needs.
- Increase awareness and knowledge of equality, access and inclusion.
- Increasing opportunities of participation with disabled people.
- Offer training, information, and advice to those wishing to engage with disabled people.
- Become an accredited CPD training provider
- Increase our membership and continue to engage with members on important policy issues, ensuring disabled people continue to have their views and opinions heard.
- Provide regular statistics and data on the issues affecting Disabled People in Scotland.
- Continue to provide informative news to disabled people using our mediums – Workshops, Roundtables, Parliamentary Forums, Access Panel Conference, Annual General Meeting, monthly newsletter, website and Hubs.

TRUSTEES' ANNUAL REPORT

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

- Support, sustain and grow the Access Panel Network in Scotland

STRUCTURE GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

Governing document

Disability Equality Scotland is;

- a charitable company limited by guarantee, incorporated in Scotland, and granted charitable status on 9th July 2001
- governed by its Memorandum and Articles of Association that were last amended on 17th October 2018 and registered with the Office of the Scottish Regulator (OSCR) and Companies House.

Appointment of trustees

The trustees are elected at the AGM and can serve for a period of three years. The governing document allows for a minimum of six and a maximum of 11 trustees. Although not a public body, our board recruitment is competency based and the skills, knowledge, and experience on our board during 2022-2023 include HR Management, Governance, Strategy Planning, Business Management, Risk Management and Business Continuity Planning, Inclusive Design Principles, Equalities, Access Panel involvement and personal lived experience as a disabled person. Board members serve a term of three years and are voted in at our Annual General Meeting. Board members can serve a maximum of two terms.

Organisational structure

The role of the Board is to oversee the work of the organisation and to make strategic decisions about its future. Our Convener leads the board and offers support to our Chief Executive Officer.

Induction and training of trustees

Potential trustees, with the relevant skills, are interviewed by the Convenor of the charity and then invited to get to know the charity with the Chief Executive Officer. When appointed, new trustees are provided with an induction pack which contains relevant information pertaining to the charity, Training for trustees is provided as required.

REFERENCE AND ADMINISTRATIVE DETAILS

Charity Name	Disability Equality Scotland	
Charity No	SC031893	
Company No	SC243392	
Registered Office	Suite 204B, the Pentagon Centre 36 Washington Street Glasgow G3 8AZ	
Website Address	www.disabilityequality.scot	
Company Secretary	Lyn Pornaro	Appointed March 2023

TRUSTEES' ANNUAL REPORT

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

Current Trustees

Lauren Asher
Kayla-Megan Burns Convenor
Rhianne Forrest
Kenny Milne
Carolyn Griffiths
Marie Harrower
Scott Stewart
Zara Todd Appointed June 2023

Other Trustees who served during the period

Maureen Morrison Resigned April 2023
Linda Bamford Resigned March 2023
Dorothy Jane McKinney Resigned March 2023
Colin Millar Resigned December 2022

Chief Executive Officer

Morven Brooks Resigned 7th October 2022
Lyn Pornaro Commenced 31 October 2022

Bankers

Bank of Scotland
Business Banking
PO Box 1984
Andover
SP10 9GZ

Independent Examiner

Anne Knox FCIE
Cameron House
Forthside Way
Stirling
FK8 1QZ

APPROVAL

This report, which has been prepared in accordance with the provisions in the Companies Act 2006 relating to small companies, was approved by the trustees on 30 August 2023 and signed on their behalf by:



Kayla-Megan Burns

Convenor

INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

Independent examiner's report to the trustees of Disability Equality Scotland

I report on the accounts of the charity for the year ended 31 March 2023, which are set out on pages 15 to 24

Respective responsibilities of trustees and examiner

The charity's trustees (who are the directors of the company for the purposes of company law) are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the terms of the Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005 ("the 2005 Act") and the Charities Accounts (Scotland) Regulations 2006 (as amended) ("the 2006 Regulations"). The trustees consider that the audit requirement of Regulation (10)(1)(a)-(c) of the 2006 Regulations does not apply.

It is my responsibility to examine the accounts under section (44)(1)(c) of the 2005 Act and to state whether particular matters have come to my attention.

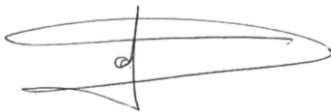
Basis of independent examiner's statement

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

Independent examiner's statement

In connection with my examination, no matter came to my attention:-

1. which gives me reasonable cause to believe that in any material respect, the requirements
 - to keep accounting records in accordance with section 44(1)(a) of the 2005 Act and Regulation 4 of the 2006 Regulations, and
 - to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and comply with Regulation 8 of the 2006 Regulationshave not been met, or
2. to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.



