



# Dyslexia Scotland

## Annual Report 2023/24



During the reporting year 2023-2024, we celebrated our 55th anniversary, a significant milestone and a time for reflection on what it means to be dyslexic in Scotland today. As part of our journey towards a dyslexia-friendly Scotland, we launched an important baseline survey in liaison with the University of Glasgow to ask dyslexic adults over 16 for their views. Over 1400 people responded to this survey wanting to share their stories and experiences. At the time of writing, the findings are being analysed in time for the groundbreaking report to be published in Dyslexia Awareness week.

Over the past year, the small team at Dyslexia Scotland, supported by an impressive community of volunteers, changemakers and partner organisations, has continued to deliver the objectives set out in our Strategic Plan. This has been done through a combination of digital delivery of our services and face to face support for the dyslexic community.

Our Education Conference in October 2023 was the first in-person conference since 2019. It was clear from the sell-out success of the event that teachers welcomed the opportunity to network face to face with colleagues, speakers and exhibitors.

The cost-of-living crisis has placed substantial pressures

on Third Sector services. Charities such as Dyslexia Scotland are facing increasing demand for services alongside the rising cost of delivering new and existing services to those most in need.



Under that backdrop, we work hard to secure the funding we need to deliver our objectives. We successfully secured renewed core funding from the Scottish Government and the Corra Foundation to improve outcomes for children, families and adults with dyslexia. Core funding during the year from the Government and others such as The Robertson Trust and Scottish Equity Partners enabled us to deliver the remarkable range of activities outlined in this report. The Board of Directors is seeking to generate income from our services where possible and diversify funding from the public and private sectors. For this reason, we invested during the year in consultancy work to increase our skills over time in developing corporate partnerships.

As you will read in the 'Achievements and performance' section of this report and our accompanying visual Annual review, we are making enormous strides forward in our



## Chief Executive's voice

work. However, there is much more to do to address the challenges faced by Scotland's dyslexic community.

I am sincerely grateful for the generosity of our funders and to the many individuals and organisations who support Dyslexia Scotland by giving time and in-kind help to support dyslexic people. These individuals include our dedicated President, Sir Jackie Stewart, our Vice Presidents, Ambassadors, Young Ambassadors, my fellow Directors, Council members, national and local volunteers including the Adult Networks and all those involved in our network of branches.

Our Ambassadors play a key role in raising awareness about dyslexia and the important work of Dyslexia Scotland. Coming from a wide range of backgrounds and from different parts of Scottish society, they challenge prejudices and stereotypes about dyslexia whilst also acting as role models for dyslexic children, young people and adults. We were delighted to welcome two new Ambassadors, Hamza Yassin, Cameraman and television presenter, and Alan Sinclair, lawyer, to join the group this year.

My heartfelt gratitude goes to the staff team for their hard work, commitment and energy this year in supporting the dyslexic community.

David Shaw

Chair of Dyslexia Scotland

Our annual report provides an opportunity to reflect on distance travelled. In this last year, we have taken significant steps towards our goal of a dyslexia-friendly Scotland.

Take a moment to contemplate with us as we pause for breath and celebrate our achievements with pride:

more teachers trained in dyslexia and inclusive practice

a groundbreaking survey to 'take the temperature' of our community in Scotland

bold new actions to bring attention to our cause, through campaigns and Ambassadors.

We will use what we have learned over the past year to build on these successes and inform our next steps. There is still much to do if we are to ensure that all people with dyslexia in Scotland have their rights met and are able to reach their full potential. We ask that you continue to support us on this important journey. We cannot do it without you.



Cathy Magee OBE

Chief Executive of Dyslexia Scotland

# Objectives and activities

Dyslexia Scotland is the national voluntary organisation representing the needs and views of dyslexic people in Scotland. Dyslexia Scotland aims to inspire and enable people with dyslexia, regardless of their age and abilities, to reach their full potential in education, employment and in life, through:

Promotion of national policies, standards and best practice for early recognition, assessment and training for dyslexia in Scotland.

Promotion of equality for all dyslexic people in all areas of life.



Our four strategic aims are outlined in the Strategic Plan for 2022–2025:

1. To provide and promote high quality services
2. To influence and achieve positive change at a national and local level
3. To give people with dyslexia an effective individual and collective voice
4. To ensure that Dyslexia Scotland is a sustainable, efficient and effective organisation

Our Strategic Plan is available at the following link, along with a visual outline of our core services:

[dyslexiascotland.org.uk/what-we-do](https://dyslexiascotland.org.uk/what-we-do).

