

POHWER

England & Wales · Charity number 1061543

Details

Status Registered

Legal form Charitable company

Company number [03323040](#)

Registered 1997-03-25

Register [View on the Charity Commission register](#)

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Activities

Objects: 4. Objects4.1 The Charity's Objects are, for the public benefit in the United Kingdom:(a) To relieve people in need; (b) To promote social inclusion by preventing people from becoming socially excluded and relieving the needs of those who are social excluded; and(c) To promote human rights by raising awareness of human rights,in particular but without limitation by providing advocacy, information, advice and guidance.4.2 In these Objects, "social excluded" means being excluded from society or parts of society because of one or more of the following factors: youth or old age, ill health (physical or mental), disability, requiring care, substance abuse or dependency; financial hardship, discrimination on the grounds of sex, race, disability, ethnic origin, religion, belief, creed, sexual orientation or gender re-assignment, poor educational or skill attainment or relationship or family breakdown; and "human rights" is as set out in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and subsequent United Nations conventions and declarations."Nothing in the Articles shall authorise an application of the property of the Charity for the purposes which are not charitable in accordance with section 7 of the Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005 and section 2 of the Charities Act (Northern Ireland) 2008.

Activities: POhWER provides information, advice, statutory and non statutory advocacy services to people with disabilities or who are vulnerable or disadvantaged, supporting them to speak up and have a voice that

is heard when important decisions are being made about them. Our statutory advocacy services include Community Advocacy, Mental Health and Mental Capacity advocacy and NHS/Health Complaints advocacy.

Classification

- **How:** Makes Grants To Organisations, Provides Advocacy/advice/information
- **What:** The Advancement Of Health Or Saving Of Lives, Disability, The Prevention Or Relief Of Poverty, Economic/community Development/employment, Other Charitable Purposes
- **Who:** Children/young People, Elderly/old People, People With Disabilities, People Of A Particular Ethnic Or Racial Origin, Other Charities Or Voluntary Bodies, Other Defined Groups, The General Public/mankind

Geography

- **Area of benefit:** NATIONAL
- Scotland
- Throughout England

Finances

Period end	Income	Expenditure	Assets	Employees
2025-03-30	£15,975,771	£15,854,635	£4,613,387	429
2024-03-30	£16,086,520	£15,936,683	£4,492,251	443
2023-03-30	£16,911,291	£16,643,342	£4,342,414	428
2022-03-30	£15,934,026	£14,315,376	£4,074,465	432
2021-03-30	£15,624,829	£14,559,653	£2,455,815	403

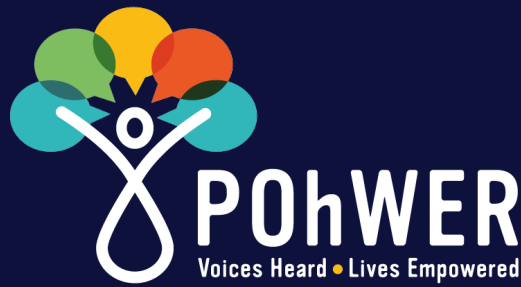
Trustees

Name	Role	Appointed
Robert Templeton	Chair	2024-07-11
Gemma Hope		2022-10-26
John Kaness		2026-03-26
Maria Aguilar		2026-03-26
Michelle Tessaro		2026-03-26
Paul Robinson		2022-10-26
Rachael Gilthorpe		2022-10-26

POHWER

England & Wales - Charity number 1061543

Accounts

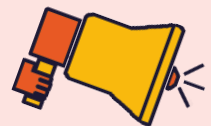


Annual Report and Financial Statements

For the year ended 31 March 2025



Positive Outcomes
Transparency



Great Communication Timely and responsive Professional

Advocacy

Knowledgeable Person-centred approach

Empowerment



Being heard and understood
Consistent and Reliable

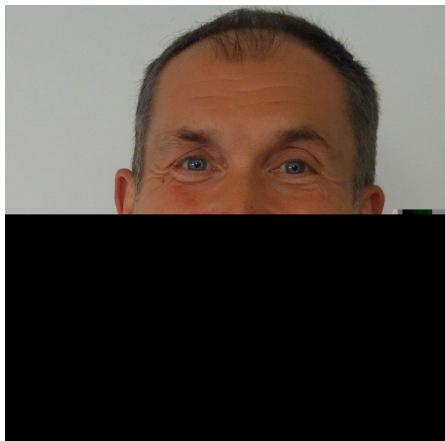
Accessibility



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Welcome from the Chair



The past year has continued to bring significant change and growing economic and global uncertainty. High inflation remains a key driver of the rising cost of living, and new tariffs risk compounding these pressures.

Reforms to the welfare system, recently announced by the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, are expected to have a profound and detrimental impact on many of those we support.

Local authorities continue to face unrelenting financial pressures, grappling with rising costs and soaring demand, particularly in social care within a rapidly evolving landscape. Increasing devolution of powers and budgets, the growth of combined authorities and

mayoral areas and new models of governance are reshaping how decisions are made, and services are commissioned at a local level. While this brings opportunities for more tailored responses to community needs, it also raises challenges around consistency, equity, and access.

In parallel, changes within the NHS, including integrated care systems and shifts in commissioning structures are creating both opportunities and uncertainties for health and social care providers. These reforms have the potential to support more joined-up care but require careful navigation to ensure the voices of those with complex needs are not lost in the process.

All of these developments disproportionately affect the most disadvantaged in our society, driving increased demand for POhWER's advocacy, information, and advice services. Yet, funding frequently falls short of this rising need. We continue to work closely with commissioners and partners to ensure our services remain accessible, responsive and impactful.

This year also marked a leadership transition. We extend our thanks to Vicky Browning, our interim Chief Executive, for her contribution, and to Dr Felix Davies who served as our CEO from September 2024 to May 2025. We are pleased to welcome Belinda Phipps as our interim CEO from 17 June 2025.

We have begun shaping our new strategy for 2025 and beyond. Developed in collaboration with our major stakeholders, it explores emerging models of advocacy and care. At its core, our new strategy will reaffirm our strong commitment to delivering vital, person-centred advocacy and demonstrating the real impact of our work.

Despite ongoing economic headwinds, we are proud to have reached over 45,824 clients through our advocacy services this year.

This achievement is thanks to the dedication of our staff and volunteers, who continue to go above and beyond. We are also fortunate to have an experienced and engaged Board of Trustees whose diverse expertise ensures that POhWER remains ambitious, resilient, and focused on delivering excellence.

We wish to acknowledge the late Janet Douglas, our Company Secretary and Governance Manager, whose recent passing was a great loss to the charity. Janet's dedication, professionalism, and wise counsel made a significant and lasting contribution to our governance and to the preparation of this annual report. She will be greatly missed and warmly remembered.

As we look ahead, we remain steadfast in our mission: to uphold rights, tackle inequality and ensure that every voice is heard.

Tony Kildare

Antony Kildare
Chair of Board of Trustees

Our Vision, Mission and Values

Our Vision

Upholding rights and tackling inequalities for those who need to have their voice heard.

Our Mission

To deliver high quality advocacy, information and advice services empowering people to have a voice and to make a real difference to their lives.

Our Values

- **P**rofessional – We are committed to working in a confidential and person-centred way. Being professional, respectful, reliable, honest and independent.
- **E**mpowering – We will empower people to develop their skills and confidence, stand up for their rights and regain control. Thus creating a culture of enablement, not dependency.
- **O**pen, free and fair – We will deliver services that are free to use and accessible to all members of the community while encouraging and valuing differences and diversity and always working in a fair and open way.
- **P**ositive difference – We will ensure that our passion for our work results in a positive difference to people's lives and use the learning from our casework to have a positive impact on the delivery of services in the future.
- **L**ocal – We will engage with local communities in the areas that we serve, understanding their specific needs and determining the best way to meet these.
- **E**ngaging – We will meaningfully listen and engage with people and groups to ensure they are involved in the design, delivery and evaluation of our services, ensuring we are a pioneering client and needs led organisation.

Our values are our core principles, the qualities and beliefs that drive all of our work. We put people at the heart of everything we do in the way we work with our beneficiaries, partners and stakeholders and, equally importantly, with each other.

What is Advocacy?

POhWER's mission is to empower people through advocacy, information, advice and guidance to give people the tools, help, and support they need to allow them to be involved and make their own choices and decisions about their lives.

Any person at a point in their life may need support to navigate their own path and be supported to have choice and an independent voice.

Advocacy helps you to understand your rights and entitlements as given to us in the Human Rights Act 1998.

POhWER's advocates seek to empower people, not to create dependency but to promote independence. They walk alongside you to navigate life challenges at a particularly challenging time when anyone can need support regardless of their lived experience or situation.

POhWER shapes its services around the needs of each individual, supporting them as a whole person not as a label, issue or problem statement.

Types of advocacy

Statutory Advocacy

In certain circumstances a person has the legal right to an advocate including under the Care Act, Mental Capacity Act, and Mental Health Act.

Care Act Advocacy

The Care Act says that local councils must involve people in decisions about their care and support needs. If it would be difficult for someone to be involved without support, the council must make sure they get the help they need. If the person doesn't have someone who can help them they have the right to have an independent Care Act Advocate.



NHS Complaints Advocacy

This is also called Independent Health Complaints Advocacy (IHCA). NHS Complaints Advocates help people to use the complaints process to raise a complaint about NHS funded treatment or care.



Independent Mental Capacity Advocacy (IMCA)

An IMCA is an advocate who has been specially trained to support people who are not able to make certain decisions for themselves (they lack the capacity) and do not have family or friends who are able to speak for them. IMCAs do not make decisions and they are independent of the people who do make the decisions.

How can POhWER staff or volunteers help you?

Our POhWER colleagues can help a person to speak up for themselves and understand the process they are going through. They can support them to understand what their rights are and what choices are available to them to ensure that they are central to important decisions being made about them. Advocates can also speak up for people when they are unable to do this for themselves.

They can help you to understand what your options are when you are facing difficult or challenging issues and can help you to understand what your options are, prepare for and take part in meetings, tribunals, raise queries or concerns and access information in the format which is most suitable for you. Advocates can also provide information and signpost people to other helpful services.

Visit <https://youtu.be/ulbzWYiqyuEf> to watch our short video about what advocacy is.

Non-Statutory Advocacy

Non-statutory advocacy services help those who fall outside the eligibility criteria for statutory services in Health and Social care. Advocacy can support people who are facing challenges in getting resolutions for issues impacting on their daily lives in relation to health and social care, housing and other public service provision.

Regulatory - Fitness to Practice Advocacy

that can support people who are involved in complaints about the fitness to practice cases of a registered health or social care professional, overseen by the professions regulatory body.



Community Advocacy

Community Advocates can support people who find it difficult to put their views across or feel they aren't being listened to and need help to navigate an issue they are facing.



Self-Advocacy

Self-Advocacy is representing your own views and wishes and asking for what you need or want. It gives you the ability to make your voice heard and take part in important decisions which are being made about you including how and where you live.



Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards (DoLS)/ Liberty Protection Safeguards (LPS)

If a person is deprived of their liberty under the Mental Capacity Act, an IMCA will be appointed to protect their human rights and make sure the deprivation is lawful, reasonable and in their best interests. The IMCA supports the person and collects information about them including their beliefs, values, and previous behaviour in order to represent their wishes.



Relevant Person's Paid Representative Service (RPPR)

Everyone who is deprived of their liberty under the Mental Capacity Act must have a representative. This could be a family member or a friend, but if there is no one suitable it could be a Paid Representative also known as an RPPR. RPPRs are qualified advocates who have specialist knowledge of the Mental Capacity Act and Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards legislation.



Independent Mental Health Advocacy (IMHA)

An IMHA is an independent advocate who is trained in the Mental Health Act and supports people who are being treated under the Act to understand their rights and participate in decisions about their care and treatment. IMHAs can support people who are detained in hospital, and people living in the community who are receiving Supervised Community Treatment or are subject to Guardianship under the Act.



Children's and Young People's Advocacy including Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS)

CAMHS advocacy support is provided within both private and NHS hospitals across the country. Advocates provide drop-in services for the young people to access advocacy on a regular basis. Advocates support individuals to have their voice heard or work with groups of young people to raise issues they have identified.



Culturally Appropriate Advocacy

Advocacy that aims to meet the cultural needs of individuals and seek to redress the health inequalities and outcomes experienced by people from racially minoritised backgrounds who are more likely to experience difficulties in access and treatment in mental health services.



Volunteer Advocacy

POhWER has developed an engaging volunteering offer that promotes and supports relevance in the local communities where we work and builds community resilience and for individuals promoting inclusion and the opportunity to use existing skills to give back to society and learn new skills in life's pathway. Co-production is an integral part of how we work and our volunteers are central to this process.



Volunteer Advocates

Volunteer advocates work as an integral part of an advocacy team delivering advocacy to support understanding of rights and what choices are available to empower people to have choice and control in their lives.

Peer Advocacy

Peer Advocates are volunteers with lived experience of using public authority services. They share their experience and provide practical support and encouragement. Peer Advocates are matched with someone who has similar needs and issues to support them to develop new skills and gain confidence.



Group Advocacy

Group Advocacy brings people with similar needs and issues together to support each other. These groups give people the opportunity to work together, share their experiences and raise joint concerns. Sometimes the group has a facilitator who supports the running of the group and sometimes these groups are self-supporting.



Instructed Advocacy

Instructed Advocacy is when a person is able to tell the advocate what their needs and wishes are and what support they need. They are able to ask the advocate for support and tell them what actions they would like to be taken on their behalf.

Non-Instructed Advocacy

When a person is unable to communicate their wishes and needs for reasons such as temporary unconsciousness, brain injury, dementia etc., an advocate will use techniques such as observing the person, speaking to people who know them well or care for them to build a profile of the person's needs and wishes and use this to make sure their best interests are represented and that the voice of the person can still be heard.

Strategic Report 2024-2025

This has been a year of reflection on our consolidation of the previous year and informed and considered growth on where and how we can promote and provide advocacy to meet growing and complex needs of people that can benefit from our services.

As we move towards the final year of our current strategy, we have co-produced and delivered models of advocacy into areas where advocacy has not been previously available to support individuals finding it challenging to navigate complex systems and processes. This builds on our mission to empower people to have a voice and make a real difference to their lives and recognises the growing support needs across many areas in the public and charitable sectors.

We provided vital advocacy, information and empowerment through a range of statutory and non-statutory advocacy, advice and guidance services to over 46,380 clients each year, many of whom have multiple needs, resulting in over 79,698 client focused interventions. We also provided 32,000 downloads of information, self-help and referral documents from the POhWER website.

We are now in the final year of our current five-year strategy, which you can read here: <https://www.pohwer.net/strategy-2020-2025>.

Areas of focus 2024-2025

Like many charities, POhWER has continued to provide advocacy and empowerment services in a financially challenging environment with growing unmet needs not only in the health and social care environment where our core advocacy models operate, but across the dimensions of people's daily lives and interactions in society with third sector and public sector service providers.

Over the last year we have continued to deliver high quality advocacy services in the health and social care environment providing statutory advocacy services where we are seeing increasing demand with no resulting increase in real terms to fund our work. To alleviate the reduction in preventive advocacy services we have used our rich source of data information to work with commissioners and stakeholders to develop pilot projects to bring real added value to those people we meet who have unmet needs, to not only provide benefit to the individual but also to create systemic improvement. These benefits have the potential to stretch across health and social care with evolving models of advocacy that create solutions across interconnecting areas of people's lives.

We have laid the foundations of our new volunteer strategy to recognize and reaffirm that there is no higher form of empowerment than learning and to be able to support others with life challenges through your own lived experience or learning. POhWER was founded by individuals who gave their time and lived experience freely to promote the voice of others. Volunteering is at our roots and our new strategy will strengthen our connection to the benefits and value it creates.

We have invested in our systems and digital capability to allow us to better evidence the value of advocacy to individuals and health and social care systems but also to promote its value into markets where there is significant unmet need that advocacy models can seek to engage with to promote individual and systemic improvements.



Outcomes and Achievements

Financial performance

POhWER's income for 2024-2025 was £15,975.771, with costs of £15,854.802, yielding a surplus of £121,136.

Bene fciary reach

We had 291,639 webpage views and 32,000 downloads of information, self-help and referral documents from the POhWER website.

This year, POhWER provided advocacy support to 45,824 people and information, advice and signposting to 556 people who faced extensive and often multiple challenges in securing their rights and entitlements within public services, including 23,678 new advocacy clients and 320 new clients with information, guidance and signposting.

People contacted POhWER for help with a range of issues which included, among others, aspects of clinical treatment, attitude of staff, complaints handling, safeguarding, needs assessment and more.

87% of the people we helped gave our services a rating of five out of five.

Geographical reach

POhWER holds 66 contracts delivering information, advice and advocacy services across the UK.

We hold 13 contracts with the NHS or private providers and deliver Secure and Complex Advocacy services in 66 units.

In addition to this we provided spot purchase advocacy in 171 areas to individuals and organisations across England and Wales.

Raising awareness

It remains incredibly important to continue to raise awareness amongst those who are in need or may benefit from advocacy and to educate those who can promote and support people's right to advocacy. We continue to support the voice of our clients by sharing their experiences and challenges to raise awareness, tell stories and educate others promoting access to advocacy to promote wellbeing and empower individuals and

communities to strive for an equal society.

In the past year, POhWER received 29 pieces of media coverage with an estimated 1.67m views and a potential audience of 211m.

External engagement and digital activity

This year we produced 14 new short informational videos, 11 of which were co-produced with the help of our Deaf Advocacy Partners. Our videos attracted 21,000 views via our YouTube Channel.

Our Impact Report can be found on our website: <https://www.pohwer.net/our-impact>

In f uencing

At POhWER, we recognise the critical role advocacy plays across both health and social care in ensuring that people's voices are heard, their rights respected and their needs met. There is an increasing need to build awareness of the tangible difference advocacy can make, not only in improving outcomes for individuals, but in preventing crisis, reducing avoidable hospital admissions or readmissions and supporting the sustainability of the NHS and local authority services.

Over the past year, we've engaged with a wide range of stakeholders, including health and social care commissioners, Integrated Care Boards (ICBs), county councils, housing providers and potential staff and volunteers, to raise awareness of the value of advocacy. This has become especially important as commissioning structures evolve, with ICBs now holding broader responsibility for population health and integrated service delivery, and local authorities reassessing priorities in light of increasing demand and funding pressures.

Through lived experience stories, we've shown how advocacy helps people navigate increasingly complex health and social care systems. These stories have also challenged assumptions about who can be an advocate, demonstrating that qualities such as empathy, communication and listening skills often matter more than a previous career in health or care. Many of our advocates bring diverse experiences from other sectors, and sharing their journeys has helped us meet our recruitment targets.

We've also been working across national and regional media to increase understanding of

advocacy, particularly among journalists and the general public. Our goal is to highlight the essential support advocates provide, including during the NHS complaints process, social care reviews, safeguarding concerns and when individuals face difficult transitions between services or settings.

Looking ahead, with the upcoming NHS 10-Year Plan and further alignment between ICBs and local authority commissioning and Mental Health Act amendments, we will continue to champion the role of advocacy in integrated, person-centred model .

As both ICBs and county councils seek to improve outcomes and deliver value for money, it is vital they recognise the preventative, empowering role advocacy plays. Advocacy doesn't just respond to issues, it helps stop them from escalating, and ensures people are actively involved in decisions about their care and lives.

Safeguarding

Safeguarding is fundamental to our Independence, culture and practice and we strive to promote, uphold and maintain people's rights to live a life free from abuse and to be empowered and supported to raise concerns as they are experienced by the person subject to abuse. To ensure that we fulfil our safeguarding duty we invited independent external auditors into our Charity in 2024 to review our culture and compliance to statutory legislation and regulatory requirements

“ There is a clear awareness of safeguarding throughout POhWER, the nature of the services they deliver are underpinned by safeguarding protocols. There is visibility of the topic throughout all levels of the organisation from frontline staff into the executive and Board. Safeguarding is seen as a priority throughout POhWER and this is driven by a dedicated safeguarding team and the passion by senior leaders. ”

**Independent Safeguarding Auditor,
RLB Safeguarding**

In 2024-25, POhWER Advocates and Hub advisors identified 934 types of abuse relating to 552 people we supported. 762 alerts were made to responsible bodies.

Because of the independence of our advocates and advisors, more than 400 safeguarding concerns became known either through direct advocate observation or through direct disclosure from the people affected who our advocates and advisors supported. These concerns may never have been raised and acted upon without the involvement of our independent advocates and advisors to support the voice of our clients. These concerns often relate to medication administration errors, neglect and organisational abuse which can frequently be linked to staff shortages or use of temporary staff affecting the consistency and quality of an individual's care. POhWER will continue to use the information we compile on safeguarding to highlight these issues to the relevant statutory bodies and regulators.

New advocacy services

Working in partnership and collaboration with partners and stakeholders, POhWER has developed and implemented models of training and advocacy into national infrastructure providers and social living providers across England. These services promote individual rights but also support organisations with accessibility and meeting their duties under the Equality Act 2010 and regulatory requirements

We have continued to provide and to further develop additional advocacy services that support people's unmet needs in the community following discharge from mental health services.

Community engagement

To ensure our services are accessible and people are aware of their right to advocacy or their responsibility as a professional to refer for advocacy, we continue to not only raise awareness of advocacy but offer training in advocacy, the legislation that underpins it to individuals in communities, professionals and organisations that need to facilitate and support its availability. By educating individuals and organisations about the right to an individual and societal benefits of advocacy, we can try to take advocacy to people who are currently unable to access it due to a lack of awareness of their right to do so.

POhWER also promotes the value of advocacy to stakeholders and communities even when there is no statutory right underpinned by Health and Social Care legislation. Non statutory advocacy can offer support with a range of issues that can prevent a person from living an independent life.

Early intervention can promote empowerment and, in many cases, prevent the need for interventions due to reaching the threshold for health or social care intervention.

Over the last year we have attended over 150 local community engagement events promoting the role of advocacy in upholding people's rights and offered training to individuals and groups to create community and individual ability to self-advocate.

Equity, diversity, and inclusion

We have been in the last year of our current EDI strategy and plan and are currently in consultation with our workforce to reviewing and planning our EDI strategy and plan.

We are committed to fostering an equitable and diverse workplace and charity that empowers all individuals, regardless of their background, identity or circumstances.

This year, we introduced Equality Impact Assessments to help ensure our decisions, practices and policies are fair and do not discriminate directly or indirectly against any protected group. The assessment requires us to consider the positive and negative impact of introducing or changing policies, projects and activities. These assessments are undertaken by peers and colleagues to foster inclusivity and co-production.

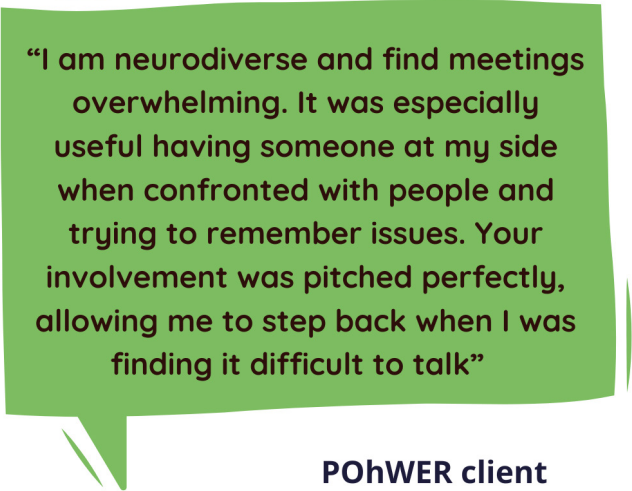
POhWER staff networks groups are a vital component in our drive towards an equitable and diverse workplace

The work of the groups listed below are fundamental to our culture and inclusivity of our workplace.

UNIFY, Rainbow Network Group, EMPOhWERace, Neurodiversity Group.

This year our groups ran sessions and wrote blogs on subjects from their lived experiences and from those of Allies including:

- Black History Month - reclaiming the narrative
- Establishing a Safer Culture as part of National Safeguarding Week
- Neurodiversity Celebration week awareness session.



"I am neurodiverse and find meetings overwhelming. It was especially useful having someone at my side when confronted with people and trying to remember issues. Your involvement was pitched perfectly, allowing me to step back when I was finding it difficult to talk"

POhWER client

Partnerships

POhWER value working in partnership with other organisations to provide services to bring a holistic person-centred advocacy service that is accessible and inclusive to those that need it. Over the last year we have worked in partnership with 30 civil society partners and together have been able to provide person centred advocacy, engagement and community resilience support across England.

We have been grateful to these organisations for their support and remain committed to providing high-quality advocacy and empowerment services in partnership with other organisations.

Support and investment in our staff

In 2024, we made significant strides in investing in our people, ensuring that both personal development and wellbeing remain at the forefront of our organisational priorities.

A major milestone this year was the successful implementation of our new Learning Management System (LMS). The LMS has been well received by employees and volunteers, resulting in a notable increase in engagement with both mandatory compliance training and non-mandatory self-development modules. This transition has empowered our staff to take control of their learning and development, with many opting to enhance their skills in areas beyond the core requirements.

Additionally, we embraced a collaborative approach to ensure the relevance and impact of our training content. By working in co-production with staff, we actively involved employees in the review and development of training materials, ensuring that the content aligns with their needs and real-world applications. This collaboration has

led to more tailored and effective training that resonates with employees across the organisation.

To further elevate the quality of our offerings, we brought in external expert trainers who introduced specialised knowledge and skills to our development programs. These partnerships have enhanced the depth and variety of our training, ensuring that our teams are equipped with cutting-edge insights and expertise.

We also delivered a series of internal and leadership training sessions, covering essential topics such as employment relations, legislation and health and wellbeing. These initiatives are part of our ongoing commitment to developing a skilled, knowledgeable, and resilient workforce.

An important highlight this year was the excellent outcome of our safeguarding audit, which reviewed our organisational safety and culture. The audit demonstrated strong practices in safeguarding and underscored our commitment to maintaining a safe, supportive and inclusive environment for all employees. This result reflects our dedication to fostering a culture of safety and respect, where staff feel empowered, secure and valued in their roles.

We are proud to have achieved the Investors in People (IiP) award and to have retained our Silver level accreditation. Following the comprehensive analysis provided by IiP, we have developed an action plan aimed at improving in key areas, with a specific focus on advancing to Gold level in both 'We Invest in People' and 'We Invest in Wellbeing.' This reflects our continued dedication to creating a positive, supportive environment where staff can thrive.

The health and wellbeing of our employees continue to be a top priority. In 2024, we took significant steps to further strengthen our support in this area. We procured a new occupational health provider, expanded the number of Mental Health First Aiders across the organisation, and introduced a range of enhancements to our optional health care plan. This includes claims for vaccinations, allowing greater access to preventive health measures. Additionally, we amended our Employee Assistance Programme (EAP) to make it available to all employees, not just those enrolled in the healthcare plan, ensuring that support is accessible to everyone.

Through these investments, we are committed to fostering a culture of development and wellbeing, helping our people to achieve their full potential and remain engaged, healthy and motivated.

Plans, objectives and challenges 2025/2026

This is the last year of POhWER's current 5-year strategy so the focus is on taking what we do well into the next five years to adapt and respond to societal unmet needs whilst continuing to remain true to our vision of upholding rights and tackling inequalities for those who need to have their voice heard .

There is a strong appetite to ensure our models of advocacy are transferable across markets whilst still improving advocacy service quality and value.

We will continue to grow our volunteer and coproduction opportunities and embed coproduction into service design and development and seek to expand opportunities for people who engage with our services to offer feedback to improve our service quality.

We will continue to improve our employee value proposition as our staff are our most valuable resource.

We will grow our partnerships cross the sectors in which we work and offer accessible holistic models of advocacy that meet individual and wider societal needs.

This will be underpinned by an increasing resilience in Finance, People and Data reporting systems to provide information to ensure informed growth and evidence-based outcomes to lead us into the next 5 years.

Governance, Structure and Management

Legal Status and Objects

POhWER is a charity registered with the Charity Commission in England and Wales under charity number 1061543 and registered in Scotland by the Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator under charity number SCO48858 and is also a company limited by guarantee.

Our organisation was established in 1996 and registered as a charity in 1997 and is governed by its Articles of Association which set out that our charitable objects are to relieve people in need, to promote social inclusion by preventing people from becoming socially excluded, and to promote human rights by raising awareness of human rights, in particular by providing advocacy, information, advice and guidance, to help people speak up and to be heard as well as securing their rights and entitlements.

Public Benefit

The Trustees have a duty to report on how POhWER's charitable objects have been carried out for the public benefit and to follow guidance from the Charity Commission on the provision of Public Benefit requirement under the Charities Act 2011.

We demonstrate how we have met our principal objects in our Strategic Report and how POhWER has worked within its charitable objects in 2024/2025. We set out further specific details in our Impact Report, which demonstrates the impact of our work and which compliments this report. Our Impact Report can be found on our website: <https://www.pohwer.net/our-impact>

Understanding and measuring our impact is vitally important in making sure we achieve our Vision to empower all people to have a voice and make a real difference in their lives. We do this by speaking for them when they can't and supporting them to speak for themselves when they can.

Structure

The Trustee Board is responsible for the governance and strategic direction of the Charity ensuring that the Charity upholds its values and core principles and delivers its key objectives.

The Trustees of the Charity are also the Directors of the company for the purpose of company law, and any reference to Trustees is therefore also to Directors.

Members of the Board of Trustees serve a three-year term, after which they are eligible for a further three-year term. In exceptional circumstances, a trustee may serve an additional year to make sure that appropriate succession is in place.

Trustees are appointed through a transparent and rigorous recruitment and selection process.

Newly appointed Trustees are provided with a comprehensive induction programme which includes meeting the Executive team. All relevant documents to their role are provided to them, including a comprehensive Trustee Handbook. A Trustee SharePoint site is regularly updated and all Trustees have private access to the site. We appointed one new Trustee during the year.

Trustees deploy a wide range of skills, knowledge and experience essential to good governance. The range of expertise held by our Trustees is regularly reviewed to determine that their experience meets POhWER's requirements. A skills audit is carried out annually and informs the skills required during any recruitment drive. We have dedicated safeguarding trustees who hold extensive experience and knowledge in relation to the safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults.

Operational management is delegated by the Trustees to the Chief Executive who is accountable to the Trustee Board. The Chief Executive and the Executive team normally attend Board and Committee meetings.

Trustees, Chief Executive and Executive team are expected to behave with the utmost integrity and professionalism at all times and to adhere to POhWER's Code of Conduct and the Nolan Committee's Seven Principles of Public Life and to consistently demonstrate their commitment to the values of POhWER.

All Trustees give their time voluntarily and receive no reward or benefit from POhWER.

The Trustee Board met both physically and

digitally during the year including four formal meetings and in addition there is a Board Away Day which allows Trustees to focus, along with the Executive team, on key strategic issues.

Trustees who served during the year are listed on page 36 together with information about their membership of Board Committees.

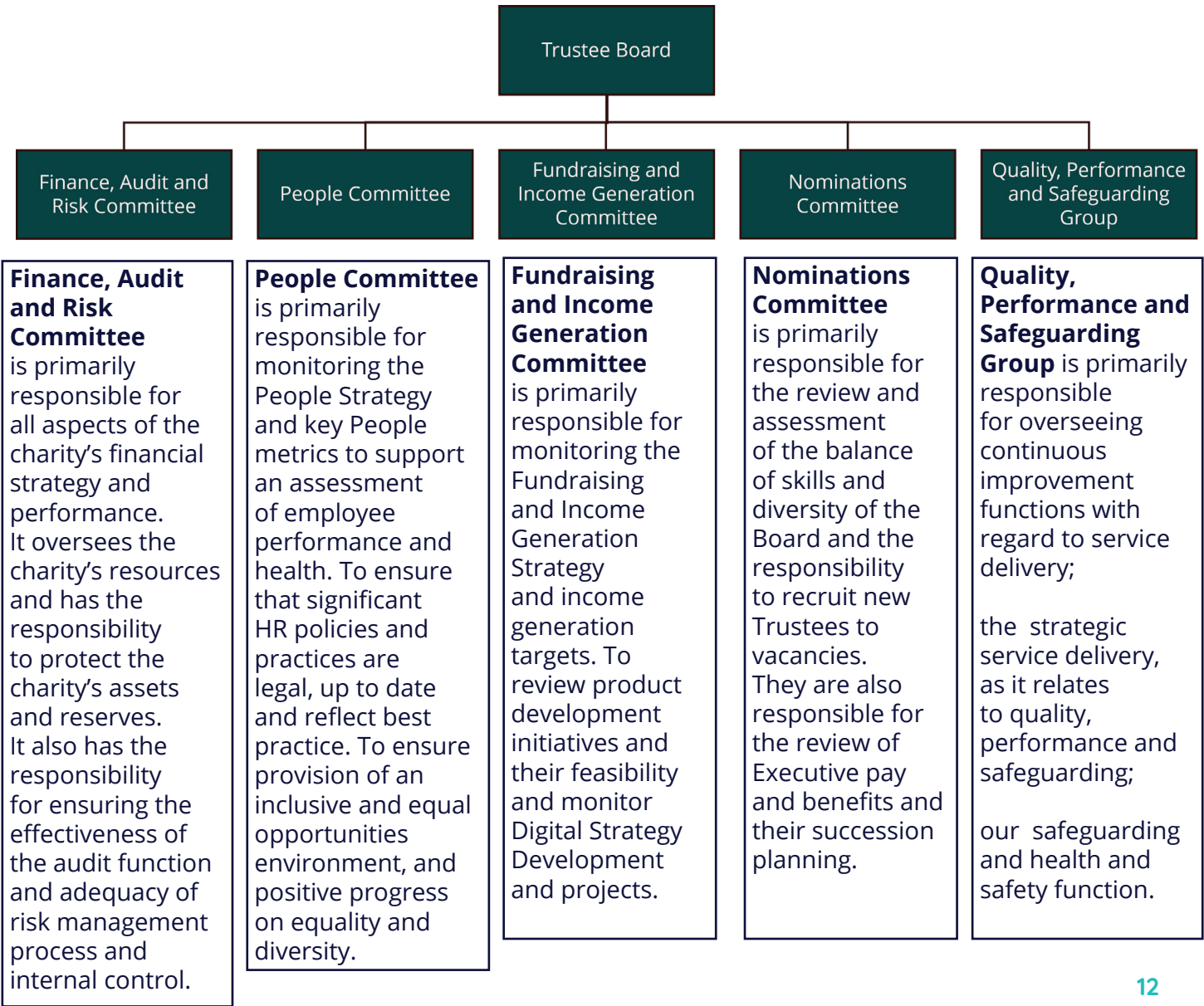
Modern Slavery

As a human rights charity, POhWER is alert to the problem of modern slavery in society. Modern slavery can take the form of servitude, forced and bonded labour, human trafficking, sexual exploitation and child labour, all of which severely violate basic human rights and deprive people of their liberty for commercial gain.

We are committed to acting ethically and with integrity in all of our relationships by taking every reasonable opportunity to act within our direct operations and wider sphere of influence to make sure that slavery and human trafficking does not take place in the charity's operations. We are satisfied that we are compliant with the Modern Slavery Act 2015. Our modern slavery statement can be found at <https://www.pohwer.net/modern-slavery-and-human-trafficking>

Delegation and Committees

The Board maintains a Scheme of Delegation and matters reserved for Board Committees are clearly defined in their Terms of Reference which are reviewed annually. The Committees report directly to the Board.



People

During the last year, there have been significant changes within the People Team whereby there is now a stabilised department in place. This has resulted in improved support for employees and the opportunity to review and simplify our people processes to enhance the culture and employee experience.

Last year we said we would focus on:

working with staff to make POhWER an even better place to work, including revamping our internal communications, developing a collaborative culture with empowered teams and leadership that encourages trust and continuous growth, and ensuring we actively live our values organisationally and as individuals. We are investing in our People Team and HR processes through implementation of a dedicated HR Reserve Fund.

What we did:

- Implementation of a new Learning Management System (LMS) which went live on 1 October 2024. Employees have engaged with the system and we have seen an excellent increase in mandatory compliance training and good engagement with non-mandatory training modules which has been beneficial for self-development.
- People data – we collate and monitor a number of monthly metrics to identify patterns and areas for improvement for our employees. Quarterly reports are produced for the senior leadership team to share data which can inform decisions. For example, this has allowed us to focus on implementing new health and wellbeing measures to reduce absence and keep people safe, well and in work.
- All People policies are being reviewed in line with the Employment Rights Bill reforms and as a result, we have revamped and refreshed a number to ensure they are fair, consistent, transparent and easy to access for our employees.
- Leadership training – we have delivered a number of internal and leadership training and awareness sessions in a variety of topics such as employment relations, legislation, health and wellbeing.
- Appraisals – we have created a new digitised appraisal system which focuses on a

two-way discussion between managers and employees to discuss performance, objectives and development. Awareness sessions have been delivered whereby the feedback is that the system is much easier to use, it is accessible, simplistic and people can see the value of investing in our employees to drive success.

- We achieved the Investors in People award and retained our Silver level accreditation. An action plan is in place following the detailed analysis from IiP and we are working towards Gold level for 'We Invest in People' and 'We Invest in Wellbeing'.
- Health and wellbeing has been an increasingly important area. We procured a new occupational health provider, expanded the number of Mental Health First Aiders, introduced claims for vaccinations to the optional health care plan and amended the Employee Assistance Programme so it is available to everyone, not just health care plan members.
- Pay and Reward – we have introduced a new Pay and Reward Policy which outlines the benefits of working for POhWER as well as communicating a new career framework.

Remuneration

Our pay continues to meet the Real Living wage threshold and is underpinned by the Living Wage Foundation. The Trustee Board oversees the pay and benefits of the Chief Executive and the Executive Team through its Nominations Committee. Decisions regarding remuneration of staff are agreed by the Board of Trustees.

A pay award was approved by the Trustee Board in March 2025 and we are prioritising our lowest earning employees.

Fundraising and Income Generation

Like many charities during the tough economic climate of 2024-2025, POhWER faced a challenging fundraising environment. We continued to build on our legacy work and donations from the public, receiving several donations from beneficiaries who were delighted with our service and grateful to be supported by our amazing staff and volunteers.

“I know the value of having an advocate when times are tough.”

“To say thank you for the great service I received from my advocate.”

“Thank you so much! It feels like your work has saved my life! Sorry I can’t donate more as I’m on sick pay, but I will keep thanking you when I can.”

POhWER donors

numbers of people who need our help.

POhWER is registered with the Fundraising Regulator and is committed to responsible and ethical fundraising practices. POhWER complies with the Code of Fundraising Practice and the Fundraising Promise.

GDPR

We are committed to maintaining the trust and confidence of the people we support, those we work with, those who support us and those we come into contact with in other ways. We do this in line with POhWER's values and with the law.

Risk Management

The Trustees have a responsibility for ensuring that the charity maintains a comprehensive risk management system and that appropriate actions are taken to manage and mitigate risks. The Finance, Audit and Risk Committee monitors and reviews these reports and reports to the Board on their effectiveness.

The Trustees have given consideration to the major risks to which the charity is exposed and satisfied themselves that systems or procedures are established in order to manage those risks.

The principal risks identified through their likelihood and impact on the Charity are:

Risk	Examples of mitigating actions
A safeguarding failure results in harm to a beneficiary or staff member	• Continuous reviewing, strengthening and embedding of Safeguarding policies, process and practice • Independent External Safeguarding Audit of Safeguarding practices and procedures • Mandatory safeguarding training and reinforcement for all staff, volunteers and trustees • Focus on identification of trends to support escalation of systemic causes of harm
Unable to increase our income through our new product development opportunities and financial restraints on local authority funding	• Regular analysis of income from statutory and non-statutory services • Income modelling and pipeline approach • Rigorous contract retention and tender scoping processes • Increased use of volunteer model
Economic climate	• Monitoring business plans and budget for robustness and ensuring efficiency in all departments.

Financial Review

Despite the challenges of the current economic climate Pohwer can report another year of surplus and increased financial sustainability.

Total income for 2024/2025 remained stable at £15,975,771 (2023/2024: £16,086,520). POhWER have continued to pursue a strategy of bidding for financially viable contracts with public and private institutions, whilst also working to diversify income streams by developing emerging advocacy models. This strategy has continued to deliver new income streams.

Costs have decreased proportionately to income reduction, totalling £15,854,802 (2023/2024: £15,936,683). In-year costs include the use of reserves of £174,382, which have been used to invest in staff and infrastructure to deliver service improvements.

The overall effects were surplus of £121,136 (2023/2024: £149,837).

In accordance with the surplus reported, cash balances held, including on short-notice deposit accounts, totalled £3,702,093 (2023/2024: £3,132,987).

POhWER operates with disciplined debtor and supplier management to ensure that working capital is tightly controlled.

Reserves Policy and Going Concern

Trustees review the Charity's reserves policy annually and given there had been no change in circumstance, a light touch review of the designated reserves was undertaken. Reserves are held, in summary, to provide working capital, ensure continuation of services and/or to ensure that the Charity can wind down in an orderly fashion and/or retain an essential administrative function in case of a crisis. The current reserves policy is to hold free reserves representing between 1.5 and 4 months of operating expenditure.

At the reporting date, the Charity held reserves totalling £4,612,387 of which £3,746,308 were free from restriction and were not designated for specific purposes (2023/2024 £4,492,251 of which £3,369,196 were free). Free reserves represent 2.8 months of operating expenditure (2023/2024 2.5 months) so the Trustees are satisfied that free reserves are within the confines of the policy.

Our position post-year end is that we can meet all our financial commitments on time and POhWER remains a going concern. The Charity has a strong record of both winning and retaining contracts, against a backdrop of a financial position that has strengthened through reserves growth over the past few financial years. The Trustees have made this assessment in respect to a period one year from the date of approval of these accounts.

Statement of Trustees' Responsibilities

The charity trustees (who are also the directors of POhWER for the purposes of company law) are responsible for preparing the annual report and financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice) including FRS 102, the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the United Kingdom and Republic of Ireland.

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

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- observe the methods and principles in the 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);
- make judgements and 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;
- 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 proper accounting records that disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charity 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 charity and hence taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

Each of the trustees confirms that: so far as the Trustee is aware, there is no relevant audit information of which the charitable company's auditor is unaware;

the Trustee has taken all steps that he or she ought to have taken, as a trustee, in order to be aware of any relevant audit information and to

establish that the charitable company's auditor is aware of that information.

This confirmation is given and should be interpreted in accordance with the provisions of s148 of the Companies Act 2006.

The trustees had no beneficial interests in, or contracts with, the charitable company during the year. Trustees may reclaim the expenses incurred in fulfilling their duties as trustees, and these are disclosed in notes 7 and 18 of the financial statements. All the trustees are required to be Members of the charitable company, but this entitles them only to voting rights. The trustees have no beneficial interest in the charitable company.

The trustees are responsible for the maintenance and integrity of the corporate and financial information included on 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 Trustees' Annual Report, incorporating the Strategic Report, was approved by the Board of Trustees and signed on their behalf by:

Tony Kildare

Antony Kildare
Chair of Board of Trustees

11 July 2025

Independent Auditor's Report to the Members of POhWER

Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of POhWER for the year ended 31 March 2025 which comprise the Statement of Financial Activities, the Balance Sheet, the Statement of Cash Flows and notes to the financial statements, including a summary of significant accounting policies.

The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards, including Financial Reporting Standard 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 March 2025 and of the charitable company's net movement in funds, including the 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 and the Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005 and regulation 8 of the Charities Accounts (Scotland) Regulations 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 Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements section of our report. We are independent of the charity 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 Trustees' Annual Report and the Welcome from our Chair. 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 there is a material misstatement in the financial statements or a material misstatement of the

other information. 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 Trustees' Annual Report (which includes the strategic report and the directors' report prepared for the purposes of company law) for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements; and
- the strategic report and the directors' report included within the Trustees' Annual Report have 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 Trustees' Annual Report (which incorporates the strategic report and the directors' report).

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

- adequate accounting records have not been kept by the charitable company; or
- the charitable company 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.

Responsibilities of trustees for the financial statements

As explained more fully in the trustees' responsibilities statement set out on page 16, 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.

Irregularities, including fraud, are instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations. We design procedures in line with our responsibilities, outlined above, to detect material misstatements in respect of irregularities, including fraud. The extent to which our procedures are capable of detecting irregularities, including fraud is detailed below:

Based on our understanding of the charitable company and the environment in which it operates, we identified that the principal risks of non-compliance with laws and regulations related to safeguarding and fundraising regulations, GDPR and company law in England and Wales, and charity law in England and Wales and in Scotland, and we considered the extent to which non-compliance might have a material effect on the financial statements. We also considered those laws and regulations that have a direct impact on the preparation of the financial statements such as the Companies Act

2006, the Charities Act 2011, the Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005 and the Charities Accounts (Scotland) Regulations 2006 and payroll taxes.

We evaluated management's incentives and opportunities for fraudulent manipulation of the financial statements (including the risk of override of controls), and determined that the principal risks were related to management override of controls. Audit procedures performed by the engagement team included:

- Inspecting correspondence with regulators and tax authorities;
- Discussions with management including consideration of known or suspected instances of non-compliance with laws and regulation and fraud;
- Evaluating management's controls designed to prevent and detect irregularities;
- Identifying and testing journals; and
- Challenging assumptions and judgements made by management in their critical accounting estimates.

Because of the inherent limitations of an audit, there is a risk that we will not detect all irregularities, including those leading to a material misstatement in the financial statements or non-compliance with regulation. This risk increases the more that compliance with a law or regulation is removed from the events and transactions reflected in the financial statements, as we will be less likely to become aware of instances of non-compliance. The risk is also greater regarding irregularities occurring due to fraud rather than error, as fraud involves intentional concealment, forgery, collusion, omission or misrepresentation.

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 auditor's report.

Use of our report

This report is made solely to the charitable company's members, as a body, in accordance with Chapter 3 of Part 16 of the Companies Act 2006, section 44(1)(c) of the Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005 and regulation 10 of the Charities Accounts (Scotland) Regulations 2006. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the charitable company's members those matters we are required to state

to them in an 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 charitable company and the charitable company's members as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.



Lee Stokes (Senior Statutory Auditor)
For and on behalf of HaysMac LLP,
Statutory Auditors
10 Queen Street Place
London EC4R 1AG
Date: 11 July 2025

Statement of Financial Activities

For the year ended 31 March 2025

(Including an Income & Expenditure Account)

	Note	Restricted 2025 £	Unrestricted 2025 £	Total 2025 £	Restricted 2024 £	Unrestricted 2024 £	Total 2024 £
Income from:							
Donations & Legacies	2	-	1,849	1,849	-	4,015	4,015
Charitable Activities	3	174,382	15,684,408	15,858,790	414,629	15,599,094	16,013,723
Investment Income	4	-	115,132	115,132	-	67,602	67,602
Other Income	5	-	-	-	-	1,180	1,180
Total income		174,382	15,801,389	15,975,771	414,629	15,671,891	16,086,520
Expenditure on:							
Cost of raising funds		-	(332)	(332)	-	(499)	(499)
Charitable Activities:	6	(174,382)	(15,679,921)	(15,854,303)	(457,451)	(15,478,733)	(15,936,184)
Total expenditure		(174,382)	(15,680,253)	(15,854,635)	(457,451)	(15,479,232)	(15,936,683)
		Restricted 2025 £	Unrestricted 2025 £	Total 2025 £	Restricted 2024 £	Unrestricted 2024 £	Total 2024 £
Net income/(expenditure)	7	-	121,136	121,136	(42,822)	192,659	149,837
Transfers between funds		618	(618)	-	(4,127)	4,127	-
Net movement between funds		618	120,518	121,136	(46,949)	196,786	149,837
Reconciliation of Funds							
Total funds brought forward		-	4,492,251	4,492,251	46,949	4,295,465	4,342,414
Total funds carried forward	15	618	4,612,769	4,613,387	-	4,492,251	4,492,251

All of the above results are derived from continuing activities. All recognised gains and losses are included in the above statement of financial activities.

