WALES COUNCIL OF THE BLIND

England & Wales · Charity number 1045841

Details

Other names	VISION IN WALES, WALES COUNCIL FOR THE BLIND - CYNGOR CYMREIG Y DEILLION, WALES COUNCIL FOR THE BLIND - CYNGOR CYMRU I'R DEILLION, SOUTHERNDOWN CARE HOME
Status	Registered
Legal form	Charitable company
Company number	02578918
Registered	1995-04-18
Register	View on the Charity Commission register

Contact

Address	Wales Council Of The Blind Hastings House Fitzalan Place Cardiff CF24 0BL
Phone	02920473954
Email	owen@wcb-ccd.org.uk
Website	wcb-ccd.org.uk

Activities

Objects: TO PROMOTE THE WELFARE OF BLIND AND PARTIALLY SIGHTED PERSONS, AND THE PREVENTION OF BLINDNESS.

Activities: WCB is the umbrella agency in Wales representing blind and partially sighted people and the clubs and societies that support them. We gather the opinions and views of people with sight loss through groups and consultation. We put their voice at the centre of what we do, reporting their views to the people who are responsible for the services that help them. We signpost people to these services.

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Classification

- **How:** Provides Services, Provides Advocacy/advice/information, Sponsors Or Undertakes Research, Acts As An Umbrella Or Resource Body
- **What:** Disability
- **Who:** People With Disabilities

Geography

- **Area of benefit:** NOT DEFINED BUT IN PRACTICE WALES
- Throughout Wales

Finances

Period end	Income	Expenditure	Assets	Employees
2025-03-31	£205,919	£164,760	-	-
2024-03-31	£137,362	£157,211	-	-
2023-03-31	£128,777	£149,609	-	-
2022-03-31	£120,066	£149,472	-	-
2021-03-31	£160,807	£147,025	-	-

Trustees

Name	Role	Appointed
JANICE D POWERS	Chair	2013-01-21
BRIAN MAWBY		
Brian James Hobart		2015-08-18
Helen Simon		2023-11-06
JULIE THOMAS		2013-07-24
Malcolm John Nicholas		2023-11-06
Michelle Wall		2023-11-06
PETER CURTIS		
Rhianwen Elen Stiff		2019-04-25

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WALES COUNCIL OF THE BLIND

England & Wales - Charity number 1045841

Accounts

COMPANY REGISTRATION NUMBER: 02578918
CHARITY REGISTRATION NUMBER: 1045841

Wales Council of the Blind

Company Limited by Guarantee

Unaudited Financial Statements

31 March 2025

CARSTON ETL
Chartered accountants
1st Floor, Tudor House
16 Cathedral Road
Cardiff
CF11 9LJ

Wales Council of the Blind

Company Limited by Guarantee

Financial Statements

Year ended 31 March 2025

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Wales Council of the Blind

Company Limited by Guarantee

Trustees' Annual Report (Incorporating the Director's Report) *(continued)*

Year ended 31 March 2025

The trustees, who are also the directors for the purposes of company law, present their report and the unaudited financial statements of the charity for the year ended 31 March 2025.

Chair's report

I am delighted to report that Wales Council of the Blind has received an additional year of Welsh Government funding and is recognised as a key organisation here in Wales. We look forward to discussing future sustainable funding over the coming year.

WCB has a responsibility to bring the sector together. A great example of this is the work of the Wales Vision Forum in developing its website. This web resource contains useful information about looking after your eyes, what to do if you have difficulties with your eyesight, and the organisations that can support you. The Wales Vision Forum is an informal group of local, regional and national charities who have worked together to produce this resource.

Whether you just need to know about maintaining good eye health or need to understand more about significant eye problems, or talk to others with similar problems and concerns, this site will point you to the help you need. The site will also be used by our optometrists across Wales to signpost their patients to vision rehabilitation and to charities in your community. We hope that this will have direct benefit to our members as we should see an increase in referrals. We hope that this will increase membership to our local societies.

For many years, WCB has led on a series of reports highlighting the critical role of vision rehabilitation. I am especially proud to see this work progressing and that we now have coverage in all local authorities across Wales. More local authorities are recognising the need to train vision rehabilitation specialists, also known as Rehabilitation Officers for the Vision Impaired, with five qualifying this year and upwards of ten to be enrolled over the next two years.

The trustees are grateful to our staff and volunteers for all their work, and it is a real privilege to see first-hand the collaboration between our members. We continue to provide our core information services by providing a wealth of information to professionals and people with sight loss through Sylw, social media and Perspectif. I am particularly proud of the support we offer smaller local societies but remain concerned that their membership numbers are dwindling. We will explore reasons why and look to increase referrals through the new Wales Vision Forum website.

Finally, I would like to thank my fellow trustees for their work and support during this time.

Janice Powers
Chairperson

Wales Council of the Blind

Company Limited by Guarantee

Trustees' Annual Report (Incorporating the Director's Report) *(continued)*

Year ended 31 March 2025

Reference and administrative details

Registered charity name	Wales Council of the Blind	
Charity registration number	1045841	
Company registration number	02578918	
Principal office and registered office	Hastings House Fitzalan Place Unit 3.1 Cardiff CF24 0BL	
The trustees	Mr Peter Curtis Mr Brian Mawby Mrs Miriam Wright Ms Janice Powers Ms Julie Thomas Mr Brian J Hobart Dr Rhianwen Stiff Mrs Michelle Wall Mrs Helen Simon Mr Malcolm John Nicholas	(Retired 7 February 2025)
Company secretary	Owen J Williams	
Independent examiner	Farzana Ahmed FCCA Carston ETL 1st Floor, Tudor House 16 Cathedral Road Cardiff CF11 9LJ	

Wales Council of the Blind

Company Limited by Guarantee

Trustees' Annual Report (Incorporating the Director's Report) *(continued)*

Year ended 31 March 2025

Objectives and activities

Wales Council of the Blind's charitable objects are "to promote the welfare of blind and partially sighted persons, and the prevention of blindness".

Wales Council of the Blind (WCB) is the independent umbrella agency for vision impairment in Wales representing blind and partially sighted people and the clubs and societies who support them. Our independence enables us to act as an impartial observer, advocate, intermediary and evaluator for this complex, diverse group of organisations and services. In carrying out our charitable objectives, services to people with sight loss are improved.

We gather the opinions and views of people with sight loss through groups and consultation. We put their voice at the centre of what we do, reporting on their views to the people who are responsible for the services that help them. We also act as an agency to direct people to these services, giving them impartial advice and choice.

The trustees confirm that they complied with the duty in Section 4 of the Charities Act 2006 to have due regard for the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit.

Our work over the last year has focussed on three strategic priorities:
1) Information services
2) Network support
3) Service improvement

WCB upholds the following principles throughout our work:

- Beneficiaries first
- Integrity
- Openness
- Honesty
- Accountability
- Trust

Wales Council of the Blind

Company Limited by Guarantee

Trustees' Annual Report (Incorporating the Director's Report) *(continued)*

Year ended 31 March 2025

Achievements and performance

Information services

Wales Vision Forum Website

A major communications milestone this year is the development of the Wales Vision Forum (WVF) website, based on the Eye Care Support Pathway. It offers tailored resources for professionals and individuals with sight loss, aligned with specific stages of the pathway (e.g. hospital appointments, living well with sight loss). Resources are hosted on Perspectif, curated by the forum to ensure relevance and encourage further exploration. The site was announced at the Wales Eye Care Conference and went live in August 2025: www.walesvisionforum.org.uk.

Sylw Bulletin

Sylw is a weekly email bulletin, also available monthly in accessible formats. It is distributed to a total of 3,328 readers, including 452 who receive it in alternative formats. The bulletin reaches all eye clinics and now features a dedicated section for children and young people, supporting ongoing research into barriers to accessing Low Vision Service Wales (LVSW). "I love the new format including the section for Children and Young People (CYP), thank you!" - Parent

Perspectif Bulletin

This newsletter updates LVSW practitioners on database changes. Recent editions covered Certificate of Vision Impairment (CVI) and registration. Upcoming themes include community transport, loneliness and social isolation, and children and young people's engagement with LVSW.

Perspectif Information Portal

Perspectif is a searchable database of services, providers, resources, and events. Key features include:

- Keyword and postcode search
- Glossary with service links
- Events calendar
- Wales General Ophthalmic Services (WGOS) optometrist search
- Mobile-friendly contact links

Wales Council of the Blind

Company Limited by Guarantee

Trustees' Annual Report (Incorporating the Director's Report) *(continued)*

Year ended 31 March 2025

Developments in Perspectif

Loneliness and social isolation and children and young people.

Two research projects into Loneliness and Social Isolation and children and young people access to LVSW respectively have led to the creation of tailored entry points into the Wales Vision Forum website.

Quick Pathways by Health Board

A set of pages provide direct links to services by local health board area:

- Aneurin Bevan UHB
- Betsi Cadwaladr UHB
- Cardiff and Vale UHB
- Cwm Taf Morgannwg UHB
- Hywel Dda UHB
- Powys THB
- Swansea Bay UHB

Training Module

A training module for using Perspectif has been created and is available online: Perspectif How-To Guide.

5)LVSW Signposting Project

LVSW-accredited optometrists are listed on Perspectif, filling the gap left by the discontinued Wales Eye Care Service website. NHS 111 is expected to list practices soon. We are hoping to add mobile providers of Wales General Ophthalmic Services (WGOS) 1 (Eye Examination / Sight Test) and WGOS 2 (Examinations for urgent eye problems). Presentations have been made to optometrists across Wales to promote Perspectif.

LVSW Domiciliary Services

Only 27 LVSW providers currently offer domiciliary assessments across Wales - a significant drop due to:

1. Services not resuming post-pandemic

2. Practitioner retirements

3. Optometry reform making home visits unfeasible

Perspectif has been updated to reflect this.

"When I show patients Perspectif - it has transformed their lives." - LVSW Practitioner.

Wales Council of the Blind

Company Limited by Guarantee

Trustees' Annual Report (Incorporating the Director's Report) *(continued)*

Year ended 31 March 2025

CVI Leaflets and Perspectif Referrals

Two CVI leaflets now refer patients to Perspectif:

1. **'Support for Parents and Families of Children with Vision Impairments'** - sent with CVI letters to families.

2. **'What next? Your guide to Dry AMD and finding advice, information and support'** - distributed to patients with CVI(W) in primary care.

These have led to increased enquiries.

WVF members agreed that WCB's telephone number and support webpage will be the only contact in the revised **CVI patient leaflet** updated as part of Optometry Reform.

These leaflets can be found on WCBs Perspectif portal.

Social Prescribing

As part of Optometry Contract Reform, a social prescribing document was created. Resources, including Perspectif, are now linked from the NHS 'Eye Care Wales' website. The aim is to support holistic care across conditions. Perspectif is recognised as the sector's central access point and will be referenced in WGOS4 patient guides and the Eye Care Support Pathway resource on the WVF website. Leaflets with QR codes will help patients access relevant services easily.

Communications and Media

- **Social Media:** Facebook and Instagram remain active; Twitter/X is no longer actively used.
- **Accessible Media:** Materials are produced in large print and audio formats.
- **Distribution:** Newsletters and papers are produced sent to the members of several local organisations, including Visual Impairment Merthyr Tydfil, Visual Impairment Breconshire, Radnorshire Association for the Blind, Ceredigion Association for the Blind, and the Macular Society.
- **Partnerships:** Accessible materials have also been produced for the Royal Society for Blind Children.

Network Support

Wales Vision Forum

Wales Council of the Blind has a responsibility to bring the sector together through various forums. Many of these are managed by WCB.

WCB chairs and manages the Wales Vision Forum, bringing together local, regional and national sight loss organisations to share best practice, coordinate efforts, and reduce duplication. Themed meetings covered transport, employment, optometry reform, and more.

The Forum advocated for simplified Companion Bus Pass eligibility. Awarding a Companion Pass to anyone who has a certificate of vision impairment would remove any requirement to "assess" an individual's situation and allow them to choose whether or not they need a companion for each journey. This is in line with the Social Model of Disability, which is endorsed by Welsh Government, and our commitment to social inclusion. In addition, official notification from DVLA that an individual can no longer drive, would be sufficient.

Task & Finish Groups

1. **Optometry/Ophthalmology Reform:** Ensures patient concerns are voiced at Eye Care Collaboration Groups and Welsh Government led committees.

   Primary Care Needs Assessments: WCB contributed third sector and Vision Rehabilitation data to each Health Board.

   Third sector organisations are ideally placed to maintain patient wellbeing while the patient is awaiting monitoring, treatment and surgical appointments. They can help maximise independence and confidence to keep people living well at home, reducing the demand on unscheduled care services.

   A high volume of secondary eye clinic referrals into the third sector will come via Eye Care Liaison Officers, embedded within clinics. In primary care, WGOS3 low vision optometrists are trained to identify patient needs and have knowledge of the services available to patients.

2. **The Wales Eye Care Support Pathway and signposting to the third sector through WGOS4:** WGOS4 optometrists have guidance to signpost into services depending on answers to a short sequence of questions. WCB is leading on work to create a sector-wide website that will include a landing page for WGOS4 patients, along with a web resource to signpost patients to third sector services and support, vision rehabilitation, low vision, and other resources (see above).

Wales Council of the Blind

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Trustees' Annual Report (Incorporating the Director's Report) *(continued)*

Year ended 31 March 2025

3. **Vision Rehabilitation:** This group has met more frequently as we sought opinion on our report 'Recognising the role of the Vision Rehabilitation Specialist' and possible funding ideas for future work (see section on service improvement below). We continue to update progress on the good practice guidelines through the main forum meeting and will meet in May to discuss Social Care Wales' consultation on revising their practice guidance for the Codes of Professional Practice.

   WCB and Guide Dogs meet regularly to advance this work.

WCB's Director provides monthly updates to National Clinical Leads on the work of the forum.

WCB also chairs the Welsh Government's Patient Eye Health Advisory Group, which advises on WGOS standards, service development, population needs, and communications. Meetings are held quarterly with broad representation across sectors.

WCB participates in the Ophthalmology Clinical Implementation Network (CIN) and Eye Care Collaboration Groups (ECCGs), collaborating with RNIB and NHS leaders to address patient concerns. In March, WCB and WVF members presented evidence to the Health and Social Care Committee Inquiry into Ophthalmology Services in Wales, focusing on:

1. **Strategy:** Support for regional centres of excellence, with calls for clear funding, timelines, and accountability.

2. **Patient Experience:** Emphasis on lived experiences, including delays in treatment and communication.

3. **Safety:** Highlighted injection delays.

4. **Workforce & Infrastructure:** Stressed the need for adequate staffing and transport for patients.

5. **Digital Transformation:** Urged fast-tracking of a national Electronic Patient Record (EPR) to streamline referrals, reduce repetition, and improve clinician capacity.

6. **Health Inequalities:** Called for urgent funding and development of equitable services.

WCB and RNIB also raised concerns about transport access for patients with sight loss, recommending that Non-Emergency Patient Transport Service eligibility be expanded to include vision impairment.

Wales Council of the Blind

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Trustees' Annual Report (Incorporating the Director's Report) *(continued)*

Year ended 31 March 2025

Geographic Atrophy Pilot

WCB attended a Senedd roundtable on the challenges of Geographic Atrophy (GA) in Wales. With 5,000 patients potentially needing 30,000 injections annually, concerns were raised about the limited number of trained injectors. Clinicians support an NHS-led service but stressed the need for planning.

WCB wrote to the Cabinet Secretary to ask:

- How increased referrals will be managed
- What steps are being taken to prepare for new GA treatments
- How timely injections will be ensured, given current delays with Wet AMD

Concerns continue to be raised via the CIN.

Visionary and Other Networks

WCB represents Wales on Visionary's UK forum, attending four meetings and sharing updates with Welsh members. Local societies contribute to WVF discussions and receive free Visionary membership. WCB's Director stepped down as Chair but remains a trustee and helped appoint a new Welsh representative.

WCB also participates in multiple networks to ensure the voice of people with sight loss is heard, including:

Wales Rehabilitation Officers Forum.

- Disability Equality Forum and Disability Rights Taskforce.
- ECCGs (Hywel Dda, Cardiff & Vale).
- SENCOM Partnership Board that looks at service improvement for children and young people in education across Gwent.
- Ophthalmology Clinical Implementation Network (CIN).
- Children and Young People Partnership meeting.
- Patient Advisory Group.
- Hospital to Community: the value to stakeholders of community low vision optometrists and providing certification of vision impairment in cases of dry age-related macular degeneration.
- ASSIST project steering group (supporting older people with vision impairment).

Wales Council of the Blind

Company Limited by Guarantee

Trustees' Annual Report (Incorporating the Director's Report) *(continued)*

Year ended 31 March 2025

Supporting Local Organisations

WCB visited five volunteer-led groups and continues to support local societies through:

- Committee participation and governance support.
- Accessible media and newsletters.
- Website management for Ceredigion Association for the Blind, and WROF.

Perspectif

WCB maintains the Perspectif portal, ensuring services and contacts are up to date. It's listed on the Eye Care Wales website and used by LVSW practitioners.

Regional Forum

Our Regional forum in West Wales, provide a platform for individuals with sight loss to share views and influence WCB's agenda. 2 meetings were held, and the following topics were discussed:

Sight Loss Councils

WCB is introducing Thomas Pocklington Trust Sight Loss Council in Wales. A part-time post has been advertised, and local action groups will feed into the council as part of a two-year pilot.

Health Board Update

WCB shared updates on Optometry Reform, including a case where an independent prescriber provided timely treatment for macular degeneration. Feedback from Ceredigion highlighted strong collaboration between VRS and LVSW practitioners.

Service Feedback and Improvements

Sensory Loss Checklist

Our West Wales group reviewed Hywel Dda's Sensory Loss Friendly Self-Assessment Checklist and expressed interest in reestablishing a sensory loss group in West Wales.

Guide Dogs

Concerns were raised about declining service quality, fewer dogs being trained, and long wait times.

Wales Council of the Blind

Company Limited by Guarantee

Trustees' Annual Report (Incorporating the Director's Report) *(continued)*

Year ended 31 March 2025

Low Vision Service

The group discussed outdated magnifiers. WCB will inform LVSW recipients about equipment return/recycling options and is working with LVSW on a scheme for returning aids through 'Articles for the Blind'.

Secondary Care Experiences

Users reported:

- Glangwili Hospital stops answering calls after 12pm
- No artificial eye service in Pembrokeshire (patients must travel to Cardiff)
- Poor communication around appointments and waiting lists

Loneliness and Isolation

WCB shared the Wales Vision Forum website as a resource to help reduce social isolation among people with sight loss. It supports collaboration, service planning, and access to inclusive environments.

Primary Care Update

The group received updates on WGOS community services. Members shared positive experiences with high street opticians, including LVSW and independent prescribing.

Service Improvement

Vision Rehabilitation Workforce

WCB's report 'Addressing a Workforce Crisis in Wales' highlights a growing crisis: demand for Vision Rehabilitation Specialists (VRS) is rising due to an ageing population, yet in recent years, we have seen a decline in the Vision Rehabilitation Specialist workforce needed to provide the right level of support to this growing cohort. Due to the system being under-resourced, too many blind and partially sighted people are not receiving vision rehabilitation support in a timely manner. This shortfall in support increases the pressure on other services in health and social care, and many local authorities have no clear plans for workforce renewal. WCB, working with members of the WVF, has published a report 'Recognising the role of the Vision Rehabilitation Specialist'.

The Wales Vision Forum is calling for Welsh Government to ensure all blind and partially sighted people can access the support they need to live life to the full. Adequate social care is fundamental to well-being, and for people with the sight loss it is about thriving, not just surviving. We need national oversight of services to ensure they are consistently delivered to the required standard.

WCB received funding to:

1. **Review Good Practice Guidelines** - aligning with national standards and adding sections on commissioning and transition

2. **Develop a Vision Rehabilitation Charter** - outlining service expectations, including rehabilitation

3. **Explore Regulation** - scoping what formal regulation could look like in Wales

Presentations on the scarcity of rehabilitation workers were delivered to the Directors of Social Services and at the Wales Eye Care Conference.

Recruitment is challenging due to limited training availability - only one university offers the qualification. WCB was asked to draft a business plan for national VRS provision. The plan outlined training needs but leaves hiring decisions to local authorities. An all-Wales post is proposed to lead on assessments, outcome measures, referrals, supervision and mentoring.

Campaigning and Strategic Work

We are collaborating with RNIB and WROF on an RNIB campaign for timely access to rehabilitation, sharing case studies and offering strategic input.

Wales Council of the Blind

Company Limited by Guarantee

Trustees' Annual Report (Incorporating the Director's Report) *(continued)*

Year ended 31 March 2025

Welsh Rehabilitation Officers Forum

WCB continues to support WROF, providing secretariat support. WCB's Director is also the Treasurer. WROF held quarterly meetings and endorsed the need to refresh good practice guidelines at its July AGM.

Referral Pathways

WCB received RNIB funding to develop a Wales-specific Eye Care Support Pathway, highlighting LVSW. WVF members contributed to the WGOS4 patient guide and booklet. The pathway will be integrated into a new website (www.walesvisionforum.org.uk), dynamically linked to Perspectif. QR codes on leaflets will guide patients to relevant pages, with anonymous tracking of engagement.

A Steering Group will oversee the site, which supports WGOS4 and WGOS5 third sector referral requirements.

Research Projects

1. Loneliness and Isolation (Apr 2024 - Mar 2025)

Funded by the Vision Foundation, this study explores how LVSW practitioners identify and manage loneliness and social isolation in patients with sight loss.

The output of our study will be;

i. Recommendations for methods of identifying loneliness and isolation in people who access the LVSW.

ii. A proposed resource package for LVSW practitioners in the management of people at risk of loneliness and isolation who access the LVSW.

iii. A published report in peer reviewed journals, shared with stakeholders and Welsh Government.

47 practitioners have completed questionnaires; data analysis is underway. Post-research, WCB will consult users and organisations to shape Perspectif improvements.

2. Children and Young People Accessing LVSW (Aug 2024 - Jul 2026)

Funded by the Powell Family Foundation, this project will consist of two interlinked streams of work:

1) Development of the Perspectif portal to meet the needs of children, their families and professionals in finding support from which they would benefit.

2) A research project 'exploring the barriers for children accessing the low vision service Wales'.

Pending ethical approval, the study will begin with baseline data analysis, followed by interviews and focus groups with children, families, educators, VRSs, habilitation specialists, and optometrists.

Broadly, topics covered will include:

- knowledge of the LVSW;
- experience of the LVSW;
- experience of having accessed or having been signposted to support services;
- perceived barriers and enablers for children accessing the LVSW;
- and possible interventions to improve access to the service.

The learning from these results will:

1. be used to design and implement interventions with the aim of increasing access to the LVSW for children.

2. further inform the development of the Perspectif portal.

Both research projects will promote the continued use of Perspectif, and the broad range of support and services provided by the third sector on Wales.

Wales Eye Care Conference 2024

The theme this year was Eye Health Care in Wales: new service models and patient experiences.

133 people attended. A keynote speech came from Jeremy Miles MS, Cabinet Secretary for Health and Social Care.

Wales Council of the Blind

Company Limited by Guarantee

Trustees' Annual Report (Incorporating the Director's Report) *(continued)*

Year ended 31 March 2025

Financial review

With the ending of the financial year, the board of trustees report a year-end surplus ~~financial position~~ of £64,816 (2024: deficit £11,005). Welsh Government funding has continued throughout the year.

WCB reserves policy is fully met and we have sufficient funds to plan for the future.

Unrestricted funds at year-end were £235,727 (2024: £212,069) with free reserves of £ 35,159 (2024: £18,877).

Investment Policy

Under articles of association the charity has the power to make any investment which the trustees see fit. The present policy is to keep an amount that represents short term operating requirements in liquid deposits (bank deposit accounts) and place the balance in the hands of a professional investment broker, to invest in wide range of fixed interest and equity funds. During the period 2015/16 the charity invested £200,000 with Quilter Cheviot as part of a Discretionary Managed Portfolio at a lower to medium tolerance of risk. WCB's investment objective is to grow the capital of the portfolio, as well as generating some degree of income. At the year-end WCB's managed portfolio was valued at £196,150. This was a net gain of £5,804 on the previous year. This will continue to be invested.

Reserves Policy

The Trustees have considered carefully the purpose of any reserves Wales Council of the Blind has or might have in the future. The stated aim of the reserves policy is to allow for unforeseeable events. This could be anything from replacing essential office equipment, to the sudden loss of funding. The amount should be sufficient to pay for staff redundancies and outstanding liabilities.

Reserves should be maintained at a level of 6 months operating costs of the core organisation. In addition, we may need to recognise any longer-term grant / project commitments and to settle the finances accordingly. Reserves should exclude funding that has been restricted for other specified use. Reserves should be invested in a safe, low risk environment that maintains the capital invested and where possible provides a level of return on those funds.

The policy is reviewed annually by Trustees, or more frequently as necessary.

Wales Council of the Blind

Company Limited by Guarantee

Trustees' Annual Report (Incorporating the Director's Report) *(continued)*

Year ended 31 March 2025

Plans for future periods

WCB received Welsh Government funding of £150,000 for this period and has been awarded an indicative grant for the following year 2025/26 of up to £105,000. We will produce a final report on our loneliness and social isolation project funded by the Vision Foundation and drawdown a final payment of £2,821.20. We were also awarded a 2-year grant to carryout research that will enable more children to access Low Vision Service Wales. This entails research to identify the barriers and creating an accessible online resource through Perspectif via the new Wales Vision Forum website. The grant for 2025/26 is £28,597.

We are a partner in a Wales-wide project led by the Royal Society for Blind Children called 'Eye Connect Cymru'. The project provides vision impaired children and young people and their families with a range of support and activities across Wales. WCB will receive a grant for 2025/26 of £7,725. WCB will lead on establishing a Sight Loss Council for Wales and receive a grant of £45,000 from Thomas Pocklington Trust. We will appoint a Sight Loss Council Engagement Manager, and the project should begin in July.

Structure, governance and management

Governing Document

The organisation is a charitable company limited by guarantee and as such is governed by a Memorandum and Articles of Association. The company was incorporated on 31 January 1991 under the Companies Act 1985 and registered as a charity on 18 April 1995.

Recruitment and Appointment of the Management Committee

The directors of the company also serve as trustees of the charity and under the company's Articles are known as members of the Management Committee. Trustees are appointed annually at the Annual General Meeting. Casual vacancies are filled by the Management Committee and ratified at the next Annual General Meeting.

Each member of the Management Committee has agreed to guarantee the company's debts for the amount of £1 each.

All new Trustees are given induction training via the issuing of our organisational policy and procedures book and WCB offers to arrange for Trustees to have the opportunity to attend Trustee training provided by Wales Council for Voluntary Action (WCVA) should they wish. Trustees are able to contact the Council's secretary if they wish to have specific advice or guidance on any policies or procedures. WCB provides Trustees with indemnity insurance to the value of £500,000.