Anne Knox, FCIE

Cameron House

Forthside Way

Stirling

FK8 1QZ

30 August 2023

**STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES
(INCLUDING INCOME & EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT)**

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

	Note	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Total 2023	Total 2022
		£	£	£	£
Income and endowments from:					
Donations and legacies		-	-	-	-
Charitable activities	6	5,971	343,023	348,994	338,210
Other trading activities	7	51,221	10,213	61,434	57,094
Investments (Bank interest)		26	-	26	-
		<u>57,218</u>	<u>353,236</u>	410,454	395,304
Expenditure on:					
Charitable activities	11	8,351	368,258	376,609	328,192
Other		-	-	-	-
		<u>8,351</u>	<u>368,258</u>	376,609	328,192
Net income/(expenditure)		48,867	(15,022)	33,845	67,112
Transfer between funds		-	-	-	-
Net movement in funds		48,867	(15,022)	33,845	67,112
Reconciliation of funds					
Total funds as at 01 April 2022		88,053	60,117	148,170	81,058
Total funds as at 31 March 2023	15	<u>136,920</u>	<u>45,095</u>	182,015	148,170

All income and expenditure derives from continuing activities.

The above statement includes all gains and losses recognised during the year, and complies with the requirements for an income and expenditure account under the Companies Act 2006

Comparative figures for the previous year by fund type are shown in Note 18

The Notes on pages 17 to 24 form an integral part of these accounts.

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION (BALANCE SHEET)

AS AT 31 MARCH 2023

	Note	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Total 2023	Total 2022
Fixed assets:		£	£	£	£
Tangible assets	10	4,971	-	4,971	2,131
Current assets:					
Debtors	11	7,621	-	7,621	13,575
Cash at bank and in hand	12	134,677	45,095	179,772	140,418
		<u>142,298</u>	<u>45,095</u>	187,393	153,993
Liabilities:					
Creditors (due within one year)	13	10,349	-	10,349	7,956
Net current assets		<u>131,949</u>	<u>45,095</u>	177,044	146,037
Net Assets		<u>136,920</u>	<u>45,095</u>	182,015	148,168
Funds of the charity:	15				
Restricted funds		-	45,095	45,095	60,117
Unrestricted funds		136,920	-	136,920	88,053
		<u>136,920</u>	<u>45,095</u>	182,015	148,170

The trustees (who are also the directors of the company for the purposes of company law) confirm that for the year ended 31 March 2023

- the company was entitled to exemption from audit under section 477 of the Companies Act 2006, and
- members have not required the company to obtain an audit of its accounts for the year in question in accordance with section 476 of the Act. However, in accordance with section 44 of the Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005, the accounts have been examined by an independent examiner whose report appears on page 14.

The trustees acknowledge their responsibilities for complying with the requirements of the Act with respect to accounting records and the preparation of accounts.

The Notes on 17 to 24 form an integral part of these accounts.

These accounts, which have been prepared in accordance with the provisions in the Companies Act 2006 relating to small companies, were approved by the trustees on 30 August 2023 and signed on their behalf by:



Kayla-Megan Burns

Convenor

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

1. Basis of preparation

- 1.1. These accounts (financial statements) have been prepared under the historic cost convention, with items recognised at cost or transaction value, unless otherwise stated in the relevant note(s), in accordance with:
 - (a) The Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005
 - (b) The Charities Accounts (Scotland) Regulations 2006 (as amended)
 - (c) The Companies Act 2006
 - (d) The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102)
 - (e) Charities SORP (FRS 102) Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (effective 01 January 2015)
- 1.2. The accounts have been prepared in sterling, which is the functional currency of the charity. Monetary amounts are rounded to the nearest £1.
- 1.3. In preparing the accounts, the trustees were not required to make any judgements that would have a material effect on the numbers reported.
- 1.4. There have been no changes to the basis of preparation or to the previous year's accounts.
- 1.5. The charity meets the definition of a public benefit entity as defined by FRS 102.
- 1.6. The trustees have reviewed the financial position of the Charity and are satisfied that it has sufficient resources to continue for at least 12 months beyond the date of approval of these accounts. The accounts are thus prepared on a going concern basis.

