

**Company Registration No. 02723670**  
**Registered Charity In England & Wales No. 1059879**  
**Registered Charity in Scotland No. SC038199**

**RSPCA Assured Limited (formerly Freedom Food Limited)**

**Trustees' Report and Accounts**

**31 December 2023**

**RSPCA ASSURED LIMITED (FORMERLY FREEDOM FOOD LIMITED)**

**REPORT AND ACCOUNTS 2023**

<b>CONTENTS</b>	<b>Page</b>
Officers and Professional Advisors	2
Chief Executive and Trustees' Report	3 - 8
Trustees' Statement of Responsibilities	9
Independent Auditor's Report	10 - 14
Statement of Financial Activities	15
Balance Sheet	16
Cash flow Statement	17
Notes to the Accounts	18 - 27

**RSPCA ASSURED LIMITED (FORMERLY FREEDOM FOOD LIMITED)**

**Company Registration No. 02723670**  
**Registered Charity in England & Wales No. 1059879**  
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**OFFICERS AND PROFESSIONAL ADVISERS**

**TRUSTEES**

Mr D Smith (Chairman)  
Mrs M Crawley (resigned 20 October 2023)  
Mr R Olivieri  
Mr D Main  
Mr G Chohan (elected to the Board 20 October 2023)  
Mr D Thiem (elected to the Board 20 October 2023)  
Ms A Wycherley (elected to the Board 20 October 2023)

**CHIEF EXECUTIVE**

Mr M Baker (resigned 11 July 2023)  
Mr C Sherwood (interim from 11 July 2023 to 7 February 2024)  
Mr T Baker (appointed 7 February 2024)

**SECRETARY**

Chalfen Secretaries Limited

**REGISTERED OFFICE**

4<sup>th</sup> Floor Parkside  
Chart Way  
Horsham  
West Sussex  
RH12 1GY

**BANKERS**

National Westminster Bank plc  
48 Carfax  
Horsham  
West Sussex  
RH12 1EJ

**INDEPENDENT AUDITORS**

RSM UK Audit LLP  
25 Farringdon Street  
London  
EC4A 4AB

## **CHIEF EXECUTIVE AND TRUSTEES' REPORT**

The Chief Executive and Trustees of RSPCA Assured Limited (formerly Freedom Food Limited) present their annual report and the audited financial statements for the year ended 31 December 2023.

## **OBJECTS OF THE COMPANY**

RSPCA Assured Limited is a subsidiary charitable company of the Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (RSPCA). The primary object of RSPCA Assured is to prevent cruelty to animals by the promotion of humane farming, transportation, marketing and slaughter of farmed animals, in particular but without prejudice to the generality of the foregoing, by implementing a set of rearing and handling standards developed by the RSPCA. For the benefit of the public to otherwise prevent, suppress or alleviate cruelty to animals, whether within the UK or elsewhere and to educate the public in matters pertaining to animal welfare in general and the prevention of cruelty and suffering among animals.

There have been no major changes to these activities during the year.

## **ABOUT THE ORGANISATION**

Freedom Food Limited was incorporated as a private company limited by shares (registered company number 02723670) in 1992, and began trading in 1994. On the 17th May 2023 the Company name changed to RSPCA Assured Limited ('RSPCA Assured') in order to benefit from the consumer trust in the RSPCA brand as advocating for higher animal welfare. The RSPCA is the sole member and beneficial owner of RSPCA Assured. RSPCA Assured Ltd is governed by a Memorandum and Articles of Association, the contents of which have been approved by the Trustees of the RSPCA.

The company is also a charity registered with the Charity Commission in England and Wales (registered number 1059879) since December 1996, and the Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator in Scotland (registered number SC038199) since May 2007. RSPCA Assured has charitable tax status with HMRC.

## **THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE AND TRUSTEES AND THEIR INTERESTS**

The RSPCA Assured Board of Trustees has the legal responsibility for the effective use of the charity's resources in accordance with the overall objects of the organisation, and for providing effective leadership and direction.

The Articles of Association of RSPCA Assured Limited requires a minimum of three trustees of the Board with no maximum. The RSPCA may appoint one trustee, who shall act as Chair for such term of up to three years as the RSPCA sees fit.

If the RSPCA does not exercise its power to appoint a trustee, it may appoint an existing trustee as Chair.

The trustees have been appointed to the Board of Trustees because of their particular experience and are non-executive directors. There are currently six trustees with additional vacancies for suitable

## RSPCA ASSURED LIMITED (FORMERLY FREEDOM FOOD LIMITED)

candidates. During 2024 the Trustees will be looking to fill four vacancies, skills that would be considered as advantageous are; technology, digital, data and or retail. The Board of Trustees meet a minimum of four times a year.

Training is provided to every trustee. During the recruitment and appointment process, each prospective Trustee is provided with information about the charitable company's constitution, policies, and activities.

Within 2022, RSPCA Assured completed a review of their governance and the recommendations were accepted by the Board of Trustees in November 2022. Within 2023, as part of the ongoing implementation of these recommendations, the RSPCA Assured Board of Trustees appointed a Finance Audit and Risk Committee (FARCOM) to support the Board of Trustees to deliver the charity's strategic charitable aims, effectively and sustainably.

