



COMMONWEALTH
DROWNING
PREVENTION

Annual Report and Accounts

2024

Drowning

The process of experiencing respiratory impairment from immersion/submersion in liquid



The World Health Organization (WHO) estimates that there are 300,000 annual drowning deaths worldwide

Children aged under 5 years account for nearly a quarter of all drowning deaths.



Drowning is the fourth leading cause of death for children aged 1–4 years and the third leading cause of death for children aged 5–14 years.



Ninety-two percent of drowning deaths occur in low- and middle-income countries.

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KENSINGTON PALACE,
LONDON, W. 8.

At the end of 2023, I was pleased to see the final Strategic Action Plan for the period 2024 to 2026 adopted, and I am happy to report that good progress has already been made in many areas detailed in the plan throughout 2024.

In May, I was delighted to learn that His Majesty King Charles III was to become the Society's Patron. The RLSS has been fortunate to have every reigning monarch as its Patron since 1904. On behalf of the Society, I would like to express our gratitude to His Majesty for his support.

In June, I was delighted to endorse the appointment of Dr. Stephen Beerman as the next Deputy Commonwealth President of the Royal Life Saving Society. Dr. Beerman's dedication and experience, not only with the RLSS but also within the international drowning prevention community, will undoubtedly be an asset to the Society. I am extremely grateful to Clive Holland for his commitment and diligence over the past thirteen years, and I know Clive will continue to support us in various roles within the headquarters team.

It was extremely pleasing to hear about the collaborative efforts between the RLSS, Laerdal Medical, and Navarino in distributing manikin kits to many of our members across the Commonwealth. Increasing CPR training and awareness is crucial, and by providing these kits, we can extend this knowledge to more communities that previously lacked access to such education. I know many of our members in low and middle-resource settings have impressively improvised when equipment was scarce, so I am delighted to see that they now have the resources to enhance their training.

2025 will be a busy year for the Society as we continue to launch projects and resources that have been developed over several years and are currently being finalized. Additionally, we have the 2025 Commonwealth Lifesaving Championships in Swansea, an exciting and enjoyable event that brings together many athletes, officials, and volunteers from across the Commonwealth.

I would like to extend my thanks to all our officers, members, supporters and volunteers around the Commonwealth and send my very best wishes for 2025.

Commonwealth President
HRH Prince Michael of Kent GCVO



Message from the Deputy Commonwealth President

The first half of 2024 was a particularly busy period for the Society as we successfully recruited new Directors to lead the implementation of our Strategic Action Plan for 2024 to 2026. We are delighted to welcome our new Directors and extend our heartfelt thanks to the outgoing Directors for their dedicated efforts in delivering the activities of the RLSS.

In addition to this recruitment, we initiated the nomination process for our Trustee Board for the term from May 2024 to 2026. We are pleased to report that we have achieved a more balanced gender representation on our Board.

As detailed later in this report, we hosted two highly successful workshops in the latter part of 2024—one in Delhi for our Asia Pacific members and another in Johannesburg for our African members. I had the privilege of attending the Johannesburg workshop, which brought together 12 of our African members. These workshops were a success thanks to the tremendous efforts of Norman Farmer and our members from the Rashtriya Life Saving Society (India) and Lifesaving South Africa. We extend our gratitude to all involved.

At the beginning of the year, we welcomed Esther Groves to the RLSS Headquarters team as our part-time administration assistant, supporting Emma in the Worcester office. Given the limited capacity of our headquarters staff, we are, as always, extremely grateful for the diligent support we receive from so many volunteers across the Commonwealth.

This will be my final annual report message as Deputy Commonwealth President. As I hand over the baton to Dr Beerman, I am confident that the Society is well positioned to support our members and activities moving forward. It has been my pleasure to serve the Society in this role for the past 12 years.

Clive Holland
Deputy Commonwealth President

Charity Information and Overview

<i>Registered Name:</i>	The Royal Life Saving Society
<i>Working Names:</i>	RLSS, RLSS Commonwealth, Commonwealth Drowning Prevention, Commonwealth Lifesaving
<i>Registered Charity:</i>	Charity Commission England and Wales, Charity Number 306094
<i>Accredited Commonwealth Organisation</i>	CAO 979
<i>Registered with the Fundraising Regulator</i>	
<i>Registered Address:</i>	Red Hill House, 227 London Road, Worcester, WR5 2JG, United Kingdom
<i>Patron:</i>	HM King Charles III
<i>Commonwealth President:</i>	HRH Prince Michael of Kent GCVO
<i>Deputy Commonwealth President:</i>	Clive Holland
<i>Deputy Commonwealth President Designate:</i>	Dr Stephen Beerman
<i>Treasurer:</i>	Clive Patrickson PhD
<i>Portfolio Directors:</i>	<i>Honorary Executive Director</i> Norman Farmer AM ESM <i>Director of Commonwealth Lifesaving Championships</i> Anne-Maree Gardiner AM <i>Director of Drowning Data</i> Dr Aminur Rahman DCM PhD <i>Director of Lifeguard Solutions</i> Nick Grazier <i>Director of Digital Resource Platform</i> Robert Reid <i>Director of Lifesaving Sport Development</i> Rebecca Boyd <i>Director of Youth Development</i> Bhavik Barochia <i>Director of Governance & Compliance</i> Cavell Burchell <i>Director of Advocacy</i> Dr Stephen Beerman <i>Director of Strategy</i> Clive Patrickson PhD
<i>Operations Manager:</i>	Emma Harrison
<i>Operations Assistant:</i>	Esther Groves
<i>Society Bankers:</i>	Lloyds Bank, PO Box 1000, BX1 1LT
<i>Independent Financial Examiner:</i>	Richard Oddy FCA
<i>Honorary Legal Advisor:</i>	Alastair Collett

RLSS Board of Trustees - 2024 to 2026



Chair
Clive Holland



Treasurer
Clive Patrickson PhD
Appointed Trustee for Strategy

Elected Trustees

Asia Pacific



Alexandra Ash
Australia



Geh Cheow Mei
Malaysia



Sanath Wijayaratne
Sri Lanka

Europe & Africa



Bryan Finlay
United Kingdom



Dylan Tommy
South Africa



Nkatha Hellen
Muthomi
Kenya

Canada & Caribbean



Robert Clark
Canada



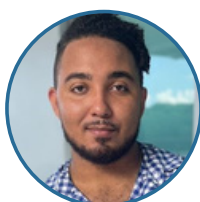
John MacFarlane
Jamaica



Evelyn-Marie Day
St Lucia

Appointed Trustees

Jonathan Bruce
Youth Trustee
St Lucia



Dr Stephen Beerman
*Deputy Commonwealth President
Designate/Director for Advocacy*
Canada

