

Annual Review 2023

Unlocking potential, creating possibilities



Unlocking Potential

Since1982 we have been helping children with disabilities and additional needs to reach their potential, through our bespoke specialist therapy programmes. In 2023, we expanded our service delivery by introducing outreach hubs, enabling us to bring our vital services directly to more communities increasing accessibility and reach. To support families through the cost-of-living crisis we also made changes to our Therapy Access Fund (TAF) and provided financial support with travel costs too.

Brainwave
Unlocking Children's Potential

Activities



Our multidisciplinary team of qualified therapists continue to support and empower families to deliver therapy programmes for their children at home. This approach helps increase their strength, mobility, communication and coordination, enabling them to reach their full potential and lead more independent, fulfilling lives. All therapies are grounded in the principle of neuroplasticity, which supports the brain in developing new pathways through regular repetition of newly acquired skills.

Families receive ongoing support and essential equipment for home use and are guided through therapy sessions between assessments (4–6-month intervals). We maintain regular contact to address current and future needs and aspirations of the families we serve.

Outputs

Our team conducted a total of 266 assessments, reflecting a significant increase of 77 assessments, or just over 40%, compared to the previous year. Of these, 99 were initial assessments for new children, representing a notable rise of nearly 55%. Additionally, 167 were reassessments, an increase of almost 34% from 2022.
Our team of specialist therapists worked with children facing a diverse range of conditions, including chromosome and genetic disorders, muscular dystrophy and atrophy, and acquired brain injury.

We also worked with children who have the following conditions:

- Cerebellar Hypoplasia
- Down syndrome
- Metabolic disorders
- Autism
- Sensory
- ADHD
- Undiagnosed
- Epilepsy
- Agenesis of the Corpus Callosum

Service Development

This year we welcomed a new Physiotherapist, Shreya, to Brainwave, who has integrated well and since commenced Sensory Integration (SI) training, which will enhance our capacity to support more children with sensory processing needs. Our extensive efforts to recruit an additional Speech and Language Therapist during the year were rewarded in early 2024 when we successfully appointed two new therapists. Once they are fully operational (January 2025), we will have capacity to support four families per day. Additionally, we expanded our outreach service by delivering two hubs in Warrington, one in the South East and two in Scotland, with plans to add more weeks annually, thanks to the increased capacity from our new SLTs.

Outcomes

We awarded 87 certificates of achievement, an increase from the 67 certificates last year. These recognise significant progress in areas such as sitting up and walking independently, improved attention, and understanding single words. The progress made by the children we support is invaluable to them and their families, greatly enhancing their ability to manage and cope with their child's condition.

Physical/Sensory

- Improved walking with tripod sticks.
- Improved balance and stability on the wobble board.
- Improved reaching, standing and stepping.
- Sitting independently.
- Cruising independently between gaps.
- Independent crawling.
- Standing up at furniture.
- Improved tolerance to touch and sound.
- Improved head control.
- Walking and jumping independently.

Communication/Learning

- Improved descriptive language.
- Making choices.
- Using symbols to communicate 'more' & 'finished'.
- Feeding with a loaded spoon.
- Signing single words.
- Improved attention, listening and talking.
- Improved interaction.
- Understanding key words.
- Using subject, verb, object sentences.
- Good use of communication boards.

2% of children have degenerative conditions.

35% of children make significant progress.

45% of children make some progress.

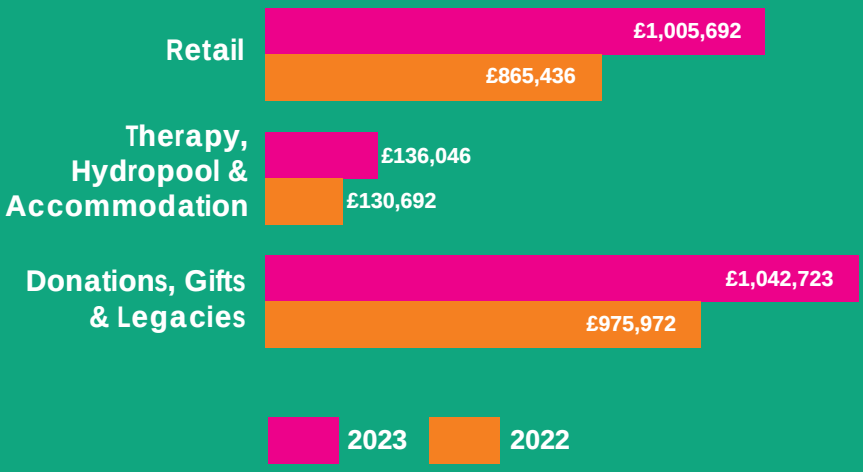
18% of children maintain their abilities.

