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COMPANY INFORMATION

Articles of Association

Lifeskills – Learning for Living is a Company Limited by Guarantee and a Registered Charity governed by its Memorandum and Articles of Association.

Company No: 3944179. Charity No: 1080747

Registered Office The Create Centre, Smeaton Road, Bristol, BS1 6XN

Auditors Mazars LLP
Clifton Down House
Beaufort Buildings
Clifton
Bristol BS8 4AN

Bankers The Co-operative Bank
PO Box 250
Delf House
Skelmersdale
WN8 6WT

Secretariat Ovalesec Limited
2 Temple Back East
Temple Quay
Bristol
BS1 6EG

MISSION STATEMENT

To strive to establish Lifeskills – Learning for Living as a Centre of Excellence dedicated to improving the safety of the community.

The Centre aims to reduce unintentional injuries by influencing attitudes and changing behaviour.

*Lifeskills – Learning for Living
The Create Centre
Smeaton Road
Bristol BS1 6XN*

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Fax: 0117 9224544

E-mail: manager@lifeskills-bristol.org.uk

Website: www.lifeskills-bristol.org.uk

GOVERNMENT SUPPORT FOR INJURY PREVENTION

“Saving Lives: Our Healthier Nation” (1999) the Government public health strategy, sets the target to reduce accidents by at least 20% by the year 2010. The “Choosing Health” White Paper (2004) states “We will have delivered if we reduce death and injury from accidents, and:

- ‘reduce the number of accidental fire-related deaths in the home by 20%’;
- ‘reduce the number of people killed or seriously injured in Great Britain in road accidents by 40% and the number of children killed or seriously injured by 50%’ (2004 Government PSA targets).

The strategy encourages local communities and individuals to join in partnership to improve health. The Lifeskills Centre encompasses the recommended approaches by enabling people to understand risks and learn how to deal with them.

To support the “Saving Lives” target there are many government policies that aim to have an impact on injury reduction e.g.

- Tomorrow’s Roads: Safer for Everyone 2000
- The National Service Framework for Children
- The National Service Framework for Older People
- Valuing People: A new strategy for Learning Disability for the 21st Century

LOCAL STRATEGIC SUPPORT

Lifeskills has been included within local strategies for health improvement, notably:

- Avonsafe Injury Prevention Alliance Strategy 2001-2006
- Community Safety Strategies
- Primary Care Trusts
- Local Authority Joint Strategic Groups for Injury Reduction
- Member Organisation Plans

LIFESKILLS PATRONS

TERRY CLEVERLEY

Alderman, Bristol City Council

JANE CORKE, JP

Former Lifeskills Chair

DON FOSTER

MP Bath

DR JOHN HOOPER

former Chief Executive, RoSPA

JOHN HOWARD, OBE

Chief Executive, RoSPA

CHRISTIAN OAKLAND

Accident & Emergency Consultant,
North Bristol NHS Trust

KATRINA PHILLIPS

Chief Executive, Child Accident
Prevention Trust

DAWN PRIMAROLO

MP Bristol South & Cabinet Minister

JAY TIDMARSH, MBE

Lord Lieutenant of Bristol

COLIN WHITESIDE

Former Lifeskills Treasurer

LIFESKILLS MANAGEMENT BOARD

Directors: The Directors of the Charitable Company (“the charity”) are its Trustees for the purpose of charity law and throughout this report are collectively referred to as the Directors. As set out in the Articles of Association the Chair of Directors is nominated by the Board who will also nominate a further four Directors – thus making a minimum total of five Directors. At every AGM, one third of the Directors (three, as Lifeskills now has 9 Directors) who are subject to retirement by rotation shall retire from office and if desired, offer themselves for re-election.