Wales Council of the Blind

Company Limited by Guarantee

Trustees' Annual Report (Incorporating the Director's Report) *(continued)*

Year ended 31 March 2025

The staff and volunteers

Owen Williams is the Director at Wales Council of the Blind. He provides senior management to WCB and helps plan and deliver strategic direction to the sector.

Richard Bowers is our Communications Officer, and he manages WCB's communications and has developed and updates 'Perspectif, our online information portal.

Our Engagement Officer, Rebecca Phillips, facilitates and organises the Regional Steering Groups, as well as enables the voice of people with sight loss to be heard.

WCB has a dedicated team of volunteers who we would like to thank, providing invaluable support to the organisation around information gathering, keeping our database up-to-date and updating our social media feed, collating the material for newsletters, providing help with fundraising, answering the telephone, and providing advice. Thank you, Ann, Dewi, Alan and Valmai for your continued support. We would also like to thank Bethan Smale our bookkeeper for all of her hard work.

Small company provisions

This report has been prepared in accordance with the provisions applicable to companies entitled to the small companies exemption.

The trustees' annual report was approved on 17th December 2025 and signed on behalf of the board of trustees by:

..... Signed

Trustee Name: Janice Powers

Wales Council of the Blind

Company Limited by Guarantee

Independent Examiner's Report to the Trustees of Wales Council of the Blind

Year ended 31 March 2025

I report to the trustees on my examination of the financial statements of Wales Council of the Blind ('the charity') for the year ended 31 March 2025.

Responsibilities and basis of report

As the charity trustees of the company (and also its directors for the purposes of company law) you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006 ('the 2006 Act').

Having satisfied myself that the accounts of the company are not required to be audited under Part 16 of the 2006 Act and are eligible for independent examination, I report in respect of my examination of your company's accounts as carried out under section 145 of the Charities Act 2011 ('the 2011 Act'). In carrying out my examination I have followed the Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the 2011 Act.

Independent examiner's statement

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination giving me cause to believe that in any material respect:

1. accounting records were not kept in respect of the company as required by section 386 of the 2006 Act; or
2. the accounts do not accord with those records; or
3. the accounts do not comply with the accounting requirements of section 396 of the 2006 Act other than any requirement that the accounts give a 'true and fair view' which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination; or
4. the accounts have not been prepared in accordance with the methods and principles of the Statement of Recommended Practice for accounting and reporting by charities.

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

Farzana Ahmed FCCA
Independent Examiner
1st Floor, Tudor House
16 Cathedral Road
Cardiff
CF11 9LJ
Dated: 17/12/2025

Wales Council of the Blind

Company Limited by Guarantee

Statement of Financial Activities
(including income and expenditure account)

Year ended 31 March 2025

	Note	Unrestricted funds £	2025 Restricted funds £	**Total funds £**	2024 Total funds £
Income and endowments					
Donations and legacies	**5**	19,437	205,919	**225,356**	131,956
Investment income	**6**	4,423	–	**4,423**	5,406
Total income		23,860	205,919	**229,779**	137,362
Expenditure					
Expenditure on raising funds:					
Costs of other trading activities	**7**	642	–	**642**	848
Investment management costs	**8**	2,727	–	**2,727**	3,647
Expenditure on charitable activities	**9,10**	941	164,760	**165,702**	152,716
Total expenditure		4,310	164,760	**169,071**	157,211
Net gains on investments	**12**	4,108	–	**4,108**	8,844
Net income/(expenditure) and net movement in funds		23,658	41,159	**64,816**	(11,005)
Reconciliation of funds					
Total funds brought forward		212,069	–	**212,069**	223,074
Total funds carried forward		235,727	41,159	**276,886**	212,069

The statement of financial activities includes all gains and losses recognised in the year.
All income and expenditure derive from continuing activities.

Wales Council of the Blind

Company Limited by Guarantee

Statement of Financial Position

31 March 2025

	Note	2025 £	2025 £	2024 £	2024 £
Fixed assets					
Tangible fixed assets	18		4,417		2,846
Investments	19		196,150		190,346
			200,567		193,192
Current assets					
Debtors	20	23,444		3,822	
Cash at bank and in hand		59,066		20,650	
		82,510		24,472	
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	21	6,191		5,595	
Net current assets			76,319		18,877
Total assets less current liabilities			276,886		212,069
Net assets			276,886		212,069
Funds of the charity					
Restricted funds			41,159		–
Unrestricted funds			235,727		212,069
Total charity funds	23		276,886		212,069

For the year ending 31 March 2025 the charity was entitled to exemption from audit under section 477 of the Companies Act 2006 relating to small companies.

Directors' responsibilities:

- The members have not required the company to obtain an audit of its financial statements for the year in question in accordance with section 476;
- The directors acknowledge their responsibilities for complying with the requirements of the Act with respect to accounting records and the preparation of financial statements.

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

The statement of financial position
continues on the following page.
The notes on pages 22 to 35 form part of these financial statements.

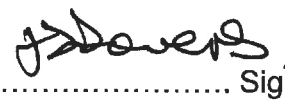
Wales Council of the Blind

Company Limited by Guarantee

Statement of Financial Position *(continued)*

31 March 2025

These financial statements were approved by the board of trustees and authorised for issue on 17th December 2025, and are signed on behalf of the board by:



..... Signed

Trustee Name: Janice Powers

..... Signed

Trustee Name: Brian Hobart

Company registration number: 02578918

Wales Council of the Blind

Company Limited by Guarantee

Notes to the Financial Statements

Year ended 31 March 2025

1. General information

The charity is a public benefit entity and a private company limited by guarantee, registered in England & Wales and a registered charity in England and Wales. The address of the registered office is Hastings House, Fitzalan Place, Unit 3.1, Cardiff, CF24 0BL.

2. Statement of compliance

These financial statements have been prepared in compliance with FRS 102, 'The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and the Republic of Ireland', the Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (Charities SORP (FRS 102)) and the Companies Act 2006.

3. Accounting policies

Basis of preparation

The financial statements have been prepared on the historical cost basis, as modified by the revaluation of certain financial assets and liabilities and investment properties measured at fair value through income or expenditure.

The financial statements are prepared in sterling, which is the functional currency of the entity.

Going concern

After making reasonable enquiries and having considered the impact of the economic downturn and other factors on the financial performance of the charity and its current performance, the Trustee's believe that the charity will be able to continue to fulfil its charitable purpose, will be able to meet its liabilities as they fall due, and will have adequate resources to continue in operational existence for the foreseeable future. Accordingly, the trustees continue to adopt the going concern basis in preparing the financial statements

Judgements and key sources of estimation uncertainty

The preparation of the financial statements requires management to make judgements, estimates and assumptions that affect the amounts reported. These estimates and judgements are continually reviewed and are based on experience and other factors, including expectations of future events that are believed to be reasonable under the circumstances.

Wales Council of the Blind

Company Limited by Guarantee

Notes to the Financial Statements *(continued)*

Year ended 31 March 2025

3. Accounting policies *(continued)*

Fund accounting

Unrestricted funds are available for use at the discretion of the trustees in furtherance of the purposes of the charity. Unrestricted funds include a revaluation reserve representing the restatement of investment assets at market values.

Designated funds are unrestricted funds earmarked by the trustees for specific purposes.

Restricted funds are subjected to restrictions on their expenditure imposed by the donor.

Incoming resources

All incoming resources are included in the statement of financial activities when entitlement has passed to the charity; it is probable that the economic benefits associated with the transaction will flow to the charity and the amount can be reliably measured. The following specific policies are applied to particular categories of income:

- income from donations or grants is recognised when there is evidence of entitlement to the gift, receipt is probable, and its amount can be measured reliably.

- legacy income is recognised when receipt is probable and entitlement is established.

- income from donated goods is measured at the fair value of the goods unless this is impractical to measure reliably, in which case the value is derived from the cost to the donor or the estimated resale value. Donated facilities and services are recognised in the accounts when received if the value can be reliably measured. No amounts are included for the contribution of general volunteers.

- income from contracts for the supply of services is recognised with the delivery of the contracted service. This is classified as unrestricted funds unless there is a contractual requirement for it to be spent on a particular purpose and returned if unspent, in which case it may be regarded as restricted.

Wales Council of the Blind

Company Limited by Guarantee

Notes to the Financial Statements *(continued)*

Year ended 31 March 2025

3. Accounting policies *(continued)*

Resources expended

Expenditure is recognised on an accruals basis as a liability is incurred. Expenditure includes any VAT which cannot be fully recovered, and is classified under headings of the statement of financial activities to which it relates:

- expenditure on raising funds includes the costs of all fundraising activities, events, non-charitable trading activities, and the sale of donated goods.
- expenditure on charitable activities includes all costs incurred by a charity in undertaking activities that further its charitable aims for the benefit of its beneficiaries, including those support costs and costs relating to the governance of the charity apportioned to charitable activities.
- other expenditure includes all expenditure that is neither related to raising funds for the charity nor part of its expenditure on charitable activities.

All costs are allocated to expenditure categories reflecting the use of the resource. Direct costs attributable to a single activity are allocated directly to that activity. Shared costs are apportioned between the activities they contribute to on a reasonable, justifiable and consistent basis.

Tangible assets

All fixed assets are initially recorded at cost. Fixed assets are not capitalised where the cost is below £100.

Depreciation

Depreciation is calculated so as to write off the cost or valuation of an asset, less its residual value, over the useful economic life of that asset as follows:

Office equipment	-	25% reducing balance

Investments

Unlisted equity investments are initially recorded at cost, and subsequently measured at fair value. If fair value cannot be reliably measured, assets are measured at cost less impairment.

Listed investments are measured at fair value with changes in fair value being recognised in income or expenditure.

Wales Council of the Blind

Company Limited by Guarantee

Notes to the Financial Statements *(continued)*

Year ended 31 March 2025

3. Accounting policies *(continued)*

Debtors and creditors receivable/ payable within one year

Debtors and creditors with no stated interest rate and receivable or payable within one year are recorded at transaction price. Any losses arising from impairment are recognised in expenditure.

Financial instruments

A financial asset or a financial liability is recognised only when the entity becomes a party to the contractual provisions of the instrument. Basic financial instruments are initially recognised at the amount receivable or payable including any related transaction costs, unless the arrangement constitutes a financing transaction, where it is recognised at the present value of the future payments discounted at a market rate of interest for a similar debt instrument. Current assets and current liabilities are subsequently measured at the cash or other consideration expected to be paid or received and not discounted. Debt instruments are subsequently measured at amortised cost. Where investments in shares or preference shares are publicly traded or their fair value can otherwise be measured reliably, the investment is subsequently measured at fair value with changes in fair value recognised in income and expenditure. All other such investments are subsequently measured at cost less impairment.

Defined contribution plans

Contributions to defined contribution plans are recognised as an expense in the period in which the related service is provided. Prepaid contributions are recognised as an asset to the extent that the prepayment will lead to a reduction in future payments or a cash refund.

4. Limited by guarantee

Each member of the Board of Trustees has undertaken to guarantee the Council's debts to the sum of £1 each.

Wales Council of the Blind

Company Limited by Guarantee

Notes to the Financial Statements *(continued)*

Year ended 31 March 2025

5. Donations and legacies

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	**Total Funds 2025 £**
Donations			
Donations and bequests	2,314	–	**2,314**
Grants			
Welsh Government	–	150,000	**150,000**
Local Authority grants	3,018	–	**3,018**
Wales Council for Voluntary Action	983	–	**983**
Thomas Pocklington Trust	–	–	**–**
Vision Foundation - Fight for Sight	–	28,212	**28,212**
The Powell Family Foundation	–	27,707	**27,707**
Other donations and legacies			
Other income	13,122	–	**13,122**
	19,437	205,919	**225,356**

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total Funds 2024 £
Donations			
Donations and bequests	3,978	–	3,978
Grants			
Welsh Government	–	105,000	105,000
Local Authority grants	1,485	–	1,485
Wales Council for Voluntary Action	875	–	875
Thomas Pocklington Trust	–	5,756	5,756
Vision Foundation - Fight for Sight	–	–	–
The Powell Family Foundation	–	–	–
Other donations and legacies			
Other income	14,862	–	14,862
	21,200	110,756	131,956

Wales Council of the Blind

Company Limited by Guarantee

Notes to the Financial Statements *(continued)*

Year ended 31 March 2025

6. Investment income

	Unrestricted Funds £	**Total Funds 2025 £**	Unrestricted Funds £	Total Funds 2024 £
Income from listed investments	4,423	**4,423**	5,406	5,406

7. Costs of other trading activities

	Unrestricted Funds £	**Total Funds 2025 £**	Unrestricted Funds £	Total Funds 2024 £
Fundraising costs	642	**642**	848	848

8. Investment management costs

	Unrestricted Funds £	**Total Funds 2025 £**	Unrestricted Funds £	Total Funds 2024 £
Portfolio management	2,727	**2,727**	3,647	3,647

9. Expenditure on charitable activities by fund type

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	**Total Funds 2025 £**
Promoting Welfare	824	143,752	**144,576**
Support costs	117	21,008	**21,126**
	941	164,760	**165,702**

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total Funds 2024 £
Promoting Welfare	21,319	110,756	132,075
Support costs	20,641	–	20,641
	41,960	110,756	152,716

Wales Council of the Blind

Company Limited by Guarantee

Notes to the Financial Statements *(continued)*

Year ended 31 March 2025

10. Expenditure on charitable activities by activity type

	Activities undertaken directly £	Support costs £	**Total funds 2025 £**	Total fund 2024 £
Promoting Welfare	144,576	17,193	**161,769**	149,118
Governance costs	–	3,933	**3,933**	3,598
	144,576	21,126	**165,702**	152,716

11. Analysis of support costs

	Analysis of support costs £	**Total 2025 £**	Total 2024 £
Staff costs	14,683	**14,683**	14,264
General office	2,510	**2,510**	2,780
Governance costs	3,933	**3,933**	3,598
	21,126	**21,126**	20,642

12. Net gains on investments

	Unrestricted Funds £	**Total Funds 2025 £**	Unrestricted Funds £	Total Funds 2024 £
Gains/(losses) on listed investments	4,108	**4,108**	8,844	8,844

13. Net income/(expenditure)

Net income/(expenditure) is stated after charging/(crediting):

	2025 £	2024 £
Depreciation of tangible fixed assets	**1,129**	799

Wales Council of the Blind

Company Limited by Guarantee

Notes to the Financial Statements *(continued)*

Year ended 31 March 2025

14. Independent examination fees

	2025	2024
	£	£
Fees payable to the independent examiner for:		
Independent examination of the financial statements	**2,520**	2,520

15. Staff costs

The total staff costs and employee benefits for the reporting period are analysed as follows:

	2025	2024
	£	£
Wages and salaries	**118,944**	114,347
Social security costs	**7,648**	7,014
Employer contributions to pension plans	**5,360**	3,255
	131,952	124,616

The average head count of employees during the year was 3 (2024: 3). The average number of full-time equivalent employees during the year is analysed as follows:

	2025	2024
	No.	No.
Project staff	**3**	3

No employee received employee benefits of more than £60,000 during the year (2024: Nil).

Key Management Personnel

Key management personnel include all persons that have authority and responsibility for planning, directing and controlling the activities of the charity. The total compensation paid to key management personnel for services provided to the charity was £45,634 (2024:£43,560).

16. Trustee remuneration and expenses

No remuneration or other benefits from employment with the charity or a related entity were received by the trustees.

All trustees are entitled to claim reimbursement of the cost of attending meetings, no trustees were reimbursed during the year (2024: £nil) for travelling costs to attend meetings.

Wales Council of the Blind

Company Limited by Guarantee

Notes to the Financial Statements *(continued)*

Year ended 31 March 2025

17. Transfers between funds

Designated funds of £12,500 were transferred to the general fund during the year.

18. Tangible fixed assets

	Equipment £	**Total £**
Cost		
At 1 April 2024	28,118	**28,118**
Additions	2,700	**2,700**
At 31 March 2025	30,818	**30,818**
Depreciation		
At 1 April 2024	25,272	**25,272**
Charge for the year	1,129	**1,129**
At 31 March 2025	26,401	**26,401**
Carrying amount		
At 31 March 2025	4,417	**4,417**
At 31 March 2024	2,846	2,846

19. Investments

	Cash or cash equivalents £	Listed investments £	**Total £**
Cost or valuation			
At 1 April 2024	10,266	180,080	**190,346**
Additions	41,638	36,404	**78,042**
Disposals	(39,131)	(35,997)	**(75,128)**
Fair value movements	–	2,890	**2,890**
At 31 March 2025	12,773	183,377	**196,150**
Impairment			
At 1 April 2024 and 31 March 2025			**–**
Carrying amount			
At 31 March 2025	12,773	183,377	**196,150**
At 31 March 2024	10,266	180,080	190,346

Wales Council of the Blind

Company Limited by Guarantee

Notes to the Financial Statements *(continued)*

Year ended 31 March 2025

19. Investments *(continued)*

All investments shown above are held at valuation.

Listed investments
The aggregate market value of listed investments is £183,377 (2024: £180,080) and the stock exchange value is £183,377 (2024: £180,080).

Financial assets held at fair value

Investments are stated at fair value at the balance sheet date, listed investments are stated at the stock exchange values at the year end. Other investments are valued based on investment performance.

The historical cost of investments at the year end date is £203,504 (2024: £215,588).

20. Debtors

	2025	2024
	£	£
Trade debtors	19,351	2,550
Prepayments and accrued income	1,272	1,272
Other debtors	2,821	–
	23,444	3,822

21. Creditors: amounts falling due within one year

	2025	2024
	£	£
Trade creditors	133	146
Accruals and deferred income	2,760	2,520
Social security and other taxes	2,917	2,929
Other creditors	381	–
	6,191	5,595

22. Pensions and other post retirement benefits

Defined contribution plans

The amount recognised in income or expenditure as an expense in relation to defined contribution plans was £5,360 (2024: £3,255).

Wales Council of the Blind

Company Limited by Guarantee

Notes to the Financial Statements *(continued)*

Year ended 31 March 2025

23. Analysis of charitable funds

Unrestricted funds

	At 1 Apr 2024	Income	Expenditure	Transfers	Gains and losses	**At 31 Mar 2025**
	£	£	£	£	£	**£**
General funds	199,569	23,860	(4,310)	12,500	4,108	**235,727**
Designated Fund	12,500	–	–	(12,500)	–	**–**
	212,069	23,860	(4,310)	–	4,108	**235,727**

	At 1 Apr 2023	Income	Expenditure	Transfers	Gains and losses	At 31 Mar 2024
	£	£	£	£	£	£
General funds	210,574	26,606	(46,455)	–	8,844	199,569
Designated Fund	12,500	–	–	–	–	12,500
	223,074	26,606	(46,455)	–	8,844	212,069

Wales Council of the Blind

Company Limited by Guarantee

Notes to the Financial Statements *(continued)*

Year ended 31 March 2025

23. Analysis of charitable funds *(continued)*

Restricted funds

	At 1 Apr 2024 £	Income £	Expenditure £	Transfers £	Gains and losses £	**At 31 Mar 2025 £**
Welsh Government	–	150,000	(120,000)	–	–	**30,000**
Vision Foundation - Fight for Sight	–	28,212	(23,980)	–	–	**4,232**
The Powell Family Foundation	–	27,707	(20,780)	–	–	**6,927**
	–	205,919	(164,760)	–	–	**41,159**

	At 1 Apr 2023 £	Income £	Expenditure £	Transfers £	Gains and losses £	At 31 Mar 2024 £
Welsh Government	–	105,000	(105,000)	–	–	–
Thomas Pocklington Trust	–	5,756	(5,756)	–	–	–
	–	110,756	(110,756)	–	–	–

Wales Council of the Blind

Company Limited by Guarantee

Notes to the Financial Statements *(continued)*

Year ended 31 March 2025

23. Analysis of charitable funds *(continued)*

The Welsh Government grant was received in respect of funding for delivery information services, network support and service improvement for the sight loss sector in Wales.

The Vision Foundation - Fight for Sight grant was received towards the National Tackling Loneliness and Isolation Fund.

The Powell Family Foundation grant was received to support the project to enable more children and young people to access the Low Vision Service Wales.

Thomas Pocklington Trust grant was received towards producing a State Of the Nation report on third sector services for blind and partially sighted people.

24. Analysis of net assets between funds

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	**Total Funds 2025 £**
Tangible fixed assets	4,417	–	**4,417**
Investments	196,150	–	**196,150**
Current assets	41,351	41,159	**82,510**
Creditors less than 1 year	(6,191)	–	**(6,191)**
Net assets	235,727	41,159	**276,886**

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total Funds 2024 £
Tangible fixed assets	2,845	–	2,845
Investments	190,346	–	190,346
Current assets	24,472	–	24,472
Creditors less than 1 year	(5,594)	–	(5,594)
Net assets	212,069	–	212,069

25. Related parties

The charity was under the control of the trustees throughout the current and previous year.

No transactions with related parties were undertaken such as are required to be disclosed under FRS 102.

WALES COUNCIL OF THE BLIND

England & Wales - Charity number 1045841

Accounts

COMPANY REGISTRATION NUMBER: 02578918
CHARITY REGISTRATION NUMBER: 1045841

Wales Council of the Blind

Company Limited by Guarantee

Unaudited Financial Statements

31 March 2024

CARSTON
Chartered accountants
1st Floor, Tudor House
16 Cathedral Road
Cardiff
CF11 9LJ

Wales Council of the Blind

Company Limited by Guarantee

Financial Statements

Year ended 31 March 2024

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Wales Council of the Blind

Company Limited by Guarantee

Trustees' Annual Report (Incorporating the Director's Report)

Year ended 31 March 2024

The trustees, who are also the directors for the purposes of company law, present their report and the unaudited financial statements of the charity for the year ended 31 March 2024.

Chair's report

Looking back over my second 3-year term as Chair of Wales Council of the Blind, I am extremely proud of the progress made under very challenging conditions. The pandemic offered new opportunities with WCB playing a crucial role in bringing the sector together. This strengthened our role as an umbrella body and, in no small part, helped us to secure three years Welsh Government funding. This is the last year of our current grant, and we look forward to working with Welsh Government to secure future sustainable core funding. We have also worked hard to reduce any future drawdown on our investment portfolio and have secured a 1-year grant from the Vision Foundation. This project shall provide the tools for optometrists throughout Wales to determine if their Low Vision Service patients are at risk of social isolation or loneliness.

We continue to focus our core work centred on three main areas: information services, network support, and service improvement. Perspectif and Sylw are being recognised as valuable resources, and the Wales Vision Forum is a great illustration of what an umbrella body can achieve in an otherwise geographically dispersed group of organisations.

The trustees are grateful to our staff and volunteers for all their work, and it is a real privilege to see first-hand the collaboration amongst our members. We continue to provide our core information services by providing a wealth of information to professionals and people with sight loss through Sylw, social media and Perspectif. I am particularly proud of the support we offer smaller local societies and hope that their membership will increase as a result of our projects with LVSW.

Finally, I would like to thank my fellow trustees for their work and support during this time.

Janice Powers
Chairperson

Wales Council of the Blind

Company Limited by Guarantee

Trustees' Annual Report (Incorporating the Director's Report) *(continued)*

Year ended 31 March 2024

Reference and administrative details

Registered charity name	Wales Council of the Blind	
Charity registration number	1045841	
Company registration number	02578918	
Principal office and registered office	Hastings House Fitzalan Place Unit 3.1 Cardiff CF24 0BL	
The trustees	Ms J Powers	
	Mr Peter Curtis	
	Mr Brian Mawby	
	Mrs Miriam Wright	
	Ms J Thomas	
	Mr B J Hobart	
	Dr R Stiff	
	Michelle Wall	(Appointed 6/11/2023)
	Helen Simon	(Appointed 6/11/2023)
	Malcolm John Nicholas	(Appointed 6/11/2023)
Company secretary	Owen J Williams	
Independent examiner	Farzana Ahmed FCCA 1st Floor, Tudor House 16 Cathedral Road Cardiff CF11 9LJ	

Wales Council of the Blind

Company Limited by Guarantee

Trustees' Annual Report (Incorporating the Director's Report) *(continued)*

Year ended 31 March 2024

Objectives and activities

Wales Council of the Blind's charitable objects are "to promote the welfare of blind and partially sighted persons, and the prevention of blindness".

Wales Council of the Blind (WCB) is the independent umbrella agency for vision impairment in Wales representing blind and partially sighted people and the clubs and societies who support them. Our independence enables us to act as an impartial observer, advocate, intermediary and evaluator for this complex, diverse group of organisations and services. In carrying out our charitable objectives, services to people with sight loss are improved.

We gather the opinions and views of people with sight loss through groups and consultation. We put their voice at the centre of what we do, reporting on their views to the people who are responsible for the services that help them. We also act as an agency to direct people to these services, giving them impartial advice and choice.

The trustees confirm that they complied with the duty in Section 4 of the Charities Act 2006 to have due regard for the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit.

Our work over the last year has focussed on three strategic priorities:

1) Information services
2) Network support
3) Service improvement

WCB upholds the following principles throughout our work:

- Beneficiaries first
- Integrity
- Openness
- Honesty
- Accountability
- Trust

Wales Council of the Blind

Company Limited by Guarantee

Trustees' Annual Report (Incorporating the Director's Report) *(continued)*

Year ended 31 March 2024

Achievements and performance

A) Information services.

Wales Vision Forum recognises us as the best organisation to serve as a single point of access for the sector. Perspectif enables us to achieve this by listing the broad range of services and support across Wales. We will be signing up and providing training on the latest features of Perspectif to Vision Rehabilitation Specialists (VRS) across Wales.

LVSW have allowed us to list all **LVSW accredited Optometrists** on Perspectif. This is particularly important at the time as the Wales Eye Care Service (WECS) website no longer exists. Information concerning WECS is now provided on nhs.wales portal. For further information relating to Low Vision Services, patients are advised to contact their local optometrist or search Perspectif for an optometrist in your area.

A **training module** was developed to aid practitioners in the use of Perspectif and will form part of the accreditation requirements. One session has taken place.

WVF members have agreed that WCB's telephone number and support webpage will be the only contact in the revised **CVI patient leaflet** to be updated as part of Optometry Reform (see below).

A Children's leaflet has been produced for distribution with the CVI. This is also available at the Perspectif library.

WCB Signposting

WCB has seen an increase in enquiries from optometrists, people with sight loss, and professionals. This is evidence that 'Perspectif' and our impartiality is being more widely recognised.

Under this present funding stream, WCB shall provide the following core information services:

1) Perspectif and Website
2) Perspectif Newsletters
3) Sylw
4) Social Media
5) Accessible Media
6) Other information services

Wales Council of the Blind

Company Limited by Guarantee

Trustees' Annual Report (Incorporating the Director's Report) *(continued)*

Year ended 31 March 2024

1) PERSPECTIF and WEBSITE

Perspectif is a database of services and other resources. This will aid the 'Referral Pathways' explained further below. The main WCB site hosts Perspectif and other resources including Sylw bulletin.

