

REGISTERED COMPANY NUMBER: 03267791 (England and Wales)
REGISTERED CHARITY NUMBER: 1059064

Report of the Trustees and
Audited Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31 March 2024
for
The Chester Link
(A Company Limited by Guarantee)

The Chester Link

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for the Year Ended 31 March 2024

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The Chester Link

Reference and Administrative Details
for the Year Ended 31 March 2024

TRUSTEES	R J Causer (Chairman) K A Robertson H Caley M T Mannion I P Spink (Treasurer) G R Dick E P Offer I Matson (appointed 12/10/23)
COMPANY SECRETARY	K A Robertson
REGISTERED OFFICE	Suite 1B Third Floor 10 St John Street Chester Cheshire CH1 1DA
REGISTERED COMPANY NUMBER	03267791 (England and Wales)
REGISTERED CHARITY NUMBER	1059064
AUDITORS	Johnstone Howell & Co Statutory Auditors 104 Whitby Road Ellesmere Port Cheshire CH65 0AB
SOLICITORS	Aaron and Partners 5-7 Foregate Street Chester CH1 1HG

The Chester Link

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 2024. 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).

The Chester Link

Report of the Trustees for the Year Ended 31 March 2024

OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES

Objectives and aims

Mission Statement

Chester Link supports individuals with learning disabilities to lead independent and fulfilling lives by facilitating and providing person-centred high quality care.

The strategic aims are to:

Ensure that our most important responsibility is to service users.

Work to promote the independence, choices, rights and responsibilities of service users. We will listen to service users to develop and provide services, activities, support and opportunities that are in direct response to their expressed or identified needs. We will ensure that service users are involved in the decisions that affect them wherever possible. We will encourage service users to speak up on their own behalf and use Advocacy Services as appropriate.

Value our staff, ensuring that they are well trained, informed and involved in the organisation's development, ensuring that we follow best practice.

Involve service users' families because it is fundamental to the way we work.

Work within a framework of regularly reviewed policies, informed decision making, and high quality, professional standards of service delivery.

Work in partnership with other organisations to secure the best response to the needs of our service users.

The Charitable Company supports nineteen people in six properties in Chester opened in 1999, 2007, 2018, 2019, 2021 and 2022.

At all properties, a staff team is employed on a rota to ensure the provision of support services that are tailor made to meet the needs of each service user. The houses are run as shared homes, with service users, where they can, taking responsibility for their share of tasks to promote independence. Service users are charged for the services they receive and use their benefits to pay for supported accommodation and care.

Main objectives and outcomes for the year 2023/2024

Main outcomes

Following the financially challenging years of the Covid pandemic the 2023/24 years has seen the company back to a financial surplus, that is very much due to the keen focus on our financial spend and overall performance from the Treasurer and Chief Officer. The company remains open to consider all business opportunities which meet with our strategic direction and objectives.

A continued thanks to all our partner companies and contractors who work with us to deliver services in a safe, sustainable and secure manner.

Finally, the trustees wish to continue to recognise the contribution by the Chester Link leadership team for their significant work during the year. They work with flexibility to fill in staffing shortages and support the delivery of a safe and secure service in often challenging circumstances which pays testament to the commitment, loyalty and resolve of all of those in the team. Particular mention again to Anna Macleese, our Chief Officer for her leadership and total professionalism in delivering our services set against the wider challenges for health and social care.

Service users

Emphasis continues to be on the improvements of services to service users as their individual needs and abilities change. The company offers to provide service users with three services, Housing, Care and Support. The service at Winsford has only care and support provided with a close working relationship with a housing association who provide the housing, and a linked SLA is in place between the two parties. One service in Chester is in a property owned by a charitable trust with Chester Link being responsible for the care and the day-to-day maintenance of the building.

The Chester Link

Report of the Trustees for the Year Ended 31 March 2024

Staff manage changes in the availability of services from outside agencies on an ongoing basis. The company continues to work with Cheshire West and Chester Council and Wirral Council.

The company has a strategy to enhance the quality of service user's accommodation through its cyclical maintenance programme, which includes upgrades to bedroom and bathroom facilities for service users and to maintain the high standard of general up keep of the properties. The Housing Coordinator is responsible for housing management activities.

