

**growing back stronger,  
better and fairer**





**JEN HENWOOD**  
SIS Chair

# CHAIR'S MESSAGE

## WELCOME TO SIS'S ANNUAL REVIEW FOR THE YEAR APRIL 2021 – MARCH 2022.

When I joined the SIS Management Committee in September 2011, I did so because I had worked closely with SIS for a number of years and had great respect for the **skill, professionalism and commitment to clients of SIS interpreters** and for the **efficiency and dedication of SIS staff**. I became Chair of the Management Committee in September 2012, and I am about to stand down.

On the occasion of SIS's 25th anniversary, I reflected on what it means that SIS delivers **language support services at the heart of the community**. I suggested that heart, as well as meaning centre or hub, has connotations of **compassion, humanity and courage**, and that community is a **complex web of mutuality, nurturing human connection**.

It would be impossible to do justice to all SIS's achievements over recent years, but perhaps the most recent **Customer Service Excellence** award, with eleven areas marked as Compliance Plus, says a great deal. This "remarkable achievement" is the result of the hard work and dedication of the staff team, sessional linguists and volunteers. You can read more about this on page 5.

One of the ways SIS nurtures community is through its **volunteers**. SIS has a management committee made up of **volunteer Trustees**, who have come from all walks of life,

contributing their skills and experience, for the benefit of SIS's beneficiaries and the wider community.

More recently, SIS has enrolled **Volunteer Linguists**, who have generously contributed their skills and time to enable SIS to expand its range of services. An outstanding example of this is the **Bilingual Telephone Befriending Service**, set up during the COVID lockdown, which matches Volunteer Linguists, according to language and culture, with otherwise isolated Service Users. You can read more about this on page 8.

It is interesting to reflect on what motivates people to volunteer their time, energy and skills. Enrique Restoy, Trustee and Volunteer Linguist said

**"SIS is a daily reminder that people are precious wherever they are from and wherever they find themselves. Humanity knows no borders. SIS helps people who find themselves in Sussex to live with dignity, be able to communicate and understand how things work here, and integrate into our community"**

Thank you, to our generous Volunteer Linguists and Trustees, and to everyone else who is part of the web of mutuality that is the SIS community – our excellent staff team, our dedicated sessional linguists, our many partners, our funders and of course, our Service Users.

**Jen Henwood, Chair SIS Management Committee**





**ARRAN EVANS**  
SIS Director

# DIRECTORS' REPORT

## April 2021 – March 2022

### RECOVERY CHALLENGES

We came a long way this year. Interpreting grew significantly but did not fully recover to pre-pandemic levels. The situation remained complex; a continuing pandemic, health appointment backlogs, external staff absences, a mental health epidemic and an emerging cost of living crisis. In spite of this, we seized opportunities, engaged widely and started to build back better, stronger and fairer.

A persistent and significant challenge has been restoring access to primary care.

**“COVID has made it more difficult to get an appointment. I cannot use the technology. I was feeling ill and needed to follow up my treatment and review my medication. I have diabetes and kidney problems. I am concerned that my condition will get worse. It was particularly difficult to make a face-to-face appointment.”**

#### Farsi Speaking Service User

We helped people register with a G.P, make appointments, and get interpreting support. We promoted the importance of Face-to-Face interpreting. G.P. access increased but remained less than 50% of pre-pandemic levels.

### RAPID RESPONSES

Service Users encountered the full range of challenging life situations that can face any of us. In addition, some fled violence, suffer trauma and carry serious psychological burdens. Many feel unsafe, confused and vulnerable. They face language, cultural and information barriers.

Community Interpreters make it possible for Service Users to have a voice. They address isolation, frustration and misunderstanding and support effective diagnoses, treatment and prevention. In emergencies, our services work closely with health and social care colleagues to prevent situations becoming life-threatening. We deliver 24 hour interpreting services, every day of the year. Emergency interpreting was busier than before the pandemic.

There has been significant demographic change. The Afghan crisis in September 2021, the Ukraine crisis in March 2022 and many more displaced people placed in unsuitable hotels. All needed urgent interpreting responses.