Oversight of the Trustees' Annual Report and Accounts, budgeting and financial performance, financial strategy and reporting, external audit and risk management lies with the FARCOM.

The Board of Trustees appoints the Chief Executive/ Executive Director who leads the Leadership Team. Mike Baker resigned as Chief Executive on 11th July 2023, with Chris Sherwood (Chief Executive of the RSPCA) acting as Chief Executive of RSPCA Assured on an interim basis for the remainder of 2023 and into early 2024. Toby Baker has taken on the responsibilities as the Executive Director on a permanent basis from 7th February 2024.

The Leadership Team is responsible for the implementation of the strategy and day to day management of the operation and finances of RSPCA Assured. In July 2023, there was a reorganisation of the Leadership Team, with the Leadership Team being subdivided into an Executive Leadership Team responsible for the implementation of the strategy, and the Senior Leadership Team responsible for the day to day management, operation and finances of the charity.

For the first seven months of the year, the Leadership Team consisted of the Chief Executive, Head of Certification, Interim Head of Marketing, Head of Corporate Partnerships and Programme Lead of the Transformation Project.

From July 2023, the Executive Leadership Team includes the Chief Executive of RSPCA (acting as Interim Executive Director), Interim Chief Operations Officer and Interim Chief Marketing Officer. The Senior Leadership Team includes the Head of Certification, Head of Corporate Partnerships, Head of Strategic Delivery, Head of Marketing and Communications and Head of Farming Engagement.

The policy for remuneration of all staff, including the Leadership Team is decided by joint national agreement with Unite which covers both RSPCA and RSPCA Assured Limited. The policy is a bespoke job evaluation scheme to assess each role. The Remuneration Committee of RSPCA decides the salary of the new Executive Director of RSPCA Assured.

## RESULTS AND ACTIVITIES

The results for 2023 show a deficit of £0.3m (2022: surplus of £1.0m).

## RSPCA ASSURED LIMITED (FORMERLY FREEDOM FOOD LIMITED)

Income from charitable activities is made up of licence fees £4.3m (2022 £3.8m) and membership fees £1.3m (2022 £1.4m). Total expenditure in 2023 was £6m (2022 £4.3m).

The company has a strong balance sheet, with cash balance as at 31 December 2023 being £2.6m (2022: £2.6m) and a large balance in net current assets of £3.0m (2022: £3.3m).

Highlights from 2023 include the successful adoption of technology with a Google migration and Assessor App trials. We formed a brand new Farm Engagement team who are standards technical experts, working with our colleagues in the RSPCA Farm Animal Department, our existing and prospective members to solve problems and overcome barriers to standards implementation.

We built awareness of RSPCA Assured with our 'festive feast' series of seasonal advertising campaigns, which consistently performed well and through our retail and foodservice partners, with Marks & Spencer highlighting dairy welfare and RSPCA Assured in their Farm to Food Hall advertising campaign involving Tom Kerridge (TV ad) and Emille Wlx, as well as with outdoor billboard spots.

Finally, we developed our refined Strategy to 2030 which was signed off by the Board in December 2023.

### RESERVES

The Charity held only unrestricted funds at the end of 2023. The opening restricted funds balance of £0.05m related solely to the Eat Less Eat Better fund which was spent in totality in 2023. An analysis of restricted funds is provided in note 15.

The charity maintains free reserves that represent sufficient funds to cover any unforeseen circumstances that cannot reasonably be foretold. The highest risk in this regard for RSPCA Assured is deemed to be an outbreak of animal related disease restricting access to producers.

In light of this, RSPCA Assured seeks to retain free reserves at least equivalent to the annual standing costs of the assessment team. These are considered to equate to £1.1m, in line with prior year, and free reserves of £3.1m (2022: £3.4m) is substantially in excess of this.

RSPCA Assured has a budgeted deficit in 2024 in order to ensure reserves remain at an acceptable level; balancing both long term sustainability to ensure that the charity can support future beneficiaries, and a high level of impact on animal welfare for farmed animals in the short term.

### PUBLIC BENEFIT

In considering public benefit the Board of Trustees have had regard to the guidance issued by the Charity Commission. It is not enough that RSPCA Assured Limited's work benefits animals. Richard Martin, one of the RSPCA's nineteenth century founders, identified the Society's prime aim as being to alter the moral feelings of the country. He recognised that taking care of animals is an essential part of any civilisation. This still resonates today. Preventing cruelty to animals promotes humane sentiments in humankind towards animals which involves moral benefit to the human community as

## **RSPCA ASSURED LIMITED (FORMERLY FREEDOM FOOD LIMITED)**

a whole. Whilst this public benefit is clear, it is difficult to quantify and must be balanced against any detriment.

The Results and Activities section of this report demonstrates the achievements and performance of RSPCA Assured Limited and the benefit provided to the public. All of the charitable activities of RSPCA Assured focus on promoting kindness and preventing or suppressing cruelty to farmed animals and are undertaken to further these charitable purposes for the public benefit.

### **RSPCA SUPPORT**

RSPCA Assured Limited is not dependent on the services of volunteers in accomplishing its work, although RSPCA branch volunteers support the promotion of the scheme at a local level. RSPCA is a provider of a number of business services for RSPCA Assured Limited, including human resources, payroll, IT, finance, facilities and fleet. RSPCA Assured Limited and RSPCA staff also work closely in managing the most effective implementation of their shared goal for farmed animals.