2. Accounting policies

2.1. Fund accounting

- (a) Unrestricted funds are those that can be expended at the discretion of the trustees in the furtherance of the objects of the charity.
- (b) Designated funds are unrestricted funds that the trustees have set aside for particular purposes. The designation is administrative only and does not restrict the trustees' ability to apply the funds.
- (c) Restricted funds are those that may only be used for specific purposes. Restrictions arise when specified by the donor, or when funds are raised for specific purposes.
- (d) The purposes of the funds are shown in Note 17.

2.2. Income

Income is recognised and included in the Statement of Financial Activities (SoFA) when the charity becomes entitled to the income; receipt is probable; and the monetary value can be measured with sufficient reliability. The specific bases used are as follows:

Income is recognised and included in the Statement of Financial Activities (SoFA) when the charity becomes entitled to the income; receipt is probable; and the monetary value can be measured with sufficient reliability. The specific bases used are as follows:

- (a) Donations are recognised on receipt.
- (a) Grants - Income from annual grants is recognised in the period to which the grant relates. Any part of an annual grant relating to a future accounting period is included as deferred income in creditors. Income from other grants and donations is recognised on receipt, provided all conditions for use of the grant have been fulfilled.
- (b) Where income has related expenditure (e.g. fundraising), the income and related expenditure are reported gross in the SoFA.

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

- (c) Income, which is subject to conditions that the charity has yet to fulfil, or which is specifically for use in a future accounting period, is treated as deferred income.
- (d) The value of voluntary help is not included in the accounts but is described in the trustees' annual report.

2.3. Expenditure and liabilities

Liabilities are recognised when it is probable that there is a legal or constructive obligation committing the charity to pay out resources and the monetary value can be measured with sufficient reliability. The specific bases used are as follows:

- (a) Expenditure is recognised on the accruals basis.
- (b) The charity is not registered for VAT, thus all costs are shown inclusive of VAT charged.
- (c) Governance costs include the costs of preparation and examination of the statutory accounts, the cost of trustee meetings and the cost of any legal advice to trustees on governance or constitutional matters.

2.4. Tangible assets

- (a) Tangible assets are capitalised if they can be used for more than one year, and cost at least £1,000. They are valued at cost or, if gifted, at their value on receipt.
- (b) Depreciation is calculated to write off the cost of tangible fixed assets over their useful economic lives. The rates used are as follows:
 - (i) Computer equipment 33.3% Straight line

2.5. Debtors

- (a) Debtors are recognised at the settlement amount due.
- (b) Prepayments are valued at the amount prepaid.

2.6. Cash

- (a) Cash includes cash in hand and bank balances repayable on demand.

2.7. Creditors

- (a) Creditors 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 are normally recognised at their settlement amount, usually the invoice amount.
- (b) Accrued charges are normally valued at their settlement amount.

2.8. Taxation

The charity is not liable to corporation tax or capital gains tax on its charitable activities.

3. Trustees' remuneration and benefits

None of the trustees were paid any remuneration or received any other benefits during the year or in the previous year.

4. Trustee expenses

None of the trustees were paid any travel expenses in this year or the previous year

5. Transactions with related parties

There were no related party transactions during the year, or in the previous year.

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

6. Income from charitable activities

	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Total 2023	Total 2022
	£	£	£	£
Access Panel Grant	-	27,000	27,000	36,500
Scottish Government Equality Unit	-	-	-	47,500
Scottish Government Equality and Human Right	-	139,637	139,637	71,179
Scottish Government Section 10	-	80,000	80,000	80,000
Transport Scotland	-	90,579	90,579	49,996
Scottish Government Ferries Accessibility	-	-	-	13,959
Scottish Government Exemption Grant	-	5,807	5,807	16,506
Garfield Weston Foundation	-	-	-	20,000
Other	180	-	180	2,570
Inclusion Scotland	5,791	-	5,791	-
	5,971	343,023	348,994	338,210

7. Income from other trading activities

	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Total 2023	Total 2022
	£	£	£	£
Donations	-	-	-	164
Generated income	2,190	-	2,190	1,965
Sponsorship	1,500	-	1,500	2,000
Easy read training	-	10,213	10,213	5,000
Easy read translation	47,531	-	47,531	47,965
	51,221	10,213	61,434	57,094

8. Staff costs

	2023	2022
	£	£
Salaries and wages	223,323	205,572
Employer's national insurance	15,226	17,146
Employer's pension contributions	13,279	11,876
	251,828	234,594