→ [sussexinterpreting.org.uk/news/ready-to-help-afghan-refugees](https://sussexinterpreting.org.uk/news/ready-to-help-afghan-refugees)

→ [sussexinterpreting.org.uk/news/ready-to-help-ukrainian-refugees](https://sussexinterpreting.org.uk/news/ready-to-help-ukrainian-refugees)

### SERVICE DEVELOPMENTS

Our grant income increased by 49%, much of it focussed on COVID responses. We engaged people directly through translated text messages, delivered more complex casework, addressed gaps in trauma pathways and targeted vaccine confidence within the Chinese and South Asian communities. All new developments. Our work in ensuring accessible translations stands in the pioneering tradition of SIS.

**“Thank you so much for the valuable feedback, from the volunteer mystery shoppers, about our website. We will use this to improve the translations.”**

#### Anita Johal, Project Manager, RISE

One of our biggest achievements was the development of a multi-faceted Bilingual Health Promotion Project. You can read about the interlinked support on offer here:

→ [sussexinterpreting.org.uk/news/productive-6-months-for-sis-bilingual-health-promotion-project](https://sussexinterpreting.org.uk/news/productive-6-months-for-sis-bilingual-health-promotion-project)

Funding from Sussex Community Foundation meant we provided additional bilingual casework support to help people with housing information, guidance and access to Housing and Homelessness services.

→ [sussexinterpreting.org.uk/news/sis-awarded-funding-to-support-housing-issues](https://sussexinterpreting.org.uk/news/sis-awarded-funding-to-support-housing-issues)

Our caseworkers work across all SIS projects, improving the Service User experience. Caseworkers build rapport and people do not need to tell their story multiple times.

### QUALITY, ACHIEVEMENT & SECURITY

We were awarded 11 areas of Compliance Plus for Customer Service Excellence- **“A remarkable achievement”. (CSE Assessor)**. We are very good at recording and presenting our continuous improvement and helping people appreciate their contribution.



**ARRAN EVANS**  
SIS Director

# DIRECTORS' REPORT

## April 2021 – March 2022

We gained national recognition with a prestigious Social Partnership of the Year Award! The Judges observed:

**“The breadth of the partnership, the recruitment of Social Prescribing Link Workers with lived experience to reach people from minority groups, the focus on those groups that find it hardest to engage positively with conventional services, and the qualitative and quantitative evidence demonstrating the impact of this approach made them outstanding”.**

For the first time we secured the Cyber Essentials quality mark – with compliance in all 50+ areas of cyber security.

### DIGITAL DEVELOPMENTS

We streamlined the interpreting booking process. Customers can easily create, amend and cancel bookings using a central dashboard. This supported our busy Coordination Team to continue delivering a fantastic service!

We launched a new Virtual Switchboard - making it easier for Service Users to book interpreters and improving our response times for self-referrals.

→ [sussexinterpreting.org.uk/sis-stories/virtual-switchboard-making-it-easier-for-patients-to-book-interpreters](https://sussexinterpreting.org.uk/sis-stories/virtual-switchboard-making-it-easier-for-patients-to-book-interpreters)

### COLLABORATION AND PARTNERSHIP

SIS is widely regarded as an organisation that collaborates and innovates. We provided thoughtful feedback to support decision makers to improve service access, especially in less well served areas of Sussex. We examined our own service gaps and respond. For example

engaging our Bengali colleagues to increase Service User self-referrals.

Our mental health work remained significantly higher than before the pandemic. We contributed to a Refugee, Asylum Seeker, & Migrant Working Group which influences mental health transformation plans. We shared data and case studies.

**“Thank you so much for sending this through it is incredibly helpful. I will make sure I add all to the next iteration of the data & intelligence mapping document”.**

**Leila Morley – Commissioning Manager – Sussex Health & Care Partnership – Mental Health**

Interpreting across maternity care pathways was a big area of work. We collaborated on improvements and provided interpreters for language specific antenatal classes.

### LEARNING, TEAMWORK AND TRUST

We continued to reflect on lessons from the pandemic. Trust embedded in the organisational culture helped us succeed. SIS Stories show our determination to grow back stronger, better and fairer; “Face to Face interpreting is essential!”, “Continuity of Interpreter improves mental health” and “Urgent help with housing”.