### **PRINCIPAL RISKS AND UNCERTAINTIES**

The Board of Trustees of RSPCA Assured Limited reviews the operations and potential for any risk that may impact the ability of RSPCA Assured Limited to meet its objectives. These risks are reviewed annually.

The major risk facing RSPCA Assured is a possible disease outbreak which would lead to restricted farm access. This could compromise the inspection regime and have a negative impact on brand integrity. The risk of reputational damage from Assured members failing to abide by standards is closely monitored and addressed in our improvement programme.

2023 remained a year of economic uncertainty, with continuing inflationary pressure and the cost of living crisis. Although inflation began to plateau towards the end of 2023, the economic outlook at the end of the year remained far from optimistic, with speculation of a recession in 2024. These macroeconomic pressures present risks to RSPCA Assured, such as the risk of consumers moving away from higher welfare animal products and producers struggling to afford to meet higher welfare standards.

There has been no reduction in the licensing income due to these issues yet, with the current impact being mainly felt by organic ranges, rather than higher welfare. The Trustees and the Leadership Team are closely monitoring this.

While the evolving nature of the situation means it is not possible to accurately quantify the financial impact, the charitable company is in a good financial position having maintained a high level of reserves and cash. Steps are being taken on an ongoing basis to minimise the impact on the charitable company's activities and the wider impact on animal welfare.

### **PLANS FOR THE FUTURE**

## RSPCA ASSURED LIMITED (FORMERLY FREEDOM FOOD LIMITED)

During the coming year RSPCA Assured Limited will launch and begin to implement its new strategy, which will set out its seven ambitions, including for more than half of all the UK's farmed animals to be raised to RSPCA welfare standards and for people to eat less meat fish, eggs and dairy from low welfare farms and eat better by consciously choosing RSPCA Assured food because they trust that the animals have had a good life.

We will continue to ensure higher farmed animal welfare through a robust assurance scheme and a trusted supply chain, improving our internal governance, operational effectiveness, and building trusted relationships with the food and farm industry. We will also develop and launch a refreshed brand to engage with consumers to begin to grow the understanding, awareness and demand for RSPCA Assured products.

### GOING CONCERN

The Board of Trustees reviewed the financial plans of RSPCA Assured in December 2023, and the principal financial risks of the organisation, as part of the annual review process. At that time, the Trustees were satisfied that RSPCA Assured Limited had sufficient resources to continue operating for the foreseeable future and the accounts have been prepared in the knowledge that RSPCA Assured Limited is a financially viable organisation.

The financial statements indicate a strong balance sheet, with a high level of reserves and cash at the end of 2023. As at 31 December 2023, there were unrestricted funds of £3.1m, representing circa six months total expenditure. There was a cash balance on this date of £2.6m, which is forecast to remain healthy throughout 2024 and into 2025.

With regards to the year ending 31 December 2024, the Board of Trustees are satisfied that the level of projected income will be met even in the context of the challenging economic environment with continued inflationary pressures and a risk of recession. It is expected that expenditure will remain within budget. Budgeted expenditure includes expenditure designed to deliver the ongoing transformation to ensure the charitable company can achieve the new strategy which will increase income, generate cost savings in the long run, and continue to strengthen the financial sustainability of RSPCA Assured Limited. As a result, it is not expected that there will be the necessity to cut into essential services.

The Leadership Team will continue to review the ongoing forecasts and projections on a regular basis to ensure that RSPCA Assured remains financially viable amidst the challenging economic environment.

With the above measures in place, and the strong current financial position of RSPCA Assured, the Board of Trustees are of the opinion that RSPCA Assured Limited will have sufficient resources to meet its liabilities as they fall due. The Board of Trustees do not consider there to be a material uncertainty around the ability of RSPCA Assured Limited to continue as a going concern for the foreseeable future.

### FUNDRAISING



## RSPCA ASSURED LIMITED (FORMERLY FREEDOM FOOD LIMITED)

Section 162a of the Charities Act 2011 requires charities to make a statement regarding fundraising activities. Although RSPCA Assured Limited does not undertake widespread fundraising from the general public, the legislation defines fundraising as "soliciting or otherwise procuring money or other property for charitable purposes". Such amounts receivable are presented in the accounts as "Donations".

- No fundraising approach has been taken by the company, or by anyone acting on its behalf;
- No fundraising standards or scheme for fundraising regulation have been subscribed to by the company, or by anyone acting on its behalf;
- No complaints in relation to fundraising activities have been received and that any solicitations are managed internally, without involvement of commercial participators or professional fundraisers.

### AUDITORS

RSM UK Audit LLP remained as external auditors of the RSPCA and its subsidiary entities, including RSPCA Assured, for the financial year ended 31st December 2023. The auditor, RSM UK Audit LLP, is deemed to be reappointed under section 487(2) of the Companies Act 2006.

The report has been prepared in accordance with special provisions of s419(2) of the Companies Act 2006 relating to small companies.

In accordance with company law, as the Trustees of RSPCA Assured Limited, we certify that:

- So far as we are aware, there is no relevant audit information of which the Charitable Company's auditor is unaware.
- We have taken all the steps that we ought to have taken in order to make ourselves aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the Charitable Company's auditor is aware of the information.