The notes on pages 24 - 35 form part of these financial statements.

Balance Sheet

As at 31 March 2025

	Note	Total 2025 £	Total 2024 £
Fixed assets			
Intangible fixed assets	10	358,695	165,720
Tangible fixed assets	11	221,838	261,335
		580,533	427,055
Current assets			
Debtors	12	1,492,748	1,862,329
Cash at bank and in hand		3,702,093	3,132,987
		5,194,841	4,995,316
Current liabilities			
Creditors: amounts due within one year	13	(1,161,987)	(922,620)
Net current assets		4,032,854	4,072,696
Total assets less current liabilities		4,613,387	4,499,751
Provisions for liabilities and charges		-	(7,500)
Net assets		4,613,387	4,342,414
Restricted funds		618	-
Unrestricted funds			
Designated funds	15	285,928	696,000
Fixed asset funds	15	580,533	427,055
General funds	15	3,746,308	3,369,196
Total funds		4,613,387	4,492,251

Approved and authorised for issue by the Trustees and signed on their behalf by:

Tony Kildare

Antony Kildare

Chair of Board of Trustees

11 July 2025

Registered number: 03323040

The notes on pages 24 - 35 form part of these financial statements.

Statement of Cash Flows

For the year ended 31 March 2025

		Total 2025 £	Total 2024 £
Cash flow from operating activities	A		
Net cash provided by/(used in) operating activities		793,271	105,290
Cash flows from investing activities			
Purchase of tangible and intangible fixed assets		(339,297)	(278,587)
Interest income		115,132	67,602
Net cash provided by/(used in) investing activities		(224,165)	(210,985)
Change in cash and cash equivalents in the year		569,106	(105,695)
Cash and cash equivalents at 1 April 2023		3,132,987	3,238,682
Cash and cash equivalents at 31 March 2024	B	3,702,093	3,132,987

Notes to the Statement of Cash Flows for the Year Ended 31 March 2025

A. Reconciliation of net income (expenditure) to net cash provided by operating activities	2025 £	2024 £
Net income (expenditure) (as per the statement of financial activities)	121,136	149,837
Adjustments for:		
Depreciation charge	132,076	135,889
Amortisation charge	51,528	-
Loss on disposal of assets	2,215	67
Interest income	(115,132)	(67,602)
Decrease in debtors	369,581	158,865
Increase/(Decrease) in creditors and provisions	231,867	(271,766)
Net cash provided by/(used in) operating activities	793,271	105,290
B. Analysis of cash and cash equivalents		
Cash in hand	193	404
Cash at bank	1,526,287	698,350
Cash on instant access deposit accounts	425,613	684,233
Cash in notice accounts	1,750,000	1,750,000
Cash held in supplier client accounts	-	-
Total cash and cash equivalents	3,702,093	3,132,987

The notes on pages 24 - 35 form part of these financial statements.

Notes to the Financial Statements

For the year ended 31 March 2025

1. Accounting Policies

The principal accounting policies adopted, judgements and key sources of estimation uncertainty in the preparation of the financial statements are laid out below.

Basis of Preparation

The financial statements have been prepared for the year to 31 March 2025 with comparative information provided in respect of the year to 31 March 2024. They are presented in sterling and rounded to the nearest whole pound.

The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention with items initially recognised at cost or transaction value unless otherwise stated in the relevant accounting policy and note(s).

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 Standards applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) ('Charities SORP FRS 102') (Second Edition, effective 1 January 2019) and the Companies Act 2006.

The charity constitutes a public benefit entity as defined by FRS 102.

Assessment of going concern

The trustees have assessed whether the use of the going concern assumption is appropriate in preparing these accounts. The trustees have made this assessment in respect to a period of one year from the date of approval of these accounts, taking into account the expected commercial effects of the current economic climate.

The trustees of the charity have concluded that there are no material uncertainties relating to events or conditions that may cast significant doubt on the ability of the charity to continue as a going concern.

Entity Status

POhWER is a company limited by guarantee registered in England and Wales (company number 03323040). It is a registered charity, registered with the Charity Commission for England and Wales (registered charity number 1061543), and the Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator (registered charity number SC048858). Its registered address is Suite 4, Middlesex House, Meadway Corporate Centre, Stevenage, Hertfordshire, SG1 2EF.

Critical accounting estimates and areas of judgement

Preparation of the accounts requires the trustees and management to make significant judgements and estimates.

The items in the accounts where these judgements and estimates have been made include:

- the useful economic lives attributed to tangible and intangible fixed assets to determine the appropriate depreciation and amortisation charges;
- the basis on which support costs have been allocated across expenditure headings;
- the estimated value of provisions for liabilities;
- the estimated value of accrued income;
- and the recoverability of trade debtors.

Income

All types of income are recognised in the period in which the charity has entitlement to the income, the amount of income can be measured reliably, and it is probable that the income will be received. Income comprises contract income receivable for the delivery of charitable activities, supplemented by grant income, voluntary donations, investment and other miscellaneous income.

Income from voluntary donations comprises donations, legacies and gifts which are recognised in the statement of financial activities when received. Gift Aid is recognised and

claimed where the eligibility criteria are met. 'In kind' donations are measured at the lower of arms-length valuation or value to the charity should the goods or services have been procured at market rates.

Contract income arises from the provision of advocacy services according to the terms of contracts and service level agreements with contract commissioners which comprise local authorities and other organisations. Contract income is recognised in the statement of financial activities over the period for which advocacy services are provided. Where contract income is subject to service level agreements and subject to the quantity of services provided, it is recognised to the extent that chargeable services have been provided.

Grant income is recognised in the statement of financial activities when the charity has entitlement to the funds, any performance conditions attached to the grants have been met, it is probable the income will be received and the amount can be measured reliably and is not deferred. Performance-related grants that are conditional upon the delivery of a specific level of service are deferred where the conditions have not yet been met.

Investment income is recognised where the charity has entitlement and the amount can be reliably measured.

Expenditure

Liabilities are recognised as expenditure as soon as there is a legal or constructive obligation committing the charity to make a payment to a third party, it is probable that a transfer of economic benefits will be required in settlement and the amount of the obligation can be measured reliably. Irrecoverable VAT is charged against the expenditure category for the charitable activities for which it was incurred.

Expenditure comprises direct costs, support costs and fundraising costs. All direct costs and support costs are allocated or apportioned to the main categories of charitable activity, these are non-statutory advocacy, statutory advocacy, secure and complex services, and other. Costs of raising funds are shown on the Statement of Financial Activities.

Support costs are those costs that, whilst necessary to enable the charity to deliver charitable services, do not themselves produce

charitable outputs. These support costs include management and administration, human resources, business development, finance and IT.

Direct costs are allocated to the particular activity to which the cost relates. Support costs are apportioned on the basis of income for each category of charitable activity.

Governance costs are the costs associated with the constitutional and statutory requirements of the charitable company. Such costs include trustees' meetings, including specialist access and support costs to enable our volunteer trustees from our service users/members groups to participate and any costs associated with risk management and compliance.

Volunteers

POhWER deeply values the contribution from those who volunteer their time, commitment and expertise for POhWER. Our current volunteers include current and former service users who use their experience and skills to help others.

In accordance with the guidance in the Charities SORP FRS 102, the value of volunteers is not included in the statement of financial activities.

Taxation

The charitable company is a registered charity and is exempt from the taxation of income falling within chapter 3 part 11 of the Corporation Tax Act 2010 and section 256 of the Taxation of Chargeable Gains Act 1992 to the extent that this income is used to achieve its charitable objectives. No charge to taxation for the year has arisen as a result of the activities of the charity.

The charity is VAT registered (since 1 May 2023) and charges output VAT on eligible income and is able to reclaim input VAT incurred on eligible expenditure.

Operating Leases

Rentals applicable to operating leases where substantially all of the benefits and risks of ownership remain with the lessor are charged to the statement of financial activities in equal annual amounts over the lease term.

Defined Contribution Pension Scheme

The defined contribution pension scheme costs charged in the statement of financial activities represent the employer's pension contributions payable by the charitable company during the financial year.

Intangible Fixed Assets

Intangible fixed assets represent the cost of developing bespoke advocacy case management software. Intangible assets costing more than £1,000 are capitalised. The cost of intangible assets includes incidental acquisition costs. Intangible fixed assets are stated at cost less accumulated amortisation. Amortisation is provided at rates calculated to write down the cost or valuation of each intangible fixed asset, once brought into use, on a straight-line basis to its estimated residual value over its expected useful life. The amortisation rate is as follows:

Bespoke software 25.00%

Intangible fixed assets are reviewed for impairment if circumstances indicate their carrying value may exceed their net realisable value and value in use.

Tangible Fixed Assets

Tangible fixed assets costing more than £1,000 are capitalised. The cost of tangible assets includes incidental acquisition costs. Tangible fixed assets are stated at cost less accumulated depreciation. Depreciation is provided at rates calculated to write down the cost or valuation of each tangible fixed asset, once brought into use, on a straight-line basis to its estimated residual value over its expected useful life. The depreciation rates are as follows:-

Office Equipment:	33.33%
Fixtures and Fittings:	20.00%
Computer Equipment:	33.33%

Tangible fixed assets are reviewed for impairment if circumstances indicate their carrying value may exceed their net realisable value and value in use.

Debtors

Debtors are recognised at their settlement amount, less any provision for non-

recoverability. Prepayments are valued at the amount prepaid. Debtors are discounted to the present value of the future cash receipt where such discounting is material.

Cash at Bank and in Hand

Cash at bank and in hand represents such accounts and instruments that are available on demand or available on notice accounts of no more than 95 days.

Creditors and Provisions

Creditors and provisions are recognised when there is an obligation at the balance sheet date as a result of a past event, it is probable that a transfer of economic benefit will be required in settlement, and the amount of the settlement can be estimated reliably. Creditors and provisions are recognised at the amount the charity anticipates it will pay to settle the debt. They have been discounted to the present value of the future cash payment where such discounting is material.

Financial Instruments

Financial instruments are classed as basic, including debtors and creditors. If arrangement with the debtor or creditor constitutes a financing transaction, it is measured at the net present value of future payments, discounted at market rates to the extent where such discounting is material.

Fund Accounting

Unrestricted funds comprise accumulated surpluses and deficits on the general fund which are available for use in furtherance of the objectives of the Charity and which have not been restricted by the donor or designated by the Trustees for a specific purpose.

Designated funds are funds transferred from unrestricted funds that the trustees have set aside for a specific purpose.

Restricted funds are those where income has been received from a donor who places specific restrictions on how the funds must be spent. Restricted funds are only expendable in relation to the purposes set out by the donor.

2. Income from Donations

	2025 Restricted £	2025 Unrestricted £	2025 Total £	2024 Total £
Donations and gifts	-	1,563	1,563	4,015
Donations in kind	-	286	286	-
Total	-	4,015	4,015	4,015

2024: All income from donations was unrestricted.

3. Income from Charitable Activities

	2025 Restricted £	2025 Unrestricted £	2025 Total £	2024 Total £
Core contract income	174,382	15,049,701	15,224,083	15,481,843
Other contract income	-	634,707	634,707	531,880
Total	174,382	15,684,399	15,858,790	16,013,723

2024: Restricted income from contract income was £414,629. All other income was unrestricted.

We have changed the way we present the above note to be reflective of how we present this information internally.

4. Investment Income

	2025 Unrestricted £	2024 Unrestricted £
Bank Interest Receivable	115,132	67,602

5. Other Income

	2025 Unrestricted £	2024 Unrestricted £
Other fees & recharged services	-	1,180

6. Expenditure on Charitable Activities

Current year:	2025 Core contracts	2025 Other contracts	2025 Strategic investment	2025 Total
	£	£	£	£
Direct operating costs	13,230,687	340,638	-	13,571,325
Support costs				
Management and Administration	532,820	22,214	-	555,034
Human Resources	558,883	23,300	126,734	708,917
Business Development	386,974	16,133	29,213	432,320
Finance	412,808	17,210	25,893	455,911
IT	80,481	3,355	-	83,836
Governance	45,081	1,879	-	46,960
	2,017,047	84,091	181,840	2,282,977
Total Costs	15,427,734	424,729	181,840	15,854,303
<i>Prior Year Comparison:</i>	2024 Core contracts	2024 Other contracts	2024 Strategic investment	2024 Total
	£	£	£	£
Direct operating costs	12,742,535	1,029,597	-	13,772,132
Support costs				
Management and Administration	601,051	20,648	-	621,699
Human Resources	565,906	19,442	-	585,348
Business Development	356,027	12,231	-	368,258
Finance	409,054	14,053	-	423,107
IT	89,034	3,059	-	92,093
Governance	71,104	2,443	-	73,547
	2,092,176	71,876	-	2,164,052
Total Costs	14,834,711	1,101,473	-	15,936,184

We have changed the way we present the above note to be reflective of how we present this information internally.

7. Net Income / (Expenditure) for the Year

Net income / (expenditure) is stated after charging:

	2025 £	2024 £
Depreciation and amortisation	183,604	135,889
Operating lease rentals	124,296	133,749
Auditor's remuneration		
- Audit provision for current year	26,520	24,720
Trustees' remuneration	-	-
Trustees' reimbursed expenses	64	667

8. Staff Costs and Remuneration of Key Management Personnel

Staff costs were as follows:

	2025 £	2024 £
Salaries and wages	9,697,816	9,507,504
Severance payments (including payments in lieu of notice)	31,922	88,331
Social security costs	851,609	806,883
Pension contributions	269,774	255,231
Total Staff Costs	10,851,121	10,657,949

The number of employees whose emoluments exceeded £60,000 was as follows:

	2025 Number	2024 Number
£60,000 to £70,000	2	2
£70,000 to £80,000	2	2
£80,000 to £90,000	1	-

The company made contributions to the pension plans of 5 employees whose emoluments exceeded £60,000 in 2024/25 of £10,175 (2023/24 £8,241, 4 employees).

The key management personnel of the charity comprise the Trustees and the Executive Team.

None of the trustees receive any remuneration in connection with their services to the charity (2023/24: £nil). The total remuneration including employer's pension contributions of the Executive Team for the year was £417,392 (2023/24: £412,411).

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

	2025 Number	2024 Number
Charitable activities	393	413
Management, support services and administration	36	30
Total	429	428

In accordance with the relevant accounting standards, employee numbers are counted irrespective of hours worked. POhWER benefits from the services of part time employees, and the headcount expressed in full time equivalents would be 335 for charitable activities (2023/24: 335) and 33 in management, support services and administration (2023/24: 28).

9. Defined Contribution Pension Schemes

The charitable company opened a defined contribution pension scheme provided by the NOW: Pensions Trust effective from the staging date of 1 April 2014, we subsequently moved to The Peoples Pension on 1 April 2019, both schemes satisfy the requirements of automatic enrolment pension legislation. The charitable company pays employer's contributions of 3% of pensionable salary into this defined contribution pension scheme provided that an employee pays employee contributions of at least 5% of pensionable salary. The charitable company pays employer's contributions exceeding 3% in a limited number of cases in order to comply with contractual obligations. At the year end, amounts of £61,082 were due to the pension scheme provider (2023/24: £55,751).

10. Intangible Fixed Assets

	Bespoke Software £
Cost or valuation	
At the start of the year	307,084
Additions in the year	244,503
Disposals in the year	(141,364)
At the end of the year	410,223
Depreciation	
At the start of the year	(141,364)
Charge for the year	(51,528)
Disposals in the year	141,364
At the end of the year	(51,528)
Net book value	
At the end of the year	358,695
At the start of the year	165,720

11. Tangible Fixed Assets

	Fixtures and Fittings £	Computer Equipment £	Total £
Cost or valuation			
At the start of the year	102,683	643,840	746,523
Additions in the year	5,270	89,524	94,794
Disposals in the year	-	(206,328)	(206,328)
At the end of the year	107,953	527,036	634,989
Depreciation			
At the start of the year	(9,403)	(475,785)	(485,188)
Charge for the year	(20,888)	(111,188)	(132,076)
Disposals in the year	-	204,113	204,113
At the end of the year	(30,291)	(382,860)	(413,151)
Net book value			
At the end of the year	77,662	144,176	221,838
At the start of the year	93,280	168,055	261,335

12. Debtors

	2025 £	2024 £
Trade debtors	1,253,780	1,662,315
Accrued income	59,763	31,166
Prepayments	162,009	153,606
Other debtors	17,196	15,242
Total Debtors	1,492,748	1,862,329

13. Creditors: Amounts Due Within One Year

	2025 £	2024 £
Trade creditors	256,479	214,321
Taxation and social security	218,681	192,589
Accrued expenses	192,678	298,410
Other creditors	93,483	58,430
Deferred income	400,666	158,870
Total Creditors	1,161,987	922,620

Income received in advance of the provision of services is deferred. Deferred income recognised during the year is as follows:

	£
Deferred income brought forward	158,870
Deferred income released during the year	(106,668)
Income deferred during the year	348,464
Deferred income carried forward	400,666

14. Movement in Restricted Funds

	Start of year 01.04.2024	Income	Expenditure	Transfers between funds	End of year 31.03.2025
	£	£	£	£	£
Restricted funds					
- Birmingham NNS Grants	-	174,382	(174,382)	618	618
Total Funds	-	174,382	(174,382)	618	618

Prior Year Comparison

	Start of year 01.04.2023	Income	Expenditure	Transfers between funds	End of year 31.03.2024
	£	£	£	£	£
Restricted funds					
- Birmingham NNS Grants	9,264	170,254	(193,485)	13,967	-
- Birmingham NNS	25,837	173,166	(165,824)	33,179	-
- Herts Community Navigator Service	-	65,460	(68,019)	(2,559)	-
- Oxfordshire Community Advocacy	11,848	-	(11,848)	-	-
- Birmingham All Age Autism	-	5,749	(18,275)	(12,526)	-
Total Funds	46,949	414,629	(457,451)	4,127	-

Restricted Funds

Birmingham NNS (Neighbourhood Network Scheme)

Working on behalf of Birmingham City Council to support citizens over 50 in the community to live healthy, independent lives. The Neighbourhood Network

Scheme helps connect older people to individuals, groups, organisations, activities, services and places in their neighbourhoods.

Herts Community Navigator Service

A grant for a Community Navigator who provides face to face support to help with a variety of issues including practical support to help arrange bill payments, sorting domestic paperwork and reviewing benefit entitlement in Hertfordshire.

Oxfordshire Community Advocacy

A grant from Oxfordshire Advocacy, known as Getting Heard, to deliver community advocacy in Oxfordshire.

All Age Autism

A grant to support autistic people learn self-advocacy skills.

15. Movement in Unrestricted Funds

	Start of year 01.04.2024	Income	Expenditure	Transfers between funds	End of year 31.03.2025
	£	£	£	£	£
Unrestricted funds					
- General fund	3,369,196	15,801,389	(15,498,413)	74,136	3,746,308
<i>Designated funds</i>					
- Arthur Bate fund	30,000	-	-	-	30,000
- People & Culture fund	166,000	-	(121,847)	(44,153)	-
- Strategic fund	500,000	-	(59,993)	(184,079)	255,928
- Fixed assets fund	427,055	-	-	153,478	580,533
Total Funds	4,492,251	15,801,389	(15,680,253)	(618)	4,612,769

Prior Year Comparison

	Start of year 01.04.2023	Income	Expenditure	Transfers between funds	End of year 31.03.2024
	£	£	£	£	£
Unrestricted funds					
- General fund	3,981,041	15,671,891	(15,479,232)	(804,504)	3,369,196
<i>Designated funds</i>					
- Arthur Bate fund	30,000	-	-	-	30,000
- People & Culture fund	-	-	-	166,000	166,000
- Strategic fund	-	-	-	500,000	500,000
- Fixed assets fund	284,424	-	-	142,631	427,055
Total Funds	4,295,465	15,671,891	(15,479,232)	4,127	4,492,251

Unrestricted Funds

General fund

The General Fund comprises the accumulated surpluses and deficits which have neither been restricted by conditions imposed by donors, nor have been designated by the trustees for specific purposes.

Designated funds

The Arthur Bate fund

In memory of Arthur Bate, a founding trustee of POhWER and campaigner for the rights of people with disabilities, the Arthur Bate fund was created to provide support for people who:

- wish to become trustees of charities
- seek to set up self-advocacy groups
- want to set up peer support groups
- want to set up advocacy groups
- seek to start other kinds of advocacy activity

People & Culture fund

The people and culture fund has been designated to fund additional HR resources and people related projects, including training.

Strategic fund

The strategic fund has been designated to fund internal projects as well as externally facing work ensuring POhWER has the appropriate building blocks in place to facilitate future direction.

Fixed assets fund

The fixed assets fund reflects the carrying net book value of the charity's tangible and intangible fixed assets and has been separated from the charity's general unrestricted funds in recognition of the fact that these assets are essential to the day-to-day operations of the charity and should not be considered realisable to meet future commitments.

16. Analysis of Net Assets between Funds

Current Year	General funds	Designated funds	Fixed assets fund	Restricted Funds	Total 2025
Intangible Assets	-	-	358,695	-	358,695
Tangible Assets	-	-	221,838	-	221,838
Debtors	1,492,748	-	-	-	1,492,748
Cash	3,415,547	285,928	-	618	3,702,093
Creditors	(1,161,987)	-	-	-	(1,161,987)
Provisions	-	-	-	-	-
Total	3,746,308	285,928	580,533	618	4,613,387
<i>Prior Year Comparison</i>	General funds	Designated funds	Fixed assets fund	Restricted Funds	Total 2024
Intangible Assets	-	-	165,720	-	165,720
Tangible Assets	-	-	261,335	-	261,335
Debtors	1,862,329	-	-	-	1,862,329
Cash	2,436,987	696,000	-	-	3,132,987
Creditors	(922,620)	-	-	-	(922,620)
Provisions	(7,500)	-	-	-	(7,500)
Total	3,981,041	696,000	427,055	-	4,492,251

17. Operating Lease Commitments

The total commitment under non-cancellable operating leases at 31 March 2025 is analysed according to the periods in which the leases expire:

	2025 Land & Buildings £	2024 Land & Buildings £
Less than 1 year	106,424	124,995
2-5 years	80,088	186,512
Total	186,512	311,507

Lease costs expensed during the year amounted to £124,296 (2023/24: £133,749).

18. Related Party Transactions

During the financial year 1 Trustee was reimbursed £64 (2023/24: 3 Trustees reimbursed £667) for travel and incidental expenses which related to carrying out their duties as Trustees of the charitable company. Trustees are based in a wide geographical area in a reflection of the areas we work in.

Trustees made no voluntary donations in the financial year (2023/24 £nil).

There were no other related party transactions during the financial year (2023/24: none).

Expenditure includes £3,118 (2023/24: £3,118) in respect of trustees' indemnity insurance which provides cover of up to a maximum of £5,000,000.

POhWER

A company limited by guarantee

Registered Office

Suite 4, Middlesex House
Meadway Corporate Centre
Stevenage
Hertfordshire SG1 2EF

Registered in England and Wales with the Charity Commission under charity number 1061543

Registered in Scotland by the Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator under charity number SCO48858

Registered company number 03323040

www.pohwer.net

Auditors

HaysMac LLP
10 Queen Street Place
London EC4R 1AG

Legal Advisors

Stone King
Boundary House
91 Charterhouse St
Barbican, London EC1M 6HR

Bankers

The Co-operative Bank plc
PO Box 101
1 Balloon Street
Manchester M60 4EP

Patrons

Lord Michael Cashman CBE
Peter Duncan
Nitu Shah
Samantha Lee Howe
Dr Melrose Stewart

Vice Presidents

Aruna Patel
Carol Lee MBE
Gary Blaker
Iris Lusack
Judith Smart
Phil Lawrence
Steven Rathbone
Tim Anfilogoff

Trustees

Antony Kildare (Chair) (d)
Abdi Mohamed (b) (d)
Alex Cisneros (d) (e)
Andrew McGrath (a) (d)
Corinne Mils (b) (d)
Gemma Hope (c)
Ian Holland (a)
Jackie Kinsey (b) (retired 31 March 2025)
Paul Robinson (a)
Rachael Gilthorpe (c) (e)
Robert Templeton (c) (e) (appointed July 2024)

- a. Member of the Finance, Audit and Risk Committee
- b. Member of the People Committee
- c. Member of the Fundraising and Income Generation Committee
- d. Member of the Nominations Committee
- e. Member of the Quality, Performance and Safeguarding Group

Executive Team

Chief Executive

Dr Felix Davies (from 2 September 2024)

Interim Chief Executive

Vicky Browning (resigned 31 August 2024)

Deputy Chief Executive

Elyzabeth Hawkes

Director of Finance and Resources

Marie Perry

Director of Fundraising and Engagement

Fiona McArthur-Worbey

People Director

Susie Forster (from 15 April 2024)

Head of People

Karen Williams (resigned 26 April 2024)

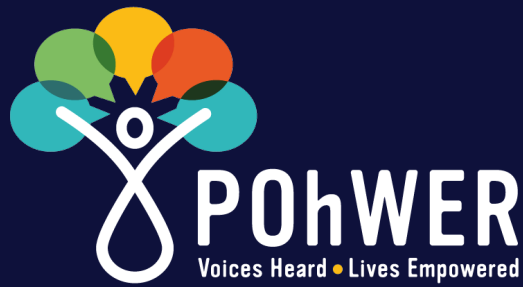
Company Secretary

Janet Douglas

POHWER

England & Wales - Charity number 1061543

Accounts



Annual Report and Financial Statements

For the year ended 31 March 2024



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Welcome from the Chair



The past year has been one of continued change and economic uncertainty, with the most challenging cost of living crisis in decades, rising geopolitical tensions and declining health and social care provision. Local Authorities, faced with severe budget constraints and difficult choices over dwindling discretionary spending, are also reducing their spend on non-statutory activities to adjust for cost pressures elsewhere.

Although in real terms, funding for adult social care by local authorities and the NHS increased in 2023-2024, while this is beneficial, it is still unlikely to be sufficient to address the systemic problems in social care and comes at the expense of long-awaited charging reforms.

Throughout this period, POhWER has stayed focused on supporting our clients to navigate complex challenges, and we have used our expertise and resources to help make a positive impact to their lives.

We continue to work closely with the local authorities that commission our services to ensure that we are meeting all our obligations, and importantly we are achieving good outcomes for the people we are working with.

Our former Chief Executive, Helen Moulinos, left us during the year. With almost four years of service, Helen successfully steered POhWER through the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic and promoted Human Rights through successful campaigning. We appointed Vicky Browning OBE as our interim Chief Executive and, through her calm and professional leadership, she has maintained a clear focus on the organisation's strategic priorities and brought strength to influence and motivate.

This year we were proud to provide advocacy support to over 60,000 people, often requiring multiple interventions per client. We saw a significant rise in the complexity of cases our advocates manage, reflecting the difficulty of supporting people to navigate services under severe financial pressure. As POhWER enters into the final year of its Strategy 2020-2025, our Trustees and Executive Team will be working on the development of our new Strategy with a new CEO to lead its delivery. This Strategy will provide direction and scope over the longer-term to create value and opportunity for the organisation and staff, and growth for our service users and colleagues.

Our dedicated staff are key to our success and the team continues to work tirelessly to ensure that people who have requested our support receive it and have their views and voices heard. We are especially conscious of the need to support our colleagues in the context of cost-of-living increases. That's why we took the decision to make a one-off payment in March 2024 in recognition of their hard work and contribution to delivering POhWER's mission over the year. Meanwhile, we are reviewing our pay, reward and recognition to enable us to continue to recruit and retain a talented, values-driven workforce.

Finally, I would like to record my heartfelt appreciation for the hard work and dedication of our colleagues, including volunteers; to our Board of Trustees, who generously donate their time, skills and wisdom, and to our supporters and partners, without whom we could not continue with our vital work: upholding rights and tackling inequalities for those who need to have their voice heard.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Antony Kildare'.

Antony Kildare
Chair of Board of Trustees

Our Vision, Mission and Values

Our Vision

Upholding rights and tackling inequalities for those who need to have their voice heard.

Our Mission

To deliver high quality advocacy, information and advice services empowering people to have a voice and to make a real difference to their lives.

Our Values

Our values are our core principles, the qualities and beliefs that drive all of our work. We put people at the heart of everything we do in the way we work with our beneficiaries, partners and stakeholders and, equally importantly, with each other.

- **P**rofessional – We are committed to working in a confidential and person-centred way. Being professional, respectful, reliable, honest and independent.
- **E**mpowering – We will empower people to develop their skills and confidence, stand up for their rights and regain control. Thus creating a culture of enablement, not dependency.
- **O**pen, free and fair – We will deliver services that are free to use and accessible to all members of the community while encouraging and valuing differences and diversity and always working in a fair and open way.
- **P**ositive difference – We will ensure that our passion for our work results in a positive difference to people's lives and use the learning from our casework to have a positive impact on the delivery of services in the future.
- **L**ocal – We will engage with local communities in the areas that we serve, understanding their specific needs and determining the best way to meet these.
- **E**ngaging – We will meaningfully listen and engage with people and groups to ensure they are involved in the design, delivery and evaluation of our services, ensuring we are a pioneering client and needs led organisation.

What is Advocacy?

POhWER's mission is to empower people through advocacy, information, advice and guidance to give people the tools, help and support they need to allow them to be involved and make their own choices and decisions about their lives.

Any person at a point in their life may need support to navigate their own path and be supported to have choice and an independent voice.

Advocacy supports you to understand your rights and entitlements as given to us in the Human Rights Act 1998.

POhWER's advocates seek to empower people, not to create dependency but to promote independence. They walk alongside you to navigate life challenges at a particularly challenging time when anyone can need support regardless of their lived experience or situation.

Types of advocacy

Statutory Advocacy

In certain circumstances a person has the legal right to an advocate including under the Care Act, Mental Capacity Act and Mental Health Act.

Non-Statutory Advocacy

Non-statutory advocacy services help those who fall outside the eligibility criteria for statutory services.

Independent Mental Health Advocacy (IMHA)

An IMHA is an independent advocate who is trained in the Mental Health Act and supports people who are being treated under the Act to understand their rights and participate in decisions about their care and treatment. IMHAs can support people who are detained in hospital, and people living in the community who are receiving Supervised Community Treatment or are subject to Guardianship under the Act.



NHS Complaints Advocacy

This is also called Independent Health Complaints Advocacy (IHCA). NHS Complaints Advocates help people to use the complaints process to raise a complaint about NHS funded treatment or care.



POhWER shapes its services around the needs of each individual, supporting them as a whole person not as a label, issue or problem statement.

How can POhWER staff or volunteers help you?

Our POhWER colleagues can help a person to speak up for themselves and understand the process they are going through. They can support them to understand what their rights are and what choices are available to them to ensure that they are central to important decisions being made about them. Advocates can also speak up for people when they are unable to do this for themselves.

They can support you to prepare for and take part in meetings and tribunals, raise queries or concerns and access information in the format which is most suitable for you. Advocates can also provide information and signpost people to other helpful services.

Instructed Advocacy

Instructed Advocacy is when a person is able to tell the advocate what their needs and wishes are and what support they need. They are able to ask the advocate for support and tell them what actions they would like to be taken on their behalf.

Non-Instructed Advocacy

When a person is unable to communicate their wishes and needs for reasons such as temporary unconsciousness, brain injury, dementia etc., an advocate will use techniques such as observing the person, speaking to people who know them well or care for them to build a profile of the person's needs and wishes and use this to make sure their best interests are represented.



Care Act Advocacy

The Care Act says that local councils must involve people in decisions about their care and support needs. If it would be difficult for someone to be involved without support, the council must make sure they get the help they need. If the person doesn't have someone who can help them they have the right to have an independent Care Act Advocate.





Independent Mental Capacity Advocacy (IMCA)

An IMCA is an advocate who has been specially trained to support people who are not able to make certain decisions for themselves (they lack the capacity) and do not have family or friends who are able to speak for them. IMCAs do not make decisions and they are independent of the people who do make the decisions.



Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards (DoLS)/ Liberty Protection Safeguards (LPS)

If a person is deprived of their liberty under the Mental Capacity Act, an IMCA will be appointed to protect their human rights and make sure the deprivation is lawful, reasonable and in their best interests. The IMCA supports the person and collects information about them including their beliefs, values and previous behaviour in order to represent their wishes.



Relevant Person's Paid Representative Service (RPPR)

Everyone who is deprived of their liberty under the Mental Capacity Act must have a representative. This could be a family member or a friend, but if there is no one suitable it could be a Paid Representative also known as an RPPR. RPPRs are qualified advocates who have specialist knowledge of the Mental Capacity Act and Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards legislation.

Children's and Young People's Advocacy including Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS)

CAMHS advocacy support is provided within both private and NHS hospitals across the country. Advocates provide drop-in services for the young people to access advocacy on a regular basis. Advocates support individuals to have their voice heard or work with groups of young people to raise issues they have identified.

Culturally Appropriate Advocacy

Advocates who ensure access to culturally appropriate IMHA and other forms of advocacy aiming to create an increased say and involvement in care and treatment during detention under the Mental Health Act for ethnic minority groups.



Regulatory - Fitness to Practice Advocacy

Advocacy that can support people who are involved in complaints about the fitness to practice cases of a registered health or social care professional, overseen by the professions regulatory body.

Community Advocacy

Community Advocates can support people who find it difficult to put their views across or feel they aren't being listened to and help deal with an issue they are facing.



Citizen Advocacy

Citizen Advocates are trained volunteers. They provide one-to-one support to help people tackle the issues they are facing. Citizen Advocates may provide support in person, by telephone or by email and help people to access information, speak up and get their voice heard.

Peer Advocacy

Peer Advocates are volunteers with lived experience of using public authority services. They share their experience and provide practical support and encouragement. Peer Advocates are matched with someone who has similar needs and issues to support them to develop new skills and gain confidence.



Self-Advocacy

Self-Advocacy is representing your own views and wishes and asking for what you need or want. It gives you the ability to make your voice heard and take part in important decisions which are being made about you including how and where you live.

Group Advocacy

Group Advocacy brings people with similar needs and issues together to support each other. These groups give people the opportunity to work together, share their experiences and raise joint concerns. Sometimes the group has a facilitator who supports the running of the group and sometimes these groups are self-supporting.



Strategic Report

This has been a year of both change and consolidation for POhWER.

Our former CEO, Helen Moulinos, left POhWER in December 2023 after nearly four years at the helm. We'd like to express our thanks for all she achieved in that time, particularly in campaigning for a fairer and more equal society, for meaningful change to tackle inequalities and to uphold the vital importance of human rights.

Our interim CEO, Vicky Browning, joined in January 2024 to offer stability and a continued push for progress towards our strategic objectives as POhWER looks for its next permanent executive leader to take us into a new strategic period beyond 2025.

What hasn't changed is our commitment to supporting people who engage with public services and, because of disability, illness, social exclusion and other marginalising challenges, find it difficult to express their views or get the support they need. This year we have focused on consolidating our core offer to ensure we maintain a quality service in the face of significant challenges.

Our mission to empower people to have a voice and make a real difference to their lives remains as vital as ever. We deliver it through providing a range of statutory and non-statutory advocacy, advice and guidance services to over 60,000 clients each year, many of whom have multiple needs, resulting in over 100,000 interventions on our clients' behalf. We ensure each person that we support has their views and wishes heard in a way that empowers and promotes choice and control.



POhWER is now in year four of our current five year strategy, which you can read here: <https://www.pohwer.net/strategy-2020-2025>. Once appointed, our next Chief Executive will be working with the Board and staff team to set the ambition and direction for the charity beyond 2025. In the meantime, we have continued to drive progress against our strategic targets.

Thank you for your time and understanding and for making me feel heard and helped as someone suffering incapacitating disability. I feel that you have advocated for me to a very professional and fair level and I am greatly appreciative of this.

POhWER beneficiary

Areas of focus 2023-2024

Like many charities, POhWER has been operating in a difficult financial and social environment which has brought many challenges.

Our advocacy and advice services operate at the confluence of adult social care, the NHS and mental health provision, all of which are facing unprecedented pressures. The majority of our work is in providing statutory services to local authorities across England and some parts of Scotland, with councils also facing severe financial restrictions. In turn, our advocates are facing both huge levels of demand and a significant rise in the complexity of the cases they manage.

The ultimate aim of POhWER's advocacy is to try to support the whole person as opposed to merely addressing the legislative issues contained in contracts. Sometimes the biggest challenge for our advocates is the complex need of the client, which is often difficult to address due to funding issues. We have therefore paid particular attention to our contract performance this year, including successfully challenging commissioners regarding under-funding on some contracts, and exiting loss-making contracts or contracts where we have felt unable to maintain the full independence of our advocacy service.

Within this challenging climate of financial constraint and increased complexity, our focus this year has been on delivering high quality services to our beneficiaries, technology enablement, leveraging partnerships and developing our people. Following a period of rapid change and innovation, we have chosen this year to consolidate and improve the quality of what we already have in place. This approach has included:

- Doing more with digital technology
- Delivering improved quality in services
- Driving better value from partners and suppliers
- Delivering impact creatively
- Developing and retaining our people.



Everyone I have met at POhWER since I joined has been happy, friendly and willing to offer help and support. The company as a whole is very professional and I feel welcomed, listened to and treated as a professional myself. Thank you for making POhWER a joy to work for.

POhWER employee

Outcomes and Achievements

Financial performance

POhWER's income for 2023-2024 was £16.1m, with costs of £15.9m, yielding a surplus of £150k after awarding staff a one-off year end payment in thanks for all their hard work and commitment to the people we support.

Beneficiary reach

This year we have reviewed the way we calculate our reach to be clear about the distinction between the number of beneficiaries we support, the number of cases that represents, and the volume of interventions this entails. Our updated figures represent this and we will continue to report in this way in future years. In 2023-24, we gave advocacy support to 61,439 people who faced extensive and often multiple challenges in securing their rights and entitlements within public services, including 33,926 new clients. Our Help Hub handled 127,871 requests for information and advice, and we had 31,787 downloads of information, self-help and referral documents from the POhWER website.

People contacted POhWER for help with a range of issues including aspects of clinical treatment, attitude of staff, complaints handling, safeguarding, needs assessment and more.

91% of the people we helped gave our services a rating of five out of five.



Healthwatch service manager, Brent, London

Geographical reach

POhWER holds 71 contracts delivering information, advice, and advocacy services across the UK.

We hold 11 contracts with NHS or private providers to deliver Secure and Complex

Advocacy services in 66 units. We spot purchase on behalf of 48 additional areas across England and Wales, supporting individuals in an area outside of their usual funded local authority.



POhWER beneficiary

Raising awareness

Broadcasting key messages and amplifying our beneficiary's experiences are important to POhWER with an aim to raise awareness, tell stories and educate others promoting a fairer and more equal society.

In the past year, POhWER received 25 pieces of media coverage with an estimated 618k views and a potential audience of 1.62m.

External engagement and digital activity

This year we produced two new short informational videos attracting 29,200 views. We had 494 engagements with our podcasts, and 332,408 webpage views. We routinely capture information about the outcomes that we help people achieve to ensure we are delivering benefits to the beneficiaries we serve. Our Impact Report can be found on our website: <https://www.pohwer.net/our-impact>

Campaigning and influencing

Our aim is to change or uphold as necessary laws which are important to our beneficiaries, enabling them to live as equal people. We achieve this through evidence-led submissions to powerful people and institutions, ministerial engagement, external awareness raising and

through telling the stories of our beneficiaries' circumstances.

As a charity we have now found our public voice, through our campaigning, relationship building, community engagement and public affairs efforts and have more firmly established our identity.

This year, following an invitation from civil society umbrella body NCVO, POhWER participated in the UK's first Power & Integrity Lab with four other charities. This was a new initiative launched to examine the negative impact power structures can have in the sector, and help voluntary organisations develop approaches that embody integrity.

Safeguarding

At POhWER, we believe everyone who comes into contact with our organisation, including beneficiaries, staff and volunteers, should be safe from bullying, harassment and abuse and should be treated with dignity and respect. As a result, safeguarding is at the heart of our work.

Over this year, we continued to maintain and further strengthen our safeguarding processes and overarching framework by focusing on:

- Reviewing our safeguarding policies and the use of our data to support systemic issue escalation to the CQC. This is in order to effect improvement in systems of care provision and how a local authority discharges its safeguarding responsibilities;
- Reviewing our mandatory staff training and compliance alongside a focus on staff wellbeing from a safeguarding perspective. This is needed due to the impact this work can have on our staff and to fulfil our duty to safeguard our staff as well as the people we serve;
- Reviewing our recruitment framework and process to put safeguarding at its heart;
- Identifying trends to support escalation of systemic causes of harm and targeted awareness-raising of potentially unreported safeguarding issue types;
- Commissioning an external safeguarding audit due to report in 2024-2025.

Our safeguarding system was reviewed as part of the Quality Performance Mark (QPM) accreditation, and in February 2024 we passed our ISO 9001 accreditation with no non-conformities to the standard. This is a

positive indication that our policies, procedures, continuous improvement, and monitoring systems across all directorates of the charity are operating according to an industry recognised quality standard.

In 2023-2024 we raised 1,356 safeguarding alerts, of which 1,001 were raised to:

• Client Settings	276
• CQC	98
• a Local Authority	544
• Police	52
• Other	31

"Evidence provided within the safeguarding section indicates a strong commitment and robust approaches towards supporting people to remain safe from harm and have their rights upheld. Sophisticated systemic and strategic approaches to safeguarding are evidenced extremely well."

QPM accreditor

New advocacy services

POhWER was successful in a one year grant funded application for an Autism Self Advocacy programme in Birmingham. This was a six-week autism self-advocacy program designed to empower individuals on the autism spectrum to take control of their own lives and speak up for themselves.

We also launched two new Culturally Competent Advocate services this year. Advocates for Change in Birmingham and Solihull is a Culturally Appropriate Advocacy Service which is designed and adapted to meet the individual cultural needs of people from racialised communities so that they can access support without encountering barriers, have improved experiences and achieve better outcomes. It is delivered by advocates trained to be aware of cultural and religious requirements and to adapt their practice to meet these needs. Advocates are also trained in understanding the impact of racism on mental health. Wherever possible advocates will have lived experience of the supported person's circumstances/personal experiences.

Our Culturally Appropriate Independent Mental Health Advocacy at Mersey Care NHS Foundation Trust sees POhWER and Mary Seacole House working in partnership to provide a Culturally Appropriate Mental Health Advocacy Service for those of African and Caribbean descent, who experience unmet cultural needs or discrimination within mental health settings.

Community engagement

Educating people to know their rights in public authorities is essential to empowering them. Since the start of the year we have attended over 102 local community engagement events promoting the role of advocacy in upholding people's rights.



"Your work has made a significant impact on the lives of our patients, and we are truly grateful for your presence and efforts. Your unwavering commitment to advocating for our patients and providing them with emotional support has been truly remarkable."

Hospital professional

Equity, diversity and inclusion

POhWER aspires to be a leader of Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) practices within the charity sector by going above and beyond the minimum baseline of equality laws in everything we do. We believe everyone has a human right to be treated with respect and dignity.

Following on from a 2-year programme of actively engaging with our workforce and beneficiaries we have formally committed to an EDI strategy and plan which will further transform our organisation. Our 2022-2025 EDI strategy and plan can be found here: www.pohwer.net/edi

This year we:

- Facilitated Anti-Racism Tea Break sessions to explore two topics with our workforce – how do we call out and speak up about

racism, and what are the disproportionate inequalities within the mental health system;

- Held micro aggressions sessions relating to race and people who identify as LGBTQIA+;
- Introduced new mandatory EDI and Unconscious Bias Training;
- Participated in Race Equality Week 2024 activities;
- Launched two new Culturally Appropriate Advocacy services with partner organisations.

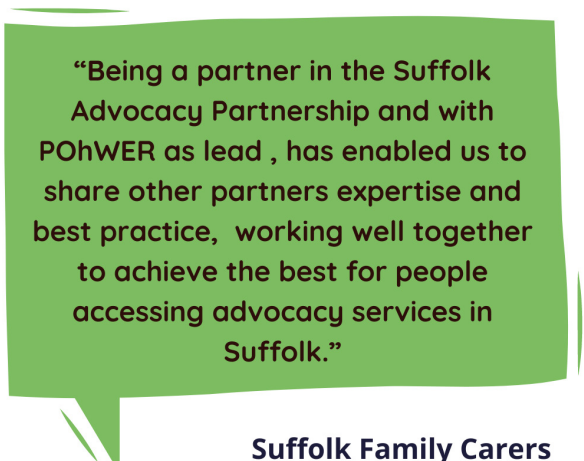


I am autistic neurodiverse and struggle to communicate with people who are not inclusive of this. My advocate was perfect – she listened, understood me and worked in the way I'm comfortable with. Our communication was very productive and the outcome of my case was achieved efficiently and quickly.

POhWER beneficiary

Partnerships

In some areas we work in partnership with other organisations to provide services. This year we worked with 45 civil society partners who have enabled us to deliver tailored and relevant advocacy knowledge and skills to local people who benefited from these synergistic relationships. We have been grateful to these organisations for their support and ongoing commitment to collaboration for a more holistic provision.



"Being a partner in the Suffolk Advocacy Partnership and with POhWER as lead, has enabled us to share other partners expertise and best practice, working well together to achieve the best for people accessing advocacy services in Suffolk."

Suffolk Family Carers

Support and investment in our staff

Our new main office in Stevenage became fully operational, offering a professional, spacious and modern location for staff and partners to work and meet. We have strengthened our commitment to our staff with the introduction of several staff “voice” groups representing the diversity of employees and lived experiences. We have empowered our workforce to speak up and out without fear of retribution and strengthened safeguards, keeping them free from harm and abuse.

Plans, objectives and challenges 2024/2025

2023-2024 saw us take a single lens focus on POhWER's core operations. However, there is a strong appetite across the organisation to move forward strategically in the year ahead, which has seen the Trustee Board approve two pots of strategic reserves to enable investment in our digital capability and our People team and human resources processes.

Our strategic focus for the year ahead is on the four key areas of people, processes, systems and diversification.

- **People:** working with staff to make POhWER an even better place to work, including revamping our internal communications, developing a collaborative culture with empowered teams and leadership that encourages trust and continuous growth, and ensuring we actively live our values organisationally and as individuals. We are investing in our People team and HR processes through implementation of a dedicated HR Reserve fund.
- **Processes:** reviewing key policies and processes to improve performance and reduce risk.
- **Systems:** focusing on improving the five key platforms that POhWER uses:
 - Intranet
 - Case management system
 - Website
 - HR database
 - Finance system

We will be investing in a new website in order to separate out services from campaigning stakeholders so people can self-help and access the relevant content for their ask. We will look to improve the automation of professional referrals, and we will further develop POhWER's campaigning capability and capacity on an organisation-wide level through improved data collection via our case management system. This will also ensure that we are able to track and evaluate the impact of our services more effectively across all of our digital platforms.

- **Geographical and sector diversification:** including continuing to widen our geographical reach and developing new models that are transferable across sectors.

“

My advocate should be commended for her ongoing outstanding professionalism and being the very best of the best in her field...she is second to none and your organisation should be really proud of her

”

POhWER beneficiary

Governance, Structure and Management

Legal Status and Objects

POhWER is a charity registered with the Charity Commission in England and Wales under charity number 1061543 and registered in Scotland by the Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator under charity number SCO48858 and is also a company limited by guarantee.

Our organisation was established in 1996 and registered as a charity in 1997 and is governed by its Articles of Association which set out that our charitable objects are to relieve people in need, to promote social inclusion by preventing people from becoming socially excluded, and to promote human rights by raising awareness of human rights, in particular by providing advocacy, information, advice and guidance, to help people speak up and to be heard as well as securing their rights and entitlements.

Public Benefit

The Trustees have a duty to report on how The Trustees have a duty to report on how POhWER's charitable objects have been carried out for the public benefit and to follow guidance from the Charity Commission on the provision of Public Benefit requirement under the Charities Act 2011.

