

REGISTERED COMPANY NUMBER: 02914384 (England and Wales)
REGISTERED CHARITY NUMBER: 1046018

**REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES AND
AUDITED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024
FOR
CITIZENS ADVICE MERTON AND LAMBETH
LIMITED
(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)**

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**CITIZENS ADVICE MERTON AND LAMBETH
LIMITED**

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FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024**

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CITIZENS ADVICE MERTON AND LAMBETH LIMITED

CHAIR'S WELCOME FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

I am glad to present our 2023-2024 Trustees Report and Accounts. Through a period where high levels of hardship continued to affect many of our clients, CAML has delivered significant support to residents, predominantly in Merton and Lambeth, on behalf of our commissioners and funders, with impressive outcomes for our clients.

CAML supported over 25,000 clients this year. This is 10% down on the previous year however this reduction is explained by the 6% increase in the complexity of issues presented by clients, requiring more time and diligence by our team.

CAML's support and advice generated more than £3m of direct financial benefit for our clients (2023: £3.2m), which was worth over £11.2m in value to the people we supported (2023: £10.3m). The broader economic and social benefit of improving our clients' wellbeing is an estimated £19.6m (2023: nearly £26.5m).

Client demand has remained high during the year. We have worked hard to recruit to match the demand but this has been difficult. As a local charity we continue to work hard to afford a team to address continued high levels of demand for our services. Our funders understand the challenges posed by such high need for our service. They support us, where possible, to retain the high quality, fully accredited services that we provide.

Our staff and volunteers have continued to go the extra mile to support the volume and complexity of needs brought to us by our clients, supported by our outgoing Chief Executive, Suzanne Hudson, and a committed and talented Trustee Board. I speak on behalf of the Board of Trustees when I say thank you to Suzanne and our dedicated and hard-working staff.

In early 2024, Simon Shimmens joined as Chief Executive and I took over from Jatinder Gosal as Chair of the Board of Trustees. I take this opportunity to say thank you to my Board colleagues who support the CEO and I very well.

We have moved into the 2024/25 financial year with continued high demand, and budget and resource pressures. I am glad that we face these challenges with a committed team, passionate about the substantial benefits they provide for our clients, their families and local communities.

E Coulter

Elizabeth Coulter

Chair of the Board of Trustees

30 October 2024

**CITIZENS ADVICE MERTON AND LAMBETH
LIMITED (REGISTERED NUMBER: 02914384)**

**REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024**

The Trustees who are also directors of the charity for the purposes of the Companies Act 2006, present their report with the financial statements of the charity for the year ended 31 March 2023. The Trustees have adopted the provisions of Accounting and Reporting by Charities: 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) (effective 1 January 2019).

OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES

Principles, Aims and Strategic priorities

Citizens Advice Merton and Lambeth (CAML) is one of London's leading and busiest advice charities. We support individuals and families who live, work or study primarily in the London Boroughs of Merton and Lambeth, but also elsewhere. We also work to raise awareness and understanding of the challenging issues affecting individuals and our communities.

The charity's objects are to promote any charitable purpose for the public benefit by the advancement of education, the protection and preservation of health and the relief of poverty, sickness and distress for the benefit of the communities we serve.

We were one of the first Citizens Advice services to open our doors in 1939, so in September 2024 the team and partners celebrated 85 years of providing our services and support, which remain as important today as they were when our work began.

Strategy 2021-2026

In 2021 we developed and implemented a new five-year strategy in consultation with staff, volunteers, funders, commissioners, clients and other stakeholders.

Our Purpose

Supporting people to resolve their advice problems and change their lives for the better. We do this on a **free, confidential and impartial basis** by:

- Providing **advice and information services** to support people in resolving the problems they face; and
- Supporting the **improvement of policies and practices** that affect people's lives both locally and nationally.

Our Values

Clients and Beneficiaries first

- We work for the public and place the interests of our clients and communities at the heart of our high quality advice, information and support.
- We collaborate with other organisations and partners for the benefit of our clients.

Professionalism

- Working together as a team we take pride in doing things properly, in making a real difference.
- Our staff, volunteers and trustees act with integrity.
- We support our team with on-going training and mentoring to achieve the best for clients and beneficiaries.

Compassion

- We believe everyone should have access to social justice.
- We value diversity, challenge discrimination and create a culture where all can flourish.

**REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024**

Strategic Priorities 2021-2026

1. To **deliver the highest quality advice and support** across the range of our services.
2. To **use technology to enable multi-channel access** and to support as many clients as we can in the way that best meets their needs.
3. To **ensure our services are accessible** by:
 - a) Prioritising face-to-face support for those who most need it.
 - b) Finding other means to help vulnerable clients where that would be more effective.
4. To invest in **quality training and supervision** to make the most of our **exceptional staff and volunteers**.
5. To build the long-term success of the charity by **prioritising financial sustainability** and by **attracting more investment from our communities**.

Public benefit

The Trustees have complied with the duty in Section 17 of the Charities Act 2011 to have due regard to public benefit guidance published by the Charities Commission. The company's objects are to promote any charitable purpose for the public and preservation of health and the relief of poverty, sickness and distress but without limitation, for the benefit of the community in London Boroughs of Merton and Lambeth and surrounding areas; specifically, to provide free, independent, confidential, impartial advice, advocacy and information to the public on civil, financial, legal and other matters.

The Trustees refer to the guidance contained in the Charity Commission's general guidance on public benefit when reviewing the aims and objectives of the company and in planning its future activities. The Trustees consider how planned activities will contribute to the aims and objectives they have set.

The Charity believes its strategy should be a living document, engaging with all our stakeholders and being actively reviewed and enhanced in response to the rapidly changing social, political and economic external environment. To ensure that we remain relevant and effective in responding to the needs of our local communities, we are committed to building on what we know works, involving our partners, commissioners, funders, staff, and volunteers.

ACHIEVEMENT AND PERFORMANCE

Charitable activities

Our services

CAML provides a range of services and specialist projects primarily for the residents of the two London boroughs of Merton and Lambeth, but also wider London/elsewhere. The demographics of the two London boroughs differ, and our funding and hence services and projects in the respective boroughs also vary, albeit that some of our core services are consistent in each borough. Our focus remains on each and every client and their particular situation, which continue to typically be more complex.

We work in partnership and collaboration with other organisations, knowing that together we can often achieve better outcomes for individuals and families in need. Our information, support and advice services are provided via telephone, online, video conference and face-to-face. In addition to our main public advice services we offer a range of specialist services and projects.

Although our funding sources continue to develop, unfortunately we do not have the resources to immediately support everyone who contacts us. The high number of clients we have supported has only been possible through the continued commitment of our staff team, our amazing volunteers, our partners and our fantastic funders/supporters.

"Thanks for your help. I have found a bit of peace around this situation now." - Client

**REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024**

ACHIEVEMENT AND PERFORMANCE

Charitable activities

A year of unprecedented demand and challenges

The 23/24 financial year was still affected by what was still referred to as the 'cost of living crisis', which has continued into generally high levels of hardship, high costs and low incomes, which shows no signs of falling. As a consequence the demand for CAML's advice and support continued at unprecedented levels, far exceeding the charity's capacity and placing huge pressures on our services and team of staff and volunteers.

As local people continue to find it difficult to pay their rent, Council Tax and energy bills and generally make ends meet, they turned to us for help. We saw a further increase in complex debt issues, an increase in housing disrepair and maintenance issues, plus rises in cases of clients presenting with private sector rents and social housing service charge problems. National Citizens Advice statistics, reflecting our local experience, evidenced that over recent years clients have presented an average of over 4 bespoke issues, whilst in 23/24 this increased to an average of over 5. This has added extra time and solution pressure on team members. We continue to support people to the best of our ability and capacity, mindful of the wellbeing of our team.

Funding continued for specific cost-of-living crisis advice projects in both Merton and Lambeth, including with the benefit of GLA funding. Cost-of-living contract delivery includes partnership working with community and faith organisations in Merton, Lambeth and Wandsworth to reach parts of the community experiencing cost-of-living difficulties.

"Thank you for getting back to me so promptly. Much appreciated. Will follow your advice." - Client

Rising numbers helped and value generated

During the year **we supported over 25,000 clients**, a reduction of 9% on the previous year, but with a 6% increase **of over 43,000 advice issues** through our range of services. There was a slightly lower result compared to last financial year, but still **over £3 million of financial benefit achieved** for clients. The figure does not include people who accessed the self-help resources on the CAML website, which we estimate to be in excess of 30,000 a year.

For every £1 invested in our services in 2023-2024, we generated*:

£2.28 in savings to government and public services (fiscal benefits)

By helping stop problems occurring or escalating, we reduce the need for public services (health, housing, out of work benefits).

£14.57 in wider economic and social benefits (public value)

Supporting and helping to solve residents' problems improves lives - and this means better wellbeing, participation and productivity for residents, communities and the boroughs we serve.

£8.32 in financial value to the people we help

Through our services and support we can increase people's income, help write off debt, take up benefits and resolve consumer issues.

CAML's support and advice generated just over £3 million in fiscal benefits and over £11.2 million in value to the people we supported. The wider economic and social benefit of improving clients' well-being is estimated at £19.6 million.

*Data calculated using Treasury impact model available to Citizens Advice network.

**CITIZENS ADVICE MERTON AND LAMBETH
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**REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024**

Main public advice services

CAML delivered general advice and information services for Merton and Lambeth residents by telephone (Adviceline) - 35% of clients, email - 30% of clients, in-person drop-in sessions at charity offices in Mitcham, Morden and Kennington - 35% of clients, and through our website (caml.org.uk). Our general advice support encompasses information support, advice needs assessments, advice appointments and referral to specialist advice services provided by CAML's special projects, pro bono law partners or other organisations. For more about special projects and pro bono support see below.

The main topics we received enquiries about across all our services were as follows. Benefit enquiries, including tax credits and Universal Credit, account for 30% of issues we helped with. Enquiries about Personal Independence Payment were by far the largest matter that we dealt with. Housing and debt issues accounted for another third of our work. The top debt issues that people came to us for help with were council tax arrears, housing association rent arrears and fuel debts.