→ [sussexinterpreting.org.uk/sis-stories](https://sussexinterpreting.org.uk/sis-stories)

Our resilience is rooted in teamwork, a ‘can do’ approach and nurtured by the passion and commitment of everyone involved in SIS – linguists, staff, trustees and volunteers.

We are all proud of the difference we have made this year.



# ACCREDITATIONS



**ARRAN EVANS**  
SIS Director



**MATT EVENDEN**  
Digital Manager

## CUSTOMER SERVICE EXCELLENCE

This was the 12th continuous year of our Customer Service Excellence journey – [www.customerserviceexcellence.uk.com](http://www.customerserviceexcellence.uk.com)

SIS was one of the first charities to engage this rigorous independent quality assessment. We have built up momentum and provided compelling evidence of continuous improvement.

**This year we secured 11 areas of Compliance Plus!**

Our Assessor commented:

**“This is a remarkable achievement!”**

He shares our belief that SIS is emerging from the pandemic stronger and better able to deliver our Vision, Mission and Values. He sees us as an influencer across Sussex.

Our three new areas of Compliance Plus:

- We value the contribution our staff make to delivering customer focused services, and leaders, managers and staff demonstrate these behaviours.
- We take reasonable steps to make sure our customers have received and understood the information we provide.
- We consult and involve customers, citizens, partners and staff on the setting, reviewing and raising of our local standards.

Next year a key challenge is to provide access channels, addressing digital barriers; capability, poverty, hesitancy - ensuring appropriate and fair access for all.



Well done to everyone who has worked so hard to make SIS successful in delivering language support at the heart of our communities.

You can read more: [sussexinterpreting.org.uk/news/a-remarkable-achievement](https://sussexinterpreting.org.uk/news/a-remarkable-achievement)

## CYBER ESSENTIALS

In Spring 2022, SIS achieved Cyber Essentials accreditation. Cyber Essentials is a UK certification scheme designed to show an organisation has a minimum level of protection in cyber security through annual assessments to maintain certification. The scheme is backed by the UK government and overseen by the National Cyber Security Centre.

The SIS Digital Team have been working towards this achievement for several years and by implementing a number of software, hardware and policy changes we can now show that our systems are more secure.

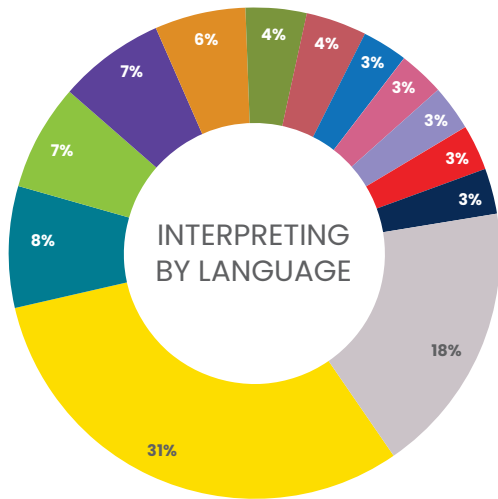
This helps to reduce the risk of a cyber-attack having a catastrophic effect on the organisation.

**We secured compliance in all 50+ areas – a valuable addition to our quality assurance.**

The certification is one of several ways SIS can demonstrate our commitment to keeping our Service Users, Service Providers, staff and linguists safe.