Service users maintain their own independent living supported by our staff. This results in individual and small group holidays being taken throughout the year, supported by a regular programme of activities for those service users who wish to participate. These have been undertaken in the Chester Link properties and within the wider community.

Staff

Staff teams continue to be stable with some small changes in year. The company's staff turnover is significantly below the average turnover of social care staff across the sector/country although some recruitment pressures continue to be felt during the year. The company places great importance on the investment in staff education, training and staff development. This has demonstrable benefits to the needs of service users.

Chester Link is now a registered training centre and are approved to qualify staff at Levels 2, 3, 4 and 5 in health and social care, leadership and management. This is led by the Training Coordinator. This is an investment in the quality of training as we can ensure that the qualifications are tailored to the service we deliver.

All staff have their own personal development plans that are used to direct individual training programmes to meet their needs. These plans are the basis under which staff receive continuous professional development as well as company wide training on subjects such as medicines management. Under the direction of our Chief Officer and Registered Manager, the Care and Staffing Coordinators manage the daily activities of service users and staff.

Operational policy documents required by employment, housing, and care and support agencies continue to be subject to review in line with the company's policy review timetable.

Management

Service users and staff teams have regular meetings and each Service Team meets regularly with their Lead Support Worker and representatives from the management team. The minutes of all sets of meetings are summarised, and any emerging issues are shared with the Board to enable immediate concerns to be addressed.

The sub-committees are led by trustees, they meet and prepare reports for the Trustees as required.

Public Benefit

The trustees confirm that they have referred to the guidance contained in the Charity Commission's general guidance on Public Benefit when reviewing the charity's aims and objectives and in planning its future activities.

The Chester Link

Report of the Trustees for the Year Ended 31 March 2024

STRATEGIC REPORT

Financial Position

The Trustees note the improved financial results of the year. This year has seen a surplus of income set against overall expenditure levels. The company maintains a programme of refurbishment and upgrades to property to maintain the high standards the company has set for accommodation and to maintain its services throughout. The company continues to face and manage the challenges of increased staffing costs, including agency costs, and cost of living increases in utilities and food. The company retains its commitment in investing in high quality staff training far above the mandatory levels set, and is bespoke around the needs of the service users.

The Charity had total incoming resources in the year of £1,751,721 (2023 - £1,518,299) and resources expended of £1,659,367 (2023 - £1,593,237) which has resulted in net incoming resources of £92,354 (2023 - net outgoing resources of £74,938).

The Trustees consider that the income resources in the foreseeable future will finance the ordinary activities of the Charity.

Resources expended

The provision of accommodation and support services for our service users is the expenditure of the charity.

A mortgage loan, from the charity's new bankers CAF Bank plc, is secured on one freehold property.

No grants were made from the Capital Support Fund during the year.

Reserves Policy

The Trustees have reviewed the reserves of the charity. This review encompassed the nature of the income and expenditure of the charity, and the need to match variable income with fixed commitments and the nature of the reserves. The review concluded that to allow the charity to be managed efficiently and to provide a buffer for uninterrupted services, a general reserve equivalent to between £150,000 to £200,000 should be maintained.

During the year the charity's general reserves have increased to £1,500,532 at the year end. The trustees regularly review the charity's reserve requirements to ensure that they are in line with the charity's activities and provide cover for the growth in annual expenditure.

Income generation and reserves

Income generation

The charity receives its income either directly from the service users or from Cheshire West and Chester Council and Wirral Council.

Donations from individuals and charities continue to be received and Chester Link is grateful for all donations received. In 2023/24 the company continued with some limited fundraising to generate additional funds for service user's activities, with the annual Christmas raffle being the main fundraising activity.

Corporate priorities for 2023/2024 and beyond

In May 2016 the company finished a three-year business planning process which was supported by a volunteer from Chester Voluntary Action and a full report was received and approved by the Board on 9 May 2016. Given the ever changing business environment the Board agreed that the Business plan required to be refreshed and working with Chester Voluntary Action a new volunteer was identified who agreed to support the Board in this task which was undertaken during the 2019/20 financial year. A new summary set of business objectives was received by the board for further development. A further full board session took place in October 2023 and one is planned for October 2024 to review progress against actions and this work remains a focus for the full board moving forward into 2024/25.