Chair: John Sleight, MBE (Director)
Trustee, Child Accident Prevention Trust

Vice-Chair: Maggie Sims (Director)
Senior Health Promotion Specialist, South Gloucestershire PCT

Treasurer: John Massie (Director)
Volunteer Trainer Guide

Helen Arnoldi (Director)
Smoking Education Team, Bath & NE Somerset PCT

Rosalie Brown (Director)
Councillor, Bristol City Council

Sue Green (Director)
Health Development Officer, Bath & North East Somerset Council

Monica Harris (Director)
Schools Liaison Officer, Avon & Somerset Constabulary

Fiona O’Driscoll (Director)
Health Promotion Officer, South Gloucestershire Council

Sue Walker (Director)
LEA Health and Well-being Coordinator, North Somerset Council

John Rhoden
Home Safety Officer,
Bristol City Council

Geoff Britton
Volunteer Guide Representative

Violet Delmas
Volunteer Guide Representative

<p>The Board would be pleased to hear from anyone who may be able to contribute towards the Mission Statement of the Centre</p>

Centre Manager: **Andrew Townsend**
Office Manager: **Angela Jeal**

Lifeskills for Independent Living Programme Manager: **Louise Salter**
Lifeskills for Independent Living Administrative Assistant: **Lucy Coombes**

MEMBER ORGANISATION BOARD

The Board meets twice a year. Its main function is to ensure that the programme content and delivery is current, and appropriate at Lifeskills.

The following organisations pledged their financial and resource support:

Alvis Brothers
Avon Ambulance NHS Trust
Avon & Somerset Constabulary
Avon Fire and Rescue Service
Bath & North East Somerset Council
Bath and North East Somerset Primary Care Trust
Bristol City Council
Bristol North Primary Care Trust
Bristol South and West Primary Care Trust
British Telecom
British Transport Police
Ernest Ireland
Network Rail
North Somerset Council
North Somerset Primary Care Trust
RoSPA
Somersfield
South Gloucestershire Council
South Gloucestershire Primary Care Trust
Transco
Western Power Distribution

SUPPORTING ORGANISATIONS

Lifeskills is also supported by a large number of organisations from both the statutory and voluntary sectors. A list of supporters is displayed in the Lifeskills foyer.

CHAIR'S REPORT

REVIEW OF THE YEAR

Each year I look forward to the AGM and Review of the Year. It gives me the opportunity to share with you many of the key achievements that we have made during the year. The Volunteer Guides will always be the backbone of Lifeskills and it is therefore fitting that I begin my review with them.

Volunteer Guides

Once again, the recruitment, training and retention of Volunteer Guides has been a priority throughout the year.

We have welcomed another 12 Guides as well as a number of student nurses and two Volunteer Guides who joined us from Voluntary Service Overseas (VSO). We ended the year with 78 fully trained Guides of whom 22 are Trainer Guides. In addition, a further 4 Guides are undergoing training.

Recruitment opportunities were also taken at Open Days held at the Create Centre and also at outside venues including the Volunteer Fair held at Bristol University and also the Women's Institute Annual Meeting held at the Winter Gardens in Weston super Mare. Louise attended a Regional Seminar 'Strengthening Ethnic Minority Communities Through Volunteering' and Andy has attended monthly meetings with "Volunteering Bristol". A new Volunteering leaflet has been produced which provides the answers to frequently asked questions. We have produced new colour display posters promoting our work which cover a new six board display stand. In order to show Lifeskills 'in action' bringing the Centre to life during presentations we have also produced a three minute around the Centre video clip.

Training - we continued our Guide training programme of evening sessions each term, which are always extremely well attended, and my thanks go to our Member Organisations for their support and time given in working with us. We have also revised our Volunteer Guide Handbook, Working with Children Policy and Tour Notes, taking into account scenario revisions and a more formalised structure to the volunteering role. Plans are underway to produce a Volunteer Guide Training Video that we look forward to developing during 2005.

Violet Delmas and Geoff Britton were again elected to represent our Volunteer Guides on the Management Board. We have all enjoyed reading Violet's regular newsletter "Volunteer Voice" which provides an effective method of communication between the Management Board and the Volunteer Guides. I am delighted to tell you that Geoff Britton was recently awarded the Chair's Community Award from South Gloucestershire Council for his volunteering services to Lifeskills. Some of the messages on the scenarios have been revised during the year and as ever were embraced by our Guides with their usual enthusiasm. Our Guide Monitoring programme has been further developed which has consolidated a consistent delivery of the Year 6 programme.

Children's Programme

During the year 8,910 Year 6 Primary School children visited the Centre bringing our overall total to 37,265.

