

# ANNUAL REPORT AND ACCOUNTS

FOR THE YEAR TO 31 DECEMBER 2022



## St Gregory's Foundation

Helping vulnerable children and families  
in Russia and Georgia

Charity Registration no. 1002469

Company no. 02589926

[www.stgregorysfoundation.org.uk](http://www.stgregorysfoundation.org.uk)

## Contents:

Chairman's report	3
Achievements of 2022	4-10
Future plans	10
Financial review and SGF policies	10-11
Our finances	12-13
Legal and administrative details	14
Find out more, how you can help	15

## CHAIRMAN'S REPORT BY MR NICHOLAS KOLARZ



Our charity has been supporting vulnerable children and young people in Russia and other countries for over 30 years. The war in Ukraine and economic crisis badly affected our partner organisations and created enormous difficulties for them after sanctions in 2022 made it impossible to send grants to Russia. In the first month after the invasion, our colleagues in Russia noted a sharp decline in individual donations, as many people were unable to transfer money after major credit cards and payment services withdrew from Russia. With the blocking of Facebook and Instagram, publicising the work of the charities became increasingly difficult. None of our projects have closed but most of our colleagues have been working as volunteers for many months.

The impact on us was fundamental as St Gregory's was unable to deliver services to its beneficiaries in Russia. This included paying salaries, services, feeding, organising training sessions and more. SGF continued to raise funds and the crisis had little impact on the charity's reputation but fundraising notably decreased.

The Trustees recognised the pressing need to continue funding our Russian projects and following our mandate looked for legal avenues to help them. St Gregory's Foundation filed a Serious Incident Report about the impact on the charity last March and worked with the Charity Commission, the City Law Firm Withers and Risk Advisory Ltd (a company specialising in due diligence checks). Our proposal for an 'informal value transfer system' through trusted third parties has been vetted and approved by the above-mentioned Law Firm and accepted by the Commission. The first grants were received by our partners in November 2022. Our proposal included a series of due diligence checks and enabled us to deliver our charitable aims in a low-risk fashion and with the necessary controls in place. Transfers to Mkurnali were totally unaffected.

The St Gregory's Foundation currently has no partner projects in Ukraine but in support of children and families of refugees from Ukraine as well as social orphans in St Petersburg we organised a fundraising Dinner at Mercers' Hall raising about £19,000. Half of this amount was sent to Save the Children UK towards their work in Ukraine. Our year end appeal for Mkurnali's work with homeless teenagers was supported by the renowned singer Katie Melua and Global Giving raising over £4,500. £11,000 was contributed by the Countess Alexandra Tolstoy-Miloslavsky and Nikolai Tolstoy from proceeds of his lecture on the conflict between Russia and Ukraine at the Royal Geographical Society last March.

With the retirement of Luliia Mesotitsch, SGF's former Treasurer in August, Shiho Prevost joined the Foundation in the capacity of a Reporting Accountant. Vivian Wright remained our Acting Treasurer.

For good reasons, as well as to ensure coverage of SGF's broader mandate to focus on all ex-USSR countries (not just Russia and Georgia), the charity decided it would be prudent and appropriate for the St Gregory's Foundation to extend its support to registered charities across Eastern Europe. The charity undertook informal consultations with its members and this work will continue in 2023.

## ACHIEVEMENTS OF 2022

***Alternative technology for children and teenagers with complex severe disabilities and autistic children – run by ANO 'Communication Space' in Moscow and ANO 'Physical Rehabilitation' in St Petersburg***

Due to sanctions ANO 'Physical Rehabilitation' postponed their grant request. ANO 'Communication Space' sent us a grant request and, after some delay, St Gregory's managed to transfer their grant in March 2023. Despite these problems, our colleagues continued their vital work with severely disabled children and teenagers. A-tech Moscow focused on holding regular classes for children and teenagers with multiple disabilities and autism, providing them with individual timetables and working closely

with qualified psychologists and specialists, promoting the use and creation of existing and new communication devices. Children learned how to improve their communication skills, play games, learn household activities and how to interact in social environments. 26 children and young people aged 4-27 years old and 21 specialists from Moscow, St Petersburg, and Bryansk were helped or trained by Communication Space this year. 53 new families benefited from an online course "Alternative and Augmentative communication: what is important to know?" created as part of last year's project. The specialists of 'Communication Space' regularly worked with the children's parents,



teaching them how to make or use additional devices at home, such as buttons or switches.