As well as offering the only place online to identify local LVSW practitioners, Perspectif now offers an improved search facility using keywords, searching on library records, and an events calendar. There is better linkage between areas of Perspectif such as relevant services appearing under definitions in the glossary.

Sylw continues to be the main feature of the site generally and we are working to ensure news items are routinely linked to records in the Perspectif database, particularly Service Provider records.

Hypertext Transfer Protocol Secure (HTTPS) level security exists across the whole site.

2) PERSPECTIF NEWSLETTERS

Roundup has been replaced by Perspectif Newsletters for the time being. They are produced on an ad-hoc basis.

We update readers (notably the LVSW practitioners) on changes and additions to the database through a newsletter. Over the last 6 months we have sent out:

- A Guide on using Perspectif.
- Talking magazines and transcriptions,
- Focus on Children's Services.

We will continue to send out themed editions. The next edition will focus on the importance of the Certificate of Vision Impairment (CVI) for accessing services.

3) SYLW

Sylw is a weekly bulletin distributed via email and on the website. It is also produced in alternative formats monthly and distributed by post. Sylw is distributed to a total readership of 5,314. This includes alternative formats (511). We also distribute to all eye clinics.

Wales Council of the Blind

Company Limited by Guarantee

Trustees' Annual Report (Incorporating the Director's Report) *(continued)*

Year ended 31 March 2024

4) SOCIAL MEDIA

We shall continue to use our Facebook, Instagram and Twitter accounts to promote the work of the sector.

WCB has 1975 X (Twitter) followers; 399 Facebook (regional forum group 43); 302 Instagram.

5) ACCESSIBLE MEDIA

We produce our materials, and that of member organisations, in accessible formats - notably large print and audio.

We continue to send newsletters and papers for:

- Visual Impairment Merthyr Tydfil
- Visual Impairment Breconshire
- Radnorshire Association for the Blind
- Ceredigion Association for the Blind
- Macular Society

We have produced accessible materials and distributed them on behalf of Royal Society for Blind Children under our project with them.

6) OTHER INFORMATION SERVICES

Social prescribing

Perspectif is included in a document that has been created on social prescribing as part of Optometry Contract Reform. The rationale was to have a live document on an eye care specific part of the NHS website, to be used as a reference for professionals in their day-to-day practice. There was definitely a wish to make this very general as there is a drive towards holistic care, and hence social prescribing across the whole gamut of conditions and lifestyles, rather than specifically eye related suggestions. There is a suggestion of directing people to Dewis and Perspectif (sight loss specific) that would remove the need to submit continual updates. This is being considered by the clinical leads.

WGOS 4: practitioners will now be required, as part of their claim for payments, to provide data on whether they have signposted the patient to the third sector. This is an important step in improving and monitoring referrals.

Throughout the WGOS 4 manual there are additional points where the optometrist will actively seek to support a patient through the provision, signposting and/or referral to sources of trusted information and support, as part of an examination. Local guides will be published by Wales Council of the Blind. Written information should be provided in the patient's preferred accessible format.

Wales Council of the Blind

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Trustees' Annual Report (Incorporating the Director's Report) *(continued)*

Year ended 31 March 2024

Certification of Vision Impairment (CVI) Wales in Primary Care

WCB chaired the advisory group (2020) that explored the option of LVSW/EHEW accredited practitioners carrying out CVI(W) in the high street. We have been involved in the process throughout.

Press release relating to LVSW/CVI is available at https://wcb-ccd.org.uk/news/4946]

Patient leaflets

We have been working with organisations in the sector to produce two important leaflets.

'What next? Your guide to Dry AMD and finding advice, information and support', is given to all patients who have a CVI(W) completed in Primary Care. Perspectif is used to direct patients to support and services.

'Support for Parents and Families of Children with Vision Impairments' will be included within a letter that will be sent by LVSW to every child, young person, and their families as part of the CVI process.

B) Network support.

Wales Council of the Blind has a responsibility to bring the sector together through various forums. Many of these are managed by WCB.

Wales Vision Forum

WCB chairs and provides secretariat for the Wales Vision Forum and directs its work. The purpose of the Forum is for national, local and specialist organisations representing people with sight loss to come together to share, discuss and outline work programmes and priorities to enhance joint working and reduce duplication to maximise our collective reach and impact.

The Forum is a platform for sharing information, sharing good practice and expertise, consulting and identifying opportunities to support service and campaign planning.

The group will also focus on the work of relevant work-streams. Task and Finish groups will be established for specific areas of work.

WVF T&F Group on Optometry Reform has continued, with forum members sitting on each of the key groups. Our Director sat on the WGOS (Clinical 1 and 2) working group, as well as WGOS Implementation Working Group (which met fortnightly). These groups have now been discontinued.

Our Director also sits on the Ophthalmology Clinical Implementation Network (CIN) representing the Wales Vision Forum. WCB and RNIB meet quarterly to ensure that we provide a joint response to concerns raised by people with sight loss and our wider membership.

WCB, RNIB and the Macular Society have also met with Hywel Dda UHB to discuss waiting times for macular injections. This has been hugely positive. Waiting times have been reduced and two new nurse injector posts have been applied for. The rehabilitation / habilitation T&F Group has met several times to receive updates but will continue to meet monthly once we are able to report a way forward. WCB and Guide Dogs have met twice monthly to take this work forward.

A new report from RNIB Cymru reveals how cost of living increases have had a devastating effect on people with sight loss. Focus group participants listed Wales Council of the Blind as providing key sources of information and support. This is an example where regular correspondence through Sylw for example has enabled us to keep people with sight loss informed on a range of different topics including cost of living.

Geographic Atrophy pilot

We attended a round table discussion at the Senedd on **'Addressing the challenges of Geographic Atrophy in Wales'.**

There will be an estimated 5,000 eligible patients with Geographic Atrophy in Wales who may require 6 injections per year which equates to 30,000 injection appointments starting in around 18 months. Concerns were raised about the limited number of trained injectors currently available to administer the treatment.

Clinicians in Wales are supportive of an NHS delivered service and are confident that they can deliver this to the proposed number of patients. However, they will be unable to do this without adequate planning due to the increased burden on the service in Wales.

We have written to Eluned Morgan MS, to:

a) understand what plans are being made to manage this increase in referrals to secondary care;

b) discuss what steps Welsh Government are taking to ensure that patients can be brought onto the programme once new GA drugs are approved;

c) understand how health boards can administer ongoing GA injections on time for it to work, which is already a problem in the administering of Wet AMD drugs.

Wales Council of the Blind

Company Limited by Guarantee

Trustees' Annual Report (Incorporating the Director's Report) *(continued)*

Year ended 31 March 2024

Visionary

Visionary members in Wales. Visionary is the UK umbrella organisation for local societies serving people with sight loss. WCB is the representative for Wales on Visionary's Members' Representative Forum. This is an opportunity to extend the reach of the voice of local societies into the UK agenda. Our Engagement Officer attended 5 meetings during this period and continues to feed information to our Visionary members, as well as receive feedback through WVF. We have held Visionary meetings with local societies specifically to discuss the sight loss pathway work (a task and finish group has been established). Local and Regional societies who are members of WCB are entitled to free membership of Visionary.

WCB's Director stood down as Chair of Visionary after 5 years in office but will remain on the board of trustees until 2026.

Our Director co-presented a workshop on rehabilitation at Visionary's conference in late September ensuring that a Welsh-perspective was provided. He also highlighted the low vision service and how it played an important role in referrals to social care and the third sector.

He was also a panel member on collaborative working and highlighted the work of the Wales Vision Forum.

Other networks

We ensure that the voice of people with sight loss in Wales is represented in various networks. We sit on several networks including:

- Wales Rehabilitation Officers Forum;
- Wales Disability Reference Group;
- Cross Party Groups on Disability (WCB provides notetaking);
- Disability Equality Framework;
- Low Vision Service Wales Advisory Group: our Director, in his capacity as Chair, sits on the Wales Eye Care Service Joint Committee;
- Hywel Dda Eyecare Collaboration Group;
- Disability Rights Taskforce - including Task and Finish Group on Independent Living and Social Care Working Group;
- SENCOM Partnership Board that looks at service improvement for children and young people in education across Gwent;
- WGOS Implementation Working Group;
- Ophthalmology Clinical Implementation Network (CIN);
- Children and Young People Partnership meeting.

Richard Bowers, Communication Officer, sits on the **ASSIST** (a preventative approach to Access to a Sustainable, whole System pathway for older people with a vISion ImpairmenT) **project steering group** and has contributed to the production of questionnaires and interview questions. The project hopes to address the need for more sustainable care and support for older people with vision impairment to help them live happier and more fulfilling lives.

In April, our Director will sit on a **Patient Communications Support Group** (as part of Ophthalmology reform) and be part of a steering group to look at Hospital to Community: the value to stakeholders of community low vision optometrists and providing certification of vision impairment in cases of dry age-related macular degeneration.

WCB Membership

In addition to ordinary membership support we work on the following areas:

Supporting local organisations. Our Engagement Officer sits on a number of local societies and provides a combination of secretarial support, newsletters, accessible media, and governance.

The Communications Officer maintains a web presence for Ceredigion Association for the Blind, Welsh Rehabilitation Officers Forum, and the Welsh Association for Visually Impaired Bowlers (WAVIB). We have ported their websites to a new server. WCB assists WAVIB with the development and promotion of the game of bowls within Wales.

Regional Forums. These are where individuals with sight loss are able to share their views and, to some extent, direct WCB's agenda. As an independent organisation we provide this crucial platform through which people are able to express themselves freely. Meeting face-to-face has continued to be difficult post pandemic.

We are seeking to introduce Thomas Pocklington Trust Sight Loss Councils in Wales. These could coexist with less frequent regional groups. We will review how we proceed over the next period.

We will work with Ceredigion Association for the Blind and partners to seek wider support to establish an online group of people with sight loss of working age. We have identified this as a gap.

WCB Perspectif.

We shall continue to support the sector in Wales through the online signposting portal 'Perspectif'. This has been adopted by LVSW (as mentioned above) and shall be updated accordingly.

Wales Council of the Blind

Company Limited by Guarantee

Trustees' Annual Report (Incorporating the Director's Report) *(continued)*

Year ended 31 March 2024

C) Service improvement.

Recognising the role of the Vision Rehabilitation Specialist

As highlighted in WCB's 'Addressing a Workforce Crisis in Wales', an ageing workforce and the lack of a qualification pathway in Wales combine to pose a threat to future provision and delivery of Rehabilitation Services in Wales, both now and in the immediate future.

The Wales Vision Forum is calling for Welsh Government to ensure all blind and partially sighted people can access the support they need to live life to the full. Adequate social care is fundamental to well-being, and for people with sight loss it is about thriving, not just surviving. We need national oversight of services to ensure they are consistently delivered to the required standard.

To achieve this:

1. Social Care Wales should work with local authorities, Welsh Rehabilitation Officers Forum (WROF) and the third sector to undertake a review of the Vision Impairment Good Practice Guidelines (WCB/WLGA 2006) (referencing the 10 Principles of Good Practice in Vision Rehabilitation (RNIB)) to establish minimum standards and good practice for service, workforce and commissioning. These can then be used as the basis for ongoing service monitoring.

2. The skill and expertise of Vision Rehabilitation Specialists (and Qualified Habilitation Specialists) must be recognised by making Vision Rehabilitation Specialists a regulated profession, on a par with those included in the Regulation and Inspection of Social Care (Wales) Act 2016 and listed on Social Care Wales website.

3. An advisory board should be established to address the workforce crisis across Wales.

4. A short-term post be created to lay the foundations for the above work. Welsh Government funding could enable this work to start from early Autumn and we shall seek support from all local authorities. The Welsh Rehabilitation Officers Forum, at their AGM on 17th July 2024, have supported the refresh of the guidelines.

5. An all-Wales post should be created to lead on establishing a consistent specialist assessment; national outcome measures; improved referral pathways; and provide supervision and mentoring for isolated workers on specific cases.

Wales Council of the Blind

Company Limited by Guarantee

Trustees' Annual Report (Incorporating the Director's Report) *(continued)*

Year ended 31 March 2024

Wales-based Rehabilitation Degree

Rehabilitation Work (Visual Impairment) - FdSc (Foundation Degree) is only currently available in Birmingham City University. WCB, WVF and WROF will continue to work together to explore a course to be delivered in Wales (see above). We have secured 5 places for Welsh students on the BCU course for the next 5 years.

The Map of the Third Sector VI Services

The Thomas Pocklington Trust commissioned WCB to produce a report on a map of services for people with sight loss in Wales. This shall lead the way for a larger UK report to be conducted by others in the future. It was an excellent opportunity for WCB to gain a stronger understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the sector and to make improvements to the Perspectif database so that LVSW practitioners and others can seek the best support for their patients. The report found that community-delivered services can be hampered by the geography and communications in Wales and that some form of mobile support would be beneficial in many areas, an example being the Vision Support Mobile Resource Unit that visits various localities across North Wales.

CVI(W) Consent to share information

At December's (2023) Wales Vision Forum meeting, we discussed an opportunity to update the CVI Welsh Health Circular, as part of the planned rollout of CVIs completed in primary care for patients with bilateral Dry AMD. One suggestion was that the wording in 'You consent to share PART C' is revised from "They will also offer to assess your needs" – to "You are entitled to an assessment by a vision rehabilitation specialist". This change was accepted and will help to reinforce the role of the VRS.

Wales Rehabilitation Officers Forum (WROF)

Vision Rehabilitation Specialists in Wales will pay their own membership fees to Rehabilitation Workers Professional Network (RWPN) at a discounted rate, as previously offered to WCB. Unfortunately, we have seen a reduction in membership to RWPN since WCB had to stop paying. WCB can offer secretariat support to WROF. WCB's Director is the current Treasurer for WROF.

In November WROF held 2 workshops (South Wales and West Wales) on 'Collective alchemy: Unleashing the power of collaboration'. Vision Rehabilitation Specialists (VRSs), Eye Care Liaison Officers (ECLOs) and Manging Better workers attended. There will be a North Wales workshop in 2024/25.

Equipment provided by local authorities through VRS

WCB has provided advice to a local authority in relation to the provision of equipment. It is our understanding that it is a statutory duty for equipment to be purchased by the local authority that would keep someone healthy and safe. This would include mobility canes, liquid level indicators, etc, in other words items recommended by Vision Rehabilitation Specialists.

We added that people should not be encouraged to buy these products while waiting for rehabilitation. We also highlighted the low vision service in Wales and that they provide a range of optical aids and an electronic magnifier, as well as lighting solutions. We have evidence of a post code lottery across Wales of the equipment that is provided by social care. We will discuss these concerns with WROF.

Referral Pathways

We work with WVF, LVSW and partners to increase and improve referrals between health, social care, and the third sector.

Eye Care Support Pathway

WCB received a small grant from RNIB to work with our members to develop a Wales-based eye care support pathway. This project started in December and will include services unique to Wales such as LVSW. (We regard the LVSW as a key point in the pathway, so we have encouraged its greater visibility in the pathway in Wales).

We provided a case study for the UK-eye care support pathway that showed CVI(W) in primary care and referrals are made to VRS and third sector (using Perspectif). This highlighted the need for a Wales-specific pathway as support and services vary in devolved nations.

WCB established a Task and Finish Group with the first meeting held on 12th January. Questionnaires to be sent to people with sight loss, professionals and organisations were signed off at WVF meeting on 30th January. A report will be sent to RNIB in the spring.

Eye Care Services in Wales

Following the BBC coverage of the rise in R1 (highest priority) patients waiting beyond target, RNIB Cymru, Wales Council of the Blind, Guide Dogs Cymru and the Macular Society wrote to Eluned Morgan, Minister for Health and Social Services, about waiting times and eye care services in Wales.

The response received made it clear that the Minister is taking the need for reform seriously and she is clearly putting a lot of weight behind the National Clinical Strategy that the Royal College is working on.

School Pupil Eye Care Service (SPECS)

In September, WCB contributed to and co-signed a letter to Eluned Morgan, Minister for Health and Social Services, encouraging Welsh Government to make the School Pupil Eye Care Service (SPECS) in special schools in Wales a higher priority, and to address the wider needs of people with learning disabilities in Welsh Government's primary ophthalmic services reform protocols.

Vision Foundation grant

This WCB project shall provide the tools for optometrists throughout Wales to determine if their Low Vision Service patients (c. 10,000 per year) are at risk of social isolation or loneliness. The tools will be a) a set of trigger questions coupled with b) an online social prescribing portal, customised to the patient's particular circumstances. By providing timely interventions in the form of befriending, social activities, peer group support, relevant organisations, and information about ways to alleviate loneliness and isolation, the patient would be at a reduced risk of moving towards depression and requiring mental health services. The project will begin 1st April 2024. Research will be carried out by Rebecca John (Wales General Ophthalmic Service National Clinical Lead).

Sight Loss Councils in Wales

WCB met with Sight Life and Thomas Pocklington Trust (TPT) to discuss funding for Sight Loss Councils in Wales, under the umbrella of WCB. It is our intention to submit a joint bid with members. We will draft a bid and discuss it more widely with the sight loss sector.

SenCom - Vision and Multi-Sensory Impairment Service

SenCom closed its building in Cwmbran (November 2023). This decision was reached by the 5 local authorities and without consultation neither in general nor with the partnership board of which WCB is a member. We understand that the closure is to protect jobs, but WCB is concerned that there is a freeze on recently vacated posts and that this may impact negatively on this best practice regional service. WCB is working with the partnership board and service to seek reassurance that the closure will not impact on the children and families supported in any way. In March 2024, 2 frozen posts were advertised.

WCB is concerned that services could only be offered to those pupils with an Individual Development Plan (IDP). We believe that all pupils with vision impairment should have access to SenCom under the Equality Act 2010.

Bus travel in Wales: Report on Disabled Person's Welsh Concessionary Travel Card and companion pass across Wales

WCB and members of the Welsh Rehabilitation Officers Forum received concerns from people with sight loss about applying / renewing their disabled person's bus pass and/or companion pass. In August, we produced a report that has been presented to officials from Welsh Government / Transport for Wales in partnership with Guide Dogs Cymru. The process for applying for Disabled Person's and Companion bus passes must be consistent across Wales. The report listed a series of recommendations. As a result of the report, we understand that Transport for Wales is seeking to work with local authorities to ensure that there are consistent information and referral pathways across Wales. Unfortunately, there has been little progress made since the report was published and we have sought an update.

Wales Eye Care Conference - 'Future Approach to Optometry: Successful Reform and Implementation'.

The conference took place on Wednesday, 22nd November. A total of 123 delegates attended. A full report was sent to Welsh Government colleagues.

Wales Council of the Blind

Company Limited by Guarantee

Trustees' Annual Report (Incorporating the Director's Report) *(continued)*

Year ended 31 March 2024

Financial review

With the ending of the financial year, the board of trustees report a year-end financial position of a deficit £11,005 (2023: deficit £39,987). This deficit includes net gains drawdown on investments revaluation of £8,844. Welsh Government funding has continued throughout the year.

WCB reserves policy is fully met and we have sufficient funds to plan for the future.

Unrestricted funds at year-end were £212,069 (2023: £223,074) with free reserves of £18,877 (2023: £1,987).

Investment Policy

Under articles of association the charity has the power to make any investment which the trustees see fit. The present policy is to keep an amount that represents short term operating requirements in liquid deposits (bank deposit accounts) and place the balance in the hands of a professional investment broker, to invest in wide range of fixed interest and equity funds. During the period 2015/16 the charity invested £200,000 with Quilter Cheviot as part of a Discretionary Managed Portfolio at a lower to medium tolerance of risk. WCB's investment objective is to grow the capital of the portfolio, as well as generating some degree of income. At the year-end WCB's managed portfolio was valued at £190,346. This was a net gain (due to drawdown) of £8,844 on the previous year. This will continue to be invested.

Reserves Policy

The Trustees have considered carefully the purpose of any reserves Wales Council of the Blind has or might have in the future. The stated aim of the reserves policy is to allow for unforeseeable events. This could be anything from replacing essential office equipment, to the sudden loss of funding. The amount should be sufficient to pay for staff redundancies and outstanding liabilities.

Reserves should be maintained at a level of 6 months operating costs of the core organisation. In addition, we may need to recognise any longer-term grant / project commitments and to settle the finances accordingly. Reserves should exclude funding that has been restricted for other specified use.

Reserves should be invested in a safe, low risk environment that maintains the capital invested and where possible provides a level of return on those funds.

The policy is reviewed annually by Trustees, or more frequently as necessary.

Wales Council of the Blind

Company Limited by Guarantee

Trustees' Annual Report (Incorporating the Director's Report) *(continued)*

Year ended 31 March 2024

Plans for future periods

WCB received Welsh Government funding of £105,000 for this period and has been awarded an indicative grant for the following year 2024-25 of up to £105,000 per annum. We have secured a 1-year grant (2024/25) from the Vision Foundation of £28,212. This project shall provide the tools for optometrists throughout Wales to determine if their Low Vision Service patients are at risk of social isolation or loneliness. We have also received 2-year funding (July 2024) from the Powell Family Foundation of £27,707 (year 1) and £29,042 (year 2) to support the project to enable more children and young people to access Low Vision Service Wales. This entails research to identify the barriers and creating an accessible online resource through Perspectif.

WCB is a partner in a Wales-wide project led by the Royal Society for Blind Children called Access Unlimited. The project, due to end in June 2024, supports blind and partially sighted children, young people, and their families in Wales. WCB will be included in their next Lottery bid.

Structure, governance and management

Governing Document

The organisation is a charitable company limited by guarantee and as such is governed by a Memorandum and Articles of Association. The company was incorporated on 31 January 1991 under the Companies Act 1985 and registered as a charity on 18 April 1995.

Recruitment and Appointment of the Management Committee

The directors of the company also serve as trustees of the charity and under the company's Articles are known as members of the Management Committee. Trustees are appointed annually at the Annual General Meeting. Casual vacancies are filled by the Management Committee and ratified at the next Annual General Meeting.

Each member of the Management Committee has agreed to guarantee the company's debts for the amount of £1 each.

All new Trustees are given induction training via the issuing of our organisational policy and procedures book and WCB offers to arrange for Trustees to have the opportunity to attend Trustee training provided by Wales Council for Voluntary Action (WCVA) should they wish. Trustees are able to contact the Council's secretary if they wish to have specific advice or guidance on any policies or procedures. WCB provides Trustees with indemnity insurance to the value of £500,000.

Wales Council of the Blind

Company Limited by Guarantee

Trustees' Annual Report (Incorporating the Director's Report) *(continued)*

Year ended 31 March 2024

Structure, governance and management *(continued)*

The staff and volunteers

Owen Williams is the Director at Wales Council of the Blind. He provides senior management to WCB and helps plan and deliver strategic direction to the sector.

Richard Bowers is our Communications Officer, and he manages WCB's communications and has developed and updates 'Perspectif, our online information portal.

Our Engagement Officer, Rebecca Phillips, facilitates and organises the Regional Steering Groups, as well as enables the voice of people with sight loss to be heard.

WCB has a dedicated team of volunteers who we would like to thank, providing invaluable support to the organisation around information gathering, keeping our database up-to-date and updating our Twitter feed, collating the material for newsletters, providing help with fundraising, answering the telephone, and providing advice. Thank you, Ann, Dewi, Alan and Valmai for your continued support. We would also like to thank Bethan Smale our bookkeeper for all of her hard work.

Small company provisions

This report has been prepared in accordance with the provisions applicable to companies entitled to the small companies exemption.

The trustees' annual report was approved on 28th November 2024 and signed on behalf of the board of trustees by:

..... Signed

Trustee Name: Brian Hobart

Wales Council of the Blind

Company Limited by Guarantee

Independent Examiner's Report to the Trustees of Wales Council of the Blind

Year ended 31 March 2024

I report to the trustees on my examination of the financial statements of Wales Council of the Blind ('the charity') for the year ended 31 March 2024.

Responsibilities and basis of report

As the charity trustees of the company (and also its directors for the purposes of company law) you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006 ('the 2006 Act').

Having satisfied myself that the accounts of the company are not required to be audited under Part 16 of the 2006 Act and are eligible for independent examination, I report in respect of my examination of your company's accounts as carried out under section 145 of the Charities Act 2011 ('the 2011 Act'). In carrying out my examination I have followed the Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the 2011 Act.

Independent examiner's statement

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination giving me cause to believe that in any material respect:

1. accounting records were not kept in respect of the company as required by section 386 of the 2006 Act; or
2. the accounts do not accord with those records; or
3. the accounts do not comply with the accounting requirements of section 396 of the 2006 Act other than any requirement that the accounts give a 'true and fair view' which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination; or
4. the accounts have not been prepared in accordance with the methods and principles of the Statement of Recommended Practice for accounting and reporting by charities.

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

Farzana Ahmed FCCA
Independent Examiner

1st Floor, Tudor House
16 Cathedral Road
Cardiff
CF11 9LJ
Dated: 9th Dec 2024

Wales Council of the Blind

Company Limited by Guarantee

Statement of Financial Activities (including income and expenditure account)

Year ended 31 March 2024

	Note	2024 Unrestricted funds £	2024 Restricted funds £	2024 Total funds £	2023 Total funds £
Income and endowments					
Donations and legacies	5	21,200	110,756	**131,956**	123,699
Investment income	6	5,406	–	**5,406**	5,078
Total income		26,606	110,756	**137,362**	128,777
Expenditure					
Expenditure on raising funds:					
Costs of other trading activities	7	848	–	**848**	1,002
Investment management costs	8	3,647	–	**3,647**	3,812
Expenditure on charitable activities	9,10	41,960	110,756	**152,716**	144,795
Total expenditure		46,455	110,756	**157,211**	149,609
Net gains/(losses) on investments	12	8,844	–	**8,844**	(19,155)
Net expenditure and net movement in funds		(11,005)	–	**(11,005)**	(39,987)
Reconciliation of funds					
Total funds brought forward		223,074	–	**223,074**	263,061
Total funds carried forward		212,069	–	**212,069**	223,074

The statement of financial activities includes all gains and losses recognised in the year.
All income and expenditure derive from continuing activities.

Wales Council of the Blind

Company Limited by Guarantee

Statement of Financial Position

31 March 2024

	Note	2024 £	2024 £	2023 £	2023 £
Fixed assets					
Tangible fixed assets	18		2,846		3,645
Investments	19		190,346		217,442
			193,192		221,087
Current assets					
Debtors	20	3,822		4,510	
Cash at bank and in hand		20,650		3,169	
		24,472		7,679	
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	21	5,595		5,692	
Net current assets			18,877		1,987
Total assets less current liabilities			212,069		223,074
Net assets			212,069		223,074
Funds of the charity					
Unrestricted funds			212,069		223,074
Total charity funds	23		212,069		223,074

For the year ending 31 March 2024 the charity was entitled to exemption from audit under section 477 of the Companies Act 2006 relating to small companies.