We demonstrate how we have met our principal objects in our Strategic Report and how POhWER has worked within its charitable objects in 2023/2024. We set out further specific details in our Impact Report, which demonstrates the impact of our work and which compliments this report. Our Impact Report can be found on our website: <https://www.pohwer.net/our-impact>

Understanding and measuring our impact is vitally important in making sure we achieve our Vision to empower all people to have a voice and make a real difference in their lives. We do this by speaking for them when they can't and supporting them to speak for themselves when they can.

Structure

The Trustee Board is responsible for the

governance and strategic direction of the Charity ensuring that the Charity upholds its values and core principles and delivers its key objectives. The Trustees of the Charity are also the Directors of the company for the purpose of company law, and any reference to Trustees is therefore also to Directors.

Members of the Board of Trustees serve a three-year term, after which they are eligible for a further three-year term. In exceptional circumstances, a trustee may serve an additional year to make sure that appropriate succession is in place.

Trustees are appointed through a transparent and rigorous recruitment and selection process. Newly appointed Trustees are provided with a comprehensive induction programme which includes meeting the Executive team. All relevant documents to their role are provided to them, including a comprehensive Trustee Handbook. A Trustee SharePoint site is regularly updated and all Trustees have private access to the site.

Trustees deploy a wide range of skills, knowledge and experience essential to good governance. The range of expertise held by our Trustees is regularly reviewed to determine that their experience meets POhWER's requirements. A skills audit is carried out annually and informs the skills required during any recruitment drive. We have dedicated safeguarding trustees who hold extensive experience and knowledge in relation to the safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults.

Operational management is delegated by the Trustees to the Chief Executive who is accountable to the Trustee Board. The Chief Executive and the Executive team normally attend Board and Committee meetings.

Trustees, Chief Executive and Executive team are expected to behave with the utmost integrity and professionalism at all times and to adhere to POhWER's Code of Conduct and the Nolan Committee's Seven Principles of Public Life.

All Trustees of POhWER give their time voluntarily and receive no reward or benefit from POhWER.

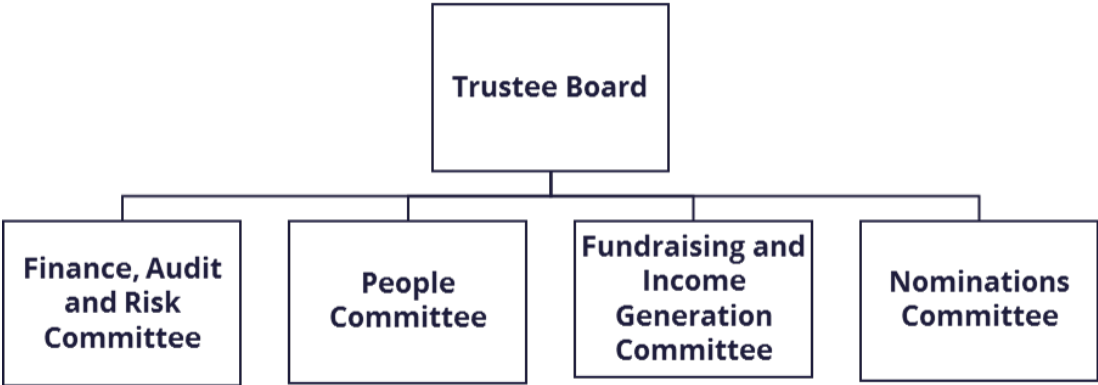
The Trustee Board meets a minimum of four times each year and in addition there is a Board Away Day which allows Trustees to focus, along with the Executive team, on key strategic issues. Trustees who served during the year are listed on page 37 together with information about their membership of Board Committees.

Modern Slavery

As a human rights charity, POHwER is alert to the problem of modern slavery in society. Modern slavery can take the form of slavery, servitude, forced labour, and human trafficking, all of which severely violate basic human rights and deprive people of their liberty for commercial gain. We are committed to acting ethically and with integrity in all of our relationships by taking every reasonable opportunity to act within our direct operations and wider sphere of influence to make sure that slavery and human trafficking does not take place in the charity's operations.

Delegation and Committees

The Board maintains a Scheme of Delegation and matters reserved for Board Committees are clearly defined in their Terms of Reference. The Committees report directly to the Board.



Finance, Audit and Risk Committee
Is primarily responsible for all aspects of the charity's financial strategy and performance. It oversees the charity's resources and has the responsibility to protect the charity's assets and reserves. It also has the responsibility for ensuring the effectiveness of the audit function and adequacy of risk management process and internal control.

People Committee
Is primarily responsible for monitoring the People Strategy and key People metrics to support an assessment of employee performance and health. To ensure that significant HR policies and practices are legal, up to date and reflect best practice. To ensure provision of an inclusive and equal opportunities environment, and positive progress on equality and diversity.

Fundraising and Income Generation Committee
Is primarily responsible for monitoring the Fundraising and Income Generation Strategy and income generation reporting. To review product development initiatives and monitor Digital Strategy Development and projects. To review proposals from the Chief Executive for the appointment of Honorary Officers.

Nominations Committee
Is primarily responsible for the review and assessment of the balance of skills and diversity of the Board and the responsibility to recruit new Trustees to vacancies. They are also responsible for the review of Executive salaries.

People

Providing an efficient and effective HR function is key to POhWER being able to support all our hard-working staff in the delivery of our mission. This year we restructured our People Team and expanded our HR capacity by recruiting additional team members.

This included adding an additional HR Business Partner to oversee our central services and increasing the capability and capacity in our administration function by recruiting two new HR Administrators.

We have updated the new Sage HR database implemented in 2022 to capture training statistics. We have also spent time significantly upskilling the People Team to maximise our knowledge base and increase the effective use of Sage HR across the organisation.

Further progress of our EDI Strategy had been made during the year and our focus areas and achievements can be found on page 10.

Our training schedule was expanded to start building comprehensive training programmes for all colleagues in the organisation, ensuring that the entire employment lifecycle with POhWER supports and develops them.

We created a standard induction and onboarding presentation in a collaboration with our Community Managers and Heads of Service. Our recruitment policy was refreshed to bolster our safeguarding requirements, by including safer recruitment processes. All hiring managers are now required to undertake this mandatory training to ensure that our recruitment practices meet best practice moving forward.

Wellbeing continues to feature high in our priorities. Our first Mental Health First Aid programme was rolled out and generated considerable interest among colleagues wanting to know more about the support that has been put in place for them if/when needed, and colleagues continue to benefit from our extensive Employee Assistance Programme. We also ran a Men's Mental Health Forum where male colleagues were invited to a drop in session held during lunch to discuss issues they may have and to support each other's mental health.

Remuneration

Our pay structure is benchmarked against other charities as part of our commitment to having a fair and equitable pay structure. The pay structure is underpinned by the Living Wage Foundation. The Trustee Board oversees the pay and benefits of the Chief Executive and the Executive Team through the work of its Nominations Committee. Pay and Benefits for all staff is underpinned by our Reward and Remuneration Strategy and decisions regarding remuneration are agreed by the Board of Trustees.

Thanks to a solid financial performance, we were able to make a one-off payment during the year in recognition of the contribution of our colleagues to the delivery of POhWER's mission, which was welcomed by staff.

Fundraising and Income Generation

Like many charities during the tough economic climate of 2023-2024, POhWER faced a challenging fundraising environment. We continued to build on our legacy work and donations from the public, receiving several donations from beneficiaries who were delighted with our service and grateful to be supported by our amazing staff and volunteers.

"My sincere gratitude for the extraordinary professionalism, kind nature and thoughtfulness I have been receiving which has truly touched my heart. You are making a rather remarkable difference in my life, as well as to other people like myself who are thankful to you both and your organisation as a whole."

POhWER Donor

Social media, films and stories about our work continue to drive awareness about the need and impact of advocacy at a beneficiary, community and national level.

During the financial year we did not work with any fundraising agencies or commercial participators. No complaints were received in respect of our fundraising activity.

POhWER is grateful to our commissioners for their contract funding of our services and to all the other individuals and organisations who have donated or fundraised. We continue to work with funders as we identify unmet needs and together develop and implement pilot schemes to address gaps in services, further supporting the growing numbers of people who need our help.

POhWER is registered with the Fundraising Regulator and is committed to responsible and ethical fundraising practices. POhWER complies with the Code of Fundraising Practice and the Fundraising Promise.

GDPR

We are committed to maintaining the trust and confidence of the people we support, those we work with, those who support us and those we come into contact with in other ways. We do this in line with POhWER's values and with the law.

Risk Management

The Trustees have a responsibility for ensuring that the charity maintains a comprehensive risk management system and that appropriate actions are taken to manage and mitigate risks. The Finance, Audit and Risk Committee monitors and reviews these reports and reports to the Board on their effectiveness.

The principal risks identified through their likelihood and impact on the Charity are:

Risk	Examples of mitigating actions
A safeguarding failure results in harm to a beneficiary or staff member	• Continuous reviewing, strengthening and embedding of Safeguarding policies, process and practice • Independent External Safeguarding Audit of Safeguarding practices and procedures • Mandatory safeguarding training and reinforcement for all staff, volunteers and trustees • Focus on identification of trends to support escalation of systemic causes of harm
Threat of Local Authorities' s114 Notices having an impact on income	• Tight cost control mechanisms in place • Rigorous contract retention and tender scoping processes in place • Diversification of funding to reduce dependence on local authority statutory advocacy services • Investigate in more detail, volunteer model
Economic climate	• Monitoring business plans and budget for robustness and ensuring efficiency in all departments.

Financial Review

Despite the challenges of the current economic climate, POhWER can report another year of surplus and increased financial sustainability.

Total income for 2023/2024 decreased by 5% to £16,086,520 (2022/2023: £16,911,291). The decrease relates to a structured exit from activities which did not generate a surplus. POhWER has continued to pursue a strategy of bidding for financially viable contracts with public and private institutions, whilst also working to diversify income streams.

Costs have decreased proportionately to income reduction, despite significant inflationary pressures, which were offset by carefully structured cost reductions. The overall effects were a decrease in surplus to £149,837 (2022/2023: £267,949).

In accordance with the surplus reported, cash balances held, including on short-notice deposit accounts, totalled £3,132,987 (2022/2023: £3,238,682).

POhWER operates with disciplined debtor and supplier management to ensure that working capital is tightly controlled.

Reserves Policy and Going Concern

In September 2023, the Trustees reviewed the Charity's reserves policy and given there had been no change in circumstance, a light touch review of the designated reserves was undertaken. Reserves are held, in summary, to provide working capital, ensure continuation of services and/or to ensure that the Charity can wind down in an orderly fashion and/or retain an essential administrative function in case of a crisis. The current reserves policy is to hold free reserves representing between 1.5 and 4 months of operating expenditure.

At the reporting date, the Charity held reserves totalling £4,492,251 of which £3,369,196 were free from restriction and were not designated for specific purposes (2022/2023: £4,342,414 of which £3,981,041 were free). Free reserves represent 2.5 months of operating expenditure (2022/2023: 2.9 months) so the Trustees are satisfied that free reserves are within the confines of the policy.

Our position post-year end is that we can meet all our financial commitments on time and POhWER remains a going concern. The Charity has a strong record of both winning and retaining contracts, against a backdrop of a financial position that has strengthened through reserves growth over the past few financial years. The Trustees have made this assessment in respect to a period one year from the date of approval of these accounts.

Statement of Trustees' Responsibilities

The charity trustees (who are also the directors of POhWER for the purposes of company law) are responsible for preparing the annual report and financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice) including FRS 102, the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the United Kingdom and Republic of Ireland.

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

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- observe the methods and principles in the 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);
- make judgements and 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;
- 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 proper accounting records that disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charity 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 charity and hence taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

Each of the trustees confirms that:

- so far as the Trustee is aware, there is no relevant audit information of which the charitable company's auditor is unaware;
- the Trustee has taken all steps that he or she ought to have taken, as a trustee, in order to be aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the charitable company's auditor is aware of that information.

This confirmation is given and should be interpreted in accordance with the provisions of s148 of the Companies Act 2006.

The trustees had no beneficial interests in, or contracts with, the charitable company during the year. Trustees may reclaim the expenses incurred in fulfilling their duties as trustees, and these are disclosed in notes 7 and 18 of the financial statements. All the trustees are required to be Members of the charitable company, but this entitles them only to voting rights. The trustees have no beneficial interest in the charitable company.

The trustees are responsible for the maintenance and integrity of the corporate and financial information included on 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 Trustees' Annual Report, incorporating the Strategic Report, was approved by the Board of Trustees and signed on their behalf by:



Antony Kildare
Chair of Board of Trustees

11th July 2024

Independent Auditor's Report to the Members of POhWER

Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of POhWER for the year ended 31 March 2024 which comprise the Statement of Financial Activities, the Balance Sheet, the Statement of Cash Flows and notes to the financial statements, including a summary of significant accounting policies. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards, including Financial Reporting Standard 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 March 2024 and of the charitable company's net movement in funds, including the 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 and the Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005 and regulation 8 of the Charities Accounts (Scotland) Regulations 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 Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements section of our report. We are independent of the charity 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 Trustees' Annual Report and the Welcome from our Chair. 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 there is a material misstatement in the financial statements or a material misstatement of the other information. 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 Trustees' Annual Report (which includes the strategic report and the directors' report prepared for the purposes of company law) for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements; and
- the strategic report and the directors' report included within the Trustees' Annual Report have 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 Trustees' Annual Report (which incorporates the strategic report and the directors' report).

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

- adequate accounting records have not been kept by the charitable company; or
- the charitable company 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.

Responsibilities of trustees for the financial statements

As explained more fully in the trustees' responsibilities statement set out on page 17, 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.

Irregularities, including fraud, are instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations. We design procedures in line with our responsibilities, outlined above, to detect material misstatements in respect of irregularities, including fraud. The extent to which our procedures are capable of detecting irregularities, including fraud is detailed below:

Based on our understanding of the charitable company and the environment in which it operates, we identified that the principal risks of non-compliance with laws and regulations related to safeguarding and fundraising regulations, GDPR and company law in England and Wales, and charity law in England and Wales and in Scotland, and we considered the extent to which non-compliance might have a material effect on the financial statements. We also considered those laws and regulations that have a direct impact on the preparation of the financial statements such as the Companies Act

2006, the Charities Act 2011, the Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005 and the Charities Accounts (Scotland) Regulations 2006 and payroll taxes.

We evaluated management's incentives and opportunities for fraudulent manipulation of the financial statements (including the risk of override of controls), and determined that the principal risks were related to management override of controls. Audit procedures performed by the engagement team included:

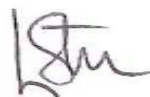
- Inspecting correspondence with regulators and tax authorities;
- Discussions with management including consideration of known or suspected instances of non-compliance with laws and regulation and fraud;
- Evaluating management's controls designed to prevent and detect irregularities;
- Identifying and testing journals; and
- Challenging assumptions and judgements made by management in their critical accounting estimates.

Because of the inherent limitations of an audit, there is a risk that we will not detect all irregularities, including those leading to a material misstatement in the financial statements or non-compliance with regulation. This risk increases the more that compliance with a law or regulation is removed from the events and transactions reflected in the financial statements, as we will be less likely to become aware of instances of non-compliance. The risk is also greater regarding irregularities occurring due to fraud rather than error, as fraud involves intentional concealment, forgery, collusion, omission or misrepresentation.

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 auditor's report.

Use of our report

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



Lee Stokes (Senior Statutory Auditor)
For and on behalf of haysmacintyre LLP,
Statutory Auditors
10 Queen Street Place
London EC4R 1AG
Date: 19th July 2024

Statement of Financial Activities

For the year ended 31 March 2024

(Including an Income & Expenditure Account)

	Note	Restricted 2024 £	Unrestricted 2024 £	Total 2024 £	Restricted 2023 £	Unrestricted 2023 £	Total 2023 £
Income from:							
Donations & Legacies	2	-	4,015	4,015	28,742	6,436	35,178
<i>Charitable Activities:</i>							
- Contract Income	3	-	15,599,094	15,599,094	60,000	16,209,601	16,269,601
- Grants	3	414,629	-	414,629	558,949	8,000	566,949
Investment Income	4	-	67,602	67,602	-	33,625	33,625
Other Income	5	-	1,180	1,180	-	5,938	5,938
Total income		414,629	15,671,891	16,086,520	647,691	16,263,600	16,911,291
Expenditure on:							
Cost of raising funds		-	(499)	(499)	-	(2,986)	(2,986)
<i>Charitable Activities:</i>							
- Statutory services	6	-	(12,081,490)	(12,081,490)	-	(11,130,729)	(11,130,729)
- Non Statutory Services		(457,451)	(1,996,448)	(2,453,899)	(654,858)	(3,494,522)	(4,149,380)
- Secure services		-	(1,400,795)	(1,400,795)	-	(1,360,247)	(1,360,247)
Subtotal – Charitable Activities		(457,451)	(15,478,733)	(15,936,184)	(654,858)	(15,985,498)	(16,640,356)
Total expenditure		(457,451)	(15,479,232)	(15,936,683)	(654,858)	(15,988,484)	(16,643,342)
		Restricted 2024 £	Unrestricted 2024 £	Total 2024 £	Restricted 2023 £	Unrestricted 2023 £	Total 2023 £
Net income/(expenditure)	7	(42,822)	192,659	149,837	(7,167)	275,116	267,949
Transfers between funds		(4,127)	4,127	-	(4,335)	4,335	-
Net movement between funds		(46,949)	196,786	149,837	(11,502)	279,451	267,949
Reconciliation of Funds							
Total funds brought forward		46,949	4,295,465	4,342,414	58,451	4,016,014	4,074,465
Total funds carried forward	15	-	4,492,251	4,492,251	46,949	4,295,465	4,342,414

All of the above results are derived from continuing activities. All recognised gains and losses are included in the above statement of financial activities.

The notes on pages 25 - 36 form part of these financial statements.

Balance Sheet

As at 31 March 2024

	Note	Total 2024 £	Total 2023 £
Fixed assets			
Intangible fixed assets	10	165,720	-
Tangible fixed assets	11	261,335	284,424
		427,055	284,424
Current assets			
Debtors	12	1,862,329	2,021,194
Cash at bank and in hand		3,132,987	3,238,682
		4,995,316	5,259,876
Current liabilities			
Creditors: amounts due within one year	13	(922,620)	(1,201,886)
Net current assets		4,072,696	4,057,990
Total assets less current liabilities		4,499,751	4,342,414
Provisions for liabilities and charges		(7,500)	-
Net assets		4,492,251	4,342,414
Restricted funds		-	46,949
Unrestricted funds			
Designated funds	15	696,000	30,000
Fixed asset funds	15	427,055	284,424
General funds	15	3,369,196	3,981,041
Total funds		4,492,251	4,342,414

Approved and authorised for issue by the Trustees and signed on their behalf by:



Antony Kildare

Chair of Board of Trustees

11 July 2024

Registered number: 03323040

The notes on pages 25 - 36 form part of these financial statements.

Statement of Cash Flows

For the year ended 31 March 2024

		Total 2024 £	Total 2023 £
Cash flow from operating activities	A		
Net cash provided by/(used in) operating activities		105,290	(168,842)
Cash flows from investing activities			
Purchase of tangible and intangible fixed assets		(278,587)	(194,520)
Interest income		67,602	33,802
Net cash provided by/(used in) investing activities		(210,985)	(160,718)
Change in cash and cash equivalents in the year		(105,695)	(329,560)
Cash and cash equivalents at 1 April 2023		3,238,682	3,568,242
Cash and cash equivalents at 31 March 2024	B	3,132,987	3,238,682

Notes to the Statement of Cash Flows for the Year Ended 31 March 2024

A. Reconciliation of net income (expenditure) to net cash provided by operating activities	2024 £	2023 £
Net income (expenditure) (as per the statement of financial activities)	149,837	267,949
Adjustments for:		
Depreciation charge	135,889	144,082
Amortisation charge	-	1,605
Loss on disposal of assets	67	2,318
Interest income	(67,602)	(33,802)
Decrease (Increase) in debtors	158,865	(466,296)
(Decrease) in creditors and provisions	(271,766)	(84,698)
Net cash provided by/(used in) operating activities	105,290	(168,842)
B. Analysis of cash and cash equivalents		
Cash in hand	404	419
Cash at bank	698,350	432,602
Cash on instant access deposit accounts	684,233	1,014,233
Cash in notice accounts	1,750,000	1,750,000
Cash held in supplier client accounts	-	41,428
Total cash and cash equivalents	3,132,987	3,238,682

The notes on pages 25 - 36 form part of these financial statements.

Notes to the Financial Statements

For the year ended 31 March 2024

1. Accounting Policies

The principal accounting policies adopted, judgements and key sources of estimation uncertainty in the preparation of the financial statements are laid out below.

Basis of Preparation

The financial statements have been prepared for the year to 31 March 2024 with comparative information provided in respect of the year to 31 March 2023. They are presented in sterling and rounded to the nearest whole pound.

The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention with items initially recognised at cost or transaction value unless otherwise stated in the relevant accounting policy and note(s).

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 Standards applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) ('Charities SORP FRS 102') (Second Edition, effective 1 January 2019) and the Companies Act 2006.

The charity constitutes a public benefit entity as defined by FRS 102.

Entity Status

POhWER is a company limited by guarantee registered in England Wales (company number 03323040). It is a registered charity, registered with the Charity Commission for England and Wales (registered charity number 1061543), and the Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator (registered charity number SC048858). Its registered address is Suite 4, Middlesex House, Meadway Corporate Centre, Stevenage, Hertfordshire, SG1 2EF.

Critical accounting estimates and areas of judgement

Preparation of the accounts requires the trustees and management to make significant judgements and estimates.

The items in the accounts where these judgements and estimates have been made include:

- the useful economic lives attributed to tangible and intangible fixed assets to determine the appropriate depreciation and amortisation charges;
- the basis on which support costs have been allocated across expenditure headings;
- the estimated value of provisions for liabilities;
- the estimated value of accrued income;
- and the recoverability of trade debtors.

Assessment of going concern

The trustees have assessed whether the use of the going concern assumption is appropriate in preparing these accounts. The trustees have made this assessment in respect to a period of one year from the date of approval of these accounts, taking into account the expected commercial effects of the current economic climate.

The trustees of the charity have concluded that there are no material uncertainties relating to events or conditions that may cast significant doubt on the ability of the charity to continue as a going concern.

Income

All types of income are recognised in the period in which the charity has entitlement to the income, the amount of income can be measured reliably, and it is probable that the income will be received. Income comprises contract income receivable for the delivery of charitable activities, supplemented by grant income, voluntary donations, investment and other miscellaneous income.

Income from voluntary donations comprises donations, legacies and gifts which are recognised in the statement of financial activities when received. Gift Aid is recognised and claimed where the eligibility criteria are met.

'In kind' donations are measured at the lower of arms-length valuation or value to the charity should the goods or services have been procured at market rates.

Contract income arises from the provision of advocacy services according to the terms of contracts and service level agreements with contract commissioners which comprise local authorities and other organisations. Contract income is recognised in the statement of financial activities over the period for which advocacy services are provided. Where contract income is subject to service level agreements and subject to the quantity of services provided, it is recognised to the extent that chargeable services have been provided.

Grant income is recognised in the statement of financial activities when the charity has entitlement to the funds, any performance conditions attached to the grants have been met, it is probable the income will be received and the amount can be measured reliably and is not deferred. Performance-related grants that are conditional upon the delivery of a specific level of service are deferred where the conditions have not yet been met.

Investment income is recognised where the charity has entitlement and the amount can be reliably measured.

Expenditure

Liabilities are recognised as expenditure as soon as there is a legal or constructive obligation committing the charity to make a payment to a third party, it is probable that a transfer of economic benefits will be required in settlement and the amount of the obligation can be measured reliably. Irrecoverable VAT is charged against the expenditure category for the charitable activities for which it was incurred.

Expenditure comprises direct costs, support costs and fundraising costs. All direct costs and support costs are allocated or apportioned to the main categories of charitable activity, these are non-statutory advocacy, statutory advocacy, secure and complex services, and other. Costs of raising funds are shown on the Statement of Financial Activities.

Support costs are those costs that, whilst necessary to enable the charity to deliver charitable services, do not themselves produce charitable outputs. These support costs include

management and administration, human resources, business development, finance and IT.

Direct costs are allocated to the particular activity to which the cost relates. Support costs are apportioned on the basis of income for each category of charitable activity.

Governance costs are the costs associated with the constitutional and statutory requirements of the charitable company. Such costs include trustees' meetings, including specialist access and support costs to enable our volunteer trustees from our service users/members groups to participate and any costs associated with risk management and compliance.

Volunteers

POhWER deeply values the contribution from those who volunteer their time, commitment and expertise for POhWER. Our current volunteers include current and former service users who use their experience and skills to help others.

In accordance with the guidance in the Charities SORP FRS 102, the value of volunteers is not included in the statement of financial activities.

Taxation

The charitable company is a registered charity and is exempt from the taxation of income falling within chapter 3 part 11 of the Corporation Tax Act 2010 and section 256 of the Taxation of Chargeable Gains Act 1992 to the extent that this income is used to achieve its charitable objectives. No charge to taxation for the year has arisen as a result of the activities of the charity.

The charity is VAT registered (since 1 May 2023) and charges output VAT on eligible income and is able to reclaim input VAT incurred on eligible expenditure.

Operating Leases

Rentals applicable to operating leases where substantially all of the benefits and risks of ownership remain with the lessor are charged to the statement of financial activities in equal annual amounts over the lease term.

Defined Contribution Pension Scheme

The defined contribution pension scheme costs

charged in the statement of financial activities represent the employer’s pension contributions payable by the charitable company during the financial year.

Intangible Fixed Assets

Intangible fixed assets represent the cost of developing bespoke advocacy case management software. Intangible assets costing more than £1,000 are capitalised. The cost of intangible assets includes incidental acquisition costs. Intangible fixed assets are stated at cost less accumulated amortisation. Amortisation is provided at rates calculated to write down the cost or valuation of each intangible fixed asset, once brought into use, on a straight-line basis to its estimated residual value over its expected useful life. The amortisation rate is as follows:

Bespoke software 25.00%

Intangible fixed assets are reviewed for impairment if circumstances indicate their carrying value may exceed their net realisable value and value in use.

Tangible Fixed Assets

Tangible fixed assets costing more than £1,000 are capitalised. The cost of tangible assets includes incidental acquisition costs. Tangible fixed assets are stated at cost less accumulated depreciation. Depreciation is provided at rates calculated to write down the cost or valuation of each tangible fixed asset, once brought into use, on a straight-line basis to its estimated residual value over its expected useful life. The depreciation rates are as follows:-

Office Equipment:	33.33%
Fixtures and Fittings:	20.00%
Computer Equipment:	33.33%

Tangible fixed assets are reviewed for impairment if circumstances indicate their carrying value may exceed their net realisable value and value in use.

Debtors

Debtors are recognised at their settlement amount, less any provision for non-recoverability. Prepayments are valued at the amount prepaid. Debtors are discounted to the present value of the future cash receipt where such discounting is material.

Cash at Bank and in Hand

Cash at bank and in hand represents such accounts and instruments that are available on demand or available on notice accounts of no more than 95 days.

Creditors and Provisions

Creditors and provisions are recognised when there is an obligation at the balance sheet date as a results of a past event, it is probable that a transfer of economic benefit will be required in settlement, and the amount of the settlement can be estimated reliably. Creditors and provisions are recognised at the amount the charity anticipates it will pay to settle the debt. They have been discounted to the present value of the future cash payment where such discounting is material.

Financial Instruments

Financial instruments are classed as basic, including debtors and creditors. If arrangement with the debtor or creditor constitutes a financing transaction, it is measured at the net present value of future payments, discounted at market rates to the extent where such discounting is material.

Fund Accounting

Unrestricted funds comprise accumulated surpluses and deficits on the general fund which are available for use in furtherance of the objectives of the Charity and which have not been restricted by the donor or designated by the Trustees for a specific purpose.

Designated funds are funds transferred from unrestricted funds that the trustees have set aside for a specific purpose.

Restricted funds are those where income has been received from a donor who places specific restrictions on how the funds must be spent. Restricted funds are only expendable in relation to the purposes set out by the donor.

2. Income from Donations

	2024 Restricted £	2024 Unrestricted £	2024 Total £	2023 Total £
Donations and gifts	-	4,015	4,015	35,178
Total	-	4,015	4,015	35,178

2023: Restricted income from donations and gifts was £28,742. All other income was unrestricted.

3. Income from Charitable Activities

	2024 Restricted £	2024 Unrestricted £	2024 Total £	2023 Total £
Statutory Services	-	11,690,185	11,690,185	11,260,363
Non Statutory Services	414,629	2,249,778	2,664,407	3,693,898
Secure & Complex Services	-	1,659,131	1,659,131	1,882,289
Total	414,629	15,599,094	16,013,723	16,836,550

2023: Restricted income from non statutory services was £608,949 and from statutory services was £10,000. All other income was unrestricted.

4. Investment Income

	2024 Unrestricted £	2023 Unrestricted £
Bank Interest Receivable	67,602	33,625

5. Other Income

	2024 Unrestricted £	2023 Unrestricted £
Other fees & recharged services	1,180	5,938

6. Expenditure on Charitable Activities

Current year:	2024 Statutory services £	2024 Non Statutory services £	2024 Secure services £	2024 Total £
Direct operating costs	10,501,710	2,093,837	1,176,585	13,772,132
Support costs				
Management and Administration	453,847	103,440	64,413	621,700
Human Resources	427,310	97,392	60,646	585,348
Business Development	268,832	61,272	38,154	368,258
Finance	308,872	70,398	43,836	423,106
IT	67,229	15,323	9,541	92,093
Governance	53,690	12,237	7,620	73,547
	1,579,780	360,062	224,210	2,164,052
Total Costs	12,081,490	2,453,899	1,400,795	15,936,184
<i>Prior Year Comparison:</i>	2023 Statutory services £	2023 Non Statutory services £	2023 Secure services £	2023 Total £
Direct operating costs	9,815,449	3,712,974	1,137,869	14,666,292
Support costs				
Management and Administration	425,265	141,102	71,901	638,268
Human Resources	367,221	121,843	62,086	551,150
Business Development	286,840	95,173	48,497	430,510
Finance	120,034	39,827	20,295	180,156
IT	63,156	20,955	10,678	94,789
Governance	52,764	17,506	8,921	79,191
	1,315,280	436,406	222,378	1,974,064
Total Costs	11,130,729	4,149,380	1,360,247	16,640,356

7. Net Income / (Expenditure) for the Year

Net income / (expenditure) is stated after charging:

	2024 £	2023 £
Depreciation and amortisation	135,889	145,687
Operating lease rentals	133,749	132,450
Auditor's remuneration		
- Audit provision for current year	24,720	22,500
Trustees' remuneration	-	-
Trustees' reimbursed expenses	667	415

8. Staff Costs and Remuneration of Key Management Personnel

Staff costs were as follows:

	2024 £	2023 £
Salaries and wages	9,507,504	9,277,917
Severance payments (including payments in lieu of notice)	88,331	14,748
Social security costs	806,883	819,980
Pension contributions	255,231	256,502
Total Staff Costs	10,657,949	10,369,147

The number of employees whose emoluments exceeded £60,000 was as follows:

	2024 Number	2023 Number
£60,000 to £70,000	2	-
£70,000 to £80,000	2	3
£80,000 to £90,000	-	-
£100,000 to £110,000	-	1

The company made contributions to the pension plans of 4 employees whose emoluments exceeded £60,000 in 2023/24 of £8,241 (2022/23 £8,456, 4 employees).

The key management personnel of the charity comprise the Trustees and the Executive Team.

None of the trustees receive any remuneration in connection with their services to the charity (2022/23: £nil). The total remuneration including employer's pension contributions of the Executive Team for the year was £412,411 (2022/23: £371,942).

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

	2024 Number	2023 Number
Charitable activities	413	395
Management, support services and administration	30	33
Total	443	428

In accordance with the relevant accounting standards, employee numbers are counted irrespective of hours worked. POhWER benefits from the services of part time employees, and the headcount expressed in full time equivalents would be 331 for charitable activities (2022/23: 328) and 28 in management, support services and administration (2022/23: 30).

9. Defined Contribution Pension Schemes

The charitable company opened a defined contribution pension scheme provided by the NOW: Pensions Trust effective from the staging date of 1 April 2014, we subsequently moved to The Peoples Pension on 1 April 2019, both schemes satisfy the requirements of automatic enrolment pension legislation. The charitable company pays employer's contributions of 3% of pensionable salary into this defined contribution pension scheme provided that an employee pays employee contributions of at least 5% of pensionable salary. The charitable company pays employer's contributions exceeding 3% in a limited number of cases in order to comply with contractual obligations. At the year end, amounts of £55,751 were due to the pension scheme provider (2022/23: £56,335).

10. Intangible Fixed Assets

	Bespoke Software £
Cost or valuation	
At the start of the year	141,364
Additions in the year	165,720
At the end of the year	307,084
Depreciation	
At the start of the year	(141,364)
Charge for the year	-
At the end of the year	(141,364)
Net book value	
At the end of the year	165,720
At the start of the year	-

11. Tangible Fixed Assets

	Office Equipment £	Fixtures and Fittings £	Computer Equipment £	Total £
Cost or valuation				
At the start of the year	7,372	102,683	543,841	653,896
Additions in the year	-	-	112,867	112,867
Disposals in the year	(7,372)	-	(12,868)	(20,240)
At the end of the year	-	102,683	643,840	746,523
Depreciation				
At the start of the year	(7,372)	(3,263)	(358,837)	(369,472)
Charge for the year	-	(6,140)	(129,749)	(135,889)
Disposals in the year	7,372	-	12,801	20,173
At the end of the year	-	(9,403)	(475,785)	(485,188)
Net book value				
At the end of the year	-	93,280	168,055	261,335
At the start of the year	-	99,420	185,004	284,424

12. Debtors

	2024 £	2023 £
Trade debtors	1,662,315	1,839,903
Accrued income	31,166	31,615
Prepayments	153,606	129,454
Other debtors	15,242	20,222
Total Debtors	1,862,329	2,021,194

13. Creditors: Amounts Due Within One Year

	2024 £	2023 £
Trade creditors	214,321	281,599
Taxation and social security	192,589	185,215
Accrued expenses	298,410	237,718
Other creditors	58,430	124,303
Deferred income	158,870	373,051
Total Creditors	922,620	1,201,886

Income received in advance of the provision of services is deferred. Deferred income recognised during the year is as follows:

	£
Deferred income brought forward	373,051
Deferred income released during the year	(338,447)
Income deferred during the year	124,266
Deferred income carried forward	158,870

14. Movement in Restricted Funds

	Start of year 01.04.2023	Income	Expenditure	Transfers between funds	End of year 31.03.2024
	£	£	£	£	£
Restricted funds					
- Birmingham NNS Grants	9,264	170,254	(193,485)	13,967	-
- Birmingham NNS	25,837	173,166	(165,824)	(33,179)	-
- Herts Community Navigator Service	-	65,460	(68,019)	2,559	-
- Oxfordshire Community Advocacy	11,848	-	(11,848)	-	-
- Birmingham All Age Autism	-	5,749	(18,275)	12,526	-
Total Funds	46,949	414,629	(457,451)	(4,127)	-

Prior Year Comparison

	Start of year 01.04.2022	Income	Expenditure	Transfers between funds	End of year 31.03.2023
	£	£	£	£	£
Restricted funds					
- Birmingham NNS Grants	39,974	175,000	(205,710)	-	9,264
- Birmingham NNS	-	179,598	(153,761)	-	25,837
- Herts Community Navigator Service	-	159,350	(152,155)	(7,195)	-
- Oxfordshire Community Advocacy	12,151	-	(303)	-	11,848
- Heart of England Food Bank	-	10,000	(10,000)	-	-
- NHS Bristol Members Event	-	50,000	(50,000)	-	-
- Family Action Birmingham Household Support	-	35,000	(35,000)	-	-
- Shout About It	-	1,150	(1,150)	-	-
- Training grant Luton	-	10,001	(10,018)	17	-
- Hertfordshire Suicide Prevention Podcast	-	3,000	(3,000)	-	-
- Allen & Overy	6,326	-	(6,326)	-	-
- Kickstart	-	24,592	(27,435)	2,843	-
Total Funds	58,451	647,691	(654,858)	(4,335)	46,949

Restricted Funds

Birmingham NNS (Neighbourhood Network Scheme)

Working on behalf of Birmingham City Council to support citizens over 50 in the community to live healthy, independent lives. The Neighbourhood Network Scheme helps connect older people to individuals, groups, organisations, activities, services and places in their neighbourhoods.

Hertfordshire Navigator Service

A grant for a Community Navigator who provides face to face support to help with a variety of issues including practical support to help arrange bill payments, sorting domestic paperwork and reviewing benefit entitlement in Hertfordshire.

Oxfordshire Community Advocacy

A grant from Oxfordshire Advocacy, known as Getting Heard, to deliver community advocacy in Oxfordshire.

Birmingham All Age Autism

A grant to support autistic people learn self-advocacy skills.

Heart of England Food Bank

Hertfordshire crisis funding for a beneficiary.

NHS Bristol Members Event

Training grant ring fenced to south west used to upskill advocates in courage leadership.

Family Action Household Support Fund

A funding programme to support households in most need in Birmingham with food, energy, water bills and other essential costs.

Shout About It

Network event, fees, grants and donations received as part of the annual event to fund future network events.

Luton Training Grant

Training grant to upskill advocates.

Hertfordshire Suicide Prevention Podcast

A grant to produce a suicide awareness & prevention podcast.

Allen & Overy

A grant to advance parents' advocacy to help navigate child protection proceedings, either through 1-2-1 support or through the development of self-advocacy tools.

Kickstart

A government grant towards the cost of workers employed on the Kickstart scheme.

15. Movement in Unrestricted Funds

	Start of year 01.04.2023	Income	Expenditure	Transfers between funds	End of year 31.03.2024
	£	£	£	£	£
Unrestricted funds					
- General fund	3,981,041	15,671,891	(15,479,232)	(804,504)	3,369,196
<i>Designated funds</i>					
- Arthur Bate fund	30,000	-	-	-	30,000
- People & Culture fund	-	-	-	166,000	166,000
- Strategic fund	-	-	-	500,000	500,000
- Fixed assets fund	284,424	-	-	142,631	427,055
Total Funds	4,295,465	15,671,891	(15,479,232)	4,127	4,492,251

Prior Year Comparison

	Start of year 01.04.2022	Income	Expenditure	Transfers between funds	End of year 31.03.2023
	£	£	£	£	£
Unrestricted funds					
- General fund	3,729,109	16,263,600	(15,988,484)	(23,184)	3,981,041
<i>Designated funds</i>					
- Arthur Bate fund	36,530	-	-	(6,530)	30,000
-Community fund	12,466	-	-	(12,466)	-
Fixed assets fund	237,909	-	-	46,515	284,424
Total Funds	4,016,014	16,263,600	(15,988,484)	4,335	4,295,465

Unrestricted Funds

General fund

The General Fund comprises the accumulated surpluses and deficits which have neither been restricted by conditions imposed by donors, nor have been designated by the trustees for specific purposes.

Designated funds

The Arthur Bate fund

In memory of Arthur Bate, a founding trustee of POhWER and campaigner for the rights of people with disabilities, the Arthur Bate fund was created to provide support for people who:

- wish to become trustees of charities
- seek to set up self-advocacy groups
- want to set up peer support groups
- want to set up advocacy groups
- seek to start other kinds of advocacy activity

People & Culture fund

The people and culture fund has been designated to fund additional HR resources and people related projects, including training.

Strategic fund

The strategic fund has been designated to fund internal projects as well as externally facing work ensuring POhWER has the appropriate building blocks in place to facilitate future direction.

Fixed assets fund

The fixed assets fund reflects the carrying net book value of the charity's tangible and intangible fixed assets and has been separated from the charity's general unrestricted funds in recognition of the fact that these assets are essential to the day-to-day operations of the charity and should not be considered realisable to meet future commitments.

Community Fund

A fund to develop community advocacy and engagement.

16. Analysis of Net Assets between Funds

Current Year	General funds	Designated funds	Fixed assets fund	Restricted Funds	Total 2024
Intangible Assets	-	-	165,720	-	165,720
Tangible Assets	-	-	261,335	-	261,335
Debtors	1,862,329	-	-	-	1,862,329
Cash	2,436,987	696,000	-	-	3,132,987
Creditors	(922,620)	-	-	-	(922,620)
Provisions	(7,500)	-	-	-	(7,500)
Total	3,369,196	696,000	427,055	-	4,492,251

<i>Prior Year Comparison</i>	General funds	Designated funds	Fixed assets fund	Restricted Funds	Total 2023
Intangible Assets	-	-	-	-	-
Tangible Assets	-	-	284,424	-	284,424
Debtors	2,021,194	-	-	-	2,021,194
Cash	3,161,733	30,000	-	46,949	3,238,682
Creditors	(1,201,886)	-	-	-	(1,201,886)
Total	3,981,041	30,000	284,424	46,949	4,342,414

17. Operating Lease Commitments

The total commitment under non-cancellable operating leases at 31 March 2024 is analysed according to the periods in which the leases expire:-

	2024	2023
	Land & Buildings	Land & Buildings
	£	£
Less than 1 year	124,995	126,549
2-5 years	186,512	292,902
Total	311,507	419,451

Lease costs expensed during the year amounted to £133,749 (2022/23: £132,450).

18. Related Party Transactions

During the financial year 3 trustees were reimbursed £667 (2022/23: 3 trustees reimbursed £415) for travel and incidental expenses which related to carrying out their duties as Trustees of the charitable company. Trustees are based in a wide geographical area in a reflection of the areas we work in.

Trustees made no voluntary donations in the financial year (2022/23 £nil).

There were no other related party transactions during the financial year (2022/23: none).

Expenditure includes £3,118 (2022/23: £3,118) in respect of trustees' indemnity insurance which provides cover of up to a maximum of £5,000,000.

POhWER

A company limited by guarantee

Registered Office

Suite 4, Middlesex House
Meadway Corporate Centre
Stevenage
Hertfordshire SG1 2EF

Registered in England and Wales with the Charity Commission under charity number 1061543

Registered in Scotland by the Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator under charity number SCO48858

Registered company number 03323040

www.pohwer.net

Auditors

haysmacintyre LLP
10 Queen Street Place
London EC4R 1AG

Legal Advisors

Stone King
Boundary House
91 Charterhouse Street
Barbican, London EC1M 6HR

Bankers

The Co-operative Bank plc
PO Box 101
1 Balloon Street
Manchester M60 4EP

Patrons

Lord Michael Cashman CBE
Peter Duncan
Nitu Shah
Samantha Lee Howe
Dr Melrose Stewart

Vice Presidents

Aruna Patel
Carol Lee MBE
Gary Blaker
Iris Lusack
Judith Smart
Phil Lawrence
Steven Rathbone
Tim Anfilogoff

Trustees

Antony Kildare (Chair) (d)
Abdi Mohamed (d)
Alex Cisneros (d)
Andrew McGrath (a)(d)
Corinne Mils (b)(d)
Gemma Hope (c)
Ian Holland (a)
Jackie Kinsey (b)
Mitch Miller (b) (retired 31 March 2024)
Paul Robinson (a)
Rachael Gilthorpe (c)
Sandra Harding (a)(c) (retired 31 March 2024)

- a. Member of the Finance, Audit and Risk Committee
- b. Member of the People Committee
- c. Member of the Fundraising and Income Generation Committee
- d. Member of the Nominations Committee

Executive Team

Chief Executive

Helen Moulinos (resigned 31 December 2023)

Interim Chief Executive

Vicky Browning (from 2 January 2024)

Deputy Chief Executive

Elyzabeth Hawkes

Director of Finance and Resources

Vicky Hilpert (resigned 1 March 2024)
Marie Perry (from 19 February 2024)

Director of Fundraising and Engagement

Fiona McArthur-Worbey

People Director

Julie Born (resigned 15 December 2023)

Head of People

Karen Williams (from 18 December 2023)

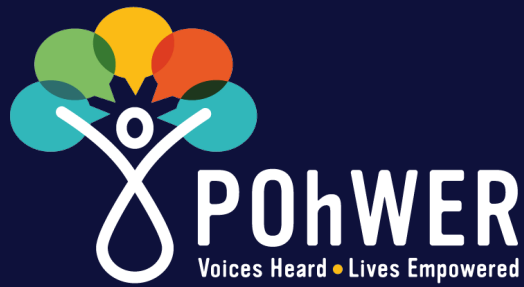
Company Secretary

Janet Douglas

POHWER

England & Wales - Charity number 1061543

Accounts



Annual Report and Financial Statements

For the year ended 31 March 2023



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Welcome from the Chair



Without doubt, against a backdrop of economic volatility, rising costs, high inflation, deteriorating health and social care provision, human rights infringements and political grandstanding, the past twelve months have brought challenge unprecedented in recent history to individuals, families and organisations across the UK. Confronting this challenge for so many who lack capacity, stamina, strength, capability, funds and/or access to support networks, has been so much harder. In pursuit of its charitable purpose, POhWER has had to adapt quickly to respond to the changing operating environment post global pandemic, as well as to the needs of commissioners and contract managers. In addition, the human factors and anxieties associated with potential recession have driven increasing demand for our services from our service user

and beneficiary communities, all of whom have been directly impacted. Our dedicated staff team and many committed volunteers have worked very hard indeed to deliver and make a difference.

In seeking to realise balanced budgets, we also acknowledge that many local authorities are tightening their belts, reducing spending on non-statutory and discretionary activities, to adjust for higher costs elsewhere.

During the year we have endeavoured to make sure that we have invested sufficiently to balance current need to deliver services with future preparedness and resilience. These considerations included increasing financial resilience and sustainability and managing costs, driving greater efficiency and agility and increasing our dialogue and engagement with commissioners.

Underpinning the UK's civil society is the freedom for charities to advocate on behalf of the communities they serve and to this end, to help deliver a level playing field, we engaged in three key areas of campaigning: to protect the Human Rights Act, to reform the Mental Health Act and Liberty Protection Safeguards. We also contributed important evidence to the Covid-19 Public Inquiry. I am gratified to report that POhWER's campaign work has been highly commended by legal professionals, community activist groups, charity leaders and politicians.

In parallel to our successful campaigning efforts and, despite external threats, we have increased our advocacy support to our service users who often face extensive challenges in their lives. Service users supported by our advocacy services increased by 5.5% totalling 156,405. Our information and advice service decreased slightly by 1.2%, answering 367,873 enquiries.

As POhWER continues to make progress to deliver against its 2020-2025 strategy, building on established and new relationships and contracts to expand and grow into new areas and markets, the Board of Trustees agreed that a full review of POhWER's Articles of Association should be undertaken. This review was to ensure that POhWER's Articles were fit for purpose for the immediate and foreseeable future and these were approved by the Board of Trustees and our Members at our 2022 AGM.

None of the above would have been possible without the goodwill and hard work of our dedicated staff, volunteers and fellow trustees. I would like to take this opportunity to thank you all for your enduring support, unswerving commitment and valuable contribution.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading 'Antony Kildare'. The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name 'Antony' written in a larger, more prominent script than the surname 'Kildare'.

Antony Kildare
Chair of Board of Trustees

Welcome from the Chief Executive



Reflecting on the last year gives me great hope for the future of advocacy, information and advice in the UK in supporting people to have a voice, to know what their human rights and options are within public services, and to empower them to be treated as equal people in our society.

This past year we supported over half a million people through our free, independent, and confidential services. We collaborated with hundreds of Civil Society partners to oppose proposed legislation which would have threatened our Human Rights Act. We promoted human rights in every life through our “My Dignity, My Rights” awareness campaign, amplifying the voices of people who might otherwise be ignored without our intervention and support.

I am hopeful for a future time where the vital independent role our colleagues play in delivering a “level playing field”, ensuring everyone is treated with dignity, respect and kept free from harm and abuse, receives the respect it deserves.