# COMMUNITY INTERPRETING

APRIL 2021 – MARCH 2022

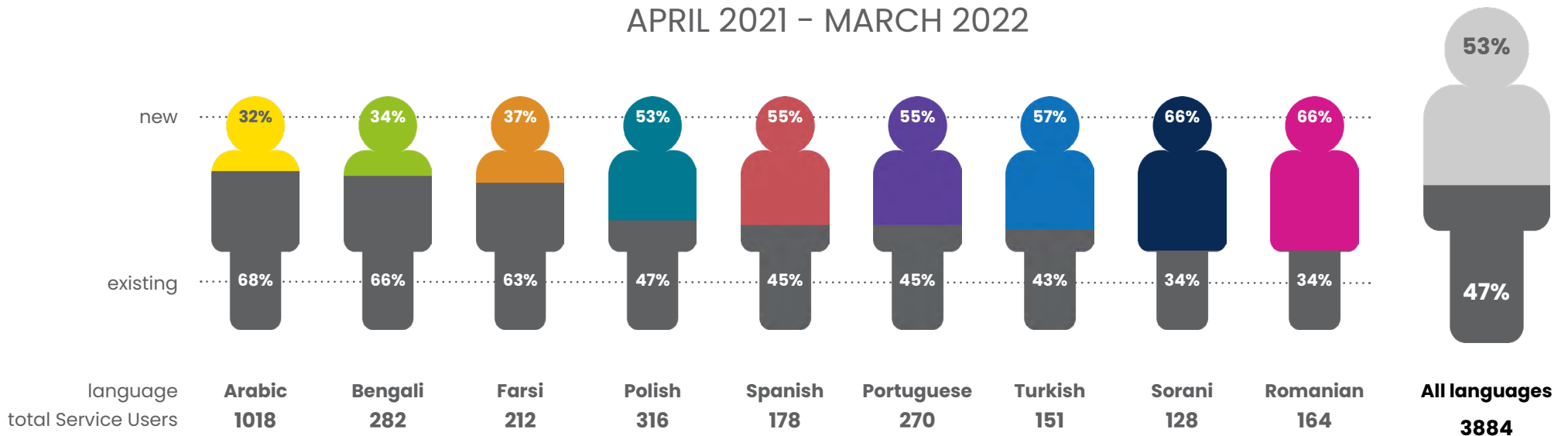


LANGUAGE	SESSIONS
Arabic	4445
Polish	1105
Bengali	982
Portuguese	937
Farsi	874
Italian	571
Spanish	505
Turkish	478
Hungarian	453
Russian	442
Cantonese	438
Sorani	422
All Other	2601