I am pleased to say that the attendance from schools in the four Unitary Authorities has been consistent around 64%, a total of 93% having attended since our opening in January 2000. Our Children's Programme is highly valued by schools. In many cases it is included in the Schools Improvement Plan and has been recognised in some OFSTED inspections as an example of good practice. Following the results of the two-year Evaluation Study, we carried out a comprehensive scripting of all the scenarios, together with a revision to the drug, kitchen and first aid messages. During the year we assisted Oxford Brookes University in a new research study into the behaviour of Year 6 children during dawn and dusk relevant to road and pedestrian safety. It was very pleasing to note that Bristol Community Safety and Drugs Partnership known as Safer Bristol, have incorporated in their Bristol Crime and Drugs Strategy 2005-2008 within their young people objectives "to improve the lifeskills of pupils in Year 6, by providing specialist lifeskills training to at least 3,000 pupils annually, with subsidised access for those with higher risk factors". We would hope that the other three Unitary Authorities would take up this initiative.

Lifeskills for Independent Living

**COMMUNITY
FUND**
LOTTERY FUNDED

During the year we completed the first phase of the Community Funded programme. 242 adults with learning difficulties have made 373 visits and 62 professionals trained to work with them. There were a number of significant outcomes:

- The programme was further developed and now enables children from special schools to visit the Centre, 122 children have visited the Centre in small class groups over the year. Accessible teaching resources and materials have been produced for these children, including an adapted Safety Detective Sheet. Training for Guides on Disability Awareness Issues took place in September and a teacher has been brought onto the Steering Group
- New resources have also been produced for adults, including a Home Safety Checklist and safety information leaflets in the form of photostories
- Four adults with learning difficulties registered with City of Bristol College and have gained Unit 1 of the ASDAN Certificate in Community Volunteering while training to become Peer Guides and we are very proud of their achievements

My thanks go to Louise Salter, the Programme Manager, Lucy Coombes who provides administrative support for the work and members of the Steering Group (as well as Lifeskills representatives the Steering Group includes Andy Box – Occupational Therapist at Bristol Central CLDT, Chris Cook – tutor at City of Bristol College, Liz Fowler – Post 16 teacher at Ravenswood School, N. Somerset, Richard Gammans – Freeways, Bristol, Annette Jansen – Occupational Therapist at BRIDGES, B&NES and Andrew Tilling – Supporting Independence Team, S. Glos.). Much has been achieved and we look forward to the further development of this programme next year and we will be fundraising to ensure its sustainability at the end of the Lottery funded period.

Older People

The Older Peoples programme is growing in popularity with 240 older people visiting during the year. We have trained ten Volunteer Guides to deliver this programme, including two Guides who have relevant qualifications to deliver the exercise section of the session. A new leaflet is currently being developed to hand out to the older people who wish to carry on doing the exercises at home. Thanks to grants from Bath and North East Somerset Council and South Gloucestershire Council, we have been able to start up a safety equipment scheme. A range of items can be purchased at the end of each session, including stepladders, kneelers, grabbers, push lights etc.

A range of approaches to evaluating the Older Peoples Programme have been introduced, including focus group discussion and questionnaires for the visit organiser and participants. The results of the evaluation continue to advise on the development of this much appreciated and popular programme.

We continue to liaise with and gain support from professionals in the field of falls prevention, including community nurses, to ensure that they are familiar with the facilities and programmes that we offer at the Centre. Successful fundraising has again enabled older peoples groups to attend Lifeskills free of charge with transport also provided.

Other Initiatives

During the year we have continued our partnership with the Avon and Somerset Constabulary in hosting six Operation Taboo sessions. This activity is very compatible with our own Lifeskills road safety programme.

We also continued to host the Older Peoples crime prevention awareness days, 'Senior Lifeskills', managed by Avon and Somerset Constabulary for South Bristol residents.

In July Bristol District held a Police Awareness Day at Lifeskills for 40 Year 10 pupils from local schools who had expressed an interest in a career in the police service. This was the second year that this format has been used and once again it was well received by the participants. The day involved presentations from different police departments and pupils were tasked with role-playing several realistic scenarios based on everyday policing.