My hope is that our society becomes less polarised in the future, and that we become kinder and more empathetic of the struggles others might face different from our own lived experiences. Not everyone needs an advocate, however access to one should not be subject to a “postcode lottery” or local limitations to access their human rights. I remain committed to campaigning for a fairer and more equal society, and will continue to press for meaningful change to tackle inequalities and uphold our rights. Here is to a brighter year ahead.

In solidarity.

Helen

Helen Moulinos
Chief Executive

Our Vision, Mission and Values

Our Vision

Upholding rights and tackling inequalities for those who need to have their voice heard.

Our Mission

To deliver high quality advocacy, information and advice services empowering people to have a voice and to make a real difference to their lives.

Our Values

Our values are our core principles, the qualities and beliefs that drive all of our work. We put people at the heart of everything we do in the way we work with our beneficiaries, partners and stakeholders and, equally importantly, with each other.

- **P**rofessional – We are committed to working in a confidential and person-centred way. Being professional, respectful, reliable, honest and independent.
- **E**mpowering – We will empower people to develop their skills and confidence, stand up for their rights and regain control. Thus creating a culture of enablement, not dependency.
- **O**pen, free and fair – We will deliver services that are free to use and accessible to all members of the community while encouraging and valuing differences and diversity and always working in a fair and open way.
- **P**ositive difference – We will ensure that our passion for our work results in a positive difference to people's lives and use the learning from our casework to have a positive impact on the delivery of services in the future.
- **L**ocal – We will engage with local communities in the areas that we serve, understanding their specific needs and determining the best way to meet these.
- **E**ngaging – We will meaningfully listen and engage with people and groups to ensure they are involved in the design, delivery and evaluation of our services, ensuring we are a pioneering client and needs led organisation.

What is Advocacy?

POhWER seeks to empower people through advocacy, information, advice and guidance to give people the tools, help and support they need to allow them to be involved and make their own choices and decisions about their lives.

Supporting them to have informed choice and an independent voice by understanding their rights and entitlements given to all of us in the Human Rights Act 1998.

Our independent information and advocacy services seek to empower people, not create dependency and are available to anyone who needs someone by their side regardless of their lived experience or situation.

POhWER shapes its services around the needs of each individual, supporting them as a whole person not as a label, issue or problem statement.

How can POhWER staff or volunteers help you?

Our POhWER colleagues can help a person to speak up for themselves or give their views to understand the process they are going through. They can support them to understand what their rights and what choices are available to them to ensure that they are central to important decisions being made about them. Advocates can also speak up for people when they are unable to do this for themselves.

They can support you to prepare for and take part in meetings and tribunals, raise queries or concerns and access information in the format which is most suitable for you. Advocates can also provide information and signpost people to other helpful services.

Types of advocacy

Statutory Advocacy

In certain circumstances a person has the legal right to an advocate including under the Care Act, Mental Capacity Act and Mental Health Act.

Care Act Advocacy

The Care Act says that local councils must involve people in decisions about their care and support needs. If it would be difficult for someone to be involved without support, the council must make sure they get the help they need. If the person doesn't have someone who can help them they have the right to have an independent Care Act Advocate.



NHS Complaints Advocacy

This is also called Independent Health Complaints Advocacy (IHCA). NHS Complaints Advocates help people to use the complaints process to raise a complaint about NHS funded treatment or care.



Independent Mental Capacity Advocacy (IMCA)

An IMCA is an advocate who has been specially trained to support people who are not able to make certain decisions for themselves (they lack the capacity) and do not have family or friends who are able to speak for them. IMCAs do not make decisions and they are independent of the people who do make the decisions.



Non-Statutory Advocacy

Non-statutory advocacy services help those who fall outside the eligibility criteria for statutory services.

Regulatory - Fitness to Practice Advocacy

Advocacy that can support people who are involved in complaints about the fitness to practice cases of a registered health or social care professional, overseen by the professions regulatory body.

Community Advocacy

Community Advocates can support people who find it difficult to put their views across or feel they aren't being listened to and help deal with an issue they are facing.



Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards (DoLS)/ Liberty Protection Safeguards (LPS)

If a person is deprived of their liberty under the Mental Capacity Act, an IMCA will be appointed to protect their human rights and make sure the deprivation is lawful, reasonable and in their best interests. The IMCA supports the person and collects information about them including their beliefs, values and previous behaviour in order to represent their wishes.



Relevant Person's Paid Representative Service (RPPR)

Everyone who is deprived of their liberty under the Mental Capacity Act must have a representative. This could be a family member or a friend, but if there is no one suitable it could be a Paid Representative also known as an RPPR. RPPRs are qualified advocates who have specialist knowledge of the Mental Capacity Act and Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards legislation.

Independent Mental Health Advocacy (IMHA)

An IMHA is an independent advocate who is trained in the Mental Health Act and supports people who are being treated under the Act to understand their rights and participate in decisions about their care and treatment. IMHAs can support people who are detained in hospital, and people living in the community who are receiving Supervised Community Treatment or are subject to Guardianship under the Act.



Children's and Young People's Advocacy including Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS)

CAMHS advocacy support is provided within both private and NHS hospitals across the country. Advocates provide drop-in services for the young people to access advocacy on a regular basis. Advocates support individuals to have their voice heard or work with groups of young people to raise issues they have identified.

Culturally Appropriate Advocacy

Advocates who ensure access to culturally appropriate IMHA and other forms of advocacy aiming to create an increased say and involvement in care and treatment during detention under the Mental Health Act for ethnic minority groups.



Citizen Advocacy

Citizen Advocates are trained volunteers. They provide one-to-one support to help people tackle the issues they are facing. Citizen Advocates may provide support in person, by telephone or by email and help people to access information, speak up and get their voice heard.

Peer Advocacy

Peer Advocates are volunteers with lived experience of using public authority services. They share their experience and provide practical support and encouragement. Peer Advocates are matched with someone who has similar needs and issues to support them to develop new skills and gain confidence.



Self-Advocacy

Self-Advocacy is representing your own views and wishes and asking for what you need or want. It gives you the ability to make your voice heard and take part in important decisions which are being made about you including how and where you live.

Group Advocacy

Group Advocacy brings people with similar needs and issues together to support each other. These groups give people the opportunity to work together, share their experiences and raise joint concerns. Sometimes the group has a facilitator who supports the running of the group and sometimes these groups are self-supporting.



Instructed Advocacy

Instructed Advocacy is when a person is able to tell the advocate what their needs and wishes are and what support they need. They are able to ask the advocate for support and tell them what actions they would like to be taken on their behalf.

Non-Instructed Advocacy

When a person is unable to communicate their wishes and needs for reasons such as temporary unconsciousness, brain injury, dementia etc., an advocate will use techniques such as observing the person, speaking to people who know them well or care for them to build a profile of the person's needs and wishes and use this to make sure their best interests are represented.



Strategic Report

POhWER empowers people to uphold human rights in their lives and the public services they use that are run by our local and central governments. We help people who, because of disability, illness, social exclusion and other marginalising challenges, find it difficult to express their views, access their human rights or receive the support they require.

Our strategy describes where we are heading and how we will achieve our aims and objectives. For charities like POhWER, who are driving rights-led change through advocacy, a strategy defines the long-term goals, influences, interventions and factors involved in achieving them. Our strategy is built upon six core strategic themes we want to realise through POhWER's charitable work.

Our full strategy can be read here: <https://www.pohwer.net/strategy-2020-2025>



Areas of Focus 2022-2023

During 2022-2023, we prioritised our strategic resources to deliver against three areas of activity which included growth, systemic change and awareness and operational strengthening.

Our growth and systemic change and awareness plans this year included investment focused on:

- Deepening our campaigning and influencing activities to protect human rights, reform laws and influence policy-makers
- Expanding our geographic services footprint
- Refining services to be more relevant to local people and their requirements
- Understanding unmet needs of our beneficiaries and the issues most important to them
- Investing in our workforce and infrastructure
- Promoting a culture of fairness, equality and transparency by strengthening governance, policies and support

Having completed year 3, we will be entering into year 4 of a 5 year strategic change programme in 2023 - 2024. Progress against completion is very mature for many of the strategies and many ahead of plan. The implementation includes 8 key strategy projects.

The status of the 8 strategic implementation projects are as follows at 31st March 2023:

Implementation Project	% Complete
5-year Strategy (Main)	85.7%
Campaigning, Influencing and Amplification	73.8%
Fundraising and Income Generation	79.6%
Safeguarding	89.1%
Finance and Governance	63.6%
People	76.8%
Equality, Diversity and Inclusion	72%
Quality and Risk	80.9%

Outcomes and Achievements

Over the next 12-18 months our Board and Executive Team will commence work on developing a “beyond 2025” vision and the next strategy for POhWER.

5-year Desired Outcome (before 2025)	2022-2023 Achievement
Beneficiary reach trebles to support people not supported by advocacy today	Supported 524,278 people who faced extensive challenges in securing their rights and entitlements within public services. This included advocacy support to 156,405 people and 367,873 contacts through our Help Hub information and support line. For our beneficiaries accessing advocacy services, 44% were new clients. 337,381 people accessed our digital self-advocacy resources.
Service users have an independent voice and are more empowered through POhWER's intervention Achieve >85% positive client quality outcomes every year	Feedback from our beneficiaries using our services has been broadly positive with 91% rating our services 5 out of 5. 6% gave us a 4 out of 5 and less than 1% gave us a rating of 1 out of 5. This past year we launched “The Big Listen” to digitally and anonymously capture feedback to a wider group which included beneficiaries, commissioners, partners and public service professionals. Through our local services we regularly canvas views on the suitability, quality and completeness of our services to ensure we continue to deliver value to the people we serve.
Embed structured co-production in service design and continuous development Aspirations and unmet needs are better understood and embedded in future service design and development	We managed unmet needs cases across 16 local communities for additional support where our beneficiaries were “falling between the cracks” of public services and unsure where they could turn to for support to access their rights, what rights they had and how they might advocate for themselves within public services. We study these unmet needs and feedback to co-produce new innovative models of advocacy, information and suitable beneficiary advice for the future. We also use these unmet needs to campaign for systemic change and to inform our strategic development. Since the start of the year we have attended over 150 local community engagement events promoting the role of advocacy in upholding people's rights.
British society becomes more inclusive and accepting and institutions value and understand the importance of equal treatment and access	We held briefing sessions with policymakers and politicians, organised petitions to protect the Human Rights Act and created coalitions of civil society senior leaders speaking up to raise awareness of importance of human rights in everyday British life. We focused on awareness raising, relationship building, educational and informative public speaking, digital information content development including two new podcast series and eight new informational films and also launched new self-advocacy tools on our website to help influence the attitudes of the British public. Our most popular films this year were “What is Advocacy?” which received over 17,000 views and “Have you heard about the government's plans to scrap the Human Rights Act?” which received 22,000 views. We managed our second Human Rights Attitudes and Opinions annual survey. Across the UK, we delivered Rights Strengthening Awareness Raising sessions in-person and digitally promoted education of the general public on equality, rights and entitlements in public services to promote self-advocacy. Our CEO shared the important work of POhWER in the media, amplifying the lived experiences of people across the UK who were struggling to be heard, have a voice and options and be treated as equal people within public services. More information can be found in our External Engagement and Digital section found on page 11.

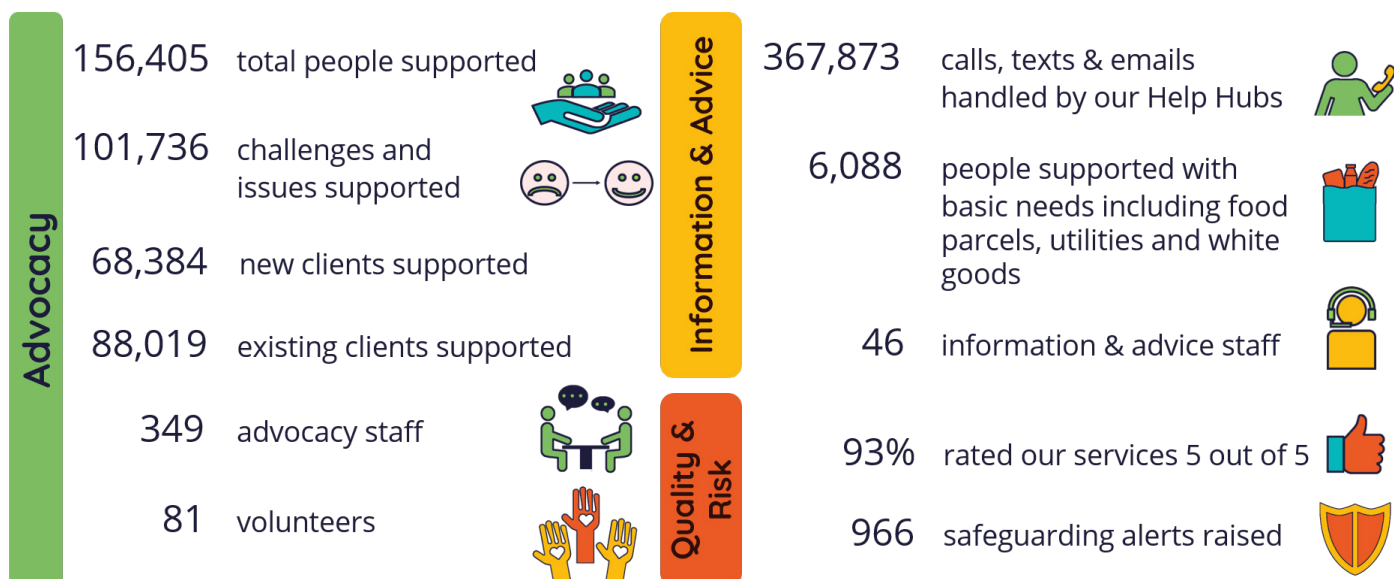
5-year Desired Outcome (before 2025)	2022-2023 Achievement				
The support and investment in our staff	Detailed under the 'People' section on page 16.				
Raise beneficiary reach and awareness of POHWER through face-to-face social media and digital information resources	Broadcasting key messages and amplifying our beneficiaries' experiences are important to POHWER with an aim to raise awareness, tell stories and educate others promoting a fairer and more equal society.  One of the barriers to ensuring the public cares about the Human Rights Act is to make it relevant to them. De-ciphering the Human Rights Act through positive stories helps people to understand that this involves all of us. Our beneficiary case study base is vast and humanises rights in everyday British life. This past year POHWER was featured in print, radio and television 24 times in major media outlets with an estimated digital reach of 645,000 people. Press & media coverage <table><tr><td>24 pieces of coverage</td><td>645,000 online readership</td><td>489,000 estimated views</td><td></td></tr></table> Mentioned in articles and/or audio from:  	24 pieces of coverage	645,000 online readership	489,000 estimated views	
24 pieces of coverage	645,000 online readership	489,000 estimated views			
Campaign for proposed changes to key legislation, influence public attitudes and develop our national parliamentary/policy making relationships Laws and human rights are upheld and new protections developed.	Our aim is to change laws and to uphold laws important to our beneficiaries enabling them to live as equal people through evidence led submissions to powerful people and institutions, ministerial engagement, external awareness raising and through telling the stories of our beneficiaries circumstances. During 2022 - 2023, we campaigned to uphold and protect the Human Rights Act this past year with a coalition of charities. 81 MPs and Peers met with our Chief Executive to discuss the detrimental impacts the proposed Bill of Rights would have on the beneficiaries we support each day. The bill is no longer proceeding and has been stood down. We supported long overdue reform of the Mental Health Act, informed proposals into social care, and contributed to independent COVID-19 Inquiry. We submitted written evidence to inform the implementation approach for the long-awaited Liberty Protection Safeguards to the government. Our advocacy work continued to create precedent through case law in the Court of Protection.				

Our Services



I just wanted to say a massive thank you for all of your help with my recent complaint to the NHS. I quite literally couldn't have done it without you. You made the whole thing so much less stressful, you were great at explaining things to me and calming me down. I wouldn't have had a clue about wording or get what I needed from it without your input.

This past year we saw an increase in new people seeking advocacy support and a decrease in demand for information or advice support. Our existing clients required advocacy support for multiple cases often over a longer time frame which drove exponential demand for our services.



Data Measure	2021 - 2022	2022 - 2023	% Change
Number of new people supported by 1:1 advocacy support	66,875	68,384	2.25%
Number of existing people supported by 1:1 advocacy support	81,328	88,019	8.22%
Total number of people supported by 1:1 advocacy cases	148,203	156,403	5.53%

The post-pandemic environment resulted in a levelling off of new cases and a modest decrease in demand for our information & advice services managed by our Help Hubs.

Data Measure	2021 - 2022	2022 - 2023	% Change
Total number of contacts (phone calls, emails, video conferences)	372,154	367,873	-1.15%

External Engagement and Digital

The diversification of our digital information resources available to the general public and investments in awareness building of human rights through public speaking and media enabled us to find new ways to present relevant information informing people of their rights and entitlements. Our focus this year digitally has been to present human rights information in an easy-to-understand format and to invest in skills and infrastructure to build for future growth.

We produced 8 new short films which were viewed 54,000 times this year. Our podcasts were downloaded 985 times and last summer we engaged 62,000 people on social media through our My Dignity, My Rights Campaign in a single month. Our website traffic and self-advocacy downloads decreased over the past year as our post-pandemic advocacy 1-2-1 case support was more accessible than previous years and returned to full capacity again. Our intentions for next year will be to continue to build our digital audience and understand what new information resources our beneficiaries would like to see.

Data Measure	2021 - 2022	2022 - 2023	% Change
Number of webpage views	439,440	337,381	-23%
Number of self-help and information resources downloaded from our website	35,594	30,314	-15%



We routinely capture information about the outcomes that we help people achieve to ensure we are delivering benefits to the beneficiaries we serve. Our Impact Report can be found on our website:

<https://www.pohwer.net/our-impact>

“

My advocate was excellent and really professional, she helped us through all of this from start to finish... without her help we wouldn't have got as far as we did with this complaint. Having my advocate dealing with our case meant that things we didn't know and understand she explained to us and guided us through the process the correct and right way.

”



Top five issues supported by service type

The most common reasons why people contacted POhWER vary by service. Complaints and attitude of staff were most common within NHS Complaints, while other advocacy services focused predominantly on statutory cases and safeguarding with exception of community advocacy where many unmet needs arose.

NHS Complaints - Aspects of clinical treatment – hospital and community services - Aspects of clinical treatment – GPs and dentists - Attitude of staff - hospital and community services - Complaints handling - hospital and community services - Attitude of staff - GPs and dentists	IMHA - Rights under the act - Ward rounds - Communication - Introduction to advocacy - Help to self-advocate	Secure Advocacy - Communication - Hospital admission - Client engagement - Mental health services - Complaints
Care Act Advocacy - Support to review care and support plan or support plan (Section 27) - Needs assessment (Section 9) - Safeguarding enquiry (Section 42) - Support with preparation of a care and support plan or support plan (Section 25) - Safeguarding alerts	IMCA - Paid Person's Representative - Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards - Change of accommodation - Serious medical treatment - Safeguarding	Community Advocacy - Housing - Children - Care - Mental health services - Complaints

Geographic Expansion and Local Partnership

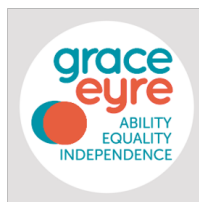
We continued our geographic expansion across the UK, establishing new or expanding advocacy services in the following areas:

- Surrey
- Suffolk
- Waltham Forest
- North Lincolnshire
- Bristol
- Broadmoor
- Walsall
- Barnet
- Enfield
- Haringey

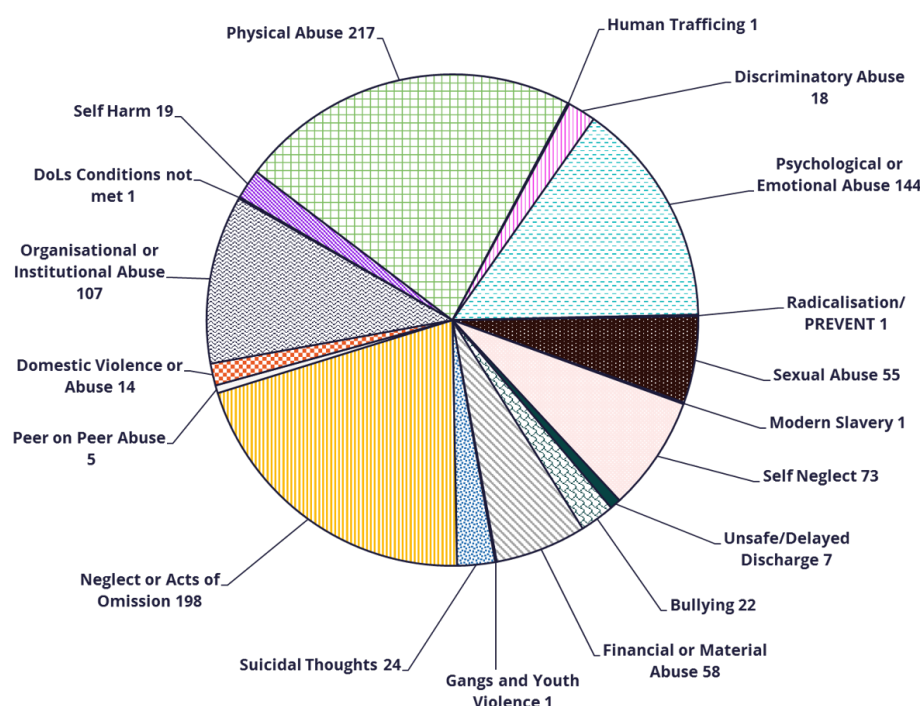
This past year POhWER expanded the number of formal civil society service partnerships. Our 45 charity partners have enabled us to deliver tailored and relevant advocacy knowledge and skills to local people who benefited from these synergistic relationships. We have been grateful to these organisations for their support.



Through our Arthur Bate Fund, POhWER offered small grants to a number of grassroots charities to raise awareness in their local community or establish community advocacy and peer groups empowering people to have an independent voice.



Safeguarding our beneficiaries is paramount to protecting human rights and continued to be prominent in our work. The most significant issues relating to physical, psychological, emotional or institutional abuse cases.



966 safeguarding alerts were raised in 2022/2023, of which 878 were raised to:

Client Setting	22.21%
CQC	6.49%
Local Authority	65.95%
Police	5.35%

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

Our focus on Equality, Diversity and Inclusion this past year has been on driving inclusion and belonging through training and awareness projects, mentoring and coaching programmes, support interventions and well-being programmes for our workforce.

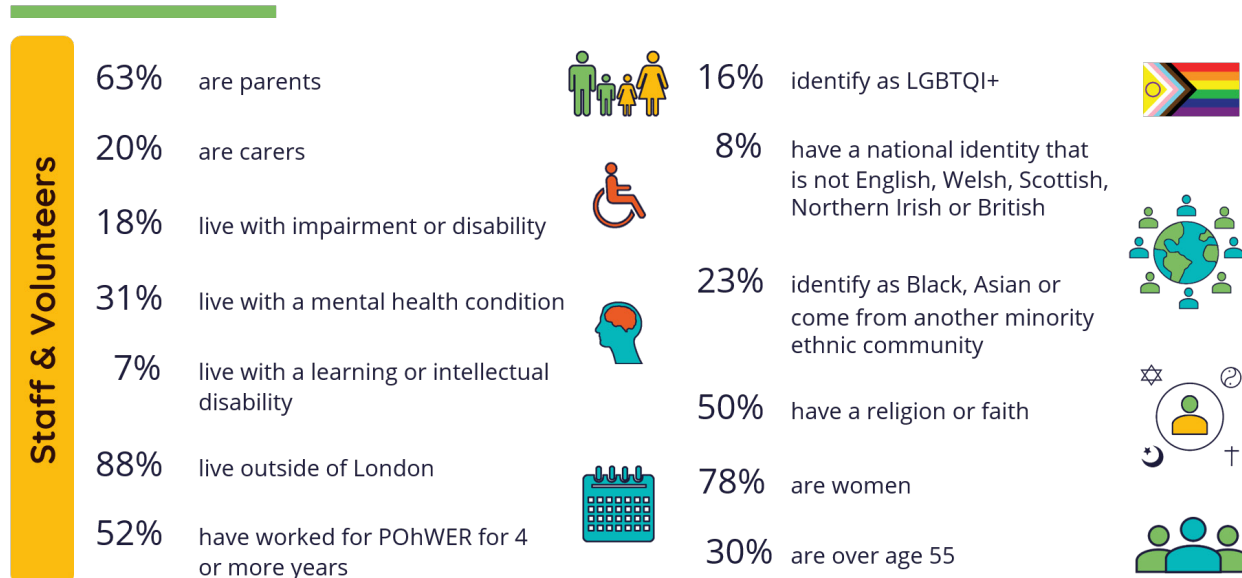
As a charity, we are on a continuous journey, and we aspire to be a leader of Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) practices within the charity sector by being known for going above and beyond the minimum baseline of equality laws in everything we do.

We aspire to be a charity where everyone who comes into contact with POhWER feels they are free to be their authentic selves in a supportive environment.

Diversity Profile of our Employees and Volunteers 2022 - 2023

Our workforce is a diverse group. However, we continue to be under-represented in many areas, especially within our management and leadership group. We continue to leverage positive action in our recruitment campaigns, interview training, confidence building peer groups and career development opportunities to empower more people from under-represented groups to access leadership opportunities when they arise and to play a role in the charity's future direction.

As a workforce, we are a diverse group of people

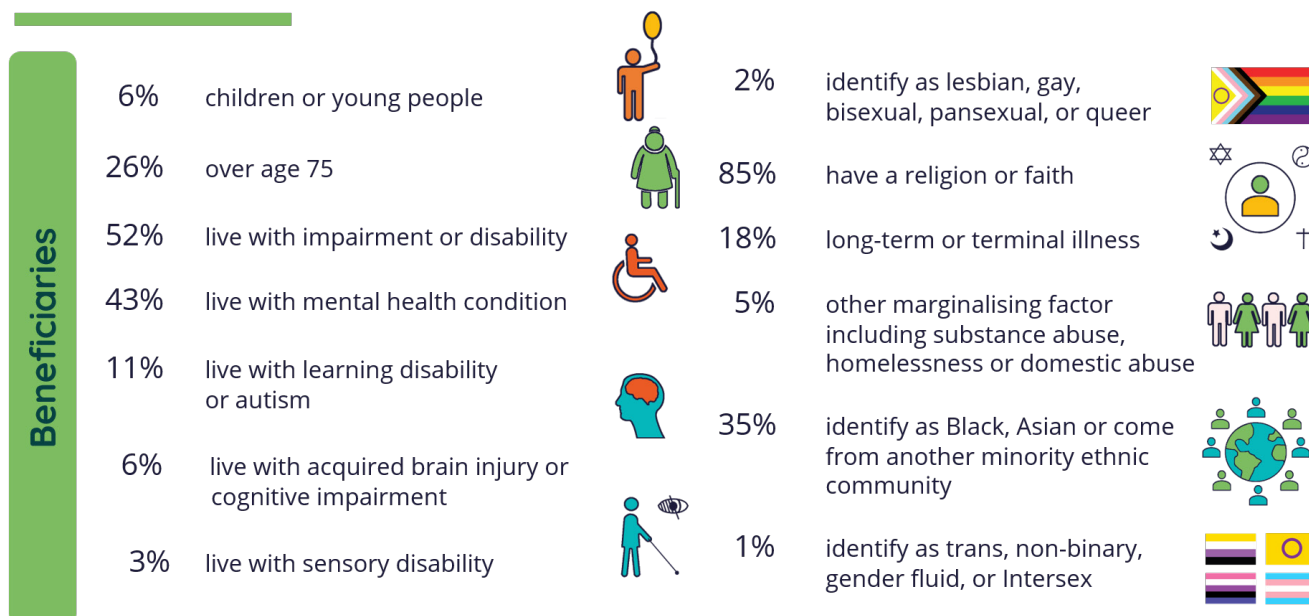


Our EDI work this past year examined power imbalances and integrity, such as safeguarding, anti-racism, gender inequality, anti-corruption, and anti-bullying for example, and ways to inter-connect EDI into “the DNA” of our charity. We continue to build a stronger picture of how inequality may cause harm to our workforce and beneficiaries, and adopt an approach to organisational integrity that promotes transparency and participation.

We believe everyone has a human right to be treated with respect and dignity. Our beneficiaries come to POhWER for support from all walks of life. No two beneficiaries are the same and we do not have a “typical” beneficiary across the half million beneficiaries we supported this past year.

Diversity Profile of Beneficiaries 2022 - 2023

POhWER does not have a “typical beneficiary”



We continue to implement a multi-year EDI strategy and plan to continuously transform our organisation, actively listen and pivoting our priorities to promote diversity.

Our 2022 - 2025 EDI strategy and plan can be found on our website www.pohwer.net/edi

Governance, Structure and Management

Legal Status and Objects

POhWER is a charity registered with the Charity Commission in England and Wales under charity number 1061543 and registered in Scotland by the Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator under charity number SCO48858 and is also a company limited by guarantee.

Our organisation was established in 1996 and registered as a charity in 1997 and is governed by its Articles of Association which set out our objective is to relieve people in need and to promote social inclusion by preventing people from becoming socially excluded and to promote human rights by raising awareness of human rights, in particular by providing advocacy, information, advice and guidance, to help people speak up and to be heard as well as securing their rights and entitlements.

Public Benefit

The Trustees have a duty to report on how POhWER's charitable object has been carried out for the public benefit and to follow guidance from the Charity Commission on the provision of Public Benefit requirement under the Charities Act 2011.

We demonstrate how we have met our principal objective in our Strategic Report and how POhWER has worked within its charitable objectives in 2022/2023. We set out further specific details in our Impact Report which demonstrates the impact of our work and which compliments this report.

Structure

The Trustee Board is responsible for the governance and strategic direction of the Charity ensuring that the Charity upholds its values and core principles and delivers its key objectives.

The Trustees of the Charity are also the Directors of the company for the purpose of company law, and any reference to Trustees is therefore also to Directors.

Trustees are appointed through a transparent and rigorous recruitment and selection process and are elected by the Members at our AGM. Newly appointed Trustees are provided with a comprehensive induction programme and includes meeting the Executive team. All relevant documents to their role are provided to them including a comprehensive Trustee Handbook. A Trustee SharePoint site is regularly updated and all Trustees have private access to the site.

Trustees deploy a wide range of skills, knowledge and experience essential to good governance. The range of expertise held by our Trustees is reviewed regularly to determine that their experience meets POhWER's requirements. A skills audit is carried out annually and informs the experience required during any recruitment drive.

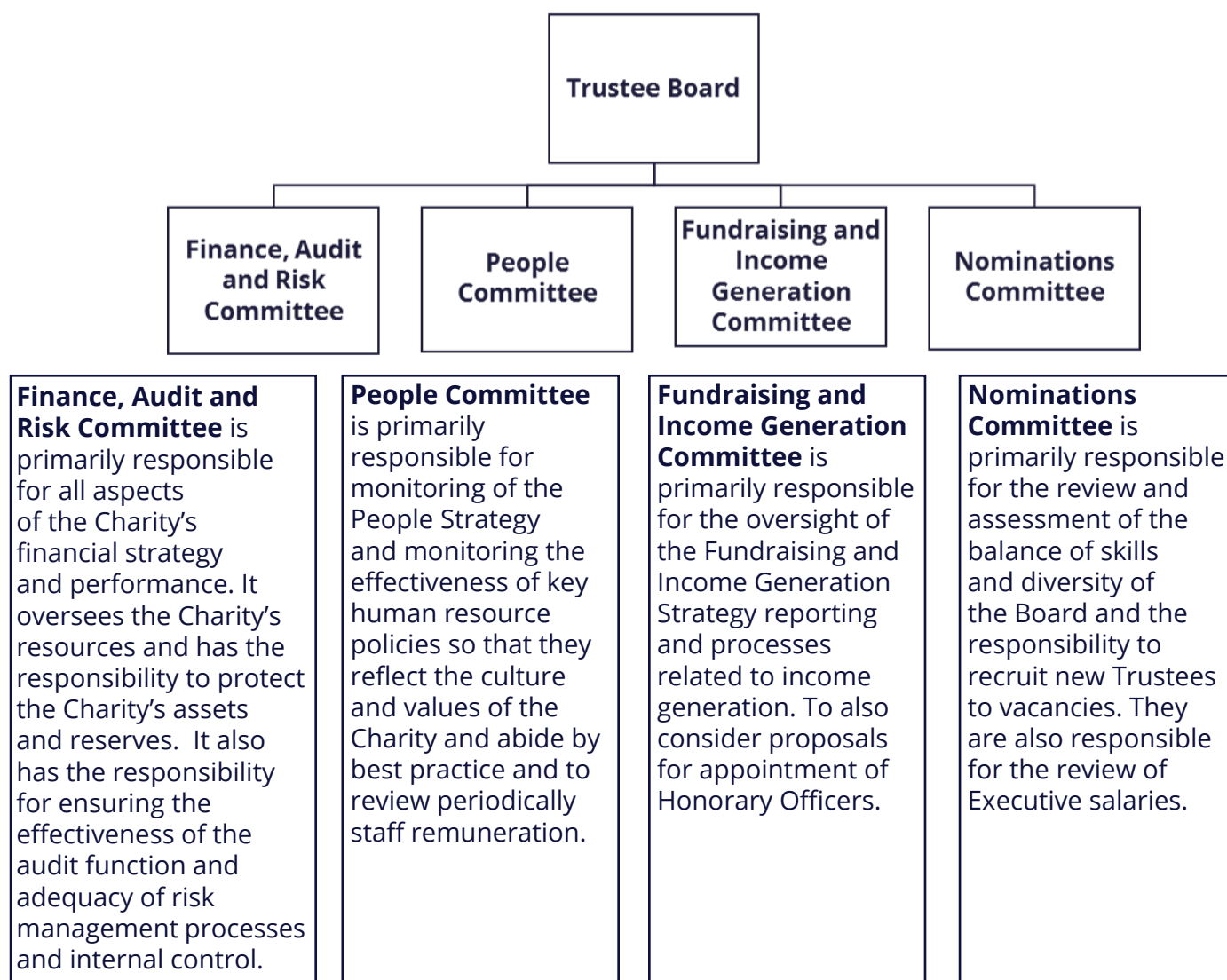
Operational management is delegated by the Trustees to the Chief Executive who is accountable to the Trustee Board. The Chief Executive and the Executive team normally attend Board and Committee meetings.

Trustees, Chief Executive and Executive team are expected to behave with the utmost integrity and professionalism at all times and to adhere to POhWER's Code of Conduct and the Nolan Committee's Seven Principles of Public Life.

All Trustees of POhWER give their time voluntarily and receive no reward or benefit from POhWER. The Trustee Board meets a minimum of four times each year and in addition there is a Board Away Day which allows Trustees to focus, along with the Executive team, on key strategic issues. Trustees who served during the year are listed on page 42 together with information about their membership of Board Committees.

Delegation and Committees

The Board maintains a Scheme of Delegation and matters reserved for Board Committees are clearly defined in their Terms of Reference. The Committees report directly to the Board.



People

In 2022, we continued to expand our People Directorate by recruiting a dedicated Training Officer and Talent Acquisition and Resourcing Officer. These two roles compliment the HR team and enhance the service offering of the People Directorate.

Well-being continues to feature high in our priorities and this has been supported with the introduction of paid carer's leave, to support anyone with caring responsibility. In addition, we enhanced paid sick leave and paid compassionate leave to ensure that support remains in place at a time when people may need it the most.

Our training schedule has been expanded to start building comprehensive training programmes for

all colleagues in the organisation, ensuring that the entire employment lifecycle with us supports and develops them. Later in 2023 will also see a dedicated new management training programme aimed at providing a toolkit for new managers.

Our EDI Strategy and Plan was launched during the year and our focus areas and achievements can be found on page 14.

A new HR database was introduced in September 2022 and recruitment and training is now embedded in the new system which affords much more flexibility for the leadership team and colleagues wishing to ensure their own personal development needs are met.

Remuneration

All colleagues received a 3% pay increase early in 2023 and our pay also continues to be underpinned by the Living Wage Foundation.

The next benchmarking will take place in 2024 in line with the commitment made by our Trustees and to ensure our salaries remain in line with the market sector.

Fundraising and Income Generation

POhWER has spent 2022-2023 building on the work that was started in the prior year. We pursued further fundraising opportunities in payroll giving, micro donations, streaming events and digital giving. This expanded our core supporter base, gained new audiences and made donor support more accessible to everyone.

The external engagement policy continues to support the charity in how we engage with audiences, such as fundraisers and donors, in an appropriate, respectful and effective manner.

Our network of dedicated and committed supporters continue to engage with us through email and social media, further strengthening relationships. This has been effective as evidenced by an increase in fundraising through direct donations. Our engagement through social media has enabled us to richly evidence our impact on our beneficiaries and wider communities that we work in.

During the financial year we did not work with any fundraising agencies or commercial participators. No complaints were received in respect of our fundraising activity.

POhWER is grateful to our commissioners for their contract funding of our services and to all the other individuals and organisations who have donated or fundraised. We continue to work with funders as we identify unmet needs and together develop and implement pilot schemes to address gaps in services, further supporting the growing numbers of people who need our help.

POhWER is registered with the Fundraising Regulator and is committed to responsible and ethical fundraising practices. POhWER complies with the Code of Fundraising Practice and the Fundraising Promise.

GDPR

We are committed to maintaining the trust and confidence of the people we support, those we work with, those who support us and those we come into contact with in other ways. We do this in line with POhWER's values and with the law.



Risk Management

The Trustees have a responsibility for ensuring that the charity maintains a comprehensive risk management system and that appropriate actions are taken to manage and mitigate risks. The Finance, Audit and Risk Committee monitors and reviews these reports and reports to the Board on their effectiveness.

The principal risks identified through their likelihood and impact on the Charity are:

Risk	Examples of mitigating actions
A safeguarding failure results in harm to a beneficiary or staff member	• Continuous strengthening of Safeguarding process and practice • Specialist Safeguarding Resource in place • Mandatory safeguarding training and reinforcement for all staff, volunteers and trustees • Safer recruitment implemented • Focus on identification of trends to support escalation of systemic causes of harm • External audit of Safeguarding practices and procedures
Government spending on Covid-19 impacts the available funds for Commissioners to procure advocacy services at previous or appropriate levels	• Tight cost control mechanisms in place • Rigorous contract retention and tender scoping processes in place • Diversification of funding to reduce dependence on local authority statutory advocacy services • Investigate in more detail, volunteer model
The legal statutory framework enabling independent advocacy to exist is altered by the government with detrimental impact to our beneficiaries.	• Campaigning and influencing in the public domain through digital, media and social media outlets and MPs and Peers awareness raising • Responding to Government consultation, including submitting evidence of impact of advocacy in upholding human rights • Influencing work done in partnership with 60+ other charities
Economic climate for growth and diversification of income	• Monitoring business plans and budget for robustness and ensuring efficiency in all departments • Engage with stakeholders to innovate service provision to mitigate people going into crisis

Financial Review

Despite the challenges of the current economic climate POhWER can report another year of surplus and increased financial sustainability. The economic climate and an increase in non-surplus generating activity has impacted the level of surplus allocated to the reserves at the year end. Total income for 2022/2023 increased by 6% to £16,911,291 (2021/2022: 15,934,026). The increase relates to non-surplus generating activity. POhWER have continued to pursue a strategy of bidding for financially viable contracts with public and private institutions, whilst also working to diversify income streams by inviting grants, private donations and developing emerging advocacy models. This strategy has delivered new income streams but

the impact of this has been negated in year by exiting a number of historic contracts. Costs have significantly increased during the year through a combination of high inflation levels, increased travel expenses post pandemic, and the cost of delivery on the increase in non-surplus income. The overall effects were a decrease in surplus to £267,949 (2021/2022: £1,618,650). In accordance with the surplus reported, cash balances held, including on short-notice deposit accounts, totalled £3,238,682 (2021/2022: £3,568,242). POhWER operates with disciplined debtor and supplier management to ensure that working capital is tightly controlled.

Reserves Policy and Going Concern

At 31 March 2023, POhWER held total reserves of £4,342,414 (2021/22 £4,074,465). Of this amount, £3,981,041 represents the Charity's free reserves (2021/2022 £3,729,109). Free reserves are the unrestricted reserves of the Charity that are not designated by the Trustees or that represent the value of fixed assets used by the Charity.

In February 2022 the Trustees reviewed the Charity's reserves policy and amended it in line with the Charity's latest circumstances, giving regard to regulatory guidance. In February 2023, given there had been no change in circumstance, a light touch review of the designated reserves was undertaken. Reserves are held, in summary, to provide working capital, ensure continuation of services and/or to ensure that the Charity can wind down in an orderly fashion and/or retain an essential administrative function in case of a crisis. The current reserves policy is to hold free reserves representing between 1.5 and 4 months of operating expenditure.

At the reporting date, the Charity held reserves totalling £4,342,414 of which £3,981,041 were free from restriction and were not designated for specific purposes (2021/2022: £4,074,465 total, of which £3,729,109 were free). Free reserves represent 2.9 months of operating expenditure (2021/2022: 3.1 months) so the Trustees are satisfied that free reserves are within the confines of the policy.

Our position post-year end is that we can meet all our financial commitments on time and POhWER remains a going concern. The Charity has a strong record of both winning and retaining contracts, against a backdrop of a financial position that has strengthened through reserves growth over the past few financial years. The Trustees have made this assessment in respect to a period one year from the date of approval of these accounts.



“Having a IMHA support me during my admission and prepare me for ward rounds ... took away my anxiety and stress. My advocate helped me understand the outcome of meetings and supported me to communicate my views and concerns”

Statement of Trustee Responsibilities

The charity trustees (who are also the directors of POhWER for the purposes of company law) are responsible for preparing the annual report and financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice) including FRS 102, the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the United Kingdom and Republic of Ireland.

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

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- observe the methods and principles in the 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);
- make judgements and 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;
- 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 proper accounting records that disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charity 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 charity and hence taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

Each of the trustees confirms that:

- so far as the Trustee is aware, there is no relevant audit information of which the charitable company's auditor is unaware;
- the Trustee has taken all steps that he or she ought to have taken, as a trustee, in order to be aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the charitable company's auditor is aware of that information.

This confirmation is given and should be interpreted in accordance with the provisions of s148 of the Companies Act 2006.

The trustees had no beneficial interests in, or contracts with, the charitable company during the year. Trustees may reclaim the expenses incurred in fulfilling their duties as trustees, and these are disclosed in notes 7 and 18 of the financial statements. All the trustees are required to be Members of the charitable company, but this entitles them only to voting rights. The trustees have no beneficial interest in the charitable company.

The trustees are responsible for the maintenance and integrity of the corporate and financial information included on 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 Trustees' Annual Report, incorporating the Strategic Report, was approved by the board of trustees and signed on their behalf by:



Antony Kildare
Chair of Board of Trustees

26 October 2023

Independent Auditor's Report to the Members of POhWER

Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of POhWER for the year ended 31 March 2023 which comprise the Statement of Financial Activities, the Balance Sheet, the Statement of Cash Flows and notes to the financial statements, including a summary of significant accounting policies.

The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards, including Financial Reporting Standard 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 March 2023 and of the charitable company's net movement in funds, including the 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 and the Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005 and regulation 8 of the Charities Accounts (Scotland) Regulations 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 Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements section of our report. We are independent of the charity 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 Trustees' Annual Report and the Welcome from our Chair and Chief Executive. 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 there is a material misstatement in the financial statements or a material misstatement of the other information. 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 Trustees' Annual Report (which includes the strategic report and the directors' report prepared for the purposes of company law) for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements; and
- the strategic report and the directors' report included within the Trustees' Annual Report have 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 Trustees' Annual Report (which incorporates the strategic report and the directors' report).

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

- adequate accounting records have not been kept by the charitable company; or
- the charitable company 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.

Responsibilities of trustees for the financial statements

As explained more fully in the trustees' responsibilities statement set out on page 20, 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.

Irregularities, including fraud, are instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations. We design procedures in line with our responsibilities, outlined above, to detect material misstatements in respect of irregularities, including fraud. The extent to which our procedures are capable of detecting irregularities, including fraud is detailed below:

Based on our understanding of the charitable company and the environment in which it operates, we identified that the principal risks of non-compliance with laws and regulations related to company law in England and Wales, and charity law in England and Wales and in Scotland, and we considered the extent to which non-compliance might have a material effect on the financial statements. We also considered those laws and regulations that have a direct impact on the preparation of the financial statements such as the Companies Act 2006, the Charities Act 2011, the Charities and Trustee

Investment (Scotland) Act 2005 and the Charities Accounts (Scotland) Regulations 2006 and payroll taxes.

We evaluated management's incentives and opportunities for fraudulent manipulation of the financial statements (including the risk of override of controls), and determined that the principal risks were related to management override of controls. Audit procedures performed by the engagement team included:

- Inspecting correspondence with regulators and tax authorities;
- Discussions with management including consideration of known or suspected instances of non-compliance with laws and regulation and fraud;
- Evaluating management's controls designed to prevent and detect irregularities;
- Identifying and testing journals and
- Challenging assumptions and judgements made by management in their critical accounting estimates.

that we might state to the charitable company's members 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 charitable company and the charitable company's members as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.



Lee Stokes (Senior Statutory Auditor)
For and on behalf of haysmacintyre LLP,
Statutory Auditors
10 Queen Street Place
London EC4R 1AG
2 November 2023

Because of the inherent limitations of an audit, there is a risk that we will not detect all irregularities, including those leading to a material misstatement in the financial statements or non-compliance with regulation. This risk increases the more that compliance with a law or regulation is removed from the events and transactions reflected in the financial statements, as we will be less likely to become aware of instances of non-compliance. The risk is also greater regarding irregularities occurring due to fraud rather than error, as fraud involves intentional concealment, forgery, collusion, omission or misrepresentation.

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 auditor's report.

Use of our report

This report is made solely to the charitable company's members, as a body, in accordance with Chapter 3 of Part 16 of the Companies Act 2006, section 44(1)(c) of the Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005 and regulation 10 of the Charities Accounts (Scotland) Regulations 2006. Our audit work has been undertaken so

Financial Statements

Statement of financial activities

For the year ended 31 March 2023

(Including an Income & Expenditure Account)

	Note	Restricted 2023 £	Unrestricted 2023 £	Total 2023 £	Restricted 2022 £	Unrestricted 2022 £	Total 2022 £
Income from:							
Donations & Legacies	2	28,742	6,436	35,178	1,336	21,239	22,575
<i>Charitable Activities:</i>							
- Contract Income	3	60,000	16,209,601	16,269,601	-	15,190,016	15,190,016
- Grants	3	558,949	8,000	566,949	703,126	-	703,126
Investment Income	4	-	33,625	33,625	-	2,100	2,100
Other Sources	5	-	5,938	5,938	-	16,209	16,209
Total income		647,691	16,263,600	16,911,291	704,462	15,229,564	15,934,026
Expenditure on:							
Cost of raising funds		-	(2,986)	(2,986)	-	(84,824)	(84,824)
Charitable Activities:	6						
- Statutory services		-	(11,130,729)	(11,130,729)	-	(10,142,934)	(10,142,934)
- Non Statutory Services		(654,858)	(3,494,522)	(4,149,380)	(657,007)	(2,024,213)	(2,681,220)
- Secure services		-	(1,360,247)	(1,360,247)	-	(1,406,398)	(1,406,398)
- Other services		-	-	-	-	-	-
Subtotal – Charitable Act		(654,858)	(15,985,498)	(16,640,356)	(657,007)	(13,573,545)	(14,230,552)
Total expenditure		(654,858)	(15,988,484)	(16,643,342)	(657,007)	(13,658,369)	(14,315,376)
Reconciliation of Funds							
		Restricted 2023 £	Unrestricted 2023 £	Total 2023 £	Restricted 2022 £	Unrestricted 2022 £	Total 2022 £
Net income/(expense)	7	(7,167)	275,116	267,949	47,455	1,571,195	1,618,650
Transfers between funds		(4,334)	4,335	-	(1,388)	1,388	-
Net movement between funds		(11,501)	279,451	267,949	46,067	1,572,583	1,618,650
Total funds brought forward		58,451	4,016,015	4,074,465	12,384	2,443,431	2,455,815
Total funds carried forward	15	46,949	4,295,465	4,342,414	58,451	4,016,014	4,074,465

All of the above results are derived from continuing activities. All recognised gains and losses are included in the above statement of financial activities.