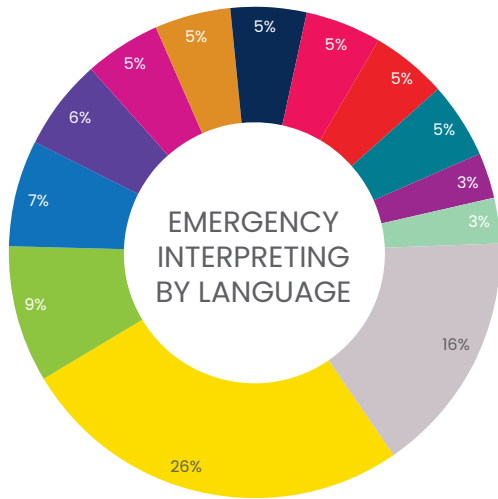
## NEW VS EXISTING SERVICE USERS

APRIL 2021 – MARCH 2022

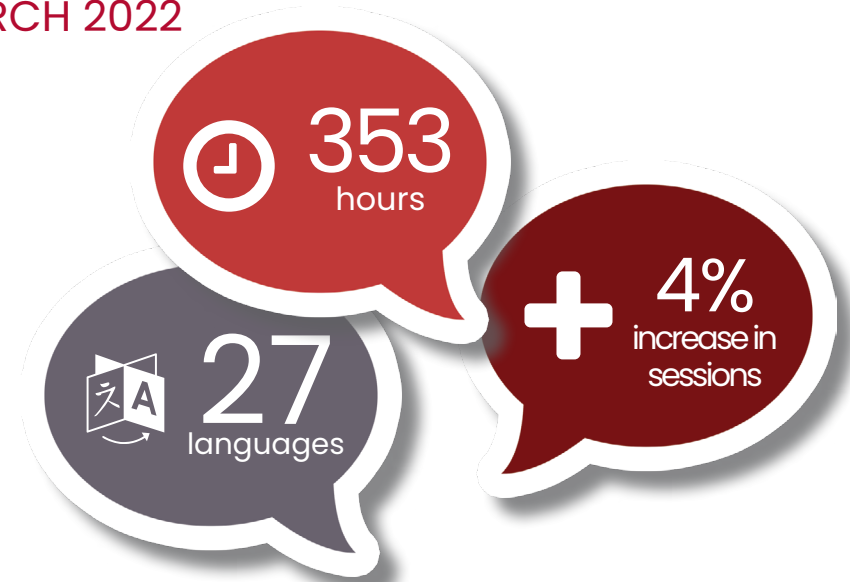


# EMERGENCY INTERPRETING

APRIL 2021 – MARCH 2022

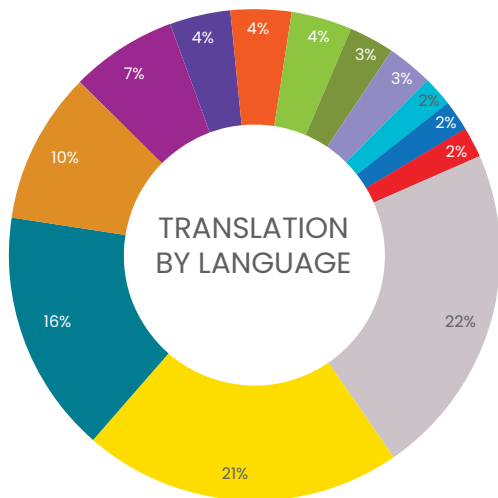


LANGUAGE	SESSIONS
Arabic	76
Bengali	26
Turkish	19
Portuguese	16
Romanian	15
Farsi	14
Sorani	14
Albanian	13
Cantonese	13
Polish	13
Mandarin	10
Lithuanian	10
All Other	48
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>287</b>



# COMMUNITY TRANSLATION

APRIL 2021 – MARCH 2022



LANGUAGE	WORDS
Arabic	51759
Polish	39332
Farsi	24917
Mandarin	16585
Portuguese	10736
Vietnamese	8956
Bengali	8756
Italian	7182
Russian	7164
Czech	4942
Turkish	4598
Cantonese	4063
All Other	55570





**VIKKI GIMSON**  
Quality Assurance  
Manager

# PROJECTS UPDATE

The SIS Projects Team had another exceptionally productive year delivering additional services that help support people with language needs.

## **SOCIAL PRESCRIBING AND ADVOCACY**

Our team of volunteers and caseworkers helped more people than ever before to manage their social, emotional and practical needs (output statistics page 10).

The Social Prescribing Plus Partnership (SP+) won the prestigious National Association of Linkworkers' best partnership award with judges saying

**"SP+ is a strong example of using social prescribing to address health inequalities and an inspiration for integrated social prescribing partnerships. The breadth of the partnership, recruitment of staff with lived experience, ... and evidence demonstrating impact made them outstanding."**

Sussex Community Foundation provided a grant to add casework capacity involving housing related issues. We helped to prevent homelessness and improve Service Users' housing provision and prospects.

**"I found the support incredibly useful. There have been so many forms to fill in, I was very lost with all the appointments and calls. The advice has always been spot on. I feel not only supported but looked after by everyone at SIS."**

**Spanish Speaking Service User**

## **BEFRIENDING**

SIS strengthened the delivery of our newest service, established as an emergency response during the COVID lockdown. We recruited a Projects Coordinator to develop processes and recruit/support Volunteer Bilingual Telephone Befrienders.

Migrants are especially vulnerable to loneliness and isolation. SIS has matched 46 pairs, with a shared culture and language, to create friendships, which enhance wellbeing, through a weekly phone call. The average relationship duration is 9 months.

The nature of isolation and the stigma it brings is reflected in unusually low self-referrals. We have promoted translated information to boost self-referral.

**"Every week D sounds better; enthusiastic, happy to talk and share her daily life. She is optimistic about the future....Her social life is improving... I think befriending was a good experience for her to boost her confidence."**

**French Speaking Bilingual Telephone Befriender**

**"It is difficult at first to establish trust and a meaningful relationship with someone we've never met, it requires a lot of patience and an open, friendly approach. Eventually it pays off and becomes more natural and leads to a positive outcome."**

**Polish Speaking Bilingual Telephone Befriender**







**VIKKI GIMSON**  
Quality Assurance  
Manager

# PROJECTS UPDATE

## BILINGUAL HEALTH PROMOTION PROJECT (BHPP)

This new, Sussex-wide, project combines community development, partnership work and volunteer management to deliver an ambitious programme of health promotion, social prescribing and community engagement.