Board Members

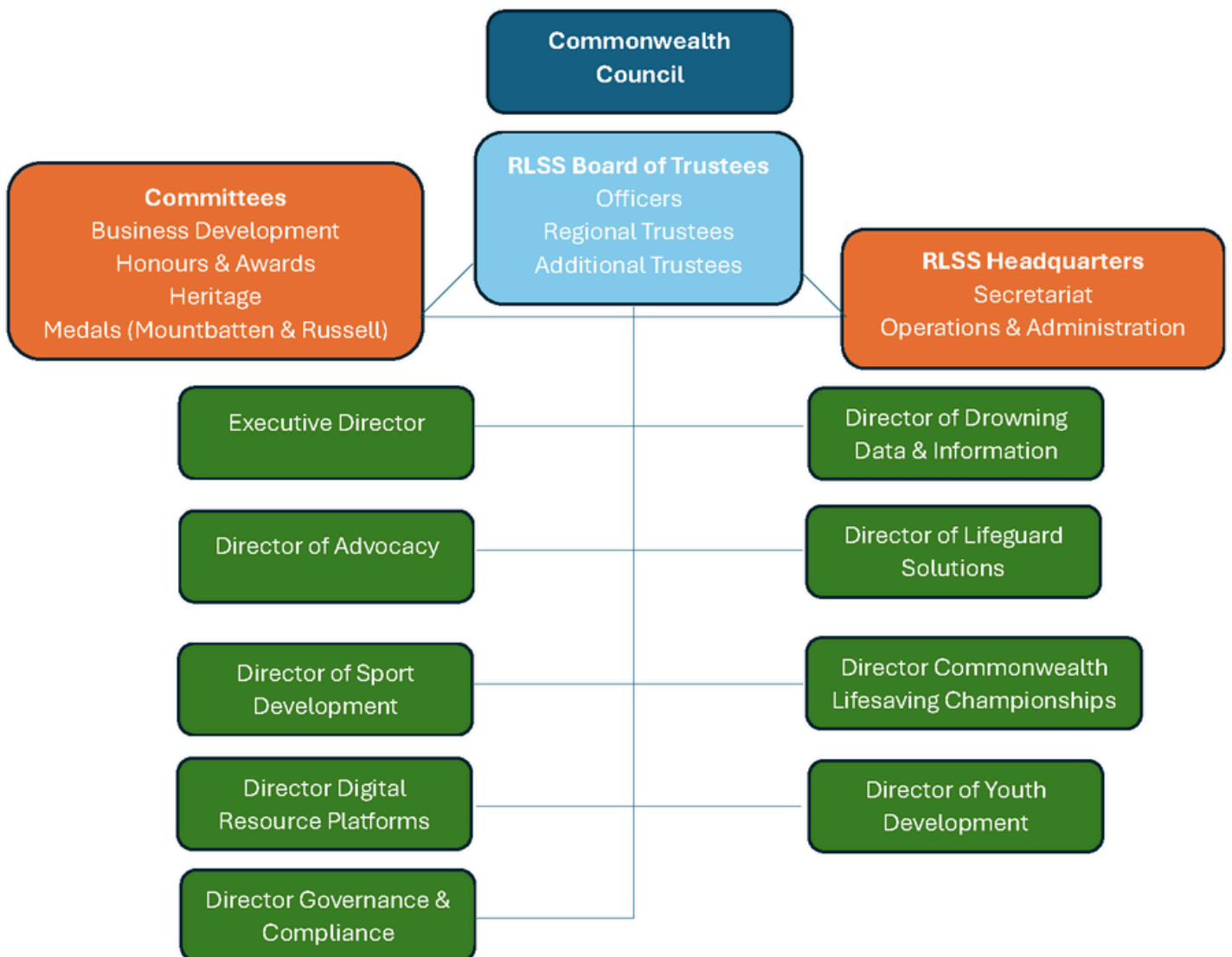
Norman Farmer AM ESM
Executive Director
Australia



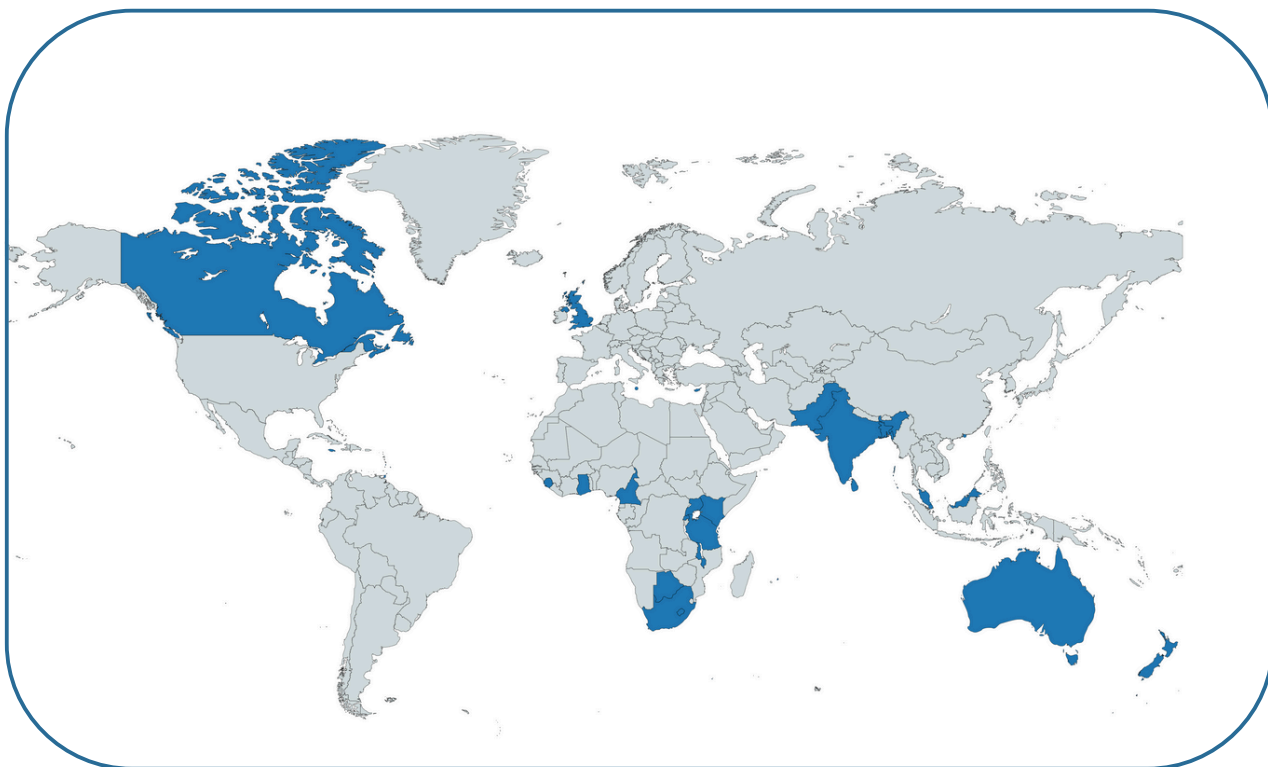
Cavell Burchell
Director Governance & Compliance
UK

Trustees are appointed or elected in accordance with our Regulations to be representative of the range of our network. All Trustees have participated in an induction programme to acquaint them with the responsibilities of trustees and update them on current aspects of our work.