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

Approved by the Board of Trustees of RSPCA Assured Limited and signed on behalf of the Board.



Mr D. Smith

Chairman

11 April 2024

## **TRUSTEES' STATEMENT OF RESPONSIBILITIES**

The Trustees (who are also the Directors for the purpose of company law) are responsible for preparing the Chief Executive and Trustees' Report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and regulations.

Company law requires the trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice (United Kingdom Accounting Standards and applicable law). Under company law the trustees must not approve the financial statements unless they are satisfied that they 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 these financial statements, the trustees are required to:

- Select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- Make judgements and accounting estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- State whether applicable UK Accounting Standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements;
- Observe the methods and principles in the Statement of Recommended Practice: Accounting and Reporting by Charities (2019);
- Prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charity will continue in business.

The Trustees are responsible for keeping adequate accounting records that are sufficient to show and explain the Charitable Company's transactions and disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the Charitable Company and enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 2006 and the Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005 and Regulations 6 and 8 of the Charities Accounts (Scotland) Regulations 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 Trustees are responsible for the maintenance and integrity of the corporate and financial information included in the charitable company's website. Legislation in the United Kingdom governing the preparation and dissemination of financial statements may differ from legislation in other jurisdictions. The maintenance and integrity of the charity's website is the responsibility of the Trustees'. The Trustees' responsibility also extends to the ongoing integrity of the financial statements contained therein.

**INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT TO THE TRUSTEES AND MEMBERS OF RSPCA ASSURED LIMITED  
(FORMERLY FREEDOM FOOD LIMITED)**

**Opinion**

We have audited the financial statements of RSPCA Assured Limited (formerly Freedom Food Limited) (the 'charitable company') for the year ended 31 December 2023 which comprise the Statement of Financial Activities, the Balance Sheet, the Cash Flow Statement and notes to the financial statements, including significant accounting policies. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards, including FRS 102 "The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland" (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 December 2023 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, the Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005 and regulation 8 of the Charities Accounts (Scotland) Regulations 2006 (as amended).

**Basis for opinion**

We have been appointed auditor under section 44(1)(c) of the Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005 and under the Companies Act 2006 and report to you in accordance with regulations made under those Acts.

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 Auditor's 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 other information comprises the information included in the Trustees Report and Accounts other than the financial statements and our auditor's report thereon. The trustees are responsible for the other information contained within the Trustees Report and Accounts. 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.

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 course of 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 directors' report prepared for the purposes of company law and included within the Trustees Report and Accounts, for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements; and
- the directors' report included within the Trustees Report and Accounts has been prepared in accordance with applicable legal requirements.

#### **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 directors' report, included within the trustees' annual report.

We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters where the Companies Act 2006 and the Charities Accounts (Scotland) Regulations 2006 (as amended) require us to report to you if, in our opinion:

- adequate and proper 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 prepare the financial statements in accordance with the small companies' regime and take advantage of the small companies' exemptions in preparing the directors' report, included within the Trustees Report and Accounts, and from the requirements to prepare a strategic report.

### **Responsibilities of trustees**

As explained more fully in the statement of trustees' responsibilities set out on page 9, 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.

### **Auditor's 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 an auditor's report 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 the audit was considered capable of detecting irregularities, including fraud

Irregularities are instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations. The objectives of our audit are to obtain sufficient appropriate audit evidence regarding compliance with laws and regulations that have a direct effect on the determination of material amounts and disclosures in the financial statements, to perform audit procedures to help identify instances of non-compliance with other laws and regulations that may have a material effect on the financial statements, and to respond appropriately to identified or suspected non-compliance with laws and regulations identified during the audit.

In relation to fraud, the objectives of our audit are to identify and assess the risk of material misstatement of the financial statements due to fraud, to obtain sufficient appropriate audit evidence regarding the assessed risks of material misstatement due to fraud through designing and implementing appropriate responses and to respond appropriately to fraud or suspected fraud identified during the audit.

However, it is the primary responsibility of management, with the oversight of those charged with governance, to ensure that the entity's operations are conducted in accordance with the provisions of laws and regulations and for the prevention and detection of fraud.

In identifying and assessing risks of material misstatement in respect of irregularities, including fraud, the audit engagement team:

- obtained an understanding of the nature of the sector, including the legal and regulatory framework that the charitable company operates in and how the charitable company is complying with the legal and regulatory framework;
- Inquired of management, and those charged with governance, about their own identification and assessment of the risks of irregularities, including any known actual, suspected or alleged instances of fraud;
- discussed matters about non-compliance with laws and regulations and how fraud might occur including assessment of how and where the financial statements may be susceptible to fraud.

As a result of these procedures, we consider the most significant laws and regulations that have a direct impact on the financial statements are FRS 102, Charities SORP (FRS 102), Companies Act 2006, the Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005 and regulation 8 of the Charities Accounts (Scotland) Regulations 2006 (as amended), and the charitable company's governing document. We performed audit procedures to detect non-compliances which may have a material impact on the financial statements which included reviewing the financial statements including the Trustees' Report, remaining alert to new or unusual transactions which may not be in accordance with the governing documents, inspecting correspondence with local tax authorities and evaluating advice received from internal/external advisors.