Dyslexia Scotland's core services include:

confidential National Helpline: 0344 800 8484

a national list of approved Assessors (Psychologists and Dyslexia Specialists) who carry out assessments to identify dyslexia and other associated difficulties

a national Tutor List and professional development for tutors

an in-house library, information leaflets and resources

conferences, masterclasses, special events, workshops and dyslexia awareness training tailored to a range of large and small organisations

support of a range of initiatives and projects for the Scottish Government and other partners, including professional learning resources and opportunities for teachers

a variety of local events, activities and support through our network of volunteer-led Branches and Dyslexic Adult Networks

a quarterly magazine and a range of services for members

two websites and active social networks:

[dyslexiascotland.org.uk](https://dyslexiascotland.org.uk) (incorporating Dyslexia Unwrapped for children and young people) and

[addressingdyslexia.org](https://addressingdyslexia.org) (for teachers)

Our 3-year Strategic Plan 2022 – 2025 was developed following consultation with members and key stakeholders about the priorities for the 3-year period. That Plan was launched in March 2022.



# Achievements and performance

We've achieved a huge amount in the last year, well above and beyond the day-to-day service delivery.

These are our top-picks of the year's highlights.



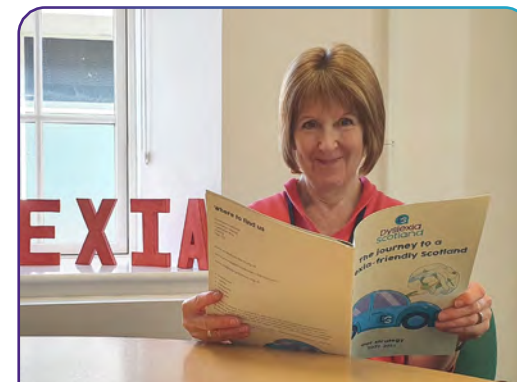
Launched Scotland's biggest-ever survey of its dyslexic population, together with the University of Glasgow.

**The Drum**  
World Creative  
Rankings 2024

**130th**  
World's Most Awarded Advertisers

**Dyslexia Scotland**

Ranked 130th most awarded advertiser in the World Creative Rankings, thanks to the 'There's Nothing Comic About Dyslexia' campaign.



Our Chief Executive was awarded an OBE for services to dyslexic people.

Delivered the GTCS Professional Recognition Dyslexia and Inclusive practice programme to a new cohort of teachers and lecturers.







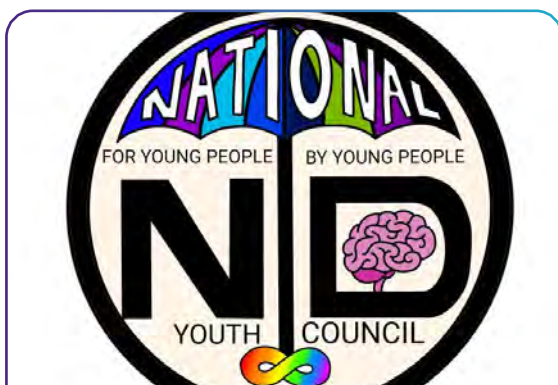
Attracted more companies to join as Organisational Members.



Celebrated our 55th anniversary as a charity.



Welcomed Hamza Yassin as a new Ambassador and hosted an awareness event with him during Dyslexia Awareness Week.



Appointed two Young Ambassadors to the National Neurodiversity Youth Council.



Called on all Head Teachers in Scotland to sign a pledge to be more dyslexia inclusive.



Collaborated with RSABI to deliver free dyslexia assessments to the Scottish agriculture community.