Directors' responsibilities:

- The members have not required the company to obtain an audit of its financial statements for the year in question in accordance with section 476;
- The directors acknowledge their responsibilities for complying with the requirements of the Act with respect to accounting records and the preparation of financial statements.

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

The statement of financial position
continues on the following page.

The notes on pages 23 to 34 form part of these financial statements.

Wales Council of the Blind

Company Limited by Guarantee

Statement of Financial Position *(continued)*

31 March 2024

These financial statements were approved by the board of trustees and authorised for issue on 28th November 2024, and are signed on behalf of the board by:

..... Signed

Trustee Name: Janice Powers

..... Signed

Trustee Name: Brian Hobart

Company registration number: 02578918

Wales Council of the Blind

Company Limited by Guarantee

Notes to the Financial Statements

Year ended 31 March 2024

1. General information

The charity is a public benefit entity, and a private company limited by guarantee, registered in England & Wales and a registered charity in England and Wales. The address of the registered office is Hastings House, Fitzalan Place, Unit 3.1, Cardiff, CF24 0BL.

2. Statement of compliance

These financial statements have been prepared in compliance with FRS 102, 'The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and the Republic of Ireland', the Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (Charities SORP (FRS 102)) and the Companies Act 2006.

3. Accounting policies

Basis of preparation

The financial statements have been prepared on the historical cost basis, as modified by the revaluation of certain financial assets and liabilities and investment properties measured at fair value through income or expenditure.

The financial statements are prepared in sterling, which is the functional currency of the entity.

Going concern

After making reasonable enquiries and having considered the impact of the economic downturn and other factors on the financial performance of the charity and its current performance, the Trustee's believe that the charity will be able to continue to fulfil its charitable purpose, will be able to meet its liabilities as they fall due, and will have adequate resources to continue in operational existence for the foreseeable future. Accordingly, the trustees continue to adopt the going concern basis in in in preparing the financial statements

Judgements and key sources of estimation uncertainty

The preparation of the financial statements requires management to make judgements, estimates and assumptions that affect the amounts reported. These estimates and judgements are continually reviewed and are based on experience and other factors, including expectations of future events that are believed to be reasonable under the circumstances.

3. Accounting policies *(continued)*

Fund accounting

Unrestricted funds are available for use at the discretion of the trustees in furtherance of the purposes of the charity. Unrestricted funds include a revaluation reserve representing the restatement of investment assets at market values.

Designated funds are unrestricted funds earmarked by the trustees for specific purposes.

Restricted funds are subjected to restrictions on their expenditure imposed by the donor.

Incoming resources

All incoming resources are included in the statement of financial activities when entitlement has passed to the charity; it is probable that the economic benefits associated with the transaction will flow to the charity and the amount can be reliably measured. The following specific policies are applied to particular categories of income:

- income from donations or grants is recognised when there is evidence of entitlement to the gift, receipt is probable and its amount can be measured reliably.
- legacy income is recognised when receipt is probable and entitlement is established.
- income from donated goods is measured at the fair value of the goods unless this is impractical to measure reliably, in which case the value is derived from the cost to the donor or the estimated resale value. Donated facilities and services are recognised in the accounts when received if the value can be reliably measured. No amounts are included for the contribution of general volunteers.
- income from contracts for the supply of services is recognised with the delivery of the contracted service. This is classified as unrestricted funds unless there is a contractual requirement for it to be spent on a particular purpose and returned if unspent, in which case it may be regarded as restricted.

3. Accounting policies *(continued)*

Resources expended

Expenditure is recognised on an accruals basis as a liability is incurred. Expenditure includes any VAT which cannot be fully recovered, and is classified under headings of the statement of financial activities to which it relates:

- expenditure on raising funds includes the costs of all fundraising activities, events, non-charitable trading activities, and the sale of donated goods.
- expenditure on charitable activities includes all costs incurred by a charity in undertaking activities that further its charitable aims for the benefit of its beneficiaries, including those support costs and costs relating to the governance of the charity apportioned to charitable activities.
- other expenditure includes all expenditure that is neither related to raising funds for the charity nor part of its expenditure on charitable activities.

All costs are allocated to expenditure categories reflecting the use of the resource. Direct costs attributable to a single activity are allocated directly to that activity. Shared costs are apportioned between the activities they contribute to on a reasonable, justifiable and consistent basis.

Tangible assets

All fixed assets are initially recorded at cost. Fixed assets are not capitalised where the cost is below £100.

Depreciation

Depreciation is calculated so as to write off the cost or valuation of an asset, less its residual value, over the useful economic life of that asset as follows:

Office equipment	-	25% reducing balance

Investments

Unlisted equity investments are initially recorded at cost, and subsequently measured at fair value. If fair value cannot be reliably measured, assets are measured at cost less impairment.

Listed investments are measured at fair value with changes in fair value being recognised in income or expenditure.

Wales Council of the Blind

Company Limited by Guarantee

Notes to the Financial Statements *(continued)*

Year ended 31 March 2024

3. Accounting policies *(continued)*

Debtors and creditors receivable/ payable within one year

Debtors and creditors with no stated interest rate and receivable or payable within one year are recorded at transaction price. Any losses arising from impairment are recognised in expenditure.

Financial instruments

A financial asset or a financial liability is recognised only when the entity becomes a party to the contractual provisions of the instrument. Basic financial instruments are initially recognised at the amount receivable or payable including any related transaction costs, unless the arrangement constitutes a financing transaction, where it is recognised at the present value of the future payments discounted at a market rate of interest for a similar debt instrument. Current assets and current liabilities are subsequently measured at the cash or other consideration expected to be paid or received and not discounted. Debt instruments are subsequently measured at amortised cost. Where investments in shares or preference shares are publicly traded or their fair value can otherwise be measured reliably, the investment is subsequently measured at fair value with changes in fair value recognised in income and expenditure. All other such investments are subsequently measured at cost less impairment.

Defined contribution plans

Contributions to defined contribution plans are recognised as an expense in the period in which the related service is provided. Prepaid contributions are recognised as an asset to the extent that the prepayment will lead to a reduction in future payments or a cash refund.

4. Limited by guarantee

Each member of the Board of Trustees has undertaken to guarantee the Council's debts to the sum of £1 each.

Wales Council of the Blind

Company Limited by Guarantee

Notes to the Financial Statements *(continued)*

Year ended 31 March 2024

5. Donations and legacies

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	**Total Funds 2024 £**
Donations			
Donations and bequests	3,978	–	**3,978**
Grants			
Welsh Government	–	105,000	**105,000**
Local Authority grants	1,485	–	**1,485**
Wales Council for Voluntary Action	875	–	**875**
Thomas Pocklington Trust	–	5,756	**5,756**
Other donations and legacies			
Other income	14,862	–	**14,862**
	21,200	110,756	**131,956**

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total Funds 2023 £
Donations			
Donations and bequests	5,274	–	5,274
Grants			
Welsh Government	–	105,000	105,000
Local Authority grants	1,533	–	1,533
Wales Council for Voluntary Action	700	–	700
Thomas Pocklington Trust	–	5,756	5,756
Other donations and legacies			
Other income	5,436	–	5,436
	12,943	110,756	123,699

Wales Council of the Blind

Company Limited by Guarantee

Notes to the Financial Statements *(continued)*

Year ended 31 March 2024

6. Investment income

	Unrestricted Funds £	**Total Funds 2024 £**	Unrestricted Funds £	Total Funds 2023 £
Income from listed investments	5,406	**5,406**	5,078	5,078

7. Costs of other trading activities

	Unrestricted Funds £	**Total Funds 2024 £**	Unrestricted Funds £	Total Funds 2023 £
Fundraising costs	848	**848**	1,002	1,002

8. Investment management costs

	Unrestricted Funds £	**Total Funds 2024 £**	Unrestricted Funds £	Total Funds 2023 £
Portfolio management	3,647	**3,647**	3,812	3,812

9. Expenditure on charitable activities by fund type

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	**Total Funds 2024 £**
Promoting Welfare	21,319	110,756	**132,075**
Support costs	20,641	–	**20,641**
	41,960	110,756	**152,716**

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total Funds 2023 £
Promoting Welfare	14,170	110,756	124,926
Support costs	19,869	–	19,869
	34,039	110,756	144,795

Wales Council of the Blind

Company Limited by Guarantee

Notes to the Financial Statements *(continued)*

Year ended 31 March 2024

10. Expenditure on charitable activities by activity type

	Activities undertaken directly £	Support costs £	**Total funds 2024 £**	Total fund 2023 £
Promoting Welfare	132,075	17,043	**149,118**	141,098
Governance costs	–	3,598	**3,598**	3,697
	132,075	20,641	**152,716**	144,795

11. Analysis of support costs

	Analysis of support costs activity 1 £	**Total 2024 £**	Total 2023 £
Staff costs	14,263	**14,263**	13,512
General office	2,780	**2,780**	2,658
Governance costs	3,598	**3,598**	3,699
	20,641	**20,641**	19,869

12. Net gains/(losses) on investments

	Unrestricted Funds £	**Total Funds 2024 £**	Unrestricted Funds £	Total Funds 2023 £
Gains/(losses) on listed investments	8,844	**8,844**	(19,155)	(19,155)

13. Net expenditure

Net expenditure is stated after charging/(crediting):

	2024 £	2023 £
Depreciation of tangible fixed assets	**799**	364

Wales Council of the Blind

Company Limited by Guarantee

Notes to the Financial Statements *(continued)*

Year ended 31 March 2024

14. Independent examination fees

	2024	2023
	£	£
Fees payable to the independent examiner for:		
Independent examination of the financial statements	**2,1000**	2,640

15. Staff costs

The total staff costs and employee benefits for the reporting period are analysed as follows:

	2024	2023
	£	£
Wages and salaries	**114,347**	108,122
Social security costs	**7,014**	6,703
Employer contributions to pension plans	**3,255**	3,130
	124,616	117,955

The average head count of employees during the year was 3 (2023: 3). The average number of full-time equivalent employees during the year is analysed as follows:

	2024	2023
	No.	No.
Project staff	**3**	3

No employee received employee benefits of more than £60,000 during the year (2023: Nil).

Key Management Personnel

Key management personnel include all persons that have authority and responsibility for planning, directing and controlling the activities of the charity. The total compensation paid to key management personnel for services provided to the charity was £43,560 (2023:£41,487).

16. Trustee remuneration and expenses

No remuneration or other benefits from employment with the charity or a related entity were received by the trustees.

All trustees are entitled to claim reimbursement of the cost of attending meetings, no trustees were reimbursed during the year (2023: £nil) for travelling costs to attend meetings.

Wales Council of the Blind

Company Limited by Guarantee

Notes to the Financial Statements *(continued)*

Year ended 31 March 2024

17. Transfers between funds

No transfers between general funds and designated funds took place during the year.

18. Tangible fixed assets

	Equipment £	Total £
Cost		
At 1 April 2023 and 31 March 2024	28,118	**28,118**
Depreciation		
At 1 April 2023	24,473	**24,473**
Charge for the year	799	**799**
At 31 March 2024	25,272	**25,272**
Carrying amount		
At 31 March 2024	2,846	**2,846**
At 31 March 2023	3,645	3,645

19. Investments

	Cash or cash equivalents £	Listed investments £	Total £
Cost or valuation			
At 1 April 2023	13,694	203,748	**217,442**
Additions	140,148	102,230	**242,378**
Disposals	(143,576)	(101,398)	**(244,974)**
Fair value movements	–	(24,500)	**(24,500)**
At 31 March 2024	10,266	180,080	**190,346**
Impairment			
At 1 April 2023 and 31 March 2024			–
Carrying amount			
At 31 March 2024	10,266	180,080	**190,346**
At 31 March 2023	13,694	203,748	217,442

All investments shown above are held at valuation.

19. Investments *(continued)*

Listed investments

The aggregate market value of listed investments is £180,080 (2023: £203,748) and the stock exchange value is £180,080 (2023: £203,748).

Financial assets held at fair value

Investments are stated at fair value at the balance sheet date, listed investments are stated at the stock exchange values at the year end. Other investments are valued based on investment performance.

The historical cost of investments at the year-end date is £215,588 (2023: £203,504).

20. Debtors

	2024	2023
	£	£
Trade debtors	2,550	2,115
Prepayments and accrued income	1,272	2,395
	3,822	4,510

21. Creditors: amounts falling due within one year

	2024	2023
	£	£
Trade creditors	146	245
Accruals and deferred income	2,520	2,640
Social security and other taxes	2,929	2,807
	5,595	5,692

22. Pensions and other post retirement benefits

Defined contribution plans

The amount recognised in income or expenditure as an expense in relation to defined contribution plans was £3,255 (2023: £3,130).

Wales Council of the Blind

Company Limited by Guarantee

Notes to the Financial Statements *(continued)*

Year ended 31 March 2024

23. Analysis of charitable funds

Unrestricted funds

	At 1 April 2023	Income	Expenditure	Gains and losses	**At 31 March 2024**
	£	£	£	£	**£**
General funds	210,574	26,606	(46,455)	8,844	**199,569**
Designated Fund	12,500	–	–	–	**12,500**
	223,074	26,606	(46,455)	8,844	**212,069**

	At 1 April 2022	Income	Expenditure	Gains and losses	At 31 March 2023
	£	£	£	£	£
General funds	250,561	18,021	(38,853)	(19,155)	210,574
Designated Fund	12,500	–	–	–	12,500
	263,061	18,021	(38,853)	(19,155)	223,074

Restricted funds

	At 1 April 2023	Income	Expenditure	Gains and losses	**At 31 March 2024**
	£	£	£	£	**£**
Thomas Pocklington Trust	–	5,756	(5,756)	–	–
Welsh Government	–	105,000	(105,000)	–	–
	–	**110,756**	**(110,756)**	–	–

	At 1 April 2022	Income	Expenditure	Gains and losses	**At 31 March 2023**
	£	£	£	£	**£**
Thomas Pocklington Trust	–	5,756	(5,756)	–	–
Welsh Government	–	105,000	(105,000)	–	–
	–	**110,756**	**(110,756)**	–	–

The Welsh Government grant was received in respect of funding for delivery information services, network support and service improvement for the sight loss sector in Wales.

Thomas Pocklington Trust grant was received towards producing a State Of the Nation report on third sector services for blind and partially sighted people.

24. Analysis of net assets between funds

	Unrestricted Funds £	**Total Funds 2024 £**
Tangible fixed assets	2,846	**2,845**
Investments	190,346	**190,346**
Current assets	24,472	**24,472**
Creditors less than 1 year	(5,595)	**(5,594)**
Net assets	212,069	**212,069**

	Unrestricted Funds £	Total Funds 2023 £
Tangible fixed assets	3,645	3,645
Investments	217,442	217,442
Current assets	7,679	7,679
Creditors less than 1 year	(5,692)	(5,692)
Net assets	223,074	223,074

25. Related parties

The charity was under the control of the trustees throughout the current and previous year.

No transactions with related parties were undertaken such as are required to be disclosed under FRS 102.

WALES COUNCIL OF THE BLIND

England & Wales - Charity number 1045841

Accounts

COMPANY REGISTRATION NUMBER: 02578918
CHARITY REGISTRATION NUMBER: 1045841

Wales Council of the Blind

Company Limited by Guarantee

Unaudited Financial Statements

31 March 2023

CARSTON
Chartered accountants
1st Floor, Tudor House
16 Cathedral Road
Cardiff
CF11 9LJ

Wales Council of the Blind

Company Limited by Guarantee

Financial Statements

Year ended 31 March 2023

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Wales Council of the Blind

Company Limited by Guarantee

Trustees' Annual Report (Incorporating the Director's Report)

Year ended 31 March 2023

The trustees, who are also the directors for the purposes of company law, present their report and the unaudited financial statements of the charity for the year ended 31 March 2023.

Chair's report

Looking back over my five years as Chair of Wales Council of the Blind, we, like many charities, have faced a number of challenges including uncertainty around funding. The pandemic offered new opportunities with WCB playing a crucial role in bringing the sector together. This strengthened our role as an umbrella body and, in no small part, helped us to secure three years Welsh Government funding. It is with enormous pleasure that we can report on the first year of this funding period and that we were able to continue to expand on our work centred on three areas as previously conducted in 2021-22: information services, network support, and service improvement.

1. Information services: WCB is recognised as the best organisation to serve as a single point of access for the sector. This work is aided by Perspectif, which has been overhauled with several new features added. Perspectif shall be used as a tool to aid Low Vision Service Wales practitioner in making suggestions to patients to support and services within their community. We hope that this will see more people referred directly to the broad range of services provided by our members.

2. Network support: As an umbrella body, we have a responsibility to bring the sector together through various forums. Many of these are managed by WCB including the Wales Vision Forum, a forum comprising of local, regional, specialist and national organisations representing people with sight loss in Wales.

3. Service Improvement: We have been actively seeking solutions to the workforce crisis of too few Vision Rehabilitation Specialists across Wales. We have written and presented a training needs analysis to Welsh Government and, over the next year, will explore how this work could be taken forward through Wales' Regional Partnership Boards. WCB has a long history of supporting vision rehabilitation and have been appointed secretary of the Welsh Rehabilitation Officers Forum (WROF).

We are pleased to report an increase in the number of trainee and practising vision rehabilitation specialists over the past year but with almost half of the profession set to retire in the next ten years it is even more important that funding is secured so that future generations of blind and partially sighted people will be able to receive this critical service wherever they live in Wales.

Wales Council of the Blind

Company Limited by Guarantee

Trustees' Annual Report (Incorporating the Director's Report)

Year ended 31 March 2023

Over the past year we have continued to look at ways of reducing our expenditure. We have successfully downsized our office space and staff have adopted a hybrid working policy. The trustees are grateful to our staff and volunteers for all their work, and it is a real privilege to see first-hand the collaboration amongst our members. We continue to provide our core information services by providing a wealth of information to professionals and people with sight loss through Sylw, social media and Perspectif. I am particularly proud of the support we offer smaller local societies and hope that their membership will increase as a result of our project with LVSW.

Finally, I would like to thank my fellow trustees for their work and support during this time.

Janice Powers
Chairperson

Wales Council of the Blind

Company Limited by Guarantee

Trustees' Annual Report (Incorporating the Director's Report) *(continued)*

Year ended 31 March 2023

Reference and administrative details

Registered charity name	Wales Council of the Blind
Charity registration number	1045841
Company registration number	2578918
Principal office and registered office	Hastings House Fitzalan Place Unit 3.1 Cardiff CF24 0BL
The trustees	Mr Peter Curtis Mr Brian Mawby Mrs Miriam Wright Ms J Powers Ms J Thomas Mr B J Hobart Dr R Stiff
Company secretary	Owen J Williams
Independent examiner	Farzana Ahmed FCCA 1st Floor, Tudor House 16 Cathedral Road Cardiff CF11 9LJ

Wales Council of the Blind

Company Limited by Guarantee

Trustees' Annual Report (Incorporating the Director's Report) *(continued)*

Year ended 31 March 2023

Objectives and activities

Wales Council of the Blind's charitable objects are "to promote the welfare of blind and partially sighted persons, and the prevention of blindness".

Wales Council of the Blind (WCB) is the independent umbrella agency for vision impairment in Wales representing blind and partially sighted people and the clubs and societies who support them. Our independence enables us to act as an impartial observer, advocate, intermediary and evaluator for this complex, diverse group of organisations and services. In carrying out our charitable objectives, services to people with sight loss are improved.

We gather the opinions and views of people with sight loss through groups and consultation. We put their voice at the centre of what we do, reporting on their views to the people who are responsible for the services that help them. We also act as an agency to direct people to these services, giving them impartial advice and choice.

The trustees confirm that they complied with the duty in Section 4 of the Charities Act 2006 to have due regard for the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit.

Our work over the last year has focussed on three strategic priorities:

1) Information services
2) Network support
3) Service improvement

WCB upholds the following principles throughout our work:

- Beneficiaries first
- Integrity
- Openness
- Honesty
- Accountability
- Trust

Wales Council of the Blind

Company Limited by Guarantee

Trustees' Annual Report (Incorporating the Director's Report) *(continued)*

Year ended 31 March 2023

Achievements and performance

1) Information services.

Wales Vision Forum, a forum comprising of local, regional and national sight loss charities, recognises us as the best organisation to serve as a single point of access for the sector. Similarly, Low Vision Service Wales (LVSW) will be working with us in this vein because they recognise us as the independent organisation best placed to appropriately signpost patients to services and support.

The new CVI patient leaflet.

WCB is listed as the single point of access to information about services within the Certificate of Vision Impairment (Wales) CVI(W). This was a decision arrived at through agreement from the Wales Vision Forum. We believe that the sector is keen to have an impartial organisation offering signposting services for patients in receipt of a CVI.

Perspectif information portal

Perspectif has been overhauled by our developer to bring the code in line with current software versions. The new features are:

- searching by keyword from the home page;
- an events calendar linked to service and provider records;
- an option to create specialist site users (e.g. LVSW practitioners);
- a reporting function for named groups of users (such as LVSW; practitioners, Eye Care Liaison Officers (ECLOs), etc.);
- a postcode-based distance indicator;
- a filtering facility for the events page;
- a word search for the Library.

The Perspectif Library is now functioning well and shall become the central repository in Wales for information on sight loss and support. It shall include leaflets, reports, newsletters and the like which shall be stored on the WCB server.

Registered users can create folders which function like shopping baskets. You can add and remove services, service providers, glossary terms, events, and library items. These folders can be opened up into a single web page that is unformatted, enabling accessible versions to be produced easily.

We are now able to provide data on signposting for the benefit of our member organisations in order to highlight gaps in services and information about services. We hope it shall also demonstrate our impartiality.

Replacing the service offered by the Wales Eye Care Service (WECS) website.

Since the taking down of the WECS site, Perspectif is the only online up-to-date register of LVSW and Eye Health Examination Wales (EHEW) practitioners. An updating arrangement with LVSW is working well: we are informed via email of any changes required and can implement the changes usually within the hour. We are seeking a similar relationship with the EHEW service.

We have had inquiries from Vision Rehabilitation Specialists (VRSs) / ROVIs, ECLOs and Wales Vision Forum members about the unavailability of the WECS online service to find practitioners and we have been able to direct them to Perspectif as the only resource available currently. Since the site also offers information on other kinds of support, it fulfils an important role for professionals when advising and signposting service users to wider support, as well as WECS support. It is also a source of of contacts to obtain support from VRSs (ROVIs) and ECLOs.

Low Vision Service Wales.

Perspectif shall be used as a tool to aid the LVSW practitioner in making suggestions to patients regarding support and services within their communities; a critical part of their role. It is a reinforcement of the signposting element of the assessment.

(There will be no concerns regarding GDPR as at no point will any personal patient data be shared via the portal. Only the practitioner will retain the patient's personal data. WCB will make no contact with the patient unless, of course, the patient chooses to contact us.)

To aid this process we hope that all LVSW practitioners shall be registered as users and communications shall go out to them with a guide to using the site.

Working with LVSW we have developed and provided a training package to assist optometrists with getting the best from Perspectif.

LVSW sees Perspectif as an educational tool for its practitioners. In the next 2 years, we shall evaluate this service through a research programme. This research shall require independent funding. Therefore, an outcome alongside those given below shall be to secure funding for this research.

Perspectif Bulletin

Our Perspectif Bulletin shall become an ad-hoc publication to show recent additions and changes to the portal along with featured services. This will keep optometrists up-to-date and keep them aware of the portal as a useful part of their LVSW assessments.

Keywords

We have updated all records, along with some rationalisation of categories. The updating is an ongoing process. We have also added keywords into each record to aid searches.

Events calendar

The events calendar shows the patient or user a list of forthcoming activities, clubs, conferences and so on. These will eventually be linked to our Sylw bulletin under the events heading.

Rehabilitation officers (VRSs) and ECLOS

We are also aiming to get all Eye Clinic Liaison Officers and Vision Rehabilitation Specialists (ROVIs) registered as users. This shall form an important piece of work in April 2023. The aim - similar to that of the LVSW practitioners - is to encourage officers to use Perspectif as a tool for signposting patients and clients.

Monitoring

The overhaul of the site has given us additional functionality to see the pattern of recommendations across Wales. This shall help us to identify gaps in knowledge and gaps in services.

Other developments

In Bridgend, the Sensory Loss Professionals Group are working with us to ensure all services in their area are listed on Perspectif. Bridgend's Community Cluster Navigator and Social Prescriber within Bridgend District Nursing will also use Perspectif to signpost people to local services such as BridgeVis.

The database is the best source of information on the Third Sector support for VI people across Wales and we have been funded by **Thomas Pocklington Trust** (TPT) to map the services to identify gaps in provision. In order to make the report more useful to TPT we shall include categories of services defined by TPT and Visionary as part of a UK-wide survey. This won't affect the existing categories we adopted in Perspectif from the outset, but it will be an opportunity for Perspectif to be used as part of a UK survey and it shall demonstrate the flexibility of the database to be applied in other ways.

Website www.wcb-ccd.org.uk: This has been overhauled, bringing its code up to date and to align it with Perspectif. It has been made more accessible via smartphones following user feedback. This site is the focal point of our information provision and hosts, or provides access to, the following media:

Wales Council of the Blind

Company Limited by Guarantee

Trustees' Annual Report (Incorporating the Director's Report) *(continued)*

Year ended 31 March 2023

Sylw: Sylw is WCB's online news feed. It also takes the form of a weekly bulletin distributed via email. It is also produced in alternative formats monthly and distributed by post. Sylw is distributed to a total readership of 5,027. This includes alternative formats (465). We also distribute to all eye clinics.

Roundup: a quarterly magazine that provides a space for a fuller exploration of themes from the perspective of sight loss. Sent via email, post and available online.

Social Media: we shall continue to use our Facebook, Instagram and Twitter accounts to promote the work of the sector.

WCB has 1945 twitter followers; 366 Facebook; 274 Instagram

Accessible media: Wales Council of the Blind produces its materials, and that of member organisations, in accessible formats - notably large print and audio.

Over the past year we sent out newsletters and papers for:

- Visual Impairment Merthyr Tydfil
- Visual Impairment Breconshire
- Radnorshire Association for the Blind
- Ceredigion Association for the Blind
- Sight Life
- Macular Society (Wales)

2) Network support.

Wales Council of the Blind has a responsibility to bring the sector together through various forums. Many of these are managed by WCB.

Wales Vision Forum.

WCB chairs and provides secretariat for the Wales Vision Forum (WVF). The purpose of the Forum is for national, local and specialist organisations representing people with sight loss to come together to share, discuss and outline work programmes and priorities to enhance joint working and reduce duplication to maximise our collective reach and impact.

The Forum is a platform for sharing information, sharing good practice and expertise, consulting and identifying opportunities to support service and campaign planning.

The group focuses on the work of relevant work-streams. Task and finish groups are established for specific areas of work.

The Forum meets monthly.