The audit engagement team identified the risk of management override of controls and the completeness of income as the areas where the financial statements were most susceptible to material misstatement due to fraud. Audit procedures performed included but were not limited to testing manual journal entries and other adjustments, evaluating the business rationale in relation to significant, unusual transactions and transactions entered into outside the normal course of business, challenging judgments and estimates and reviewing transactions processed in the post balance sheet period.

A further description of our responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements is located on the Financial Reporting Council's website at <http://www.frc.org.uk/auditorsresponsibilities>. This description forms part of our auditor's report.

**Use of our report**

This report is made exclusively to the members, as a body, in accordance with Chapter 3 of Part 16 of the Companies Act 2006, and to the charity's trustees, as a body, in accordance with section 44(1)(c) of the Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005 and regulation 10 of the Charities Accounts (Scotland) Regulations 2006 (as amended). Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the members and the charity's trustees those matters we are required to state to them in an auditor's 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 charity, its members as a body, and its trustees as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.

*RSM UK Audit LLP*

**NICHOLAS SLADDEN (Senior Statutory Auditor)**

**For and on behalf of RSM UK AUDIT LLP, Statutory Auditor**

**Chartered Accountants**

**25 Farringdon Street**

**London**

**EC4A 4AB**

**Date** 25 April 2024

**RSM UK Audit LLP is eligible to act as an auditor in terms of section 1212 of the Companies Act 2006**

**RSPCA ASSURED LIMITED (FORMERLY FREEDOM FOOD LIMITED)**

**STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES**  
**(Incorporating income and expenditure account)**

**Year ended 31 December 2023**

	<b>Note</b>	<b>2023</b>	<b>2022</b>
		<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
<b>Income from:</b>			
Donations	<b>2</b>	<b>90</b>	80,000
Charitable activities	<b>2</b>	<b>5,651,427</b>	5,205,669
Other trading activities	<b>2</b>	-	10,720
Investments	<b>2</b>	<b>12,482</b>	2,242
<b>Total income</b>		<b>5,663,999</b>	5,298,631
<b>Expenditure on:</b>			
Charitable activities	<b>3</b>	<b>5,977,180</b>	4,285,932
<b>Net movement in funds</b>		<b>(313,181)</b>	1,012,699
<b>Reconciliation of funds:</b>			
Funds brought forward at 1 January 2023		<b>3,450,358</b>	2,437,659
<b>Funds carried forward at 31 December 2023</b>		<b>3,137,177</b>	3,450,358

All amounts disclosed above relate to unrestricted funds apart from expenditure on charitable activities of £46,740 which relate to a restricted project. More detail can be found in note 15.

The notes on pages 18 to 27 form part of these financial statements.



# RSPCA ASSURED LIMITED (FORMERLY FREEDOM FOOD LIMITED)

## BALANCE SHEET

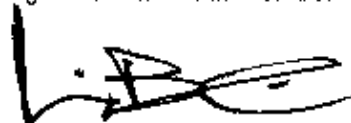
COMPANY NO. 02723670

As at 31 December 2023

	Note	2023 £	2022 £
<b>FIXED ASSETS</b>			
Tangible Fixed Assets	5	3,451	10,397
Intangible Fixed Assets	6	103,437	114,653
		<u>106,888</u>	<u>125,050</u>
<b>CURRENT ASSETS</b>			
Debtors	7	1,545,160	1,719,466
Cash at bank and in hand		2,624,115	2,571,425
		<u>4,169,275</u>	<u>4,290,891</u>
<b>CREDITORS: amounts falling due within one year</b>	8	<u>(1,138,986)</u>	<u>(965,583)</u>
<b>NET CURRENT ASSETS</b>		<u>3,030,289</u>	<u>3,325,308</u>
<b>TOTAL ASSETS LESS CURRENT LIABILITIES</b>		<u>3,137,177</u>	<u>3,450,358</u>
<b>CAPITAL AND RESERVES</b>			
Called up share capital	11	2	2
Restricted Funds	15	-	46,740
Unrestricted funds			
Designated Funds	14	-	-
Other Charitable Funds		3,137,175	3,403,616
<b>TOTAL FUNDS</b>		<u>3,137,177</u>	<u>3,450,358</u>

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

Signed on behalf of the Board of Directors by



Mr D Smith  
Chairman

11 April 2024

# RSPCA ASSURED LIMITED (FORMERLY FREEDOM FOOD LIMITED)

The notes on pages 18 to 27 form part of these financial statements.

## CASH FLOW STATEMENT

Year ended 31 December 2023

	Note	2023 £	2022 £
<b>Cash flows from operating activities:</b>			
Net cash provided by operating activities	A	79,134	727,426
<b>Cash flows from Investing activities:</b>			
Bank interest received		12,482	2,242
Purchase of Intangible fixed assets		(38,926)	(125,434)
Net cash used in investing activities		(26,444)	(123,192)
<b>Change in cash and cash equivalents in the reporting period</b>		<b>52,690</b>	<b>604,234</b>
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the reporting period		2,571,425	1,967,191
Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the reporting period		2,624,115	2,571,425

## Notes to the consolidated cash flow statement

### A) Reconciliation of net income to net cash flow from operating activities

Net (expenditure)/ income for the reporting period	(313,181)	1,012,699
Depreciation and amortisation charges	56,858	17,144
Loss on disposal of tangible fixed asset	230	-
Bank Interest receivable	(12,482)	(2,242)
Decrease/(increase) in debtors	174,306	(414,390)
Increase in creditors	173,403	114,215
Net cash provided by operating activities	A	79,134

## Loans and overdrafts

The Charity does not have any external debt or borrowings and as such a net debt reconciliation is not prepared.