In addition, the Centre offered free online psychological support of parents, carers and specialists to help families cope through these difficult times. There was an increased demand for psychological support to families after the invasion and following economic crisis. 109 parents from Moscow and nearby regions have been receiving free online support for a few months. St Gregory's has also funded a successful online learning course 'Models of support for parents of children with disabilities' for 24

specialists and parents from Moscow, St Petersburg, Tula, Kirov, Rostov-on-Don and other cities. In addition, 'Communication Space' ran an educational campaign for parents of children and young people with mental disabilities "Marathon of simple changes" on the Telegram social network.

## Club for children with impaired hearing



Deaf Club at the Early Intervention Institute received St Gregory's grant before February and managed to run activities as normal. The Club remains the only place in St Petersburg where children as young as 8 months-2-years old can get an early diagnosis and start speech and language therapy whilst their parents get practical help and socialise with peer families. The parents help to subsidise the cost of weekly group meetings, thereby increasing the number of families and toddlers receiving support, without increasing reliance on outside funding. Beyond weekly music and play therapy the Club offers regular consultations by audiologists, speech therapy specialists and specialists in early intervention to help monitor the progress of each child. Some children have other health issues: cerebral palsy, cognitive retardation; behavioural problems (hypermobility).

In 2022, 26 families were beneficiaries of the Club. They came mainly from St Petersburg and the nearby regions but the Club hosted some families from Vladivostok, Primorsky Krai, Kyrgyzstan and one family of refugees from Ukraine. All families used the services of a social taxi - this reduced the family's financial costs for their commute to the Early Intervention Institute. All parents who attended the Club were actively involved in the work at the Club and online. At the Institute a group of hearing relatives of deaf people learned sign language.

The majority of hearing-impaired children wore special hearing aid devices thanks to the dedicated work of the audiologist of the Club who made the parents aware of the importance of wearing hearing aids on a regular basis. We also saw a growing number of children with cochlear implants at the Club. From September 2022, 10 children began attending mainstream kindergartens and according to their parents they adapted very well thanks to their new skills.

## Mkurnali – legal support, assistance and rehabilitation of formerly homeless teenagers and young people in the street in Tbilisi, Georgia



In 2022 Mkurnali defended 42 cases with 3 cases still ongoing: 16 young people were acquitted and 14 were given a conditional discharge. 11 young people were given reduced prison terms of 1-2 years, one person was convicted for a longer term.

Last year Mkurnali housed around 20 formerly homeless young people and provided training and employment in their social enterprises. St Gregory's continued to fund the legal service and contributed to the cost of feeding their residents and paid both the Director and her assistant worker who were able to connect directly with teenagers who are still homeless.

In December St Gregory's raised funds with Global Giving and the renowned singer Katie Melua to help Mkurnali finish their loft reconstruction and accommodate more homeless young people. Two new rooms and a bathroom were much needed for the shelter, which has become more crowded. This mainly because the prices of rented accommodation have risen sharply because of Russians who fled to Georgia to escape mobilisation to the war in Ukraine. Local Georgians and in particular homeless or former residents of Mkurnali could not afford high rents and had to turn to Mkurnali for help. We hope that the loft will be ready in 2023 and families will move in.

## Sunflower Centre - supporting orphanage-leavers

For 15 years Sunflower's work with young people who grew up in orphanages has been in high demand. Our colleagues have helped over 650 teenagers and young parents, 300 families in crisis, and 200 foster families with teenagers to build independent lives and develop their parenting skills. Sunflower has become a respected training provider, helping over 2,000 specialists who work with orphanage-leavers and improving standards across St Petersburg and beyond.