The notes on pages 28-41 form part of these financial statements.

Balance Sheet

For the year ended 31 March 2023

	Note	Total 2023 £	Total 2022 £
Fixed assets			
Intangible fixed assets	10	-	1,605
Tangible fixed assets	11	284,424	236,304
		<u>284,424</u>	<u>237,909</u>
Current assets			
Debtors	12	2,021,194	1,554,898
Cash at bank and in hand		3,238,682	3,568,242
		<u>5,259,876</u>	<u>5,123,140</u>
Current liabilities			
Creditors: amounts due within one year	13	(1,201,886)	(1,286,584)
		<u>4,057,990</u>	<u>3,836,556</u>
Net current assets			
Total assets less current liabilities		<u>4,342,414</u>	<u>4,074,465</u>
Net assets		4,342,414	4,074,465
Restricted funds			
		46,949	58,451
Unrestricted funds			
Designated funds	15	30,000	48,996
Fixed asset funds	15	284,424	237,909
General funds	15	3,981,041	3,729,109
Total funds		4,342,414	4,074,465

Approved and authorised for issue by the Trustees and signed on their behalf by:



Antony Kildare

Chair of Board of Trustees

26 October 2023

The notes on pages 28-41 form part of these financial statements.

Statement of cash flows

For the year ended 31 March 2023

		Total 2023 £	Total 2022 £
Cash flow from operating activities	A		
Net cash provided by/(used in) operating activities		(135,040)	1,421,901
Cash flows from investing activities			
Purchase of tangible and intangible fixed assets		(194,520)	(177,871)
Change in cash and cash equivalents in the year		(329,560)	1,244,030
Cash and cash equivalents at 1 April 2022		3,568,242	2,324,212
Cash and cash equivalents at 31 March 2023	B	3,238,682	3,568,242

Notes to the statement of cash flows

For the year ended 31 March 2023

A. Reconciliation of net income (expenditure) to net cash provided by operating activities	2023 £	2022 £
Net income (expenditure) (as per the statement of financial activities)	267,949	1,618,650
Adjustments for:		
Depreciation charge	144,082	106,150
Amortisation charge	1,605	3,210
Loss on disposal of assets	2,318	511
(Increase) decrease in debtors	(466,296)	138,262
Increase (decrease) in creditors	84,698	(444,882)
Net cash provided by/(used in) operating activities	(135,040)	1,421,901

B. Analysis of cash and cash equivalents

Cash in hand	419	535
Cash at bank	432,602	807,367
Cash on instant access deposit accounts	1,014,233	1,756,616
Cash in notice accounts	1,750,000	1,000,000
Cash held in supplier client accounts	41,428	3,724
Total cash and cash equivalents	3,238,682	3,568,242

B. Analysis of movement in net funds	2022 £	Movement £	2023 £
Cash in hand	535	(116)	419
Cash at bank	807,367	(374,765)	432,602
Cash on instant access deposit accounts	1,756,616	(742,383)	1,014,233
Cash in notice accounts	1,000,000	750,000	1,750,000
Cash held in supplier client accounts	3,724	37,704	41,428
Total cash and cash equivalents	3,568,242	(329,560)	3,238,682

The notes on pages 28-41 form part of these financial statements.

Notes to the Financial Statements

For the year ended 31 March 2023

1. Accounting Policies

The principal accounting policies adopted, judgements and key sources of estimation uncertainty in the preparation of the financial statements are laid out below.

Basis of Preparation

The financial statements have been prepared for the year to 31 March 2023 with comparative information provided in respect of the year to 31 March 2022. They are presented in sterling and rounded to the nearest whole pound.

The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention with items initially recognised at cost or transaction value unless otherwise stated in the relevant accounting policy note(s).

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 Standards applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) ('Charities SORP FRS 102') (Second Edition, effective 1 January 2019) and the Companies Act 2006.

The charity constitutes a public benefit entity as defined by FRS 102.

Entity Status

POhWER is a company limited by guarantee registered in England Wales (company number 03323040). It is a registered charity, registered with the Charity Commission for England and Wales (registered charity number 1061543), and the Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator (registered charity number SC048858). Its registered address is Suite 4, Middlesex House, Meadway Corporate Centre, Stevenage, Hertfordshire, SG1 2EF.

Critical accounting estimates and areas of judgement

Preparation of the accounts requires the trustees and management to make significant judgements and estimates.

The items in the accounts where these judgements and estimates have been made include:

- the useful economic lives attributed to tangible and intangible fixed assets to determine the appropriate depreciation and amortisation charges;
- the basis on which support cost have been allocated across expenditure headings;
- the estimated value of accrued income and work in progress; and
- the recoverability of trade debtors.

Assessment of going concern

The trustees have assessed whether the use of the going concern assumption is appropriate in preparing these accounts. The trustees have made this assessment in respect to a period of one year from the date of approval of these accounts, taking into account the expected commercial effects of the current economic climate.

The trustees of the charity have concluded that there are no material uncertainties relating to events or conditions that may cast significant doubt on the ability of the charity to continue as a going concern.

Income

All types of income are recognised in the period in which the charity has entitlement to the income, the amount of income can be measured reliably, and it is probable that the income will be received. Income comprises contract income receivable for the delivery of charitable activities, supplemented by voluntary donations, investment and other miscellaneous income.

Income from voluntary donations comprises donations, legacies and gifts which are recognised in the statement of financial activities when received. Gift Aid is recognised and claimed where the eligibility criteria are met. 'In kind' donations are measured at the lower of arms-length valuation or value to the charity should the goods or services have been procured at market rates.

Contract income arises from the provision of advocacy services according to the terms of contracts and service level agreements with contract commissioners which comprise local authorities and other organisations. Contract income is recognised in the statement of financial activities over the period for which advocacy services are provided. Where contract income is subject to service level agreements and subject to the quantity of services provided, it is recognised to the extent that chargeable services have been provided.

Investment income is recognised where the charity has entitlement and the amount can be reliably measured.

Expenditure

Liabilities are recognised as expenditure as soon as there is a legal or constructive obligation committing the charity to make a payment to a third party, it is probable that a transfer of economic benefits will be required in settlement and the amount of the obligation can be measured reliably. All expenditure is stated inclusive of irrecoverable VAT.

Expenditure comprises direct costs, support costs and fundraising costs. All direct costs and support costs are allocated or apportioned to the main categories of charitable activity, these are non-statutory advocacy, statutory advocacy, secure and complex services, and other. Costs of raising funds are shown on the Statement of Financial Activities.

Support costs are those costs that, whilst necessary to enable the charity to deliver

charitable services, do not themselves produce charitable outputs. These support costs include management and administration, human resources, business development, finance and IT.

Direct costs are allocated to the particular activity to which the cost relates. Support costs are apportioned on the basis of income for each category of charitable activity.

Governance costs are the costs associated with the constitutional and statutory requirements of the charitable company. Such costs include preparation of statutory accounts, trustees' meetings, including specialist access and support costs to enable our volunteer trustees from our service users/members groups to participate and any costs associated with risk management and compliance.

Volunteers

POhWER deeply values the contribution from all those who volunteer their time, commitment and expertise for POhWER. The number of volunteers is rising and includes current and former service users who use their experience and skills to help others (see 'Making a difference' for examples). Volunteer roles range from the provision of advocacy services to administrative support services, and their contribution enables POhWER to increase the number of clients reached.

In accordance with the guidance in the Charities SORP FRS 102, the value of volunteers is not included in the statement of financial activities.

Taxation

The charitable company is a registered charity and is exempt from the taxation of income falling within chapter 3 part 11 of the Corporation Tax Act 2010 and section 256 of the Taxation of Chargeable Gains Act 1992 to the extent that this income is used to achieve its charitable objectives. No charge to taxation for the year has arisen as a result of the activities of the charity.

Value Added Tax is not recoverable by the charitable company and is included within the relevant costs in the statement of financial activities.

Operating Leases

Rentals applicable to operating leases where substantially all of the benefits and risks of ownership remain with the lessor are charged to the statement of financial activities in equal annual amounts over the lease term.

Defined Contribution Pension Schemes

The defined contribution pension scheme costs charged in the statement of financial activities represent the employer's pension contributions payable by the charitable company during the financial year.

Intangible Fixed Assets

Intangible fixed assets represent the cost of developing bespoke advocacy case management software. Intangible assets costing more than £1,000 are capitalised. The cost of intangible assets includes incidental acquisition costs. Intangible fixed assets are stated at cost less accumulated amortisation. Amortisation is provided at rates calculated to write down the cost or valuation of each intangible fixed asset, once brought into use, on a straight-line basis to its estimated residual value over its expected useful life. The amortisation rate is as follows:

Bespoke software 25.00%

Intangible fixed assets are reviewed for impairment if circumstances indicate their carrying value may exceed their net realisable value and value in use.

Tangible Fixed Assets

Tangible fixed assets costing more than £1,000 are capitalised. The cost of tangible assets includes incidental acquisition costs. Tangible fixed assets are stated at cost less accumulated depreciation. Depreciation is provided at rates calculated to write down the cost or valuation of each tangible fixed asset, once brought into use, on a straight-line basis to its estimated residual value over its expected useful life. The depreciation rates are as follows:-

Office Equipment:	33.33%
Fixtures and Fittings:	20.00%
Computer Equipment:	33.33%

Tangible fixed assets are reviewed for impairment if circumstances indicate their carrying value may exceed their net realisable value and value in use.

Debtors

Debtors are recognised at their settlement amount, less any provision for non-recoverability. Prepayments are valued at the amount prepaid. Debtors are discounted to the present value of the future cash receipt where such discounting is material.

Work in Progress

Where income is earned at the end of a referral, the value of work in progress is estimated based on the number of open cases at the year end and the average extent of completeness. Work in progress is included in the accounts only to the extent that the value is material, and judged to be recoverable.

Cash at Bank and in Hand

Cash at bank and in hand represents such accounts and instruments that are available on demand or available on notice accounts of no more than 95 days.

Creditors and Provisions

Creditors and provisions are recognised when there is an obligation at the balance sheet date as a result of a past event, it is probable that a transfer of economic benefit will be required in settlement, and the amount of the settlement can be estimated reliably. Creditors and provisions are recognised at the amount the charity anticipates it will pay to settle the debt. They have been discounted to the present value of the future cash payment where such discounting is material.

Financial Instruments

Financial instruments are classed as basic, including debtors and creditors. If arrangement with the debtor or creditor constitutes a financing transaction, it is measured at the net present value of future payments, discounted at market rates to the extent where such discounting is material.

Fund Accounting

Unrestricted funds comprise accumulated surpluses and deficits on the general fund which are available for use in furtherance of the objectives of the Charity and which have not been restricted by the donor or designated by the trustees for a specific purpose.

Designated funds are funds transferred from unrestricted funds that the trustees have set aside for a specific purpose.

Restricted funds are those where income has been received from a donor who places specific restrictions on how the funds must be spent. Restricted funds are only expendable in relation to the purposes set out by the donor.

2. Income from Donations

	2023 Restricted £	2023 Unrestricted £	2023 Total £	2022 Unrestricted £
Donations and gifts	28,742	6,436	35,178	10,532
Legacies	-	-	-	-
Donations in kind	-	-	-	12,043
Total	28,742	6,436	35,178	22,575

3. Income from Charitable Activities

	2023 Restricted £	2023 Unrestricted £	2023 Total £	2022 Total £
Statutory Services	10,000	11,250,363	11,260,363	10,682,159
Non Statutory Services	608,949	3,084,949	3,693,898	3,315,049
Secure & Complex Services	-	1,882,289	1,882,289	1,895,934
Other	-	-	-	-
Total	618,949	16,217,601	16,836,550	15,893,142

2022: Restricted income from non-statutory services was £713,126. All other income was unrestricted.

4. Investment Income

	2023 Unrestricted £	2022 Unrestricted £
Bank Interest Receivable	33,625	2,100

5. Income from Other Sources

	2023 Unrestricted £	2022 Unrestricted £
Other fees & recharged services	5,938	11,607
CJRS grants	-	4,602
Total	5,938	16,209

6. Expenditure on Charitable Activities

Current year:	2023 Statutory services £	2023 Non Statutory services £	2023 Secure services £	2023 Other services £	2023 Total £
Direct operating costs	9,815,449	3,712,974	1,137,869	-	14,666,292
Support costs					
Management and Administration	425,265	141,102	71,901	-	638,268
Human Resources	367,221	121,843	62,086	-	551,150
Business Development	286,840	95,173	48,497	-	430,510
Finance	120,034	39,827	20,295	-	180,156
IT	63,156	20,955	10,678	-	94,789
Governance	52,764	17,506	8,921	-	79,191
	1,315,280	436,406	222,378	-	1,974,064
Total Costs	11,130,729	4,149,380	1,360,247	-	16,640,356
Prior Year Comparison:	2022 Statutory services £	2022 Non Statutory services £	2022 Secure services £	2022 Other services £	2022 Total £
Direct operating costs	9,158,300	2,375,653	1,231,639	-	12,765,592
Support costs					
Management and Administration	294,805	91,488	52,324	-	438,617
Human Resources	250,808	77,835	44,515	-	373,158
Business Development	178,282	55,327	31,643	-	265,252
Finance	163,755	50,819	29,064	-	243,638
IT	62,159	19,291	11,032	-	92,482
Governance	34,825	10,807	6,181	-	51,813
	984,634	305,567	174,759	-	1,464,960
Total Costs	10,142,934	2,681,220	1,406,398	-	14,230,552

7. Net Income / (Expenditure) for the Year

Net income / (expenditure) is stated after charging:

	2023 £	2022 £
Depreciation and amortisation	145,687	109,361
Operating lease rentals	132,450	125,570
<i>Auditor's remuneration</i>		
- Audit provision for current year	22,500	22,530
Trustees' remuneration	-	-
Trustees' reimbursed expenses	415	312

8. Staff Costs and Remuneration of Key Management Personnel

Staff costs were as follows:

	2023 £	2022 £
Salaries and wages	9,277,917	9,392,015
Redundancy payments (including payments in lieu of notice)	14,748	10,455
Social security costs	819,980	790,242
Pension contributions	256,502	251,994
Total Staff Costs	10,369,147	10,444,706

The number of employees whose emoluments exceeded £60,000 was as follows:

	2023 Number	2022 Number
£60,000 to £70,000	-	4
£70,000 to £80,000	3	-
£80,000 to £90,000	-	1
£100,000 to £110,000	1	-

The company made contributions to the pension plans of 4 employees whose emoluments exceeded £60,000 in 2022/23 of £8,456 (2021/22 £9,094, 5 employees).

The key management personnel of the charity comprise the Trustees and the Executive Team.

None of the trustees receive any remuneration in connection with their services to the charity (2021/22: £nil). The total remuneration including employer's pension contributions of the Executive Team for the year was £371,942 (2021/22: £365,110).

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

	2023 Number	2022 Number
Charitable activities	395	407
Management, support services and administration	33	25
Total	428	432

In accordance with the relevant accounting standards, employee numbers are counted irrespective of hours worked. POhWER benefits from the services of part time employees, and the headcount expressed in full time equivalents would be 328 for charitable activities (2021/22: 346) and 30 in management, support services and administration (2021/22: 23).

9. Defined Contribution Pension Schemes

The charitable company opened a defined contribution pension scheme provided by the NOW: Pensions Trust effective from the staging date of 1 April 2014, we subsequently moved to The Peoples Pension on 1 April 2019, both schemes satisfy the requirements of automatic enrolment pension legislation. The charitable company pays employer's contributions of 3% of pensionable salary into this defined contribution pension scheme provided that an employee pays employee contributions of at least 5% of pensionable salary. The charitable company pays employer's contributions exceeding 3% in a limited number of cases in order to comply with contractual obligations. At the year end, amounts of £56,335 were due to the pension scheme provider (2021/22: £57,085).

10. Intangible Fixed Assets

	Bespoke Software £
Cost or valuation	
At the start of the year	162,077
Additions in the year	-
Disposals in the year	(20,713)
At the end of the year	141,364
Depreciation	
At the start of the year	(160,472)
Charge for the year	(1,605)
Disposals in the year	20,713
At the end of the year	(141,364)
Net book value	
At the end of the year	-
At the start of the year	1,605

11. Tangible Fixed Assets

	Office Equipment £	Fixtures and Fittings £	Computer Equipment £	Total £
Cost or valuation				
At the start of the year	77,886	25,062	490,622	593,570
Additions in the year	-	97,042	97,478	194,520
Disposals in the year	(70,514)	(19,421)	(44,259)	(134,194)
At the end of the year	7,372	102,683	543,841	653,896
Depreciation				
At the start of the year	(70,502)	(21,396)	(265,368)	(357,266)
Charge for the year	(5,538)	(1,288)	(137,256)	(144,082)
Disposals in the year	68,668	19,421	43,787	131,876
At the end of the year	(7,372)	(3,263)	(358,837)	(369,472)
Net book value				
At the end of the year	-	99,420	185,004	284,424
At the start of the year	7,384	3,666	225,254	236,304

12. Debtors

	2023 £	2022 £
Trade debtors	1,839,903	1,300,640
Accrued income	31,615	70,954
Prepayments	129,454	165,270
Other debtors	20,222	18,034
Total Debtors	2,021,194	1,554,898

13. Creditors: Amounts Due Within One Year

	2023 £	2022 £
Trade creditors	281,599	228,171
Taxation and social security	185,215	196,865
Accrued expenses	237,718	229,731
Other creditors	124,303	58,637
Deferred income	373,051	573,180
Total Creditors	1,201,886	1,286,584

Income received in advance of the provision of services is deferred. Deferred income recognised during the year is as follows:

	£
Deferred income brought forward	573,180
Deferred income released during the year	(573,180)
Income deferred during the year	373,051
Deferred income carried forward	373,051

14. Movement in Restricted Funds

	Start of year 01.04.2022 £	Income £	Expenditure £	Transfers between funds £	End of year 31.03.2023 £
Restricted funds					
- Birmingham NNS Grants	39,974	175,000	(205,710)	-	9,264
- Birmingham NNS	-	179,598	(153,761)	-	25,837
- Herts Community Navigator Service	-	159,350	(152,155)	(7,195)	-
- Oxfordshire Community Advocacy	12,151	-	(303)	-	11,848
- Food bank	-	10,000	(10,000)	-	-
- NHS Bristol Members Event	-	50,000	(50,000)	-	-
- Family Action Birmingham Household Support	-	35,000	(35,000)	-	-
- Shout About It	-	1,150	(1,150)	-	-
- Training grant Luton	-	10,001	(10,018)	18	-
- Hertfordshire Suicide Prevention Podcast	-	3,000	(3,000)	-	-
- Allen & Overy	6,326	-	(6,326)	-	-
- Kickstart	-	24,592	(27,435)	2,843	-
Total Funds	58,451	647,691	(654,858)	(4,334)	46,949

Prior Year Comparison

	Start of year 01.04.2021	Income	Expenditure	Transfers between funds	End of year 31.03.2022
	£	£	£	£	£
Restricted funds					
- Birmingham NNS	103	350,916	(310,350)	(695)	39,974
- Herts Community Navigator Service	-	181,297	(180,370)	(927)	-
- Oxfordshire Community Advocacy	12,281	-	(131)	-	12,150
- Nottingham Peer Advocacy	-	986	(986)	-	-
- Hertfordshire Members Event	-	350	(350)	-	-
- Family Action Birmingham Household Support	-	18,338	(18,338)	-	-
- East Herts District Council Hub Training	-	1,000	(1,000)	-	-
- Herts Help at Home – Emergency Grant	-	750	(750)	-	-
- Nottinghamshire Mental Health Discharge	-	78,907	(78,907)	-	-
- Leicester Health Surveys	-	298	(298)	-	-
- Birmingham Covid Support	-	3,897	(3,897)	-	-
- Islington Covid Support	-	1,477	(1,427)	(50)	-
- Bedford Infection Control	-	6,000	(6,000)	-	-
- Barnet Infection Control	-	6,300	(6,300)	-	-
- Hertfordshire Suicide Prevention Podcast	-	3,000	(3,000)	-	-
- Bedfordshire Infection Control	-	28,400	(28,400)	-	-
- Allen & Overy	-	8,000	(1,674)	-	6,326
- Bedford Covid Support	-	6,000	(6,000)	-	-
- Kickstart	-	8,546	(8,829)	284	-
Total Funds	12,384	704,462	(657,007)	(1,388)	58,451

Restricted Funds

Birmingham NNS (Neighbourhood Network Scheme)

Working on behalf of Birmingham City Council to support citizens over 50 in the community to live healthy, independent lives. The Neighbourhood Network Scheme helps connect older people to individuals, groups, organisations, activities, services and places in their neighbourhoods.

Management Funding

Funding from Hertfordshire County Council and NHS Herts Valleys CCG towards the HertsHelp service Manager.

Hertfordshire Navigator Service

A grant for a Community Navigator who provides face to face support to help with a variety of issues including practical support to help arrange bill payments, sorting domestic paperwork and reviewing benefit entitlement in Hertfordshire.

Nottingham Community Mental Health

A pilot to develop a community mental health service in Nottingham.

Oxfordshire Community Advocacy

A grant from Oxfordshire Advocacy, known as Getting Heard, to deliver community advocacy in Oxfordshire.

Heart of England Food Bank

Hertfordshire crisis funding for a beneficiary.

Bristol Members Event

Training grant ring fenced to south west used to upskill advocates in courage leadership.

Shout About It

Network event, fees, grants and donations received as part of the annual event to fund future network events.

Luton Training Grant

Training grant to upskill advocates.

Hertford Members Event

A corporate donation towards events for members in Hertfordshire.

Family Action Household Support Fund

A funding programme to support households in most need in Birmingham with food, energy, water bills and other essential costs.

East Herts District Council Hub Training

A grant towards training for our Hub employees.

Nottinghamshire Healthcare NHS Trust Mental Health Discharge

A grant to support the integration of community mental health in Nottinghamshire.

Leicester

A grant for conducting telephone surveys.

Birmingham Covid Support

A local authority grant to support with additional costs associated with the Covid-19 pandemic.

Islington Covid Support

A local authority grant to support with additional costs associated with the Covid-19 pandemic.

Bedford Borough Council Infection Control

A local authority grant to support with additional costs associated with the Covid-19 pandemic.

Barnet Infection Control

A local authority grant to support with additional costs associated with the Covid-19 pandemic.

Hertfordshire Suicide Prevention Podcast

A grant to produce a suicide awareness & prevention podcast.

Central Bedfordshire Infection Control

A local authority grant to support with additional costs associated with the Covid-19 pandemic.

Allen & Overy

A grant to advance parents' advocacy to help navigate child protection proceedings, either through 1-2-1 support or through the development of self-advocacy tools.

Bedford Covid Support

A local authority grant to support with additional costs associated with the Covid-19 pandemic.

Kickstart

A government grant towards the cost of workers employed on the Kickstart scheme.

15. Movement in Unrestricted Funds

	Start of year 01.04.2022	Income	Expenditure	Transfers between funds	End of year 31.03.2023
	£	£	£	£	£
Unrestricted funds					
- General fund	3,729,109	16,263,600	(15,988,484)	(23,184)	3,981,041
Designated funds					
- Arthur Bate fund	36,530	-	-	(6,530)	30,000
- PR fund	-	-	-	-	-
- Staff training	-	-	-	-	-
- Technology development fund	-	-	-	-	-
- Community fund	12,466	-	-	(12,466)	-
- Fixed assets fund	237,909	-	-	46,515	284,424
Total Funds	4,016,014	16,263,600	(15,988,484)	4,335	4,295,465

Prior Year Comparison

	Start of year 01.04.2021	Income	Expenditure	Transfers between funds	End of year 31.03.2022
	£	£	£	£	£
Unrestricted funds					
- General fund	2,214,826	15,229,563	(13,655,169)	(60,111)	3,729,109
Designated funds					
- Arthur Bate fund	39,730	-	(3,200)	-	36,530
-PR fund	-	-	-	-	-
-Staff training development fund	6,500	-	-	(6,500)	-
-Technology development fund	-	-	-	-	-
-Community fund	12,466	-	-	-	12,466
Fixed assets fund	169,909	-	-	68,000	237,909
Total Funds	2,443,431	15,229,563	(13,658,369)	1,389	4,016,014

Unrestricted Funds

General fund

The General Fund comprises the accumulated surpluses and deficits which have neither been restricted by conditions imposed by donors, nor have been designated by the trustees for specific purposes.

- wish to become trustees of charities
- seek to set up self-advocacy groups
- want to set up peer support groups
- want to set up advocacy groups
- seek to start other kinds of advocacy activity

Designated funds

The Arthur Bate fund

In memory of Arthur Bate, a founding trustee of POhWER and campaigner for the rights of people with disabilities, the Arthur Bate fund was created to provide support for people who:

PR Fund

A seed fund to buy in specialist PR and media support to further develop the charity's campaigning activities.

Staff Training Development Fund

A fund to purchase supplementary advocacy training and materials over and above the general budget for NAQ-level training.

Technology Development Fund

A fund for investment in (1) automation development and (2) ongoing improvements to the charity's operational management system.

Community Fund

A fund to develop community advocacy and engagement.

Fixed assets fund

The fixed assets fund reflects the carrying net book value of the charity's tangible and intangible fixed assets and has been separated from the charity's general unrestricted funds in recognition of the fact that these assets are essential to the day-to-day operations of the charity and should not be considered realisable to meet future commitments.

16. Analysis of Net Assets between Funds

Current Year	General funds	Designated funds	Fixed assets fund	Restricted Funds	Total 2023
Intangible Assets	-	-	-	-	-
Tangible Assets	-	-	284,424	-	284,424
Cash	3,161,733	30,000	-	46,949	3,238,682
Debtors	2,021,194	-	-	-	2,021,194
Creditors	(1,201,886)	-	-	-	(1,329,256)
Total	3,981,041	30,000	284,424	46,949	4,342,414

Prior Year Comparison	General funds	Designated funds	Fixed assets fund	Restricted Funds	Total 2022
Intangible Assets	-	-	1,605	-	1,605
Tangible Assets	-	-	236,304	-	236,304
Cash	3,460,795	48,996	-	58,451	3,568,242
Debtors	1,554,898	-	-	-	1,554,898
Creditors	(1,286,584)	-	-	-	(1,286,584)
Total	3,729,109	48,996	237,909	58,451	4,074,465

17. Operating Lease Commitments

The total commitment under non-cancellable operating leases at 31 March 2023 is analysed according to the periods in which the leases expire:-

	2023	2022
	Land & Buildings	Land & Buildings
	£	£
Less than 1 year	126,549	110,510
2-5 years	292,902	224,345
Total	419,451	334,855

Lease costs expensed during the year amounted to £132,450. (2021/22: £125,570).

18. Related Party Transactions

During the financial year 3 trustees were reimbursed £415 (2021/22: 7 trustees reimbursed £312) for travel and incidental expenses which related to carrying out their duties as Trustees of the charitable company. Trustees are based in a wide geographical area in a reflection of the areas we work in.

Trustees made no voluntary donations in the financial year (2021/22 donations including gift aid were £2,187).

There were no other related party transactions during the financial year (2021/22: none).

Expenditure includes £3,118 (2021/22: £3,032) in respect of trustees' indemnity insurance which provides cover of up to a maximum of £5,000,000.

POhWER

A company limited by guarantee

Registered Office

Suite 4, Middlesex House
Meadway Corporate Centre
Stevenage
Hertfordshire SG1 2EF

Registered in England and Wales with the Charity Commission under charity number 1061543

Registered in Scotland by the Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator under charity number SCO48858

Registered company number 03323040

www.pohwer.net

Auditors

haysmacintyre LLP
10 Queen Street Place
London EC4R 1AG

Legal Advisors

Stone King LLP
Boundary House
91 Charterhouse St
Barbican, London EC1M 6HR

Bankers

The Co-operative Bank plc
PO Box 101
1 Balloon Street
Manchester M60 4EP

Patrons

Lord Michael Cashman CBE
Peter Duncan
Nitu Shah
Samantha Lee Howe
Dr Melrose Stewart

Vice Presidents

Aruna Patel
Carol Lee MBE
Gary Blaker
Iris Lusack
Judith Smart
Phil Lawrence
Steven Rathbone
Tim Anfilogoff

Trustees

Antony Kildare (Chair)
Abdi Mohamed (d) (from October 2022)
Alex Cisneros (d) (from October 2022)
Andrew McGrath (a)(d)
Bridget Flint (a)(b) (retired October 2022)
Corinne Mills (b) (from October 2022)
Gemma Hope (c) (from October 2022)
Geoff Gibbs (a)(d) (retired October 2022)
Ian Holland (c)
Jackie Kinsey (b)
Mitch Miller (b)
Paul Robinson (a) (from October 2022)
Rachael Gilthorpe (c) (from October 2022)
Sandra Harding (a)(c)
Sundera Kumara-Moorthy (a)(c) (retired October 2022)
Toby Cotton (a)(d) (retired October 2022)

- a. Member of the Finance, Audit and Risk Committee
- b. Member of the People Committee
- c. Member of the Fundraising and Income Generation Committee
- d. Member of the Nominations Committee

Executive Team

Chief Executive

Helen Moulinos

Deputy Chief Executive

Elyzabeth Hawkes

Company Secretary (resigned 2 February 2023)
and Chief Finance Officer (resigned 30 March 2023)

Tim Jarvis

Director of Finance and Resources from 1 July 2023

Vicky Hilpert

Company Secretary (from 2 February 2023)
Janet Douglas

Director of Fundraising and Engagement
Fiona McArthur-Worbey

People Director

Julie Born

POHWER

England & Wales - Charity number 1061543

Accounts



Annual Report and Financial Statements

For the year ended 31 March 2022



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Welcome from the Chair



Despite another difficult and unpredictable year, it is reassuring and humbling to see how robustly all our staff and volunteers have risen to the many challenges we have faced, enabling POhWER to emerge with greater resilience and a continuing determination to support those in our society who struggle to understand their rights, express their views and have their voices heard, and make things better for them. Our work is all the more important to our many service users, beneficiaries and their supporters and families given the extended period of disruption and change it has been necessary to confront.

We remember all those who have been affected by COVID-19 directly and indirectly, those who have lost loved ones and all who have suffered as a consequence of hardship, poor and deteriorating physical and mental health. We acknowledge and thank our people, our volunteers and our champions who have made so many sacrifices throughout the year to ensure our beneficiaries continued to be supported and represented.

I believe the role of charities as a catalyst for change and a force for good in society has been reinforced in the past year, both at home and internationally. POhWER is proud to be part of that momentum.

Without doubt, uncertainty, unpredictability and economic and financial volatility lie ahead. Along with the rest of our sector, we are experiencing changes and increases in demand as well as anxiety and alarm from commissioners experiencing their own financial pressures to reduce and contain delivery costs. In particular, the outcome of the Government's review of the Human Rights Act could create major social consequences and instability for many, including our beneficiaries and those whom we represent and support. POhWER will rise to this challenge, to be courageous in helping defend the rights of our beneficiaries and amplify their voice.

As part of this work, we intend to augment our campaigning and influencing efforts to change and uphold the laws that are important to enable our beneficiaries to live as equal people. The submission of strong and clear evidence-based qualitative and quantitative information and data to consultations and inquiries will be an essential part of our plan.

On behalf of the Board of Trustees, I want to gratefully and sincerely thank our staff, volunteers, supporters and partners, all of whom have contributed to our Charity's objectives and achievements over the past year and who have made personal sacrifices, repeatedly demonstrating generosity and unstinting commitment to make this possible. We will continue to invest in our people and recognise that our achievements and impact are possible only through their outstanding individual and collective efforts.

Finally, I want to thank our Trustees who, with passion, commitment to POhWER and good humour, have steadfastly supported me through a momentous year.

Antony Kildare
Chair of Board of Trustees

Welcome from the Chief Executive



We have been reminded this past year that POhWER's work remains significantly impactful and relevant in a year where human rights and entitlements have been tested, challenged and threatened. The advocacy, information and advice support that our staff, volunteers, trustees, partners and commissioners offer, delivers a 'level playing field' and social justice. Our Charity empowers people to have a voice, access information to make informed choices for themselves and offers a champion in their corner.

We continue to recognise that our role is paramount to supporting our beneficiaries to have their voices heard and rights upheld and safeguarding many vulnerable and marginalised people. As a Charity which does not have a typical beneficiary, we seek to widen entitlement for advocacy to as many people

as possible. We are changing and innovating in step with our beneficiaries offering new models of support this year.

I am very proud of what POhWER has achieved this past year – reaching 520,357 people who needed our support and faced extensive challenges in securing their rights and entitlements within public services and facing off to public authorities.

However, the fact remains that POhWER would not need to exist in a fair, free and equal world. The growth that we have experienced this past year is driven by the inequalities that exist and a sign that we don't live in a society where everyone is treated fairly or equally. The rising number of people accessing our support is due to the sheer scale of social inequality in the UK.

POhWER's aspiration is to create a level playing field and help our beneficiaries live as equal people. But we can only be part of the solution and we are seeing increased instances of people falling between the cracks which we think will increase if the Government replaces the Human Rights Act. The surge in demand for our services tells me human rights, entitlements and protections are not being respected in our everyday life.

For those who utilised our services – whether it was our national helpline, one-to-one advocacy services, community advocacy or self-advocacy digital resources we continue to fight for your dignity and equality through our independent role.

Thank you to everyone who was part of our POhWER story this past year.

Helen Moulinos
Chief Executive

Our Vision, Mission and Values

Our Vision

Upholding rights and tackling inequalities for those who need to have their voice heard.

Our Mission

To deliver high quality advocacy, information and advice services empowering people to have a voice and to make a real difference to their lives.

Our Values

Our values are our core principles, the qualities and beliefs that drive all of our work. We put people at the heart of everything we do in the way we work with our beneficiaries, partners and stakeholders and, equally importantly, with each other.

- **P**rofessional – We are committed to working in a confidential and person-centred way. Being professional, respectful, reliable, honest and independent.
- **E**mpowering – We will empower people to develop their skills and confidence, stand up for their rights and regain control. Thus creating a culture of enablement, not dependency.
- **O**pen, free and fair – We will deliver services that are free to use and accessible to all members of the community while encouraging and valuing differences and diversity and always working in a fair and open way.
- **P**ositive difference – We will ensure that our passion for our work results in a positive difference to people's lives and use the learning from our casework to have a positive impact on the delivery of services in the future.
- **L**ocal – We will engage with local communities in the areas that we serve, understanding their specific needs and determining the best way to meet these.
- **E**ngaging – We will meaningfully listen and engage with people and groups to ensure they are involved in the design, delivery and evaluation of our services, ensuring we are a pioneering client and needs led organisation.

What is Advocacy?

POhWER seeks to empower people through advocacy, information, advice and guidance, supporting them to have informed choice and an independent voice by understanding their rights and entitlements.

Advocacy seeks to give people the tools, help and support they need to allow them to be involved and make their own choices and decisions about their lives.

Our core advocacy services seek to empower people, not create dependency and are available to people who need a helping hand regardless of their lived experience or situation.

POhWER shapes its services around the needs of each individual, supporting them as a whole person not as a label, issue or problem statement.

How can POhWER staff or volunteers help you?

Our POhWER colleagues can help a person to:

- speak up for themselves or give their views
- understand the process they are going through, their rights and what choices are available to them
- be part of an important decision which is being made about them
- prepare for and take part in meetings and tribunals
- raise queries or concerns
- access information in the format which is most suitable
- access services that can support them
- advocates can also provide information and signpost people to other helpful services.

Types of advocacy

Statutory Advocacy

In certain circumstances a person has the legal right to an advocate including under the Care Act, Mental Capacity Act and Mental Health Act.

Care Act Advocacy

The Care Act says that local councils must involve people in decisions about their care and support needs. If it would be difficult for someone to be involved without support, the council must make sure they get the help they need. If the person doesn't have someone who can help them they have the right to have an independent Care Act Advocate.



NHS Complaints Advocacy

This is also called Independent Health Complaints Advocacy (IHCA). NHS Complaints Advocates help people to use the complaints process to raise a complaint about NHS funded treatment or care.



Independent Mental Capacity Advocacy (IMCA)

An IMCA is an advocate who has been specially trained to support people who are not able to make certain decisions for themselves (they lack the capacity) and do not have family or friends who are able to speak for them. IMCAs do not make decisions and they are independent of the people who do make the decisions.



Non-Statutory Advocacy

Non-statutory advocacy services help those who fall outside the eligibility criteria for statutory services.

Regulatory - Fitness to Practice Advocacy

Advocacy that can support people who are involved in complaints about the fitness to practice cases of a registered health or social care professional, overseen by the professions regulatory body.

Community Advocacy

Community Advocates can support people who find it difficult to put their views across or feel they aren't being listened to and help deal with an issue they are facing.



Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards (DoLS)/ Liberty Protection Safeguards (LPS)

If a person is deprived of their liberty under the Mental Capacity Act, an IMCA will be appointed to protect their human rights and make sure the deprivation is lawful, reasonable and in their best interests. The IMCA supports the person and collects information about them including their beliefs, values and previous behaviour in order to represent their wishes.



Relevant Person's Paid Representative Service (RPPR)

Everyone who is deprived of their liberty under the Mental Capacity Act must have a representative. This could be a family member or a friend, but if there is no one suitable it could be a Paid Representative also known as an RPPR. RPPRs are qualified advocates who have specialist knowledge of the Mental Capacity Act and Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards legislation.

Independent Mental Health Advocacy (IMHA)

An IMHA is an independent advocate who is trained in the Mental Health Act and supports people who are being treated under the Act to understand their rights and participate in decisions about their care and treatment. IMHAs can support people who are detained in hospital, and people living in the community who are receiving Supervised Community Treatment or are subject to Guardianship under the Act.



Children's and Young People's Advocacy including Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS)

CAMHS advocacy support is provided within both private and NHS hospitals across the country. Advocates provide drop-in services for the young people to access advocacy on a regular basis. Advocates support individuals to have their voice heard or work with groups of young people to raise issues they have identified.

Culturally Appropriate Advocacy

Advocates who ensure access to culturally appropriate IMHA and other forms of advocacy aiming to create an increased say and involvement in care and treatment during detention under the Mental Health Act for ethnic minority groups.



Citizen Advocacy

Citizen Advocates are trained volunteers. They provide one-to-one support to help people tackle the issues they are facing. Citizen Advocates may provide support in person, by telephone or by email and help people to access information, speak up and get their voice heard.

Peer Advocacy

Peer Advocates are volunteers with lived experience of using public authority services. They share their experience and provide practical support and encouragement. Peer Advocates are matched with someone who has similar needs and issues to support them to develop new skills and gain confidence.

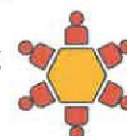


Self-Advocacy

Self-Advocacy is representing your own views and wishes and asking for what you need or want. It gives you the ability to make your voice heard and take part in important decisions which are being made about you including how and where you live.

Group Advocacy

Group Advocacy brings people with similar needs and issues together to support each other. These groups give people the opportunity to work together, share their experiences and raise joint concerns. Sometimes the group has a facilitator who supports the running of the group and sometimes these groups are self-supporting.



Instructed Advocacy

Instructed Advocacy is when a person is able to tell the advocate what their needs and wishes are and what support they need. They are able to ask the advocate for support and tell them what actions they would like to be taken on their behalf.

Non-Instructed Advocacy

When a person is unable to communicate their wishes and needs for reasons such as temporary unconsciousness, brain injury, dementia etc, an advocate will use techniques such as observing the person, speaking to people who know them well or care for them to build a profile of the person's needs and wishes and use this to make sure their best interests are represented.



Strategic Report

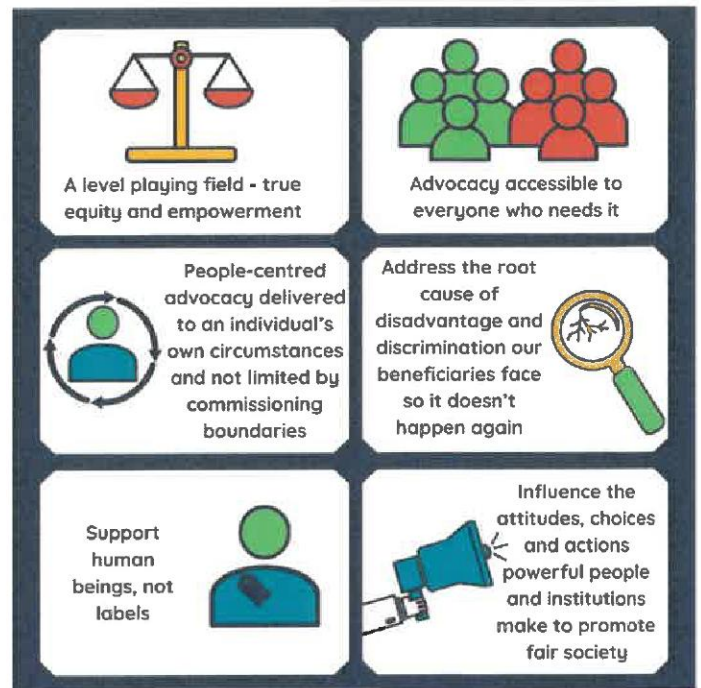
Strategic Direction 2020-2025

POhWER has been working to effect change in British society since 1996. Our strategy describes where we are heading to and how we will achieve our aims and objectives. For charities like POhWER who are driving rights-led change through advocacy, a strategy defines the long-term goals, influences, interventions, and factors involved in achieving them.

POhWER was established by a group of people who were fighting social injustice and challenges in their lives. POhWER still operates with these roots at the heart of everything it does; supporting marginalised, vulnerable and socially excluded people through its charitable work.

Our strategy is built upon six foundations or strategic themes we want to realise through POhWER's charitable work.

Our full strategy can be read here: <https://www.pohwer.net/strategy-2020-2025>



Areas of Focus

We continue to move further towards achieving our vision through six broad areas of focused activity included in our 5-year strategy:

- Deliver more to each client through greater expertise, efficiency, and digital development
- Grow income through mutually beneficial partnerships, fundraising and commercial enterprise
- Influence policy, public attitudes and legislation through campaigning, lobbying and influencing
- Grow client reach through new models of impact-led advocacy and geographical expansion
- Further embed co-production within the design and development of our services
- Strengthen culture, skills, finances, governance and infrastructure

During 2021-2022, we prioritised our strategic resources to deliver against three areas of activity which included growth, systemic change and awareness and operational strengthening.

Our growth and systemic change and awareness plans included investment focused on:

- Broadening our campaigning and influencing activity
- Piloting new innovative advocacy models
- Diversifying income and geographical expansion
- Re-designing our co-production and engagement models in line with our diverse beneficiary profiles
- Understanding unmet needs of our beneficiaries and the issues most important to them

Operational strengthening activity focused on strengthening our safeguarding skills, policies, procedures and relationships and restructuring our organisational structure. People and Culture focus included continuous improvement of our HR operation and the launch of our Equality Diversity & Inclusion Strategy and Plan.

Impact and Achievements

Through our planning, implementation focus and strategic investment, POhWER hopes to demonstrate improvement and impact over the remainder of the current strategy.

5-year Desired Outcome (before 2025)	2021-2022 Achievement
Beneficiary reach trebles to support people not supported by advocacy today	Supported 520,357 people who faced extensive challenges in securing their rights and entitlements within public services and provided in-person advocacy support to 148,203 people. Supported 372,154 people through our Help Hub information and support line.
Service users have an independent voice and are more empowered through POhWER's intervention Achieve >85% positive client quality outcomes every year	Feedback from our beneficiaries using our services has been broadly positive with 87% rating our services 5 out of 5. We conducted a review this year of our beneficiaries to understand their circumstances and lived experiences in more detail. This review has informed activity and new forums supporting our co-production. Through our local services we regularly canvas views on the suitability, quality and completeness of our services to ensure we continue to deliver value to the people we serve.
Embed structured co-production in service design and continuous development Aspirations and unmet needs are better understood and embedded in future service design and development	We continued to capture data to understand unmet needs of our beneficiaries, and for the first time this year we tracked and analysed these unmet needs to understand where our beneficiaries were 'falling between the cracks' of public services. We plan to study this analysis to co-produce new innovative pilots, non-statutory models of advocacy and information & advice to inform future service design. Increased frequency of the service user panel meetings and detailed design pathway for lived experience panels to be launched in 2022-2023.
British society becomes more inclusive and accepting and institutions value and understand the importance of equal treatment and access	We focused on awareness raising, relationship building, educational and informative public speaking, digital information content development including 5 new podcasts and 10 new informational videos and also launched new self-advocacy tools on our website to help influence the attitudes of the British public. We published our first Human Rights Attitudes & Opinions survey. Across the UK, we delivered Rights Strengthening Awareness Raising sessions in-person and digitally promoted education of the general public on equality, rights and entitlements in public services to promote self-advocacy.
The support and investment in our staff	Detailed under the 'People' section on pages 15 and 16.
To develop and implement six new models of non-statutory advocacy	These are listed on page 11 under Service Innovation..
Secure new diversified income through fundraising, corporate partnerships and civil society partnerships	Continued expansion of partnership working with 40+ civil society organisations; this is an increase on the prior year. Diversification of income through launch of digital fundraising channels.
Raise beneficiary reach and awareness of POhWER through face-to-face social media and digital information resources	We held peer advocacy groups to help people to share perspectives and empower them with information. Continued to restructure our digital offering and expanded our social media and information assets found on our website. Expanded our podcast series to include POhWER's 25th anniversary heritage celebration.

5-year Desired Outcome (before 2025)	2021-2022 Achievement
Campaign for proposed changes to key legislation, influence public attitudes and develop our national parliamentary/policy making relationships Laws and human rights are upheld and new protections developed.	Our aim is to change laws and to uphold laws important to our beneficiaries enabling them to live as equal people through evidence led submissions to powerful people and institutions, ministerial engagement, external awareness raising and through telling the stories of our beneficiaries circumstances. During 2021-2022 we submitted nine written evidence submissions to Parliament, managed campaigns against the use of blanket DNARs, provided input into Mental Health Act Reform, Liberty Protection Safeguards and Human Rights Act Review. We raised awareness of the detrimental impacts of the proposed Bill of Rights, Voter ID and inequalities within healthcare and social care for marginalised groups. Our case work and research on break on applications of blanket DNACPRs and human rights breaches for over 800 cases was cited by several notable organisations. We supported long overdue reform of the Mental Health Act, informed proposals into social care, and contributed to impact reviews of COVID-19 pandemic. Our advocacy work continued to create precedent through case law in the Court of Protection. Through our public engagement we used our position within media channels and civil society to promote support for human rights in everyday British life, educate the general public on inequalities and unfair treatment for our beneficiaries. We deepened relationships with key policy-making units within the British Institute of Human Rights, Equality & Human Rights Commission and the Care Quality Commission. Our work was cited by several academic institutions, public authorities, regulators and rights organisations.
Champion local engagement and deliver social value within the communities we serve The support and investment in our staff is detailed under the 'People' section on page 15.	POhWER continues to strive to deliver social value in the areas in which we work, helping to build resilient communities. Among many other commitments this year we have: • run community engagement and improvement programmes and groups • introduced a strategy and plan to reduce our carbon footprint • raised £684,372 through new funding to help us to expand our services to address unmet needs. We launched the first phase of our grant fund in memory of Arthur Bate, to create a helpful intervention for new trustee support, campaigning, community advocacy and/or peer groups. We made three awards in our first grant phase to Disability Snowsport UK, Striving for Unity and Basingstoke and District Disability Forum. In Hertfordshire, we supported local people living in crisis with basic needs including food parcels, white goods and fuel vouchers through HertsHelp and HCNS partnerships. Our Shout About It events brought together local organisations working to improve lives and empower people living in Hertfordshire. In Birmingham, we supported Commonwealth Games accessibility planning and helped to fund local innovation projects via the Neighbourhood Network Grant Scheme. In Nottingham, we delivered women's self-advocacy workshops, COVID-19 pandemic check-ins and partnered with local charities to deliver information and awareness raising sessions.