Wales Council of the Blind

Company Limited by Guarantee

Trustees' Annual Report (Incorporating the Director's Report) *(continued)*

Year ended 31 March 2023

WVF has set up a specific T&F group on Optometry Reform with forum members sitting on each of the key groups. Our director sits on Clinical 1. This group is looking at the establishment of the CVI in Primary Care. We continue to hold Rehabilitation T&F groups.

Visionary.

WCB represents Visionary's members in Wales. Visionary is the UK umbrella organisation for local societies serving people with sight loss. WCB is the representative for Wales on Visionary's Members' Consultative Group (MCG). This is an opportunity to extend the reach of the voice of local societies into the UK agenda.

WCB's Director is currently Chair of Visionary and has been for the past 4 years.

Visionary have changed the frequency of the MCG meetings to quarterly. Our Engagement Officer continues to feed information to our Visionary members, as well as receive feedback through WVF. We will look to hold quarterly Visionary meetings with local societies specifically next year. The focus will be on referral pathways.

Other networks.

Wales Council of the Blind ensures that the voice of people with sight loss in Wales is represented in various networks. We sit on a number of networks including:

- Wales Rehabilitation Officers Forum;
- Wales Disability Reference Group;
- The Group on Vision has not been reformed in this session;
- Cross Party Group on Disability. WCB provides notetaking for the CPGD. The group met 5 times last year and discussed a range of themes including cost of living, transport, welfare reform, habilitation services and the work of the Disability Rights Taskforce;
- Disability Equality Forum;
- Low Vision Service Wales Advisory Group: our Director, in his capacity as Chair, sits on the Wales Eye Care Service Joint Committee;
- Hywel Dda Eyecare Collaboration Group;
- Welsh Government's Loneliness and Social Isolation Group;
- All-Wales Sensory Loss Information and Communication Group. (Currently inactive);
- Disability Rights Taskforce;
- Disability Rights Taskforce - Independent Living: Social Care Working Group and health and well-being;
- Optometry Reform Clinical 1;
- SENCOM Partnership Board that looks at service improvement for children and young people in education across Gwent.

Wales Council of the Blind

Company Limited by Guarantee

Trustees' Annual Report (Incorporating the Director's Report) *(continued)*

Year ended 31 March 2023

WCB Membership.
In addition to ordinary membership support we shall work on the following areas.

Supporting local organisations. Our Engagement Officer sits on a number of local societies and provides a combination of secretarial support, newsletters, accessible media, and governance.

The Communications Officer will improve the online presence of two member organisations: BridgeVis and Carmarthenshire Area Blind Society. We are covering Carmarthenshire Area Blind Society and BridgeVis through the support page agreed by WVF members. This is in line with drawing people to Perspectif as a source.

Regional Forums.

These are where individuals with sight loss are able to share their views and, to some extent, direct WCB's agenda. As an independent organisation we provide this crucial platform through which people are able to express themselves freely. Three meetings took place in West Wales, Cardiff and Southeast Wales.

Members in West Wales received a Local Health Board update on services and discussed the impact of Covid on their confidence. Cardiff and Southeast Wales met to explore the potential of establishing VI Bowls in the area. A new club has been established in Cardiff. WCB is working with the Welsh Association of Visually Impaired Bowlers to develop the number of clubs and people with sight loss who play the game. Participation in sport increases confidence and well-being, as well as reduce isolation and loneliness - these are key Welsh Government objectives.

3) Service improvement.

Scarcity of Rehabilitation Officers.

Following the report on the scarcity of rehabilitation officers in Wales, WCB and Guide Dogs held regular meetings to ensure that the recommendations take place. In May, WCB gave a presentation on the scarcity of ROVIs to the Deputy Minister for Social Services. WCB and Guide Dogs Cymru also met with Welsh Government officials in November to discuss the ongoing workforce crisis and to seek the establishment of a task and finish group.

Wales-based Rehabilitation Degree.

Rehabilitation Work (Visual Impairment) - FdSc (Foundation Degree) is only currently available in Birmingham. WCB, WVF and WROF continue to work together to explore the option of having a course delivered in Wales.

Following a successful meeting with Welsh Government, we have been actively seeking solutions to the workforce crisis: WCB led on the development of a Training Needs Analysis for additional Vision Rehabilitation Specialists in Wales.

Wales Council of the Blind

Company Limited by Guarantee

Trustees' Annual Report (Incorporating the Director's Report) *(continued)*

Year ended 31 March 2023

This report supports the inclusion of the role of the Vision Rehabilitation Specialist within the

apprenticeship scheme in Wales. WCB has collected up-to-date information from 18 of the 22 authorities to inform this work. WCB has met with Cardiff Metropolitan University to explore the possibility of Cardiff Met being the training provider for the satellite course in Wales.

We acknowledge the responsibilities of the Regional Partnership Boards and the local authorities in delivering habilitation and rehabilitation services, but we feel that the role of supporting Higher Education opportunities rests with Welsh Government. It's important to note that rehabilitation and habilitation services for vision impaired people cannot be delivered by a person without the Rehabilitation Foundation Degree or Habilitation Degree respectively. In some instances, third sector organisations are paid by the local authority to deliver the services but, similarly, these can only be delivered by fully qualified specialists.

There are currently only 31.1 FTE out of the recommended 44.9 FTE Vision Rehabilitation Specialists currently employed across Wales (the recommended number is 1 per 70,000 residents). It is essential that new Vision Rehabilitation Specialists gain qualifications, as half (15) of the current workforce is set to retire in the next 5 years. There are also only 10 practising Habilitation Specialists out of the recommended 20 (1 Habilitation specialist per 100 children).

On 7th February we met with Christopher Hare and Jason Stickler from Welsh Government's Further Education and Apprenticeship Division to discuss training needs analysis. We were informed that the role is too niche to be added to the apprenticeship scheme. This has forced us to explore an alternative model and we shall be discussing this with Welsh Government.

In brief, we propose a model to obtain a bursary to train specialists over the next 5 years. This 5-year plan will be led by a project officer who shall:

- Develop national wellbeing outcomes;
- Define an all-Wales rehabilitation pathway;
- Capture and analyse the outcomes data for service planning across Wales;

Importantly, the bursary shall also fund:

- 10 Habilitation Specialists .
- 25 Vision Rehabilitation Specialists (5 places have been guaranteed by Birmingham Central University).
- 5 Vision Rehabilitation Specialists top-up for Habilitation of Complex Needs (DeafBlind)).
- Yearly expenses of each student enrolled.

In March we wrote to the Deputy Minister for Social Services explaining that her officials have signalled their intention to meet with us, and we would ask that these discussions take place as soon as possible. We wish to contribute our knowledge and understanding to a long-term solution, but we need to act now if we are to prevent a work force crisis.

Additionally, we have met with Birmingham Central University (BCU) who, as the role of the VRS will not be added to the apprenticeship scheme here in Wales, will offer training to Welsh VRSs in Birmingham and not via a satellite course in Wales. BCU has agreed to hold 5 places a year for Welsh students for the next 5 years.

Wales Rehabilitation Officers Forum (WROF).

WCB continued to pay RWPN membership of Welsh ROVIs for 2022. ROVIs will receive specialist training opportunities as determined by WROF, as a result of our report 'addressing a workforce crisis'.

WROF held an AGM in March that included training for ROVIs. WCB will now provide secretariat support to WROF, as well as continuing to act as a Treasurer.

WROF has asked WCB to organize and facilitate the WROF Conference. WCB will also be responsible for organizing all WROF meetings in the future, as secretariat.

This year's conference doubled-up as an extended event so that members could discuss a range of topics including:

- Change of name - ROVI to Vision Rehabilitation Specialist (VRS)
- CVI in Primary Care - impact on social services - increased referrals
- Awareness of WCB Perspectif portal re: LVSW practitioners

Referral Pathways.

We work with WVF, LVSW and the Welsh Government to increase and improve referrals between health, social care, and the third sector.

LVSW practitioners shall engage with WCB and use Perspectif to offer signposting to patients as part of their LVSW assessment package.

WCB has also collated contact details (address and email) for Welsh Government in relation to sending CVIs in Primary Care to Social Care. This will ensure that all CVIs will get to the most appropriate person, and we hope this will involve a telephone call from a ROVI.

WCB also sits on the Optometry Reform Clinical 1 group. We have led on developing an updated CVI patient leaflet that has been agreed and signed off by members of the WVF. This leaflet cites WCB as the sole contact for signposting of services. We will use Perspectif for this function.

Wales Council of the Blind

Company Limited by Guarantee

Trustees' Annual Report (Incorporating the Director's Report) *(continued)*

Year ended 31 March 2023

Wales Eye Care Conference.

WCB supported the Welsh Government in the designing and running of the Annual Wales Eyecare Conference for 2022.

The conference, the first since the pandemic, 'Future Approach to Eye Care: Reform and Recovery' took place on Monday 7th November. A total of 106 delegates attended. We had 148 people booked on. 42 people didn't turn up on the day. Attendance was down from 138 delegates in 2019. Covid and the late cancellation of the train strike directly influenced attendance.

LVSW PREMs: WCB established a group of vision impaired LVSW users to design PREMs for the service. This was piloted across Hywel Dda and has now been rolled out across Wales. WCB continues to provide support for the publication of research on the process. We hope to add Perspectif and its usefulness to the PREMs in order to gain user satisfaction data regarding the portal.

Additional support for member organisations: We have aided the following in their successful funding applications with letters of support:

- Vision Support and Sight Life
- Macular Society
- UCAN Productions

Patient information leaflet for Ranibizumab and biosimilars treatment: we were consulted on the leaflet to be issued to patients with Macular conditions.

Diabetic Eye Screening Wales: We have provided advice on accessibility of their appointment, cancellation and reminder letters.

Wales Council of the Blind

Company Limited by Guarantee

Trustees' Annual Report (Incorporating the Director's Report) *(continued)*

Year ended 31 March 2023

Financial review

With the ending of the financial year, the board of trustees report a year-end financial position of a deficit of £39,987 (2022: deficit £22,284). This deficit includes net losses on investments revaluation of £19,155. Welsh Government funding has continued throughout the year.

WCB reserves policy is fully met and we have sufficient funds to plan for the future.

Unrestricted funds at year-end were £223,074 (2022: £263,061) with free reserves of £1,987 (2022: £27,551).

Investment Policy

Under articles of association the charity has the power to make any investment which the trustees see fit. The present policy is to keep an amount that represents short term operating requirements in liquid deposits (bank deposit accounts) and place the balance in the hands of a professional investment broker, to invest in wide range of fixed interest and equity funds. During the period 2015/16 the charity invested £200,000 with Quilter Cheviot as part of a Discretionary Managed Portfolio at a lower to medium tolerance of risk. WCB's investment objective is to grow the capital of the portfolio, as well as generating some degree of income. At the year-end WCB's managed portfolio was valued at £217,442. This was a net loss of £17,888 on the previous year. This will continue to be invested.

Reserves Policy

The Trustees have considered carefully the purpose of any reserves Wales Council of the Blind has or might have in the future. The stated aim of the reserves policy is to allow for unforeseeable events. This could be anything from replacing essential office equipment, to the sudden loss of funding. The amount should be sufficient to pay for staff redundancies and outstanding liabilities.

Reserves should be maintained at a level of 6 months operating costs of the core organisation. In addition, we may need to recognise any longer-term grant / project commitments and to settle the finances accordingly. Reserves should exclude funding that has been restricted for other specified use.

Reserves should be invested in a safe, low risk environment that maintains the capital invested and where possible provides a level of return on those funds.

The policy is reviewed annually by Trustees, or more frequently as necessary.

Wales Council of the Blind

Company Limited by Guarantee

Trustees' Annual Report (Incorporating the Director's Report) *(continued)*

Year ended 31 March 2023

Plans for future periods

WCB received Welsh Government funding of £105,000 for this period and has been awarded an indicative grant for the following two years 2023-24 and 2024-25 of up to £105,000 per annum. We have restarted the Thomas Pocklington Trust project now that covid restrictions have ended and will draw down the final payment of £5,756.25 in 2023/24.

WCB is a partner in a Wales-wide project led by the Royal Society for Blind Children. The project will provide specialist personal development support that focuses on establishing social connections, empowering families and young people to take control of their lives, link into their communities and equipping local providers with the knowledge, confidence and skills to include children and young people with sight loss in their existing provision.

Structure, governance and management

Governing Document

The organisation is a charitable company limited by guarantee and as such is governed by a Memorandum and Articles of Association. The company was incorporated on 31 January 1991 under the Companies Act 1985 and registered as a charity on 18 April 1995.

Recruitment and Appointment of the Management Committee

The directors of the company also serve as trustees of the charity and under the company's Articles are known as members of the Management Committee. Trustees are appointed annually at the Annual General Meeting. Casual vacancies are filled by the Management Committee and ratified at the next Annual General Meeting.

Each member of the Management Committee has agreed to guarantee the company's debts for the amount of £1 each.

All new Trustees are given induction training via the issuing of our organisational policy and procedures book and WCB offers to arrange for Trustees to have the opportunity to attend Trustee training provided by Wales Council for Voluntary Action (WCVA) should they wish. Trustees are able to contact the Council's secretary if they wish to have specific advice or guidance on any policies or procedures. WCB provides Trustees with indemnity insurance to the value of £500,000.

Wales Council of the Blind

Company Limited by Guarantee

Trustees' Annual Report (Incorporating the Director's Report) *(continued)*

Year ended 31 March 2023

Structure, governance and management *(continued)*

The staff and volunteers

Owen Williams is the Director at Wales Council of the Blind. He provides senior management to WCB and helps plan and deliver strategic direction to the sector.

Richard Bowers is our Communications Officer, and he manages WCB's communications and has developed and updates 'Perspectif, our online information portal.

Our Engagement Officer, Rebecca Phillips, facilitates and organises the Regional Steering Groups, as well as enables the voice of people with sight loss to be heard.

WCB has a dedicated team of volunteers who we would like to thank, providing invaluable support to the organisation around information gathering, keeping our database up-to-date and updating our Twitter feed, collating the material for Roundup, providing help with fundraising, answering the telephone, and providing advice. Thank you, Ann, Dewi, Alan and Valmai for your continued support. We would also like to thank Bethan Smale our bookkeeper for all of her hard work

Small company provisions

This report has been prepared in accordance with the provisions applicable to companies entitled to the small companies exemption.

The trustees' annual report was approved on 6th November 2023 and signed on behalf of the board of trustees by:

.....Signed
Trustee

Wales Council of the Blind

Company Limited by Guarantee

Independent Examiner's Report to the Trustees of Wales Council of the Blind

Year ended 31 March 2023

I report to the trustees on my examination of the financial statements of Wales Council of the Blind ('the charity') for the year ended 31 March 2023.

Responsibilities and basis of report

As the charity trustees of the company (and also its directors for the purposes of company law) you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006 ('the 2006 Act').

Having satisfied myself that the accounts of the company are not required to be audited under Part 16 of the 2006 Act and are eligible for independent examination, I report in respect of my examination of your company's accounts as carried out under section 145 of the Charities Act 2011 ('the 2011 Act'). In carrying out my examination I have followed the Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the 2011 Act.

Independent examiner's statement

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination giving me cause to believe that in any material respect:

1. accounting records were not kept in respect of the company as required by section 386 of the 2006 Act: or
2. the accounts do not accord with those records; or
3. the accounts do not comply with the accounting requirements of section 396 of the 2006 Act other than any requirement that the accounts give a 'true and fair view' which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination; or
4. the accounts have not been prepared in accordance with the methods and principles of the Statement of Recommended Practice for accounting and reporting by charities.

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

Farzana Ahmed FCCA
Independent Examiner
1st Floor, Tudor House
16 Cathedral Road
Cardiff
CF11 9LJ
Dated: 04/12/2023

Wales Council of the Blind

Company Limited by Guarantee

Statement of Financial Activities
(including income and expenditure account)

Year ended 31 March 2023

	Note	2023 Unrestricted funds £	2023 Restricted funds £	2023 Total funds £	2022 Total funds £
Income and endowments					
Donations and legacies	5	12,943	110,756	**123,699**	115,641
Investment income	6	5,078	–	**5,078**	4,425
Total income		18,021	110,756	**128,777**	120,066
Expenditure					
Expenditure on raising funds:					
Costs of other trading activities	7	1,002	–	**1,002**	1,428
Investment management costs	8	3,812	–	**3,812**	3,993
Expenditure on charitable activities	9,10	34,039	110,756	**144,795**	144,051
Total expenditure		38,853	110,756	**149,609**	149,472
Net (losses)/gains on investments	12	(19,155)	–	**(19,155)**	7,122
Net expenditure and net movement in funds		(39,987)	–	**(39,987)**	(22,284)
Reconciliation of funds					
Total funds brought forward		263,061	–	**263,061**	285,345
Total funds carried forward		223,074	–	**223,074**	263,061

The statement of financial activities includes all gains and losses recognised in the year.
All income and expenditure derive from continuing activities.

Wales Council of the Blind

Company Limited by Guarantee

Statement of Financial Position

31 March 2023

	Note	2023 £	2023 £	2022 £	2022 £
Fixed assets					
Tangible fixed assets	18		3,645		180
Investments	19		217,442		235,330
			221,087		235,510
Current assets					
Debtors	20	4,510		4,433	
Cash at bank and in hand		3,169		29,160	
		7,679		33,593	
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	21	5,692		6,042	
Net current assets			1,987		27,551
Total assets less current liabilities			223,074		263,061
Net assets			223,074		263,061
Funds of the charity					
Unrestricted funds			223,074		263,061
Total charity funds	23		223,074		263,061

For the year ending 31 March 2023 the charity was entitled to exemption from audit under section 477 of the Companies Act 2006 relating to small companies.

Directors' responsibilities:

- The members have not required the company to obtain an audit of its financial statements for the year in question in accordance with section 476;
- The directors acknowledge their responsibilities for complying with the requirements of the Act with respect to accounting records and the preparation of financial statements.

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

The statement of financial position
continues on the following page.
The notes on pages 21 to 32 form part of these financial statements.

Wales Council of the Blind

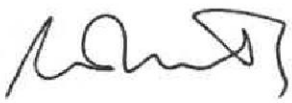
Company Limited by Guarantee

Statement of Financial Position *(continued)*

31 March 2023

These financial statements were approved by the board of trustees and authorised for issue on 6th November 2023, and are signed on behalf of the board by:

.....Signed
Trustee



.....Signed
Trustee

Company registration number: 02578918

Wales Council of the Blind

Company Limited by Guarantee

Notes to the Financial Statements

Year ended 31 March 2023

1. General information

The charity is a public benefit entity and a private company limited by guarantee, registered in England & Wales and a registered charity in England and Wales. The address of the registered office is Hastings House, Fitzalan Place, Unit 3.1, Cardiff, CF24 0BL.

2. Statement of compliance

These financial statements have been prepared in compliance with FRS 102, 'The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and the Republic of Ireland', the Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (Charities SORP (FRS 102)) and the Companies Act 2006.

3. Accounting policies

Basis of preparation

The financial statements have been prepared on the historical cost basis, as modified by the revaluation of certain financial assets and liabilities and investment properties measured at fair value through income or expenditure.

The financial statements are prepared in sterling, which is the functional currency of the entity.

Going concern

After making reasonable enquiries and having considered the impact of the economic downturn and other factors on the financial performance of the charity and its current performance, the Trustee's believe that the charity will be able to continue to fulfil its charitable purpose, will be able to meet its liabilities as they fall due, and will have adequate resources to continue in operational existence for the foreseeable future. Accordingly, the trustees continue to adopt the going concern basis in in in preparing the financial statements

Judgements and key sources of estimation uncertainty

The preparation of the financial statements requires management to make judgements, estimates and assumptions that affect the amounts reported. These estimates and judgements are continually reviewed and are based on experience and other factors, including expectations of future events that are believed to be reasonable under the circumstances.

3. Accounting policies *(continued)*

Fund accounting

Unrestricted funds are available for use at the discretion of the trustees in furtherance of the purposes of the charity. Unrestricted funds include a revaluation reserve representing the restatement of investment assets at market values.

Designated funds are unrestricted funds earmarked by the trustees for specific purposes.

Restricted funds are subjected to restrictions on their expenditure imposed by the donor.

Incoming resources

All incoming resources are included in the statement of financial activities when entitlement has passed to the charity; it is probable that the economic benefits associated with the transaction will flow to the charity and the amount can be reliably measured. The following specific policies are applied to particular categories of income:

- income from donations or grants is recognised when there is evidence of entitlement to the gift, receipt is probable and its amount can be measured reliably.

- legacy income is recognised when receipt is probable and entitlement is established.

- income from donated goods is measured at the fair value of the goods unless this is impractical to measure reliably, in which case the value is derived from the cost to the donor or the estimated resale value. Donated facilities and services are recognised in the accounts when received if the value can be reliably measured. No amounts are included for the contribution of general volunteers.

- income from contracts for the supply of services is recognised with the delivery of the contracted service. This is classified as unrestricted funds unless there is a contractual requirement for it to be spent on a particular purpose and returned if unspent, in which case it may be regarded as restricted.

3. Accounting policies *(continued)*

Resources expended

Expenditure is recognised on an accruals basis as a liability is incurred. Expenditure includes any VAT which cannot be fully recovered, and is classified under headings of the statement of financial activities to which it relates:

- expenditure on raising funds includes the costs of all fundraising activities, events, non-charitable trading activities, and the sale of donated goods.
- expenditure on charitable activities includes all costs incurred by a charity in undertaking activities that further its charitable aims for the benefit of its beneficiaries, including those support costs and costs relating to the governance of the charity apportioned to charitable activities.
- other expenditure includes all expenditure that is neither related to raising funds for the charity nor part of its expenditure on charitable activities.

All costs are allocated to expenditure categories reflecting the use of the resource. Direct costs attributable to a single activity are allocated directly to that activity. Shared costs are apportioned between the activities they contribute to on a reasonable, justifiable and consistent basis.

Tangible assets

All fixed assets are initially recorded at cost. Fixed assets are not capitalised where the cost is below £100.

Depreciation

Depreciation is calculated so as to write off the cost or valuation of an asset, less its residual value, over the useful economic life of that asset as follows:

Office equipment	-	25% reducing balance

Investments

Unlisted equity investments are initially recorded at cost, and subsequently measured at fair value. If fair value cannot be reliably measured, assets are measured at cost less impairment.

Listed investments are measured at fair value with changes in fair value being recognised in income or expenditure.

Wales Council of the Blind

Company Limited by Guarantee

Notes to the Financial Statements *(continued)*

Year ended 31 March 2023

3. Accounting policies *(continued)*

Debtors and creditors receivable/ payable within one year

Debtors and creditors with no stated interest rate and receivable or payable within one year are recorded at transaction price. Any losses arising from impairment are recognised in expenditure.

Financial instruments

A financial asset or a financial liability is recognised only when the entity becomes a party to the contractual provisions of the instrument. Basic financial instruments are initially recognised at the amount receivable or payable including any related transaction costs, unless the arrangement constitutes a financing transaction, where it is recognised at the present value of the future payments discounted at a market rate of interest for a similar debt instrument. Current assets and current liabilities are subsequently measured at the cash or other consideration expected to be paid or received and not discounted. Debt instruments are subsequently measured at amortised cost. Where investments in shares or preference shares are publicly traded or their fair value can otherwise be measured reliably, the investment is subsequently measured at fair value with changes in fair value recognised in income and expenditure. All other such investments are subsequently measured at cost less impairment.

Defined contribution plans

Contributions to defined contribution plans are recognised as an expense in the period in which the related service is provided. Prepaid contributions are recognised as an asset to the extent that the prepayment will lead to a reduction in future payments or a cash refund.

4. Limited by guarantee

Each member of the Board of Trustees has undertaken to guarantee the Council's debts to the sum of £1 each.

Wales Council of the Blind

Company Limited by Guarantee

Notes to the Financial Statements *(continued)*

Year ended 31 March 2023

5. Donations and legacies

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	**Total Funds 2023 £**
Donations			
Donations and bequests	5,274	–	**5,274**
Grants			
Welsh Government	–	105,000	**105,000**
Local Authority grants	1,533	–	**1,533**
Wales Council for Voluntary Action	700	–	**700**
Thomas Pocklington Trust	–	5,756	**5,756**
Other donations and legacies			
Other income	5,436	–	**5,436**
	12,943	110,756	**123,699**

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total Funds 2022 £
Donations			
Donations and bequests	4,315	–	4,315
Grants			
Welsh Government	–	105,000	105,000
Local Authority grants	1,437	–	1,437
Wales Council for Voluntary Action	700	–	700
Thomas Pocklington Trust	–	–	–
Other donations and legacies			
Other income	4,189	–	4,189
	10,641	105,000	115,641

Wales Council of the Blind

Company Limited by Guarantee

Notes to the Financial Statements *(continued)*

Year ended 31 March 2023

6. Investment income

	Unrestricted Funds £	**Total Funds 2023 £**	Unrestricted Funds £	Total Funds 2022 £
Income from listed investments	5,078	**5,078**	4,425	4,425

7. Costs of other trading activities

	Unrestricted Funds £	**Total Funds 2023 £**	Unrestricted Funds £	Total Funds 2022 £
Fundraising costs	1,002	**1,002**	1,428	1,428

8. Investment management costs

	Unrestricted Funds £	**Total Funds 2023 £**	Unrestricted Funds £	Total Funds 2022 £
Portfolio management	3,812	**3,812**	3,993	3,993

9. Expenditure on charitable activities by fund type

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	**Total Funds 2023 £**
Promoting Welfare	14,170	110,756	**124,926**
Support costs	19,869	–	**19,869**
	34,039	110,756	**144,795**

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total Funds 2022 £
Promoting Welfare	19,812	105,000	124,813
Support costs	19,239	–	19,238
	39,051	105,000	144,051

Wales Council of the Blind

Company Limited by Guarantee

Notes to the Financial Statements *(continued)*

Year ended 31 March 2023

10. Expenditure on charitable activities by activity type

	Activities undertaken directly £	Support costs £	**Total funds 2023 £**	Total fund 2022 £
Promoting Welfare	124,926	16,172	**141,098**	140,880
Governance costs	–	3,697	**3,697**	3,171
	124,926	19,869	**144,795**	144,051

11. Analysis of support costs

	Analysis of support costs activity 1 £	**Total 2023 £**	Total 2022 £
Staff costs	13,512	**13,512**	12,816
General office	2,658	**2,658**	3,251
Governance costs	3,699	**3,699**	3,171
	19,869	**19,869**	19,238

12. Net (losses)/gains on investments

	Unrestricted Funds £	**Total Funds 2023 £**	Unrestricted Funds £	Total Funds 2022 £
Gains/(losses) on listed investments	(19,155)	**(19,155)**	7,122	7,122

13. Net expenditure

Net expenditure is stated after charging/(crediting):

	2023 £	2022 £
Depreciation of tangible fixed assets	**364**	60

Wales Council of the Blind

Company Limited by Guarantee

Notes to the Financial Statements *(continued)*

Year ended 31 March 2023

14. Independent examination fees

	2023	2022
	£	£
Fees payable to the independent examiner for:		
Independent examination of the financial statements	**2,640**	2,640

15. Staff costs

The total staff costs and employee benefits for the reporting period are analysed as follows:

	2023	2022
	£	£
Wages and salaries	**108,122**	103,912
Social security costs	**6,703**	6,679
Employer contributions to pension plans	**3,130**	3,190
	117,955	113,781

The average head count of employees during the year was 3 (2022: 3). The average number of full-time equivalent employees during the year is analysed as follows:

	2023	2022
	No.	No.
Project staff	**3**	3

No employee received employee benefits of more than £60,000 during the year (2022: Nil).