Governance



Our Members



Africa Members

Botswana
Cameroon
Ghana
Lesotho
Kenya
Malawi
Mauritius
Rwanda
Sierra Leone
South Africa
Tanzania
Uganda
Zambia

Asia Pacific Members

Australia
Bangladesh
Brunei
India
Malaysia
New Zealand
Pakistan
Singapore
Sri Lanka

Canada & the Caribbean Members

Barbados
Canada
Cayman Islands
Jamaica
St Lucia
Trinidad & Tobago

Europe Members

Cyprus
Gibraltar
Malta
United Kingdom

Our Charitable Purpose

The Royal Life Saving Society provides public benefit as a charity through reducing drownings and the impact of drownings in the community across the Commonwealth.

Our Trustees have complied with their duty in accordance with the Charities Act 2011 to follow the Charity Commission's guidance on the operations of this public benefit

Our Mission

Commonwealth Drowning Prevention

Our Vision

No person in the Commonwealth should drown

Our Motto

Whomsoever you see in distress, recognise in them a fellow human being
Quemcunque Miserum Videris Hominem Scias

Our Scope

"Drowning Prevention"

All activities that contribute to the saving of life in, on and near water

"Commonwealth"

All nations that are recognised at any given time by the Commonwealth Secretariat including overseas territories, protectorates and dependencies that are recognised at any given time by the Commonwealth Games Federation



Our Values

Consistent with the principles outlined in its Royal Charter, Mission, Vision and Motto, and the Charter of the Commonwealth, the RLSS shall undertake its activities in accordance with the following Values:



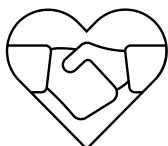
Family

We are a Family with common heritage and values that works to achieve our mission through a common drowning prevention bond.



Working Together

The Society is 'Our' organisation, and our strength comes from sharing and working together.



Mutual Respect

We embark on our tasks with honesty and mutual respect for the skills, knowledge, and experience that we all bring.



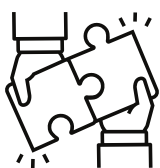
Learning

We foster a commitment to curiosity and continual learning to help us in achieving our tasks.



Equity, Diversity & Inclusiveness

In all activities, we actively embrace the concepts of equity, diversity, and inclusiveness, enabling participation despite economic adversity.



Collaboration

We include, welcome and work collaboratively with organisations and personnel throughout the Commonwealth in achieving our mission.

RLSS Positioning Statement

RLSS provides leadership by facilitating drowning prevention, lifesaving, and lifesaving sport activity under the brand of The Royal Life Saving Society (RLSS) throughout the Commonwealth through its Members. The RLSS also fosters and facilitates exchanges and collaboration between RLSS Members and companion organisations.

Strategic Priorities 2024-2026

Supporting World Health Assembly Resolution “Accelerating action on global drowning prevention”

The 76th World Health Assembly on 29th May 2023 adopted a resolution to “accelerate action on global drowning prevention”, committed the WHO, and compelled others, to work together to raise awareness of the need for drowning prevention globally, nationally, and locally. This “call to action” is the stimulus for the RLSS and its Members to work collaboratively and with international organizations and governments to focus on reducing the drowning toll.

Member Capacity Building & Sustainability

Achieving our mission depends upon the RLSS having strong and well-organized Members in each Commonwealth country. The Members will work together over the strategic period to strengthen the smaller, lower resourced, Member organizations to be stable and well organized, have a deeper human resource pool and be financially sustainable. In addition, RLSS will seek ways to expand its work into Commonwealth countries that do not have an RLSS presence.

Resource Sharing

The RLSS family has a wealth of physical or digital resources that have been developed in multiple countries, and highly talented volunteer and paid personnel. These resources have been shared over many years on an informal basis, a process that has helped support the retention of the common educational heritage. There is a strong desire, and an efficiency imperative, to make this sharing easier and better coordinated, to minimize duplication of effort. The RLSS will facilitate this through the introduction of a digital resource sharing platform.

Sport Development

Sport has been an integral element of the RLSS fabric since shortly after its inception over 130 years ago. It has been a source of engagement of youth, development of skills, and the identification of emerging leaders. It remains a core element of the RLSS activities in many Member organizations, but innovative technologies now provide an opportunity for extension and expansion. The RLSS will enhance its sport development pathways through Lifesaving iSport, Lifesaving Sport for All and biennial Commonwealth Lifesaving Championships.

Strategic Priorities 2024-2026 cont

Youth Development

The engagement and development of young leaders is considered essential for the future development of Member organizations and the Society at large. It has been a strategy for the past 10 years, although it is now recognized that there are more opportunities for their engagement. The RLSS will facilitate youth development with a clearer youth engagement strategy and through use of relevant platforms to build youth networks.

Supporting Membership Development

The RLSS works primarily with organizations committed to drowning prevention and lifesaving in countries in the Commonwealth of Nations (currently 56 nations). Currently the RLSS works with its 32-Member organisations.

The organization's greatest asset is its network of family Members, with common mission and heritage, located in many Commonwealth countries. This brings talent and resources that can be readily shared with each other. A primary task for the RLSS is to facilitate the development of Member organizations, and work with potential new Members, through collaboration within the values of the RLSS.

Good Governance and Structure

Good governance practices and procedures will enable RLSS to achieve its objectives by creating clear lines of authority, enabling issues to be escalated and resolved. It will also give senior leaders the opportunity to guide the direction of projects, programmes, and activities, including retaining and building connections with others, especially the Royal Household, Commonwealth Secretariat and World Health Organization (WHO).