BHPP empowered people to choose healthy behaviours and manage additional risk factors through involvement in campaigns around vaccine confidence, community testing, mental health, cancer, ante-natal care, digital inclusion, active living and stopping smoking.

**“Thank you for sending me all the translated resources and links - this is really helpful. I have shared them with my colleagues and asked them to share further, as appropriate.”**

**Boba Rangelov, Patient and Public Engagement, Sussex Cancer Alliance**

Access to information was improved through redesign and development of the translated SIS Service User webpages. We produced videos in 7 languages to promote people’s right to interpreting support. We also offer consultations for other services to make accessibility improvements.

**“Thanks for revising our communication documents. The additional text about contacting SIS for support and how to navigate the website are brilliant.”**

**Annie Sparks, Community Testing Team, Brighton and Hove City Council**

We piloted and evaluated a range of methodologies to give people a voice in public consultations; translated surveys, interviews, focus groups, lived experience workshops.

We helped the NHS recruit 8 new Ethnically Diverse Community Ambassadors volunteers and added 11 new Volunteer Linguists to our network.

**“The feedback you’ve given has been really thorough and so interesting. I particularly like your focus on positive language to engage people so that they can see the benefits of the programme. You really know your stuff, this has been such a valuable process.”**

**Jason Grant, Sussex Health and Care Partnership Community Ambassador**

## COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND RESEARCH

SIS worked on two major projects;

Community Voices Group (CVG) is a group of ethnically diverse individuals who meet monthly to work with Sussex NHS and Brighton & Hove City Council to influence decision making. The CVG operates as an information and action loop – it chooses the topics, researches and presents the opinions and needs of their communities and then reports back on the response of public services. Topics discussed include; mental health, communication, information, cultural sensitivity, consultation, intersectionality.

Community Participation Action Research (CPAR) involved 5 bilingual community researchers who looked at Attitudes to Cancer Screening in different communities, interviewing 83 Service Users. They went on to present their findings at an on-line conference attended by 100s of health care professionals.

**“We are proud and privileged to have worked with you. Your research links quantitative and qualitative data, bringing value for money for health improvements. The powerful stories you reveal brings your research to life.”**