The company continues to seek new business opportunities with partners and families to develop its services.

The Chester Link

Report of the Trustees for the Year Ended 31 March 2024

STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

Governing Document

The charity is a charitable company limited by guarantee incorporated on 24 October 1996. It is governed by a Memorandum and Articles of Association.

At the trustees' Board meeting of the 9 May 2016 the trustees agreed to change the articles of association which were originally established on the 24 October 1996 to the following words which now more accurately reflect the company's work.

Its original objects are:

- (a) the relief of persons with learning difficulties in the City of Chester and its environs (the area), and of the families of such persons, in particular through the promotion and provision of supported accommodation; and
- (b) the promotion and provision of education and training facilities for persons with learning difficulties in the area, particularly facilities which lead to self-reliance and independent living within the community.

A change to the company's objects were approved at the September 2016 AGM and remain as:

- (a) the relief of persons with learning disabilities, and of the families of such persons, in particular through the promotion and provision of supported accommodation; and
- (b) the promotion and provision of care and support for persons with learning disabilities, particularly facilities which lead to self-reliance and independent living within the community.

Election and Role of Trustees

The charity has adopted the "Trustee Model", whereby the charity's trustees are the voting members of the organisation and the Board of Directors.

New trustees are supported through an induction process, which includes a presentation, planned visits to each department of the organisation, plus written material giving additional background information and outlining the responsibilities as a trustee.

The Board of Trustees is responsible for the overall governance and direction of the charity, with day-to-day operational management delegated to the Chief Officer, Mrs Anna Macleese.

The trustee directors meet three/four times each year and at other times as the business demands.

No director/trustee has any beneficial interest in the company. The subscribing members of the company undertook to contribute £1 each in the event of a winding up.

Governance and Structure

The charity continues to review its structure to ensure it fits its service users' needs and day to day operational pressures. The current leadership structure is as follows:

Leadership structure

The company now employs over 60 staff in full time, part time and relief basis. The Chief Officer is responsible for all day-to-day operational management. There are four coordinating managers, the Care, Staff, Training and Housing Coordinators all report to the Chief Officer. Lead Support Workers covering the newly formed four main operational areas of the company's business are in post to support the day-to-day and on call duties with the leadership team. In addition, there is a bank of dedicated and experienced Relief Support Workers, the company also employs Admin staff and with their dedicated company bookkeeper to an outsourced provider. The company employs a CQC Registered Manager who is responsible for the day-to-day care and support services.

Board and subcommittee structure

The Board is supported by four sub-committees (Care and Support, Housing, Finance and Service Development) that formally report to the Board, comprising a number of trustees, the Chief Officer and relevant coordinating managers as required. These sub committees are planned to meet three times per year or more frequently to meet the company's business requirements.

STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

Internal Control

The trustees have overall responsibility for ensuring that the charity has appropriate systems of control, financial and otherwise. They are also responsible for keeping proper accounting records that disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charity and enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 2006. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charity and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities and to provide reasonable assurance that:

- The charity is operating efficiently and effectively;
- Its assets are safeguarded against unauthorised use or disposition;
- Proper records are maintained and financial information used within the charity or for publication is reliable;
- The charity complies with relevant laws and regulations.

The systems of internal control are designed to provide reasonable, but not absolute, assurance against material misstatement or loss. They include:

- A strategic plan and annual budget approved by the trustees.
- Regular consideration by the trustees of financial results, variance from budgets, non-financial performance indicators and benchmarking reviews.
- Delegation of authority and segregation of duties.
- Identification and management of risks.

Quality Assurance

The company is registered with the Care Quality Commission (CQC) and after an announced inspection on the 21 September 2018 a report was received on 24 October 2018 rating the company's activities as overall "good" and in the five domain areas of inspection also rated as "good".

The company is registered and approved by The Cheshire West and Chester Council as a provider of care and support, the company is also registered by Wirral Council.