In autumn 2022 they faced their most challenging times. Elena Sukhorukova, director and co-founder, died after a serious illness. Since her death, Natalia Andreeva, the other co-founder, has had to adapt to a new role as Director and the entire team worked as volunteers for many months due to difficulties

with transferring funds to Russia. Despite all the difficulties and because of their commitments to those in their care, Sunflower continued all the programmes that Elena had headed up. They managed to respond to the increased demand for their parenting support groups and now they support 50 families of orphanage-leavers, up from 35 in 2022. Sunflower provided training for professionals from Izhevsk, Volgograd and Chelyabinsk and the Centre will welcome more trainees in 2023.

In 2022 Sunflower conducted online individual and group counselling, group outings, art therapy sessions and home visits for 35 parents, 38 children and over 130 young people. Sunflower's 'domestic' training sessions at the "Youth" club in St Petersburg were both a great source of practical help for experienced families and a fresh start for newcomers struggling on their way to an independent life.



48 specialists: psychologists, social workers and pedagogues from 15 regions of St Petersburg and the surrounding area were trained online on raising professional standards in work with orphanage-leavers. Training sessions focused on young people being integrated into society, helping them adapt to new independent living conditions after leaving orphanages and finding jobs.



## Summer camps

Last summer 5 families (5 parents, 8 children), 6 young people and specialists formed two separate groups which spent a week each at the lovely rural setting of Sunflower's camp site in the Novgorod region.

For orphanage-leavers physically separated from their friends and living on their own with no family support, it was a great relief as they found it extremely difficult to stay motivated and positive during the lockdown. The summer camp was specifically focused on training sessions to reduce stress levels and support communication between children and parents and with their peers.

Particular focus was placed on improving parenting skills in a more intensive way, physical and psychological well-being and strengthening young people's social and decision-making skills.



We were not able to transfer money to Kondopoga in time for their summer activities, the first grant only reached them in November 2022. Despite the lack of funding, the Parish and ANO 'Development' managed to continue supplying food parcels to the most disadvantaged and with their summer activities for children through June to August. A local supplier even provided food on credit. After the grant was received, the Parish paid back their debt and continued to serve very poor families in Kondopoga.

Last summer, Kondopoga parish invited a group of children with a range of disabilities to join in activities at the parish house throughout the summer holidays. The children enjoyed joining in games,



performances, and crafts. The camp became a place where parents could get advice from specialists and volunteers at the Parish and, most importantly, they received moral support and a boost to their family budget. For example, food parcels were delivered once every 2 weeks to help parents feed their children during the holidays, and school uniforms and shoes were given out in August. The Parish also organised two trips to St Petersburg and Petrozavodsk - in this way they continued to broaden the cultural horizons of children from Kondopoga.



The Parish remains a very important hub of social life in Kondopoga, helping children and families as well as feeding about 50 homeless and destitute people, helping single parents and multi-child families, collecting second hand clothes, and providing food parcels for disadvantaged people and patients of the local neuropsychiatric boarding school.



## Fundraising events and publicity

In 2022 the charity worked immensely hard to continue raising funds for our projects however the war and crisis badly affected our fundraising resulting in a considerable drop of donations throughout the year. Nevertheless, last March at our fundraising dinner at the Mercers' Hall we raised over £19,000 - half of this amount went to the Save the Children for Ukraine to help children and refugee families.

The other half was allocated to Sunflower's work with orphanage-leavers and parents who grew up in orphanages.

St Gregory's projects in Russia have also been supported by a number of Trusts and Foundations with one major gift provided by the Gerald Palmer Eling Trust (£5,000). Community support included: coffee mornings organised by George Guest and events organised by the Chester Cathedral group and led by SGF director Jane Jones. £11,000 was contributed by the Countess Alexandra Tolstoy and Nikolai Tolstoy from the proceeds of his lecture on Ukraine/Russia conflict at Royal Geographical Society last March. In December 2022 St Gregory's appeal for Mkurnali's homeless young people was supported by the renowned singer Katie Melua and supporters on Global Giving raising over £4,000.