# Achievements and performance (continued)

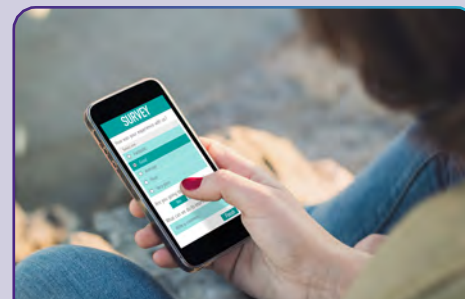
## Brief interventions



1790 Helpline enquiries answered



200 social media messages answered



338 tutor enquiries answered

## Awareness raising



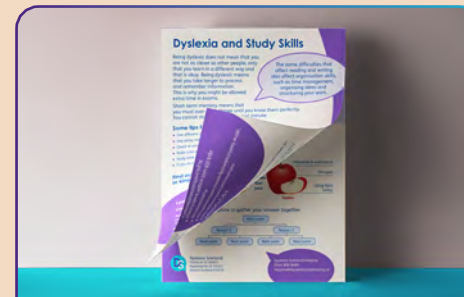
66,000  
blue ribbons



2025 magazines delivered to our members



100 dyslexic people's stories shared



13,430 leaflets and 91 awareness cards distributed



## Face to face



1983 people took part in  
51 events



430 hours of free  
tutoring



18 free assessments to  
identify dyslexia

## Training and learning provided



1411 changemakers  
upskilled

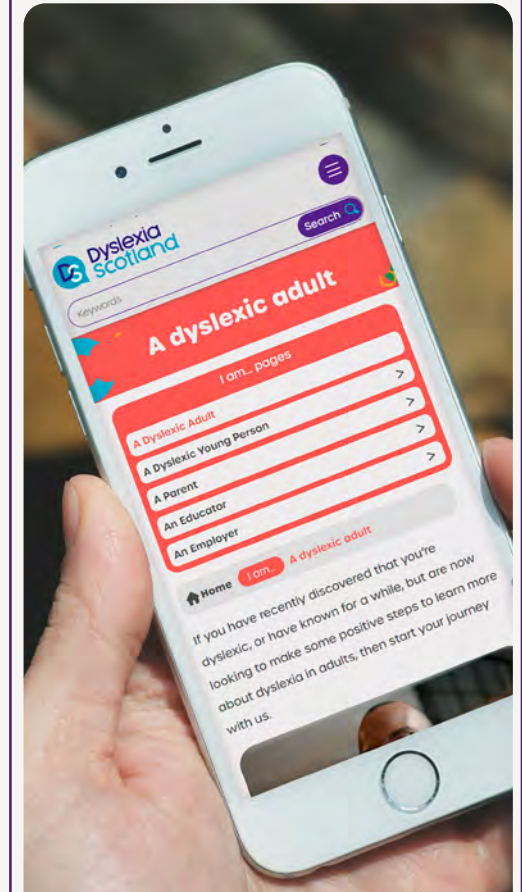


72 educators started  
their Professional  
Recognition in Dyslexia  
and Inclusive Practice



26 gained Professional  
Recognition in Dyslexia  
and Inclusive Practice

## Digital reach



1.5 million digital  
engagements across  
our websites and social  
media



Rory was struggling with reading at school but teachers just thought he wasn't trying hard enough.

Following a call to our Helpline, mum Kirsty was able to arrange a private assessment and an appointment with a specially trained optician. These confirmed that Rory has dyslexia and visual difficulties that affect his ability to read. When he learned that he was dyslexic, Rory's self-understanding and confidence grew. Teachers noted his new-found enthusiasm and improvements in reading.



Since taking part in the Sean Connery Foundation Dyslexia Initiative in Edinburgh, parents have seen a positive impact on their child's confidence. One parent spoke about the change in mindset of their child and how they have started enjoying creative literacy tasks:

"I have noticed a huge change in my daughter when it comes to doing literacy work now, she is writing short stories on the home computer, and she has so many ideas. She is more confident in trying to spell words and her reading has improved a lot too."



Teachers who completed the Dyslexia and inclusive practice Professional Recognition programme recognised the impact on their practice. One teacher said, "I am very proud to have gained Professional Recognition in Dyslexia and Inclusive Practice. It really made me step out my comfort zone in taking the lead in staff training and also I am now the expert for my school. It has had such a positive impact for my school and the pupils. There is a greater awareness of dyslexia in the school and staff are now picking up signs and questioning why a pupil might have difficulties."



A Dyslexic Adult Network participant told us, "Meeting and sharing one's personal and societal dyslexic experiences with other adults makes me feel part of a caring, empathetic group. This had never happened previously in my many years of being on the edge of society and not having a clue why. The presentations by professionals and peers can be very informative and help to keep one up to date with research and developments."



Another learner described a recent experience of the impact of the Sean Connery Foundation Dyslexia Initiative in how they have approached their work:

"I used to write half a page in class but today I wrote 2 ½ pages. It was a lot easier. I use finger spelling in class but not finger writing. I used to write 'was' the wrong way around but now I think about it and I don't. I remember what I learned."



A teacher who attended our Dyslexia and the Classroom training told us, "I cried a lot of the way through that class. It's a real eye opener. All people want to do, especially teacher and parents, is help children with dyslexia, and the ideas in this class were fantastic. All teachers should listen to this speaker."