Key Management Personnel

Key management personnel include all persons that have authority and responsibility for planning, directing and controlling the activities of the charity. The total compensation paid to key management personnel for services provided to the charity was £41,487 (2022: £39,812).

16. Trustee remuneration and expenses

No remuneration or other benefits from employment with the charity or a related entity were received by the trustees.

All trustees are entitled to claim reimbursement of the cost of attending meetings, no trustees were reimbursed during the year (2022: £nil) for travelling costs to attend meetings.

Wales Council of the Blind

Company Limited by Guarantee

Notes to the Financial Statements *(continued)*

Year ended 31 March 2023

17. Transfers between funds

No transfers between general funds and designated funds took place during the year.

18. Tangible fixed assets

	Equipment £	Total £
Cost		
At 1 April 2022	24,289	**24,289**
Additions	3,829	**3,829**
At 31 March 2023	28,118	**28,118**
Depreciation		
At 1 April 2022	24,109	**24,109**
Charge for the year	364	**364**
At 31 March 2023	24,473	**24,473**
Carrying amount		
At 31 March 2023	3,645	**3,645**
At 31 March 2022	180	180

19. Investments

	Cash or cash equivalents £	Listed investments £	Total £
Cost or valuation			
At 1 April 2022	7,277	228,053	**235,330**
Additions	66,656	56,412	**123,068**
Disposals	(60,239)	(73,326)	**(133,565)**
Fair value movements	–	(7,391)	**(7,391)**
At 31 March 2023	13,694	203,748	**217,442**
Impairment			
At 1 April 2022 and 31 March 2023			–
Carrying amount			
At 31 March 2023	13,694	203,748	**217,442**
At 31 March 2022	7,277	228,053	235,330

19. Investments *(continued)*

All investments shown above are held at valuation.

Listed investments
The aggregate market value of listed investments is £203,748 (2022: £228,053) and the stock exchange value is £203,748 (2022: £228,053).

Financial assets held at fair value

Investments are stated at fair value at the balance sheet date, listed investments are stated at the stock exchange values at the year end. Other investments are valued based on investment performance.

The historical cost of investments at the year end date is £203,504 (2022 : £215,588).

20. Debtors

	2023	2022
	£	£
Trade debtors	2,115	1,574
Prepayments and accrued income	2,395	2,859
	4,510	4,433

21. Creditors: amounts falling due within one year

	2023	2022
	£	£
Trade creditors	245	–
Accruals and deferred income	2,640	2,640
Social security and other taxes	2,807	3,402
	5,692	6,042

22. Pensions and other post retirement benefits

Defined contribution plans

The amount recognised in income or expenditure as an expense in relation to defined contribution plans was £3,130 (2022: £3,190).

Wales Council of the Blind

Company Limited by Guarantee

Notes to the Financial Statements *(continued)*

Year ended 31 March 2023

23. Analysis of charitable funds

Unrestricted funds

	At 1 April 2022	Income	Expenditure	Gains and losses	**At 31 March 2023**
	£	£	£	£	**£**
General funds	250,561	18,021	(38,853)	(19,155)	**210,574**
Designated Fund	12,500	–	–	–	**12,500**
	263,061	18,021	(38,853)	(19,155)	**223,074**

	At 1 April 2021	Income	Expenditure	Gains and losses	At 31 March 2022
	£	£	£	£	£
General funds	272,845	15,066	(44,472)	7,122	250,561
Designated Fund	12,500	–	–	–	12,500
	285,345	15,066	(44,472)	7,122	263,061

Restricted funds

	At 1 April 2022	Income	Expenditure	Gains and losses	**At 31 March 2023**
	£	£	£	£	**£**
Thomas Pocklington Trust	–	5,756	(5,756)	–	**–**
Welsh Government	–	105,000	(105,000)	–	**–**
	–	110,756	(110,756)	–	**–**

	At 1 April 2021	Income	Expenditure	Gains and losses	At 31 March 2022
	£	£	£	£	£
Welsh Government	–	105,000	(105,000)	–	–

The Welsh Government grant was received in respect of funding for delivery information services, network support and service improvement for the sight loss sector in Wales.

Thomas Pocklington Trust grant was received towards producing a State of the Nation report on third sector services for blind and partially sighted people.

Wales Council of the Blind

Company Limited by Guarantee

Notes to the Financial Statements *(continued)*

Year ended 31 March 2023

24. Analysis of net assets between funds

	Unrestricted Funds £	**Total Funds 2023 £**
Tangible fixed assets	3,645	**3,645**
Investments	217,442	**217,442**
Current assets	7,679	**7,679**
Creditors less than 1 year	(5,692)	**(5,692)**
Net assets	223,074	**223,074**

	Unrestricted Funds £	Total Funds 2022 £
Tangible fixed assets	180	180
Investments	235,330	235,330
Current assets	33,593	33,593
Creditors less than 1 year	(6,042)	(6,042)
Net assets	263,061	263,061

25. Related parties

The charity was under the control of the trustees throughout the current and previous year.

No transactions with related parties were undertaken such as are required to be disclosed under FRS 102.

WALES COUNCIL OF THE BLIND

England & Wales - Charity number 1045841

Accounts

COMPANY REGISTRATION NUMBER: 02578918
CHARITY REGISTRATION NUMBER: 1045841

Wales Council of the Blind

Company Limited by Guarantee

Unaudited Financial Statements

31 March 2022

CARSTON
Chartered accountants
1st Floor, Tudor House
16 Cathedral Road
Cardiff
CF11 9LJ

Wales Council of the Blind

Company Limited by Guarantee

Financial Statements

Year ended 31 March 2022

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Wales Council of the Blind

Company Limited by Guarantee

Trustees' Annual Report (Incorporating the Director's Report)

Year ended 31 March 2022

The trustees, who are also the directors for the purposes of company law, present their report and the unaudited financial statements of the charity for the year ended 31 March 2022.

CHAIR'S REPORT

The pandemic continued to impact on the way in which third sector organisations provide support and services to people with sight loss. Most of our members did not return to face-to-face activities during the year and WCB continued to hold all our meetings on-line. In fact, our staff and volunteers continued to work from home except for producing mail-outs, in accordance with Covid restrictions.

This year brought a very different challenge to WCB as Covid funding streams were no longer available to us.

Over the past two years, we have met with Welsh Government to explore funding streams aligned to our core function. In this regard, we were delighted to receive news that WCB had been awarded an indicative grant for 2022-23 and the following two years 2023-24 and 2024-25 of up to £105,000 per annum. This provides WCB with a stable financial platform in which to plan for the next three years.

This year's work was centered on three areas: information services, network support, and service improvement. Some key areas of work include:

- **Information services:** Discussions have taken place with Low Vision Service Wales (LVSW) to develop functionality for accredited low vision optometrists to signpost patients to third sector support using WCB's **Perspectif** online portal. This project shall form part of our 2022-23 workplan and has been approved by WECS Joint Committee. This is a great opportunity for WCB to promote the work of all our members across Wales.
- **Network support:** WCB chairs and provides secretariat for the Wales Vision Forum. This forum proved an invaluable resource during the pandemic and enabled us directly address concerns raised by people with sight loss.
- **Service improvement:** A report on the scarcity of Rehabilitation Officers for the Visually Impaired (ROVIs) was sent to Welsh Government highlighting recommendations, including the option of a course to be delivered in Wales and the possibility of this being part of the apprenticeship scheme. This critical work will continue next year.

Wales Council of the Blind

Company Limited by Guarantee

Trustees' Annual Report (Incorporating the Director's Report) *(continued)*

Year ended 31 March 2022

The trustees are grateful to staff and volunteers for continuing to adapt to the situation and maintaining a service throughout this difficult time. Each of them continued to provide core services to our activities, including helping local societies to support their members through Zoom and telephone meetings. Owen Williams, our director, had been on long-term sick leave following a retinal detachment in June. This had an impact on delivery of some workstreams and I would like to particularly thank Richard and Rebecca for all their hard work during this time. Owen returned full-time in December.

I would also like to thank my fellow trustees for their work and support during this time.

Janice Powers
Chairperson

Wales Council of the Blind

Company Limited by Guarantee

Trustees' Annual Report (Incorporating the Director's Report) *(continued)*

Year ended 31 March 2022

Reference and administrative details

Registered charity name	Wales Council of the Blind	
Charity registration number	1045841	
Company registration number	2578918	
Principal office and registered office	Hastings House Fitzalan Place Unit 3.1 Cardiff CF24 0BL	
The trustees	Mr Peter Curtis Mr Brian Mawby Mrs Miriam Wright Ms J Powers Ms J Thomas Mr B J Hobart Ms C Draper Dr R Stiff	(Retried 28 February 2022)
Company secretary	Owen J Williams	
Independent examiner	Farzana Ahmed FCCA 1st Floor, Tudor House 16 Cathedral Road Cardiff CF11 9LJ	

Wales Council of the Blind

Company Limited by Guarantee

Trustees' Annual Report (Incorporating the Director's Report) *(continued)*

Year ended 31 March 2022

OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES

Wales Council of the Blind's charitable objects are "to promote the welfare of blind and partially sighted persons, and the prevention of blindness".

Wales Council of the Blind (WCB) is the independent umbrella agency for vision impairment in Wales representing blind and partially sighted people and the clubs and societies who support them. Our independence enables us to act as an impartial observer, advocate, intermediary and evaluator for this complex, diverse group of organisations and services. In carrying out our charitable objectives, services to people with sight loss are improved.

We gather the opinions and views of people with sight loss through groups and consultation. We put their voice at the centre of what we do, reporting on their views to the people who are responsible for the services that help them. We also act as an agency to direct people to these services, giving them impartial advice and choice.

The trustees confirm that they complied with the duty in Section 4 of the Charities Act 2006 to have due regard for the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit.

Our work over the last year has focussed on three strategic priorities:

1) Information services
2) Network support
3) Service improvement

WCB upholds the following principles throughout our work:

- Beneficiaries first
- Integrity
- Openness
- Honesty
- Accountability
- Trust

Wales Council of the Blind

Company Limited by Guarantee

Trustees' Annual Report (Incorporating the Director's Report) *(continued)*

Year ended 31 March 2022

ACHIEVEMENTS AND PERFORMANCE

1) Information Services

WCB provides information services to our members, professionals, and people with sight loss. In addition to informal support via telephone and email, WCB provides the following information services.

Website www.wcb-ccd.org.uk.

This is the focal point of our information provision and hosts, or provides access to, the following media:

Sylw: a weekly bulletin distributed via email and on the website. It is also produced in alternative formats monthly and distributed by post. Sylw continues to be extremely well received and its content is distributed further afield by other partners. Our e-bulletin has a readership of over 4,000 recipients whilst the monthly edition was delivered to 577 individuals with sight loss who would not have access via the web or email.

'*I enjoy reading the Sylw newsletter - I find it really informative and useful.*'

Sylw (e-bulletin) is made available through twitter, facebook, instagram and the RNIB Connect Cymru facebook group.

WCB also produces **Roundup**: a quarterly magazine that provides a space for a fuller exploration of themes from the perspective of sight loss. Sent via email, post and available online. We sent out 3 editions last year: **'Conversations that Matter'** focused on the impact of the pandemic; **'Jobense and Sight Village edition'** looked at employment and the range of access technologies available; our final edition was a **'Focus on Glaucoma'**.

Each edition of Roundup was circulated quarterly via email, social media, large print and audio to over 4,680.

Perspectif: a database of services and other resources has been overhauled this year. Discussions have taken place with Low Vision Service Wales (LVSW) to develop functionality for accredited low vision optometrists. This project shall form part of our 2022-23 workplan. It has been approved by WECS Joint Committee. We also held conversations with the School of Optometry's proposed NOUSE project and we are awaiting decisions on their funding.

RESET: this project, Lottery-funded until April 2021, had the sole purpose of informing service users of changes to retail, education, social care/health, employment and transport under Covid-19 restrictions. WCB continued this into the 2021/22 year to help people - who have limited access to online information – manage the changes arising from the lifting of restrictions. We continued to use the Wales Vision Forum to identify themes to explore, with 4 editions issued, as well as updates online and via Sylw. Now that subtle changes in regulations are the main issue we required a quicker vehicle of communication than the planned bulletins could deliver, so the RESET publications are abandoned in favour of updates channeled through the website, social media and monthly Sylw bulletins.

Social Media: we continue to use our Facebook, Instagram and Twitter accounts to promote the work of the sector. WCB has 1,886 twitter followers, 243 on instagram and 325 Facebook followers.

Accessible media.
WCB produces its materials, and that of member organisations, in accessible formats - notably large print and audio CDs. We produced newsletters for Visual Impairment Merthyr; Radnorshire Association for the Blind; Visual Impairment Breconshire; Ceredigion Association for the Blind; and the Macular Society (Cymru) – commenced January 2022.

2) Network Support

Wales Council of the Blind has a responsibility to bring the sector together through various forums. Many of these are managed by WCB.

Wales Vision Forum

WCB continued to and provide secretariat for the Wales Vision Forum. The purpose of the Forum is for national, local and specialist organisations representing people with sight loss to come together to share, discuss and outline work programmes and priorities to enhance joint working and reduce duplication to maximise our collective reach and impact.

The Forum is a platform for sharing information, sharing good practice and expertise, consulting and identifying opportunities to support service and campaign planning.

The group focussed on the work of relevant work-streams. Task and finish groups will be established for specific areas of work. A proposed group is Eye Care Collaboration Groups / Optometry reform.

WCB was responsible for establishing weekly emergency meetings during the Covid pandemic, leading to an information resource to ensure that Welsh Government messages go out in an accessible form to people with sight loss. This then became a fortnightly meeting, alternating between broad themes and the work of the Eye Care Collaboration Groups (ECGs). This is now a monthly meeting.

The Rehabilitation Task and Finish Group continues to meet and contributed feedback on the rehabilitation report: addressing a workforce crisis in Wales. We will now focus on the apprenticeship scheme in Wales and have been asked by Welsh Government to prepare a Needs Analysis in this regard.

Visionary

Visionary is the UK umbrella organisation for local societies serving people with sight loss. WCB is the representative for Wales on Visionary's Members' Consultative Group (MCG). This is an opportunity to extend the reach of the voice of local societies into the UK agenda.

The Member's Consultative Group (MCG) met, initially, on a monthly basis then reduced to quarterly. WCB convenes a Wales division group to feed to and from the MCG meetings. Additionally, there are MCG meetings that include the National partners (such as Thomas Pocklington Trust, RNIB, Macular Society, Blind Veterans, Retina UK and Guide Dogs)

Owen Williams, WCB's CEO, continues as Chair of Visionary.

WCB Membership

To support our members during the pandemic, WCB did not collect membership during this year.

In addition to ordinary membership support our Engagement Officer sits on a number of local societies and provides a combination of secretarial support, newsletters, accessible media, and governance.

WCB has provided access to our telephone conference facility to Pembrokeshire Blind Society, Radnorshire Association for the Blind and Visual Impairment Merthyr to enable their board meetings and social groups to continue. We will also work with Carmarthenshire Area Blind Society to offer an alternative website.

We have produced and shared sample Covid-19 risk assessment forms with BridgeVis which has given them the assurance to safely reopen their face-to-face

monthly coffee mornings. We also continued to provide governance support and advice to local societies and had recently shared a sample constitution with BridgeVis to adapt and adopt. In addition, WCB exhibited at the Sight Village event in Cardiff, the first to be held in Wales, where we promoted the work of the local societies to over 300 visitors.

Our Engagement Officer supported Visual Impairment Breconshire and Ceredigion Association for the Blind by producing their quarterly newsletters as mentioned above.

Our Engagement Officer has attended 4 executive meetings of the Ceredigion Association for the Blind and 1 executive meeting of Radnorshire Association for the Blind.

WCB also gave advice to Sight Life regarding their options for the future of the organisation following the ending of the relationship with RNIB.

Radnorshire Association were considering folding and leaving their funds to WCB. Instead we offered to act as a Treasurer so they voted to continue as before. Since this time they have found a treasurer locally.

Regional Forums. These are where individuals with sight loss are able to share their views and, to some extent, direct WCB's agenda. Under the current Covid restrictions, these have met with some success via telephone. Given the geographical spread of the regions, WCB may continue to convene these meetings via telephone or as virtual meetings. We have valued the input of these groups into our organisational responses to consultations. They have been instrumental in influencing change. As an independent organisation we provide a crucial platform through which people are able to express themselves freely.

We used representatives of our regional forums to create and comment upon a PREMs framework for Low Vision Service Wales. The PREMs was piloted with patients in the Hywel Dda area from November onwards and will be rolled out across Wales next year. This group met 3 times.

Look. We worked with LOOK, a charity for children with sight loss. They shall be using our office in 2022 and shall be supporting us to build content for this newsletter.

Networks. Wales Council of the Blind ensures that the voice of people with sight loss in Wales is represented in various networks. We sit on a number of networks including:

- Wales Rehabilitation Officers Forum.
- Wales Disability Reference Group.
- Cross Party Groups on Vision (currently inactive)
- Cross Party Group on Disability.
- Disability Equality Framework.
- Low Vision Service Wales Advisory Group: our CEO, in his capacity as Chair of this group, sits on the Wales Eye Care Service Joint Committee.
- Welsh Government's Loneliness and Social Isolation Group.
- All-Wales Sensory Loss Information and Communication Group (inactive). Members have requested that this group be revived.
- Ophthalmic Planned Care Board.
- Hywel Dda Eye Care Collaboration Group.
- Locked Out report steering group.
- All-Wales Learning Disability Group.

Other support

We have written letters of support to help member organisations obtain funding.

3) Service Improvement

Wales-based Rehabilitation Degree

Rehabilitation Work [Visual Impairment] – FdSc (Foundation Degree) is only currently available in Birmingham. Given the changes in delivery of university courses due to Coronavirus measures, there is a strong case for strengthening the prevalence of trained rehabilitation officers in Wales through distance learning combined with placements in Welsh Local Authorities. WCB, WVF and WROF will continue to work together to explore a module-based approach to be delivered in Wales.

A report was sent to Welsh Government highlighting the options for the course and the possibility of this being part of the apprenticeship scheme. We met with Welsh Government and they requested we produce a training needs analysis. This work will be undertaken in 2022. This is a positive step to having a Wales-based rehabilitation degree.

Wales Council of the Blind

Company Limited by Guarantee

Trustees' Annual Report (Incorporating the Director's Report) *(continued)*

Year ended 31 March 2022

Wales Rehabilitation Officers Forum (WROF)

WCB continues to fund 30 ROVIs to receive Continued Professional Development training through membership of the Rehabilitation Workers Professional Network (30 hours per person, per year). Ideas for training were listed within the Rehabilitation report. This has largely been delivered online through RWPN website.

Hidden Carers research

This work is based on our concern that there are large numbers of people actively caring informally for people with sight loss and that they are unaware of any support structures available to them. We hope this research would provide evidence for the need to offer support to a specific group of informal carers. This research has been delayed due to COVID as many participants were unwilling to engage. However, key documents have been drafted by the researcher in preparation and ethical approval has been applied for. The research will be completed during 2022/23.

Referral Pathways

We will work with WVF, LVSW and the Welsh Government Communications Group to increase and improve referrals between health, social care, and the third sector.

An edition of RESET, giving a list of resources and Welsh Government guidance was sent to Sali Davis of Optometry Wales for distribution through her network and the sensory loss Communications Group.

An initial meeting had taken place with LVSW to explore the potential for an enhancement of their optometry-based referral pathway. This will develop links to rehab and the third sector. This will entail the production of information packs for optometrists from the perspective database. The LVSW signposting project has been agreed and will commence in 2022-23.

FINANCIAL REVIEW

With the ending of the financial year, the board of trustees report a year-end financial position of a deficit of £22,284 compared to a surplus of £32,769 in 2021. Welsh Government funding has continued through the year.

WCB reserves policy is fully met and we have sufficient funds to plan for the future.

Unrestricted reserves at year-end were £263,061 (2021: £285,345) with free reserves of £27,551 (2021: £57,329).

Wales Council of the Blind

Company Limited by Guarantee

Trustees' Annual Report (Incorporating the Director's Report) *(continued)*

Year ended 31 March 2022

Investment Policy

Under articles of association the charity has the power to make any investment which the trustees see fit. The present policy is to keep an amount that represents short term operating requirements in liquid deposits (bank deposit accounts) and place the balance in the hands of a professional investment broker, to invest in wide range of fixed interest and equity funds. During the period 2015/16 the charity invested £200,000 with Quilter Cheviot as part of a Discretionary Managed Portfolio at a lower to medium tolerance of risk. WCB's investment objective is to grow the capital of the portfolio, as well as generating some degree of income. At the year-end WCB's managed portfolio was valued at £235,330. This was a net gain of £7,122 on the previous year. This will continue to be invested.

Reserves Policy

The Trustees have considered carefully the purpose of any reserves Wales Council of the Blind has or might have in the future. The stated aim of the reserves policy is to allow for unforeseeable events. This could be anything from replacing essential office equipment, to the sudden loss of funding. The amount should be sufficient to pay for staff redundancies and outstanding liabilities.

Reserves should be maintained at a level of 6 months operating costs of the core organisation. In addition, we may need to recognise any longer-term grant / project commitments and to settle the finances accordingly. Reserves should exclude funding that has been restricted for other specified use.

Reserves should be invested in a safe, low risk environment that maintains the capital invested and where possible provides a level of return on those funds.

The policy is reviewed annually by Trustees, or more frequently as necessary.

PLANS FOR FUTURE PERIODS

WCB has been awarded an indicative grant for 2022-23 and the following two years 2023-24 and 2024-25 of up to **£105,000** per annum. We will also discuss restarting the Thomas Pocklington Trust project now that covid restrictions have ended.

WCB is a partner in a Wales-wide project bid led by the Royal Society for Blind Children. The project will provide specialist personal development support that focuses on establishing social connections, empowering families and young people to take control of their lives, link into their communities and equipping local providers with the knowledge, confidence and skills to include children and young people with

sight loss in their existing provision. If successful, WCB will receive £7,000 over the next two-years to promote the project and house an officer.

WCB will explore funding to ensure that all aspects of our work can continue indefinitely.

STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

Governing Document

The organisation is a charitable company limited by guarantee and as such is governed by a Memorandum and Articles of Association. The company was incorporated on 31 January 1991 under the Companies Act 1985 and registered as a charity on 18 April 1995.

Recruitment and Appointment of the Management Committee

The directors of the company also serve as trustees of the charity and under the company's Articles are known as members of the Management Committee. Trustees are appointed annually at the Annual General Meeting. Casual vacancies are filled by the Management Committee and ratified at the next Annual General Meeting.

Each member of the Management Committee has agreed to guarantee the company's debts for the amount of £1 each.

All new Trustees are given induction training via the issuing of our organisational policy and procedures book and WCB offers to arrange for Trustees to have the opportunity to attend Trustee training provided by Wales Council for Voluntary Action (WCVA) should they wish. Trustees are able to contact the Council's secretary if they wish to have specific advice or guidance on any policies or procedures. WCB provides Trustees with indemnity insurance to the value of £500,000.

The staff and volunteers

Owen Williams is the Director at Wales Council of the Blind. He provides senior management to WCB and helps plan and deliver strategic direction to the sector.

Richard Bowers is our Communications Officer and he manages WCB's communications and has developed and updates 'Perspectif, our online information portal.

Our Engagement Officer, Rebecca Phillips, facilitates and organises the Regional Steering Groups, as well as enables the voice of people with sight loss to be heard.

Wales Council of the Blind

Company Limited by Guarantee

Trustees' Annual Report (Incorporating the Director's Report) *(continued)*

Year ended 31 March 2022

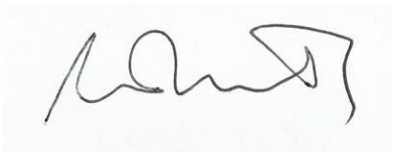
WCB has a dedicated team of volunteers who we would like to thank, providing invaluable support to the organisation around information gathering, keeping our database up-to-date and updating our Twitter feed, collating the material for Roundup, providing help with fundraising, answering the telephone and providing advice. Thank you, Ann, Dewi, Alan and Valmai for your continued support. We would also like to thank Bethan Smale our bookkeeper for all of her hard work

Small company provisions

This report has been prepared in accordance with the provisions applicable to companies entitled to the small companies exemption.

The trustees' annual report was approved on 15th December 2022. and signed on behalf of the board of trustees by:

Trustee



Name: Brian Mawby

Wales Council of the Blind

Company Limited by Guarantee

Independent Examiner's Report to the Trustees of Wales Council of the Blind

Year ended 31 March 2022

I report to the trustees on my examination of the financial statements of Wales Council of the Blind ('the charity') for the year ended 31 March 2022.

Responsibilities and basis of report

As the charity trustees of the company (and also its directors for the purposes of company law) you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006 ('the 2006 Act').

Having satisfied myself that the accounts of the company are not required to be audited under Part 16 of the 2006 Act and are eligible for independent examination, I report in respect of my examination of your company's accounts as carried out under section 145 of the Charities Act 2011 ('the 2011 Act'). In carrying out my examination I have followed the Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the 2011 Act.

Independent examiner's statement

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination giving me cause to believe that in any material respect:

1. accounting records were not kept in respect of the company as required by section 386 of the 2006 Act; or
2. the accounts do not accord with those records; or
3. the accounts do not comply with the accounting requirements of section 396 of the 2006 Act other than any requirement that the accounts give a 'true and fair view' which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination; or
4. the accounts have not been prepared in accordance with the methods and principles of the Statement of Recommended Practice for accounting and reporting by charities.