The sale of Christmas cards continued to be a popular way of fundraising - albeit on a smaller scale.

## Future plans

Our foremost task remains to ensure continuity of our projects and deliver outstanding funds to our partner organisations in Russia.

### Supporting orphanage-leavers

We continue to support the Sunflower Centre, which over the years has been developed and praised as displaying best practice and an expert agency providing counselling and training to young orphanage-leavers, young parents and specialists from St Petersburg and other regions across Russia.

### Helping children with disabilities and autism in St Petersburg, Moscow and the regions

We shall work with 'Communication Space' Centre and 'Physical Rehabilitation' to provide accessible solutions and technologies (devices, software, applications) to disabled and autistic Russian children and teenagers and their families across Russia. We continue to work with local partners to adapt A-Tech, and provide affordable or free solutions and services where possible.

### Education and rehabilitation for disabled and disadvantaged children in Karelia

We will support ANO 'Development' and the Parish of Kondopoga so that they can reach out to the most underprivileged children and teenagers in the remote and poor region of Karelia. The Parish has outstanding long-term experience of organising summer camps, feeding and training children from very poor families and preparing them for school.

### Working with the hearing-impaired

We also continue helping deaf and hearing-impaired children and their parents whose needs are not currently met in St Petersburg and the region or who have received poor service from municipal bodies.

### Securing legal services for young people in the street and out of youth detention centres and prison in Tbilisi and helping Mkurnali's shelter

We shall continue to support the legal programme, the only one of its kind in Tbilisi, which remains in high demand as well as funding food for residents of Mkurnali's shelter and helping provide accommodation for the larger number of homeless people in their care.

## Financial review

2022 was the most challenging year for the charity since its foundation. For much of the year sanctions made it impossible to send grants to our Russian partner organisations. However, the charity's fundraising efforts have paid off and we have managed to provide additional funding to Save the Children for Ukraine in addition to commitments to our core projects. The charity ended the year with a surplus net income of £5,662 compared to the previous year of £13,263. Once re-evaluation of assets are considered, overall net movement of funds for 2022 is £ (41,128) compared to £44,755 last year.

## SGF policies

St Gregory's acts in accordance with our policies:

- Safeguarding vulnerable children and adults and safeguarding policy (online teaching)
- Volunteer policy
- Conflict of interest policy
- Donations policy
- Complaints policy
- Privacy policy
- Risk management
- Investment and reserves policy

### Investment and reserves policy

SGF aims to ensure that there are sufficient funds available to maintain the operations of the Charity and to meet regular charitable giving for a minimum of two years for which we currently hold long-term reserves. The long-term reserves should be invested to grow at least in line with inflation and the short-term reserves should be invested emphasising certainty of value.

SGF's long-term commitments demand substantial funding, therefore reserves need to be built up. The Board of SGF has invested its long-term reserves into "Cazenove Capital (part of Schroders PLC)", an authorised professional investment manager. Previously the Board of SGF has also opened a Charity Investment Account with Hargreaves Lansdown plc, and selected a suitable investment or mix of investments that are consistent with the investment objectives of the long-term reserves. Where necessary, the Board will take advice from someone experienced in investment matters.

SGF seeks to produce the best financial return within an acceptable level of risk. The investment objective for the long-term reserves is to generate a return to at least maintain the real value of the capital over the long term whilst generating income to support the ongoing activities of the charity. The investment objective for the short-term reserves is to preserve the capital value with a minimum level of risk.

### Risk management policy

The board have identified potential risks to the charity in the current climate of war and crisis and have put measures in place, where possible, to minimise its potential impact. SGF is reliant on fundraising and donations for its activities. Investment assets are held as reserves to ensure continuity of our projects and potential future major project investment. The key risk to long-term reserves is inflation, and the assets should be invested to mitigate this risk over the long term. The short-term reserves are held to provide financial security and may be required at short notice.

SGF is not subject to the restrictions on foreign funding to Russian NGOs, since our work is resolutely unpolitical and is purely concerned with providing assistance and services to people in need.