**Joanne McEwan, Public Health Development Manager, Health Education England**

SIS Projects Team works in formal partnerships with



With thanks for SIS Projects Funding to



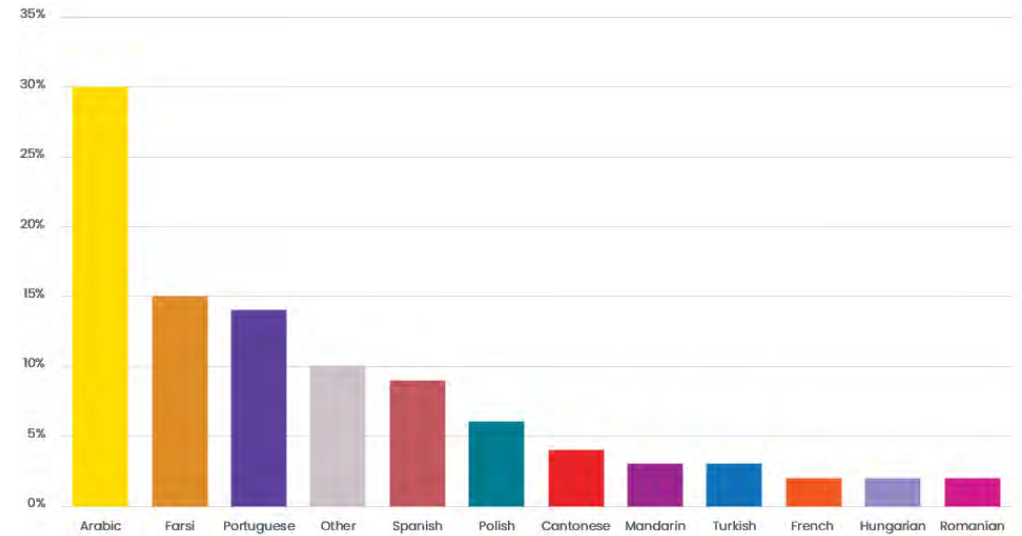
# PROJECTS

APRIL 2021 – MARCH 2022

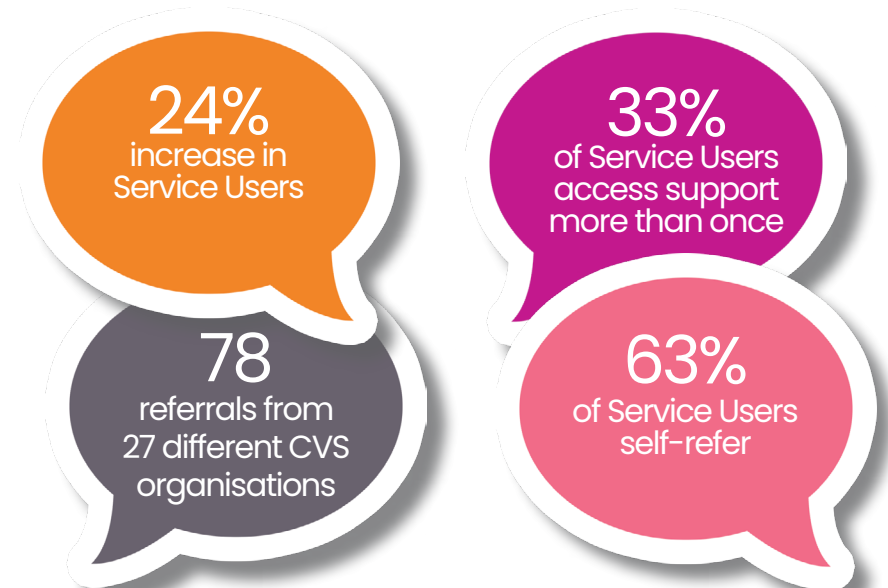
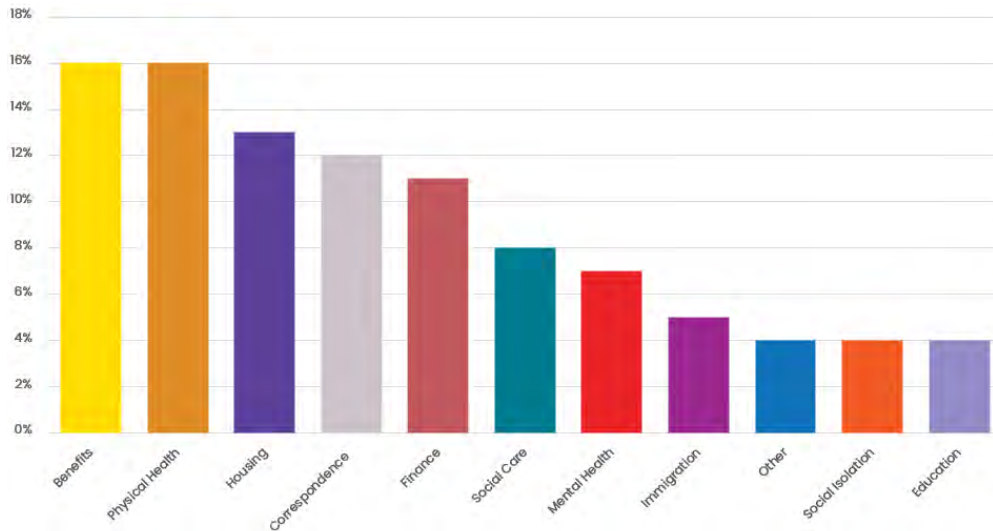
## NUMBER OF SERVICE USERS SUPPORTED