No employee received remuneration in excess of £60,000

	2023	2022
Average number of employees		
Administration	10	10

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

9. Costs of Charitable Activities

	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Total 2023	Total 2022
	£	£	£	£
Staff costs (see note 8)	(2,619)	254,447	251,828	234,594
Rent and service charge	-	12,517	12,517	13,446
Telephone	-	3,449	3,449	3,364
Printing, postage and stationery	13	7,952	7,965	7,828
Subscriptions, recruitment and training	710	23,348	24,058	15,469
Travel, expenses and subsistence	4,689	7,259	11,948	3,859
IT development	266	6,089	6,355	16,082
Interpretation	-	4,706	4,706	5,788
Bank charges and payroll	-	751	751	674
Depreciation	2,290	-	2,290	1,229
Grants to Access Panels within Scotland	-	30,400	30,400	9,783
Legal and professional fees	13	10,203	10,216	10,427
Insurance	-	5,351	5,351	4,624
Events, promotional materials and conference	-	352	352	-
Governance	-	1,050	1,050	1,025
Sundries	404	70	474	-
Staff costs -other	2,585	313	2,898	-
	8,351	368,258	376,609	328,192

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

10. Tangible assets

	Computer Equipment	Total 2023
	£	£
Cost		
As at 01 April 2022	3,724	3,724
Additions	5,131	5,131
As at 31 March 2023	8,855	8,855
Depreciation		
As at 01 April 2022	1,593	1,593
Charge for year	2,291	2,291
As at 31 March 2023	3,884	3,884
Net Book Value		
As at 01 April 2022	2,131	2,131
As at 31 March 2023	4,971	4,971

11. Debtors

	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Total 2023	Total 2022
	£	£	£	£
Trade debtors	7,174	-	7,174	13,575
Prepayments	447	-	447	-
	7,621	-	7,621	13,575

12. Cash at bank and in hand

	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Total 2023	Total 2022
	£	£	£	£
Bank of Scotland Business Account	14,640	-	14,640	24,316
Bank of Scotland Instant Account	11,721	-	11,721	5,250
Bank of Scotland Reserves Account	107,800	45,095	152,895	109,852
Guaranteed fixed account	516	-	516	516
Cash in hand	-	-	-	484
	134,677	45,095	179,772	140,418

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

13. Creditors (falling due within one year)

	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Total 2023	Total 2022
	£	£	£	£
Trade creditors	1,811	-	1,811	1,778
Other creditors	48	-	48	1,759
Accruals	2,105	-	2,105	2,105
Deferred income	6,385	-	6,385	-
PAYE	-	-	-	2,314
	10,349	-	10,349	7,956

14. Movements in deferred income

	As at 31/03/2022	Funds Received	Released to income	As at 31/03/2023
	£	£	£	£
Transport Scotland (2023-24)	-	6,385	-	6,385
	-	6,385	-	6,385

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

15. Movements in funds (this year)

	As at 31/03/2022	Incoming Resources	Outgoing Resources	Transfers	As at 31/03/2023
	£	£	£	£	£
<u>Unrestricted funds</u>					
General fund	88,053	57,218	(8,351)	-	136,920
 <u>Restricted funds</u>					
Access Panel Grant	15,034	27,000	(31,820)	-	10,214
Scottish Government Section 10	11,110	80,000	(81,697)	-	9,413
Transport Scotland	4,641	90,579	(91,745)	-	3,475
Scottish Government Ferries Acces	109	-	-	-	109
Exemption Card Project Fund	1,389	5,807	(3,706)	-	3,490
Equalities and Human Rights fund	16,080	139,637	(151,376)	-	4,341
Easy read training	11,754	10,213	(7,914)	-	14,053
	60,117	353,236	(368,258)	-	45,095
 <u>Total funds</u>	 148,170	 410,454	 (376,609)	 -	 182,015

16. Movements in funds (previous year)

	As at 31/03/2021	Incoming Resources	Outgoing Resources	Transfers	As at 31/03/2022
	£	£	£	£	£
<u>Unrestricted funds</u>					
General fund	45,159	52,094	(9,200)	-	88,053
 <u>Restricted funds</u>					
Access Panel Grant	10,495	39,070	(34,531)	-	15,034
Scottsih Government Equality	8,618	47,500	(56,118)	-	-
Scottsih Government Section 10	12,414	80,000	(81,304)	-	11,110
Tranport Scotland	3,840	49,996	(49,195)	-	4,641
Scottish Government Ferries Acces	69	13,959	(13,919)	-	109
Exemption Card Project Fund	463	16,506	(15,580)	-	1,389
Equalities and Human Rights Fund	-	71,179	(55,099)	-	16,080
Easy Read Training	-	25,000	(13,246)	-	11,754
	35,899	343,210	(318,992)	-	60,117
 <u>Total funds</u>	 81,058	 395,304	 (328,192)	 -	 148,170

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

17. Purpose of funds

General fund Unrestricted funds that can be expended at the discretion of the trustees in furtherance of the objects of the charity.