"Brainwave has opened up a new world for our daughter. From being an outsider looking in, she's now able to enjoy so many new experiences. Without the dedication from all of the therapists, our daughter could have missed out on so much. We are forever grateful for this amazing place!"

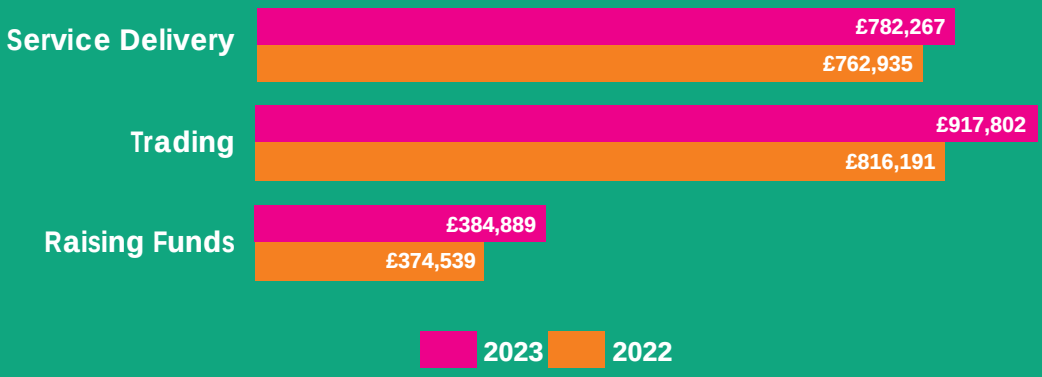
Summary Financials: 2023 v 2022

Income generation has been positive and ahead of 2022 across all areas, except for Therapy Service. This is as a result of changes made to our Therapy Access Fund criteria to support families through the cost-of-living crisis. This meant that most only pay a £50 deposit as opposed to the full amount of £500 for an Initial Assessment and £400 for a Reassessment.

Income



Expenditure





Future plans

Looking ahead to 2024, we aim to:

- Continue providing financial support to families, ensuring they can access our services.
- Enhance our support services to achieve a 'whole family' approach.
- Expand our therapy space to accommodate four families per day.
- Increase the number and reach of our outreach hubs.
- Develop our website further, by implementing a Chatbot.
- Redevelop and refurbish our other accommodation bungalow, including adding a wet room for improved accessibility.
- Upgrade our National Therapy Assessment Centre (formerly the South West Centre) and enhance our Sensory Garden to enrich the experience for children and families.
- Improve our ability to measure and demonstrate impact through the use of bespoke outcome measurement tools.



Summary

It's been another busy and positive year for the charity albeit in an extremely challenging financial environment (cost of living crisis). We have faced significant increases in our costs and competition for funding is also having an effect across the third sector. In addition, our own fundraising events have struggled in terms of sponsorship and ticket sales, with some needing to be cancelled. Demands on our services have increased too as families seek support from organisations like ours as statutory support is also stretched. All of this in a backdrop of recruitment (therapists) also being an issue, for example there is a reported 25% vacancy rate for Speech and Language Therapists (SLT) in the NHS and their terms are more favourable than ours.

Despite all the challenges we have faced, we continue to deliver excellent services and achieve significant outcomes for the children and families we support. Two outreach hubs were delivered in the North West the first of these being in March, and it was great to be back in Warrington supporting families locally. This hub has extended our reach ensuring that our services are more accessible for those unable to travel to the South West.

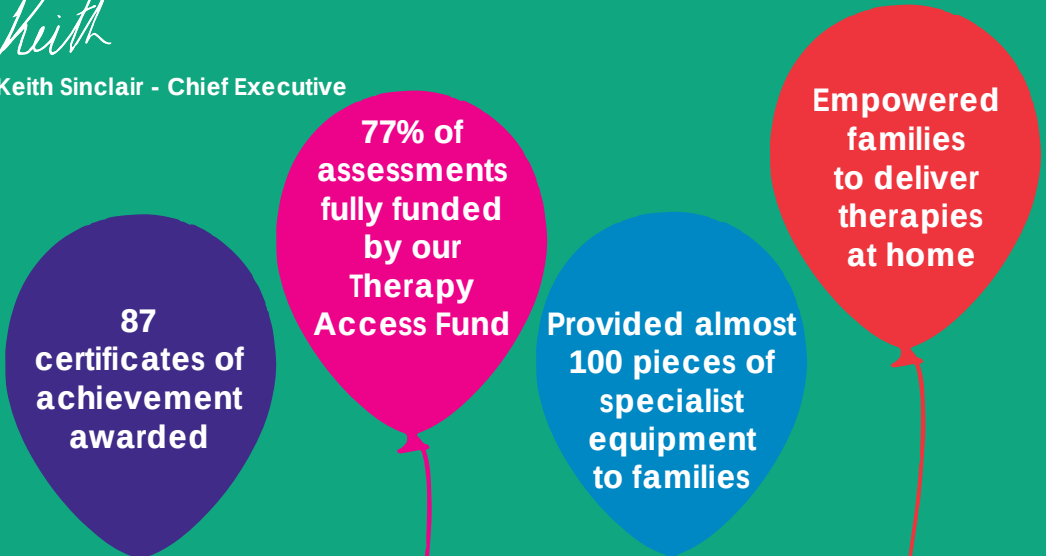
Another first for us this year was a 'pop up' charity shop at Glastonbury Festival which was a fantastic experience and opportunity to raise awareness about Brainwave and interact with a diverse audience. We are immensely grateful for the enthusiasm, hard work, and support of our team to make this happen.