For the second year running, Police Officers from Southmead hosted a "Splash" Murder Mystery Event over a three-day period. This initiative targeted 25 vulnerable young people from their District and tasked them with several detective investigations to solve a "who dunnit" murder. This included interviewing suspects, forensic examination and group discussions.

In October we held a pilot Teenager Day for South Gloucestershire young people. The evaluation was very positive. A Babysitter Safety Course was also held for teenagers from South Gloucestershire which also proved to be beneficial to those that took part. Meetings are planned to discuss repeating such projects in the future.

Sure Start South West Bath held a training session in July for family link workers and community parents, each of whom benefited from the realistic approach of the Lifeskills course.

The Lifeskills venue provides the opportunity for a variety of activities as I have just described, enabling various groups from the community to benefit from the resources at the Centre.

Member Organisation Board

The Member Organisation Board comprises professionals representing organisations with an interest in each of our safety scenarios. The Board meets twice a year with members of the Lifeskills Management Board where valuable input is given to keep our scenarios reflecting current and appropriate practice and standards. Members continue to update Lifeskills with appropriate resource information and are key to the operational delivery from the Centre. During the year we have welcomed two new members, Network Rail and British Telecom who I know will add a valuable contribution to our work.

Evaluation

The recommendations made by Oxford/Oxford Brookes Universities as a result of the two-year Evaluation Study carried out 2001-2003 have been incorporated within the Lifeskills Children's Programme. The Evaluation was the first of its kind, not only in the UK but worldwide and of course we were delighted that it identified that the Lifeskills approach to safety education and training "works". A paper was presented at the Seventh World Injury Prevention Conference in Vienna by the Lifeskills Vice Chair, Maggie Sims which generated a great deal of discussion and debate. Following this presentation, a further invitation was received from the ODPM to present the same findings at a European Congress in Karlstad, Sweden which Maggie and I attended.

Lifeskills is now working with Professor Elizabeth Towner at the University of the West of England (UWE) to consider future evaluation proposals.

Centre Development

During the year numerous maintenance, improvements and additional features have taken place. We will all have seen the tractor now parked in the farmyard. The lounge has been refurbished with grateful thanks to IKEA for the new units and furniture. Our thanks also to MFI for the new wall units that have been fitted in the kitchen. As a part of the revision of the Drugs Scenario we have installed new magnetic boards in the garage that have provided a much welcomed more "user friendly" hands on activity. We have also revised and added further scenery painting around the Centre, particularly on the wall and doorway between the Building Site and the Playground. My thanks to Safer Bristol Partnership for their financial support in enabling Lifeskills to add further sound and visual resources to our railway scenario. This project is aimed to tackle antisocial behaviour. We have installed a CCTV camera and monitor which have greatly helped our Guides and Staff in being aware when the school coach has arrived at the building. We have increased the hedging in the countryside that has provided better screening for the railway scenario. You may have noticed that the metal railings have been removed from the roadside which has enabled the children to stand more comfortably on the edge of the pavement kerb outside the school.

Fundraising and Finance

Fundraising continues to be a challenge. Our fundraising is based on a strategy produced during the year which identifies the following approaches for our core funding –

- Member Organisations
- Entry charges
- Grant giving bodies and charitable trusts
- General

Lifeskills continues to be dependant on contributions from all these sources and I would like to thank all our funders for their generosity and support.

We are nearing the end of the second years funding from the National Lottery Community Fund. The grant was for a three-year period and we are actively seeking funding to ensure that this key area of work will continue long into the future.

Publicity and Media Coverage

Again this year numerous opportunities were taken to promote Lifeskills on radio, television and in the local press. BBC television in its national and local news bulletin covered Liberal Democrat Leader Charles Kennedy's visit to the Centre. The Bristol Evening Post and Police Newsbeat magazine covered the launch of "Stay Safe" a safety booklet targeting those with learning difficulties. Radio Bristol covered Ben Johnson who was seconded from Avon and Somerset Police to Safer Bristol Partnership as he cycled to raise funds for Lifeskills from Lands End to John O'Groats. Radio Bristol also gave Lifeskills generous publicity for a week in September where they promoted children, Volunteer Guides and Staff working with children on their interactive safety education.