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

Carston

Farzana Ahmed ACCA
Independent Examiner
1st Floor, Tudor House
16 Cathedral Road
Cardiff
CF11 9LJ

Dated: 16 December 2022

Wales Council of the Blind

Company Limited by Guarantee

Statement of Financial Activities (including income and expenditure account)

Year ended 31 March 2022

	Note	Unrestricted funds £	2022 Restricted funds £	**Total funds £**	2021 Total funds £
Income and endowments					
Donations and legacies	**5**	10,641	105,000	**115,641**	156,553
Investment income	**6**	4,425	–	**4,425**	4,254
Total income		15,066	105,000	**120,066**	160,807
Expenditure					
Expenditure on raising funds:					
Costs of other trading activities	**7**	1,428	–	**1,428**	1,007
Investment management costs	**8**	3,993	–	**3,993**	3,719
Expenditure on charitable activities	**9,10**	39,051	105,000	**144,051**	145,399
Total expenditure		44,472	105,000	**149,472**	150,125
Net gains on investments	**12**	7,122	–	**7,122**	22,087
Net (expenditure)/income and net movement in funds		(22,284)	–	**(22,284)**	32,769
Reconciliation of funds					
Total funds brought forward		285,345	–	**285,345**	252,576
Total funds carried forward		263,061	–	**263,061**	285,345

The statement of financial activities includes all gains and losses recognised in the year.
All income and expenditure derive from continuing activities.

Wales Council of the Blind

Company Limited by Guarantee

Statement of Financial Position

31 March 2022

	Note	2022 £	2022 £	2021 £	2021 £
Fixed assets					
Tangible fixed assets	**18**		**180**		240
Investments	**19**		**235,330**		227,776
			235,510		228,016
Current assets					
Debtors	**20**	**4,433**		29,690	
Cash at bank and in hand		**29,160**		54,514	
		33,593		84,204	
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	**21**	**6,042**		26,875	
Net current assets			**27,551**		57,329
Total assets less current liabilities			**263,061**		285,345
Net assets			**263,061**		285,345
Funds of the charity					
Unrestricted funds			**263,061**		285,345
Total charity funds	**23**		**263,061**		285,345

For the year ending 31 March 2022 the charity was entitled to exemption from audit under section 477 of the Companies Act 2006 relating to small companies.

Directors' responsibilities:

- The members have not required the company to obtain an audit of its financial statements for the year in question in accordance with section 476;
- The directors acknowledge their responsibilities for complying with the requirements of the Act with respect to accounting records and the preparation of financial statements.

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

The statement of financial position
continues on the following page.

Wales Council of the Blind

Company Limited by Guarantee

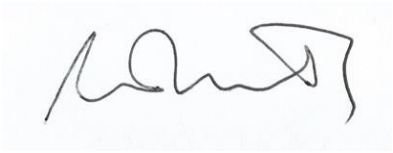
Statement of Financial Position *(continued)*

31 March 2022

These financial statements were approved by the board of trustees and authorised for issue on 15th December 2022, and are signed on behalf of the board by:

……Signed

Trustee: Janice Powers



…… Signed

Trustee: Brian Mawby

Company registration number: 02578918

Wales Council of the Blind

Company Limited by Guarantee

Notes to the Financial Statements

Year ended 31 March 2022

1. General information

The charity is a public benefit entity and a private company limited by guarantee, registered in England & Wales and a registered charity in England and Wales. The address of the registered office is Hastings House, Fitzalan Place, Unit 3.1, Cardiff, CF24 0BL.

2. Statement of compliance

These financial statements have been prepared in compliance with FRS 102, 'The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and the Republic of Ireland', the Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (Charities SORP (FRS 102)) and the Companies Act 2006.

3. Accounting policies

Basis of preparation

The financial statements have been prepared on the historical cost basis, as modified by the revaluation of certain financial assets and liabilities and investment properties measured at fair value through income or expenditure.

The financial statements are prepared in sterling, which is the functional currency of the entity.

Going concern

After making reasonable enquiries and having considered the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and other factors on the financial performance of the charity and its current performance, the Trustee's believe that the charity will be able to continue to fulfil its charitable purpose, will be able to meet its liabilities as they fall due, and will have adequate resources to continue in operational existence for the foreseeable future. Accordingly, the trustees continue to adopt the going concern basis in in in preparing the financial statements

Judgements and key sources of estimation uncertainty

The preparation of the financial statements requires management to make judgements, estimates and assumptions that affect the amounts reported. These estimates and judgements are continually reviewed and are based on experience and other factors, including expectations of future events that are believed to be reasonable under the circumstances.

Wales Council of the Blind

Company Limited by Guarantee

Notes to the Financial Statements *(continued)*

Year ended 31 March 2022

3. Accounting policies *(continued)*

Fund accounting

Unrestricted funds are available for use at the discretion of the trustees in furtherance of the purposes of the charity. Unrestricted funds include a revaluation reserve representing the restatement of investment assets at market values.

Designated funds are unrestricted funds earmarked by the trustees for specific purposes.

Restricted funds are subjected to restrictions on their expenditure imposed by the donor.

Incoming resources

All incoming resources are included in the statement of financial activities when entitlement has passed to the charity; it is probable that the economic benefits associated with the transaction will flow to the charity and the amount can be reliably measured. The following specific policies are applied to particular categories of income:

- income from donations or grants is recognised when there is evidence of entitlement to the gift, receipt is probable and its amount can be measured reliably.
- legacy income is recognised when receipt is probable and entitlement is established.
- income from donated goods is measured at the fair value of the goods unless this is impractical to measure reliably, in which case the value is derived from the cost to the donor or the estimated resale value. Donated facilities and services are recognised in the accounts when received if the value can be reliably measured. No amounts are included for the contribution of general volunteers.
- income from contracts for the supply of services is recognised with the delivery of the contracted service. This is classified as unrestricted funds unless there is a contractual requirement for it to be spent on a particular purpose and returned if unspent, in which case it may be regarded as restricted.

Wales Council of the Blind

Company Limited by Guarantee

Notes to the Financial Statements *(continued)*

Year ended 31 March 2022

3. Accounting policies *(continued)*

Resources expended

Expenditure is recognised on an accruals basis as a liability is incurred. Expenditure includes any VAT which cannot be fully recovered, and is classified under headings of the statement of financial activities to which it relates:

- expenditure on raising funds includes the costs of all fundraising activities, events, non-charitable trading activities, and the sale of donated goods.
- expenditure on charitable activities includes all costs incurred by a charity in undertaking activities that further its charitable aims for the benefit of its beneficiaries, including those support costs and costs relating to the governance of the charity apportioned to charitable activities.
- other expenditure includes all expenditure that is neither related to raising funds for the charity nor part of its expenditure on charitable activities.

All costs are allocated to expenditure categories reflecting the use of the resource. Direct costs attributable to a single activity are allocated directly to that activity. Shared costs are apportioned between the activities they contribute to on a reasonable, justifiable and consistent basis.

Tangible assets

All fixed assets are initially recorded at cost. Fixed assets are not capitalised where the cost is below £100.

Depreciation

Depreciation is calculated so as to write off the cost or valuation of an asset, less its residual value, over the useful economic life of that asset as follows:

Office equipment	-	25% reducing balance

Investments

Unlisted equity investments are initially recorded at cost, and subsequently measured at fair value. If fair value cannot be reliably measured, assets are measured at cost less impairment.

Listed investments are measured at fair value with changes in fair value being recognised in income or expenditure.

Wales Council of the Blind

Company Limited by Guarantee

Notes to the Financial Statements *(continued)*

Year ended 31 March 2022

3. Accounting policies *(continued)*

Debtors and creditors receivable/ payable within one year

Debtors and creditors with no stated interest rate and receivable or payable within one year are recorded at transaction price. Any losses arising from impairment are recognised in expenditure.

Financial instruments

A financial asset or a financial liability is recognised only when the entity becomes a party to the contractual provisions of the instrument. Basic financial instruments are initially recognised at the amount receivable or payable including any related transaction costs, unless the arrangement constitutes a financing transaction, where it is recognised at the present value of the future payments discounted at a market rate of interest for a similar debt instrument. Current assets and current liabilities are subsequently measured at the cash or other consideration expected to be paid or received and not discounted. Debt instruments are subsequently measured at amortised cost. Where investments in shares or preference shares are publicly traded or their fair value can otherwise be measured reliably, the investment is subsequently measured at fair value with changes in fair value recognised in income and expenditure. All other such investments are subsequently measured at cost less impairment.

Defined contribution plans

Contributions to defined contribution plans are recognised as an expense in the period in which the related service is provided. Prepaid contributions are recognised as an asset to the extent that the prepayment will lead to a reduction in future payments or a cash refund.

4. Limited by guarantee

Each member of the Board of Trustees has undertaken to guarantee the Council's debts to the sum of £1 each.

Wales Council of the Blind

Company Limited by Guarantee

Notes to the Financial Statements *(continued)*

Year ended 31 March 2022

5. Donations and legacies

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	**Total Funds 2022 £**
Donations			
Donations and bequests	4,315	–	**4,315**
Fundraising	–	–	**–**
Grants			
Welsh Government	–	105,000	**105,000**
Local Authority grants	1,437	–	**1,437**
Wales Council for Voluntary Action	700	–	**700**
National Lottery Community Fund	–	–	**–**
Other donations and legacies			
Other income	4,189	–	**4,189**
	10,641	105,000	**115,641**

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total Funds 2021 £
Donations			
Donations and bequests	3,500	–	3,500
Fundraising	4,507	–	4,507
Grants			
Welsh Government	30,000	–	30,000
Local Authority grants	3,018	–	3,018
Wales Council for Voluntary Action	56,250	–	56,250
National Lottery Community Fund	49,750	–	49,750
Other donations and legacies			
Other income	9,528	–	9,528
	156,553	–	156,553

Wales Council of the Blind

Company Limited by Guarantee

Notes to the Financial Statements *(continued)*

Year ended 31 March 2022

6. Investment income

	Unrestricted Funds £	**Total Funds 2022 £**	Unrestricted Funds £	Total Funds 2021 £
Income from listed investments	4,425	**4,425**	4,254	4,254

7. Costs of other trading activities

	Unrestricted Funds £	**Total Funds 2022 £**	Unrestricted Funds £	Total Funds 2021 £
Fundraising costs	1,428	**1,428**	1,007	1,007

8. Investment management costs

	Unrestricted Funds £	**Total Funds 2022 £**	Unrestricted Funds £	Total Funds 2021 £
Portfolio management	3,993	**3,993**	3,719	3,719

9. Expenditure on charitable activities by fund type

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	**Total Funds 2022 £**
Promoting Welfare	19,812	105,000	**124,813**
Support costs	19,239	–	**19,238**
	39,051	105,000	**144,051**

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total Funds 2021 £
Promoting Welfare	123,194	3,100	126,294
Support costs	19,105	–	19,105
	142,299	3,100	145,399

Wales Council of the Blind

Company Limited by Guarantee

Notes to the Financial Statements *(continued)*

Year ended 31 March 2022

10. Expenditure on charitable activities by activity type

	Activities undertaken directly £	Support costs £	**Total funds 2022 £**	Total fund 2021 £
Promoting Welfare	124,813	16,067	**140,880**	142,049
Governance costs	–	3,171	**3,171**	3,350
	124,813	19,238	**144,051**	145,399

11. Analysis of support costs

	Analysis of support costs activity 1 £	**Total 2022 £**	Total 2021 £
Staff costs	12,816	**12,816**	12,430
General office	3,251	**3,251**	3,325
Governance costs	3,171	**3,171**	3,350
	19,238	**19,238**	19,105

12. Net gains on investments

	Unrestricted Funds £	**Total Funds 2022 £**	Unrestricted Funds £	Total Funds 2021 £
Gains/(losses) on listed investments	7,122	**7,122**	22,087	22,087

13. Net (expenditure)/income

Net (expenditure)/income is stated after charging/(crediting):

	2022 £	2021 £
Depreciation of tangible fixed assets	**60**	80

Wales Council of the Blind

Company Limited by Guarantee

Notes to the Financial Statements *(continued)*

Year ended 31 March 2022

14. Independent examination fees

	2022	2021
	£	£
Fees payable to the independent examiner for:		
Independent examination of the financial statements	**2,640**	2,520

15. Staff costs

The total staff costs and employee benefits for the reporting period are analysed as follows:

	2022	2021
	£	£
Wages and salaries	**103,912**	99,608
Social security costs	**6,679**	6,109
Employer contributions to pension plans	**3,190**	3,103
	113,781	108,820

The average head count of employees during the year was 3 (2021: 3). The average number of full-time equivalent employees during the year is analysed as follows:

	2022	2021
	No.	No.
Project staff	**3**	3

No employee received employee benefits of more than £60,000 during the year (2021: Nil).

Key Management Personnel

Key management personnel include all persons that have authority and responsibility for planning, directing and controlling the activities of the charity. The total compensation paid to key management personnel for services provided to the charity was £39,812 (2021:£38,547).

16. Trustee remuneration and expenses

No remuneration or other benefits from employment with the charity or a related entity were received by the trustees.

All trustees are entitled to claim reimbursement of the cost of attending meetings, no trustees were reimbursed during the year (2021: £nil) for travelling costs to attend meetings.

Wales Council of the Blind

Company Limited by Guarantee

Notes to the Financial Statements *(continued)*

Year ended 31 March 2022

17. Transfers between funds

No transfers between general funds and designated funds took place during the year.

18. Tangible fixed assets

	Equipment £	**Total £**
Cost		
At 1 April 2021 and 31 March 2022	24,289	**24,289**
Depreciation		
At 1 April 2021	24,049	**24,049**
Charge for the year	60	**60**
At 31 March 2022	24,109	**24,109**
Carrying amount		
At 31 March 2022	180	**180**
At 31 March 2021	240	240

19. Investments

	Cash or cash equivalents £	Listed investments £	**Total £**
Cost or valuation			
At 1 April 2021	9,740	218,036	**227,776**
Additions	42,065	40,535	**82,600**
Disposals	(44,528)	(36,285)	**(80,813)**
Fair value movements	–	5,767	**5,767**
At 31 March 2022	7,277	228,053	**235,330**
Impairment			
At 1 April 2021 and 31 March 2022			**–**
Carrying amount			
At 31 March 2022	7,277	228,053	**235,330**
At 31 March 2021	9,740	218,036	227,776

All investments shown above are held at valuation.

Wales Council of the Blind

Company Limited by Guarantee

Notes to the Financial Statements *(continued)*

Year ended 31 March 2022

19. Investments *(continued)*

Listed investments

The aggregate market value of listed investments is £228,053 (2021: £218,036) and the stock exchange value is £228,053 (2021: £218,036).

Financial assets held at fair value

Investments are stated at fair value at the balance sheet date, listed investments are stated at the stock exchange values at the year end. Other investments are valued based on investment performance.

The historical cost of investments at the year end date is £215,588 (2021 : £206,783).

20. Debtors

	2022	2021
	£	£
Trade debtors	**1,574**	11,593
Prepayments and accrued income	**2,859**	17,977
Other debtors	**–**	120
	4,433	29,690

21. Creditors: amounts falling due within one year

	2022	2021
	£	£
Trade creditors	**–**	78
Accruals and deferred income	**2,640**	5,459
Social security and other taxes	**3,402**	2,588
Other creditors	**–**	18,750
	6,042	26,875

22. Pensions and other post retirement benefits

Defined contribution plans

The amount recognised in income or expenditure as an expense in relation to defined contribution plans was £3,190 (2021: £3,103).

Wales Council of the Blind

Company Limited by Guarantee

Notes to the Financial Statements *(continued)*

Year ended 31 March 2022

23. Analysis of charitable funds

Unrestricted funds

	At 1 April 2021 £	Income £	Expenditure £	Gains and losses £	**At 31 March 2022 £**
General funds	272,845	15,066	(44,472)	7,122	**250,561**
Designated Fund	12,500	-	-	-	**12,500**
	285,345	15,066	(44,472)	7,122	263,061

	At 1 April 2020 £	Income £	Expenditure £	Gains and losses £	At 31 March 2021 £
General funds	236,976	160,807	(147,025)	22,087	272,845
Designated Fund	12,500	–	–	–	12,500
	249,476	160,807	(147,025)	22,087	285,345

Restricted funds

	At 1 April 2021 £	Income £	Expenditure £	Gains and losses £	**At 31 March 2022 £**
Welsh Government	–	105,000	(105,000)	–	**–**

	At 1 April 2020 £	Income £	Expenditure £	Gains and losses £	At 31 March 2021 £
Pontypridd Talking Newspaper	3,100	–	(3,100)	–	–

The Welsh Government grant was received in respect of funding for delivery information services, network support and service improvement for the sight loss sector in Wales.

Wales Council of the Blind

Company Limited by Guarantee

Notes to the Financial Statements *(continued)*

Year ended 31 March 2022

24. Analysis of net assets between funds

	Unrestricted Funds £	**Total Funds 2022 £**
Tangible fixed assets	180	**180**
Investments	235,330	**235,330**
Current assets	33,593	**33,593**
Creditors less than 1 year	(6,042)	**(6,042)**
Net assets	263,061	**263,061**

	Unrestricted Funds £	Total Funds 2021 £
Tangible fixed assets	240	240
Investments	227,776	227,776
Current assets	84,204	84,204
Creditors less than 1 year	(26,875)	(26,875)
Net assets	285,345	285,345

25. Related parties

The charity was under the control of the trustees throughout the current and previous year.

No transactions with related parties were undertaken such as are required to be disclosed under FRS 102.

WALES COUNCIL OF THE BLIND

England & Wales - Charity number 1045841

Accounts

COMPANY REGISTRATION NUMBER: 578918
CHARITY REGISTRATION NUMBER: 1045841

Wales Council of the Blind

Company Limited by Guarantee

Unaudited Financial Statements

31 March 2021

CARSTON
Chartered accountants
1st Floor, Tudor House
16 Cathedral Road
Cardiff
CF11 9LJ

Wales Council of the Blind

Company Limited by Guarantee

Financial Statements

Year ended 31 March 2021

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Wales Council of the Blind

Company Limited by Guarantee

Trustees' Annual Report (Incorporating the Director's Report)

Year ended 31 March 2021

The trustees, who are also the directors for the purposes of company law, present their report and the unaudited financial statements of the charity for the year ended 31 March 2021.

Chair's report

It hardly needs to be said that the Coronavirus outbreak has brought about considerable changes to our daily lives. This created considerable hardship for some of our most vulnerable people, and the reduction in services impacted on disabled people in various ways. Many disabled people are highly dependent on face-to-face services, often involving physical contact, so they have been disproportionately affected by preventative measures such as social distancing.

The very concept of social distancing is problematic for the many people with sight loss who cannot see other people and who require physical guiding in unfamiliar spaces. Evidence exists that blind people have been verbally attacked for accidentally breaking social distancing rules. Guide dogs, for example, are not able to socially distance, and this has resulted in confrontations with other members ofthe public.

Wales Council of the Blind continued to work throughout the year, with no staff being furloughed, providing information and support to its members, professionals and individuals throughout the pandemic, and addressing some of the concerns that people have expressed.

The trustees are grateful to the staff and volunteers for adapting to the situation and maintaining a service throughout this difficult time. Each of them moved their work to their homes at the start of the pandemic and continued core activities, including helping smaller groups to continue supporting their members through Zoom meetings and conference calls.

At the beginning of the pandemic we were concerned about our funding streams. The pandemic halted talks with some funders as their priorities changed. Ironically, the various relief funds for voluntary sector organisations hit by the pandemic saved us from having to dip into our reserves. With the addition of project funding from Welsh Government we could carry on. I believe that the work WCB carried out during the pandemic strengthened our role and has helped us to secure a Welsh Government grant for next year, one that focuses on our core roles of information provision, supporting the sight loss sector, and representing people with sight loss.

I would also like to thank my fellow trustees for their work and support during the year.

Janice Powers
Chairperson

Wales Council of the Blind

Company Limited by Guarantee

Trustees' Annual Report (Incorporating the Director's Report) *(continued)*

Year ended 31 March 2021

Reference and administrative details

Registered charity name	Wales Council of the Blind
Charity registration number	1045841
Company registration number	2578918
Principal office and registered office	Hastings House Fitzalan Place Unit 2.2 Cardiff CF24 0BL
The trustees	Mr Peter Curtis Mr Brian Mawby Mrs Miriam Wright Ms J Powers Ms J Thomas Mr B J Hobart Ms C Draper Dr R Stiff
Company secretary	Mr O J Williams
Independent examiner	Farzana Ahmed FCCA 1st Floor, Tudor House 16 Cathedral Road Cardiff CF11 9LJ

Wales Council of the Blind

Company Limited by Guarantee

Trustees' Annual Report (Incorporating the Director's Report) *(continued)*

Year ended 31 March 2021

OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES

Wales Council of the Blind is the independent umbrella agency for vision impairment in Wales representing blind and partially sighted people and the clubs and societies who support them. Our independence also enables us to act as an impartial observer, advocate, intermediary and evaluator for this complex, diverse group of organisations and services. In carrying out our charitable objectives, services to people with sight loss are improved.

We gather the opinions and views of people with sight loss through groups and consultation. We put their voice at the centre of what we do, reporting on their views to the people who are responsible for the services that help them. We also act as an agency to direct people to these services, giving them impartial advice and choice.

The trustees confirm that they complied with the duty in Section 4 of the Charities Act 2006 to have due regard for the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit.

ACHIEVEMENTS AND PERFORMANCE

WCB staff continued to work from home according to Welsh Government advice. As restrictions have eased, staff have been sharing their time between home and office.

Here is an account of the WCB work-streams for the year.

Information services

In addition to informal support via telephone and email, WCB provided the following information services.

Website www.wcb-ccd.org.uk.

This is the focal point of our information provision and hosts, or provides access to, the following media:

Sylw, a weekly bulletin distributed via email and on the website. It is also produced in alternative formats monthly and distributed by post. The weekly e-bulletin reached over 2,900 recipients whilst the monthly edition was delivered to over 450 individuals with sight loss who would not have access via the web or email.

Roundup, a quarterly magazine that provides a space for a fuller exploration of themes from the perspective of sight loss. Sent via email, post and available online. Roundup is circulated quarterly via email, social media, large print and audio to over 3,300.

Perspectif, a database of services and other resources. This shall be overhauled in 2021-22 to improve its functionality and content.

Our social media has continued through Twitter and Facebook. We currently have over 1,800 Twitter followers.

We would like to thank our volunteers, Ann and Dewi, for their unstinting support for our information services.

Covid information resources

A specifically-funded project aimed to deliver accessible information to a hard-to-reach group - people with sight loss who would not necessarily have access to the ordinary channels of communication such as the intemet. It provided information on changes to services in the domains of Retail, Education, Social Care and Health, Employment, and Transport / travel.

The funding enabled us also to share information about Government restrictions and guidance concerning the pandemic for people with sight loss and those who work with them, alongside updates on support available in the community such as medicine collection, food delivery and events taking place online. We produced a series of newsletters - online, in print, and in audio. We also produced a set of regional (by local authority) information resources, similarly in accessible media.

We established weekly meetings of the Wales Vision Forum - an informal group of sight loss organisations and people with sight loss - in which we discussed any developments and updates on service provision to be included in the newsletters and online. Since our service users are people with sight loss who, in this situation, were considered vulnerable and often needed to 'shield', it was important that we directed our efforts towards serving their immediate needs. Through these meetings we were able to listen to the community to develop a good awareness of the situation as it developed.

We learned how it was possible to galvanize support from our sector very quickly. The project has identified a way forward for us so that we can concentrate on our information provision and let our members get on with service delivery. We now see ourselves as the glue joining services to service users in an environment where people are often in the dark about what is available to them in their communities.

Conversations that Count

Another project that related to the Covid pandemic was a collaboration with Frame Collective. For Conversations That Count, Wales Council of the Blind identified people who wanted to share their pandemic experiences. In autumn 2020, Frame Collective spoke with fourteen people with sight loss, aged in their 'twenties to 'seventies. Everyone's stories and circumstances were different, but many of the struggles were similar. How people had coped varied widely and seemed to depend on sustaining connection with others, accessing support and maintaining some

independence. Some people were better resourced and more resilient than others. Loneliness and isolation were prominent topics of conversation.

Establishing a Certificate of Visual Impairment for Primary Care

A CVI task and finish group was established through the WECS join committee to look at scoping, developing and delivering certification by low vision accredited practitioners. WCB chaired this group and a paper was signed off and sent to Welsh Government for consideration and rollout.

This initiative would give patients the choice to receive the CVI from their high street optometrist. We hope this would give them quicker access to support services, particularly patients with dry AMD who would not necessarily need to visit the ophthalmologist.

This work will be carried forward by the Low Vision Advisory Group, which WCB chairs.

Networks

Wales Council of the Blind ensures that the voice of people with sight loss in Wales is represented in various networks. We sit on a number of networks including:

- Wales Rehabilitation Officers Forum.
- Wales Disability Reference Group.
- Cross Party Groups on Vision and Disability.
- Disability Equality Framework.
- Low Vision Service Wales Advisory Group: our CEO, in his capacity as Chair, sits on the Wales Eye Care Service Joint Committee.
- Welsh Government's Loneliness and Social Isolation Group.
- All-Wales Sensory Loss Information and Communication Group.

Support for members

Accessible media

Wales Council of the Blind produces its materials, and that of member organisations, in accessible formats - notably large print and audio CDs.

All editions of Sylw, Roundup and RESET were produced in audio, electronic and large print formats. Newsletters produced for Visual Impairment Merthyr, Radnorshire Association for the Blind, and Visual Impairment Breconshire. At the end of the year we started to write and transcribe newsletters for Ceredigion Association for the Blind.

Wales Council of the Blind

Company Limited by Guarantee

Trustees' Annual Report (Incorporating the Director's Report) *(continued)*

Year ended 31 March 2021

Supporting local organisation

Our Engagement Officer sits on a number of local societies and provides a combination of secretarial support, newsletters, accessible media, and governance. We provided administrative support and telephone conference facilities to a number of member organisations.

Regional Forums

These are where individuals with sight loss are able to share their views and, to some extent, direct WCB's agenda. Under the current Covid restrictions, these have met with some success via telephone. Given the geographical spread of the regions, WCB may continue to convene these meetings via telephone or as virtual meetings. We have valued the input of these groups into our organisational responses to consultations. They have been instrumental in influencing change. As an independent organisation we we provide a crucial platform through which people are able to express themselves freely.

Wales Vision Forum

WCB chairs and provides secretariat for the Wales Vision Forum. The purpose of the Forum is for national, local and specialist organisations representing people with sight loss to come together to share, discuss and outline work programmes and priorities.

The Forum is a platform for sharing information, sharing good practice and expertise, consulting and identifying opportunities to support service and campaign planning.

WCB was responsible for establishing weekly emergency meetings during the Covid pandemic, leading to an information resource to ensure that Welsh Government messages go out in an accessible form to people with sight loss. This became a fortnightly meeting, alternating between broad themes and the work of the Eye Care Collaboration Groups (ECGs).

During this year WCB established a task and finish group to look at the scarcity of the rehabilitation workforce across Wales.

Visionary

Certain WCB members are also Visionary members. Visionary is the UK umbrella organisation for local societies serving people with sight loss. WCB is the representative for Wales on Visionary's Members' Consultative Group (MCG). This is an opportunity to extend the reach of the voice of local societies into the UK agenda.

WCB's CEO is currently Chair of Visionary.