Benefits and tax credits	21%	The following all less than 3%
Housing	19%	Consumer goods & services
Debt	12%	Health & community care
Universal Credit	9	Relationships & family
Immigration and asylum	7%	Tax
Legal	5%	Travel & Transport
Charitable Support & Food Banks	4%	
Employment	3%	
Financial services & capability	3%	
Utilities & communications	3%	

During the year we saw priority demands change slightly owing to the ongoing impact of high levels of hardship, low incomes and high costs, such as charitable support and access to food banks. Other continued demand for debt support and housing support remained high, in conjunction with the consistently high percentage of clients requesting advice regarding benefits.

Adviceline services

Our Adviceline telephone and email service provides information, assessments and support through two Advicelines - one for Merton and one for Lambeth.

Continued high levels of hardship has meant the demand for Adviceline across both local authorities continues to create volumes which the team are not able to respond to as promptly as we would like. During the year we supported over 13,676 calls and online queries, but demand levels continued to result in individuals facing potentially long waiting times to speak with a team member. Additionally the complexity of individuals' circumstances and support requested has created longer average call times with more pressure on the team.

**"They took my pension claim over the phone and now the problem is sorted. Thank you very much for your help."
- Client**

In-person services

High levels of hardship resulted in increased clients seeking in-person support. During the year we supported 6,228 people with on-the-day information and advice assessment support, an increase of 18% on the prior year. Additionally we supported 2,195 clients with generalist advice appointments.

Merton and Lambeth residents continued to face complex challenges, sometimes engaging with us very late in the day which can add to the challenge of finding successful solutions. We endeavour to prioritise face-to-face support for clients who need it, including those with complicated situations, who are vulnerable, or needing complex casework, as mentioned earlier in terms of a circa 20% increase in numbers of bespoke issues that clients present our team with.

"Thank you (advisor name) for your time in explaining the options available to move forward and improve my life." - Client

**CITIZENS ADVICE MERTON AND LAMBETH
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**REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024**

Key Demographics

Client demographics across CAML's advice services:

Gender		Age		Ethnicity	
Female	62%	<25 years	3%	White	33%
Male	38%	25-29	6%	Asian	15%
Other/refer not to say	0%	30-39	20%	Black	38%
		40-49	22%	Mixed	7%
Disability		50-59	22%	Other	7%
		60-69	17%		
Disabled	7%	>70	10%		
Long term health condition	44%				
No/prefer not to say	49%				

Many clients, for understandable reasons, may choose not to disclose health conditions. The demographic information above is largely consistent with the prior year, however, notably there has been a 50% increase of those in the 40-49 age group from last year, with the 50-59 age group reducing by a third. The percentage of clients over 70 years of age also doubled from last year's figures.

We continue to support clients mentioning mental health concerns but not disclosing a specific condition. CAML is now delivering a contract with South West London & St Georges NHS Mental Health Trust supporting clients who are formally receiving mental health system support. We continue to support any safeguarding concerns raised by clients. We have comprehensive safeguarding policies and procedures and work closely with statutory teams as appropriate to support our clients.

Case study: We help Kelsey* back on her feet

Kelsey was referred to Lambeth Living Well project after ringing Lambeth Adviceline

Kelsey initially wanted to speak with adviser in person as, in her own words, her life was "a mess" and she was struggling with day-to-day living. When her marriage broke down, she and her little girl were moved into Lambeth council accommodation from the flat she and her husband had been buying. One thing led to another, and she ended up serving a short prison sentence.

On release, Kelsey was deeply in debt with rent arrears, council tax arrears, credit card debts and more. She found a full-time job, but, with paying for child-care and the cost of living, she still couldn't make ends meet. When bailiffs threatened to take away her car, which was linked to her disabled father's Blue Badge and motability award, it was the final straw.

CAML's Lambeth Living Well adviser met with Kelsey and completed an advice assessment. Kelsey was reassured that the car would not be impounded because it was a registered motability car. The adviser provided written statement that Kelsey could use if needed in the future explaining this.

In addition to referring Kelsey to a specialist debt adviser, the Living Well adviser worked with and supported Kelsey in how to maximise her income including ensuring tax code was correct, using the Child Maintenance Service to renegotiate her ex's child support payments, applying for benefits she was entitled to, and applying to Lambeth's Emergency Support Scheme. Kelsey was supported over a number of appointments.

Kelsey thanked CAML for all our support. Kelsey was invited to contact us again for further support or information when needed.

* Names and some details have been changed to preserve confidentiality

**CITIZENS ADVICE MERTON AND LAMBETH
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**REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024**

Specialist Services Review

CAML's projects provide specialist advice and casework support or focus on specific issues, groups and/or localities.

Lambeth Children's Centre service

This is an outreach service with dedicated advisers based in Better Start Children's Centres across Lambeth supporting families in need with children under 5 years of age. During the year we supported 290 families with over 3,587 issues. Although the client numbers were consistent with the prior year the number of issues increased by a third - primarily benefits, debt and housing.

Merton Disability Welfare Service

Our Specialist Disability Caseworker delivers expert advice to disabled people living in Merton. The service is part-funded by London Borough of Merton, with the charity supporting the balance following the decision of Trustees to invest in this much-needed programme focusing on supporting some of the most vulnerable people in Merton to access/receive the disability benefits to which they are entitled.

111 individuals were supported through the service with a mix of advice and casework, addressing 640 issues, a 25% increase of issues addressed to the prior year. Due to clients' needs and circumstances nearly all appointments are face-to-face. Many cases involve appeals against disability allowance rejections. In the last year 33 of 36 appeals supported were successful to the benefit of the client.

Wimbledon Guild

For a number of years we have worked in close partnership with Wimbledon Guild with a dedicated CAML adviser based in their central Wimbledon venue supporting clients one day a week. During the year, we supported 81 clients with 325 issues.

Wimbledon Guild additionally provided funding for a specialist debt adviser one day a week owing to the cost-of-living crisis. Our adviser supported 35 clients with 167 debt issues.

Lambeth Council Tax Summons Support

Our dedicated advisers worked closely with Capita and Lambeth Council teams to help people with Lambeth Council Tax arrears. As financial difficulties for Lambeth residents mounted during the year, so did demand for this service. We supported 72 clients before the service finished at the end of the financial year in March 2024.

Lambeth Living Well Service

CAML provides generalist information and advice at community venues and through the Lambeth Living Well Bus. We supported 488 Lambeth residents with 1,512 issues, working closely with health and other organisations. The service finished in December 2023.

Immigration Service

The Trust for London funds us to provide a specialist immigration advice service, working in partnership with three other London Citizens Advice charities. Our dedicated Immigration Adviser supports residents across five London boroughs. The service supported 370 clients with 1,525 issues. The demand for this specialist support continued to exceed our forecasts.

Cost-of-Living Crisis Prevention Advice Project (GLA)

CAML is one of many local Citizens Advice offices funded by the Greater London Authority (GLA). Our Crisis Prevention Adviser provides general advice and support for Londoners struggling with the cost-of-living crisis. CAML works with community groups and organisations including Merton Carers Support and Mushkil Aasaan. CAML is also funded to employ a specialist welfare benefits adviser who takes referrals from CAML and other Citizens Advice charities in South and West London. 386 Londoners were supported.

Merton Cost-of-Living

In late 2022, Merton Council awarded CAML new funding to help support individuals and families in Merton manage their immense challenges arising from the cost-of-living crisis. The two-year grant supports a dedicated team of generalist and debt advisers to provide a mix of drop-in sessions and pre-booked appointments in outreach venues including Merton libraries and Wide Way Medical Centre. 616 Merton residents were supported in 23/24.

**REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024**

Pro Bono Advice

CAML continued to partner with two law firms in 2023-24 to provide clients with free initial legal advice on housing matters. Duncan Lewis Solicitors accepted referrals for telephone advice and Abbotts Martin saw clients referred by us in Kennington. We are grateful for their continued support and the valuable advice they provide to our clients.

Communications, Research & Campaigns

We have a fully effective Research & Campaigns (R&C) team of volunteers who support both National Citizens Advice campaigns and also help to raise policy issues at local level with local Councillors and Members of Parliament to influence policy changes that could benefit our clients. To ensure that National Citizens Advice's policy work is informed by the experiences of the people of Merton and Lambeth, our advisers, assessors and the Adviceline team sent National Citizens Advice 4,526 evidence forms, covering 1,078 problem issues faced by our clients. Challenges with the benefits system contribute to around a third of these issues, but housing concerns, in both the private and social rented sectors continue to be a key problem for clients. The case studies regularly shared with National Office are considered as high quality and effective in promoting the benefits for clients of the services we provide. Our Senior Manager who oversees and guides the R&C team was asked to present a CAML case study at the 2024 National Citizens Advice annual conference.

We also engage with the wider community through regular posts on our website and social media networks including Instagram and LinkedIn. In addition to physical promotional information being visible at our outreach locations, staff have regularly attended weekend cost of living events. We are also developing stronger links with local foodbanks as communication hubs for our services, including the most recent energy advice support that CAML can provide.

Case study: Marcia* moves forward

Marcia had had a run of bad luck. An articulate, well-educated woman in her early 60s, she lived and brought up a family in her Lambeth council flat for over 40 years. She now lives alone. Her mobility problems, sickle cell anaemia, and dyslexia make it difficult for her to engage with big organisations but she could do her job and could make ends meet.

Things changed in the autumn. Marcia's work made her job redundant, a council admin error pushed her into council tax arrears, and, on top of this, debt collectors were chasing her for an alleged catalogue debt from 10 years ago that she knew nothing about.

When she had spent her redundancy payment, she applied for Universal Credit. She couldn't navigate her energy company's website or help line so, after living in an unheated flat for 3 weeks, she called CAML's Adviceline. We gave her a fuel voucher and made her an appointment with Amy, one of our advisers.