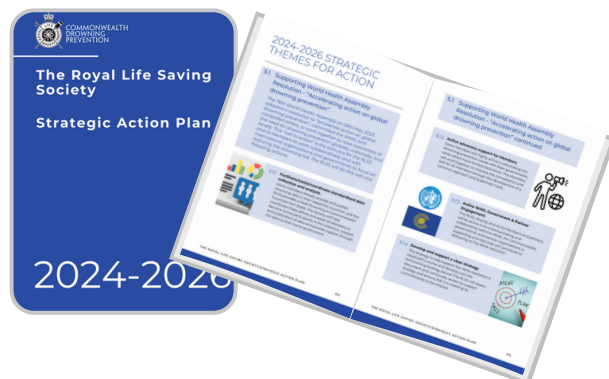
Efficient and Effective Management and Administration

The RLSS will have effective and efficient administrative systems and a small central headquarters operation that coordinates support for the work of the RLSS in conjunction with the Members.

Our Achievements 2024

Implementing the Strategic Action Plan 2024 to 2026

The main focus for the first quarter of 2024 was to implement the strategic action plan 2024 to 2026 and to recruit directors to lead on the various areas within the plan. The recruitment process was carried out by an open call via our member organisations, submission of expressions of interest, review panel set up to review applications, recommendations to the Board of Trustees and inductions with the successful applicants.



Celebrating Women in Drowning Prevention

To mark International Women's Day, on 5th March 2024, the RLSS co-hosted with the Royal National Lifeboat Institution (RNLI) an event 'Celebrating Women in Drowning Prevention' which sought to increase awareness and encouraged increased action on drowning prevention as well as celebrating the role of women in drowning prevention around the world.



The event showcased first-hand experiences of women on the frontline in Bangladesh and Tanzania and highlighted the work being done to support and encourage women in search and rescue and the maritime sectors.



Speakers included Dr Caroline Lukaszyk from the Department of Social Determinants of Health at the World Health Organization (WHO), Nahid Akther, Communications Manager from the Centre for Injury Prevention and Research, Bangladesh, and Editrudith Lukanga, Founder and Executive Director of the Environmental Management and Economic Development Organization (EMEDO) who were then joined by Caroline Jupe





(International Maritime Rescue Federation), Mariana Noceti (International Maritime Organization) and James Bridge the Chief Executive and Secretary General of the UK National Commission for UNESCO for a panel discussion.

In closing the event, Clive Holland, Deputy Commonwealth President of the RLSS reflected on the terrible global drowning statistics and the information as to location, activity and age of casualties that can be drawn from them and that drowning is preventable. He praised the variety of valuable projects being delivered and invited the audience to consider what they would do to mark International Women's Day which was celebrated on 8th March

Deputy Commonwealth President Designate

The term of the current Deputy Commonwealth President, Clive Holland, ends in July 2025 after serving for 12 years in this role. In the first quarter of 2024 we put a call out to our member organisations for applications to become the Deputy Commonwealth President Designate, a transition role to work alongside the current Deputy Commonwealth President. After consultation, recommendations and endorsement by the Board of Trustees, Commonwealth Council and our Commonwealth President, HRH Prince Michael of Kent GCVO, we were delighted to confirm the appointment of Dr Stephen Beerman from Canada and he commenced the role in July 2024.





Supporting CPR Education in Low Resourced Countries

Following receipt of a generous sponsorship program between Navarino (a maritime technology company), Laerdal Medical, and RLSS itself, 45 Mini Anne Plus (10) manikin kits were purchased to be distributed to RLSS members in low- and middle-income countries. Coinciding with this procurement was the introduction of a new RLSS Strategic Action Plan 2024 to 2026 that included a number of strategic actions directly targeted at RLSS member development.

As a result, it was decided to conduct a project to continue to address the burden of drowning in low- and middle-income countries through developing organisational capacity in RLSS Members by enhancing inter-member drowning prevention networks and to deliver CPR education programmes. This was achieved through the distribution of the CPR manikin kits which resulted in 450 individual manikins in the hands of twenty-five lifesaving organisations through a series of targeted capacity building workshops.

Drowning Prevention Development Workshops

The two workshops mentioned above were held in Delhi, India from 12th to 15th October 2024 and in Johannesburg from 18th to 21st October 2024.

The objectives of the Workshop were to:

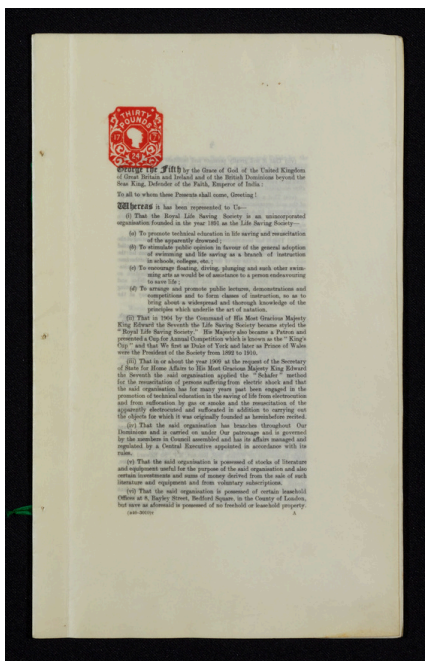
- Bring together representatives of RLSS Member Organisations in South Asia and in Africa for a 2-day workshop to foster sharing knowledge, skills and expertise between members within the region in an effort to strengthen the network of support for their drowning prevention mission.





- Share best practices in each country – e.g. organization structure, governance, survival swimming, CPR, lifesaving and lifeguard training programs, drowning prevention strategies, government and other NGO relations thereby providing RLSS and its member organisations a greater understanding of respective capabilities and needs.
- Foster greater awareness of the actions contained within the 2021 UNGA Resolution on Global Drowning Prevention and the 2023 World Health Assembly (WHA) Resolution Accelerating Action on Global Drowning Prevention.
- Explore how survival swimming and CPR can contribute to a reduction in drowning in each nation by providing the next generation with swimming survival and CPR skills.
- Distribute Mini Anne Plus (10) Kits that have been provided through a generous sponsorship program between Laerdal Medical, Navarino (maritime technology company) and RLSS, to the nominated low- and middle-income RLSS member organisations including how to use, pack, store and maintain the manikins and a refresher on delivering a CPR class.

Representatives from RLSS member organisations in India, Bangladesh, Malaysia, Sri Lanka and New Zealand came together in Delhi and Botswana, Cameroon, Ghana, Kenya, Lesotho, Malawi, Mauritius, Sierra Leone, South Africa, Tanzania, Uganda (via Zoom links) and Zambia in Johannesburg to collectively contribute to improved understanding of drowning prevention efforts to address the high burden of drowning. Unfortunately due to visa issues, representatives from our member organisations in Pakistan, Rwanda and Uganda were unable to attend in -person. RLSS acknowledges the invaluable support of the Rashtriya Life Saving Society of India – RLSS (I) in particular from Founder President, Rear Admiral P.D. Sharma (Retd.) and of Lifesaving South Africa (LSA), in particular from LSA President Dhaya Sewduth, General Manager Helen Herbert and Director of Lifesaving, Melvyn Shaw.