The notes on pages 18 to 27 form part of these financial statements.

## 1. ACCOUNTING POLICIES

The accounting policies adopted are described below.

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with 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 (FRS102) (Charities SORP (FRS102)), the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS102), the Charities Act 2011, the Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005, the Charities Accounts (Scotland) Regulations 2006, and the Companies Act 2006.

### Accounting convention

The accounting statements are prepared under the historical cost convention.

### Going concern

The Board of Trustees are required to assess the reasonableness of the application of the assumption that the Charitable Company will be able to continue as a going concern for a period of at least 12 months from the date that the financial statements are signed.

Despite the challenges of the current economic and political climate, with rising costs, the threat of stagnation, and the conflicts overseas, the Trustees do not consider there to be a material uncertainty around the ability of RSPCA Assured to continue as a going concern for the foreseeable future.

The Charity continued with a strong financial performance in 2023 the deficit of £0.3m being due to strategic project investment. The Charity has a strong balance sheet with a healthy cash balance and a high level of unrestricted reserves. Unrestricted reserves totalled £3.1m as at 31 December 2023, representing circa six months expenditure. The Charity held a cash balance of £2.6m at the balance sheet date and the cash flow forecasts indicate that the Charity is likely to retain a healthy cash balance throughout 2024 and into 2025.

The Trustees consider that the level of ongoing support from charitable activities, combined with the free reserves, secure RSPCA Assured Limited for the foreseeable future, and that whilst there is unavoidable uncertainty associated with the current economic climate, the Trustees do not consider there to be material uncertainty. On this basis, the Charity is considered to be a going concern.

### Tangible and intangible fixed assets

Fixed assets are capitalised at cost. Provision is made for depreciation and amortisation on a straight-line basis over the useful economic life of each asset. Assets less than £1,000 are expensed in the year. The useful economic lives have been estimated as follows:

Office and computer equipment	3 years
Software and Licences	3 years

### Income

Membership income is recognised in full on the first day of the membership period, based on the specific terms of the membership agreement. Licence fees are recognised in arrears based on produce sold in the previous month/quarter.

Income from donations is recognised when there is entitlement, any performance conditions have been met, receipt is probable, and measurement reliable.

### **Expenditure**

Included in the expenditure relating to Charitable activities are the direct costs of the Assessors and the support costs of the Administration and Marketing departments.

Governance costs consist of the auditor's remuneration and the Trustees expenses. During the year no costs were incurred in raising funds.

### **Operating Leases**

Rental costs under operating leases are included in total expenditure in annual instalments over the period of the leases.

### **Funds**

RSPCA Assured Limited holds two types of reserves – restricted and unrestricted. Restricted reserves relate to the balance of the Eat Well, Eat Less project. As at 31 December 2023, the balance of restricted reserves was £nil (2022: £0.05m). Details of the restricted fund are set out in note 15.

Unrestricted reserves represent the majority of funds held. Unrestricted reserves are held to fund strategic initiative over the five-year planning review and as an 'adversity' or a continuity reserve to protect operations against unplanned adverse events such as foot and mouth disease and avian flu. As at 31 December 2023, the balance of unrestricted reserves was £3.1m (2022 £3.4m).

### **Pension costs**

Pension costs in respect of employees form part of the payroll costs and are recharged by RSPCA who operate the payroll on behalf of RSPCA Assured Limited, in the month to which they relate (see note 4).

### **Critical accounting judgements and key sources of estimation uncertainty**

In the application of the charity's accounting policies, trustees are required to make judgements, estimates and assumptions about the carrying values of assets and liabilities that are not readily apparent from other sources. The estimates and underlying assumptions are based on historical experience and other factors that are considered to be relevant. Actual results may differ from these estimates.

The key areas of accounting judgement and estimation for the Charity include:

#### **Fixed assets**

The charge in respect of periodic depreciation and amortisation is derived after determining an estimate of an asset's expected useful life. The useful economic life of an asset is determined at the time the asset is acquired or brought into use and reviewed annually for appropriateness. The lives are based on historical experience together with anticipation of future events.

#### **Taxation**

The company is a charity within the meaning of Para 1 Schedule 6 Finance Act 2010. Accordingly, RSPCA Assured Limited is exempt from taxation in respect of income or capital gains, to the extent that such income or gains are applied exclusively to charitable purposes. No tax charge arose in the period.