Our Services

This past year we saw a modest increase in new people seeking advocacy, information or advice support. Our existing clients required advocacy support for multiple cases often over a longer time frame which drove exponential demand for our services.

Data Measure	2020-2021	2021-2022	% Change
Number of new people supported by 1:1 advocacy support	64,312	66,875	3.99%
Number of existing people supported by 1:1 advocacy support	18,268	81,328	345.19%
Total number of people supported by 1:1 advocacy cases	82,580	148,203	79.5%



Information & Advice

The pandemic continued to create an increase in demand for our information & advice services managed by our Help Hubs.

Data Measure	2020-2021	2021-2022	% Change
Total number of contacts (phone calls, emails, video conferences)	340,619	372,154	9.3%



Digital Self-Advocacy

The expansion of our digital information resources available to the general public and investments in awareness building of human rights through public speaking and media grew our website reach.

Data Measure	2020-2021	2021-2022	% Change
Number of webpage views	426,854	439,440	2.9%
Number of self-help and information resources downloaded from our website	35,072	35,594	1.5%



We routinely capture information about the outcomes that we help people achieve to ensure we are delivering benefits to the beneficiaries we serve. Our Impact Report can be found on our website:

<https://www.pohwer.net/our-impact>

During 2021-2022 POhWER supported the following:

Advocacy	148,203	total people supported		Information & Advice	372,154	calls, texts and emails handled by our Help Hubs	
	92,410	challenges and issues supported			8,618	people supported with basic needs including food parcels, utilities and white goods	
	66,875	new clients supported					
	81,328	existing clients supported			44	information & advice staff	
	361	advocacy staff			87%	rated our services 5 out of 5	
	117	volunteers			1,149	safeguarding alerts raised	
				Quality & Risk			

The most common reasons why people contacted POhWER vary by service. Complaints and attitude of staff were most common within NHS Complaints, while other Advocacy services focused predominantly on statutory cases and safeguarding with exception of community advocacy where many unmet needs arose.

Top five issues supported by service type

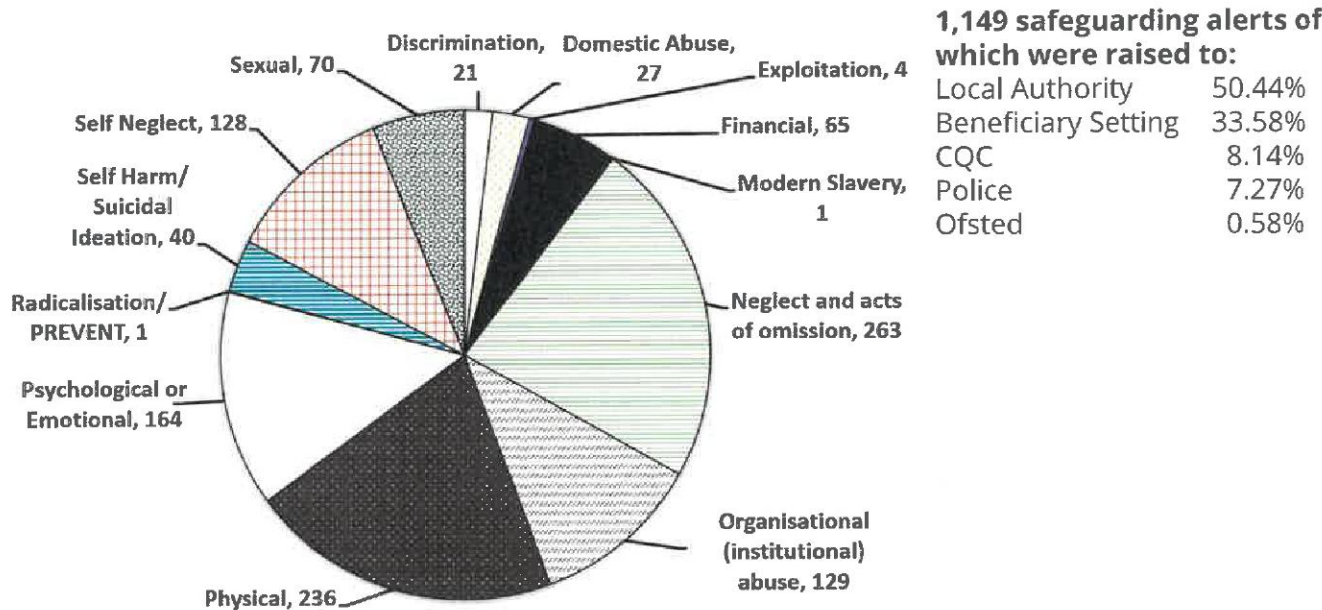


Service Innovation

We continued our service innovation through the launch of several new non-statutory advocacy pilots, projects and services:

Eating Disorder and Autism Spectrum Disorder Mental Health Discharge (ASD) Advocacy Service for Nottingham Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust	Community Equality & Diversity Lead for Gloucestershire County Council
Eating Disorder and Autism Spectrum Disorder Mental Health Discharge (ASD) Advocacy Service for Nottingham Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust	Mental Health Carers Advocacy for Gloucestershire County Council
Safeguarding Project for Nottinghamshire County Council	Expansion of Community Mental Health Project for Gloucestershire Health and Care NHS Foundation Trust
Household Support Fund for Birmingham City Council	Community Mental Health Consultation Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland Clinical Commissioning Groups
Commonwealth Games Facilitator Programme Birmingham City Council	ASD Mental Health Community Discharge Project for NHS England Mersey Care Foundation Trust

Safeguarding our beneficiaries is paramount to protecting human rights and continued to be prominent in our work. We raised 1,149 alerts during 2021-2022 with the most significant issues relating to physical, psychological, emotional or institutional abuse cases.



Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

Our focus on Equality, Diversity and Inclusion this past year sought to understand the demographics and lived experiences of the beneficiaries we serve and our workforce. POhWER does not have a typical beneficiary and the diversity of the people who use our services to uphold rights and entitlements across public institutions reflects this. Our workforce mirrors this diversity.

As a charity, we are on a continuous journey and we aspire to be a leader of Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) practices within the charity sector by being known for going above and beyond the minimum baseline of equality laws in everything we do.

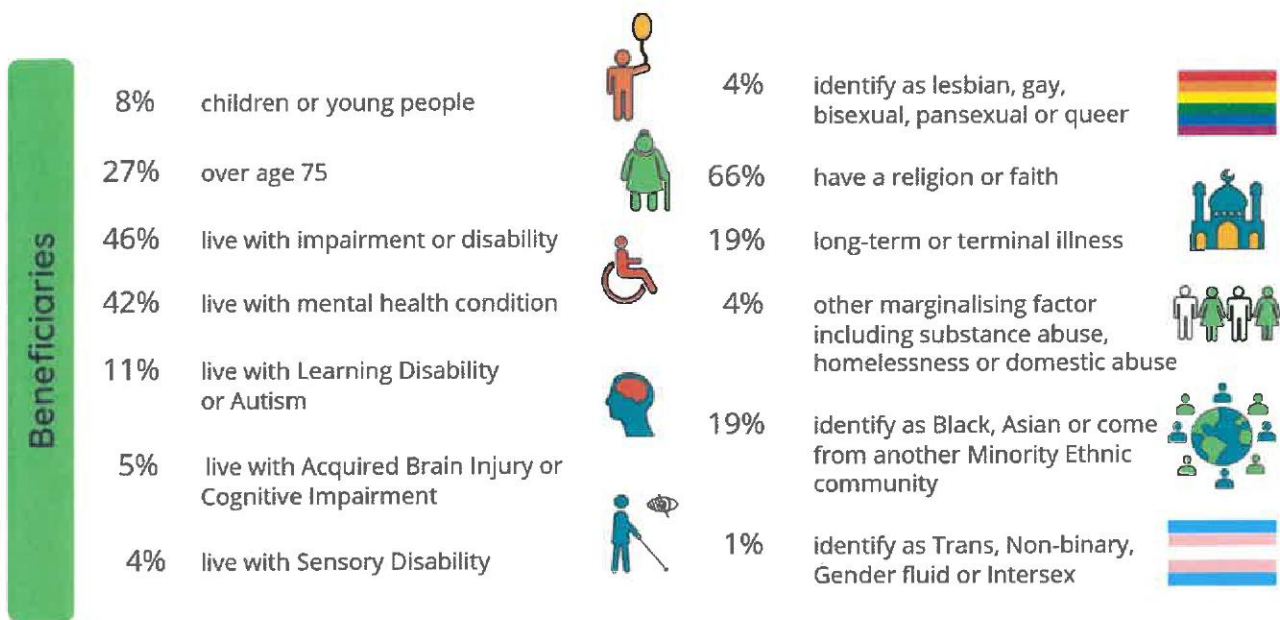
We believe everyone has a human right to be treated with respect and dignity.

Following on from a 2-year programme of actively engaging with our workforce and beneficiaries we have formally committed to an EDI strategy and plan which will further transform our organisation.

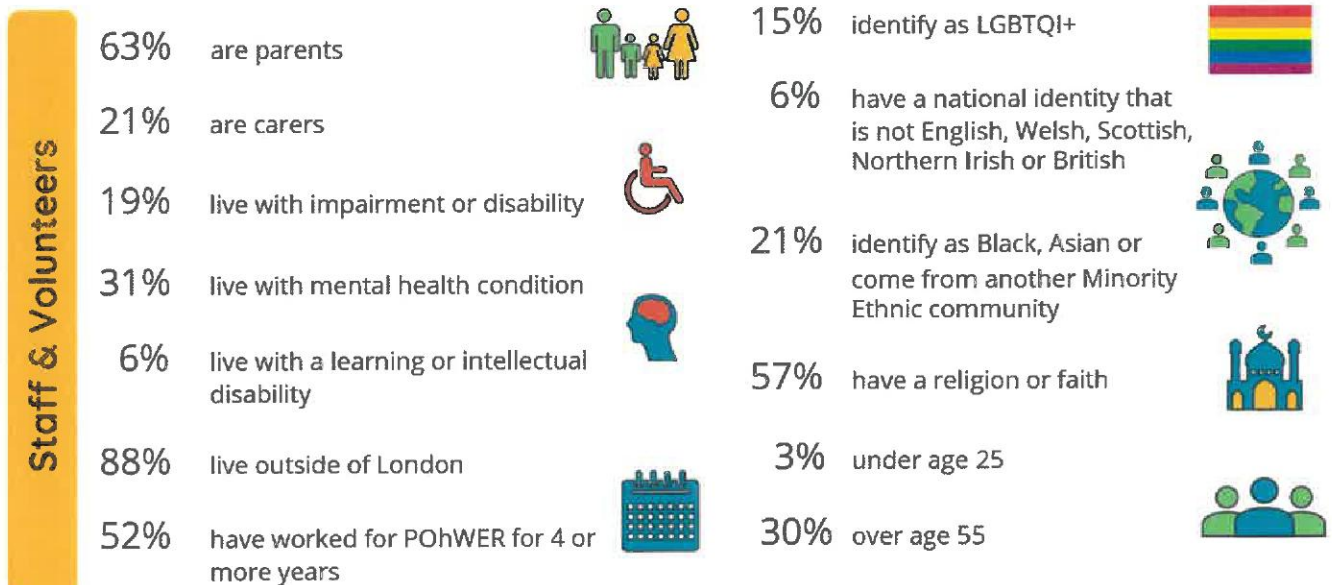
Our 2022-2025 EDI strategy and plan can be found on our website www.pohwer.net/edi



Diversity Profile of Beneficiaries 2021-2022

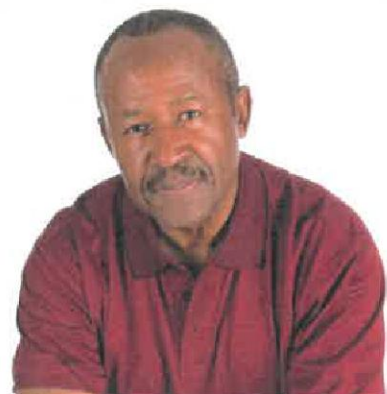


Diversity Profile of Staff and Volunteers 2021-2022



"Thank you for your support, you helped me to make sure I was receiving support from staff after being racially abused. It is more difficult for me to raise my voice when I have learning disabilities and mental health disabilities. Very pleased this service is available for us."

Otis



Governance, Structure and Management

Legal Status and Objects

POhWER is a charity registered with the Charity Commission in England and Wales under charity number 1061543 and registered in Scotland by the Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator under charity number SCO48858 and is also a company limited by guarantee.

Our organisation was established in 1996 and registered as a charity in 1997 and is governed by its Articles of Association which set out our objective to promote social inclusion for the public benefit by preventing people from becoming socially excluded, and relieving the needs of those people who are socially excluded. We do this by providing information, advice, support, empowerment and advocacy, and managing advocacy and user-involvement projects which help people to speak up and to be heard, as well as to secure their rights and entitlements.

Public Benefit

The Trustees have a duty to report on how POhWER's charitable object has been carried out for the public benefit and to follow guidance from the Charity Commission on the provision of Public Benefit requirement under the Charities Act 2011.

We demonstrate how we have met our principal objective in our Strategic Report and how POhWER has worked within its charitable objectives in 2021-2022. We set out further specific details in our Impact Report which demonstrates the impact of our work and which compliments this report.

Structure

The Trustee Board is responsible for the governance and strategic direction of the Charity, ensuring that the Charity upholds its values and core principles and delivers its key objectives. The Trustees of the Charity are also the Directors of the company for the purpose of company law, and any reference to Trustees is therefore also to Directors.

Trustees are appointed through a transparent and rigorous recruitment and selection process and are elected by the Members at our AGM.

Newly appointed Trustees are provided with a comprehensive induction programme which is tailored to their area of expertise and includes meeting the Executive team. All relevant documents to their role are provided to them including a comprehensive Trustee Handbook. A Trustee SharePoint site is regularly updated and all Trustees have private access to the site.

Trustees deploy a wide range of skills, knowledge and experience essential to good governance. The range of expertise held by our Trustees is regularly reviewed to determine that the experience meets POhWER's requirements. A skills audit is carried out annually and informs the skills required during any recruitment drive.

Operational management is delegated by the Trustees to the Chief Executive who is accountable to the Trustee Board. The Chief Executive and the Executive team normally attend Board and Committee meetings.

The Trustees, Chief Executive and Executive team are expected to behave with the utmost integrity and professionalism at all times and to adhere to POhWER's Code of Conduct and the Nolan Committee's Seven Principles of Public Life.

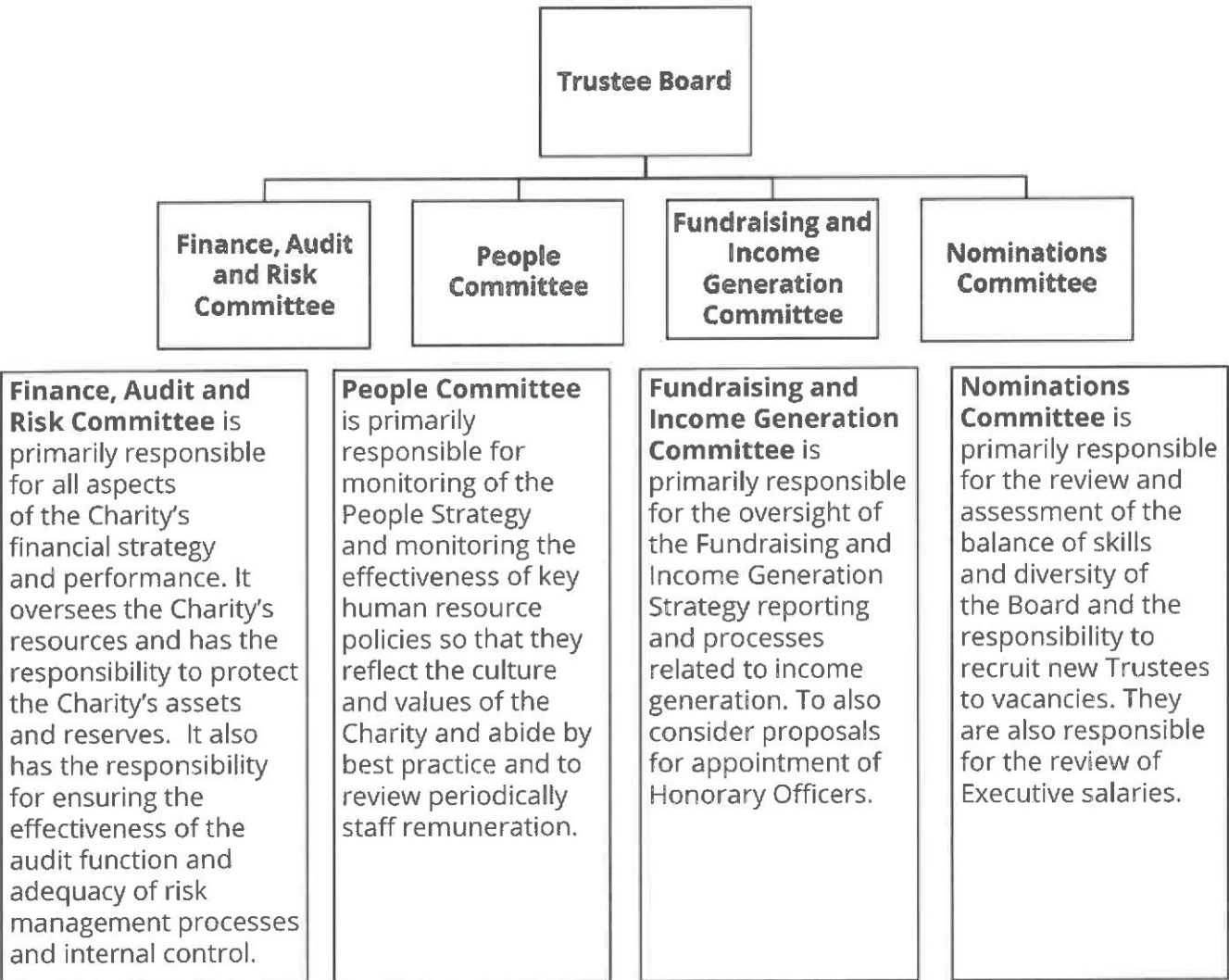
All Trustees of POhWER give their time voluntarily and receive no reward or benefit from POhWER.

The Trustee Board meets a minimum of four times each year and in addition there is a Board Away Day which allows Trustees to focus, along with the Executive team, on key strategic issues.

Trustees who served during the year are listed on page 40 together with information about their membership of Board Committees.

Delegation and Committees

The Board maintains a Scheme of Delegation and matters reserved for Board Committees are clearly defined in their Terms of Reference. The Committees report directly to the Board.



People

In 2021, we restructured our People Directorate and appointed a People Director as part of our commitment to the Charity.

Our People Strategy, launched in 2020, had eight strategic themes and during 2021-2022 we continued to strengthen our commitment to them.

All policies and procedures were reviewed and updated in 2021 and a number of different surveys were conducted with our colleagues throughout the year to gain a better understanding of the charity culture and the diversity of our colleagues.

In July 2021 we appointed a fixed term EDI Manager to bring a focus to our commitment of creating a level playing field. The EDI Manager worked with the People Director and CEO to create and implement an EDI strategy and

working plan that spans the next four years. We also supported a number of new staff groups which include a new LGBTQI+ group and Neuro Diversity group. They join our Anti-racism and UNIFY group, to ensure that all colleagues have safe spaces to discuss and raise concerns with peers that have similar lived experiences.

As restrictions following the pandemic were lifted we continued to adapt to a new way of working, with a majority of colleagues adopting a hybrid working pattern that will continue to be reviewed throughout 2022.



Wellbeing continues to feature high in our priorities and this has been supported with the introduction of a health and well-being package for all colleagues. We have also invested in training Mental Health First Aiders to ensure that our people have a number of avenues to explore to support positive mental health.

In early 2022 we started a comprehensive management training programme. This has been very well received, even with experienced managers seeking a recap of knowledge and ensuring that continuous professional development is embraced.

We developed five Kickstart placements to help 16-24 year olds into work.

As an encouragement to colleagues to become engaged with their local communities, we introduced an extra days leave for staff to enable them to volunteer in their local community and also introduced a paid day's leave to support a charity of the colleague's choosing.

Remuneration

During 2021, as part of our strategic commitment to create a level playing field for all, POhWER undertook an extensive Pay and Benefits review using creditable market data to benchmark all roles within the Charity.

This extensive data allowed us to create specific job families and set pay spine points associated with each role.

Our pay also continues to be underpinned by the Living Wage Foundation.

The Board of Trustees made a commitment to work with the Executive team to review remuneration on an annual basis, based on financial performance and stability of the Charity at that time, and conduct external benchmarking every three years, to ensure we continue to set salaries in line with the sector. The next benchmarking will take place in 2023.

Fundraising and Income Generation

POhWER has been working to identify new sources of funding and to diversify income. We continue to expand into new areas of fundraising and voluntary donations through the website,

individual fundraising activity and partnerships. In 2021-2022 we established multiple partnerships which has enhanced our fundraising capacity significantly through a variety of platforms. This has included efforts in legacy giving, events and challenges, seasonal campaigns and patron support.

During 2022-2023, we will further explore and employ fundraising opportunities in payroll giving, micro donations, streaming events and corporate giving. This will expand our core supporter base, gain new audiences and make donor support more accessible to everyone.

We implemented a robust external engagement policy which clarifies how we engage with audiences, such as fundraisers and donors, in an appropriate, respectful and effective manner.

We have also interacted more frequently with our network of dedicated and committed supporters, through email and social media, to strengthen relationships and showcase our impact on our beneficiaries. This has been effective as evidenced by an increase in fundraising through legacy giving and direct donations.

During the financial year we did not work with any fundraising agencies or commercial participators. No complaints were received in respect of our fundraising activity.

POhWER is grateful to our commissioners for their contract funding of our services and to all the other individuals and organisations who have donated or fundraised. We value renewed support from those who fund us already and continue to identify new income so that we can respond to the growing numbers who need our help.

POhWER is registered with the Fundraising Regulator and is committed to responsible and ethical fundraising practices. POhWER complies with the Code of Fundraising Practice and the Fundraising Promise.

GDPR

We are committed to maintaining the trust and confidence of the people we support, those we work with, those who support us and those we come into contact with in other ways. We do this in line with POhWER's values and with the law.

Risk Management

The Trustees have a responsibility for ensuring that the Charity maintains a comprehensive risk management system and that appropriate actions are taken to manage and mitigate risks. The Finance, Audit and Risk Committee monitors and reviews these reports and reports to the Board on their effectiveness.

The principal risks identified through their likelihood and impact on the Charity are:

Risk	Examples of mitigating actions
A safeguarding failure results in harm to a beneficiary or staff member	- Continue to develop and embed best practice throughout the Charity - Specialist Safeguarding Resource in place - Safeguarding training, reinforcement and education for all staff, volunteers and Trustees - Safer recruitment implemented - Review and refresh safeguarding monitoring systems regularly - Refreshed reporting and escalation procedure in place
Covid-19 adversely affects commissioners funding at current levels or to renew contracts at viable levels	- Tight cost control mechanisms in place - Rigorous retention and tender scoping process in place - Diversification of funding
The UK government removes the challenge and independent scrutiny right in the Human Rights Act or replaces the Human Rights Act.	- Campaigning and influencing in the public domain through digital, media and social media outlets - Sharing evidence with public bodies such as Parliament, CQC and EHRC - Responding to Government's consultation paper, including evidence of impact of advocacy in upholding Human Rights - Engage beneficiaries and general public awareness raising and impacts of losing rights and entitlements
Unable to translate strategic intent into operational reality	- Ensure business plans and budget are robust - Close monitoring of Strategy 2020-2025 Implementation Plan - Continue to strive to improve efficiency and effectiveness of all of the Charity's teams and services

Financial Review

Despite the prolonged disrupting effects of the Covid-19 pandemic during the financial period, POhWER are able to report another year of growth and increased financial stability.

Total income for 2021-22 increased by 2% to £15,934,026 (2020-21: £15,624,829). POhWER have continued to pursue a strategy of bidding for financially viable contracts with public and private institutions while also working to diversify income streams by inviting grants, private donations and developing emerging advocacy models.

Costs for the period were contained against a backdrop of a competitive recruitment market

and suppressed travel costs compared to pre-pandemic levels. The overall effects were an increase in surplus to £1,618,650 (2020-21: £1,065,176).

In accordance with the surplus reported, cash balances held including on short-notice deposit accounts totalled £3,568,242 (2020-21: £2,324,212). POhWER operates with disciplined debtor and supplier management to ensure that working capital is tightly controlled.

Reserves Policy and Going Concern

At 31 March 2022, POhWER held total reserves of £4,074,465 (2020/21 £2,455,815). Of this amount, £3,729,109 represents the Charity's free reserves (2020/21 £2,214,826). Free reserves are the

unrestricted reserves of the Charity that are not designated by the Trustees or that represent the value of fixed assets used by the Charity.

In February 2022 the Trustees reviewed the Charity's reserves policy and amended it in line with the Charity's latest circumstances, giving regard to regulatory guidance. Reserves are held, in summary, to provide working capital, ensure continuation of services and/or to ensure that the Charity can wind down in an orderly fashion and/or retain an essential administrative function in case of a crisis. The current reserves policy is to hold free reserves representing between 1.5 and 4 months of operating expenditure.

At the reporting date, the Charity held reserves totalling £4,074,465 of which £3,729,109 were free from restriction and were not designated for specific purposes (2020/21: £2,455,815 total, of which £2,214,826 were free). Free reserves represent 3.1 months of operating expenditure

(2020/21: 1.8 months) so the Trustees are satisfied that free reserves are within the confines of the policy.

Our position post-year end is that we are able to meet all of our financial commitments on time and POhWER remains a going concern. The Charity has a strong record of both winning and retaining contracts, against a backdrop of a strengthening financial position. The Trustees have made this assessment in respect to a period one year from the date of approval of these accounts.

"At a time of need I was listened to, treated with respect and promptly offered appropriate support. I found POhWER to be highly professional, knowledgeable and reliable."

Suzanne



"I can only express my gratitude to POhWER for their dedication and diligence, which without, me and my families' voices would be quelled."

Emree



Statement of Trustee Responsibilities

The Charity trustees (who are also the directors of POhWER for the purposes of company law) are responsible for preparing the annual report and financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice) including FRS 102, the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the United Kingdom and Republic of Ireland.

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

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- observe the methods and principles in the 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);
- make judgements and 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;
- 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 proper accounting records that disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the Charity 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 Charity and hence taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

Each of the trustees confirms that:

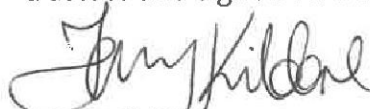
- so far as the Trustee is aware, there is no relevant audit information of which the charitable company's auditor is unaware;
- the Trustee has taken all steps that he or she ought to have taken, as a trustee, in order to be aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the charitable company's auditor is aware of that information.

This confirmation is given and should be interpreted in accordance with the provisions of s148 of the Companies Act 2006.

The trustees had no beneficial interests in, or contracts with, the charitable company during the year. Trustees may reclaim the expenses incurred in fulfilling their duties as trustees, and these are disclosed in notes 7 and 18 of the financial statements. All the trustees are required to be Members of the charitable company, but this entitles them only to voting rights. The trustees have no beneficial interest in the charitable company.

The trustees are responsible for the maintenance and integrity of the corporate and financial information included on 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 Trustees' Annual Report, incorporating the Strategic Report, was approved by the board of trustees and signed on their behalf by:



Antony Kildare
Chair of Board of Trustees

7 July 2022

Independent Auditor's Report to the Members of POhWER

Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of POhWER for the year ended 31 March 2022 which comprise the Statement of Financial Activities, the Balance Sheet, the Statement of Cash Flows and notes to the financial statements, including a summary of significant accounting policies. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards, including Financial Reporting Standard 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 March 2022 and of the charitable company's net movement in funds, including the 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 and the Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005 and regulation 8 of the Charities Accounts (Scotland) Regulations 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 Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements section of our report. We are independent of the charity 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 Trustees' Annual Report and the Welcome from our Chair and Chief Executive. 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 there is a material misstatement in the financial statements or a material misstatement of the other information. 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 Trustees' Annual Report (which includes the strategic report and the directors' report prepared for the purposes of company law) for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements; and
- the strategic report and the directors' report included within the Trustees' Annual Report have 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 Trustees' Annual Report (which incorporates the strategic report and the directors' report).

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

- adequate accounting records have not been kept by the charitable company; or
- the charitable company 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.

Responsibilities of trustees for the financial statements

As explained more fully in the trustees' responsibilities statement set out on page 19, 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.

Irregularities, including fraud, are instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations. We design procedures in line with our responsibilities, outlined above, to detect material misstatements in respect of irregularities, including fraud. The extent to which our procedures are capable of detecting irregularities, including fraud is detailed below:

Based on our understanding of the charitable company and the environment in which it operates, we identified that the principal risks of non-compliance with laws and regulations related to company law in England and Wales, and charity law in England and Wales and in Scotland, and we considered the extent to which non-compliance might have a material effect on the financial statements. We also considered those laws and regulations that have a direct impact on the preparation of the financial statements such as the Companies Act 2006, the Charities Act 2011, the Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005 and the Charities Accounts

(Scotland) Regulations 2006 and payroll taxes. We evaluated management's incentives and opportunities for fraudulent manipulation of the financial statements (including the risk of override of controls), and determined that the principal risks were related to management override of controls. Audit procedures performed by the engagement team included:

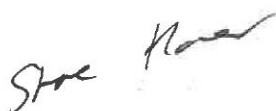
- Inspecting correspondence with regulators and tax authorities;
- Discussions with management including consideration of known or suspected instances of non-compliance with laws and regulation and fraud;
- Evaluating management's controls designed to prevent and detect irregularities;
- Identifying and testing journals, in particular journal entries posted with unusual account combinations, postings by unusual users or with unusual descriptions; and
- Challenging assumptions and judgements made by management in their critical accounting estimates.

Because of the inherent limitations of an audit, there is a risk that we will not detect all irregularities, including those leading to a material misstatement in the financial statements or non-compliance with regulation. This risk increases the more that compliance with a law or regulation is removed from the events and transactions reflected in the financial statements, as we will be less likely to become aware of instances of non-compliance. The risk is also greater regarding irregularities occurring due to fraud rather than error, as fraud involves intentional concealment, forgery, collusion, omission or misrepresentation.

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 auditor's report.

Use of our report

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



Steven Harper (Senior Statutory Auditor)
For and on behalf of Haysmacintyre LLP,
Statutory Auditors
10 Queen Street Place
London EC4R 1AG

Date: 22 August 2022

Financial Statements

Statement of financial activities

For the year ended 31 March 2022

(Including an Income & Expenditure Account)

	Note	Restricted 2022 £	Unrestricted 2022 £	Total 2022 £	Restricted 2021 £	Unrestricted 2021 £	Total 2021 £
Income from:							
Donations & Legacies	2	1,336	21,239	22,575	-	35,663	35,663
Charitable Activities:							
- Contract Income	3	-	15,190,016	15,190,016	-	14,945,770	14,945,770
- Grants	3	703,126	-	703,126	562,829	-	562,829
Investment Income	4	-	2,100	2,100	-	761	761
Other Sources	5	-	16,209	16,209	-	79,806	79,806
Total income		704,462	15,229,564	15,934,026	562,829	15,062,000	15,624,829

Expenditure on:							
Cost of raising funds		-	(84,824)	(84,824)	-	(7,319)	(7,319)
Charitable Activities:	6						
-Statutory services		-	(10,142,934)	(10,142,934)	-	(9,790,267)	(9,790,267)
-Non Statutory Services		(657,007)	(2,024,213)	(2,681,220)	(577,620)	(2,421,492)	(2,999,112)
-Secure services		-	(1,406,398)	(1,406,398)	-	(1,758,182)	(1,758,182)
-Other services		-	-	-	-	(4,773)	(4,773)
Subtotal – Charitable Act		(657,007)	(13,573,545)	(14,230,552)	(577,620)	(13,974,714)	(14,552,334)
Total expenditure		(657,007)	(13,658,369)	(14,315,376)	(577,620)	(13,982,033)	(14,559,653)

		Restricted 2022 £	Unrestricted 2022 £	Total 2022 £	Restricted 2021 £	Unrestricted 2021 £	Total 2021 £
Net income/(expense)	7	47,455	1,571,195	1,618,650	(14,791)	1,079,967	1,065,176
Transfers between funds		(1,388)	1,388	-	-	-	-
Net movement between funds		46,067	1,572,583	1,618,650	(14,791)	1,079,967	1,065,176
Reconciliation of Funds							
Total funds brought forward		12,384	2,443,431	2,455,815	27,175	1,363,464	1,390,639
Total funds carried forward	15	58,451	4,016,014	4,074,465	12,384	2,443,431	2,455,815

All of the above results are derived from continuing activities. All recognised gains and losses are included in the above statement of financial activities.

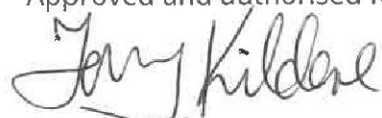
The notes on pages 27 - 39 form part of these financial statements.

Balance Sheet

For the year ended 31 March 2022

	Note	Total 2022 £	Total 2021 £
Fixed assets			
Intangible fixed assets	10	1,605	4,815
Tangible fixed assets	11	236,304	165,094
		<u>237,909</u>	<u>169,909</u>
Current assets			
Debtors	12	1,554,898	1,693,160
Cash at bank and in hand		3,568,242	2,324,212
		<u>5,123,140</u>	<u>4,017,372</u>
Current liabilities			
Creditors: amounts due within one year	13	(1,286,584)	(1,731,466)
		<u>3,836,556</u>	<u>2,285,906</u>
Net current assets			
Total assets less current liabilities		<u>4,074,465</u>	<u>2,455,815</u>
Net assets		4,074,465	2,455,815
Restricted funds		58,451	12,384
Unrestricted funds			
Designated funds	15	48,996	58,696
Fixed asset funds	15	237,909	169,909
General funds	15	3,729,109	2,214,826
Total funds		4,074,465	2,455,815

Approved and authorised for issue by the Trustees and signed on their behalf by:



Antony Kildare
Chair of Board of Trustees

7 July 2022

The notes on pages 27 - 39 form part of these financial statements.

Statement of cash flows

For the year ended 31 March 2022

	Total 2022 £	Total 2021 £
Cash flow from operating activities A		
Net cash provided by/(used in) operating activities	1,421,901	1,870,684
Cash flows from investing activities		
Purchase of tangible and intangible fixed assets	(177,871)	(123,985)
Change in cash and cash equivalents in the year	1,244,030	1,746,699
Cash and cash equivalents at 1 April 2021	2,324,212	577,513
Cash and cash equivalents at 31 March 2022 B	3,568,242	2,324,212

Notes to the statement of cash flows

For the year ended 31 March 2022

A. Reconciliation of net income (expenditure) to net cash provided by operating activities	2022 £	2021 £
Net income (expenditure) (as per the statement of financial activities)	1,618,650	1,065,176
Adjustments for:		
Depreciation charge	106,150	74,957
Amortisation charge	3,210	18,419
Loss on disposal of assets	511	-
(Increase) decrease in debtors	138,262	300,546
Increase (decrease) in creditors	(444,882)	411,586
Net cash provided by/(used in) operating activities	1,421,901	1,870,684

B. Analysis of cash and cash equivalents

Cash in hand	535	436
Cash at bank	807,367	212,407
Cash on instant access deposit accounts	1,756,616	2,055,540
Cash in notice accounts	1,000,000	-
Cash held in supplier client accounts	3,724	55,829
Total cash and cash equivalents	3,568,242	2,324,212

B. Analysis of movement in net funds

	2021 £	Movement £	2022 £
Cash in hand	436	99	535
Cash at bank	212,407	594,960	807,367
Cash on instant access deposit accounts	2,055,540	(298,924)	1,756,616
Cash in notice accounts	-	1,000,000	1,000,000
Cash held in supplier client accounts	55,829	(52,105)	3,724
Total cash and cash equivalents	2,324,212	1,244,030	3,568,242

The notes on pages 27 - 39 form part of these financial statements.

Notes to the Financial Statements

For the year ended 31 March 2022

1. Accounting Policies

The principal accounting policies adopted, judgements and key sources of estimation uncertainty in the preparation of the financial statements are laid out below.

Basis of Preparation

The financial statements have been prepared for the year to 31 March 2022 with comparative information provided in respect of the year to 31 March 2021. They are presented in sterling and rounded to the nearest whole pound.

The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention with items initially recognised at cost or transaction value unless otherwise stated in the relevant accounting policy note(s).

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 Standards applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) ('Charities SORP FRS 102') (Second Edition, effective 1 January 2019) and the Companies Act 2006.

The charity constitutes a public benefit entity as defined by FRS 102.

Entity Status

POhWER is a company limited by guarantee registered in England Wales (company number 03323040). It is a registered charity, registered with the Charity Commission for England and Wales (registered charity number 1061543), and the Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator (registered charity number SC048858). Its registered address is Hertlands House, Primett Road, Stevenage, Hertfordshire, SG1 3EE.

Critical accounting estimates and areas of judgement

Preparation of the accounts requires the trustees and management to make significant judgements and estimates.

The items in the accounts where these

judgements and estimates have been made include:

- the useful economic lives attributed to tangible and intangible fixed assets to determine the appropriate depreciation and amortisation charges;
- the basis on which support cost have been allocated across expenditure headings;
- the estimated value of accrued income and work in progress; and
- the recoverability of trade debtors.

Assessment of going concern

The charity recorded a surplus of £1,618,650 in the year, and a net cash inflow of £1,244,030. At the balance sheet date, the charity held cash balances of £3,568,242 and free reserves of £3,729,109.

The trustees have assessed whether the use of the going concern assumption is appropriate in preparing these accounts. The trustees have made this assessment in respect to a period of one year from the date of approval of these accounts, taking into account the expected commercial effects of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.

The trustees of the charity have concluded that there are no material uncertainties relating to events or conditions that may cast significant doubt on the ability of the charity to continue as a going concern. The trustees are of the opinion that the charity will have sufficient resources to meet its liabilities as they fall due. The most significant areas of judgement that affect items in the accounts are detailed on the previous section. In the context of budgets and forecasts used to assess going concern, there is an additional judgement which is the success rate of winning and retaining advocacy contracts. This is typical of charities such as POhWER operating in the advocacy sector and as a larger charity there is a less dependency on a small number of contracts. With regard to the year from the approval of these accounts, the most significant risk relates to managing the charity's working capital. The charity manages this risk through the interrogation and negotiation of client payment terms offered, proactive credit control, daily cash monitoring and forecasting and an arranged overdraft facility for contingency use. Forecasts have been prepared to March 2022 and accordingly the trustees are satisfied that there will be sufficient cash flows to support the charity's operations for a minimum period of one year from the date of the accounts.

Income

All types of income are recognised in the period in which the charity has entitlement to the income, the amount of income can be measured reliably, and it is probable that the income will be received. Income comprises contract income receivable for the delivery of charitable activities, supplemented by voluntary donations, investment and other miscellaneous income.

Income from voluntary donations comprises donations, legacies and gifts which are recognised in the statement of financial activities when received. Gift Aid is recognised and claimed where the eligibility criteria are met. 'In kind' donations are measured at the lower of arms-length valuation or value to the charity should the goods or services have been procured at market rates.

Contract income arises from the provision of advocacy services according to the terms of contracts and service level agreements with contract commissioners which comprise local authorities and other organisations. Contract income is recognised in the statement of financial activities over the period for which advocacy services are provided. Where contract income is subject to service level agreements and subject to the quantity of services provided, it is recognised to the extent that chargeable services have been provided.

Investment income is recognised where the charity has entitlement and the amount can be reliably measured.

Expenditure

Liabilities are recognised as expenditure as soon as there is a legal or constructive obligation committing the charity to make a payment to a third party, it is probable that a transfer of economic benefits will be required in settlement and the amount of the obligation can be measured reliably. All expenditure is stated inclusive of irrecoverable VAT.

Expenditure comprises direct costs, support costs and fundraising costs. All direct costs and support costs are allocated or apportioned to the main categories of charitable activity, these are non-statutory advocacy, statutory advocacy, secure and complex services, and other. Costs of raising funds are shown on the Statement of Financial Activities.

Support costs are those costs that, whilst necessary to enable the charity to deliver

charitable services, do not themselves produce charitable outputs. These support costs include management and administration, human resources, business development, finance and IT.

Direct costs are allocated to the particular activity to which the cost relates. Support costs are apportioned on the basis of income for each category of charitable activity.

Governance costs are the costs associated with the constitutional and statutory requirements of the charitable company. Such costs include external audit, preparation of statutory accounts, trustees' meetings, including specialist access and support costs to enable our volunteer trustees from our service users/members groups to participate and any costs associated with risk management and compliance.

Volunteers

POhWER deeply values the contribution from all those who volunteer their time, commitment and expertise for POhWER. The number of volunteers is rising and includes current and former service users who use their experience and skills to help others (see 'Making a difference' for examples). Volunteer roles range from the provision of advocacy services to administrative support services, and their contribution enables POhWER to increase the number of clients reached.

In accordance with the guidance in the Charities SORP FRS 102, the value of volunteers is not included in the statement of financial activities.

Taxation

The charitable company is a registered charity and is exempt from the taxation of income falling within chapter 3 part 11 of the Corporation Tax Act 2010 and section 256 of the Taxation of Chargeable Gains Act 1992 to the extent that this income is used to achieve its charitable objectives. No charge to taxation for the year has arisen as a result of the activities of the charity.

Value Added Tax is not recoverable by the charitable company and is included within the relevant costs in the statement of financial activities.

Operating Leases

Rentals applicable to operating leases where substantially all of the benefits and risks of ownership remain with the lessor are charged to the statement of financial activities in equal annual amounts over the lease term.

Defined Contribution Pension Schemes

The defined contribution pension scheme costs charged in the statement of financial activities represent the employer's pension contributions payable by the charitable company during the financial year.

Intangible Fixed Assets

Intangible fixed assets represent the cost of developing bespoke advocacy case management software. Intangible assets costing more than £1,000 are capitalised. The cost of intangible assets includes incidental acquisition costs. Intangible fixed assets are stated at cost less accumulated amortisation. Amortisation is provided at rates calculated to write down the cost or valuation of each intangible fixed asset, once brought into use, on a straight-line basis to its estimated residual value over its expected useful life. The amortisation rate is as follows:

Bespoke software 25.00%

Intangible fixed assets are reviewed for impairment if circumstances indicate their carrying value may exceed their net realisable value and value in use.

Tangible Fixed Assets

Tangible fixed assets costing more than £1,000 are capitalised. The cost of tangible assets includes incidental acquisition costs. Tangible fixed assets are stated at cost less accumulated depreciation. Depreciation is provided at rates calculated to write down the cost or valuation of each tangible fixed asset, once brought into use, on a straight-line basis to its estimated residual value over its expected useful life. The depreciation rates are as follows:-

Office Equipment:	33.33%
Fixtures and Fittings:	20.00%
Computer Equipment:	33.33%

Tangible fixed assets are reviewed for impairment if circumstances indicate their carrying value may exceed their net realisable value and value in use.

Debtors

Debtors are recognised at their settlement amount, less any provision for non-recoverability. Prepayments are valued at the amount prepaid. Debtors are discounted to the present value of the future cash receipt where such discounting is material.

Work in Progress

Where income is earned at the end of a referral, the value of work in progress is estimated based on the number of open cases at the year end and the average extent of completeness. Work in progress is included in the accounts only to the extent that the value is material, and judged to be recoverable

Cash at Bank and in Hand

Cash at bank and in hand represents such accounts and instruments that are available on demand or available on notice accounts of no more than 95 days.

Creditors and Provisions

Creditors and provisions are recognised when there is an obligation at the balance sheet date as a result of a past event, it is probable that a transfer of economic benefit will be required in settlement, and the amount of the settlement can be estimated reliably. Creditors and provisions are recognised at the amount the charity anticipates it will pay to settle the debt. They have been discounted to the present value of the future cash payment where such discounting is material.

Financial Instruments

Financial instruments are classed as basic, including debtors and creditors. If arrangement with the debtor or creditor constitutes a financing transaction, it is measured at the net present value of future payments, discounted at market rates to the extent where such discounting is material.

Fund Accounting

Unrestricted funds comprise accumulated surpluses and deficits on the general fund which are available for use in furtherance of the objectives of the Charity and which have not been restricted by the donor or designated by the Trustees for a specific purpose.

Designated funds are funds transferred from unrestricted funds that the trustees have set aside for a specific purpose.

Restricted funds are those where income has been received from a donor who places specific restrictions on how the funds must be spent. Restricted funds are only expendable in relation to the purposes set out by the donor.

2. Income from Donations

	2022 Restricted £	2022 Unrestricted £	2022 Total £	2021 Unrestricted £
Donations and gifts	1,336	9,196	10,532	12,230
Legacies	-	-	-	500
Donations in kind	-	12,043	12,043	22,933
Total	1,336	21,239	22,575	35,663

2021: All income from donations was unrestricted

3. Income from Charitable Activities

	2022 Restricted £	2022 Unrestricted £	2022 Total £	2021 Total £
Statutory Services	-	10,682,159	10,682,159	10,708,954
Non Statutory Services	703,126	2,611,923	3,315,049	2,853,127
Secure & Complex Services	-	1,895,934	1,895,934	1,923,823
Other	-	-	-	22,695
Total	703,126	15,190,016	15,893,142	15,580,599

2021: Restricted income from non-statutory services was £562,829. All other income was unrestricted

4. Investment Income

	2022 Unrestricted £	2021 Unrestricted £
Bank Interest Receivable	2,100	761

5. Income from Other Sources

	2022 Unrestricted £	2021 Unrestricted £
Other fees & recharged services	11,607	25,129
CJRS grants	4,602	54,677
Total	16,209	79,806

6. Expenditure on Charitable Activities

Current year:	2022 Statutory services £	2022 Non Statutory services £	2022 Secure services £	2022 Other services £	2022 Total £
Direct operating costs	9,158,300	2,375,653	1,231,639	-	12,765,592
Support costs					
Management and Administration	294,805	91,488	52,324	-	438,617
Human Resources	250,808	77,835	44,515	-	373,158
Business Development	178,282	55,327	31,643	-	265,252
Finance	163,755	50,819	29,064	-	243,638
IT	62,159	19,291	11,032	-	92,482
Governance	34,825	10,807	6,181	-	51,813
	984,634	305,567	174,759	-	1,464,960
Total Costs	10,142,934	2,681,220	1,406,398	-	14,230,552
Prior Year Comparison:	2021 Statutory services £	2021 Non Statutory services £	2021 Secure services £	2021 Other services £	2021 Total £
Direct operating costs	8,878,757	2,756,264	1,594,432	2,842	13,232,295
Support costs					
Management and Administration	304,105	81,020	54,632	644	440,401
Human Resources	192,132	51,189	34,516	406	278,243
Business Development	158,267	42,166	28,432	336	229,201
Finance	158,556	42,243	28,484	337	229,620
IT	66,656	17,759	11,974	141	96,530
Governance	31,794	8,471	5,712	67	46,044
	911,510	242,848	163,750	1,931	1,320,039
Total Costs	9,790,267	2,999,112	1,758,182	4,773	14,552,334

7. Net Income / (Expenditure) for the Year

Net income / (expenditure) is stated after charging:

	2022 £	2021 £
Depreciation and amortisation	109,361	93,376
Operating lease rentals	125,570	126,728
<i>Auditor's remuneration</i>		
- Audit provision for current year	22,530	22,260
Trustees' remuneration	-	-
Trustees' reimbursed expenses	312	1,702

8. Staff Costs and Remuneration of Key Management Personnel

Staff costs were as follows:

	2022 £	2021 £
Salaries and wages	9,392,015	9,316,907
Redundancy payments (including payments in lieu of notice)	10,455	39,554
Social security costs	790,242	771,828
Pension contributions	251,994	253,766
Total Staff Costs	10,444,706	10,382,055

The number of employees whose emoluments exceeded £60,000 was as follows:

	2022 Number	2021 Number
£60,000 to £70,000	4	2
£80,000 to £90,000	1	1

The company made contributions to the pension plans of 5 employees whose emoluments exceeded £60,000 in 2021/22 of £9,094 (2020/21 £6,405, 3 employees).