Equality and Human Rights Fund, Inspiring Scotland

Our focus with this fund is Disability, Equality, Access and Engagement.

As a national Disabled Peoples' Organisation, we will continue our work to make life more accessible, equal and inclusive for disabled people in Scotland.

We will do this by giving disabled people a voice and opportunity to participate in a fulfilling life through our consultation, engagement and inclusive communications.

This fund allows us to develop our work around Hate Crime, Accessible Travel, Inclusive Design and Inclusive Communication, working with our members and Access Panel Network to promote access in its widest sense, thus promoting a life of dignity, respect, choice and independence.

Section 10, The Scottish Government

We are the umbrella organisation for Access Panels across all of Scotland and work with other partners to improve access and inclusion. We work to empower and promote the rights of disabled people. Our role is to influence and effect change, both locally and nationally, through the network of Access Panels and to support them to work in partnership to address local issues.

Accessible Transport for Disabled People Grant Funding, Transport Scotland

The aim of this project is to work with Transport Scotland and relevant groups to improve the accessibility of transport in Scotland. Our role is to ensure disabled people are informed and included in each stage of the process, including proposing the issues to agreeing actions, to monitoring and feeding back on successes and areas for improvement.

To ensure our member's voices are heard and integral to plans and policies we also sit on the Accessible Travel Framework Steering Group, which looks to progress the Accessible Travel Framework for Scotland (Going Further).

More recently, and through our input to transport transition planning for emergence from lockdown, we have been invited by Transport Scotland to sit on the Transport Equalities Network to feed in the lived experiences of our members to work towards making public transport more accessible for everyone.

Ferries Accessibility, Transport Scotland

We received funding from the Ferries Accessibility Fund from April 2021 to March 2022 to work with Northlink Ferries to undertake scoping work with staff and customers on the topic of disability hate crime, developing a Hate Crime Charter for the ferry network.

Exemption Card Campaign, The Scottish Government

This project developed in response to the continued demand and need for face covering exemptions for many disabled people and those with long term or limiting conditions who are being challenged for not wearing a face covering. We administer the Scottish Government's exemption card scheme, including fielding telephone and online requests for exemption cards and fulfilling these requests via post and digitally.

We regularly provided feedback to Scottish Ministers on the issues being raised with us through the helpline.

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

18. Comparative income and expenditure by fund type

	<u>Unrestricted Funds</u>		<u>Restricted Funds</u>	
	2023	2022	2023	2022
Income from:	£	£	£	£
Charitable activities	5,971	-	343,023	338,210
Other trading activities	51,221	52,094	10,213	5,000
Investment income (Bank interest)	26	-	-	-
	57,218	52,094	353,236	343,210
Expenditure on:				
Charitable activities	8,351	9,200	368,258	318,992
	8,351	9,200	368,258	318,992
Net income/(expenditure)	48,867	42,894	(15,022)	24,218
Transfers	-	-	-	-
	48,867	42,894	(15,022)	24,218
Net movement in funds	48,867	42,894	(15,022)	24,218
Reconciliation of funds				
Total Funds B/Fwd	88,053	45,159	60,117	35,899
Total Funds C/Fwd	136,920	88,053	45,095	60,117

19. Comparative Statement of Financial Position (Balance Sheet)

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

	Unrestricted	Restricted	Total 2022
	£	£	£
Fixed assets:			
Tangible assets	2,131	-	2,131
Current assets:			
Debtors	6,351	7,224	13,575
Cash at bank and in hand	83,502	56,916	140,418
	89,853	64,140	153,993
Liabilities:			
Creditors (due within one year)	3,931	4,023	7,954
Net current assets	85,922	60,117	146,039
Net Assets	88,053	60,117	148,170
Funds of the charity:			
Restricted funds	-	60,117	60,117
Unrestricted funds	88,053	-	88,053
	88,053	60,117	148,170