Risk Assessment

The trustees have a formal risk management process, including a risk register, to assess business risks and implement risk management strategies. This involves identifying the types of risks the charity faces, prioritising them in terms of potential impact and likelihood of occurrence, and identifying means of mitigating the risks. As part of this process, the trustees continue to review risk elements of the company's activities during the year which included the adequacy of the charity's current internal controls.

STATEMENT OF TRUSTEES' RESPONSIBILITIES

The trustees (who are also the directors of The Chester Link for the purposes of company law) are responsible for preparing the Report of the Trustees 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;
- state whether applicable accounting standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements;
- 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.

The Chester Link

Report of the Trustees
for the Year Ended 31 March 2024

STATEMENT OF TRUSTEES' RESPONSIBILITIES - continued

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, Johnstone Howell & Co, will be proposed for re-appointment at the forthcoming Annual General Meeting.

Report of the trustees, incorporating a strategic report, approved by order of the board of trustees, as the company directors, on 14 October 2024 and signed on the board's behalf by:



M T Mannion - Trustee

Report of the Independent Auditors to the Trustees of
The Chester Link

Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of The Chester Link (the 'charitable company') for the year ended 31 March 2024 which comprise the Statement of Financial Activities, the Balance Sheet, the Cash Flow Statement 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.

Matters on which we are required to report by exception

We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters where the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 requires us to report to you if, in our opinion:

- the information given in the Report of the Trustees is inconsistent in any material respect with the financial statements; or
- the charitable company has not kept adequate accounting records; or
- the financial statements are not in agreement with the accounting records and returns; or
- we have not received all the information and explanations we require for our audit.

Report of the Independent Auditors to the Trustees of
The Chester Link

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.

Our responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

We have been appointed as auditors under Section 144 of the Charities Act 2011 and report in accordance with the Act and relevant regulations made or having effect thereunder.

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 gained an understanding of the legal and regulatory framework applicable to the charitable company and the industry in which it operates, and considered the risk of acts by the charitable company that were contrary to applicable laws and regulations, including fraud. We designed audit procedures to respond to the risk, recognising that the risk of not detecting a material misstatement due to fraud is higher than the risk of not detecting one resulting from error, as fraud may involve deliberate concealment by, for example, forgery or intentional misrepresentations, or through collusion.

We focussed on laws and regulations which could give rise to a material misstatement in the financial statements, including, but not limited to, the Companies Act 2006 and UK tax legislation. Our tests included agreeing the financial statement disclosures to underlying supporting documentation and enquiries with management. There are inherent limitations in the audit procedures described above and, the further removed non-compliance with laws and regulations is from the events and transactions reflected in the financial statements, the less likely we would become aware of it. We did not identify any key audit matters relating to irregularities, including fraud. As in all our audits, we also addressed the risk of management override of internal controls, including testing journals and evaluating whether there was evidence of bias by the trustees that represented a risk of material misstatement due to fraud.

We also communicated relevant identified laws and regulations and potential fraud risks to all engagement team members who were all deemed to have appropriate competence and capabilities, and remained alert to any indications 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 Trustees of
The Chester Link

Use of our report

This report is made solely to the charitable company's trustees, as a body, in accordance with Part 4 of the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the charitable company's trustees 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 trustees as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.

J. L. L. & C.

for and on behalf of Johnstone Howell & Co
Statutory Auditors
Eligible to act as an auditor in terms of Section 1212 of the Companies Act 2006
104 Whitby Road
Ellesmere Port
Cheshire
CH65 0AB