Amy explained that although Marcia would be subject to the 'bedroom tax', she could apply to the council for a Discretionary Housing Payment. Amy showed her how to get a large print application form for Personal Independence payment (PIP), apply for a Limited Capacity for Work Assessment, join the utility companies' priority registers, challenge the debt, and speak to the council about her council tax arrears.

Marcia acted on this advice and later emailed Amy saying:

'Thank you Amy, for your time in explaining the options available to move forward and improve my life'.

* Names and identifying details have been changed to preserve confidentiality

**REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024**

Volunteers

Volunteers are a vital part of CAML's services and the organisation's contribution to our local communities. All volunteers receive a comprehensive induction and ongoing training with daily support and supervision from dedicated staff members. National Citizens Advice calculates that CAML volunteers gave an estimated £294,500 worth of time during this financial year.

There were 31 volunteers throughout the year, contributing to various teams across CAML. Roles included Information, Research and Campaigns, Assessor and Adviser volunteers. CAML's Trustees are also volunteers and their work provides the governance oversight for the charity to operate. In the current financial year we have appointed a further three Trustees to replace resignations, all of whom bring valued skills and experiences to maintain a strong and diverse Trustee Board. Elizabeth Coulter also became Chair following the successful tenure of Jatinder Gosal.

We continued to observe ongoing demographic shifts amongst prospective volunteers. National statistics reflect a significant drop in volunteer numbers in the 23/24 financial year, reflecting a drop in CAML volunteer numbers. Appreciating the challenge of attracting new volunteers and the value of their support to clients, additional advertising has taken place in the current year to attract additional volunteers, including in roles not previously advertised for.

"I started volunteering as an Information Volunteer with CAML in 2019. I had always been interested in Citizens' Advice and when I took early retirement from teaching I saw an opportunity to get involved. I could not have asked for a more rewarding volunteering position. All the regular staff and the other volunteers at CAML have been so kind, supportive, patient and friendly. CAML never forgets that we are volunteers and genuinely values our contribution. It is a real privilege to meet our clients, many of whom have complex problems but are dealing with them with grace. I often feel that I haven't done much to help, but the clients are incredibly grateful. It is such an eye-opening and rewarding role." - CAML Volunteer

Staff

During the 23/24 financial year CAML employed an average of 39 members of staff (full time and part time). In full time equivalent (FTE) terms this represents an average of 31.5 staff. As core funding drops in real terms and payroll costs increase this creates an ongoing situation where it is a challenge financially to increase staff resources to address increased client demand. Suzanne Hudson stood down as CEO in February 2024 and Simon Shimmens joined as CEO on 26th February 2024.

We continue to employ the best and highest quality staff members that we can. Although this can be a challenge, especially in London, where the cost of travel and housing makes it very difficult to attract the right people for the available remuneration, we continue to maintain full or near full staffing levels throughout the year to ensure the charity continues to provide the best service provision possible and deliver on agreed targets. The number of leavers through the year remained stable in comparison to the prior year.

CAML's support

We believe that investing in and listening to our team makes us a better organisation. We involve staff and volunteers in the design and delivery of services and how we work. We regularly survey and seek feedback and also have a strong commitment to professional development and continuous training. We are proud of our team and are delighted when individuals wish to progress their career and choose to do so with the charity, including volunteers successfully applying for staff roles and staff progressing to supervision and management roles with our support.

We would like to thank every member of the CAML family. Their professionalism, commitment and dedication ensure tens of thousands of individuals and families throughout Merton and Lambeth receives the right support when they need it most.

"Thanks for listening. Thanks so much for your help and support with this. I really appreciate it." - Client

**REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES
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The Principles and Aims of CAML's Work and Services

We provide advice services responding to clients' needs via the telephone, online and face-to-face.

Our aim is to empower clients to better help themselves. But we are always here for further support and advice as and when needed.

Our approach embraces the following principles:

Build and foster trust - With our clients, our partners, and those we work closely with

Embrace joint working and collaboration - To meet individual needs, tackle wider strategic issues and maximise resources we need to work together, drawing on the diverse skills, knowledge and experience of the CAML team, our partners and those we work closely with. Collaborative working ensures the best outcomes for our clients.

Work flexibly - We know the needs of individuals, families and communities change over time - in terms of changing demographics, challenges individuals and families face, and how they prefer to receive support. To ensure we continue to meet clients' needs and demands, CAML's professional, high quality advice services need to evolve over time.

Supportive - The challenges clients face are increasingly complex which can be immensely stressful for them, their families and those who support them (including the CAML team). At CAML we are here for our clients and our team. We recognise that to best support clients we need to ensure those who work and volunteer with us are comprehensively supported. In the past year we have developed and implemented enhancements for our team including improved support and supervision, implementation of recommendations from volunteer review and team training.

Evidence based - The design, delivery and evaluation of services must be evidence based. Although we're not a large charity, we need to ensure that evaluating and demonstrating impact and delivering value for money is embedded within what we do.

Quality Assurance - As a member of the National Citizens Advice network, all our advice work is subject to professional quality assurance standards so we can ensure the best standard of support is being consistently delivered. In addition, monitoring and recording of client satisfaction is an integral part of our services. This information includes client profiles which enable us to monitor that our services are meeting the needs of the community including hard-to-reach groups such as those with additional communication needs or enhanced support through a range of delivery models to maximise access (phone, email, online, face-to-face, drop-in and appointments at multiple venues).

We record, monitor and measure customer satisfaction in a variety of ways. We have detailed information (with consent) on how we have supported clients and the number of issues resolved. We can also value economic and financial gains.

With national Citizens Advice, clients are invited to participate in feedback. Where the client agrees, a third party organisation contacts them to complete a survey (telephone or online) as to their experience with CAML.

Looking forward, we are considering how AI can help to lessen administrative time attached to the services we provide. The intention is to maximise the benefit of advisor time with clients and minimise the time producing records and case notes to our usual high standards, as independently verified.

" I have always found my local CA office [CAML] to be extremely helpful!!! They helped with my long standing case to reach a successful outcome. Cannot recommend highly enough." - Client

**REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024**

FINANCIAL REVIEW

Financial position

In the past year CAML maintained an income level of £1,279,534, almost identical to the prior year figure of £1,280,943. This was as a result of new funding virtually matching funding that ceased in the financial year as contracts reached their expected end dates.

With levels of hardship remaining, demand for our support continues to significantly outpace our ability to support everyone trying to contact us. Continued sustained charity development and expansion remains our priority aim for the next three years.

Expenditure rose to £1,299,971 from the prior year figure of £1,263,920, largely as a result of increased costs for payroll, which accounts for around 82% of overall costs, plus most other costs increasing. As a result, we closed the 23/24 financial year with a small deficit of £19,530. Prior year surplus was £17,991.

As mentioned throughout this report, the ongoing high levels of hardship for so many of our clients, means that high levels of demand which exceed our day to day capability will remain in the foreseeable future. This maintains financial pressure to maintain and try to enhance our team resources to be able to address demand and maintain the excellent quality of service we provide to clients.

We continue to work very closely with commissioners, partners and funders to professionally support the communities we serve in what remain challenging times for those experiencing high levels of hardship, low incomes and high costs.

Investment policy

Similar to many charities of our size, CAML currently has no investment funds. Surplus funds when not immediately required are placed in deposit accounts with CAF Bank and Metro Bank.

Reserves policy

In setting the reserves policy, the Board of Trustees considers the need to provide against any future income shortfall, fulfil working capital requirements and allow funds to be available to support service developments. Throughout 2023-24 we continued to meet the reserves policy of three months operational expenditure in unrestricted funds. With higher restricted balance of funds, in March 2023 the Board of Trustees approved a new reserves policy providing that unrestricted funds meet three months unrestricted expenditure.

Principal risks and uncertainties

The Trustees regularly review risks and as part of internal control, look ahead at potential risks in the future that could undermine the sustainability of the charity, including:

- Ability to recruit and retain skilled staff. Experienced Supervisors and Managers in Citizens Advice are highly trained and skilled people, and it remains a challenge to recruit and afford sufficient resources in London, where living costs are high.
- Securing longer term and viable funding remains a challenge, albeit that there is currently some stability of two year funding. Key funds from local authorities are under long term pressure due to budget deficits and typically do not cover cost increases over their contract terms, adding additional pressure on resourcing to meet demands.
- Continued levels of hardship that our clients are facing produces a sustained demand for our services in excess of our resources on a day to day basis. Delays in providing support can lead to client dissatisfaction. Resourcing pressures can make it even more difficult to accept new funding opportunities when delivery is expected at relatively short notice.

To address and mitigate these risks, ongoing actions and initiatives include:

- Raising our profile as a local charity at community level, to assist recruitment of new staff and to attract and retain a much larger number of active volunteers.
- Consolidating and diversifying our income streams, minimising the reliance on local authority funding, including engaging with the business community to assist income generation and encouraging volunteers.
- Reviewing our service delivery model to consider how we better handle high levels of demand, including by improved process and use of technology.

**REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024**

FINANCIAL REVIEW

PLANS FOR 2024 - 2025 AND FUTURE PERIODS

Governance and Management

We continue to strengthen the Board through identifying gaps in skills/knowledge/experience and successfully recruiting to these roles. During the year we recruited for new Trustees and were successful in appointing a further three new Trustees - Simon Graham, Chris Southorn and Anthony Ma. Recruitment continued in early 2024 and in the current financial year Catherine Anderson, Elaine Okyere and Rory Weal joined as trustees. Jatinder Gosal stood down as Chair and Elizabeth Coulter became Chair in 2024.

Strengthening Access

A key aspect of meeting rising demand for our services and support in an environment of lower resourcing (financial and otherwise) is to ensure we have the correct balance of service provision between telephone, online, face-to-face and outreach, and between information, assessments (triage), generalist advice and specialist advice.

This is an ongoing process as patterns of demand can change and a successful service must be flexible in order to respond appropriately.

We continue to have important conversations with our core advice funders, the London Boroughs of Merton and Lambeth. Both to ensure that our respective directions of travel are closely aligned and also to influence their future priorities for funding advice services through our expertise.