Charter Centenary

14th July 2024 marked the centenary of the Royal Life Saving Society's Royal Charter. In celebration, we traced the roots of the Charter's development, from the key figures who conceived and brought it to fruition and the impact the Charter has made to our mission of Commonwealth Drowning Prevention. To mark this Centenary, we produced a commemorative booklet.

We are grateful for the close links the Society had with the Royal Family at that time and for the continued Patronage that we receive.

2025 Commonwealth Lifesaving Championships

Preparations were commenced for the 2025 Commonwealth Lifesaving Championships, to be hosted by RLSS UK, in Swansea, Wales from 10th to 13th July 2025.

These actions included an update of the RLSS Competition Handbook, November 2024 edition, and the appointment of key Championship Officials.

The following key officials have been appointed for the event:

Chief Referee - Joanne Teagle (Australia)
 Deputy Referee - Edmund Chan (Canada)
 Deputy Referee - Michele Weedy (UK)
 SERC Referee - Zelah Weedy (UK)
 Dry SERC Referee - Sarah Ingleton (Canada)
 Wet SERC Referee - Roz Grey (Australia)
 Event Director - Shanna Reid (Canada)
 Event Director - Robert Andersen (UK)



RLSS Programme and Resource Review

Lifesaving Sport for All

The piloting and final edits to the Lifesaving Sport for All Guide was completed in 2024 and through a grant received from the Commonwealth Secretariat's Year of Youth programme, we were able to design a produce a hard copy manual that will be sent out to all our members following the launch of this resource in early 2025.

Survival Swimming Guide and Bronze Medallion

The final stages of review for both these programmes was completed by the end of 2024. The manuals and documents will be designed early in 2025 and it is anticipated both will be launched to our members during the first half of 2025.

Lifeguard Reciprocity Project

This project to look at the RLSS certification transferrable between RLSS members continued in the pilot phase in 2024, looking for lifeguards who are wishing to transfer their qualificaions between either Australia, Canada, South Africa and the United Kingdom to ensure the the proposed processes in each country are viable.



Other Notable Achievements

Advocacy

We continue with our advocacy efforts amongst our Commonwealth networks and during 2024 virtually met with representatives from the WHO regional offices for Africa and SE Asia to see how the RLSS and our members may assist them in collection of data for the Global Status Report on Drowning Prevention released at the end of 2024.

Global Status Report on Drowning Prevention

The WHO launched the Global Status Report on Drowning Prevention on 13th December 2024. RLSS were fortunate to be represented at the launch in Geneva. We actively encouraged our members to download and use the report in their advocacy efforts.

Content Management System (CMS)

We continue to make some minor adjustments to the system as we are uploading items to this platform. We envisage having Australia, Canada, South Africa and the United Kingdom starting to upload resources to the system in early 2025 prior to it being launched to all our members in the second half of 2025.

Member Outreach

Caribbean Lifesaving Association

At the end of July, a hybrid virtual and face to face meeting/workshop was held in Jamaica and supported by Patrick D'Almada from Lifesaving Society Canada to develop the Caribbean Lifesaving Association and provide some training.

RLSS Committees

The term for the Honours, Heritage and Diploma Committees concluded in December 2024 and an open call for nominations was made in the last quarter of 2024. In December the Board approved the Committee composition for the next two years (term ending in December 2026)

Honours

Higher Society Honours awarded in 2024:

Honorary Life Member

Daphne Read AO - Australia

RLSS Diploma

In 2024 we were delighted to award the following Diplomas:

Dr Ben Johns (UK)

Recruitment and retention of RLSS UK volunteers within Wales

Dr Emily Francis (Canada)

A Drowning Prevention Policy Framework

Stephen Waterman (Australia)

Kimberley River Safety Program, Western Australia

In late 2024 we conducted a review of the RLSS Diploma and approved some minor changes to the levels of Diploma and the introduction of the Research Honour. This honour recognises up to three leading drowning prevention researcher each year whose achievements have significantly impacted on the Society and its work and have contributed to our global drowning prevention mission.

RLSS Awards and Medals

2024 King Edward VII Cup

Dr William Clive Patrickson (Clive) commenced working and volunteering with the RLSS shortly after achieving his Bachelor of Education in 1979. He was personally responsible for coordinating all educational programs, publications and internal volunteer management for the Society.

In 1984, Clive and his family emigrated to Australia for Clive to accept the role of National Technical Director with RLSS Australia. In this role, he coordinated the development of all lifesaving educational programs and publications, which included Swim and Survive together with a suite of support materials and resources which became Australia's leading swimming and water safety education programme.

Clive was soon recognised for his leadership and skills in lifesaving, resulting in him accepting the role of CEO of the RLSSA Victoria Branch in 1986. Over the ensuing three years, Clive expanded the work of what was already Australia's leading lifesaving State by initiating numerous innovations including the development of Australia's first professional swimming pool lifeguard training programme and national swimming pool safety guidelines now adopted in all States.

In 1989 Clive was approached by Laerdal Medical to establish the Australian arm of the company, a role which he accepted although chose the location for the new Laerdal Australia office to be a short distance from the RLSSA Victoria Branch office, enabling Clive to continue in a volunteer role for RLSS providing guidance and advice on industry leading activities such as establishing and chairing the Australian Water Safety Education Centre (AWDEC).

In 1994 Clive was the volunteer Director of the RLSSA Australian Centenary Lifesaving Championships, Asia-Pacific Lifesaving Championships and the RLSS Commonwealth Lifesaving Championships all held at the Dandenong Oasis in Victoria.

Clive volunteered his time to be the Hon. State Treasurer of the RLSSA Victoria Branch (2001-2005) providing sound financial advice and guidance to the volunteer Board of Directors. In addition, Clive was a volunteer member of the Interim Board of Life Saving Victoria from 2002 to 2004 providing governance and operational guidance to this new entity formed in 2002 through the merger of Surf Life Saving Victoria and the RLSSA Victoria Branch.



RLSS Awards and Medals

2024 King Edward VII Cup continued

Even while leading Laerdal Medical and the RQI Partners, Clive still found time to volunteer for RLSS. From 2014 to 2023, Clive has been the RLSS Hon. Treasurer and Chair of the Business Development Committee which has seen revenue growth as well as growth in grants and donations enabling an expansion in worldwide drowning prevention projects. During 2023, Clive led the strategic review for the RLSS, and for the first time ensured that all member organisations contributed to the Society's future plans and late in 2023, Clive stepped into the role of Strategy Director for the RLSS.