14 October 2024

The Chester Link

Statement of Financial Activities
for the Year Ended 31 March 2024

		Unrestricted funds £	Restricted fund £	2024 Total funds £	2023 Total funds £
	Notes				
INCOME AND ENDOWMENTS FROM					
Donations and legacies	2	566	-	566	843
Charitable activities	4				
Residents' contributions		1,750,636	-	1,750,636	1,517,253
Investment income	3	519	-	519	203
Total		<u>1,751,721</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>1,751,721</u>	<u>1,518,299</u>
EXPENDITURE ON					
Charitable activities	5				
Staff costs		1,409,730	-	1,409,730	1,340,441
Household expenses		152,218	-	152,218	177,935
Governance		24,055	-	24,055	13,926
Support costs		59,061	-	59,061	47,095
Mortgage interest		12,320	-	12,320	10,820
Raised funds expended		1,983	-	1,983	3,020
Total		<u>1,659,367</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>1,659,367</u>	<u>1,593,237</u>
NET INCOME/(EXPENDITURE)		92,354	-	92,354	(74,938)
RECONCILIATION OF FUNDS					
Total funds brought forward		1,753,123	-	1,753,123	1,828,061
TOTAL FUNDS CARRIED FORWARD		<u><u>1,845,477</u></u>	<u><u>-</u></u>	<u><u>1,845,477</u></u>	<u><u>1,753,123</u></u>

The notes form part of these financial statements

The Chester Link

Balance Sheet
31 March 2024

	Notes	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted fund £	2024 Total funds £	2023 Total funds £
FIXED ASSETS					
Tangible assets	11	1,844,864	-	1,844,864	1,844,864
CURRENT ASSETS					
Debtors	12	125,998	-	125,998	48,443
Cash at bank and in hand		207,049	-	207,049	182,571
		<u>333,047</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>333,047</u>	<u>231,014</u>
CREDITORS					
Amounts falling due within one year	13	(83,261)	-	(83,261)	(63,556)
NET CURRENT ASSETS		<u>249,786</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>249,786</u>	<u>167,458</u>
TOTAL ASSETS LESS CURRENT LIABILITIES		2,094,650	-	2,094,650	2,012,322
CREDITORS					
Amounts falling due after more than one year	14	(249,173)	-	(249,173)	(259,199)
NET ASSETS		<u>1,845,477</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>1,845,477</u>	<u>1,753,123</u>
FUNDS	17				
Unrestricted funds:					
General fund				1,500,532	1,408,178
Revaluation Reserve				340,403	340,403
Designated Financial Support fund				4,542	4,542
				<u>1,845,477</u>	<u>1,753,123</u>
TOTAL FUNDS				<u>1,845,477</u>	<u>1,753,123</u>

The charitable company is entitled to exemption from audit under Section 477 of the Companies Act 2006 for the year ended 31 March 2024.

The members have not deposited notice, pursuant to Section 476 of the Companies Act 2006 requiring an audit of these financial statements.

The trustees acknowledge their responsibilities for

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

These financial statements have been audited under the requirements of Section 145 of the Charities Act 2011.

The notes form part of these financial statements

The Chester Link

Balance Sheet - continued

31 March 2024

The financial statements were approved by the Board of Trustees and authorised for issue on 14 October 2024 and were signed on its behalf by:



R J Crauser (Chairman) - Trustee



I P Spink (Treasurer) - Trustee

The Chester Link

Cash Flow Statement
for the Year Ended 31 March 2024

	Notes	2024 £	2023 £
Cash flows from operating activities			
Cash generated from operations	1	45,105	(44,127)
Interest paid		(12,320)	(10,820)
Net cash provided by/(used in) operating activities		<u>32,785</u>	<u>(54,947)</u>
Cash flows from investing activities			
Purchase of tangible fixed assets		-	(338,315)
Interest received		519	203
Net cash provided by/(used in) investing activities		<u>519</u>	<u>(338,112)</u>
Cash flows from financing activities			
Re-mortgage		-	275,000
Loan repayments in year		(8,826)	(6,801)
Net cash (used in)/provided by financing activities		<u>(8,826)</u>	<u>268,199</u>
Change in cash and cash equivalents in the reporting period			
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the reporting period		182,571	307,431
Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the reporting period		<u>207,049</u>	<u>182,571</u>

The notes form part of these financial statements

The Chester Link

Notes to the Cash Flow Statement
for the Year Ended 31 March 2024

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

	2024	2023
	£	£
Net income/(expenditure) for the reporting period (as per the Statement of Financial Activities)	92,354	(74,938)
Adjustments for:		
Interest received	(519)	(203)
Interest paid	12,320	10,820
Decrease in provisions	-	(720)
(Increase)/decrease in debtors	(77,555)	49,997
Increase/(decrease) in creditors	18,505	(29,083)
Net cash provided by/(used in) operations	<u>45,105</u>	<u>(44,127)</u>