## LANGUAGE UPTAKE FOR SUPPORT WORK



## SUPPORT ISSUES WE HELPED WITH





**KEITH BRAID**  
Finance Officer

# FINANCE REPORT

## April 2021 – March 2022

### STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES

(INCLUDING INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2022

	Unrestricted Funds 2022 £	Restricted Funds 2022 £	Total Funds 2022 £	Total Funds 2021 £
<b>INCOME AND ENDOWMENTS FROM</b>				
Donations and legacies	997,107		997,107	718,725
Other trading activities	473		473	-
Investment income	4		4	5
Other income	10,670		10,670	50,617
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1,008,254</b>		<b>1,008,254</b>	<b>769,347</b>
<b>CHARITABLE ACTIVITIES</b>	<b>968,700</b>		<b>968,700</b>	<b>810,794</b>
<b>NET INCOME/(EXPENDITURE)</b>	<b>39,554</b>		<b>39,554</b>	<b>(41,447)</b>
<b>RECONCILIATION OF FUNDS</b>				
Total funds brought forward	278,279		278,279	319,726
<b>TOTAL FUNDS CARRIED FORWARD</b>	<b>317,833</b>		<b>317,833</b>	<b>278,279</b>

• The year under review (2021-2022) saw a massive increase in turnover of almost 31% compared to the previous year (2020/2021). This was a direct result of coming out of the pandemic and its lockdowns from the previous year, and the resulting increase in sessions that were able to take place.

• There was also a related rise in our expenditure which was some 19½% higher than the previous year, largely due to the increased levels of work undertaken – for the same reasons as stated above.

• The result of all this was a net surplus of £39,544 (compared to a loss of £41,447 the previous year). This represents an increase in net income of some £80,991 which almost overturned the previous year's losses. Taken over the two years (2020 – 2022) the net income was almost at breakeven (£1,903 deficit), despite the pandemic occurring in the first of those two years.

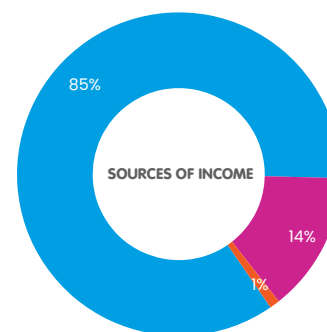
• During the current year (2022/2023) we aim to at least break even on our net income, but the social and political situation is currently uncertain and inflation rampant, so there may always be unforeseen forces at play which upset our financial plans.

• This year we once more exceeded a turnover above the £1,000,000 mark, which is a massive change since our early days, and even fifteen years ago when our income was only 66% of what it was this year.

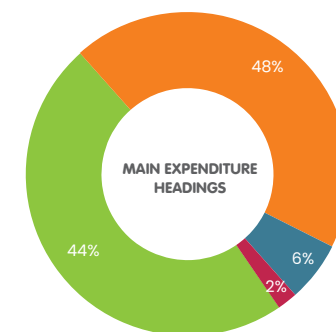
• An audit has been carried out by our auditors, Chariot House Ltd. A copy of the full report is available from our office.

### BALANCE SHEET AS AT 31 MARCH 2022

	2022		2021	
	£	£	£	£
<b>FIXED ASSETS</b>				
Tangible Assets		0		0
<b>CURRENT ASSETS</b>				
Debtors	161,482		147,294	
Cash at bank	317,066		277,602	
	<u>478,548</u>		<u>424,896</u>	
<b>CREDITORS: Amounts falling due within one year</b>	<u>(160,715)</u>		<u>(146,617)</u>	
<b>NET CURRENT ASSETS</b>		<b>317,833</b>		<b>278,279</b>
<b>TOTAL ASSETS LESS CURRENT LIABILITIES</b>		<b>317,833</b>		<b>278,279</b>
<b>NET ASSETS</b>				
<b>FUNDS</b>		<b>317,833</b>		<b>278,279</b>
Unrestricted funds		317,833		278,279
<b>TOTAL FUNDS</b>		<b>317,833</b>		<b>278,279</b>



contract fees 85%  
project grants 14%  
COVID support grants 1%



staffing costs 48%  
interpreting fees 44%  
administration 6%  
premises costs 2%

These financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the provisions applicable to charitable companies subject to the small companies regime. Our audit carried out by: Chariot House Ltd, Chartered Accountants and Statutory Auditors, 44 Grand Parade, Brighton, East Sussex BN2 9QA

# STAFF DIRECTORY



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SIS Director

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Your co-operation is appreciated. All reasonable requests will be granted.