The Board continues to transfer grants to Georgia via the usual banking system while grants to our Russian projects are being transferred through trusted third parties as vetted and approved by the Charity Commission and City Law Firm Withers.

## Our finances

Shiho Prevost, SGF accountant



We have ended 2022 in a good financial position despite the year being another challenging year due to the post-Covid situation, the war in Ukraine and the subsequent economic crisis.

Key highlights for 2022 (preliminary) are:

A surplus of £5,662 which is a positive outcome compared to a forecasted deficit. · Income totalled £141,643. ·

Donations at £95,797 accounted for 68% of our annual income. ·

Reserves have been wisely invested to deliver £15,677 dividends/interest for the year. ·

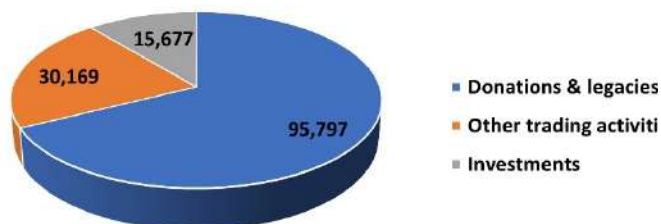
Expenditures totalled ££135,981. · Charitable project and activity costs at ££84,626

The first grants were received by our partners in November 2022 after we found a way of transferring funds that was fully vetted by our legal advisors and accepted by the Charity Commission. We continue to send funds in a low-risk fashion with the necessary controls in place.

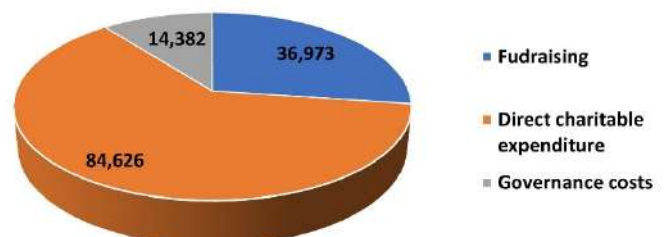
In 2023, we aim to continue raising sufficient funds to fulfil our charitable aims in a self-sustainable way without drawing too much on our reserves. Your donations and support made all this work possible and your future donations are the key to our work. Please continue to support St Gregory's Foundation as every £ counts!

What we received	2022 unrestricted funds, £	2021 total funds, £
Donations & Legacies	95,797	158,905
Other trading activities	30,169	3,918
Investments	15,677	14,983
Total income	141,643	177,806
What we spent	Year to 31.12.2022	Year to 31.12.2021
Fundraising	36,973	29,050
Direct charitable expenditure	84,626	125,623
Governance costs	14,382	9,870
Total spent	135,981	164,543
Gains/losses	(46,790)	31,492
Net movement in funds	(41,128)	44,755
Total funds brought forward	515,007	470,252
Total funds carried forward	473,879	515,007

What we received in 2022, £



What we spent in 2022, £



Balance sheet as at 31.12. 2022	Year to 31 <sup>st</sup> Dec 2022		Year to 31 <sup>st</sup> Dec 2021, £	
	£	£	£	£
<b>Fixed assets</b>				
Investments	393,456		437,847	
<b>Current assets</b>				
Debtors	9,857		1,929	
Cash at bank and in hand	75,533		91,063	
	85,390		92,992	
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	(4,967)		15,832	
Net current assets	80,423		77,160	
Total assets less current liabilities	473,879		515,007	
Net assets	473,879		515,007	
Unrestricted funds	473,879		515,007	
Total funds	473,879		515,007	

The charitable company is entitled to exemption from audit under Section 477 of the Companies Act 2006 for the year ended 31 December 2022. The members have not required the company to obtain an audit of its financial statements for the year ended 31 December 2022 in accordance with Section 476 of the Companies Act 2006. The trustees acknowledge their responsibilities for (a) ensuring that

the charitable company keeps accounting records that comply with Sections 386 and 387 of the Companies Act 2006 and (b) preparing financial statements which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charitable company as at the end of each financial year and of its surplus or deficit for each financial year in accordance with the requirements of Sections 394 and 395 and which otherwise comply with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006 relating to financial statements, so far as applicable to the charitable company.

These financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the provisions applicable to charitable companies subject to the small companies regime.

## Legal and administrative details

Charity registration no. 1002469

Company registration no. 02589926 (England and Wales)

Registered office: 8 Biddulph Road, London, W91JB

## Charity objects

- The relief of poverty and social insecurity in Russia and Georgia, amongst the most vulnerable groups of people of all nationalities and religions.
- The Company will carry out the objects through the furtherance of local initiatives and exchanges with non-profit, non-governmental, private companies and state organisations which undertake long-term social, educational and medical programmes.

In practice, our current work is concentrated almost exclusively in Russia and Georgia, in assisting socially disadvantaged and disabled children and young people and enabling young orphans and families to become independent and fully integrated into local communities. The trustees ensure that the projects undertaken are in line with our charitable aims and objectives and the Charity Commission's general guidance on public benefit and prevention and relief of poverty for the public benefit.

We work entirely through local partner organisations to help strengthen the local charity sector. We only work with those individuals and organisations who help those in need, irrespective of religion, gender, ethnicity, age, or political views, who are transparent in their activities, and share our ethic of empowering their beneficiaries.

## Governing documents

The St Gregory's Foundation is a charitable company and is regulated by the latest Articles of Association (under the Companies Act 2006) that were adopted in 2018.

## Directors

The charity is governed by a Board of Directors, all of whom are volunteers and who meet regularly throughout the year, in 2022 the charity held 5 such meetings. The number of the Directors who served during the year was 7 people, namely:

Mr Nicholas Kolarz (Chair)

Mr Hamish McArthur

Ms Vivian Wright

Mrs Tania Illingworth

Mrs Jane Jones

Mr Luke Montague

Mrs Iuliia Mesotitsch (ex-Treasurer, retired on 30th August 2022)

## Patron

HRH Prince Michael of Kent, GCVO

## UK Staff Member, freelancers and volunteers

Everyday management of the charity is delegated to one paid member of staff, the Executive Secretary Julia Ashmore, who reports to the Board of Directors. She is assisted by a number of volunteers and Sarah Gale, who helps with online fundraising on a freelance basis. Shiho Prevost, a reporting accountant on a freelance basis, joined the charity last September.

## Russian partner organisations

Our qualified and dedicated local partner charities in St Petersburg were:

"Physical Rehabilitation" (Primary State Registration Number: 1087800005150)

"Centre for parents - "Sunflower", (PSRN: 1097800001804)

"Early Intervention Institute" (PSRN: 117780000242)

"Communication Space" (PSRN: 1177700009123) in Moscow. In Karelia (in the northwest of Russia) we worked with ANO 'Development' and the Parish of Kondopoga.

We also worked with Association Mkurnali in Tbilisi, Georgia.

To ensure accountability to our donors, SGF continues to closely work with a freelance qualified accountant in St Petersburg, who provides an internal audit of the financial reports from our partner organisations.

## Find out more

Please contact Julia Ashmore if you have any comments or questions about our work: [julia@stgregorysfoundation.org.uk](mailto:julia@stgregorysfoundation.org.uk) or call 020 3372 4992.

Our website will tell you more about our work or how you can help St Gregory's Foundation [www.stgregorysfoundation.org.uk](http://www.stgregorysfoundation.org.uk)

Follow our Facebook, Instagram or Twitter pages for the most up to date news

[www.facebook.com/SaintGregs](http://www.facebook.com/SaintGregs)

[www.instagram.com/stgregorysfoundation/](http://www.instagram.com/stgregorysfoundation/)

[www.twitter.com/SaintGregsFound](http://www.twitter.com/SaintGregsFound)

or sign up to our mailing list on our website or by contacting Julia Ashmore.

## Make a donation

Visit our website or our Facebook page if you would like to give online. Otherwise, please send cheques payable to **The St Gregory's Foundation** to:

Vivian Wright, Acting Treasurer

62 Butler Road

Harrow HA1 4DR