Meeting our Legal/Financial/Risk Management Responsibilities

Lifeskills strives to meet all the requirements of both Company Law and the Charity Commission together with other relevant Legal/Financial obligations. We work closely with our professional consultants: Mazars our Finance Auditors, Osborne Clarke our Secretariat, Zurich our Insurers and BookCheck our Paymasters. We carry out the requirements of Health and Safety Legislation and Fire Precautions. We consider Risk Assessment very important to Lifeskills, the safety of our workforce of paramount importance. We have a comprehensive library of Policies and Procedures, regularly reviewed and updated after consultation at Management Board meetings.

Acknowledgements and Appreciation

It takes players to make a team and well-organised teams make great teams. Lifeskills is a great team with so many great players:

- our **Patrons** who promote us at every opportunity, some I am delighted to say are here today;
- our **Member Organisations**, working in partnership with us ensuring that we deliver to the community appropriate and accurate safety information. They provide us with resources, funding, equipment and training expertise for our Volunteer Guides;
- our **Management Board** who work tirelessly to ensure that Lifeskills remains an established Safety Centre of Excellence;

- our **Volunteer Guides**. What is there left to say about them? They epitomise the meaning of the word “Volunteer”. Their commitment and loyalty has exceeded all expectations and we will never be able to thank them enough. Many are here today and it is a real pleasure to see you. Never have I met such a group of people who give of their time so freely and so often. Let’s all remember that those who benefit from their time and energy are the children and the older people whose lives are made safer because of their commitment;
- **The Lifeskills Staff** - Andy, Angela, Louise and Lucy. Are we not blessed to have such conscientious and professional people? Their enthusiasm is infectious to all of us and to those who come into contact with them. Nothing is ever too much trouble for them and Lifeskills is so much the richer in having them. During the past year, Andy completed a Diploma in Management Studies (DMS), a First Aid at Work Course, a Certificate in Occupational Safety – Fire Safety, and the Institution of Occupational Safety and Health - Managing Safety Course. Lifeskills values its Staff and will continue to support opportunities for career development through management and training courses.

I would like to thank everyone who has made a contribution in any way to Lifeskills during the year. We really are a great team – so much achieved and so much more to look forward to.

JOHN SLEIGHT, MBE
Chair

REPORT FROM THE DIRECTORS/MANAGEMENT BOARD for the YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2005

The Directors/Management Board are pleased to present their report together with the financial statement of accounts of the charity for the year ended 31 March 2005.

Legal and administrative information set out on page 1 forms part of this report. The financial statements comply with current statutory requirements, the memorandum and articles of association and the statements of recommended practice (SORP) – accounting and reporting by charities.

Objects of the Charity

Lifeskills – Learning for Living is a permanent regional safety education and training Centre based in Bristol. It covers an area of 10,000 sq ft of floor space on the fourth floor of the CREATE Centre in Smeaton Road, Ashton. Lifeskills resembles a “village” where a number of realistic “sets” have been built that include a supermarket, two houses, a garage, road with two vehicles, a building site, dark alley, playground, electricity sub-station, railway line, countryside and farm, a garden and a river.

Every year some 30,000 children in the former Avon area alone require hospital treatment for injuries – many of which could have been prevented through education and training. Throughout the UK, road and home accidents now account for around 20 deaths per day.

The objectives of Lifeskills are to help children and other sectors of the community learn about safety in a practical way. Its aim is to bridge the gap that often exists between knowledge and behaviour. Lifeskills aims to make a significant contribution to reducing the number of deaths and injuries sustained by children and young people, those with learning difficulties and older people, which are caused either in the home, on the road or during their leisure time. These aims are consistent with Government targets, in particular, the White Paper “Saving Lives, Our Healthier Nation”. To achieve this, Lifeskills:

- offers the opportunity to all Primary Schools in the former Avon area to book a Year 6 (10/11 years of age) class visit
- offers the opportunity to professionals who work with adults with learning difficulties to become familiar with the operation of the Centre in order to deliver appropriate training
- offers the opportunity to all those schools/groups with learning difficulties under the age of eighteen years to book and visit
- offers the opportunity for adults with learning difficulties to visit the Centre in order to develop their independent living skills
- offers the opportunity to work with older people (60+) to book visits and experience education and training programmes
- operates the Centre by the use of trained Volunteer Guides who facilitate many of the diverse education and training programmes
- evaluates all training programmes delivered at the Centre
- encourages partnerships with the business and commercial sectors
- encourages partnerships with the statutory and voluntary sectors
- makes full use of the media