The key management personnel of the Charity comprise the Trustees and the Executive team.

None of the Trustees receive any remuneration in connection with their services to the Charity (2020/21: £nil). The total remuneration including employer's pension contributions of the Executive team for the year was £365,110 (2020/21: £305,118).

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

	2022 Number	2021 Number
Charitable activities	407	381
Management, support services and administration	25	22
Total	432	403

In accordance with the relevant accounting standards, employee numbers are counted irrespective of hours worked. POhWER benefits from the services of part time employees, and the headcount expressed in full time equivalents would be 346 for charitable activities (2020/21: 323) and 23 in management, support services and administration (2020/21: 21).

9. Defined Contribution Pension Schemes

The charitable company opened a defined contribution pension scheme provided by the NOW: Pensions Trust effective from the staging date of 1 April 2016, we subsequently moved to The Peoples Pension on 1 April 2019, both schemes satisfy the requirements of automatic enrolment pension legislation. The charitable company pays employer's contributions of 3% of pensionable salary into this defined contribution pension scheme provided that an employee pays employee contributions of at least 5% of pensionable salary. The charitable company pays employer's contributions exceeding 3% in a limited number of cases in order to comply with contractual obligations. At the year end, amounts of £57,085 were due to the pension scheme provider (2020/21: £55,682).

10. Intangible Fixed Assets

	Bespoke Software £
Cost or valuation	
At the start of the year	202,273
Additions in the year	-
Disposals in the year	40,196
At the end of the year	162,077
Depreciation	
At the start of the year	(197,458)
Charge for the year	(3,210)
Disposals in the year	(40,196)
At the end of the year	(160,472)
Net book value	
At the end of the year	1,605
At the start of the year	4,815

11. Tangible Fixed Assets

	Office Equipment £	Fixtures and Fittings £	Computer Equipment £	Total £
Cost or valuation				
At the start of the year	77,886	25,062	503,751	606,699
Additions in the year	-	-	177,871	177,871
Disposals in the year	-	-	(191,000)	(191,000)
At the end of the year	77,886	25,062	490,622	593,570
Depreciation				
At the start of the year	(64,964)	(20,267)	(356,374)	(441,605)
Charge for the year	(5,538)	(1,129)	(99,484)	(106,151)
Disposals in the year	-	-	190,490	190,490
At the end of the year	(70,502)	(21,396)	(265,368)	(357,266)
Net book value				
At the end of the year	7,384	3,666	225,254	236,304
At the start of the year	12,922	4,795	147,377	165,094

12. Debtors

	2022 £	2021 £
Trade debtors	1,300,640	1,496,778
Accrued income	70,954	74,313
Prepayments	165,270	96,923
Other debtors	18,034	25,146
Total Debtors	1,554,898	1,693,160

13. Creditors: Amounts Due Within One Year

	2022 £	2021 £
Trade creditors	228,171	259,767
Taxation and social security	196,865	189,835
Accrued expenses	229,731	191,502
Other creditors	58,637	62,276
Deferred income	573,180	1,028,086
Total Creditors	1,286,584	1,731,466

Income received in advance of the provision of services is deferred. Deferred income recognised during the year is as follows:

	£
Deferred income brought forward	1,028,086
Deferred income released during the year	(1,028,086)
Income deferred during the year	573,180
Deferred income carried forward	573,180

14. Movement in Restricted Funds

	Start of year 01.04.2021 £	Income £	Expenditure £	Transfers between funds £	End of year 31.03.2022 £
Restricted funds					
- Birmingham NNS	103	350,916	(310,350)	(695)	39,974
- Herts Community Navigator Service	-	181,297	(180,370)	(927)	-
- Oxfordshire Community Advocacy	12,281	-	(131)	-	12,151
- Nottingham Peer Advocacy	-	986	(986)	-	-
- Hertfordshire Members Event	-	350	(350)	-	-
- Family Action Birmingham Household Support	-	18,338	(18,338)	-	-
- East Herts District Council Hub Training	-	1,000	(1,000)	-	-
- Herts Help at Home – Emergency Grant	-	750	(750)	-	-
- Nottinghamshire Mental Health Discharge	-	78,907	(78,907)	-	-
- Leicester Health Surveys	-	298	(298)	-	-
- Birmingham Covid Support	-	3,897	(3,897)	-	-
- Islington Covid Support	-	1,477	(1,427)	(50)	-
- Bedford Infection Control	-	6,000	(6,000)	-	-
- Barnet Infection Control	-	6,300	(6,300)	-	-
- Hertfordshire Suicide Prevention Podcast	-	3,000	(3,000)	-	-
- Bedfordshire Infection Control	-	28,400	(28,400)	-	-
- Allen & Overy	-	8,000	(1,674)	-	6,326
- Bedford Covid Support	-	6,000	(6,000)	-	-
- Kickstart	-	8,546	(8,829)	284	-
Total Funds	12,384	704,462	(657,007)	(1,388)	58,451

Prior Year Comparison

	Start of year 01.04.2020	Income	Expenditure	Transfers between funds	End of year 31.03.2021
	£	£	£	£	£
Restricted funds					
- Birmingham NNS	12,495	390,335	(402,727)	-	103
- Herts Community Navigator Service	-	136,744	(136,743)	(1)	-
- Management Funding	-	13,750	(13,750)	-	-
- Oxfordshire Community Advocacy	14,680	-	(2,399)	-	12,281
- Herts CEV Grant	-	10,000	(10,001)	1	-
- Nottingham Social Prescribing Pilot	-	12,000	(12,000)	-	-
Total Funds	27,175	562,829	(577,620)	-	12,384

Restricted Funds**Birmingham NNS (Neighbourhood Network Scheme)**

Working on behalf of Birmingham City Council to support citizens over 50 in the community to live healthy, independent lives. The Neighbourhood Network Scheme helps connect older people to individuals, groups, organisations, activities, services and places in their neighbourhoods.

Management Funding

Funding from Hertfordshire County Council and NHS Herts Valleys CCG towards the HertsHelp service Manager.

Hertfordshire Navigator Service

A grant for a Community Navigator who provides face to face support to help with a variety of issues including practical support to help arrange bill payments, sorting domestic paperwork and reviewing benefit entitlement in Hertfordshire.

Hertfordshire CEV Grant

A grant to support clinically extremely vulnerable clients in Hertfordshire

Nottingham Community Mental Health

A pilot to develop a community mental health service in Nottingham.

Oxfordshire Community Advocacy

A grant from Oxfordshire Advocacy, known as Getting Heard, to deliver community advocacy in Oxfordshire.

Nottingham Peer Advocacy

Grants and donations from local partners in Nottingham to support peer advocacy.

Hertford Members Event

A corporate donation towards events for members in Hertfordshire.

Family Action Household Support Fund

A funding programme to support households in most need in Birmingham with food, energy, water bills and other essential costs.

East Herts District Council Hub Training

A grant towards training for our Hub employees.

Herts Help at Home

A crisis payment on behalf of a beneficiary.

Herts Help at Home

A crisis payment on behalf of a beneficiary.

Nottinghamshire Healthcare NHS Trust Mental Health Discharge

A grant to support the integration of community mental health in Nottinghamshire.

Leicester

A grant for conducting telephone surveys.

Birmingham Covid Support

A local authority grant to support with additional costs associated with the Covid-19 pandemic.

Islington Covid Support

A local authority grant to support with additional costs associated with the Covid-19 pandemic.

Bedford Borough Council Infection Control

A local authority grant to support with additional costs associated with the Covid-19 pandemic.

Barnet Infection Control

A local authority grant to support with additional costs associated with the Covid-19 pandemic.

Hertfordshire Suicide Prevention Podcast

A grant to produce a suicide awareness & prevention podcast.

Central Bedfordshire Infection Control

A local authority grant to support with additional costs associated with the Covid-19 pandemic.

Allen & Overy

A grant to advance parents' advocacy to help navigate child protection proceedings, either through 1-2-1 support or through the development of self-advocacy tools.

Bedford Covid Support

A local authority grant to support with additional costs associated with the Covid-19 pandemic.

Kickstart

A government grant towards the cost of workers employed on the Kickstart scheme.

15. Movement in Unrestricted Funds

	Start of year 01.04.2021	Income	Expenditure	Transfers between funds	End of year 31.03.2022
	£	£	£	£	£
Unrestricted funds					
- General fund	2,214,826	15,229,563	(13,655,169)	(60,111)	3,729,109
Designated funds					
- Arthur Bate fund	39,730	-	(3,200)	-	36,530
- PR fund	-	-	-	-	-
- Staff training	6,500	-	-	(6,500)	-
- Technology development fund	-	-	-	-	-
- Community fund	12,466	-	-	-	12,466
- Fixed assets fund	169,909	-	-	68,000	237,909
Total Funds	2,443,431	15,229,563	(13,658,369)	1,389	4,016,014

Prior Year Comparison

	Start of year 01.04.2020	Income	Expenditure	Transfers between funds	End of year 31.03.2021
	£	£	£	£	£
Unrestricted funds					
- General fund	1,091,094	15,049,534	(13,895,193)	(30,609)	2,214,826
Designated funds					
- Arthur Bate fund	39,730	-	-	-	39,730
-PR fund	5,000	-	(5,000)	-	-
-Staff training development fund	17,500	-	(11,000)	-	6,500
-Technology development fund	70,840	-	(70,840)	-	-
-Community fund	-	12,466	-	-	12,466
Fixed assets fund	139,300	-	-	30,609	169,909
Total Funds	1,363,464	15,062,000	(13,982,033)	-	2,443,431

15. Movement in Unrestricted Funds (continued)

Unrestricted Funds

General fund

The General Fund comprises the accumulated surpluses and deficits which have neither been restricted by conditions imposed by donors, nor have been designated by the trustees for specific purposes.

Designated funds

The Arthur Bate fund

In memory of Arthur Bate, a founding trustee of POhWER and campaigner for the rights of people with disabilities, the Arthur Bate fund was created to provide support for people who:

- wish to become trustees of charities
- seek to set up self-advocacy groups
- want to set up peer support groups
- want to set up advocacy groups
- seek to start other kinds of advocacy activity

PR Fund

A seed fund to buy in specialist PR and media

support to further develop the charity's campaigning activities.

Staff Training Development Fund

A fund to purchase supplementary advocacy training and materials over and above the general budget for NAQ-level training.

Technology Development Fund

A fund for investment in (1) automation development and (2) ongoing improvements to the charity's operational management system.

Community Fund

A fund to develop community advocacy and engagement.

Fixed assets fund

The fixed assets fund reflects the carrying net book value of the charity's tangible and intangible fixed assets and has been separated from the charity's general unrestricted funds in recognition of the fact that these assets are essential to the day-to-day operations of the charity and should not be considered realisable to meet future commitments.

16. Analysis of Net Assets between Funds

Current Year	General funds	Designated funds	Fixed assets fund	Restricted Funds	Total 2022
Intangible Assets	-	-	1,605	-	1,605
Tangible Assets	-	-	236,304	-	236,304
Cash	3,460,795	48,996	-	58,451	3,568,242
Debtors	1,554,898	-	-	-	1,554,898
Creditors	(1,286,584)	-	-	-	(1,286,584)
Total	3,729,109	48,996	237,909	58,451	4,074,465
Prior Year Comparison	General funds	Designated funds	Fixed assets fund	Restricted Funds	Total 2021
Intangible Assets	-	-	4,815	-	4,815
Tangible Assets	-	-	165,094	-	165,094
Cash	2,253,132	58,696	-	12,384	2,324,212
Debtors	1,693,160	-	-	-	1,693,160
Creditors	(1,731,466)	-	-	-	(1,731,466)
Total	2,214,826	58,696	169,909	12,384	2,455,815

17. Operating Lease Commitments

The total commitment under non-cancellable operating leases at 31 March 2022 is analysed according to the periods in which the leases expire:-

	2022 Land & Buildings £	2021 Land & Buildings £
Less than 1 year	110,510	126,199
2-5 years	224,345	202,725
Total	334,855	328,924

Lease costs expensed during the year amounted to £125,570 (2020/21: £126,728).

18. Related Party Transactions

During the financial year 7 trustees were reimbursed £312 (2020/21: 7 trustees reimbursed £1,702) for travel and incidental expenses which related to carrying out their duties as Trustees of the charitable company. Trustees are based in a wide geographical area in a reflection of the areas we work in.

Trustees made voluntary donations of £2,187 including Gift Aid (2020/21: £598).

There were no other related party transactions during the financial year (2020/21: none).

Expenditure includes £3,032 (2020/21: £2,088) in respect of trustees' indemnity insurance which provides cover of up to a maximum of £5,000,000.

19. Managed Funds

During the financial period the charity ended its remaining direct payment service contract, meaning that the Charity held no funds as custodian as at 31st March 2022 (2020/21: £19,431). These funds are not included in the prior year comparative in the financial statements.

"I was really struggling after an incident with the Hospital & my GP. I would not have mentally coped without the advocate, they were amazing & helped me when I was at a very low time. You helped me survive."

Ingrid



Corporate Information

POhWER

A company limited by guarantee

Registered Office
Hertlands House
Primett Road
Stevenage
Hertfordshire SG1 3EE

Registered in England and Wales with the Charity Commission under charity number 1061543

Registered in Scotland by the Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator under charity number SCO48858

Registered company number 03323040

www.pohwer.net

Trustees

Antony Kildare (Chair)
Andrew McGrath (a)(d) from April 2021
Bridget Flint (a)(b)
Genna Harwood-Armitage (b) (resigned March 2022)
Geoff Gibbs (a)(d) (Deputy Chair)
Ian Holland (c) from April 2021
Jackie Kinsey (b)(c)
Lauren McGurk (resigned March 2022)
Mitch Miller (b)
Sandra Harding (a)(c)
Sundera Kumara-Moorthy (a)(c)
Toby Cotton (a)(d)

- a. Member of the Finance, Audit and Risk Committee
- b. Member of the People Committee
- c. Member of the Fundraising and Income Generation Committee
- d. Member of the Nominations Committee

Executive Team

Helen Moulinos - Chief Executive
Elyzabeth Hawkes - Deputy Chief Executive
Tim Jarvis - Company Secretary and Chief Finance Officer
Fiona McArthur-Worbey - Director of Fundraising and Engagement
Julie Born - People Director

Patrons

Lord Michael Cashman CBE
Peter Duncan
Nitu Shah
Samantha Lee Howe
Professor Deirdre Kelly CBE (retired July 2021)
Lorraine Kelly CBE (retired October 2021)
Dr Melrose Stewart (from July 2021)

Vice Presidents

Aruna Patel
Carol Lee MBE
Gary Blaker
Iris Lusack
Judith Smart
Phil Lawrence
Steven Rathbone
Tim Anfilogoff

Auditors

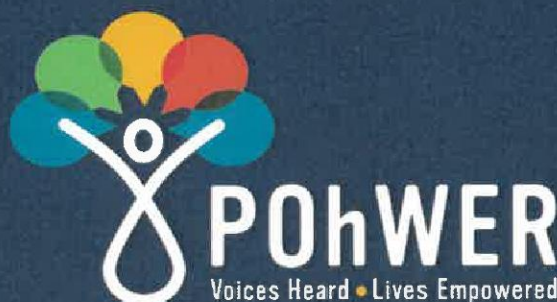
Haysmacintyre LLP
10 Queen Street Place
London EC4R 1AG

Legal Advisors

Stone King LLP
Boundary House
91 Charterhouse St
Barbican, London EC1M 6HR

Bankers

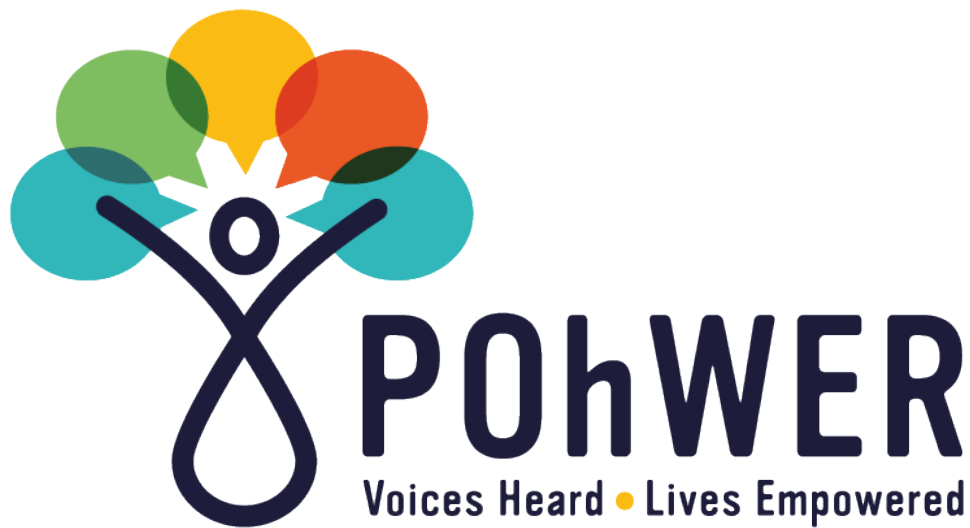
The Co-operative Bank plc
PO Box 101
1 Balloon Street
Manchester M60 4EP



POHWER

England & Wales - Charity number 1061543

Accounts



Annual Report and Financial Statements

Year ended 31 March 2021

Company Registration Number: 03323040
Charity Registration Number: 1061543 (England and Wales)
Charity Registration Number: SC048858 (Scotland)

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About POhWER

POhWER empowers people to have a voice and make a real difference to their lives.

We help people who, because of disability, illness, social exclusion and other challenges, find it difficult to express their views or get the support they need.

POhWER was established in 1996 by a group of people with disabilities who were fighting social injustice and challenges in their lives.



POhWER still operates with these roots at the heart of everything it does; supporting marginalised, vulnerable and socially excluded people through its charitable work.

Welcome from our Chair and Chief Executive



Thank you for taking the time to find out more about POhWER

I am delighted and privileged to be writing this as POhWER's new Chair of the Board. I joined POhWER in January 2021 whilst our country was experiencing its worst crisis in health and social care to cope with the many challenges and pressures brought about by the Covid-19 global pandemic.

We all have been living in a period of instability and uncertainty, but this has been especially so for the most vulnerable and socially excluded groups in our society upon whom the effects of the current crisis have been profound and far reaching.

I am passionate about advancing POhWER's mission as we continue to support those who are struggling to understand their rights and have their voices heard. During these unprecedented times we have seen the demand on our information & advice services increase significantly while of necessity due to pandemic advocacy access has been restricted. The work of our leadership team and all POhWER's advocates has never been more important. It makes all the difference for those who are living with disability or impairment, for those who are socially excluded and who face other life and health challenges.

Our charity continues to operate in an environment which is economically, politically and socially volatile. Cuts to public services and the uncertainty of the Government's review of the Human Rights Act will have an enduring impact on our work. With courage, patience and humility, we will face these uncertainties head on, aspiring to expand and to create new, innovative advocacy models beyond statutory provision. We aim to do everything we can to ensure that we are an agile, efficient, and effectively run charity and to want to achieve greater sustainable impact.

None of this is possible without the efforts and determination of our supporters, dedicated volunteers, staff, partners and my Trustee colleagues to whom we are indebted. We are grateful to Geoff Gibbs for service and stewardship as interim Chair during the past year. I want to thank each of you for your unstinting commitment, resilience and hard work to respond unconditionally in the current crisis. I would also like to thank the people we support as, often the strength they maintain in the face of unrelenting challenges is truly inspiring.

Tony Kildare

Antony Kildare
Chair of the Board of Trustees



I have now completed my first year as Chief Executive of POhWER and have been inspired by the commitment shown by the leadership team, staff and volunteers during these unprecedented times. I consider it a privilege to lead such a dedicated team.

POhWER remains committed to fighting for equal treatment and empowerment for those who find it difficult to find their voice heard. Our annual report gives a detailed review of the breadth of our services, outcomes and impact in detail.

We launched our new five-year strategy, 2020 -2025, in August 2020 which focuses on delivery of more services to clients through greater expertise, efficiency and digital developments. Increasing influencing of policy, public attitudes, and legislation through campaigning, lobbying and influencing and growing our client reach through new models of impact-led advocacy and geographical expansion. I am delighted to report that in the first year we have exceeded our ambitious plans and our progress is detailed in the Achievements section of this report.

I am also pleased to report that during the year we have submitted 5 Parliamentary submissions to help influence government policy and to help uphold the rights of all vulnerable, socially excluded and disadvantaged persons in the UK.

There remains a strong and vibrant potential to expand our reach within the UK and to extend our influence through our campaigning and influencing work. At POhWER we are excited about the increased benefits we can bring to the most vulnerable and disadvantaged and, we will continue to bring our dedication and commitment to all we do.

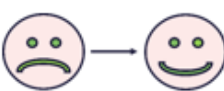
I would also wish to thank everyone who makes POhWER's work possible - the staff, volunteers, trustees, members, beneficiaries, commissioners and supporters.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Helen'.

Helen Moulinos, Chief Executive

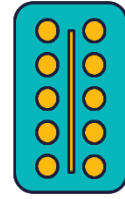
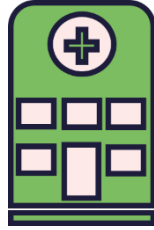
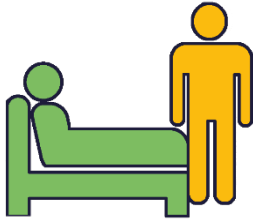
Our year in numbers

Advocacy

82,300	people supported	
95,935	challenges and issues supported	
87%	rated our services 5 out of 5	
375	advocacy Staff	
115	volunteers	

Information & Advice

340,619	calls and contacts handled by our Help Hubs	
14,041	COVID-19 crisis response issues supported	
6,943	food, fuel poverty or white goods issues supported	
72	information & advice staff	



Our core services

What is advocacy?

Advocacy is empowering people to have a voice and making a real difference to their lives by speaking for them when they can't and supporting them to speak for themselves when they can.

How can a POhWER advocate or information & advice officer help?

Our POhWER colleagues can help a person to:

- speak up for themselves or give their views
- understand the process they are going through, their rights and what choices are available to them
- be part of an important decision which is being made about them
- prepare for and take part in meetings and tribunals
- raise queries or concerns
- access information in the format which is most suitable
- access services that can support them
- advocates can also provide information and signpost people to other helpful services.

Types of advocacy

Statutory Advocacy

In certain circumstances a person has the legal right to an advocate including under the Care Act, Mental Capacity Act and Mental Health Act.

The following are Statutory Advocacy services:

Independent Mental Capacity Advocacy (IMCA) – An IMCA is an advocate who has been specially trained to support people who are not able to make certain decisions for themselves (they lack the capacity) and do not have family or friends who are able to speak for them. IMCAs do not make decisions and they are independent of the people who do make the decisions.

Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards (DoLS) / Liberty Protection Safeguards (LPS) – If a person is deprived of their liberty under the Mental Capacity Act, an IMCA will be appointed to protect their human rights and make sure the deprivation is lawful, reasonable and in their best interests. The IMCA supports the person and collects information about them including their beliefs, values and previous behaviour in order to represent their wishes.

Relevant Person's Paid Representative Service (RPPR) – Everyone who is deprived of their liberty under the Mental Capacity Act must have a representative. This could be a family member or a friend but if there is no one suitable it could be a Paid Representative also known as an RPPR. RPPRs are qualified advocates who have specialist knowledge of the Mental Capacity Act and Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards legislation.

Independent Mental Health Advocacy (IMHA) – An IMHA is an independent advocate who is trained in the Mental Health Act 1983 and supports people who are being treated under the Act to understand their rights and participate in decisions about their care and treatment. IMHAs can support people who are detained in hospital and people living in the community and receiving Supervised Community Treatment or are subject to Guardianship under the Act.

Care Act Advocacy – The Care Act says that local councils must involve people in decisions about their care and support needs. If it would be difficult for someone to be involved without support the council must make sure they get the help they need. If the person doesn't have someone who can help them they have the right to have an independent Care Act advocate.

NHS Complaints Advocacy (also called Independent Health Complaints Advocacy (IHCAS)) – NHS Complaints Advocates help people to use the complaints process to raise a complaint about NHS funded treatment or care.

Children's and Young People's Advocacy including Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) – CAMHS advocacy support is provided within both private and NHS hospitals across the country. Advocates provide drop-in services for the young people to access advocacy on a regular basis. Advocates support individuals to have their voice heard or work with groups of young people to raise issues they have identified.

Non-Statutory Advocacy

Non-statutory advocacy services help those who fall outside the eligibility criteria for statutory services.

Community Advocacy – Community Advocates can support people who find it difficult to put their views across or feel they aren't being listened to and help deal with an issue they are facing.

Citizen Advocacy – Citizen Advocates are trained volunteers. They provide one-to-one support to help people tackle the issues they are facing. Citizen Advocates may provide support in person, by telephone or by email and help people to access information, speak up and get their voice heard.

Peer Advocacy – Peer Advocates are volunteers with lived experience of using health and social care services. They share their experience and provide practical support and encouragement. Peer Advocates are matched with someone who has similar needs and issues to support them to develop new skills and gain confidence.

Group Advocacy – Group Advocacy brings people with similar needs and issues together to support each other. These groups give people the opportunity to work together, share their experiences and raise joint concerns. Sometimes the group has a facilitator who supports the running of the group and sometimes these groups are self-supporting.

Self-Advocacy – Self-Advocacy is representing your own views and wishes and asking for what you need or want. It gives you the ability to make your voice heard and take part in important decisions which are being made about you including how and where you live.

Instructed Advocacy

Instructed Advocacy is when a person is able to tell the advocate what their needs and wishes are and what support they need. They are able to ask the advocate for support and tell them what actions they would like to be taken on their behalf.

Non-Instructed Advocacy

When a person is unable to communicate their wishes and needs for reasons such as temporary unconsciousness, brain injury, dementia etc an advocate will use techniques such as observing the person, speaking to people who know them well or care for them to build a profile of the person's needs and wishes and use this to make sure their best interests are represented.

Why people used our services

Top five issues supported by service type

NHS Complaints

1. Aspects of clinical treatment – hospital and community services
2. Aspects of clinical treatment – GPs and dentists
3. Attitude of staff - hospital and community services
4. Communication / Information to patients - hospital and community services
5. Attitude of staff - GPs and dentists



IMHA

1. Rights Under Act
2. Ward Rounds
3. Communication
4. Care Programme Approach (CPA)
5. Support to Appeal Section



Secure Advocacy

1. Communication
2. Client Engagement
3. Hospital Admission
4. Engagement with professionals
5. Group work



Care Act Advocacy

1. Support to review care and support plan or support plan (Section 27)
2. Needs assessment (Section 9)
3. Safeguarding enquiry (Section 42)
4. Support with preparation of a care and support plan or support plan (Section 25)
5. Safeguarding review (Section 44)



IMCA

1. Paid Person's Rep (Not 39C)
2. Change of Accommodation
3. Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards
4. Serious Medical Treatment
5. Safeguarding

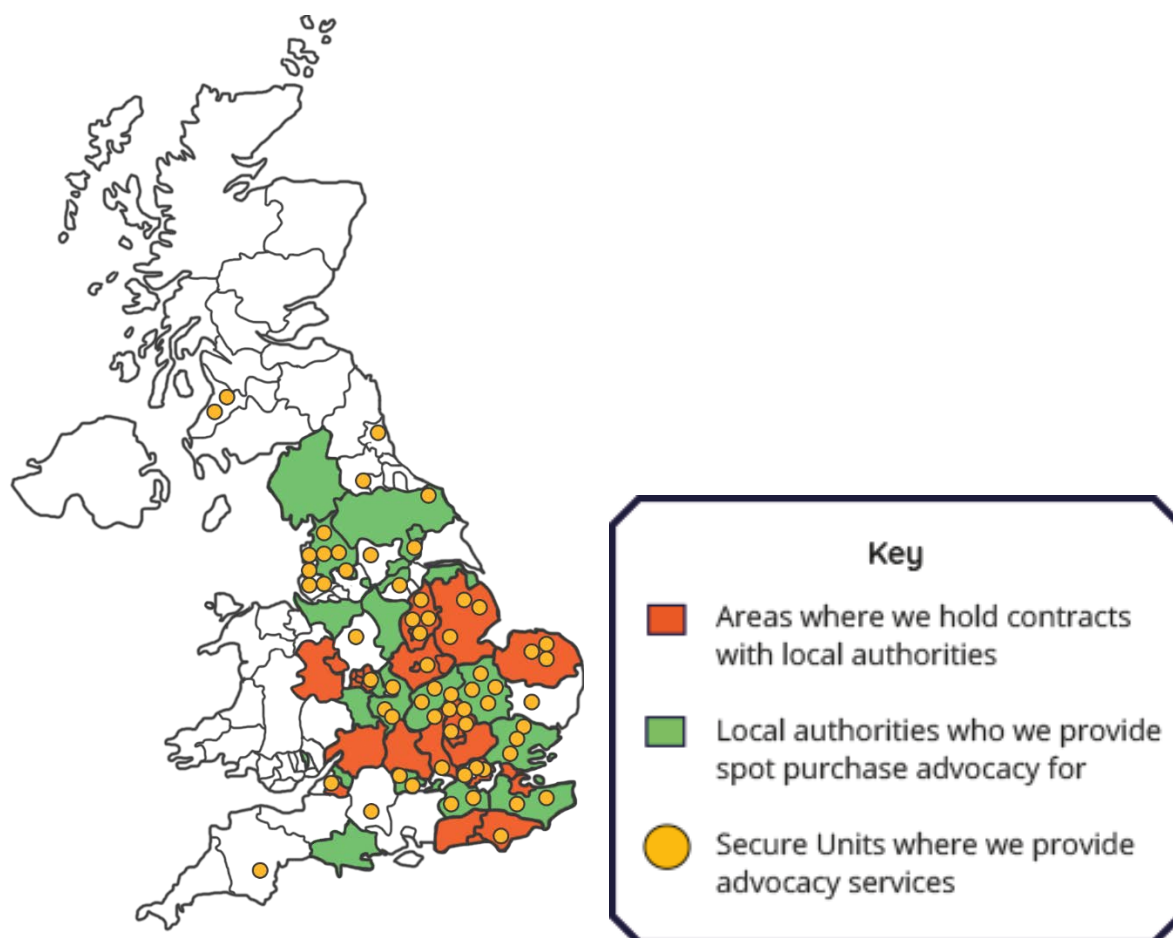


Community Advocacy

1. Children
2. Housing
3. Care
4. Mental Health Services
5. Communication



The areas where we work



POHWER expanded its' services footprint during 2020-2021, finishing the year supporting 85 advocacy, information and advice contracts across England and growing into Scotland and Wales.

Spot purchase refers to areas where we have been asked to support individuals who are resident in the local authority but where we do not hold the advocacy contract.

We hold **22 contracts** with NHS or private providers to deliver Secure and Complex Advocacy services in **100 units**.



In some areas we work in partnership with other organisations to provide services. This year we worked with 34 Civil Society Partners.

This past year, POHWER grew its' reach through the launch of four new innovative services and pilot programmes

New Advocacy Services Launched

- As part of Connect Lambeth Advocacy Partnership we provide statutory advocacy services with Age UK to the London Borough of Lambeth
- Statutory and non-statutory advocacy services to Bath and North East Somerset Council
- Statutory advocacy services to the London Borough of Hounslow
- Secure and Complex Advocacy to Magna House, Elysium, Montreux Capital Management, Mayfield Children's Home, Cawston Park and Coveberry (CareTech)

New Emerging Models & Pilots (Non-Statutory)

- New Community Mental Health Advocacy Discharge Project for Gloucestershire County Council and Gloucestershire Health and Care NHS Foundation Trust
- New Parent's Advocacy pilots in Wolverhampton and Telford & Wrekin
- New Mental Health Discharge Pressure Advocacy Service for Nottingham Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust
- Expanded our independent advocacy support and wellbeing service for people affected by HS2
- New employability service in Nottinghamshire supported by POhWER volunteer advocates, facilitated by Stay Nimble and funded by Accenture.

Case Studies



Nicholas' Story

Nicholas is 17 and was admitted to hospital and detained under the Mental Health Act on a ward for children and adolescents. He was referred to POhWER's Independent Mental Health Advocacy service and allocated an advocate – Angela. When Angela met Nicholas, she explained his rights and her role in supporting him. Nicholas told Angela how much he wanted to be at the party his family were holding for his dad's 40th birthday. He asked Angela to support him to raise this at a ward round as he was worried that he wouldn't remember everything he wanted to say.

Angela met with Nicholas before the ward round to plan what he wanted to say. She explained that under Section 17 of the Mental Health Act staff can allow patients to leave the hospital for short periods. But there may be conditions, such as returning by a certain time or being accompanied by a member of staff. Angela attended the ward round with Nicholas and supported him to explain why he was requesting section 17 leave. He was able to tell staff how long the journey to the party would be, how long it would last and why attending was so important to him. Nicholas was given enough leave to attend and was told he could go without staff support.

When Angela saw Nicholas again she asked how the party had gone. He told her how great it had been to have time with his family and how good it had felt to celebrate with his dad. He hopes to use more section 17 leave to spend time with his family in the future.



Laura's Story

Laura is 35 and was diagnosed with paranoid schizophrenia ten years ago. She was detained in hospital under the Mental Health Act and wanted an advocate to support her to voice her views at her weekly ward round. Daniel was allocated as Laura's advocate and when they met she explained that she wanted to change psychiatrist as she felt her current psychiatrist was not listening to her. Laura also said she wanted a review of her medication and had concerns about the lack of aftercare planning for her return home.

Daniel explained Laura's rights and supported her to access appropriate information about her medication and its use. This helped Laura to feel more empowered in discussions with her clinical team. With Daniel's support she also felt more able to self-advocate in her ward rounds. Laura asked Daniel to raise her concerns about her medication and her discharge from hospital with her clinical team. These issues were discussed and added to Laura's care plan. Daniel also supported Laura to raise her concerns about not being listened to with her psychiatrist and as a result their relationship improved.

Daniel attended three ward rounds with Laura, and each time Laura grew in confidence and was able to give her views about her treatment options and ensure that discharge planning was taking place every week. Laura and her psychiatrist agreed changes to her medication and a robust aftercare package was put in place when Laura returned home. Laura felt that Daniel's help had been invaluable in supporting her understanding and confidence to achieve the outcomes she wanted. She felt that her current and future risk of being readmitted to hospital had been significantly reduced by having a proper aftercare package.



Debbie's Story

Debbie is 63 and has a physical disability which affects her mobility. Following a care assessment she was informed that the number of hours of support she received as part of her care package would be cut. Debbie complained about this and about her social worker, who she felt was abrupt and did not listen to her but nothing changed.

Debbie contacted POHWER and was allocated an advocate – Clive. Clive explained that his role was to support her to get her views across. Debbie told him that since her care package hours had been reduced there was not enough time for her carers to do her shopping, laundry and housework. With Clive's help Debbie wrote to social care to request a new social worker and a reassessment of her care package.

Debbie received a written response from social care saying that they felt her original social worker had acted appropriately but that she had been allocated a new social worker and that a reassessment would be arranged. Debbie asked Clive to support her at the reassessment to ensure that she was able to make her wishes known and that she was listened to; with Clive's support, she explained to the new social worker and an occupational therapist why she had challenged the previous assessment.

Debbie's care package was reinstated to the same level as before. Debbie was grateful for the support she received from Clive, and said that without it, she would not have been listened to or had her wishes acted upon. She said she feels stronger now and that next time there is an issue she will be able to tackle it on her own, but knows how to get help if she needs it.

Trustees' Annual Report

The trustees are pleased to present their annual report together with the financial statements of the charity for the year ended 31 March 2021.

The financial statements comply with the Charities Act 2011, the Companies Act 2006, the Articles of Association, and 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). The Trustees' Annual Report includes the requirements of the Strategic Report as required by company law.

Objectives & Activities

POHWER was founded in 1996 and in 1997 registered as a charity and limited company. It is governed according to its Articles of Association.

Charitable Objects

The principal objects of the charitable company, as set out in its Articles of Association, are "To promote social inclusion for the public benefit by preventing people from becoming socially excluded, relieving the needs of those people who are socially excluded¹" in particular but not exclusively by:

- Providing information, advice, support, empowerment and advocacy and managing advocacy and user-involvement projects which help people to speak up and to be heard as well as secure their rights and entitlements;
- Supporting the development of empowerment, advocacy and service user-involvement projects which help people;
- Supporting and providing information, advice, support, empowerment and advocacy and user-involvement projects;
- Promoting information, advice, support, empowerment and advocacy and good practice in information, advice, support, advocacy and user-involvement Promoting equal opportunities for people;
- Educating and training people and organisations about empowerment, advocacy and user-involvement;
- Providing information, advice, support, empowerment and advocacy to people and those responsible for providing services to them.

¹ For the purpose of this clause 'socially excluded' means being excluded from society, or parts of society, as a result of one or more of the following factors: ill health (physical or mental); learning, physical, sensory or other disability; unemployment; financial hardship; youth or old age; substance abuse or dependency including alcohol and drugs; discrimination on the grounds of sex, race, disability, ethnic origin, religion, belief, creed, sexual orientation or gender re-assignment; poor educational or skills attainment; relationship and family breakdown; poor housing (that is housing that does not meet basic habitable standards; crime (either as a victim of crime or as an offender rehabilitating into society).

Statement of Public Benefit

POhWER's purpose is to benefit the public and in particular people who have learning difficulties, physical, sensory or other disabilities, mental health problems, dementia, people who are aged, in poverty, marginalised by societal disadvantage or who are otherwise socially excluded.

POhWER operates within its charitable objects to support people to have a voice so they can uphold their rights, prevent discrimination, and abuse and obtain the care and support they need. POhWER has worked within its charitable objects in 2020/21 and the trustees have taken decisions in line with POhWER's objects and values, focused on the people we support and taken into account the Charity Commission public benefit guidance.

Vision & Mission Statement

Our vision and mission is to empower people to have a voice and make a real difference to their lives. We do this by speaking for them when they can't and supporting them to speak for themselves when they can.

POhWER aims to enable all that need it to have a voice, achieve empowerment and self-help so they win respect and uphold their rights and get their essential needs met. We focus on the most excluded members of society, so they are listened to when decisions are being made about them or the services that they need.

Values

Our values are our core principles, the qualities and beliefs that drive all of our work. These have evolved over the years and are now refined to ensure we put people at the heart of everything we do in the way we work with our beneficiaries, partners and stakeholders and, equally importantly, with each other. Our values are as follows:

- **Professional** – we are committed to working in a confidential and person-centred way – being professional, respectful, reliable, honest and independent.
- **Empowering** – we will empower people to develop their skills and confidence, stand up for their rights and regain control – creating a culture of enablement, not dependency.
- **Open, free and fair** – we will deliver services that are free to use and accessible to all members of the community while encouraging and valuing differences and diversity and always working in a fair and open way.
- **Positive difference** – we will ensure that our passion for our work results in a positive difference to people's lives and use the learning from our casework to have a positive impact on the delivery of services in the future.

- **Local** – we will engage with local communities in the areas that we serve, understanding their specific needs and determining the best way to meet these.
- **Engaging** – we will meaningfully listen and engage with people and groups to ensure they are involved in the design, delivery and evaluation of our services, ensuring we are a pioneering client and needs led organisation.

Our Impact in 2020-2021

We routinely capture information about the outcomes that we help people achieve to ensure we are delivering benefits to the beneficiaries we serve.. Our impact report can be found on our website: <https://www.pohwer.net/our-impact>

Our services are outcome-focused. Our colleagues are trained to work with all beneficiaries to focus on identifying, recording and reviewing outcomes for each individual. These outcomes can include helping people to:

- access information and services;
- understand their options, their rights and the system (e.g. the policy / procedural / legal framework) that impacts on their quality of life and understand how to engage with professionals involved in decisions affecting them;
- make informed choices;
- feel empowered and confident to take forward their issues;
- improve their quality of life / resolve issues that compromise their health, wellbeing or quality of life;
- speak up and self-advocate / self-help;
- prevent escalation of their issues;
- engage with local services;
- secure entitlements and rights;
- maintain or enhance their independence

As we passed through the pandemic the role of advocacy, information & advice became paramount to supporting our beneficiaries to have their voices heard and rights upheld. Easements of legislative duties, blanket approaches, dilution of rights and poor access were key themes which threatened our beneficiaries' lives during the pandemic. We saw socially excluded, vulnerable and marginalised people in many cases finding themselves worse off due to emergency powers and measures taken to manage the pandemic.

During 2020-2021, POhWER supported 82,300 total people with one-to-one advocacy services, handled 340,619 information and advice calls through our Help Hubs and supported 95,935 issues through our work. In this year of the pandemic POhWER responded to 14,041 issues which were COVID-19 related and additionally provided support for 6,943 food, fuel poverty or other basic needs issues.

Advocacy Services

This past year we saw a decrease in advocacy cases due to restrictions on face to face contact during the pandemic.

Data Measure	2019-20	2020-2021	% Change
No. of new people supported 1:1 advocacy cases this year	74,636	64,312	-13.8%
No. of existing people supported 1:1 advocacy cases over multiple years	27,356	18,268	-33.2%
Total No. of people supported 1:1 advocacy cases	101,992	82,300	-19.3%

Information & Advice

The pandemic created a surge in demand for our information and advice services managed by our Help Hubs.

Data Measure	2019-20	2020-2021	% Change
Total No. of contacts (phone calls, emails, video conferences)	253,216	340,619	34.5%

Digital Self-Advocacy

The expansion of our digital information resources available to the general public and investments in awareness building of human rights through public speaking and media grew our website reach.

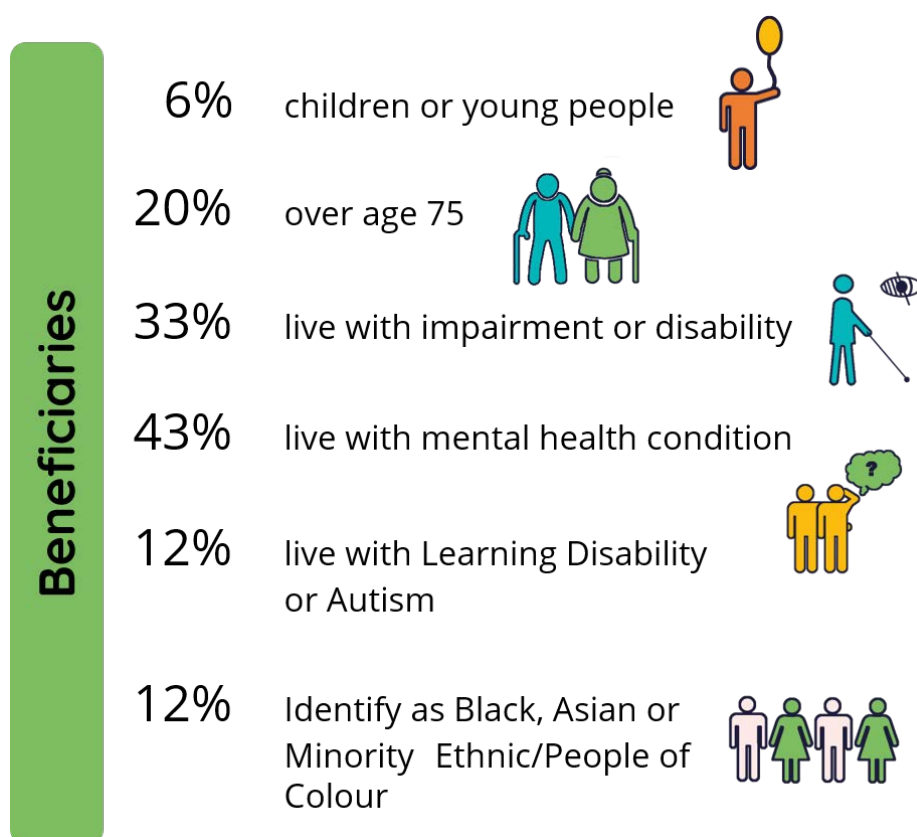
Data Measure	2019-20	2020-2021	% Change
Number of webpage views	406,832	426,854	4.92%
Number of self-help and information resources downloaded from our website	35,391	35,072	-0.9%

Diversity Profile

Our initial focus on Equality, Diversity & Inclusion this past year sought to understand the demographics and lived experiences of the beneficiaries we serve and our workforce.

POhWER does not have a typical beneficiary and the diversity of the people who use our services to uphold rights and entitlements across public institutions reflects this.

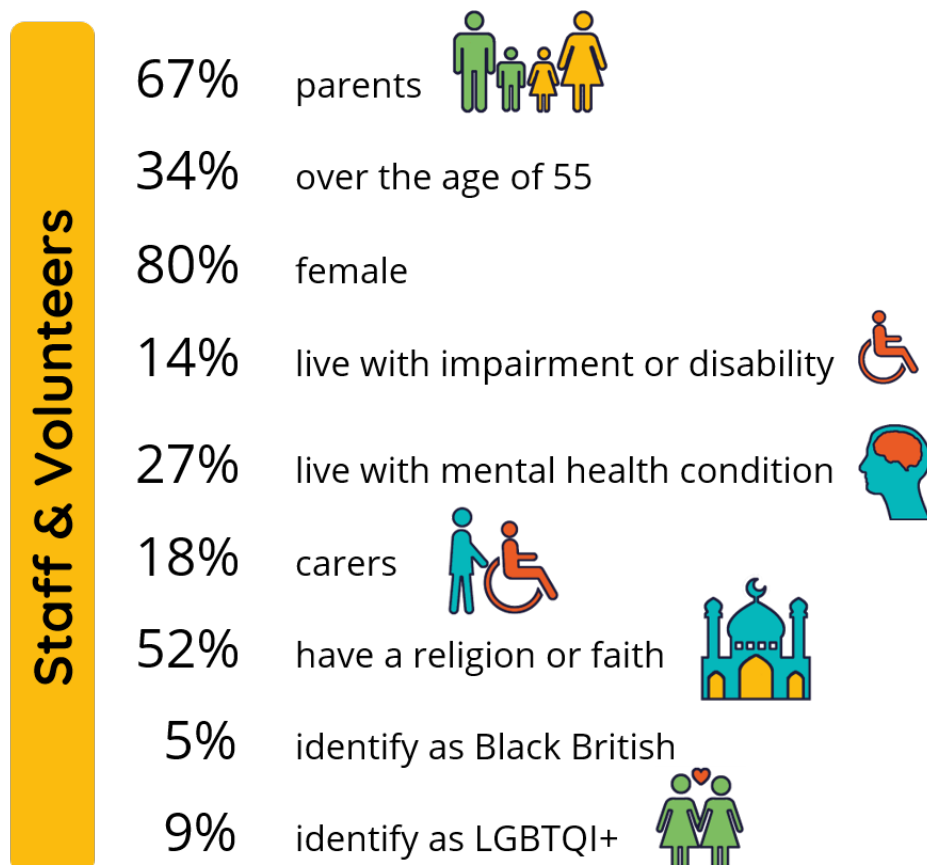
Diversity Profile of POhWER Beneficiaries 2020-2021



This past year we established our first staff network groups in the Charity's history including Empohwerace (Anti-racism), Rainbow (LGBTQI+) and Neurodiversity to augment and complement our existing Unify staff consultative group ensuring we continue to be an open and inclusive culture.

We recognise that many of our staff and volunteers share the lived experiences of our beneficiaries.

Diversity Profile of POhWER Staff & Volunteers 2020-2021



Financial Review

POhWER are pleased to report growth in 2020/21 with a surplus of £1,065,176 and an increase in both cash balances and free reserves.