Having dedicated more than four decades contributing significantly to the saving of life through his leadership and innovation in a broad range of life saving developments and initiatives in Australia and internationally, it is with great pleasure that Dr W Clive Patrickson is awarded the King Edward VII Cup for 2024.



RLSS Awards and Medals

2023 Mountbatten Medal

Saturday 11th February 2023, was a hot day and former Margate Lifesaving Club Nipper. Lee Maree was enjoying a beach BBQ with friends at Oslo Beach, KwaZulu Nata, South Africa. At around 1pm Lee was alerted to a 21 year old student who was being swept out to sea by a strong rip current.

Lee reacted immediately and swam out through the turbulent surf without any floatation or rescue equipment. Lee reached the man at the large back surf zone. After calming and securing the patient, Lee towed him back 600m to the safety of the shore, maneuvering through the rough conditions.

NSRI and medics treated the man for secondary drowning.

For his quick and courageous actions, Lee Maree was awarded the 2023 Mountbatten Medal.



2023 Russell Medal

Given that we received no 2023 nominations for the Russell Medal but received two nominations for rescues that took place in 2022, the Board and Patrons of the medal agreed that these should be considered and awarded the 2023 Russell Medal to Ella McIlveen from Western Australia.

While 17-year-old Ella was driving along the Kwinana Freeway with her brother in November 2022, she witnessed a significant collision between a pedestrian and truck. Ella stopped her car and approached the pedestrian who was unconscious on the ground and not breathing. She quickly took charge by organising bystanders and called emergency services. Ella then rendered first aid to control bleeding from a head wound and began performing CPR. After a few minutes the injured man began breathing independently and Ella continued to provide first aid until emergency services arrived. Having previously completed a CPR course through school, Ella used her skills to respond to a major emergency. She remained calm and performed under great pressure, ultimately saving the man's life.



RLSS Awards and Medals

HRH Prince Michael of Kent Certificate of Merit

Dr Amimur Rahman, a medical graduate with specialization in public health, has devoted himself to drowning prevention and lifesaving for over two decades.

Dr Rahman is one of the lead drowning prevention researchers in Bangladesh and has conducted various epidemiological and experimental studies since 2000, determining the magnitude and risk-factors, and identification of cost-effective interventions for drowning, particularly for children, in Bangladesh, which are applicable for similar settings.

In 2010, he completed his PhD, researching child drowning prevention, from the Department of Public Health Sciences, Karolinska Institutet, Stockholm, Sweden.

He has published more than 90 articles in peer reviewed journals and co-authored WHO “World Report on Child Injury Prevention” (2008) and “Drowning – Prevention, Rescue, Treatment” (2014) He acted as one of the editors of “Global Report on Drowning Prevention” (2014) and a contributor of “Preventing drowning: an implementation guide” (2017). Dr Rahman is an honorary advisor of the International Drowning Researchers’ Alliance (IDRA). In October 2017 at the World Conference of Drowning Prevention, he was awarded the “Distinguished Service to Drowning Prevention” by the International Lifesaving Federation (ILS).

Dr Rahman has been the RLSS Director for Drowning Prevention since 2018 and was the lead on the first Commonwealth Fatal Drowning Factsheet.

For his work within Bangladesh and internationally, Dr Rahman was awarded a HRH Prince Michael of Kent Certificate of Merit for Service.

RLSS Headquarters, Governance and Administration

We have continued to develop our internal processes and policies and continually monitor our risk management through our Risk Management Committee and the Board of Trustees.

During 2024, the RLSS continued to improve its governance and systems by reviewing and updating our Regulations, reviewing the Risk Register on a quarterly basis and a range of policies that has included:

- Voting Outside of a Meeting Policy
- Development Assistance Principles Policy
- Financial Procedures Policy
- Recognition and Protection of RLSS Intellectual Property Policy
- Ethical Fundraising Policy
- Grievance Policy
- Risk Management Policy
- Volunteer Management Policy
- Safeguarding Policy for Adults and Children at Risk

Our Board of Trustees meets quarterly via electronic format.

The Business Development Committee, made up of the Chief Executive Officers from Australia, Canada, South Africa and the United Kingdom met periodically during 2024 to discuss various matters and offer advice to the Trustees.

Our Membership Committee continue to meet quarterly to review various membership issues and consider new membership applications.

The Society's Portfolio Directors meet quarterly to update on the progress under their activity within our Strategic Action Plan

Collaboration

Drowning is a complex public health problem which goes without recognition or attention in many areas of greatest need. Indeed, it has been called a hidden epidemic. There are more 'at risk' populations in the world needing drowning prevention assistance than there are organisations focused on providing help. The RLSS Commonwealth drowning prevention mission needs collaboration from all national, regional and international organisations and governments to be most effective – cooperating fully for the benefit of people worldwide to reduce the global burden of drowning. Strong partnerships are key to achieving our aim of eliminating drowning in the Commonwealth and have enabled us to support our Member Branches in low resourced settings.

The 2024, key partnerships for RLSS included:

The **Commonwealth** is a voluntary association of 56 independent countries that are united by values enshrined in the Commonwealth Charter.

In the first quarter of 2024, the RLSS received notification of their re-accreditation to the Commonwealth and continues to engage with various groups within the Commonwealth such as the Independent Forum of Commonwealth Organisations (IFCO) and the Commonwealth Children's Interest Group (ComCIG)



The **World Health Organization** (WHO)

The RLSS has actively supported engagement with the WHO around the launch of the Global Status Report on Drowning Prevention and encouraged members on the advice of the WHO how to support their in-country collaborative efforts



The **International Life Saving Federation** (ILS)

Both RLSS and RLSS Member Branches are represented on the ILS Board and on the ILS Commissions and Committees, strengthening opportunities for effective collaboration.



The ILS have sanctioned and endorsed our 2025 Commonwealth Lifesaving Championships.

We continue to collaborate with the **Royal National Lifeboat Institution** (RNLI) and maintain regular dialogue of matters of mutual interest. Having hosted the 2024 International Women's Day event jointly with the RNLI, it is likely this will become an annual activity to engage with Commonwealth stakeholders based in the UK and there are plans and discussion for an early 2025 event.



RNLI/WHO Early Childcare Workshop in Thailand

The World Health Organization (WHO) and the RNLI hosted a global workshop on child day-care and drowning prevention in Chiang Mai, Thailand from 21-23 October. The RLSS supported the travel costs of Dr Aminur Rahman and Rehana Parveen from Bangladesh to attend this workshop.