#### **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 amortised cost using the effective interest method.

RSPCA ASSURED LIMITED (FORMERLY FREEDOM FOOD LIMITED)

2. INCOME

**Income from:**

<b>Donations</b>	<b>2023</b>	<b>2022</b>
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
General	90	-
Eat Less Eat Better	-	80,000
	90	80,000

<b>Income from charitable activities</b>	<b>2023</b>	<b>2022</b>
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
Membership scheme	1,334,309	1,368,172
Licence fees	4,317,118	3,837,497
	5,651,427	5,205,669

<b>Other trading activities</b>	<b>2023</b>	<b>2022</b>
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
Sale of goods and other income	-	10,720

<b>Investments</b>	<b>2023</b>	<b>2022</b>
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
Interest received	12,482	2,242

Income detailed above is wholly unrestricted (2022: wholly unrestricted other than £80,000 donation income, which was restricted). See note 15 for further detail.

RSPCA ASSURED LIMITED (FORMERLY FREEDOM FOOD LIMITED)

3. EXPENDITURE

Charitable activities

	2023	2023	2023
	Direct	Support	Total
	£	£	£
Farm animal welfare	1,996,478	3,907,622	5,904,100
Governance costs	-	26,340	26,340
Eat Less Eat Better	-	46,740	46,740
	<b>1,996,478</b>	<b>3,980,702</b>	<b>5,977,180</b>

Charitable Activities	2022	2022	2022
	Direct	Support	Total
	£	£	£
Farm animal welfare	1,547,015	2,676,220	4,223,235
Governance costs	-	29,437	29,437
Eat Less Eat Better	-	33,260	33,260
	<b>1,547,015</b>	<b>2,738,917</b>	<b>4,285,932</b>

Expenditure detailed above is wholly unrestricted other than £46,740 for the Eat Less Eat Better project (2022: £33,260), which is restricted. See note 15 for further detail.

Included in expenditure are fees payable in respect of:

	2023	2022
	£	£
Auditor's remuneration	23,310	22,200
Hire of motor vehicles under operating leases	232,522	160,203

## RSPCA ASSURED LIMITED (FORMERLY FREEDOM FOOD LIMITED)

### 4. INFORMATION REGARDING EMPLOYEES AND DIRECTORS

	2023	2022
	No.	No.
<b>Average number of persons employed</b>		
Assessments, marketing, and publicity	37	35
Support, management, and administration	21	19
	<b>58</b>	<b>48</b>
	2023	2022
	£	£
<b>Staff costs during the year</b>		
Wages and salaries	2,196,340	1,721,941
Social security costs	212,648	165,470
Pension costs	229,917	178,813
	<b>2,638,905</b>	<b>2,066,224</b>

In 2023, one employee earned between £110,000 and £119,999, two employees earned between £70,000 and £79,999 and two employees earned between £60,000 and £69,999 (2022: one employee earned between £80,000 and £89,999 and one employee earned between £70,000 and £79,999). Contribution to the pension scheme for these five highest paid employees amounted to £35,364 (2022: Contribution for these two highest paid employees amounted to £13,326).

In 2023, RSPCA Assured made termination payments of £62,520 (2022: Nil). The termination payments related to settlement agreements. The accounting policy is to recognise termination payments on communication of intention to pay and when quantifiable. Such payments are accounted for as staff costs. The payments were funded from unrestricted funds.

RSPCA Assured considers its key management personnel to comprise of Trustees and the Chief Executive Officer. The total employment benefits including employer pension contributions to key management personnel were £130,701 (2022: £102,093). The Trustees all give their time and expertise without any form of remuneration or other benefit in cash or kind, in the current year travel expenses amounting to £191 were reimbursed to one trustee (2022: Nil).

# RSPCA ASSURED LIMITED (FORMERLY FREEDOM FOOD LIMITED)

## 5. TANGIBLE FIXED ASSETS

	Office and computer equipment £	Total £
<b>Cost</b>		
At 1 January 2023	41,103	41,103
Disposals	(23,199)	(23,199)
<b>At 31 December 2023</b>	<b>17,904</b>	<b>17,904</b>
<b>Depreciation</b>		
At 1 January 2023	30,706	30,706
Charge for the year	6,211	6,211
Eliminated in respect of disposals	(22,464)	(22,464)
<b>At 31 December 2023</b>	<b>14,453</b>	<b>14,453</b>
<b>Net Book Value</b>		
<b>At 31 December 2023</b>	<b>3,451</b>	<b>3,451</b>
At 31 December 2022	10,397	10,397

## 6. INTANGIBLE FIXED ASSETS

	Software and licences £	Total £
<b>Cost</b>		
At 1 January 2023	125,434	125,434
Additions	38,926	38,926
<b>At 31 December 2023</b>	<b>164,360</b>	<b>164,360</b>
<b>Depreciation</b>		
At 1 January 2023	10,781	10,781
Charge for the year	50,142	50,142
<b>At 31 December 2023</b>	<b>60,923</b>	<b>60,923</b>
<b>Net Book Value</b>		
<b>At 31 December 2023</b>	<b>103,437</b>	<b>103,437</b>
At 31 December 2022	114,653	114,653



RSPCA ASSURED LIMITED (FORMERLY FREEDOM FOOD LIMITED)

**7. DEBTORS**

	<b>2023</b>	<b>2022</b>
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
Trade debtors	<b>42,163</b>	<b>456,278</b>
Other debtors	<b>39,323</b>	<b>7,401</b>
Prepayments and accrued income	<b>1,463,674</b>	<b>1,255,787</b>
	<b>1,545,160</b>	<b>1,719,466</b>

**8. CREDITORS: AMOUNTS FALLING DUE WITHIN ONE YEAR**

	<b>2023</b>	<b>2022</b>
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
Trade creditors	<b>279,159</b>	<b>266,951</b>
Other taxes and social security	<b>149,222</b>	<b>94,702</b>
Accruals and deferred income	<b>252,890</b>	<b>173,655</b>
Amounts owed to the RSPCA	<b>417,781</b>	<b>406,351</b>
Other creditors	<b>39,934</b>	<b>23,924</b>
	<b>1,138,986</b>	<b>965,583</b>

**9. DEFERRED INCOME**

Deferred income comprises membership scheme income receipts received prior to the year-end that relates to the future reporting period. The deferred income is released to the Statement of Financial Activities in the following year.