SUSTAINABILITY, FINANCIAL VIABILITY AND RISKS

Political, financial and societal uncertainties externally make it never more important to ensure the charity is properly resourced with a strong business plan and highly professional operational leadership and team. This is even more important as Local Authorities and other funders are under increasing and unavoidable pressure to cut their budgets.

We are therefore working to secure appropriate funding for existing service contracts and our Chief Executive is tasked with securing new funding opportunities within the approved three-year budget. Within this, being able to demonstrate the impact of our work and communicate this effectively to key stakeholders is of primary importance.

As a charity with a turnover in excess of £1 million, CAML is excluded from bidding for many charitable funds. Those that we are eligible to bid for are subject to increased competition. The three-year business plan and budget provides a framework for the charity to sustainably grow and develop. During the 23/24 financial year and the current financial year additional income was achieved broadly in line with the business plan and budget. There remains a number of future risks of key funding support changing and the Board of Trustees may well need to make major strategic decisions if core local authority funding does not meet full cost recovery going forward.

**REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024**

STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

Constitution and organisational structure

The charity is constituted as a company limited by guarantee.

Recruitment and Appointment of New Trustees

The Directors of the company are also Charity Trustees for the purposes of charity law and under the company's articles are known as the Board of Trustees. The Board of Trustees seeks to ensure that the needs of the users of the charity's services are appropriately reflected through the diversity of the members of the Trustee body. As part of our succession planning, we continue to advertise and recruit new Trustees. Prospective trustees are interviewed by trustee recruitment panel. Successful applicants are then invited to meet the Chief Executive and observe a Board meeting.

Organisational Structure and decision making

The Board of Trustees meets quarterly and is responsible for the strategic direction and policies of the charity. There are also two sub-committees of the Board covering Finance and People. These have delegated powers, terms of reference and meet quarterly and as required. The Chief Executive, assisted by three senior managers, is responsible for charity operations including services, contracts and projects within the strategy and policies set by the Board.

Induction and Training of Trustees

New Trustees have a welcome induction including information, time spent with services, team meetings and opportunities to familiarise themselves with the charity's activities and policies. All Trustees are also encouraged to join team meetings and team training. Trustees also attend relevant training sessions from national Citizens Advice and other organisations.

Key Management Remuneration

Remuneration levels for key management personnel are reviewed annually by the board. Trustees consider benchmarks against comparable roles for other similar charities when determining salary and other employment benefits.

Related Organisations

The Charity is a member of Citizens Advice, a national network of over 240 local charities that deliver advice across the country, overseen by a national framework provided by Citizens Advice.

We have excellent relationships with the London Borough of Lambeth and the London Borough of Merton who provide us with core funding for the open public advice services through contracts/grants to support our vital work with their communities.

We continue to work in partnership with other organisations including Wimbledon Guild, Walcot Foundation, Wimbledon Foundation, Greater London Authority (GLA), South West London & St Georges NHS Mental Health Trust, Citizens Advice Hounslow, Wandsworth and Hammersmith & Fulham and collaboratively work with other charities and organisations relevant to our clients' needs.

On behalf of our clients and everyone involved with Citizens Advice Merton and Lambeth, we would like to extend our gratitude for the support and co-operation we receive from all our funders, partners and other organisations.

Statement of Internal Control

Risk Management

The Trustees from review and update of the risk register remain satisfied that there are measures in place to mitigate those risks. The Trustees always undertake appropriate due diligence and seek appropriate professional advice when taking major decisions.

The charity's objectives, its internal organisation and the environment in which it operates change over time and internal controls are in place to help manage and control risk appropriately. As not all risks can be fully mitigated, an approach to risk appetite supports decisions about appropriate actions.

The following risk categories are included in the risk register:

- Governance
- Service Delivery
- Finance and Funding
- People Management

Our Business Continuity Plan details how we will handle significant risks that could cause disruption to our normal services and which have the potential for significant impact on our clients and the overall operation of the charity.

**CITIZENS ADVICE MERTON AND LAMBETH
LIMITED (REGISTERED NUMBER: 02914384)**

**REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024**

REFERENCE AND ADMINISTRATIVE DETAILS

Registered Company number

02914384 (England and Wales)

Registered Charity number

1046018

Registered office

7 Crown Parade
Morden
London
SM4 5DA

Principal address

326 London Road
Mitcham
London
CR4 3ND

Trustees

Ms E Coulter Chair
Mr R Patel Treasurer
Ms K Gray
Ms C Mercer
Ms L Whiting
Mr C Southorn (appointed 12/4/23)
Ms E Okyere (appointed 17/6/24)
Ms C J Anderson (appointed 17/6/24)
Mr R Weal (appointed 17/6/24)
Mr J S Gosal (resigned 22/7/24)
Mr S Graham (appointed 12/4/23) (resigned 22/7/24)
Ms C M Taylor (resigned 31/10/23)
Mr A Ma Solicitor (appointed 30/6/23)

Chief Executive and Company Secretary

Simon Shimmens (appointed 26 February 2024)

Senior Management

Simon is supported by Karen Brunger (Head of Advice Services), Bill Petty (Head of Adviceline, Information & Facilities) and Denitsa Ivanova (Head of Projects & Quality who was appointed in July 2023).

Auditors

Hartley Fowler LLP
Statutory Auditors
Chartered Accountants
4th Floor Tuition House
27-37 St George's Road
Wimbledon
London
SW19 4EU

Legal Advisors

Muckles LLP
Time Central
32 Gallowgate
Newcastle upon Tyne NE1 4BF

**CITIZENS ADVICE MERTON AND LAMBETH
LIMITED (REGISTERED NUMBER: 02914384)**

**REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024**

REFERENCE AND ADMINISTRATIVE DETAILS

Bankers

Metro Bank Plc
75 Piccadilly
Mayfair
London W1J 8HU

CAF Bank Ltd
25 Kings Hill Avenue
Kings Hill
West Malling ME19 4JQ

STATEMENT OF TRUSTEES' RESPONSIBILITIES

The Trustees (who are also the directors of Citizens Advice Merton and Lambeth Limited for the purposes of company law) are responsible for preparing the Annual Report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

Company law requires the Trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charitable company and of the incoming resources and application of resources, including the income and expenditure, of the charitable company for that period. In preparing those financial statements, the Trustees are required to

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- observe the methods and principles in the Charity SORP;
- make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charitable company will continue in business.

The Trustees are responsible for keeping proper accounting records which disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charitable company and to enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 2006. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charitable company and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

In so far as the Trustees are aware:

- there is no relevant audit information of which the charitable company's auditors are unaware; and
- the Trustees have taken all steps that they ought to have taken to make themselves aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the auditors are aware of that information.

AUDITORS

The auditors, Hartley Fowler LLP, will be proposed for re-appointment at the forthcoming Annual General Meeting.

This report has been prepared in accordance with the special provisions of Part 15 of the Companies Act 2006 relating to small companies.

Approved by order of the board of trustees on 30 October 2024 and signed on its behalf by:

E Coulter

Ms E Coulter - Trustee

REPORT OF THE INDEPENDENT AUDITORS TO THE MEMBERS OF CITIZENS ADVICE MERTON AND LAMBETH LIMITED

Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of Citizens Advice Merton and Lambeth Limited (the 'charitable company') for the year ended 31 March 2024 which comprise the Statement of Financial Activities, the Statement of Financial Position, the Statement of Cash Flows and notes to the financial statements, including a summary of significant accounting policies. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

In our opinion the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the state of the charitable company's affairs as at 31 March 2024 and of its incoming resources and application of resources, including its income and expenditure, for the year then ended;
- have been properly prepared in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice; and
- have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006.

Basis for opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK) (ISAs (UK)) and applicable law. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditors' responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements section of our report. We are independent of the charitable company in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in the UK, including the FRC's Ethical Standard, and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

Conclusions relating to going concern

In auditing the financial statements, we have concluded that the trustees' use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements is appropriate.

Based on the work we have performed, we have not identified any material uncertainties relating to events or conditions that, individually or collectively, may cast significant doubt on the charitable company's ability to continue as a going concern for a period of at least twelve months from when the financial statements are authorised for issue.

Our responsibilities and the responsibilities of the trustees with respect to going concern are described in the relevant sections of this report.

Other information

The trustees are responsible for the other information. The other information comprises the information included in the Annual Report, other than the financial statements and our Report of the Independent Auditors thereon.

Our opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and, except to the extent otherwise explicitly stated in our report, we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon.

In connection with our audit of the financial statements, our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements or our knowledge obtained in the audit or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If we identify such material inconsistencies or apparent material misstatements, we are required to determine whether this gives rise to a material misstatement in the financial statements themselves. If, based on the work we have performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, we are required to report that fact. We have nothing to report in this regard.

Opinions on other matters prescribed by the Companies Act 2006

In our opinion, based on the work undertaken in the course of the audit:

- the information given in the Report of the Trustees for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements; and
- the Report of the Trustees has been prepared in accordance with applicable legal requirements.

REPORT OF THE INDEPENDENT AUDITORS TO THE MEMBERS OF CITIZENS ADVICE MERTON AND LAMBETH LIMITED

Matters on which we are required to report by exception

In the light of the knowledge and understanding of the charitable company and its environment obtained in the course of the audit, we have not identified material misstatements in the Report of the Trustees.

We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters where the Companies Act 2006 requires us to report to you if, in our opinion:

- adequate accounting records have not been kept or returns adequate for our audit have not been received from branches not visited by us; or
- the financial statements are not in agreement with the accounting records and returns; or
- certain disclosures of trustees' remuneration specified by law are not made; or
- we have not received all the information and explanations we require for our audit; or
- the trustees were not entitled to take advantage of the small companies exemption from the requirement to prepare a Strategic Report or in preparing the Report of the Trustees.

Responsibilities of trustees

As explained more fully in the Statement of Trustees' Responsibilities, the trustees (who are also the directors of the charitable company for the purposes of company law) are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements and for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view, and for such internal control as the trustees determine is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, the trustees are responsible for assessing the charitable company's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the trustees either intend to liquidate the charitable company or to cease operations, or have no realistic alternative but to do so.