2. **ANALYSIS OF CHANGES IN NET DEBT**

	At 1.4.23	Cash flow	At 31.3.24
	£	£	£
Net cash			
Cash at bank and in hand	<u>182,571</u>	<u>24,478</u>	<u>207,049</u>
	<u>182,571</u>	<u>24,478</u>	<u>207,049</u>
Debt			
Debts falling due within 1 year	(9,000)	(1,200)	(10,200)
Debts falling due after 1 year	<u>(259,199)</u>	<u>10,026</u>	<u>(249,173)</u>
	<u>(268,199)</u>	<u>8,826</u>	<u>(259,373)</u>
Total	<u>(85,628)</u>	<u>33,304</u>	<u>(52,324)</u>

The notes form part of these financial statements

1. 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.

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.

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.

Tangible fixed assets

The director trustees consider that the freehold land and buildings have a residual value not less than book value as a consequence of the charity's policy to maintain the properties in such a condition that their value as a whole is not impaired by the passage of time. No depreciation has, therefore, been provided as the amount involved is insignificant.

The cost of such maintenance is charged to revenue each year.

The trustee directors consider that this departure from statutory accounting principles is necessary in order that the financial statements may give a true and fair view.

Taxation

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

Fund accounting

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

Restricted funds have been given to the charity for a particular purpose and can only be spent on that purpose.

Designated funds are unrestricted funds that the trustees have set aside for a particular purpose. Such funds can be undesignated or re-designated.

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

Hire purchase and leasing commitments

Rentals paid under operating leases are charged to the Statement of Financial Activities on a straight line basis over the period of the lease.

Government grants

Government grants are recognised when there is reasonable assurance that the entity will comply with the conditions attaching to the grant and the grant will be received.

The Chester Link

Notes to the Financial Statements - continued
for the Year Ended 31 March 2024

2. DONATIONS AND LEGACIES

	2024	2023
	£	£
Donations and fundraising	566	843

3. INVESTMENT INCOME

	2024	2023
	£	£
Deposit account interest	519	203

4. INCOME FROM CHARITABLE ACTIVITIES

	2024	2023
	£	£
Residents' contributions	1,750,636	1,517,253

5. CHARITABLE ACTIVITIES COSTS

	Direct Costs	Support costs (see note 6)	Totals
	£	£	£
Staff costs	1,409,730	-	1,409,730
Household expenses	152,218	-	152,218
Governance	-	24,055	24,055
Support costs	-	59,061	59,061
Mortgage interest	-	12,320	12,320
Raised funds expended	1,983	-	1,983
	1,563,931	95,436	1,659,367

6. SUPPORT COSTS

	Management	Finance	Governance costs	Totals
	£	£	£	£
Governance	-	-	24,055	24,055
Support costs	59,061	-	-	59,061
Mortgage interest	-	12,320	-	12,320
	59,061	12,320	24,055	95,436

7. NET INCOME/(EXPENDITURE)

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

	2024	2023
	£	£
Auditors' remuneration	3,720	3,600
Other non-audit services	18,967	8,990
Other operating leases	11,617	12,042

The Chester Link

Notes to the Financial Statements - continued
for the Year Ended 31 March 2024

8. 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

There were no trustees' expenses paid for the year ended 31 March 2024 nor for the year ended 31 March 2023.

Three director trustees received re-imbursement of approved expenses which they necessarily incurred on behalf of the charity totalling £100 (2023 - £100).

9. STAFF COSTS

	2024	2023
	£	£
Wages and salaries	1,402,420	1,332,933
	<u>1,402,420</u>	<u>1,332,933</u>

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

	2024	2023
Charitable activities	57	64
Governance, administration	5	6
	<u>62</u>	<u>70</u>

No employees received emoluments in excess of £60,000.