	<b>2023</b>	<b>2022</b>
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
<b>Membership scheme income</b>		
At 1 January	<b>122,489</b>	<b>100,563</b>
Amounts deferred in the year	<b>139,545</b>	<b>122,489</b>
Amounts released to income in the year	<b>(122,489)</b>	<b>(100,563)</b>
At 31 December	<b>139,545</b>	<b>122,489</b>

## RSPCA ASSURED LIMITED (FORMERLY FREEDOM FOOD LIMITED)

### 10. OPERATING LEASE COMMITMENTS

The Company has total commitments at the year-end under operating leases expiring as follows:

	Motor vehicles	Motor vehicles
	2023	2022
	£	£
Less than one year	28,463	48,450
Two to five years	806	14,756
	<u>29,269</u>	<u>63,206</u>

### 11. CALLED UP SHARE CAPITAL

	2023	2022
	£	£
Authorised:		
100 Ordinary Shares of £1 each	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>
Called up, allotted and fully paid:		
2 Ordinary Shares of £1 each	<u>2</u>	<u>2</u>

### 12. ULTIMATE PARENT ENTITY AND CONTROLLING ENTITY

The company's ultimate parent entity and controlling entity is the Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals ('RSPCA'), a registered charity in Great Britain (registered charity no.219099). The primary objective of the RSPCA is the prevention of cruelty to animals, at the core of which is the inspectorate who provide a wide range of rescue services for the most abused and vulnerable animals. These rescue services include the Inspectorate's preventative and educational work, enforcing the law, rehabilitation, rehoming, and wildlife rescue. The range of Inspectorate work and its related support services are the core activity and are unique to the RSPCA.

Copies of consolidated accounts are available from: The RSPCA, 4<sup>th</sup> Floor Parkside, Chart Way, Horsham, West Sussex, RH12 1GY.

There are no intermediate parent companies.

## RSPCA ASSURED LIMITED (FORMERLY FREEDOM FOOD LIMITED)

### 13. RELATED PARTY TRANSACTIONS

RSPCA charges its subsidiaries a quarterly management re-charge fee for subsidiary usage of shared overhead costs to ensure that all intragroup transactions take place on an arm's length basis. The methodology of calculating the managed fee was reviewed in 2023 following an evolution of the activities of the entities within the Group since the last review date. A new methodology was approved by the RSPCA Board of Trustees and the RTL Board of Directors. The new methodology has been applied to all four quarters within 2023.

Management fees are charged to RSPCA Assured Limited by the parent charity, RSPCA, in the year ended 31 December 2023 these amounted to £403,086 (2022: £188,177). RSPCA also operate the payroll on behalf of RSPCA Assured Limited, and all associated costs are recharged directly by the parent company. All staff are directly employed by RSPCA Assured Limited. Previously, the service of some RSPCA Livestock officers was used during the year and recharged to RSPCA Assured Limited. During the current year no amounts were recharged (2022: £127,884). In the year no donations were received from the parent company (2022: A donation of £80,000 was received from the parent company in the year, toward the Eat Better Eat Less Project). At the year-end, RSPCA Assured Limited owed £417,781 to the RSPCA (2022: £406,000)

### 14. DESIGNATED FUND MOVEMENTS

	2023	2022
	£	£
At 1 January	-	100,000
Expenditure	-	(100,000)
Transfers	-	-
<b>At 31 December</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>

### 15. RESTRICTED FUND MOVEMENTS

	2023	2022
	£	£
<b>RSPCA Project Eat Less Eat Better</b>		
At 1 January 2023	<b>46,740</b>	-
Income	-	80,000
Expenditure	<b>(46,740)</b>	(33,260)
<b>At 31 December 2023</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>46,740</b>

RSPCA ASSURED LIMITED (FORMERLY FREEDOM FOOD LIMITED)

<b>16. NET ASSETS BY FUND</b>	<b>Fixed assets</b>	<b>Current assets</b>	<b>Current liabilities</b>	<b>Total</b>
2023:				
Restricted fund	-	-	-	-
Unrestricted fund	106,888	4,169,275	(1,138,986)	3,137,177
	<b>106,888</b>	<b>4,169,275</b>	<b>(1,138,986)</b>	<b>3,137,177</b>
2022:				
Restricted fund	-	46,740	-	46,740
Unrestricted fund	125,050	4,244,151	(965,583)	3,403,618
	<b>125,050</b>	<b>4,290,891</b>	<b>(965,583)</b>	<b>3,450,358</b>