REPORT OF THE INDEPENDENT AUDITORS TO THE MEMBERS OF CITIZENS ADVICE MERTON AND LAMBETH LIMITED

Our responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue a Report of the Independent Auditors that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with ISAs (UK) will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

The extent to which our procedures are capable of detecting irregularities, including fraud is detailed below:

We identify and assess risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error, and then design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks, including obtaining audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

In identifying and assessing risks of material misstatement in respect of irregularities, including fraud and non-compliance with laws and regulations, we considered the following:

- the nature of the industry and sector, control environment and the charities activities;

As a result of these procedures, we considered the opportunities and incentives that may exist within the organisation for fraud. In common with all audits we are also required to perform specific procedures to respond to the risk of management override.

We also obtained an understanding of the legal and regulatory framework that the charitable company operates in. The key laws and regulations we considered in this context included the Charities Act 2011, UK Companies Act and tax legislation.

In addition we considered provisions of other laws and regulations that do not have a direct effect on the financial statements but compliance with which may be fundamental to the charitable company's ability to operate or to avoid a material penalty.

As a result of performing the above, we did not identify any key matters related to the potential risk of fraud or non-compliance with laws and regulations.

Our procedures to respond to risks identified included the following:

- reviewing the financial statement disclosures and testing to supporting documentation to assess compliance with provision of relevant laws and regulations described as having a direct effect on the financial statements;

- enquiring of management concerning actual and potential litigation and claims;

- performing analytical procedures to identify any unusual or unexpected relationships that may indicate risks of material misstatement due to fraud;

- reviewing minutes of meetings of those charged with governance, reviewing internal reports, and

- in addressing the risk of fraud through management override of controls, testing the appropriateness of journal entries and other adjustments, assessing whether the judgements made in making accounting estimates are indicative of a potential bias and evaluating the business rationale for any significant transactions that are unusual or outside the normal course of business.

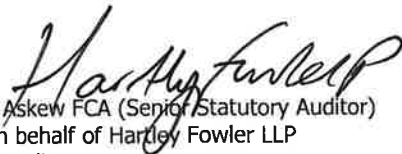
We also communicated relevant identified laws and regulations and potential fraud risks to all engagement team members and remained alert to any indication of fraud or non-compliance with laws and regulations throughout the audit.

A further description of our responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements is located on the Financial Reporting Council's website at www.frc.org.uk/auditorsresponsibilities. This description forms part of our Report of the Independent Auditors.

**REPORT OF THE INDEPENDENT AUDITORS TO THE MEMBERS OF
CITIZENS ADVICE MERTON AND LAMBETH
LIMITED**

Use of our report

This report is made solely to the charitable company's members, as a body, in accordance with Chapter 3 of Part 16 of the Companies Act 2006. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the charitable company's members those matters we are required to state to them in an auditors' report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the charitable company and the charitable company's members as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.



Jonathan Askew FCA (Senior Statutory Auditor)
for and on behalf of Hartley Fowler LLP
Statutory Auditors
Chartered Accountants
4th Floor Tuition House
27-37 St George's Road
Wimbledon
London
SW19 4EU

Date: 31-10-2024

**CITIZENS ADVICE MERTON AND LAMBETH
LIMITED**

**STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES
(INCORPORATING AN INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT)
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024**

		Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	2024 Total funds £	2023 Total funds £
	Notes				
INCOME FROM					
Donations and gifts in kind	3	42,503	35,000	77,503	81,126
Charitable activities	5				
Merton Advice, Adviceline & Information Services		431,068	45,000	476,068	469,000
Lambeth Advice, Adviceline & Information Services		285,500	7,500	293,000	310,000
Lambeth Children's Centre		84,000	-	84,000	80,000
Greater London Authority - Cost of Living Advice		-	91,125	91,125	54,000
Merton Cost of Living Advice		-	75,000	75,000	50,000
Lambeth Living Well		-	-	-	49,900
Immigration		-	41,750	41,750	42,000
London & Quadrant Housing		-	-	-	34,359
Lambeth Council Tax Summons Service		29,930	-	29,930	30,176
Merton Disability Benefit		25,000	-	25,000	25,000
Other Services and Projects		21,925	20,416	42,341	45,768
Lambeth Cost of Living Advice		18,889	-	18,889	-
Investment income	4	3,356	-	3,356	1,857
Other income		<u>21,572</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>21,572</u>	<u>7,757</u>
Total		<u>963,743</u>	<u>315,791</u>	<u>1,279,534</u>	<u>1,280,943</u>
EXPENDITURE ON					
Raising funds	6	4,785	-	4,785	3,914
Charitable activities	7				
Merton Advice, Adviceline & Information Services		389,212	107,244	496,456	488,665
Lambeth Advice, Adviceline & Information Services		375,907	-	375,907	404,046
Lambeth Children's Centre		73,156	-	73,156	71,633
Greater London Authority - Cost of Living Advice		-	91,807	91,807	54,960
Merton Cost of Living Advice		-	70,360	70,360	24,057
Lambeth Living Well		-	37,031	37,031	47,371
Immigration		-	44,902	44,902	41,879
London & Quadrant Housing		-	-	-	45,943
Lambeth Council Tax Summons Service		26,814	-	26,814	28,223
Merton Disability Benefit		16,879	-	16,879	23,317
Other Services and Projects		25,933	23,296	49,229	29,912
Lambeth Cost of Living Advice		<u>12,645</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>12,645</u>	<u>-</u>
Total		<u>925,331</u>	<u>374,640</u>	<u>1,299,971</u>	<u>1,263,920</u>
NET INCOME/(EXPENDITURE)		38,412	(58,849)	(20,437)	17,023
Other recognised gains/(losses)					
Actuarial gains on defined benefit schemes		<u>907</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>907</u>	<u>968</u>
Net movement in funds		39,319	(58,849)	(19,530)	17,991
RECONCILIATION OF FUNDS					
Total funds brought forward		<u>363,377</u>	<u>87,777</u>	<u>451,154</u>	<u>433,163</u>
TOTAL FUNDS CARRIED FORWARD		<u>402,696</u>	<u>28,928</u>	<u>431,624</u>	<u>451,154</u>

The notes form part of these financial statements

**CITIZENS ADVICE MERTON AND LAMBETH
LIMITED (REGISTERED NUMBER: 02914384)**

**STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION
31 MARCH 2024**

	Notes	2024 £	2023 £
CURRENT ASSETS			
Debtors	14	40,552	43,022
Cash at bank		<u>557,815</u>	<u>452,080</u>
		598,367	495,102
CREDITORS			
Amounts falling due within one year	15	(165,948)	(42,246)
		<u>432,419</u>	<u>452,856</u>
NET CURRENT ASSETS			
		432,419	452,856
TOTAL ASSETS LESS CURRENT LIABILITIES			
PENSION LIABILITY	18	(795)	(1,702)
		<u>431,624</u>	<u>451,154</u>
NET ASSETS			
FUNDS	17		
Unrestricted funds		402,696	363,377
Restricted funds		<u>28,928</u>	<u>87,777</u>
TOTAL FUNDS		<u>431,624</u>	<u>451,154</u>

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

The financial statements were approved by the Board of Trustees and authorised for issue on 30 October 2024 and were signed on its behalf by:

E Coulter

Ms E Coulter - Trustee

The notes form part of these financial statements

**CITIZENS ADVICE MERTON AND LAMBETH
LIMITED**

**STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024**

	Notes	2024 £	2023 £
Cash flows from operating activities			
Cash generated from operations	1	<u>102,379</u>	<u>(17,553)</u>
Net cash provided by/(used in) operating activities		<u>102,379</u>	<u>(17,553)</u>
Cash flows from investing activities			
Interest received		<u>3,356</u>	<u>1,857</u>
Net cash provided by investing activities		<u>3,356</u>	<u>1,857</u>
Change in cash and cash equivalents in the reporting period		<u>105,735</u>	<u>(15,696)</u>
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the reporting period		<u>452,080</u>	<u>467,776</u>
Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the reporting period		<u>557,815</u>	<u>452,080</u>

The notes form part of these financial statements

**CITIZENS ADVICE MERTON AND LAMBETH
LIMITED**

**NOTES TO THE STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024**

1. RECONCILIATION OF NET (EXPENDITURE)/INCOME TO NET CASH FLOW FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES

	2024 £	2023 £
Net (expenditure)/income for the reporting period (as per the Statement of Financial Activities)	(20,437)	17,023
Adjustments for:		
Interest received	(3,356)	(1,857)
Decrease/(increase) in debtors	2,470	(589)
Increase/(decrease) in creditors	<u>123,702</u>	<u>(32,130)</u>
Net cash provided by/(used in) operations	<u>102,379</u>	<u>(17,553)</u>

2. ANALYSIS OF CHANGES IN NET FUNDS

	At 1/4/23 £	Cash flow £	At 31/3/24 £
Net cash			
Cash at bank and in hand	<u>452,080</u>	<u>105,735</u>	<u>557,815</u>
	<u>452,080</u>	<u>105,735</u>	<u>557,815</u>
Total	<u>452,080</u>	<u>105,735</u>	<u>557,815</u>

3. MAJOR NON-CASH TRANSACTIONS

Donated facilities

In accordance with the Charities SORP FRS 102 the charitable company has included in income the notional rent of £41,540 (2023 £41,540) for occupying serviced accommodation in Morden and Mitcham.

The valuation of the notional rent was provided by the London Borough of Merton. The notional rent expenditure charge is included within support costs.

Donated advertising

During the year the charity received £4,700 (2023 £78,000) Google Ad Grant in in-kind Google Ads advertising.

No amount was recognised in income and expenditure in the current year as the amount was not material.

In the previous periods the charity recognised the corresponding expense on the statement of financial activities within communication and research support costs.