- encourages the public to see the Centre for themselves, holding both Open Days and Evenings
- supports the National Safety Centres Alliance by sharing best practice

Organisation

Lifeskills has a number of Patrons (10), a Management Board (12) of which 9 are Directors. The Board meets six-weekly to administer the Charity. There are sub-groups who support the Lifeskills Operational Plan, that focuses on activity programmes, e.g. Volunteer Guide Recruitment and Training, Programme Development (Children), People with Learning Difficulties, Older People, Other Initiatives, Member Organisations, Evaluation, Centre Development, Fundraising, Finance, Publicity, Management of Staff, Legal and Financial Arrangements, Risk Management and Contingency Arrangements. The Centre Manager and Office Manager who are full-time employees of the Charity manage the day-to-day operations of Lifeskills. They are responsible to the Management Board. The Independent Living Programme is managed by two members of staff, one full-time and one part-time, and is funded by a three-year grant received from the National Lottery Community Fund (July 2003-June 2006).

The following Directors held office throughout the year unless otherwise stated:

- John Sleight, MBE
- Maggie Sims
- John Massie, appointed AGM –June 2004
- Helen Arnoldi
- Rosalie Brown
- Sue Walker
- Fiona O’Driscoll, appointed AGM - June 2004
- Monica Harris, appointed AGM – June 2004
- Sue Green, appointed AGM – June 2004

Charity Commission Review

A Charity Commission Review Visit of Lifeskills took place on 8 September 2004. The purpose of the visit was to:

- Ensure compliance with the legal framework within which the Charity operates
- Assess and report on whether Lifeskills was aspiring to the standards set out in the Commission’s booklet *CC60 Hallmarks of an Effective Charity*
- Provide advice and guidance in support of the achievement of the Hallmark standards
- Contribute towards continuous improvement in the charitable sector
- Enhance the relationship between individual charities and the Commission

The Commission was pleased to advise Lifeskills Directors that there was full compliance with the above criteria and that no requirements for change were necessary. The Commission did, however, suggest four recommendations that are being addressed at Management Board level, namely:

- Director responsibilities – clarify within Board meeting minutes
- Review professional services provided – determine receiving Best Value
- Volunteer Guides - produce policies and procedures for their role
- Director protection – sign a declaration in respect of their eligibility

Related Parties

Lifeskills has the full support of a wide number of statutory and voluntary organisations. In this regard a core number are represented on the Member Organisation Board. These include the five Primary Care Trusts, the three Emergency Services and four Unitary Authorities. These members support Lifeskills through recurring funding and resources. Lifeskills finances are included within the Financial Accounts section of this Annual Report.

Financial Performance

Income during the year totalled £236,878 against an expenditure of £204,335 resulting in an increase in funds of £32,543. This offsets the reduction in funds that occurred in 2003-2004 of £30,496 and redresses that anomaly.

With the agreement of Mazars Lifeskills financial advisers and auditors, the analysis of expenditure has been amended to reflect the activity of the business in the format that appears in the periodic financial management reports to the Board. The previous year's analysis has been amended to match this change but the totals of income and expenditure have not been altered. The prime objective of this change is to account separately for the projects that are funded from Restricted Funds and for which we are required to be accountable to the funders.

A comparison of income between this year and last, shows that both Donations and Member Organisation Grants have increased. As part of the improved analysis, Donations have been allocated between General and Member Organisations for the current year, but a split has not been possible for previous years.

A comparison of Charitable Expenditure, highlighting significant change between the years shows that Lifeskills spent less on the headings Development and Projects. The Development has reduced as items of furniture, fittings and equipment required in 2003-2004 has not been needed this year. So far as Projects are concerned, 2003-2004 saw the culmination of the Evaluation and the Independent Living – General schemes and the full year effect of the Independent Living – Lottery and the Older Peoples schemes. School funding was also down in 2004-2005, but this was the result of correcting transactions in previous years. During 2003-2004 both visits and resource packs were overstated, resulting in the higher than average charge in that year. Amendments within this Restricted Fund result in a true figure being shown for 2004-2005.