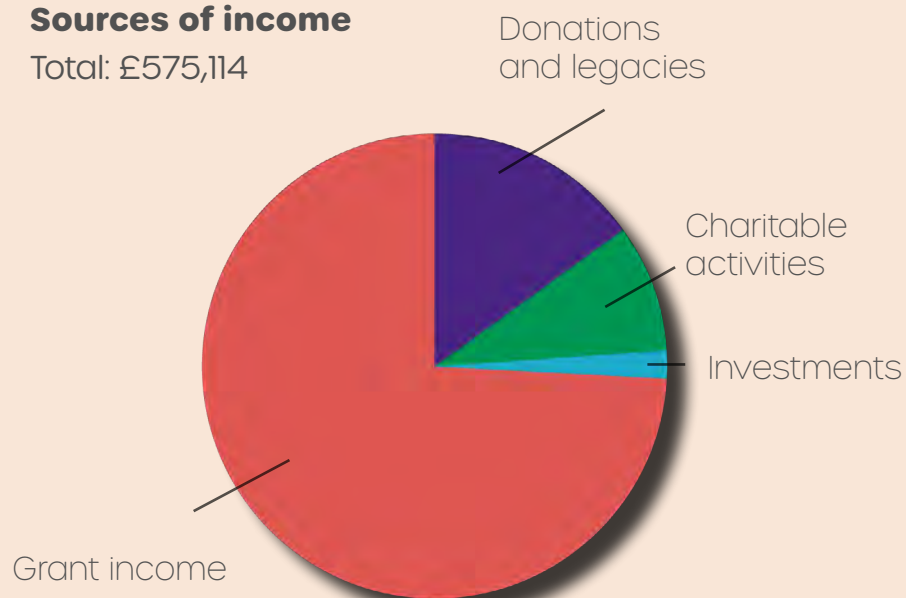
# Financial review

A surplus of £26,237 arose during the year (2023: deficit of £42,939). During the year, eighteen (2023: eighteen) Branches operated under the charity number of Dyslexia Scotland and are incorporated in the accounts. At the year end, £503,080 (2023: £476,843) of reserves were carried forward.

During the year, funding was received from the Scottish Government to engage consultants in the following areas: parent masterclasses; conference organisation; training for tutors and branches; tutor recruitment interviews; Panel training/fees for GTCS programme. Funding received from the Sean Connery Foundation was used to pay consultants involved in delivering the Sean Connery Foundation Dyslexia Initiative in partnership with the City of Edinburgh Council.