CITIZENS ADVICE MERTON AND LAMBETH LIMITED

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

1. GENERAL INFORMATION AND LEGAL STATUS

The charitable company is a private company incorporated and domiciled in England and Wales. The address of its registered office is 7 Crown Parade, Crown Lane, Morden, Surrey SM4 5DA. The registered number of the company is 02914384. The registered number of the charity is 1046018.

The financial information presented is for the year ended 31 March 2024 and 31 March 2023. The financial information is presented in sterling which is also the charitable company's functional currency. Monetary amounts are rounded to the nearest pound.

The charitable company has no share capital. Every member of the charitable company undertakes to contribute to the assets of the charitable company in the event of the company being wound up while he is a member, or within one year after he ceases to be a member, for payments of the debts and liabilities contracted before he ceases to be a member and of the costs, charges and expenses of winding up and for the adjustment of the rights of the contributories among themselves, such amount as may be required not exceeding £1.

2. ACCOUNTING POLICIES

Basis of preparing the financial statements

The financial statements of the charitable company, which is a public benefit entity under FRS 102, have been prepared in accordance with the Charities SORP (FRS 102) 'Accounting and Reporting by Charities: 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) (effective 1 January 2019)', Financial Reporting Standard 102 'The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland' and the Companies Act 2006. The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention.

Preparation of the accounts on a going concern basis

The financial statements have been prepared on the assumption that the charity is able to continue as a going concern, which the trustees consider appropriate having regard to the current level of unrestricted reserves, the financial position, future plans and the expected level of income and expenditure for 12 months from authorising these financial statements. There are no material uncertainties about the charity's ability to continue as a going concern.

Significant judgements and estimates

Preparation of the financial statements requires management to make significant judgements and estimates. The items in the financial statements where these judgements and estimates have been made include:

- Defined benefit pension scheme. Actuarial assumptions used in the calculation of the defined benefit pension liability.

Income

All income is recognised in the Statement of Financial Activities once the charity has entitlement to the funds, it is probable that the income will be received and the amount can be measured reliably.

Income in respect of services provided is recognised when, and to the extent that, performance occurs and is measured at the fair value of the consideration receivable. The main source of income for the charity is contracts for services and grants with the London Borough of Merton and the London Borough of Lambeth.

Voluntary income is received by way of grants, donations and gifts and is included in full in the Statement of Financial Activities when receivable.

Grants, where entitlement is not conditional on the delivery of a specific performance by the charity, are recognised when the charity becomes unconditionally entitled to the grant. Income from grants, where related to performance and specific deliverables, are accounted for as the charity earns the right to the consideration by its performance. Grant income relating to a later period is therefore deferred to that period and treated as deferred income in the balance sheet.

Expenditure

Liabilities are recognised as expenditure as soon as there is a legal or constructive obligation committing the charity to that expenditure, it is probable that a transfer of economic benefits will be required in settlement and the amount of the obligation can be measured reliably. Expenditure is accounted for on an accruals basis and has been classified under headings that aggregate all cost related to the category. Where costs cannot be directly attributed to particular headings they have been allocated to activities on a basis consistent with the use of resources.

2. ACCOUNTING POLICIES - continued

Governance costs

These are the costs associated with the governance arrangements of the charity. These include audit costs, the cost of legal advice for trustees and costs associated with trustee meetings and preparing statutory accounts. Included within governance costs are any costs associated with the strategic as opposed to day-to-day management of the charity's activities.

Allocation and apportionment of costs

Support costs are those functions that assist the work of the charity but do not directly undertake charitable activities. Support costs include back office costs, finance, personnel, payroll and governance costs which support the charity's activities. These support costs have been allocated to the activities undertaken by the charity on the basis of the usage of those costs by the activities.

Tangible fixed assets

Tangible fixed assets are depreciated at the following rates:

Computer servers	20% straight line
Desktop computers	25% straight line
Laptop computers	33% straight line

Where project funding has been used for the purchase of tangible fixed assets they are depreciated over the lifetime of the project or as above, whichever is the shorter.

Taxation

The charity is exempt from corporation tax on its charitable activities.

Defined benefit pension scheme

The company participates into the The Pension Trust Retirement Solution scheme - The Growth Plan, a multi-employer scheme which provides benefits to some 1,300 non-associated participating employers. The scheme is a defined benefit scheme in the UK. It is not possible for the company to obtain sufficient information to enable it to account for the scheme as a defined benefit scheme. Therefore it accounts for the scheme as a defined contribution scheme.

The scheme is subject to the funding legislation outlined in the Pensions Act 2004 which came into force on 30 December 2005. This, together with documents issued by the Pensions Regulator and Technical Actuarial Standards issued by the Financial Reporting Council, set out the framework for funding defined benefit occupational pension schemes in the UK.

The scheme is classified as a 'last-man standing arrangement'. Therefore the company is potentially liable for other participating employers' obligations if those employers are unable to meet their share of the scheme deficit following withdrawal from the scheme. Participating employers are legally required to meet their share of the scheme deficit on an annuity purchase basis on withdrawal from the scheme.

Fund accounting

Unrestricted funds can be used in accordance with the charitable objectives at the discretion of the trustees.

Restricted funds can only be used for particular restricted purposes within the objects of the charity. Restrictions arise when specified by the donor or when funds are raised for particular restricted purposes.

Further explanation of the nature and purpose of each fund is included in the notes to the financial statements.

Donated facilities

In accordance with the Charities SORP FRS 102 the charitable company has included in income the notional rent for occupying serviced accommodation in Morden and Mitcham. The valuation of the notional rents was provided by the London Borough of Merton.

Donated advertising

In accordance with the Charities SORP FRS 102 the charitable company has included in income the in-kind estimate of Google Ads advertising. The corresponding expense is recognised in the statement of financial activities within communication and research support costs.

**CITIZENS ADVICE MERTON AND LAMBETH
LIMITED**

**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS - continued
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024**

2. ACCOUNTING POLICIES - continued

Cash at bank and in hand

Cash at bank and in hand includes cash and short term highly liquid investments with a short maturity of three months or less from the date of acquisition or opening of the deposit or similar account.

Debtors

Debtors are recognised at the settlement amount due. Prepayments are valued at the invoice amount prepaid.

Creditors

Creditors are recognised where the charity has a present obligation resulting from a past event that will probably result in the transfer of funds to a third party and the amount due to settle the obligation can be measured or estimated reliably. Creditors are recognised at their settlement value.

Financial instruments

The charitable company only has financial assets and financial liabilities of a kind that qualify as basic financial instruments. Basic financial instruments are initially recognised at transaction value and subsequently measured at their settlement value.

Leasing commitments

Leases that do not transfer all the risks and rewards of ownership are classified as operating leases. Payments under operating leases are charged to the statement of financial activities on a straight-line basis over the lifetime of the lease.

Voluntary help

A certain amount of time is expended on the charitable company's activities which is donated free of charge. In accordance with Charities SORP (FRS 102), volunteer time is not recognised. Details of volunteer support and services are provided in the trustees' annual report and the notes to the accounts.

3. DONATIONS AND GIFTS IN KIND

	2024	2023
	£	£
Gifts in kind	41,540	41,540
Donations	<u>35,963</u>	<u>39,586</u>
	<u>77,503</u>	<u>81,126</u>

Included in donations is a restricted donation of £35,000 (2023: £35,000).

4. INVESTMENT INCOME

	2024	2023
	£	£
Deposit account interest	<u>3,356</u>	<u>1,857</u>

**CITIZENS ADVICE MERTON AND LAMBETH
LIMITED**

**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS - continued
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024**

5. INCOME FROM CHARITABLE ACTIVITIES

Income from grants and contracts:

	2024 £	2023 £
--	-----------	-----------

Income from Generalist advice:

Unrestricted

London Borough of Merton - Generalist advice services	431,068	355,000
London Borough of Lambeth - Generalist advice services	285,500	241,000
Google Ads (benefit in kind)	-	78,000

716,568

674,000

Income from other projects:

Unrestricted

London Borough of Lambeth - Children's Centre	84,000	80,000
London Borough of Merton - Disability Benefit	25,000	25,000
London & Quadrant Pound Advice	-	34,359
Wimbledon Guild	21,925	18,000
Lambeth Council Tax Summons Service	29,930	30,176
Lambeth Cost of Living Advice	18,889	32,768

179,744

220,303

Restricted

Greater London Authority - Cost of Living Advice	91,125	54,000
London Borough of Merton - Cost of Living Advice	75,000	50,000
London Borough of Merton - Merton Debt Advisor	45,000	45,000
London Borough of Merton - Citizens Advice Adrenaline Service	-	30,000
London Borough of Lambeth - Living Well	-	49,900
Trust for London - Immigration	41,750	42,000
The Walcot Foundation	7,500	25,000
AFA - Advice First Aid	16,666	-
The Wimbledon Foundation	3,750	-

280,791

295,900

Total income from other projects and benefit in kind

460,635

594,203

Summary of total income:

Unrestricted Income - Generalist advice	716,568	674,000
Unrestricted Income - other projects	179,744	220,303
Unrestricted Income - gift in kind - donated facilities (note 3)	41,540	41,540
Unrestricted Income - donations (note 3)	963	4,586
Unrestricted Income - investment and other	24,928	9,614

Total unrestricted income

963,743

950,043

Restricted income - donations (note 3)

35,000

35,000

Restricted income - other projects

280,791

295,900

Total restricted income

315,791

330,900

Total Income - Statement of Financial Activities

1,279,534

1,280,943

**CITIZENS ADVICE MERTON AND LAMBETH
LIMITED**

**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS - continued
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024**

6. RAISING FUNDS

Raising donations and legacies

	2024	2023
	£	£
Fundraising expenditure	<u>4,785</u>	<u>3,914</u>

7. CHARITABLE ACTIVITIES COSTS

	Direct Costs £	Support costs (see note 8) £	Totals £
Merton Advice, Adviceline & Information Services	400,333	96,123	496,456
Lambeth Advice, Adviceline & Information Services	290,735	85,172	375,907
Lambeth Children's Centre	60,187	12,969	73,156
Greater London Authority - Cost of Living Advice	82,253	9,554	91,807
Merton Cost of Living Advice	63,350	7,010	70,360
Lambeth Living Well	32,479	4,552	37,031
Immigration	44,117	785	44,902
Lambeth Council Tax Summons Service	21,810	5,004	26,814
Merton Disability Benefit	13,730	3,149	16,879
Other Services and Projects	32,025	17,204	49,229
Lambeth Cost of Living Advice	<u>10,580</u>	<u>2,065</u>	<u>12,645</u>
	<u>1,051,599</u>	<u>243,587</u>	<u>1,295,186</u>