10. COMPARATIVES FOR THE STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES

	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted fund £	Total funds £
INCOME AND ENDOWMENTS FROM			
Donations and legacies	843	-	843
Charitable activities			
Residents' contributions	1,517,253	-	1,517,253
Investment income	203	-	203
Total	<u>1,518,299</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>1,518,299</u>
EXPENDITURE ON			
Charitable activities			
Staff costs	1,340,441	-	1,340,441
Household expenses	177,935	-	177,935
Governance	13,926	-	13,926
Support costs	47,095	-	47,095
Mortgage interest	10,820	-	10,820
Raised funds expended	3,020	-	3,020
Total	<u>1,593,237</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>1,593,237</u>
NET INCOME/(EXPENDITURE)	(74,938)	-	(74,938)

Notes to the Financial Statements - continued
for the Year Ended 31 March 2024

10. COMPARATIVES FOR THE STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES - continued

	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted fund £	Total funds £
RECONCILIATION OF FUNDS			
Total funds brought forward	1,828,061	-	1,828,061
TOTAL FUNDS CARRIED FORWARD	<u>1,753,123</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>1,753,123</u>

11. TANGIBLE FIXED ASSETS

	Freehold property £
COST	
At 1 April 2023 and 31 March 2024	1,844,864
NET BOOK VALUE	
At 31 March 2024	<u>1,844,864</u>
At 31 March 2023	<u>1,844,864</u>

The director trustees consider that the freehold land and buildings have a residual value not less than book value as a consequence of the charity's policy to maintain the properties in such a condition that their value as a whole is not impaired by the passage of time. No depreciation has, therefore, been provided as the amount involved is insignificant.

The original cost of the freehold land and buildings is £1,504,462 (2023 - £1,504,462).

There is a fixed and floating charge covering the freehold property known as Shirley House, 42 Liverpool Road, Chester, CH2 1AQ. There is a floating charge covering all the property of the charity.

12. DEBTORS: AMOUNTS FALLING DUE WITHIN ONE YEAR

	2024 £	2023 £
Trade debtors	111,094	-
Other debtors	-	41,763
Prepayments	14,904	6,680
	<u>125,998</u>	<u>48,443</u>

Notes to the Financial Statements - continued
for the Year Ended 31 March 2024

13. CREDITORS: AMOUNTS FALLING DUE WITHIN ONE YEAR

	2024	2023
	£	£
Bank loans and overdrafts (see note 15)	10,200	9,000
Trade creditors	5,062	773
Social security and other taxes	22,981	-
Accrued expenses	45,018	53,783
	<u>83,261</u>	<u>63,556</u>

14. CREDITORS: AMOUNTS FALLING DUE AFTER MORE THAN ONE YEAR

	2024	2023
	£	£
Bank loans (see note 15)	<u>249,173</u>	<u>259,199</u>

15. LOANS

An analysis of the maturity of loans is given below:

	2024	2023
	£	£
Amounts falling due within one year on demand:		
Bank loans	<u>10,200</u>	<u>9,000</u>
Amounts falling between one and two years:		
Bank loans - 1-2 years	<u>11,400</u>	<u>9,600</u>
Amounts falling due between two and five years:		
Bank loans - 2-5 years	<u>41,000</u>	<u>30,000</u>
Amounts falling due in more than five years:		
Repayable by instalments:		
Bank loans more 5 yr by instal	196,773	219,599

16. LEASING AGREEMENTS

Minimum lease payments under non-cancellable operating leases fall due as follows:

	2024	2023
	£	£
Within one year	17,617	17,617
Between one and five years	<u>10,659</u>	<u>28,276</u>
	<u>28,276</u>	<u>45,893</u>

Notes to the Financial Statements - continued
for the Year Ended 31 March 2024

17. MOVEMENT IN FUNDS

	At 1.4.23 £	Net movement in funds £	At 31.3.24 £
Unrestricted funds			
General fund	1,408,178	92,354	1,500,532
Revaluation Reserve	340,403	-	340,403
Designated Financial Support fund	4,542	-	4,542
	<u>1,753,123</u>	<u>92,354</u>	<u>1,845,477</u>
TOTAL FUNDS	<u>1,753,123</u>	<u>92,354</u>	<u>1,845,477</u>