Wales Council of the Blind

Company Limited by Guarantee

Trustees' Annual Report (Incorporating the Director's Report)*(continued)*

Year ended 31 March 2021

Wales Disability Reference Group (WDRG)

Wales Council of the Blind joined other national disability organisations to raise concerns about the impact of the coronavirus pandemic on disabled people living with pre-existing medical conditions.

Report has subsequently been published.

Cross-party Group on Disability

Four meetings were held and the following items were discussed:

- Wearing face masks
- Structural barriers to intimate relationships
- Roadmap out of lockdown & disabled people
- £500 Care worker payment
- The effect of the coronavirus pandemic on people with learning disabilities
- Shielding and accessible information

At the request of Welsh Government, Wales Council of the Blind and Wales Council for Deaf People worked together to produce a document on making meetings accessible for people with sensory loss. This document was shared with WCVA and its members, as well as with the Disability Equality Forum. It was also shared with the Welsh Government 'Accessible Communications Group'.

Welsh Rehabilitation Officers' Forum

WCB continued to support WROF with funds to commission specialist training for members along with paying the membership for every ROVI in Wales for the Rehabilitation Workers Professional Network.

Rehabilitation services for people with sight loss

WCB was commissioned by Welsh Government to look at the state of current provision of rehabilitation services across Wales. Due to interruptions in services brought on by Covid, the project had to be continued into the following financial year. At the time of writing, the reports have been completed and submitted to Welsh Government. There is a scarcity of officers which will get worse if action is not taken to train and recruit more. The report includes a recommendation for a Wales-based Rehabilitation Foundation Degree.

Wales Council of the Blind

Company Limited by Guarantee

Trustees' Annual Report (Incorporating the Director's Report) *(continued)*

Year ended 31 March 2021

WCB Storm

The WCB Storm project, for young people with sight loss, ended in the previous year but we intend to continue some of the work, notably the newsletter. We would like to thank Megan Price for volunteering to help us in producing these during this year. Unfortunately for us, Megan secured full-time employment which meant she was unavailable for volunteering. We shall hopefully continue the newsletters with the aid of a new volunteer.

FINANCIAL REVIEW

With the ending of the financial year, the Board of trustees report a year-end financial position of a surplus of £32,769 compared to deficit of £38,649 in 2020. The Welsh Government funding has continued through the year.

WCB's reserves policy is fully met and we have sufficient funds to plan for the future.

Unrestricted reserves at the year-end were £285,345 (2020: £249,476) with free reserves of £57,329 (2020: £44,002).

Investment Policy

Under articles of association then charity has the power to make any investment which the trustees see fit. The present policy is to keep an amount that represents short term operating requirements in liquid deposits (bank deposit accounts) and place the balance in the hands of a professional investment broker, to invest in wide range of fixed interest and equity funds. During the period 2015/16 the charity invested £200,000 with Quilter Cheviot as part of a Discretionary Managed Portfolio at a lower to medium tolerance of risk. WCB's investment objective is to grow the capital of the portfolio, as well as generating some degree of income. At the year-end WCB's managed portfolio was valued at £227,776. This was a net gain of £22,662 on the previous year. This will continue to be invested.

Reserves Policy

The Trustees have considered carefully the purpose of any reserved Wales Council of the Blind has or might have in the future. The stated aim of the reserves policy is to allow for unforeseeable events. This could be anything from replacing essential office equipment, to the sudden loss of funding. The amount should be sufficient to pay for staff redundancies and outstanding liabilities.

Reserves should be maintained at a level of 6 months operating costs of the core organisation. In addition, we may need to recognise any longer-term grant / project commitments and to settle the finances accordingly. Reserves should exclude funding that has been restricted for other specified use.

Reserves should be invested in a safe, low risk environment that maintains the capital invested and where possible provides a level of return on those funds.

The policy is reviewed annually by Trustees, or more frequently as necessary.

PLANS FOR FUTURE PERIODS

WCB was awarded a grant of £105k for 2021/22. This will enable WCB to carry out its core function. We will also discuss restarting the Thomas Pocklington Trust project now that Covid restrictions are easing.

We will be seeking funding for a project to expand the use of Perspectif by Low Vision Service Wales practitioners as part of their role to signpost patients to support in their communities. This support is often provided by member organisations, so this project seeks to direct people to that support. We have had discussions a researcher who will, we hope, be conducting research into its efficacy. With optometry reform in Wales we will see more patients being diagnosed and treated on the high street therefore providing information on further support is a crucial part of the low vision practitioner's role.

We will explore funding for this project to be sustained indefinitely.

STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

Governing Document

The organisation is a charitable company limited by guarantee and as such is governed by a Memorandum and Articles of Association. The company was incorporated on 31 January 1991 under the Companies Act 1985 and registered as a charity on 18 April 1995.

Recruitment and Appointment of the Management Committee

The directors of the company also serve as trustees of the charity and under the company's Articles are known as members of the Management Committee. Trustees are appointed annually at the Annual General Meeting. Casual vacancies are filled by the Management Committee and ratified at the next Annual General Meeting.

Each member of the Management Committee has agreed to guarantee the company's debts for the amount of £1 each.

All new Trustees are given induction training via the issuing of our organisational policy and procedures book and WCB offers to arrange for Trustees to have the opportunity to attend Trustee training provided by Wales Council for Voluntary Action (WCVA) should they wish. Trustees are able to contact the Council's secretary if they wish to have specific advice or guidance on any policies or procedures. WCB provides Trustees with indemnity insurance to the value of £500,000.

Wales Council of the Blind

Company Limited by Guarantee

Trustees' Annual Report (Incorporating the Director's Report) *(continued)*

Year ended 31 March 2021

Structure, governance and management *(continued)*

The staff and volunteers

Owen Williams is the Director at Wales Council of the Blind. He provides senior management to WCB and helps plan and deliver strategic direction to the sector.

Richard Bowers is our Communications Officer and he manages WCB's communications and has developed and updates 'Perspectif, our online information portal.

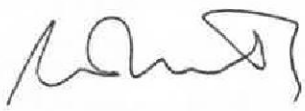
Our Engagement Officer, Rebecca Phillips, facilitates and organises the Regional Steering Groups, as well as enables the voice of people with sight loss to be heard.

WCB has a dedicated team of volunteers who we would like to thank, providing invaluable support to the organisation around information gathering, keeping our database up-to-date and updating our Twitter feed, collating the material for Roundup, providing help with fundraising, answering the telephone and providing advice. Thank you, Ann, Dewi, Alan and Valmai for your continued support. We would also like to thank Bethan Smale our bookkeeper for all of her hard work.

Small company provisions

This report has been prepared in accordance with the provisions applicable to companies entitled to the small companies exemption.

The trustees' annual report was approved on 26th January 2022 and signed on behalf of the board of trustees by:

Trustee 

Name Brian Mawby

Wales Council of the Blind

Company Limited by Guarantee

Independent Examiner's Report to the Trustees of Wales Council ofthe Blind

Year ended 31 March 2021

I report to the trustees on my examination of the financial statements of Wales Council of the Blind ('the charity') for the year ended 31 March 2021.

Responsibilities and basis of report

As the charity trustees of the company (and also its directors for the purposes of company law) you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006 ('the 2006 Act').

Having satisfied myself that the accounts of the company are not required to be audited under Part 16 of the 2006 Act and are eligible for independent examination, I report in respect of my examination of your company's accounts as carried out under section 145 of the Charities Act 2011 ('the 2011 Act'). In carrying out my examination I have followed the Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the 2011 Act.

Independent examiner's statement

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination giving me cause to believe that in any material respect:

1. accounting records were not kept in respect of the company as required by section 386 of the 2006 Act; or
2. the accounts do not accord with those records; or
3. the accounts do not comply with the accounting requirements of section 396 of the 2006 Act other than any requirement that the accounts give a 'true and fair view' which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination; or
4. the accounts have not been prepared in accordance with the methods and principles of the Statement of Recommended Practice for accounting and reporting by charities.

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

Farzana Ahmed FCCA
Independent Examiner
1st Floor, Tudor House
16 Cathedral Road
Cardiff
CF11 9LJ

Dated 27/01/2022

Wales Council of the Blind

Company Limited by Guarantee

Statement of Financial Activities (including income and expenditure account)

Year ended 31 March 2021

	Note	2021 Unrestricted funds £	2021 Restricted funds £	2021 Total funds £	2020 Total funds £
Income and endowments					
Donations and legacies	5	156,553	–	**156,553**	181,228
Charitable activities	6	–	–	**–**	540
Investment income	7	4,254	–	**4,254**	4,821
Total income		160,807	–	**160,807**	186,589
Expenditure					
Expenditure on raising funds:					
Costs of other trading activities	8	1,007	–	**1,007**	1,266
Investment management costs	9	3,719	–	**3,719**	3,775
Expenditure on charitable activities	10,11	142,299	3,100	**145,399**	207,542
Total expenditure		147,025	3,100	**150,125**	212,583
Net gains/(losses) on investments	13	22,087	–	**22,087**	(12,655)
Net income/(expenditure) and net movement in funds		35,869	(3,100)	**32,769**	(38,649)
Reconciliation of funds					
Total funds brought forward		249,476	3,100	**252,576**	291,225
Total funds carried forward		285,345	–	**285,345**	252,576

The statement of financial activities includes all gains and losses recognised in the year.
All income and expenditure derive from continuing activities.

Wales Council of the Blind

Company Limited by Guarantee

Statement of Financial Position

31 March 2021

	Note	2021 £	2021 £	2020 £	2020 £
Fixed assets					
Tangible fixed assets	19		240		320
Investments	20		227,776		205,154
			228,016		205,474
Current assets					
Debtors	21	29,690		21,096	
Cash at bank and in hand		54,514		32,094	
		84,204		53,190	
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	22	26,875		6,088	
Net current assets			57,329		47,102
Total assets less current liabilities			285,345		252,576
Net assets			285,345		252,576
Funds of the charity					
Restricted funds			–		3,100
Unrestricted funds			285,345		249,476
Total charity funds	24		285,345		252,576

For the year ending 31 March 2021 the charity was entitled to exemption from audit under section 477 of the Companies Act 2006 relating to small companies.

Directors' responsibilities:

- The members have not required the company to obtain an audit of its financial statements for the year in question in accordance with section 476;
- The directors acknowledge their responsibilities for complying with the requirements of the Act with respect to accounting records and the preparation of financial statements.

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

The statement of financial position
continues on the following page.

The notes on pages 15 to 27 form part of these financial statements.

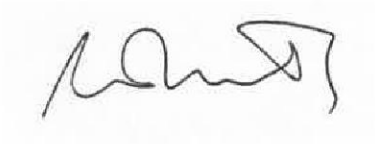
Wales Council of the Blind

Company Limited by Guarantee

Statement of Financial Position *(continued)*

31 March 2021

These financial statements were approved by the board of trustees and authorised for issue on 26th January 2022, and are signed on behalf of the board by:



.....Signed

Trustee Brian Mawby

..... Signed

Trustee Janice Powers

Company registration number: 02578918

Wales Council of the Blind

Company Limited by Guarantee

Notes to the Financial Statements

Year ended 31 March 2021

1. General information

The charity is a public benefit entity and a private company limited by guarantee, registered in England & Wales and a registered charity in England and Wales. The address of the registered office is Hastings House, Fitzalan Place, Unit 2.2, Cardiff, CF24 0BL.

2. Statement of compliance

These financial statements have been prepared in compliance with FRS 102, 'The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and the Republic of Ireland', the Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (Charities SORP (FRS 102)) and the Companies Act 2006.

3. Accounting policies

Basis of preparation

The financial statements have been prepared on the historical cost basis, as modified by the revaluation of certain financial assets and liabilities and investment properties measured at fair value through income or expenditure.

The financial statements are prepared in sterling, which is the functional currency of the entity.

Going concern

After making reasonable enquiries and having considered the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and other factors on the financial performance of the charity and its current performance, the Trustee's believe that the charity will be able to continue to fulfil its charitable purpose, will be able to meet its liabilities as they fall due, and will have adequate resources to continue in operational existence for the foreseeable future. Accordingly, the trustees continue to adopt the going concern basis in in in preparing the financial statements

Judgements and key sources of estimation uncertainty

The preparation of the financial statements requires management to make judgements, estimates and assumptions that affect the amounts reported. These estimates and judgements are continually reviewed and are based on experience and other factors, including expectations of future events that are believed to be reasonable under the circumstances.

3. Accounting policies *(continued)*

Fund accounting

Unrestricted funds are available for use at the discretion of the trustees in furtherance of the purposes of the charity. Unrestricted funds include a revaluation reserve representing the restatement of investment assets at market values.

Designated funds are unrestricted funds earmarked by the trustees for specific purposes.

Restricted funds are subjected to restrictions on their expenditure imposed by the donor.

Incoming resources

All incoming resources are included in the statement of financial activities when entitlement has passed to the charity; it is probable that the economic benefits associated with the transaction will flow to the charity and the amount can be reliably measured. The following specific policies are applied to particular categories of income:

- income from donations or grants is recognised when there is evidence of entitlement to the gift, receipt is probable and its amount can be measured reliably.
- legacy income is recognised when receipt is probable and entitlement is established.
- income from donated goods is measured at the fair value of the goods unless this is impractical to measure reliably, in which case the value is derived from the cost to the donor or the estimated resale value. Donated facilities and services are recognised in the accounts when received if the value can be reliably measured. No amounts are included for the contribution of general volunteers.
- income from contracts for the supply of services is recognised with the delivery of the contracted service. This is classified as unrestricted funds unless there is a contractual requirement for it to be spent on a particular purpose and returned if unspent, in which case it may be regarded as restricted.

3. Accounting policies *(continued)*

Resources expended

Expenditure is recognised on an accruals basis as a liability is incurred. Expenditure includes any VAT which cannot be fully recovered, and is classified under headings of the statement of financial activities to which it relates:

- expenditure on raising funds includes the costs of all fundraising activities, events, non-charitable trading activities, and the sale of donated goods.
- expenditure on charitable activities includes all costs incurred by a charity in undertaking activities that further its charitable aims for the benefit of its beneficiaries, including those support costs and costs relating to the governance of the charity apportioned to charitable activities.
- other expenditure includes all expenditure that is neither related to raising funds for the charity nor part of its expenditure on charitable activities.

All costs are allocated to expenditure categories reflecting the use of the resource. Direct costs attributable to a single activity are allocated directly to that activity. Shared costs are apportioned between the activities they contribute to on a reasonable, justifiable and consistent basis.

Tangible assets

All fixed assets are initially recorded at cost. Fixed assets are not capitalised where the cost is below £100.

Depreciation

Depreciation is calculated so as to write off the cost or valuation of an asset, less its residual value, over the useful economic life of that asset as follows:

Office equipment	-	25% reducing balance

Investments

Unlisted equity investments are initially recorded at cost, and subsequently measured at fair value. If fair value cannot be reliably measured, assets are measured at cost less impairment.

Listed investments are measured at fair value with changes in fair value being recognised in income or expenditure.

3. Accounting policies *(continued)*

Debtors and creditors receivable/ payable within one year

Debtors and creditors with no stated interest rate and receivable or payable within one year are recorded at transaction price. Any losses arising from impairment are recognised in expenditure.

Financial instruments

A financial asset or a financial liability is recognised only when the entity becomes a party to the contractual provisions of the instrument. Basic financial instruments are initially recognised at the amount receivable or payable including any related transaction costs, unless the arrangement constitutes a financing transaction, where it is recognised at the present value of the future payments discounted at a market rate of interest for a similar debt instrument. Current assets and current liabilities are subsequently measured at the cash or other consideration expected to be paid or received and not discounted. Debt instruments are subsequently measured at amortised cost. Where investments in shares or preference shares are publicly traded or their fair value can otherwise be measured reliably, the investment is subsequently measured at fair value with changes in fair value recognised in income and expenditure. All other such investments are subsequently measured at cost less impairment.

Defined contribution plans

Contributions to defined contribution plans are recognised as an expense in the period in which the related service is provided. Prepaid contributions are recognised as an asset to the extent that the prepayment will lead to a reduction in future payments or a cash refund.

When contributions are not expected to be settled wholly within 12 months of the end of the reporting date in which the employees render the related service, the liability is measured on a discounted present value basis. The unwinding of the discount is recognised as an expense in the period in which it arises.

4. Limited by guarantee

Each member of the Board of Trustees has undertaken to guarantee the Council's debts to the sum of £1 each.

Wales Council of the Blind

Company Limited by Guarantee

Notes to the Financial Statements *(continued)*

Year ended 31 March 2021

5. Donations and legacies

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	**Total Funds 2021 £**
Donations			
Donations and bequests	3,500	–	**3,500**
Fundraising	4,507	–	**4,507**
Grants			
Welsh Government	30,000	–	**30,000**
Local Authority grants	3,018	–	**3,018**
Other grants	–	–	–
Wales Council for Voluntary Action	56,250	–	**56,250**
Thomas Pocklington Trust	–	–	–
National Lottery Community Fund	49,750	–	**49,750**
Subscriptions			
Membership subscriptions	–	–	–
Other donations and legacies			
Other income	9,528	–	**9,528**
	156,553	–	**156,553**

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total Funds 2020 £
Donations			
Donations and bequests	1,779	–	1,779
Fundraising	8,229	–	8,229
Grants			
Welsh Government	–	136,139	136,139
Local Authority grants	3,018	–	3,018
Other grants	700	10,000	10,700
Wales Council for Voluntary Action	–	–	–
Thomas Pocklington Trust	–	11,513	11,513
National Lottery Community Fund	–	–	–
Subscriptions			
Membership subscriptions	1,150	–	1,150

Wales Council of the Blind

Company Limited by Guarantee

Notes to the Financial Statements *(continued)*

Year ended 31 March 2021

5. Donations and legacies *(continued)*

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total Funds 2020 £
Other donations and legacies			
Other income	8,700	–	8,700
	23,576	157,652	181,228

6. Charitable activities

	Unrestricted Funds £	**Total Funds 2021 £**	Unrestricted Funds £	Total Funds 2020 £
Promoting Welfare	–	–	540	540

7. Investment income

	Unrestricted Funds £	**Total Funds 2021 £**	Unrestricted Funds £	Total Funds 2020 £
Income from listed investments	4,254	**4,254**	4,821	4,821

8. Costs of other trading activities

	Unrestricted Funds £	**Total Funds 2021 £**	Unrestricted Funds £	Total Funds 2020 £
Fundraising costs	1,007	**1,007**	1,266	1,266

9. Investment management costs

	Unrestricted Funds £	**Total Funds 2021 £**	Unrestricted Funds £	Total Funds 2020 £
Portfolio management	3,719	**3,719**	3,775	3,775

Wales Council of the Blind

Company Limited by Guarantee

Notes to the Financial Statements *(continued)*

Year ended 31 March 2021

10. Expenditure on charitable activities by fund type

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	**Total Funds 2021 £**
Promoting Welfare	123,194	3,100	**126,294**
Support costs	19,105	–	**19,105**
	142,299	3,100	**145,399**

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total Funds 2020 £
Promoting Welfare	30,560	154,552	185,112
Support costs	22,430	–	22,430
	52,990	154,552	207,542

11. Expenditure on charitable activities by activity type

	Activities undertaken directly £	Support costs £	**Total funds 2021 £**	Total fund 2020 £
Promoting Welfare	126,294	15,755	**142,049**	203,591
Governance costs	–	3,350	**3,350**	3,951
	126,294	19,105	**145,399**	207,542

12. Analysis of support costs

	Analysis of support costs activity 1 £	**Total 2021 £**	Total 2020 £
Staff costs	12,430	**12,430**	13,253
General office	3,325	**3,325**	5,226
Governance costs	3,350	**3,350**	3,950
	19,105	**19,105**	22,430

Wales Council of the Blind

Company Limited by Guarantee

Notes to the Financial Statements *(continued)*

Year ended 31 March 2021

13. Net gains/(losses) on investments

	Unrestricted Funds £	**Total Funds 2021 £**	Unrestricted Funds £	Total Funds 2020 £
Gains/(losses) on listed investments	22,087	**22,087**	(12,655)	(12,655)

14. Net income/(expenditure)

Net income/(expenditure) is stated after charging/(crediting):

	2021 £	2020 £
Depreciation of tangible fixed assets	**80**	106

15. Independent examination fees

	2021 £	2020 £
Fees payable to the independent examiner for:		
Independent examination of the financial statements	**2,520**	2,520

16. Staff costs

The total staff costs and employee benefits for the reporting period are analysed as follows:

	2021 £	2020 £
Wages and salaries	**99,608**	96,942
Social security costs	**6,109**	6,806
Employer contributions to pension plans	**3,103**	3,130
	108,820	106,878

The average head count of employees during the year was 3 (2020: 3). The average number of full-time equivalent employees during the year is analysed as follows:

	2021 No.	2020 No.
Project staff	**3**	3

No employee received employee benefits of more than £60,000 during the year (2020: Nil).

16. Staff costs *(continued)*

Key Management Personnel

Key management personnel include all persons that have authority and responsibility for planning, directing and controlling the activities of the charity. The total compensation paid to key management personnel for services provided to the charity was £38,547 (2020: £37,558).

17. Trustee remuneration and expenses

No remuneration or other benefits from employment with the charity or a related entity were received by the trustees.

All trustees are entitled to claim reimbursement of the cost of attending meetings, no trustees were reimbursed during the year (2020: £280) for travelling costs to attend meetings.

18. Transfers between funds

No transfers between general funds and designated funds took place during the year (2020: £12,500).

19. Tangible fixed assets

	Equipment £	Total £
Cost		
At 1 April 2020 and 31 March 2021	24,289	**24,289**
Depreciation		
At 1 April 2020	23,969	**23,969**
Charge for the year	80	**80**
At 31 March 2021	24,049	**24,049**
Carrying amount		
At 31 March 2021	240	**240**
At 31 March 2020	320	320

Wales Council of the Blind

Company Limited by Guarantee

Notes to the Financial Statements *(continued)*

Year ended 31 March 2021

20. Investments

	Cash or cash equivalents £	Listed investments £	Total £
Cost or valuation			
At 1 April 2020	9,090	196,064	**205,154**
Additions	127,720	123,351	**251,071**
Disposals	(127,070)	(119,278)	**(246,348)**
Fair value movements	–	17,899	**17,899**
At 31 March 2021	9,740	218,036	**227,776**
Impairment			
At 1 April 2020 and 31 March 2021			**–**
Carrying amount			
At 31 March 2021	9,740	218,036	**227,776**
At 31 March 2020	9,090	196,064	205,154

All investments shown above are held at valuation.

Listed investments
The aggregate market value of listed investments is £218,036 (2020: £196,064) and the stock exchange value is £218,036 (2020: £196,064).

Financial assets held at fair value

Investments are stated at fair value at the balance sheet date, listed investments are stated at the stock exchange values at the year end. Other investments are valued based on investment performance.

The historical cost of investments at the year end date is £206,783 (2020: £202,978).

21. Debtors

	2021 £	2020 £
Trade debtors	**11,593**	17,570
Prepayments and accrued income	**17,977**	3,406
Other debtors	**120**	120
	29,690	21,096

Wales Council of the Blind

Company Limited by Guarantee

Notes to the Financial Statements *(continued)*

Year ended 31 March 2021

22. Creditors: amounts falling due within one year

	2021	2020
	£	£
Trade creditors	**78**	1,012
Accruals and deferred income	**5,459**	2,520
Social security and other taxes	**2,588**	2,529
Other creditors	**18,750**	27
	26,875	6,088

Other creditors balance relates to a loan received from WCVA to support the organisation through the Covid-19 pandemic, this has been repaid in full post year end.

23. Pensions and other post retirement benefits

Defined contribution plans

The amount recognised in income or expenditure as an expense in relation to defined contribution plans was £3,103 (2020: £3,130).

24. Analysis of charitable funds

Unrestricted funds

	At 1 April 20 20	Income	Expenditure	Transfers	Gains and losses	**At 31 March 2021**
	£	£	£	£	£	**£**
General funds	236,976	160,807	(147,025)	–	22,087	**272,845**
Designated Fund	12,500	–	–	–	–	**12,500**
	249,476	160,807	(147,025)	–	22,087	**285,345**

	At 1 April 20 19	Income	Expenditure	Transfers	Gains and losses	At 31 March 2020
	£	£	£	£	£	£
General funds	291,225	28,937	(58,031)	(12,500)	(12,655)	236,976
Designated Fund	–	–	–	12,500	–	12,500
	291,225	28,937	(58,031)	–	(12,655)	249,476

Wales Council of the Blind

Company Limited by Guarantee

Notes to the Financial Statements *(continued)*

Year ended 31 March 2021

24. Analysis of charitable funds *(continued)*

Restricted funds

	At 1 April 2020 £	Income £	Expenditure £	Transfers £	Gains and losses £	**At 31 March 2021 £**
Pontypridd Talking Newspaper	3,100	–	(3,100)	–	–	–

	At 1 April 2019 £	Income £	Expenditure £	Transfers £	Gains and losses £	At 31 March 2020 £
Welsh Government	–	136,139	(136,139)	–	–	–
Pontypridd Talking Newspaper	–	10,000	(6,900)	–	–	3,100
Thomas Pocklington Trust	–	11,513	(11,513)	–	–	–
	–	157,652	(154,552)	–	–	3,100

The Welsh Government grant was received in respect of funding for the Sustainable Social Services Third Sector 2016-19 project.

The Pontypridd Talking Newspaper grant was received in respect of providing support to local residents in RCT via a talking newspaper. Wales Council of the Blind are responsible for controlling the funds and monitoring this service provided.

Thomas Pocklington Trust grant was received towards producing a State Of the Nation report on third sector services for blind and partially sighted people.

Wales Council of the Blind

Company Limited by Guarantee

Notes to the Financial Statements *(continued)*

Year ended 31 March 2021

25. Analysis of net assets between funds

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	**Total Funds 2021 £**
Tangible fixed assets	240	–	**240**
Investments	227,776	–	**227,776**
Current assets	84,204	–	**84,204**
Creditors less than 1 year	(26,875)	–	**(26,875)**
Net assets	285,345	–	**285,345**

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total Funds 2020 £
Tangible fixed assets	320	–	320
Investments	205,155	–	205,155
Current assets	50,090	3,100	53,190
Creditors less than 1 year	(6,088)	–	(6,088)
Net assets	249,477	3,100	252,577

26. Related parties

The charity was under the control of the trustees throughout the current and previous year.

No transactions with related parties were undertaken such as are required to be disclosed under FRS 102.

27. Post balance sheet events

The Covid-19 pandemic has had a significant negative effect on the UK and World economy and, whilst the consequences of Covid-19 on the charitable company have been insignificant during the year and since the year-end, the trustees recognise that in the longer term its effect may be more significant. At this point in time any long-term effect on the charitable company is unknown, but the trustees remain confident of the financial position of the charitable company and its ability to meet its obligations and liabilities as they fall due. The trustees are confident that it is correct to prepare the accounts on a going concern basis and that this is not a subsequent event that requires an adjustment in the annual accounts.