RLSS is most grateful for the ongoing support from **Laerdal Medical**. In 2024 we focused on the continued development of our content management system that will support all our members through resource sharing. As previously mentioned, Laerdal were a key partner in the CPR manikin kit roll out to 25 RLSS members across the Commonwealth.



In 2024 **Ruth Lee Limited** kindly donated rescue manikins to six of our members: India, Sri Lanka, Kenya, South Africa, Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago. These manikins were shipped and received by our members during 2024.



A relationship with **Navarino**, a leading maritime technology partner, was established and with the support of Laerdal Medical and RLSS, 45 CPR manikin kits were delivered to our members across all three regions during 2024 to assist in the expansion of their CPR education.



And most importantly, our **RLSS Member Branches** continue to work at the national and community level to reduce drowning through:

- Researching drowning and aquatic emergencies to inform practice.
- Targeted community-based Drowning Prevention projects.
- Training the community and professionals in lifesaving skills for prevention & emergency response.
- Engaging young people in lifesaving and drowning prevention.
- Using the sport of lifesaving to further develop skills and techniques for rescue.
- Monitoring and risk assessing aquatic environments to guarantee safe participation in safe aquatic environments.
- Several of our Members carry out outreach work in nearby countries which widens the impact of our organisation

Acknowledgements

The Society's achievements would not have been possible without the support of and contribution from the following people who have given their time and expertise.

Portfolio Directors

- Norman Farmer AM ESM – Honorary Executive Director
- Anne-Maree Gardiner AM – Director of Commonwealth Lifesaving Championships
- Dr Aminur Rahman DCM PhD – Director of Drowning Data & Information
- Rob Reid – Director of Digital Resource Platform
- Rebecca Boyd – Director of Sport Development
- Cavell Burchell – Director of Governance and Compliance
- Dr Stephen Beerman – Director of Advocacy
- Clive Patrickson PhD – Director of Strategy
- Nick Grazier – Director of Lifeguard Solutions
- Bhavik Barochia – Director of Youth Development

Committee and Working Group Chairs

- Clive Patrickson PhD – Business Development Committee
- Robert Clark – Heritage Committee
- Dr Colleen Saunders – Diploma Committee
- Dr Christopher Love – Honours Committee
- Dr Stephen Beerman – Advocacy Steering Group

Our Committee and Working Groups are composed of members from Australia, Canada, India, Lesotho, Malaysia, Malta, South Africa, St Lucia and the UK and we are extremely grateful to all the members for their valuable contributions.



Our Plans for 2025

We will have effective and efficient administration systems that support the Society's operations and activities. This will be achieved through:

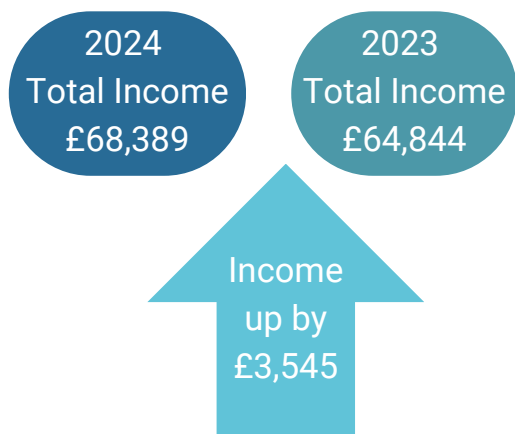
- Operating a Headquarters with good practice business systems and staffing within our means and supported by volunteers and others to ensure the Strategic Action Plan is implemented.
- Having a system of honours, used in all Member organisations, to recognise the valuable contribution by the volunteers.
- Supporting committees and working groups that the Board considers necessary from time to time including Heritage, Diploma and the provision of awards.
- Exploring multiple ways of working together as a family, embracing large, medium and small member organisations.
- Develop our communications strategy to include staying up to date with latest communication channels that use real time and online technology.

Specific Plans for 2025

- To launch the Lifesaving Sport for All, a programme of lifesaving sport events based on skills education, which will include webinars and online materials.
- To launch the content management system to our members and provide training and assistance to ensure all members utilise and benefit from the platform.
- To launch the Survival Swimming and Bronze Medallion updated programmes and resources to our members and release updated CPR and Pool Lifeguard for Low Resource Settings Guides.
- To assist RLSS UK with the planning and delivery of the 2025 Commonwealth Lifesaving Championships
- To host a face to face Commonwealth Council, Board of Trustees and Committee meetings in Swansea, UK in July 2025.
- To continue to support World Drowning Prevention Day and encourage and assist our members to contribute to the work of the WHO.
- To produce and launch the second Commonwealth Fatal Drowning Factsheet.
- To support the Youth Advisory Group that meets regularly to ensure youth engagement in drowning prevention interventions and RLSS programmes and governance.
- To ensure the smooth transition of the Deputy Commonwealth President role
- To pilot the RLSS Lifesaving iSport inter-organisation level pool lifesaving competitions held at aquatic facilities during pre-determined dates with competitors' performances compared with other lifesavers – all without travelling outside their local community.
- Supporting the RLSS Youth Scholarship programme for the World Conference on Drowning Prevention 2025 taking place in Egypt
- Working with Lifesaving South Africa, plan and deliver an Africa Regional Development Workshop

Financial Summary

Income



As with previous years, much of the RLSS's income is member payments from the three largest members branches (Australia, Canada and the UK).

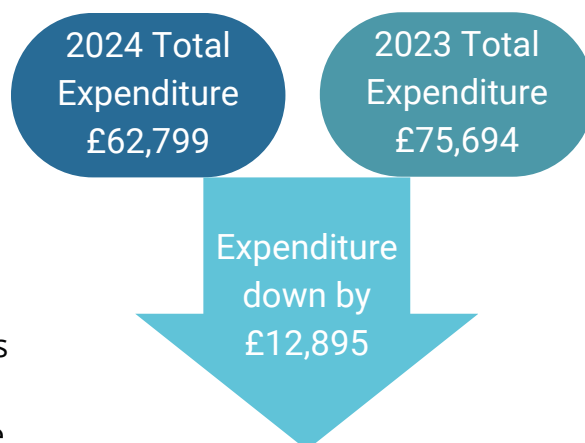
We will continue to look at diversifying income streams and funding opportunities.

Our largest branches have made commitments to continue to support the administration of the Society, allowing any raised funds to be spent on programmatic activity.

Expenditure

Most RLSS expenditure finances the valuable work of RLSS Headquarters (staff and running costs).