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

	Incoming resources £	Resources expended £	Movement in funds £
Unrestricted funds			
General fund	1,751,721	(1,659,367)	92,354
	<u>1,751,721</u>	<u>(1,659,367)</u>	<u>92,354</u>
TOTAL FUNDS	<u>1,751,721</u>	<u>(1,659,367)</u>	<u>92,354</u>

Comparatives for movement in funds

	At 1.4.22 £	Net movement in funds £	At 31.3.23 £
Unrestricted funds			
General fund	1,483,116	(74,938)	1,408,178
Revaluation Reserve	340,403	-	340,403
Designated Financial Support fund	4,542	-	4,542
	<u>1,828,061</u>	<u>(74,938)</u>	<u>1,753,123</u>
TOTAL FUNDS	<u>1,828,061</u>	<u>(74,938)</u>	<u>1,753,123</u>

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

	Incoming resources £	Resources expended £	Movement in funds £
Unrestricted funds			
General fund	1,518,299	(1,593,237)	(74,938)
	<u>1,518,299</u>	<u>(1,593,237)</u>	<u>(74,938)</u>
TOTAL FUNDS	<u>1,518,299</u>	<u>(1,593,237)</u>	<u>(74,938)</u>

Notes to the Financial Statements - continued
for the Year Ended 31 March 2024

17. MOVEMENT IN FUNDS - continued

A current year 12 months and prior year 12 months combined position is as follows:

	At 1.4.22 £	Net movement in funds £	At 31.3.24 £
Unrestricted funds			
General fund	1,483,116	17,416	1,500,532
Revaluation Reserve	340,403	-	340,403
Designated Financial Support fund	4,542	-	4,542
	<u>1,828,061</u>	<u>17,416</u>	<u>1,845,477</u>
TOTAL FUNDS	<u>1,828,061</u>	<u>17,416</u>	<u>1,845,477</u>

A current year 12 months and prior year 12 months combined net movement in funds, included in the above are as follows:

	Incoming resources £	Resources expended £	Movement in funds £
Unrestricted funds			
General fund	3,270,020	(3,252,604)	17,416
	<u>3,270,020</u>	<u>(3,252,604)</u>	<u>17,416</u>
TOTAL FUNDS	<u>3,270,020</u>	<u>(3,252,604)</u>	<u>17,416</u>

18. RELATED PARTY DISCLOSURES

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

19. DESIGNATED FUNDS

FINANCIAL SUPPORT FUND

The Financial Support fund has been established to allocate funds to a designated account to provide finance to service users who were facing financial difficulties remaining as the charity's service users.

The Chester Link

Detailed Statement of Financial Activities
for the Year Ended 31 March 2024

	2024 £	2023 £
INCOME AND ENDOWMENTS		
Donations and legacies		
Donations and fundraising	566	843
Investment income		
Deposit account interest	519	203
Charitable activities		
Residents' contributions	1,750,636	1,517,253
Total incoming resources	1,751,721	1,518,299
EXPENDITURE		
Charitable activities		
Staff costs	1,402,420	1,332,933
Rent and service charges	11,617	12,042
Rates and water	7,767	8,928
Insurance	14,999	11,268
Light and heat	28,421	25,924
Telephone and internet	12,458	12,675
Household expenses	47,310	50,623
Property expenses	29,646	56,475
Training	7,310	7,508
Raised funds expended	1,983	3,020
	1,563,931	1,521,396
Support costs		
Management		
Secretarial expenses	27,880	30,025
General expenses	1,121	1,015
Bank charges	212	220
Professional fees	20,035	6,491
Computer costs	9,813	9,344
	59,061	47,095
Finance		
Mortgage	12,320	10,820
Governance costs		
Auditors' remuneration	3,720	3,600
Auditors' remuneration for non audit work	18,967	8,990
Care Quality Commission	1,368	1,336
	24,055	13,926
Total resources expended	1,659,367	1,593,237
Net income/(expenditure)	92,354	(74,938)

This page does not form part of the statutory financial statements