The changes to Debtors and Creditors result in the normal year-end adjustments that arise when accruals are taken into consideration. By way of explanation, Pre-payments and Accrued Income relate to accrued interest receivable and room hire for an Operation Taboo meeting held in March but not invoiced until April; and Accruals and Deferred Income accounts for income received in 2004-2005 for visits to take place in 2005-2006.

Reserves – Unrestricted have increased from £119,204 to £212,824, mainly as a result of the prior year adjustments and transfers from Restricted Funds. The transfers represent monies transferred to the General account of Lifeskills at the end of a specific project (e.g. Evaluation) with the full agreement of the Project funder. They also reflect visits to the Centre funded by Member Organisations or the Lottery and represent the cost of room hire etc.

Reserves – Restricted: in the same way as the Unrestricted reserves have increased, the Restricted reserves have been reduced. It can also be seen that the Projects that have reached their conclusion have been closed with the outstanding balances thereon being transferred to or from the General (Unrestricted) reserves.

In conclusion, the accounts as presented show the true financial position of Lifeskills as at 31 March 2005. Lifeskills is satisfied that the balances shown on the various heads of account are accurate and form the basis from which future movements can be made in confidence.

Taken overall Lifeskills has managed its financial affairs in a manner approved by the Directors. Lifeskills will endeavour to continue to sustain and increase its level of reserves held in the high interest account.

Future Strategy

The Charity plans to continue the activities outlined within the Chair's report in the forthcoming years, subject to satisfactory funding arrangements. The Charity has a Strategic Development Plan titled "Lifeskills Operational Plan" which forms the foundation of the work undertaken. Lifeskills established a programme to deliver safety training opportunities for those with learning difficulties by developing accessible resources, access to the Centre and ongoing training for professionals working with people with learning difficulties. This is a three-year programme (July 2003 – June 2006) funded by the National Lottery Community Fund.

Reserves Policy

It is the stated objective of the Management Board to have established a policy whereby the unrestricted funds not committed or invested in tangible fixed assets ("the free reserves") held by the Charity should be a minimum of 6 to 12 months of the resources expended, should our income stream fail. This equates to approximately £65,000 to £130,000 in general funds. The balance on the general fund at the year end was £212,824. At this level the Management Board feel that they would be able to continue the current activities of the Charity in the event of a significant drop in funding. It would obviously be necessary to consider how the funding would be replaced or activities changed.

Risk Review

The Management Board has conducted its own review of major risks, both management and operational, to which the Charity is exposed and systems have been established to mitigate those risks. These are identified in the Lifeskills Operational Plan. In this regard a fundraising strategy has been developed which will allow for the diversification of fundraising and activities. The Chair invites Member Organisations to attend Member Organisation Board meetings. This brings our major supporters, both financial and resource providers, around the table and allows them to have a voice in operational matters. Internal risks are minimised by the implementation of procedures for authorisation of all transactions and projects and to ensure consistent quality of delivery for all operational aspects of the Charity. These procedures are periodically reviewed to ensure that they still meet the needs of the Charity.

Auditors

Mazars LLP succeeded Mazars as the independent auditor to the Charitable Company on 31 August 2004. A resolution to reappoint Mazars LLP as auditors to the Charitable Company and to authorise the Management Board to fix their remuneration will be proposed at the Annual General Meeting.

Responsibilities of the Management Board

Company Law requires the Management Board to prepare financial statements for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the Charitable Company as at the balance sheet date. It also states its incoming resources and application of resources, including income and expenditure for the financial year. In preparing those financial statements the Management Board should follow best practice and:

- select suitable accounting policies and apply them consistently;
- make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent; and
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to assume that the company will continue on that basis.

The Management Board is responsible for maintaining proper accounting records which disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the Charitable Company. They will enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 1985. The Management Board is also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the Charitable Company and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

Approved by the Management Board and signed on their behalf by:

JOHN SLEIGHT, MBE - Chair