Expenditure was higher than forecast as we developed the plan for the CPR kit distribution and associated workshops, funding for this was taken from our Regional Development Fund, a designated fund set aside to fund regional activities to support our members. Expenditure was down on 2023 which was higher due to the hosting of the various Strategic Planning Meetings in Windsor, Canada.



Donors & Funders 2024

The Royal Life Saving Society wishes to thank the following individuals and organisations for their most generous donations, sponsorships and grants during 2024

The Privy Purse
The Edinburgh Trust
The Lifesaving Society Canada
Royal Life Saving Society Australia
RLSS UK

Commonwealth Secretariat - Year of Youth
Laerdal Medical
Ruth Lee
James McClelland
Navarino
Clive Holland

Reserves Policy

RLSS has a Reserves Policy aimed at ensuring the financial sustainability of the Society. As at the end of 2024, we had £78,536 of general reserves and this meets the Society's Reserves Policy of two years core funding (excludes project work)

Over recent years RLSS has managed to increase its financial reserves through the continued contributions from major branches, increased contributions from member organisations, grants and sponsorships and good fiscal management. This allows us to offer reduced membership fees to our members who struggle financially.

In 2022 we set up a Regional Development Fund that is to support regional work carried out in conjunction with our major branches. The total amount in this fund, and our other designated and restricted funds totals £53,905 at the end of 2024. Some of the fund was used to host the Regional Development Workshops in Delhi and Johannesburg and to roll out the manikin kit distribution to our members.

The Board of Trustees approved the 2025 forecast at their December 2024 meeting given the current value of the Society's general reserves.

Statement of Trustees' Responsibilities

In relation to the following financial statements of the Royal Life Saving Society to year end 31 December 2024

In accordance with the Charities Act 2011, the Trustees have prepared the following Financial Statements which give a true and fair view of the Charity's financial activities during the year 2024 and of its financial position as at 31 December 2024. In preparing these Financial Statements, best practice has been followed and suitable accounting policies have been consistently applied.

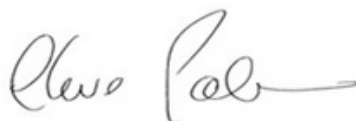
Applicable accounting standards and the Statement of Recommended Practice "Accounting and Reporting by Charities" 2005 have been followed.

The Financial Statements have been independently examined by Richard Oddy FCA after he was given access to all relevant financial documents, general correspondence and Minutes of all Society Committee meetings.

Signed on behalf of the Society Trustees



Clive Holland
Deputy Commonwealth President
31st December 2024



W Clive Patrickson PhD
Treasurer
31st December 2024



COMMONWEALTH
DROWNING
PREVENTION

Financial Statements

For the year ended
31st December 2024

Report to the trustees of The Royal Life Saving Society and to the Commonwealth Council

On accounts for the year ended 31 December 2024

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the above charity ("the Trust") for the year ended 31 December 2024 as set out on pages 3 and 4.

Responsibilities and basis of report As the charity trustees of the Trust, you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 ("the Act").

I report in respect of my examination of the Trust's accounts carried out under section 145 of the 2011 Act and in carrying out my examination, I have followed the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the Act.

Independent examiner's statement I have completed my examination. I confirm that no material matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination which gives me cause to believe that in, any material respect:

- accounting records were not kept in accordance with section 130 of the Act or
- the accounts do not accord with the accounting records

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Signed:



Richard Oddy FCA

Date: 01 July 2025

Royal Life Saving Society

Receipts and payments accounts

For the period from	01/01/2024	To	31/12/2024
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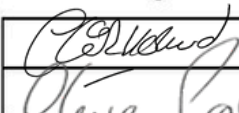
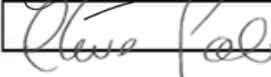
Section A Receipts and payments

	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Endowment funds	Total funds	Last year
	£	£	£	£	£
A1 Receipts					
Membership	36,986	-	-	36,986	43,308
Grants	2,390	-	-	2,390	-
Sponsorship	5,000	-	-	5,000	12,000
Donations and Legacies	2,491	-	-	2,491	7,533
Resource Income	734	-	-	734	517
General Development	16,799	-	-	16,799	-
History	966	-	-	966	-
Dividends/Interest	3,024	-	-	3,024	1,485
<i>Sub total (Income for AR)</i>	68,389	-	-	68,389	64,844
A2 Asset and investment sales, (see table).					
	-	-	-	-	-
<i>Sub total</i>	-	-	-	-	-
<i>Total receipts</i>	68,389	-	-	68,389	64,844
A3 Payments					
Charitable Activities	26,557	-	-	26,557	25,227
Commonwealth Development	8,107	500	-	8,607	38,668
Commonwealth Headquarter Costs	7,236	-	-	7,236	6,761
Lifesaving Sport Development	-	-	-	-	4,228
Membership Development	430	-	-	430	152
Support Services	210	-	-	210	144
Finance Charges	232	-	-	232	513
Regional development	19,528	-	-	19,528	-
<i>Sub total</i>	62,299	500	-	62,799	75,694
A4 Asset and investment purchases, (see table)					
	-	-	-	-	-
<i>Sub total</i>	-	-	-	-	-
<i>Total payments</i>	62,299	500	-	62,799	75,694
<i>Net of receipts/(payments)</i>	6,090	(500)	-	5,590	(10,850)
A5 Transfers between funds	-	-	-	-	-
A6 Cash funds last year end	128,983	6,764	-	135,747	146,597
<i>Cash funds this year end</i>	135,073	6,264	-	141,337	135,747

Royal Life Saving Society

For the period from	01/01/2024	To	31/12/2024
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Section B Statement of assets and liabilities at the end of the period

Categories	Details	Unrestricted funds to nearest £	Restricted funds to nearest £	Endowment funds to nearest £
B1 Cash funds	Cash at bank	135,073	6,264	-
	<i>Total cash funds</i>	135,073	6,264	-
		Unrestricted funds to nearest £	Restricted funds to nearest £	Endowment funds to nearest £
B2 Other monetary assets	Details			
	None	-	-	-
		Fund to which asset belongs	Cost (optional)	Current value (optional)
B3 Investment assets	Details			
	Quoted investments			
	Royal Life Saving Society Fund	Unrestricted	-	3,725
	Russell Medal Fund	Restricted	-	11,331
		Fund to which asset belongs	Cost (optional)	Current value (optional)
B4 Assets retained for the charity's own use	Details			
	None	Unrestricted		
		Fund to which liability relates	Amount due (optional)	When due (optional)
B5 Liabilities	Details			
	Payroll liability	-	-	
Signed by one or two trustees on behalf of all the trustees	Signature	Print Name	Date of approval	
		Clive Holland	14 th July 2025	
		W Clive Patrickson	14 th July 2025	

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