Amidst the ongoing challenges faced, we remain resolute in our commitment to support even more families. We understand the financial strains many are facing, which is why we intensified our efforts to provide more financial assistance, through our Therapy Access Fund and Travel Fund, ensuring that families can access our services without added financial pressures.

Thank you to our team, funders, supporters, patrons, and ambassadors; we couldn't achieve all we do without you, and we are fortunate to have you in our Brainwave family.

Keith

Keith Sinclair - Chief Executive



Quotes from Brainwave Families

‘The knowledge and expertise that Brainwave provide is just not available by the NHS and we would never have known a lot of information if it weren't for Brainwave.’

‘Our child’s progress has been down to Brainwave assessments and the brilliant team.’

‘Brainwave's therapists have helped my child with the ability to walk and gain strength in their muscles.’

‘It’s a brilliant place, the professionals know my child so well and have excellent ideas on how to engage them in physio.’

94% said that attending Brainwave had increased their understanding of their child's condition

97% said that their knowledge of their child's therapy needs had increased

91% said that Brainwave has helped improve their child's quality of life

92% of families said that their child had made significant achievements since coming to Brainwave

How to support us

Donate here

Get involved

brainwave.org.uk

Registered with FUNDRAISING REGULATOR

Registered Office: Marsh Lane, Huntworth Gate, Bridgwater, Somerset TA6 6LQ

Brainwave is a charity (1073238 / SC039137) and a company limited by guarantee (3666739)

Statement of Financial Activities (including income and expenditure account and Statement of Total Recognised Gains and Losses)

For the year end 30 November 2023

Income and endowments from:	Note	Unrestricted Funds Charity Shops £	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total Funds 2023 £
Donations and legacies	3	175	615,298	427,250	1,042,723
Charitable activities	4	-	-	136,046	136,046
Other trading activities	5	900,955	104,737	-	1,005,692
Investments	6	-	3,952	-	3,952
Other		-	997	-	997
Total income		901,130	724,984	563,296	2,189,410
Expenditure on:					
Raising Funds	7, 8	917,802	384,889	-	1,302,691
Charitable activities	9, 10	-	333,425	448,842	782,267
Total expenditure		917,802	718,314	448,842	2,084,958
Net income/(expenditure) before transfers	12	(16,672)	6,670	114,454	104,452
Transfers between funds	23	16,672	(16,672)	-	-
Net movements in funds		-	(10,002)	114,454	104,452
Reconciliation of funds					
Total funds brought forward	23	-	513,487	586,289	1,099,776
Total funds carried forward	23	-	503,485	700,743	1,204,228

The charity has no recognised gains or losses other than the results for the period as set out above.

Balance sheet as at 30 November 2023
(Registration number: 03666739)

	Note	2023 £	2022 £
Fixed assets:			
Tangible assets	15	803,904	815,697
Investments	16	2	2
		803,906	815,699
Current assets:			
Debtors	17	76,931	38,559
Cash at bank and in hand	18	637,272	592,142
		714,203	630,701
Creditors: Amounts falling due within one year	19	(244,032)	(308,291)
Net current assets		470,171	322,410
Total assets less current liabilities		1,274,077	1,138,109
Creditors: Amounts falling due after more than one year	20	(69,849)	(38,333)
Net assets		1,204,228	1,099,776
Funds of the charity:			
Restricted income funds	24	700,743	586,289
Unrestricted funds:			
Revaluation reserve	24	45,944	45,944
General funds	24	457,541	467,543
Total unrestricted funds		503,485	513,487
Total funds	24	1,204,228	1,099,776

These financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the special provisions of Part 15 of the Companies Act 2006 relating to small companies and were approved by the trustees on13 June 2024 and are signed on their behalf by:



Andrew Hannam



Richard Adams