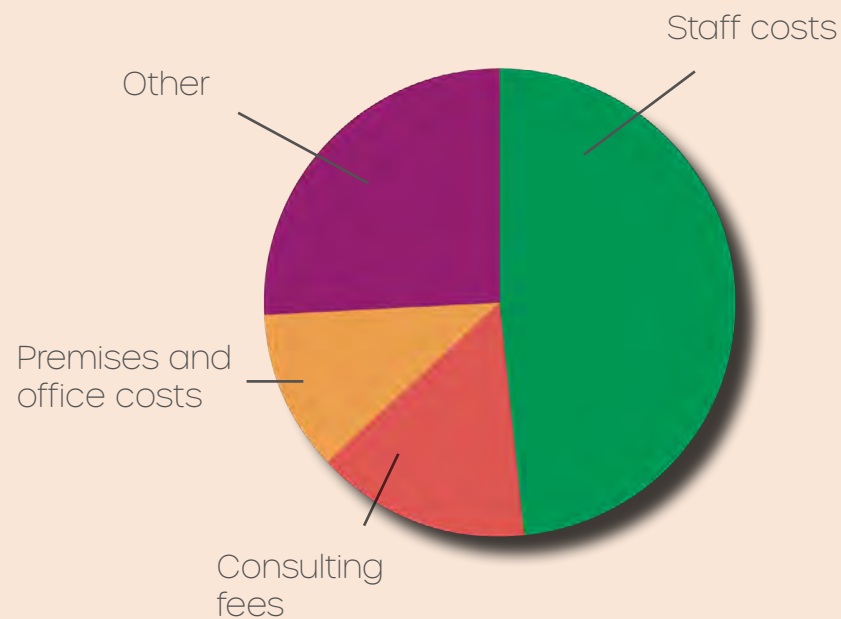
## Sources of income

Total: £575,114



## Expenditure

Total: £548,877



## Financial position - extracts from the Annual Report and Financial Statements

### Statement of financial activities

<b>Income from</b>	<b>Unrestricted funds 2024 £</b>	<b>Designated funds 2024</b>	<b>Restricted funds 2024 £</b>	<b>Total 2024 £</b>	<b>As restated total 2023 £</b>
Donations and legacies	87,051	—	426,200	513,251	446,701
Charitable activities	51,379	—	—	51,379	58,578
Investments	10,484	—	—	10,484	5,521
<b>Total income</b>	<b>148,914</b>	<b>—</b>	<b>426,200</b>	<b>575,114</b>	<b>510,800</b>
<b>Expenditure on:</b> Charitable activities	117,901	—	430,976	548,877	553,739
<b>Net (outgoing)/incoming resources before transfers</b>	31,013	—	(4,776)	26,237	(42,939)
Gross transfers between funds	(100,000)	100,000	—	—	—
<b>Net (expenditure)/income for the year/Net movement in funds</b>	<b>(68,987)</b>	<b>100,000</b>	<b>(4,776)</b>	<b>26,237</b>	<b>(42,939)</b>
Fund balances at 1 April 2022	427,883	—	48,960	476,843	519,782
<b>Fund balances at 31 March 2023</b>	<b>358,896</b>	<b>100,000</b>	<b>44,184</b>	<b>503,080</b>	<b>476,843</b>

## Balance sheet as at 31 March 2024

	<b>2024</b>		<b>2023</b>	
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
<b>Fixed assets</b>				
Tangible assets		4,854		6,615
<b>Current assets</b>				
Debtors	7,169		2,455	
Funds held as agent	63,000		63,000	
Cash at bank and in hand	<u>506,515</u>		<u>482,693</u>	
	576,684		548,148	
<b>Creditors: amounts falling due within one year</b>	<u>(78,458)</u>		<u>(77,920)</u>	
Net current assets		<u>498,226</u>		<u>470,228</u>
<b>Total assets less current liabilities</b>		<u>503,080</u>		<u>476,843</u>
<b>Income funds</b>				
Restricted funds		44,184		48,960
Designated funds		100,000		
Unrestricted funds		<u>358,896</u>		<u>427,883</u>
		<u>503,080</u>		<u>476,843</u>

This is an extract from the full accounts. Copies of the full accounts are available at [dyslexiascotland.org.uk](https://dyslexiascotland.org.uk).



## Raising awareness

Dyslexia Scotland keeps our community's issues on the public radar by sharing news stories in local and national media. Here are a few of the features we've had published over the year.



Daily Record: New role at charity  
for Strictly winner Hamza



Third Force News: 55 years of Dyslexia Scotland



Edinburgh Reporter: Sean Connery's legacy helps  
dyslexic children in Edinburgh



# Our year in pictures



Left: Our Branches raised awareness at a local level all across Scotland; Right: People took part in the Kiltwalk to raise funds for Dyslexia Scotland.







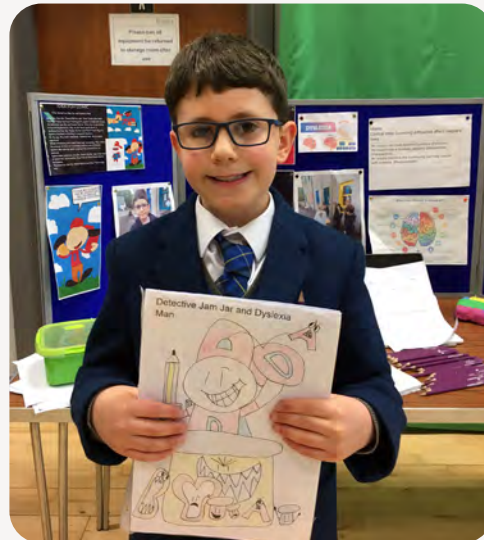
Clockwise from top left: Young people take part in an event in Stirling; Sir Jackie Stewart shared his dyslexia story for Dyslexia Voice magazine; Farmer Pete Black and RSAB's Carol McLaren lead a campaign to offer free dyslexia assessments to the agricultural sector.







Clockwise from top left: Our Volunteers Manager and two Young Ambassadors meet with Roz McCall MSP at the Scottish Parliament; young people from Duloch Primary School in Fife show off their Changemaker badge; Young Ambassador Rachel meets Foysol Choudhury MSP after speaking about dyslexia at the Scottish Parliament; a young person selling his comics to raise money



for Dyslexia Scotland; a teacher receives her GTCS Dyslexia and Inclusive Practice award.





Clockwise from top left: Journalist Laura Maciver with our Ambassador Hamza Yassin during Dyslexia Awareness Week; celebrating our 55th anniversary; teachers at our Education Conference; Scottish Apprentice of the Year Marc Ingram at our Branch Residential.