Summary of total expenditure

	2024	2023
	£	£
Charitable activities costs (above)	1,295,186	1,260,006
Fundraising expenditure (note 6)	<u>4,785</u>	<u>3,914</u>
Total Expenditure - Statement of Financial Activities	<u>1,299,971</u>	<u>1,263,920</u>

**CITIZENS ADVICE MERTON AND LAMBETH
LIMITED**

**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS - continued
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024**

8. SUPPORT COSTS

	Service support costs £	Finance £	Human resources £
Merton Advice, Adviceline & Information Services	78,613	9,544	2,281
Lambeth Advice, Adviceline & Information Services	73,035	6,618	1,582
Lambeth Children's Centre	10,401	1,411	337
Greater London Authority - Cost of Living Advice	7,650	1,038	248
Merton Cost of Living Advice	5,613	762	182
Lambeth Living Well	3,645	495	118
Immigration	646	88	21
Lambeth Council Tax Summons Service	4,007	544	130
Merton Disability Benefit	2,506	340	81
Other Services and Projects	15,560	895	215
Lambeth Cost of Living Advice	<u>1,654</u>	<u>224</u>	<u>54</u>
	<u>203,330</u>	<u>21,959</u>	<u>5,249</u>
	Communications and research £	Governance costs £	Totals £
Merton Advice, Adviceline & Information Services	2,309	3,376	96,123
Lambeth Advice, Adviceline & Information Services	1,601	2,336	85,172
Lambeth Children's Centre	341	479	12,969
Greater London Authority - Cost of Living Advice	251	367	9,554
Merton Cost of Living Advice	184	269	7,010
Lambeth Living Well	120	174	4,552
Immigration	-	30	785
Lambeth Council Tax Summons Service	132	191	5,004
Merton Disability Benefit	82	140	3,149
Other Services and Projects	217	317	17,204
Lambeth Cost of Living Advice	<u>54</u>	<u>79</u>	<u>2,065</u>
	<u>5,291</u>	<u>7,758</u>	<u>243,587</u>

9. NET INCOME/(EXPENDITURE)

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

	2024 £	2023 £
Audit fees	4,500	5,000
Other non-audit services	<u>2,400</u>	<u>1,750</u>

**CITIZENS ADVICE MERTON AND LAMBETH
LIMITED**

**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS - continued
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024**

10. TRUSTEES' REMUNERATION AND BENEFITS

There were no trustees' remuneration or other benefits for the year ended 31 March 2024 nor for the year ended 31 March 2023.

Trustees' expenses

During the year no trustees were reimbursed expenses (2023 £nil).

11. STAFF COSTS

	2024	2023
	£	£
Salaries and wages	943,362	852,118
Social security costs	80,132	76,668
Pension costs	<u>33,722</u>	<u>19,762</u>
	<u>1,057,216</u>	<u>948,568</u>

The average monthly number of employees during the year was as follows:

	2024	2023
Senior Management Team	4	3
Service/Team Managers	5	5
Service Teams	<u>31</u>	<u>28</u>
	<u>40</u>	<u>36</u>

The number of employees whose employee benefits (excluding employer pension costs) exceeded £60,000 was:

	2024	2023
£60,001 - £70,000	<u>1</u>	<u>1</u>

The key management personnel of the charitable company are the senior management team, which includes:

- (i) Chief Executive Officer
- (ii) Head of Advice Services
- (iii) Head of Adviceline, Information and Facilities
- (iv) Head of Projects and Quality

The key management personnel received benefits during the year of £203,497 (2023: £156,372).

Volunteers

The CAML service volunteer team was 27 at 31 March 2024 (2023: 45).

**CITIZENS ADVICE MERTON AND LAMBETH
LIMITED**

**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS - continued
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024**

12. COMPARATIVES FOR THE STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES

	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	Total funds £
INCOME FROM			
Donations and gifts in kind	46,126	35,000	81,126
Charitable activities			
Merton Advice, Adviceline & Information Services	394,000	75,000	469,000
Lambeth Advice, Adviceline & Information Services	285,000	25,000	310,000
Lambeth Children's Centre	80,000	-	80,000
Greater London Authority - Cost of Living Advice	-	54,000	54,000
Merton Cost of Living Advice	-	50,000	50,000
Lambeth Living Well	-	49,900	49,900
Immigration	-	42,000	42,000
London & Quadrant Housing	34,359	-	34,359
Lambeth Council Tax Summons Service	30,176	-	30,176
Merton Disability Benefit	25,000	-	25,000
Other Services and Projects	45,768	-	45,768
Investment income	1,857	-	1,857
Other income	7,757	-	7,757
Total	950,043	330,900	1,280,943
EXPENDITURE ON			
Raising funds	3,914	-	3,914
Charitable activities			
Merton Advice, Adviceline & Information Services	384,236	104,429	488,665
Lambeth Advice, Adviceline & Information Services	354,366	49,680	404,046
Lambeth Children's Centre	71,633	-	71,633
Greater London Authority - Cost of Living Advice	-	54,960	54,960
Merton Cost of Living Advice	-	24,057	24,057
Lambeth Living Well	-	47,371	47,371
Immigration	-	41,879	41,879
London & Quadrant Housing	45,943	-	45,943
Lambeth Council Tax Summons Service	28,223	-	28,223
Merton Disability Benefit	23,317	-	23,317
Other Services and Projects	29,603	309	29,912
Total	941,235	322,685	1,263,920
NET INCOME	8,808	8,215	17,023
Other recognised gains/(losses)			
Actuarial gains on defined benefit schemes	968	-	968
Net movement in funds	9,776	8,215	17,991
RECONCILIATION OF FUNDS			
Total funds brought forward	353,601	79,562	433,163
TOTAL FUNDS CARRIED FORWARD	363,377	87,777	451,154

**CITIZENS ADVICE MERTON AND LAMBETH
LIMITED**

**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS - continued
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024**

13. TANGIBLE FIXED ASSETS

	Fixtures and fittings £
COST	
At 1 April 2023 and 31 March 2024	<u>103,631</u>
DEPRECIATION	
At 1 April 2023 and 31 March 2024	<u>103,631</u>
NET BOOK VALUE	
At 31 March 2024	<u>-</u>
At 31 March 2023	<u>-</u>

14. DEBTORS: AMOUNTS FALLING DUE WITHIN ONE YEAR

	2024 £	2023 £
Trade debtors	20,000	15,501
Other debtors	517	350
Accrued income	12,041	19,500
Prepayments	<u>7,994</u>	<u>7,671</u>
	<u>40,552</u>	<u>43,022</u>

15. CREDITORS: AMOUNTS FALLING DUE WITHIN ONE YEAR

	2024 £	2023 £
Trade creditors	5,347	11,117
Social security and other taxes	18,686	17,145
VAT	-	1,146
Other creditors	6,504	6,538
Deferred income	128,811	-
Accrued expenses	<u>6,600</u>	<u>6,300</u>
	<u>165,948</u>	<u>42,246</u>

	2024 £	2023 £
<u>Deferred Income</u>		
Balance brought forward	-	30,000
Amounts released to incoming resources	-	(30,000)
Amounts deferred in the year	<u>128,811</u>	<u>-</u>
Balance carried forward	<u>128,811</u>	<u>-</u>

Deferred income comprises income received during the year which relates to the next financial year. Deferred income includes restricted deferred income of £62,700.

**CITIZENS ADVICE MERTON AND LAMBETH
LIMITED**

**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS - continued
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024**

16. ANALYSIS OF NET ASSETS BETWEEN FUNDS

	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	2024 Total funds £	2023 Total funds £
Current assets	506,739	91,628	598,367	495,102
Current liabilities	(103,248)	(62,700)	(165,948)	(42,246)
Pension liability	(795)	-	(795)	(1,702)
	<u>402,696</u>	<u>28,928</u>	<u>431,624</u>	<u>451,154</u>

	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	2023 Total funds £
Current assets	407,325	87,777	495,102
Current liabilities	(42,246)	-	(42,246)
Pension liability	(1,702)	-	(1,702)
	<u>363,377</u>	<u>87,777</u>	<u>451,154</u>

17. MOVEMENT IN FUNDS

	At 1/4/23 £	Net movement in funds £	At 31/3/24 £
Unrestricted funds			
General Fund	365,079	38,412	403,491
Pension reserve	(1,702)	907	(795)
	<u>363,377</u>	<u>39,319</u>	<u>402,696</u>
Restricted funds			
The Walcot Foundation	18,675	(18,675)	-
Restricted Donation	1,037	(1,037)	-
Trust for London	2,936	(3,174)	(238)
Lambeth Living Well	37,025	(37,032)	(7)
London Borough of Merton (Revenues and Benefits/ Merton Debt Adviser)	3,121	(16)	3,105
Greater London Authority - Cost of Living Advice	(960)	(683)	(1,643)
London Borough of Merton - Cost of Living	25,943	4,650	30,593
AFA (Advice First Aid) Community Advice	-	2,311	2,311
The Wimbledon Foundation	-	(5,193)	(5,193)
	<u>87,777</u>	<u>(58,849)</u>	<u>28,928</u>
TOTAL FUNDS	<u>451,154</u>	<u>(19,530)</u>	<u>431,624</u>

**CITIZENS ADVICE MERTON AND LAMBETH
LIMITED**

**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS - continued
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024**

17. MOVEMENT IN FUNDS - continued

Net movement in funds, included in the above are as follows:

	Incoming resources £	Resources expended £	Gains and losses £	Movement in funds £
Unrestricted funds				
General Fund	963,743	(925,331)	-	38,412
Pension reserve	-	-	907	907
	<u>963,743</u>	<u>(925,331)</u>	<u>907</u>	<u>39,319</u>
Restricted funds				
The Walcot Foundation	7,500	(26,175)	-	(18,675)
Restricted Donation	35,000	(36,037)	-	(1,037)
Trust for London	41,750	(44,924)	-	(3,174)
Lambeth Living Well	-	(37,032)	-	(37,032)
London Borough of Merton (Revenues and Benefits/ Merton Debt Adviser)	45,000	(45,016)	-	(16)
Greater London Authority - Cost of Living Advice	91,125	(91,808)	-	(683)
London Borough of Merton - Cost of Living	75,000	(70,350)	-	4,650
AFA (Advice First Aid) Community Advice	16,666	(14,355)	-	2,311
The Wimbledon Foundation	3,750	(8,943)	-	(5,193)
	<u>315,791</u>	<u>(374,640)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>(58,849)</u>
TOTAL FUNDS	<u>1,279,534</u>	<u>(1,299,971)</u>	<u>907</u>	<u>(19,530)</u>

Comparatives for movement in funds

	At 1/4/22 £	Net movement in funds £	At 31/3/23 £
Unrestricted funds			
General Fund	356,271	8,808	365,079
Pension reserve	(2,670)	968	(1,702)
	<u>353,601</u>	<u>9,776</u>	<u>363,377</u>
Restricted funds			
The Walcot Foundation	18,675	-	18,675
UC Help to Claim	287	(287)	-
Merton Neighbourhood Fund	7,893	(7,893)	-
Restricted Donation	15,396	(14,359)	1,037
Trust for London	2,815	121	2,936
Lambeth Living Well	34,496	2,529	37,025
London Borough of Merton (Revenues and Benefits/ Merton Debt Adviser)	-	3,121	3,121
Greater London Authority - Cost of Living Advice	-	(960)	(960)
London Borough of Merton - Cost of Living	-	25,943	25,943
	<u>79,562</u>	<u>8,215</u>	<u>87,777</u>
TOTAL FUNDS	<u>433,163</u>	<u>17,991</u>	<u>451,154</u>

**CITIZENS ADVICE MERTON AND LAMBETH
LIMITED**

**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS - continued
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024**

17. MOVEMENT IN FUNDS - continued

Comparative net movement in funds, included in the above are as follows:

	Incoming resources £	Resources expended £	Gains and losses £	Movement in funds £
Unrestricted funds				
General Fund	950,043	(941,235)	-	8,808
Pension reserve	-	-	968	968
	950,043	(941,235)	968	9,776
Restricted funds				
The Walcot Foundation	25,000	(25,000)	-	-
UC Help to Claim	-	(287)	-	(287)
Merton Neighbourhood Fund	-	(7,893)	-	(7,893)
Restricted Donation	35,000	(49,359)	-	(14,359)
Trust for London	42,000	(41,879)	-	121
Lambeth Living Well	49,900	(47,371)	-	2,529
London Borough of Merton (Revenues and Benefits/ Merton Debt Adviser)	45,000	(41,879)	-	3,121
London Borough of Merton - Citizens Advice Adviseline Service	30,000	(30,000)	-	-
Greater London Authority - Cost of Living Advice	54,000	(54,960)	-	(960)
London Borough of Merton - Cost of Living	50,000	(24,057)	-	25,943
	330,900	(322,685)	-	8,215
TOTAL FUNDS	1,280,943	(1,263,920)	968	17,991

Unrestricted Funds

The Pension reserve is a designated reserve set aside to cover the liability for the obligation on the defined benefit scheme.

Restricted Funds

1) The Walcot Foundation

This grant supports the full employment costs of our Lambeth Advice Supervisor.

2) Restricted Donation

We are extremely grateful to a major donor who is supporting the costs of a service manager role (Head of Quality and Projects) a priority for the charity to support our team and clients.

3) Trust For London

This two-year grant supports the full employment costs of our Immigration Adviser.

4) Lambeth Living Well

CAML advisers working in local community outreach venues across Lambeth - including Lambeth Living Well Bus and West Norwood Community Shop - focusing on priority areas of advice need.

5) London Borough of Merton - Merton Debt Adviser

Supports a dedicated debt adviser to support Merton residents.

6) Greater London Authority - Cost of Living Advice

For the delivery of cost of living crisis prevention advice and specialist casework.

7) London Borough of Merton - Cost of Living Advice

For the delivery of advice to Merton residents affected by the cost of living crisis.

**CITIZENS ADVICE MERTON AND LAMBETH
LIMITED**

**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS - continued
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024**

17. MOVEMENT IN FUNDS - continued

8) AFA (Advice First Aid) Community Advice

Supports a full-time adviser accepting referrals from community partners under the Cost of Living Crisis Prevention Advice Project, and the development of Advice First Aid.

9) The Wimbledon Foundation

Supports face-to-face advice and advice work in Merton.

18. EMPLOYEE BENEFIT OBLIGATIONS

The company participates in the scheme, a multi-employer scheme which provides benefits to some 638 non-associated participating employers. The scheme is a defined benefit scheme in the UK. It is not possible for the company to obtain sufficient information to enable it to account for the scheme as a defined benefit scheme. Therefore it accounts for the scheme as a defined contribution scheme.

The scheme is subject to the funding legislation outlined in the Pensions Act 2004 which came into force on 30 December 2005. This, together with documents issued by the Pensions Regulator and Technical Actuarial Standards issued by the Financial Reporting Council, set out the framework for funding defined benefit occupational pension schemes in the UK.

The scheme is classified as a 'last-man standing arrangement'. Therefore the company is potentially liable for other participating employers' obligations if those employers are unable to meet their share of the scheme deficit following withdrawal from the scheme. Participating employers are legally required to meet their share of the scheme deficit on an annuity purchase basis on withdrawal from the scheme.

A full actuarial valuation for the scheme was carried out at 30 September 2020. This valuation showed assets of £800.3m, liabilities of £831.9m and a deficit of £31.6m. To eliminate this funding shortfall, the Trustee has asked the participating employers to pay additional contributions to the scheme as follows:

Deficit contributions

From 1 April 2022 to 31 January 2025: £3,312,000 per annum (payable monthly).

Unless a concession has been agreed with the Trustee the term to 31 January 2025 applies.

Note that the scheme's previous valuation was carried out with an effective date of 30 September 2017. This valuation showed assets of £794.9m, liabilities of £926.4m and a deficit of £131.5m. To eliminate this funding shortfall, the Trustee asked the participating employers to pay additional contributions to the scheme as follows:

Deficit contributions

From 1 April 2019 to 30 September 2025: £11,243,000 per annum (payable monthly and increasing by 3% each on 1st April).

The recovery plan contributions are allocated to each participating employer in line with their estimated share of the Series 1 and Series 2 scheme liabilities.

Where the scheme is in deficit and where the company has agreed to a deficit funding arrangement the company recognises a liability for this obligation. The amount recognised is the net present value of the deficit reduction contributions payable under the agreement that relates to the deficit. The present value is calculated using the discount rate detailed in these disclosures. The unwinding of the discount rate is recognised as a finance cost.

Present value of provision

	31.3.2024	31.3.2023	31.3.2022
Present value of provision	<u>£795</u>	<u>£1,702</u>	<u>£2,670</u>

**CITIZENS ADVICE MERTON AND LAMBETH
LIMITED**

**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS - continued
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024**

18. EMPLOYEE BENEFIT OBLIGATIONS - continued

Reconciliation of opening and closing provisions

	31.3.2024	31.3.2023
	£	£
Provision at start of period	1,702	2,670
Unwinding of the discount factor (interest expense)	65	50
Deficit contribution paid	(973)	(973)
Remeasurements - impact of any change in assumptions	1	(45)
	<u>795</u>	<u>1,702</u>
Provision at end of period		

Income and expenditure impact

	31.3.2024	31.3.2023
	£	£
Interest expense	65	50
Remeasurements - impact of any change in assumptions	1	(45)

Assumptions

	31.3.2024	31.3.2023	31.3.2022
Rate of discount	<u>5.31%</u>	<u>5.52%</u>	<u>2.35%</u>

The discount rates shown above are the equivalent single discount rates which, when used to discount the future recovery plan contributions due, would give the same results as using a full AA corporate bond yield curve to discount the same recovery plan contributions.

The following schedule details the deficit contributions agreed between the company and the scheme at each year end period:

Deficit Contributions Schedule

Year ending	31.3.2024	31.3.2023	31.3.2022
	£	£	£
Year 1	811	973	973
Year 2	-	811	973
Year 3	-	-	811

The company must recognise a liability measured as the present value of the contributions payable that arise from the deficit recovery agreement and the resulting expense in the income and expenditure account i.e. the unwinding of the discount rate as a finance cost in the period in which it arises.

It is these contributions that have been used to derive the company's balance sheet liability.

Defined contribution scheme

Included in other creditors is a pension liability of £6,127 (2023 £5,479) due to The Pension Trust.

19. CONTINGENT LIABILITIES

Debt on withdrawal from the multi-employer defined benefit pension scheme (The Pension Trust Growth Plan)

As of 30 September 2023, the estimated cost of withdrawal from the multi-employer defined pension scheme has been calculated to be £15,028. The estimated debt is calculated on the solvency - or 'buy-out' - basis. This is the Scheme Actuary's estimate of the pricing basis used to secure pension liabilities with an insurance company in full at 30 September 2023. Provision has not been made for this amount as the charity has not withdrawn from the scheme.

Employment Tribunal

There is a historical employment tribunal claim which is still outstanding and is due to be heard at the Employment Appeal Tribunal (EAT) and possibly to be remitted to the Employment Tribunal (ET) again for further hearings. As at the reporting date, there are substantial uncertainties as to what grounds, if any, will be upheld and if so may be remitted to ET. On that basis, no provision can be reliably estimated.

20. RELATED PARTY DISCLOSURES

There were no related party transactions for the year ended 31 March 2024.