The external environment in which we operate continues to be challenging. Local authorities and other commissioners we work with have continued to cut budgets against a backdrop of rising client needs. The pandemic has stretched our capacity and resources in new ways as we responded to the crisis experienced by our beneficiaries.

Our income for 2020/21 increased by 15.8% to £15,624,829, (2019/20 £13,495,348). This figure includes additional Income from new contracts, emerging model pilots and grants that commenced in the year. This was achieved whilst successfully managing our expenditure within budget.

Our overall surplus for 2020/21 was £1,065,176, (2019/20 £287,024). This included the efficient management of our central costs to the level originally budgeted for in 2020/21. The impacts of the worldwide pandemic resulted in our support services being in greater demand, driving the growth in our income. Cost efficiency projects resulting from the implementation of improved policies,

controls and procedures also drove cost savings across the charity adding to the surplus.

Our cash balances rose to £2,324,212 (2019/20 £577,513). We continue to scrutinise payment terms offered by our funders and make the case to improve them where we judge them to be unfair or disadvantageous to third sector organisations such as ourselves.

Reserves Policy and Going Concern

At 31 March 2021, POhWER held total reserves of £2,455,815 (2019/20 £1,390,639). Of this amount, £2,214,826 represents the charity's free reserves (2019/20 £1,091,094). Free reserves are the unrestricted reserves of the charity that are not designated by the Trustees or that represent the value of fixed assets used by the charity.

During the financial period the Trustees reviewed the charity's reserves policy. Having given due regard to users of the charity's services and other stakeholders as well as considering guidance from the regulator, the new reserves policy is to hold free reserves of between 1.5 and 3.0 months operating expenditure.

At the year-end date the charity held free reserves representing 1.8 months of operating expenditure, within the range of the reserves policy.

Our current position is that we are able to meet all of our financial commitments on time and POhWER remains a going concern. The Trustees have made this assessment in respect to a period one year from the date of approval of these accounts.

Risk Management

The Trustees have a responsibility for ensuring that the charity maintains a comprehensive risk management system and that appropriate actions are taken to manage and mitigate risks. The Finance, Audit and Risk Committee monitors and reviews these reports and reports to the Board on their effectiveness. The principal risks identified through their likelihood and impact on the Charity are:

Risk	Examples of mitigating actions
A safeguarding failure results in harm to a beneficiary or staff member	• External Safeguarding review completed and detailed Safeguarding plan and processes implemented • Specialist Safeguarding Resource in place • Safeguarding training, reinforcement and education for all staff, volunteers and trustees • Safer recruitment implemented • Annual review of safeguarding practice
Covid-19 adversely affects commissioners funding at current levels or to renew contracts at viable levels	• Regular contact with commissioners where Covid-19 restrictions make delivery of advocacy to contract levels difficult. • Rigorous retention and tender scoping process in place • Diversification of funding
The UK government retracts from the European Human Rights Act 1998 and dispenses with advocacy provision and funding as a statutory service	• Campaigning and influencing in the public domain through digital, media and social media outlets • Sharing Evidence with public bodies such as Parliament, CQC and EHRC • Raising awareness of human rights through digital thought leadership articles and public speaking
Unable to translate strategic intent into operational reality	• Ensure business plans are robust • Close monitoring of Strategy 2020-2025 Implementation Plan • Continue strive to improve efficiency and effectiveness of all of the charity's teams and services

POhWER's Strategic Direction 2020-2025



POhWER has been working to effect change in British society since 1996. Our strategy describes where we are heading to and how we will achieve our aims and objectives. For charities like POhWER who are driving rights-led change through advocacy, a Theory of Change defines the long-term goals, influences, interventions, and factors involved in achieving them.

During 2020-2021, POhWER launched a new 5-year strategy. Our new strategy outlines the changes POhWER would like to see for our beneficiaries across the United Kingdom and to describe how we can make this happen.

Our strategic themes 2020-2025

The new strategy is built upon six foundations or strategic themes we want to realise through POhWER's charitable work in the next 5 years.



Who POhWER is here to support



We look at everyone who needs a helping hand through advocacy to lead independent lives and to uphold their rights.

Given POhWER's broad reach, it is not possible to always use language that perfectly describes every single one of the lived experiences that our beneficiaries identify or relate with. In the present day, the Charity not only

focuses on people living with mental health, impairment or disability but also anyone who benefits from advocacy and the helping hand it provides. The lived experiences and circumstances covered are too wide to be able to use a set of vocabulary that applies to everyone's circumstances. There is no "typical" POhWER beneficiary.

By vulnerable, we mean people who are at risk of abuse or harm due to threat to life or deprivation of liberty. We don't use this word in a disempowering way. Vulnerable is also a legal term. In this country, under the protections of safeguarding law, service users and beneficiaries are afforded a different set of rights, protections and safeguards. It is our duty to uphold these where people do not have mental capacity to make their own decisions.

By marginalised, we refer to people who have been relegated to the fringes of society who are not part of the mainstream.

By socially excluded or isolated, we are referring to systemic practices or attitudes that have made certain groups of people within a society feel isolated and unimportant.

Where we empower people living with mental health and disability, our long-term commitment is to a social model of disability where we will continuously seek sustainable changes to seek true equality and empowerment.

A social model of disability is different than a medical model. The social model of disability identifies systemic barriers, derogatory attitudes, and social exclusion (intentional or inadvertent), which make it difficult or impossible for individuals with impairments to attain their valued.

Anyone at any point in their lives can benefit from advocacy – we support people, not labels.

Problem Statement

Disempowerment isolation and discrimination towards people who are socially excluded, marginalised or vulnerable from individuals, institutions and communities limits their ability to participate fully in British society as independent and equal people.

Independent rights-led advocacy is not accessible to most who need it when they need it – supporting their life's pathways through childhood, parenthood, social care, health, education, employment, criminal justice, local community engagement, family life, financial health and dying.

Guiding Principles to Change

With the end-goal in mind of empowerment, we seek to implement change through a number of guiding principles:

- Informing, empowering and advocating with impact
- Transforming societal attitudes and practices
- Challenging laws and upholding human rights
- Adapting to beneficiary unmet needs with timeliness and agility
- Embracing difference and recognising intersectionality and lived experience
- Finding holistic solutions which are 'people-centred' not task-driven
- Creating and investing in new innovative advocacy models
- Promoting Charity sustainability and stability
- Balancing bold expression with available resources & risk appetite
- Imbedding co-production into our service design and development
- Protecting core existing services, while entering new markets
- Respecting, investing in and supporting our staff and volunteers through change

Areas of Focus 2020-2025

We will move further towards achieving our vision through six areas of focused activity during 2020-2025:

1. Deliver more to each client through greater expertise, efficiency and digital development
2. Grow income through mutually beneficial partnerships, fundraising and commercial enterprise
3. Influence policy, public attitudes and legislation through campaigning, lobbying and influencing
4. Grow client reach through new models of impact-led advocacy and geographical expansion
5. Further embed co-production within the design and development of our services
6. Strengthen culture, skills, finances, governance and infrastructure

Desired Outcomes and Achievements

Through our planning, implementation focus and investment POhWER hopes to demonstrate improvement and impact over the next 5 years.

5-year Desired Outcome (before 2025)	2020-2021 Achievement
Beneficiary reach trebles to support people not supported by advocacy today	Over 400,000+ total people reached through POhWER's advocacy, information and advice services.
Service users and carers have an independent voice and are more empowered through POhWER's intervention	Qualitative impact feedback from our beneficiaries has been broadly positive through our Voices of Beneficiaries review, however many unmet needs identified which will require further upskilling, growth and expansion for the Charity.
British society becomes more inclusive and accepting and institutions value and understand the importance of equal treatment and access	This past year we focused on awareness raising, relationship building, educational and informative public speaking, digital information content development including podcasts with the hope of influencing the attitudes of the British public. Additionally, we launched our first Human Rights survey.
Laws and human rights are upheld and new protections developed	This past year we saw a strengthening of laws and protections including LPS planning and Mental Health Act reform. However, emergency powers and easements placed our beneficiaries often at disadvantage and isolated them further from participating as equal people in our society.
Aspirations and unmet needs are better understood and embedded in future service design and development	During 2020-2021 we began to capture data to understand unmet needs of our beneficiaries. Next year we plan to shape this data into proposals and changes to enable us to better serve and deliver public benefit.
Changes are supported by a people-centred sustainable organisation	We restructured our People Directorate – refreshing leadership team, updating policies and procedures, investing in operation and appointing the Charity's first EDI Manager. We introduced virtual engagement forums and rolled out digital polling tools to ensure our workforce had a mechanism to provide feedback and take an active part in shaping the Charity's future.

5-year Desired Outcome (before 2025)	2020-2021 Achievement
Achieve >85% positive client quality outcomes every year	87% of our beneficiaries this year rated our services 5 out of 5.
To develop and implement six new models of non-statutory advocacy	Expansion of non-statutory services as outlined in New Services & Pilots section.
Embed structured co-production in service design and continuous development	Increased frequency of the service user panel meetings and design of lived experience panels to be launched in 21-22.
To secure new diversified income through fundraising, corporate partnerships and civil society partnerships	Expansion of partnership working with 34 civil society organisations. Diversification of income through launch of digital fundraising channels.
Campaign for proposed changes to key legislation, influence public attitudes and develop our national parliamentary/policy making relationships	We submitted five written evidence submissions to Parliament, managed campaigns against the use of blanket DNARs, provided input into Mental Health Act Reform, Liberty Protection Safeguards and Human Rights Act Review. We forged important new relationships with key policy making units within EHRC and CQC.
Raise beneficiary reach and awareness of POhWER through social media and digital information resources	Restructured our digital offering, expanded social media and information assets found on our website. Launched new podcast series.

Reference and Administrative Details

Patrons

Lord Michael Cashman CBE
Peter Duncan
Professor Deirdre Kelly CBE
Lorraine Kelly CBE
Nitu Shah
Samantha Lee Howe (from December 2020)

Vice Presidents

Tim Anfilogoff
Gary Blaker
Phil Lawrence
Carol Lee MBE
Iris Lusack
Aruna Patel
Steven Rathbone
Judith Smart

Trustees

Richard Carter (b)(c) (until November 2020)
Waqas Chauhdry (b)(c) (until September 2020)
Toby Cotton (a)
Bridget Flint (a)(b)
Geoff Gibbs (a) (Interim Chair from August 2020 to January 2021 and Deputy Chair from January 2021)
Sandra Harding (a)(c)
Genna Harwood-Armitage (b)
Jackie Kinsey (b)(c)
Sundera Kumara-Moorthy (a)(c)
Lauren McGurk
Mitch Miller (b)
Tony Kildare (Chair from January 2021)
Robert Wainwright (b)(c) (Chair from April 2019 to July 2020)

(a) Member of the Finance, Audit and Risk Committee

(b) Member of the People Committee

(c) Member of the Fundraising and Income Generation Committee

Chief Executive

Mark Lister (until April 2020)
Helen Moulinos (from May 2020)

Executive Team

Elyzabeth Hawkes – Deputy Chief Executive
Tim Jarvis – Chief Finance Officer

Roan Dyson – Director of Support Services (until January 2021)
Fiona McArthur-Worbey – Director of Fundraising & Engagement (from March 2021)
Julie Born – People Director (Interim from December 2020 and permanent from April 2021)

Company Secretary

Tim Jarvis

Company Number

03323040

Charity Number

1061543 (England and Wales)
SC048858 (Scotland)

Website

www.pohwer.net

Registered Office

Hertlands House
Primett Road
Stevenage
Hertfordshire
SG1 3EE

Auditors

Haysmacintyre LLP
10 Queen Street Place
London
EC4R 1AG

Bankers

The Co-operative Bank plc
PO Box 101
1 Balloon Street
Manchester
M60 4EP

Structure, Governance and Management

Structure

POhWER is an organisation that is focused on its beneficiaries in the way we deliver our services and seek their feedback to inform future improvements. We engage with beneficiaries and local communities in the areas that we serve, understanding their specific needs and determining the best way to meet these in partnership with other organisations and commissioners. We meaningfully listen and engage with people and groups to ensure they are involved in the design, delivery and evaluation of our services, ensuring we are a pioneering client and needs-led organisation.

Governance

The Trustee Board are the charity's trustees and legal directors of the company. The Board of Trustees can have a maximum of twelve members and a minimum of five.

Trustees are appointed through a transparent and rigorous recruitment and selection process and are elected by the Members at the AGM. Trustees can serve a maximum term of nine years.

Newly appointed Trustees are provided with a comprehensive induction programme which includes meeting the Executive team and with an emphasis on their responsibilities as a Trustee of the charity. All relevant documents are provided including a comprehensive Trustee Handbook.

Trustees deploy a wide range of skills, knowledge and experience essential to good governance. The range of expertise held by our Trustees is regularly reviewed To determine that it meets POhWER's needs.

Trustees, Chief Executive and Executive team are expected to behave with the utmost integrity and professionalism at all times and to adhere to POhWER's Code of Conduct and the Nolan Committee's Seven Principles of Public Life. The Trustee Board has the responsibility for the strategic direction and governance of the charity ensuring that the charity upholds its values and core principles and delivers its charitable objects.

Operational management is delegated by the Trustees to the Chief Executive who is accountable to the Trustee Board. The Chief Executive and the Executive Team normally attend Board and Committee meetings.

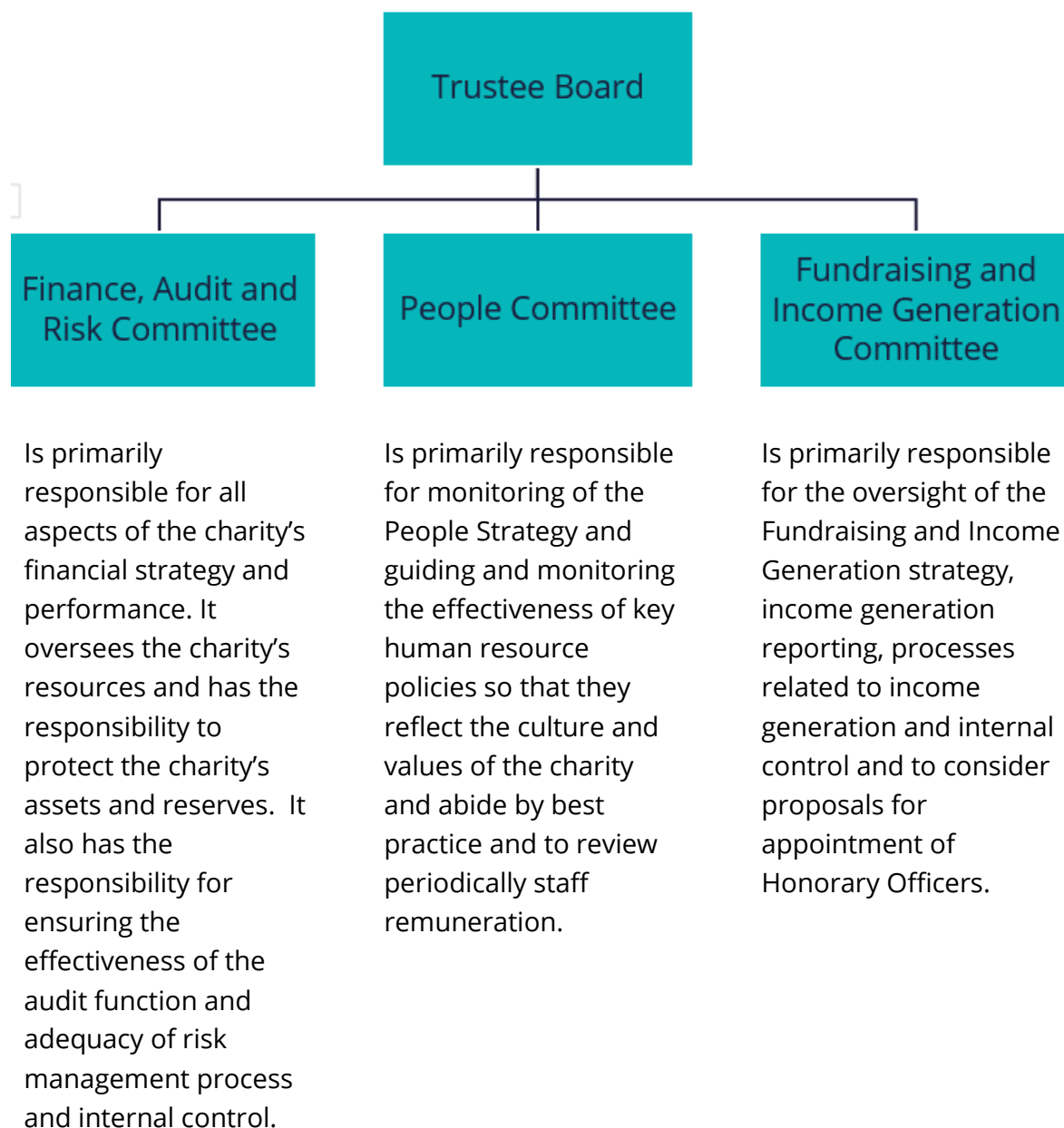
All our Trustees give their time voluntarily and received no reward or benefit from POhWER.

The Trustee Board meets a minimum of four times each year and in addition there is a Board Away Day which allows it to focus, along with the Executive team, on key strategic issues.

Trustees who served during the year are listed on page 30, together with information about their membership of Board Committees.

Delegation and committees

The Board maintains a Scheme of Delegation and matters reserved for the Committees to the Board are clearly defined in their Terms of Reference. The Committees report directly to the Board.



Management

Day-to-day management of POHWER is delegated to employees who operate within their defined terms of reference and a scheme of delegated authority. In 2020/21 the charitable company was organised into four directorates. The

Heads of each directorate report to the Chief Executive and together they form the Executive Team.

The directorates are:

- Advocacy & Help Hub Operations & Service Delivery;
- Business Development, Income Generation, Fundraising, Marketing, Press & Media, External Engagement Digital and Service Design;
- People & HR;
- Finance, Risk and Governance.

Support functions including Safeguarding, Quality and IT are line managed by members of the Executive Team. These Heads of support functions, along with operational advocacy Regional Managers, make up the Senior Management Team.

Staff And Remuneration Of Key Management Personnel

The trustees consider that they, together with the Executive Team, comprise the key management personnel of the charity. Trustees are not remunerated for their services to the charity. Note 8 to the accounts gives details of key management personnel remuneration.

The Board of Trustees oversee the setting of remuneration for the Executive Management Team including the Chief Executive. During 2021-2022, the Board intends to undertake an independent job grading review evaluating pay for the entire organisation. The findings, proposal and financial impacts will be reviewed and considered by the Board of Trustees to inform future pay award decisions.

During 2020, pay gap regulatory reporting was suspended due to the pandemic. In 2021, POhWER will report again on gender pay gap information to the EHRC. The mean pay gap was 7.5% with a median 0.0% (both male to female). Female workers made up 81% of the workforce.

POhWER has a gender neutral pay banding structure. It does not have a bonus scheme. POhWER has a Flexible Working Policy and an Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy that are geared to family friendly working arrangements and equality for all employees ensuring there is consistency across the salary structure in place.

POhWER are proud to be accredited with Investors in People and is a Disability Confident Employer. We value diversity and work tirelessly to ensure that equality is embedded in our recruitment and retention policies and procedures. We communicate with our staff and volunteers through the charity's intranet, a quarterly update from the Chief Executive, as well as holding local team meetings.

Fundraising

POhWER has been working this past year to identify new sources of funding and diversify income. POhWER is embarking on new areas of fundraising and voluntary donations through the website, individual fundraising activity and partnerships.

During the financial year we did not work with any fundraising agencies or commercial participators. No complaints were received in respect of our fundraising activity.

POhWER is grateful to our commissioners for their contract funding of our services and to all the other individuals and organisations who have donated or fundraised. We value renewed support from those who fund us already and need to identify new income so we can respond to the growing numbers who need our help.

POhWER is registered with the Fundraising Regulator and committed to responsible and ethical fundraising practices. POhWER complies with the Code of Fundraising Practice and the Fundraising Promise.

Trustee Responsibilities Statement

The charity trustees (who are also the directors of POhWER for the purposes of company law) are responsible for preparing the annual report and financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice) including FRS 102, the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the United Kingdom and Republic of Ireland.

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

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- observe the methods and principles in the 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);
- make judgements and 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;
- 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 proper accounting records that disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charity 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 charity and hence taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

Each of the trustees confirms that:

- so far as the Trustee is aware, there is no relevant audit information of which the charitable company's auditor is unaware;
- the Trustee has taken all steps that he or she ought to have taken, as a trustee, in order to be aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the charitable company's auditor is aware of that information.

This confirmation is given and should be interpreted in accordance with the provisions of s148 of the Companies Act 2006.

The trustees had no beneficial interests in, or contracts with, the charitable company during the year. Trustees may reclaim the expenses incurred in

fulfilling their duties as trustees, and these are disclosed in notes 7 and 18 of the financial statements. All the trustees are required to be Members of the charitable company, but this entitles them only to voting rights. The trustees have no beneficial interest in the charitable company.

The trustees are responsible for the maintenance and integrity of the corporate and financial information included on 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 Trustees' Annual Report, incorporating the Strategic Report, was approved by the board of trustees and signed on their behalf by:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Antony Kildare', written in a cursive style.

Antony Kildare

Chair of the Board of Trustees

23 November 2021

Independent auditor's report to the members and trustees of POhWER

Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of POhWER for the year ended 31 March 2021 which comprise the Statement of Financial Activities, the Balance Sheet, the Statement of Cash Flows and notes to the financial statements, including a summary of significant accounting policies. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards, including Financial Reporting Standard 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 March 2021 and of the charitable company's net movement in funds, including the 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 and the Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005 and regulation 8 of the Charities Accounts (Scotland) Regulations 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 Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements section of our report. We are independent of the charity 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 Trustees' Annual Report and the Welcome from our Chair and Chief Executive. 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 there is a material misstatement in the financial statements or a material misstatement of the other information. 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 Trustees' Annual Report (which includes the strategic report and the directors' report prepared for the purposes of company law) for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements; and
- the strategic report and the directors' report included within the Trustees' Annual Report have 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 Trustees' Annual Report (which incorporates the strategic report and the directors' report).

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

- adequate accounting records have not been kept by the charitable company; or
- the charitable company 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.

Responsibilities of trustees for the financial statements

As explained more fully in the trustees' responsibilities statement set out on pages 36 and 37, 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.

Irregularities, including fraud, are instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations. We design procedures in line with our responsibilities, outlined above, to detect material misstatements in respect of irregularities, including fraud. The extent to which our procedures are capable of detecting irregularities, including fraud is detailed below:

Based on our understanding of the charitable company and the environment in which it operates, we identified that the principal risks of non-compliance with laws and regulations related to company law in England and Wales, and charity law in England and Wales and in Scotland, and we considered the extent to which non-compliance might have a material effect on the financial statements. We also considered those laws and regulations that have a direct impact on the

preparation of the financial statements such as the Companies Act 2006, the Charities Act 2011, the Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005 and the Charities Accounts (Scotland) Regulations 2006 and payroll taxes.

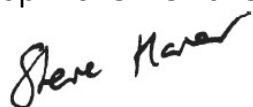
We evaluated management's incentives and opportunities for fraudulent manipulation of the financial statements (including the risk of override of controls), and determined that the principal risks were related to management override of controls. Audit procedures performed by the engagement team included:

- Inspecting correspondence with regulators and tax authorities;
- Discussions with management including consideration of known or suspected instances of non-compliance with laws and regulation and fraud;
- Evaluating management's controls designed to prevent and detect irregularities;
- Identifying and testing journals, in particular journal entries posted with unusual account combinations, postings by unusual users or with unusual descriptions; and
- Challenging assumptions and judgements made by management in their critical accounting estimates.

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 auditor's report.

Use of our report

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



Steven Harper (Senior Statutory Auditor)
For and on behalf of Haysmacintyre LLP, Statutory Auditors
10 Queen Street Place
London EC4R 1AG

29 November 2021

Statement of financial activities

for the year ended 31 March 2021

(Including an Income & Expenditure Account)

	Note	Restricted 2021 £	Unrestricted 2021 £	Total 2021 £	Restricted 2020	Unrestricted 2020	Total 2020 £
Income from:							
Donations & Legacies	2	-	35,663	35,663	-	43,790	43,790
<i>Charitable Activities:</i>							
- Contract Income	3	-	14,945,770	14,945,770	13,333	13,299,895	13,313,228
- Grants	3	562,829	-	562,829	103,468		103,468
Investment Income	4	-	761	761	-	4,816	4,816
Other Sources	5	-	79,806	79,806	-	30,046	30,046
Total income		562,829	15,062,000	15,624,829	116,801	13,378,547	13,495,348
Expenditure on:							
Cost of raising funds		-	(7,319)	(7,319)	-	(35,000)	(35,000)
Charitable activities:	6						
-Statutory services		-	(9,790,267)	(9,790,267)	-	(9,418,599)	(9,418,599)
-Non Statutory Services		(577,620)	(2,421,492)	(2,999,112)	(90,752)	(1,910,173)	(2,000,925)
-Secure services		-	(1,758,182)	(1,758,182)	-	(1,723,232)	(1,723,232)
-Other services		-	(4,773)	(4,773)	-	(30,568)	(30,568)
<i>Subtotal – Charitable Act.</i>		(577,620)	(13,974,714)	(14,552,334)	(90,752)	(13,082,572)	(13,173,324)
Total expenditure		(577,620)	(13,982,033)	(14,559,653)	(90,752)	(13,117,572)	(13,208,324)

	Note	Restricted 2021 £	Unrestricted 2021 £	Total 2021 £	Restricted 2020	Unrestricted 2020	Total 2020 £
Net income/(expense)	7	(14,791)	1,079,967	1,065,176	26,049	260,975	287,024
Transfers between funds		-	-	-	1,126	(1,126)	-
Net movement between funds		(14,791)	1,079,967	1,065,176	27,175	259,849	287,024
Reconciliation of Funds							
Total funds brought forward		27,175	1,363,464	1,390,639	-	1,103,615	1,103,615
Total funds carried forward	15	12,384	2,443,431	2,455,815	27,175	1,363,464	1,390,639

All of the above results are derived from continuing activities. All recognised gains and losses are included in the above statement of financial activities.

The notes on pages 46-64 form part of these financial statements.

Balance Sheet

as at 31 March 2021

Company registration number 03323040

	Note	Total 2021 £	Total 2020 £
Fixed assets			
Intangible fixed assets	10	4,815	23,234
Tangible fixed assets	11	165,094	116,066
		169,909	139,300
Current assets			
Debtors	12	1,693,160	1,993,706
Cash at bank and in hand		2,324,212	577,513
		4,017,372	2,571,219
Current liabilities			
Creditors: amounts due within one year	13	(1,731,466)	(1,319,880)
Net current assets		2,285,906	1,251,339
Total assets less current liabilities		2,455,815	1,390,639
Net assets		2,455,815	1,390,639
Restricted funds		12,384	27,175
Unrestricted funds			
Designated funds	15	58,696	133,070
Fixed asset funds	15	169,909	139,300
General funds	15	2,214,826	1,091,094
Total funds		2,455,815	1,390,639

Approved and authorised for issue by the trustees and signed on their behalf by:



Antony Kildare
Chair of Trustees

23rd November 2021

The notes on pages 46-64 form part of these financial statements.

Statement of cash flows

for the year ended 31 March 2021

		Total 2021 £	Total 2020 £
Cash flow from operating activities	A		
Net cash provided by/(used in) operating activities		1,870,684	99,179
Cash flows from investing activities			
- Purchase of tangible and intangible fixed assets		(123,985)	(97,444)
Change in cash and cash equivalents in the year		1,746,699	1,735
Cash and cash equivalents at 1 April 2020		577,513	575,778
Cash and cash equivalents at 31 March 2021	B	2,324,212	577,513

Notes to the statement of cash flows for the year ended 31 March 2021

A. Reconciliation of net income (expenditure) to net cash provided by operating activities	2021	2020
	£	£
Net income (expenditure) (as per the statement of financial activities)	1,065,176	287,024
Adjustments for:		
Depreciation charge	74,957	52,724
Amortisation charge	18,419	19,216
Profit on disposal of assets	-	-
(Increase) decrease in debtors	300,546	(609,183)
Increase (decrease) in creditors	411,586	349,398
Net cash provided by/(used in) operating activities	1,870,684	99,179
B. Analysis of cash and cash equivalents		
Cash in hand	436	579
Cash at bank	212,407	222,504
Cash on instant access deposit accounts	2,055,540	354,798
Cash held in supplier client accounts	55,829	(368)
Total cash and cash equivalents	2,324,212	577,513

B. Analysis of movement in net funds	2020	Movement	2021
	£	£	£
Cash in hand	579	(143)	436
Cash at bank	222,504	(10,097)	212,407
Cash on instant access deposit accounts	354,798	1,700,742	2,055,540
Cash held in supplier client accounts	(368)	56,197	55,829
Total cash and cash equivalents	577,513	1,746,699	2,324,212

The notes on pages 46-64 form part of these financial statements.

Notes to the Financial Statements

for the year ended 31 March 2021

1. Accounting Policies

The principal accounting policies adopted, judgements and key sources of estimation uncertainty in the preparation of the financial statements are laid out below.

Basis of Preparation

The financial statements have been prepared for the year to 31 March 2021 with comparative information provided in respect of the year to 31 March 2020. They are presented in sterling and rounded to the nearest whole pound.

The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention with items initially recognised at cost or transaction value unless otherwise stated in the relevant accounting policy note(s).

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 Standards applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) ('Charities SORP FRS 102') (Second Edition, effective 1 January 2019) and the Companies Act 2006.

The charity constitutes a public benefit entity as defined by FRS 102.

Entity Status

POhWER is a company limited by guarantee registered in England Wales (company number 03323040). It is a registered charity, registered with the Charity Commission for England and Wales (registered charity number 1061543), and the Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator (registered charity number SC048858). Its registered address is Hertlands House, Primett Road, Stevenage, Hertfordshire, SG1 3EE.

Critical accounting estimates and areas of judgement

Preparation of the accounts requires the trustees and management to make significant judgements and estimates.

The items in the accounts where these judgements and estimates have been made include:

- the useful economic lives attributed to tangible and intangible fixed assets to determine the appropriate depreciation and amortisation charges;
- the basis on which support cost have been allocated across expenditure headings;
- the estimated value of accrued income and work in progress; and
- the recoverability of trade debtors.

Assessment of going concern

The charity recorded a surplus of £1,065,176 in the year, and a net cash inflow of £1,746,699. At the balance sheet date, the charity held cash balances of £2,324,212 and free reserves of £2,214,826.

The trustees have assessed whether the use of the going concern assumption is appropriate in preparing these accounts. The trustees have made this assessment in respect to a period of one year from the date of approval of these accounts, taking into account the expected commercial effects of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.

The trustees of the charity have concluded that there are no material uncertainties relating to events or conditions that may cast significant doubt on the ability of the charity to continue as a going concern. The trustees are of the opinion that the charity will have sufficient resources to meet its liabilities as they fall due. The most significant areas of judgement that affect items in the accounts are detailed on the previous section. In the context of budgets and forecasts used to assess going concern, there is an additional judgement which is the success rate of winning and retaining advocacy contracts. This is typical of charities such as POhWER operating in the advocacy sector and as a larger charity there is a less dependency on a small number of contracts. With regard to the year from the approval of these accounts, the most significant risk relates to managing the charity's working capital. The charity manages this risk through the interrogation and negotiation of client payment terms offered, proactive credit control, daily cash monitoring and forecasting and an arranged overdraft facility for contingency use. Forecasts have been prepared to March 2022 and accordingly the trustees are satisfied that there will be sufficient cash flows to support the charity's operations for a minimum period of one year from the date of the accounts.

Income

All types of income are recognised in the period in which the charity has entitlement to the income, the amount of income can be measured reliably, and it is probable that the income will be received. Income comprises contract income receivable for the delivery of charitable activities, supplemented by voluntary donations, investment and other miscellaneous income.

Income from voluntary donations comprises donations, legacies and gifts which are recognised in the statement of financial activities when received. Gift Aid is recognised and claimed where the eligibility criteria are met. 'In kind' donations are measured at the lower of arms-length valuation or value to the charity should the goods or services have been procured at market rates.

Contract income arises from the provision of advocacy services according to the terms of contracts and service level agreements with contract commissioners which comprise local authorities and other organisations. Contract income is recognised in the statement of financial activities over the period for which advocacy services are provided. Where contract income is subject to service level agreements and subject to the quantity of services provided, it is recognised to the extent that chargeable services have been provided.

Investment income is recognised where the charity has entitlement and the amount can be reliably measured.

Expenditure

Liabilities are recognised as expenditure as soon as there is a legal or constructive obligation committing the charity to make a payment to a third party, it is probable that a transfer of economic benefits will be required in settlement and the amount of the obligation can be measured reliably. All expenditure is stated inclusive of irrecoverable VAT.

Expenditure comprises direct costs, support costs and fundraising costs. All direct costs and support costs are allocated or apportioned to the main categories of charitable activity, these are non-statutory advocacy, statutory advocacy, secure and complex services, and other. Costs of raising funds are shown on the Statement of Financial Activities.

Support costs are those costs that, whilst necessary to enable the charity to deliver charitable services, do not themselves produce charitable outputs. These support costs include management and administration, human resources, business development, finance and IT.

Direct costs are allocated to the particular activity to which the cost relates. Support costs are apportioned on the basis of income for each category of charitable activity.

Governance costs are the costs associated with the constitutional and statutory requirements of the charitable company. Such costs include external audit, preparation of statutory accounts, trustees' meetings, including specialist access and support costs to enable our volunteer trustees from our service users/members groups to participate and any costs associated with risk management and compliance.

Volunteers

POhWER deeply values the contribution from all those who volunteer their time, commitment and expertise for POhWER. The number of volunteers is rising and includes current and former service users who use their experience and skills to help others (see 'Making a difference' for examples). Volunteer roles range from the provision of advocacy services to administrative support services, and their contribution enables POhWER to increase the number of clients reached.

In accordance with the guidance in the Charities SORP FRS 102, the value of volunteers is not included in the statement of financial activities.

Taxation

The charitable company is a registered charity and is exempt from the taxation of income falling within chapter 3 part 11 of the Corporation Tax Act 2010 and section 256 of the Taxation of Chargeable Gains Act 1992 to the extent that this income is used to achieve its charitable objectives. No charge to taxation for the year has arisen as a result of the activities of the charity.

Value Added Tax is not recoverable by the charitable company and is included within the relevant costs in the statement of financial activities.

Operating Leases

Rentals applicable to operating leases where substantially all of the benefits and risks of ownership remain with the lessor are charged to the statement of financial activities in equal annual amounts over the lease term.

Defined Contribution Pension Schemes

The defined contribution pension scheme costs charged in the statement of financial activities represent the employer's pension contributions payable by the charitable company during the financial year.

Intangible Fixed Assets

Intangible fixed assets represent the cost of developing bespoke advocacy case management software. Intangible assets costing more than £1,000 are capitalised. The cost of intangible assets includes incidental acquisition costs. Intangible fixed assets are stated at cost less accumulated amortisation. Amortisation is provided at rates calculated to write down the cost or valuation of each intangible fixed asset, once brought into use, on a straight-line basis to its estimated residual value over its expected useful life. The amortisation rate is as follows:

Bespoke software 25.00%

Intangible fixed assets are reviewed for impairment if circumstances indicate their carrying value may exceed their net realisable value and value in use.

Tangible Fixed Assets

Tangible fixed assets costing more than £1,000 are capitalised. The cost of tangible assets includes incidental acquisition costs. Tangible fixed assets are stated at cost less accumulated depreciation. Depreciation is provided at rates calculated to write down the cost or valuation of each tangible fixed asset, once brought into use, on a straight-line basis to its estimated residual value over its expected useful life. The depreciation rates are as follows:-

Office Equipment:	33.33%
Fixtures and Fittings:	20.00%
Computer Equipment:	33.33%

Tangible fixed assets are reviewed for impairment if circumstances indicate their carrying value may exceed their net realisable value and value in use.

Debtors

Debtors are recognised at their settlement amount, less any provision for non-recoverability. Prepayments are valued at the amount prepaid. Debtors are discounted to the present value of the future cash receipt where such discounting is material.

Work in Progress

Where income is earned at the end of a referral, the value of work in progress is estimated based on the number of open cases at the year end and the average extent of completeness. Work in progress is included in the accounts only to the extent that the value is material, and judged to be recoverable

Cash at Bank and in Hand

Cash at bank and in hand represents such accounts and instruments that are available on demand or have a maturity of less than three months from the date of acquisition.

Creditors and Provisions

Creditors and provisions are recognised when there is an obligation at the balance sheet date as a result of a past event, it is probable that a transfer of

economic benefit will be required in settlement, and the amount of the settlement can be estimated reliably. Creditors and provisions are recognised at the amount the charity anticipates it will pay to settle the debt. They have been discounted to the present value of the future cash payment where such discounting is material.

Financial Instruments

Financial instruments are classed as basic, including debtors and creditors. If arrangement with the debtor or creditor constitutes a financing transaction, it is measured at the net present value of future payments, discounted at market rates to the extent where such discounting is material.

Fund Accounting

Unrestricted funds comprise accumulated surpluses and deficits on the general fund which are available for use in furtherance of the objectives of the Charity and which have not been restricted by the donor or designated by the Trustees for a specific purpose.

Designated funds are funds transferred from unrestricted funds that the trustees have set aside for a specific purpose.

Restricted funds are those where income has been received from a donor who places specific restrictions on how the funds must be spent. Restricted funds are only expendable in relation to the purposes set out by the donor.

2. Income From Donations

	2021 Unrestricted £	2020 Unrestricted £
Donations and gifts	12,230	15,302
Legacies	500	-
Donations in kind	22,933	28,488
	35,663	43,790

3. Income From Charitable Activities

	2021 Restricted £	2021 Unrestricted £	2021 Total £	2020 Total £
Statutory Services	-	10,708,954	10,708,954	9,575,812
Non Statutory Services	562,829	2,290,298	2,853,127	2,067,743
Secure & Complex Services	-	1,923,823	1,923,823	1,773,141
Other	-	22,695	22,695	-
	562,829	14,945,770	15,580,599	13,416,696

Restricted income from non-statutory services was £116,801 in 2020.

4. Investment Income

	2021 Unrestricted £	2020 Unrestricted £
Bank Interest Receivable	761	4,816

5. Income From Other Sources

	2021 Unrestricted £	2020 Unrestricted £
Other fees & recharged services	25,129	30,046
CJRS grants	54,677	-
Total	79,806	30,046

6. Expenditure On Charitable Activities

<i>Current year:</i>	2021 Statutory services £	2021 Non Statutory services £	2021 Secure services £	2021 Other services £	2021 Total £
Direct operating costs	8,878,757	2,756,264	1,594,432	2,842	13,323,295
Support costs					
Management and Administration	304,105	81,020	54,632	644	440,401
Human Resources	192,132	51,189	34,516	406	278,243
Business Development	158,267	42,166	28,432	336	229,201
Finance	158,556	42,243	28,484	337	229,620
IT	66,656	17,759	11,974	141	96,530
Governance	31,794	8,471	5,712	67	46,044
	911,510	242,848	163,750	1,931	1,320,039
	9,790,267	2,999,112	1,758,182	4,773	14,552,334

Prior Year Comparison:	2020 Statutory services £	2020 Non Statutory services £	2020 Secure services £	2020 Other services £	2020 Total £
Direct operating costs	8,504,962	1,813,511	1,554,055	27,702	11,900,230
Support costs					
Management and Administration	265,131	54,387	49,094	831	369,443
Human Resources	128,437	26,346	23,783	403	178,969
Business Development	201,667	41,368	37,342	633	281,010
Finance	184,205	37,786	34,109	578	256,678
IT	93,626	19,205	17,337	294	130,462
Governance	40,571	8,322	7,512	127	56,532
	913,637	187,414	169,177	2,866	1,273,094
	9,418,599	2,000,925	1,723,232	30,568	13,173,324

7. Net Income / (Expenditure) For The Year

Net income / (expenditure) is stated after charging:

	2021	2020
	£	£
Depreciation and amortisation	93,376	71,940
Operating lease rentals	126,728	54,456
<u>Auditors' remuneration</u>		
- Audit provision for current year	22,260	20,370
Trustees' remuneration	-	-
Trustees' reimbursed expenses	1,702	7,989

8. Staff Costs And Remuneration Of Key Management Personnel

Staff costs were as follows:

	2021	2020
	£	£
Salaries and wages	9,316,907	8,880,558
Redundancy payments (including payments in lieu of notice)	39,554	72,414
Social security costs	771,828	733,729
Pension contributions	253,766	275,202
	10,382,055	9,961,903

The number of employees whose emoluments exceeded £60,000 was as follows:

	2021	2020
	No.	No.
£60,000 to £70,000	2	2
£80,000 to £90,000	1	-

The company made contributions to the pension plans of 3 employees whose emoluments exceeded £60,000 in 2020/21 of £ 6,405. (2019/20 £3,806, 2 employees).

The key management personnel of the charity comprise the trustees and the Executive Team.

None of the trustees receive any remuneration in connection with their services to the charity (2019/20: £nil). The total remuneration including employer's pension contributions of the Executive Team for the year was £305,118 (2019/20: £225,669).

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

	2021 No.	2020 No.
Charitable activities	381	392
Management, support services and administration	22	26
	403	418

In accordance with the relevant accounting standards, employee numbers are counted irrespective of hours worked. POhWER benefits from the services of part time employees, and the headcount expressed in full time equivalents would be 323 for charitable activities (2019/20: 317) and 21 in management, support services and administration (2019/20: 24).

9. Defined Contribution Pension Schemes

The charitable company opened a defined contribution pension scheme provided by the NOW: Pensions Trust effective from the staging date of 1 April 2016, we subsequently moved to The Peoples Pension on 1 April 2019, both schemes satisfy the requirements of automatic enrolment pension legislation. The charitable company pays employer's contributions of 3% of pensionable salary into this defined contribution pension scheme provided that an employee pays employee contributions of at least 5% of pensionable salary. The charitable company pays employer's contributions exceeding 3% in a limited number of cases in order to comply with contractual obligations. At the year end, amounts of £55,682 were due to the pension scheme provider (2019/20: £52,646).

10. Intangible Fixed Assets

	Bespoke Software £
Cost or valuation	
At the start of the year	202,273
Additions in year	-
At the end of the year	202,273
Depreciation	
At the start of the year	(179,039)
Charge for the year	(18,419)
At the end of the year	(197,458)
Net book value	
At the end of the year	4,815
At the start of the year	23,234

11. tangible fixed assets

	Office Equipment £	Fixtures and Fittings £	Computer Equipment £	Total £
Cost or valuation				
At the start of the year	138,864	30,766	764,273	933,903
Additions in year	16,614	5,641	101,730	123,985
Disposals in the year	(77,592)	(11,345)	(362,252)	(451,189)
At the end of the year	77,886	25,062	503,751	606,699
Depreciation				
At the start of the year	(138,864)	(30,766)	(648,207)	(817,837)
Charge for the year	(3,692)	(846)	(70,419)	(74,957)
Disposals in the year	77,592	11,345	362,252	451,189
At the end of the year	(64,964)	(20,267)	(356,374)	(441,605)
Net book value				
At the end of the year	12,922	4,795	147,377	165,094
At the start of the year	-	-	116,066	116,066

12. Debtors

	2021	2020
	£	£
Trade debtors	1,496,778	1,810,325
Accrued income	74,313	59,078
Prepayments	96,923	108,309
Other debtors	25,146	15,994
	1,693,160	1,993,706

13. Creditors: Amounts Due Within One Year

	2021	2020
	£	£
Trade creditors	259,767	272,289
Taxation and social security	189,835	178,327
Accrued expenses	191,502	290,113
Other creditors	62,276	57,499
Deferred income	1,028,086	521,652
	1,731,466	1,319,880

Income received in advance of the provision of services is deferred. Deferred income recognised during the year is as follows:

	£
Deferred income brought forward	521,652
Deferred income released during the year	(229,095)
Income deferred during the year	735,529
Deferred income carried forward	1,028,086

14. Movement In Restricted Funds

	Start of year 1.4.2020 £	Income £	Expenditure £	Transfers between funds £	End of year 31.3.2021 £
Restricted funds					
- Birmingham NNS	12,495	390,335	(402,727)	-	103
- Herts Community Navigator Service	-	136,744	(136,743)	(1)	-
- Management Funding	-	13,750	(13,750)	-	-
- Oxfordshire Community Advocacy	14,680	-	(2,399)	-	12,281
- Hertfordshire CEV Grant	-	10,000	(10,001)	1	-
- Nottingham Social Prescribing Pilot	-	12,000	(12,000)	-	-
Total Funds	27,175	562,829	(577,620)	-	12,384

Prior Year Comparison

	Start of year 1.4.2019 £	Income £	Expenditure £	Transfers between funds £	End of year 31.3.2020 £
Restricted funds					
- Birmingham NNS	-	51,668	(39,173)	-	12,495
- Community Navigator Service	-	35,000	(35,000)	-	-
- Management Funding	-	13,333	(13,333)	-	-
- Oxfordshire Community Advocacy	-	15,000	(320)	-	14,680
- Shout About It	-	1,800	(2,926)	1,126	-
Total Funds	-	116,801	(90,752)	1,126	27,175

14. Movement In Restricted Funds (Continued)

Restricted Funds

Birmingham NNS (Neighbourhood Network Scheme)

Working on behalf of Birmingham City Council to support citizens over 50 in the community to live healthy, independent lives. The Neighbourhood Network

Scheme helps connect older people to individuals, groups, organisations, activities, services and places in their neighbourhoods.

Management Funding

Funding from Hertfordshire County Council and NHS Herts Valleys CCG towards the HertsHelp service Manager.

Hertfordshire Navigator Service

A grant for a Community Navigator who provides face to face support to help with a variety of issues including practical support to help arrange bill payments, sorting domestic paperwork and reviewing benefit entitlement in Hertfordshire.

Hertfordshire CEV Grant

A grant to support clinically extremely vulnerable clients in Hertfordshire

Nottingham Social Prescribing Pilot

A pilot to develop a social prescribing service in Nottingham.

Oxfordshire Community Advocacy

A grant from Oxfordshire Advocacy, known as Getting Heard, to deliver community advocacy in Oxfordshire.

15. Movement In Unrestricted Funds

	Start of year 1.4.2020	Income	Expenditure	Transfers between funds	End of year 31.3.2021
	£	£	£	£	£
Unrestricted funds					
- General fund	1,091,094	15,049,534	(13,895,193)	(30,609)	2,214,826
Designated funds					
- Arthur Bate fund	39,730	-	-	-	39,730
- PR fund	5,000	-	(5,000)	-	-
- Staff training	17,500	-	(11,000)	-	6,500
- Technology	70,840	-	(70,840)	-	-
development fund					
- Community fund	-	12,466	-	-	12,466
Fixed assets fund	139,300	-	-	30,609	169,909
Total Funds	1,363,464	15,062,000	(13,982,033)	-	2,443,431

Prior Year Comparison

	Start of year 1.4.2019	Income	Expenditure	Transfers between funds	End of year 31.3.2020
	£	£	£	£	£
Unrestricted funds					
- General fund	956,089	13,378,547	(13,123,572)	(119,970)	1,091,094
Designated funds					
- Arthur Bate fund	33,730	-	6,000	-	39,730
-PR fund	-	-	-	5,000	5,000
-Staff training					
development fund	-	-	-	17,500	17,500
-Technology					
development fund	-	-	-	70,840	70,840
Fixed assets fund	113,796	-	-	25,504	139,300
Total Funds	1,103,615	13,378,547	(13,117,572)	(1,126)	1,363,464

15. Movement In Unrestricted Funds (Continued)

Unrestricted Funds

General fund

The General Fund comprises the accumulated surpluses and deficits which have neither been restricted by conditions imposed by donors, nor have been designated by the trustees for specific purposes.

Designated funds

The Arthur Bate fund

In memory of Arthur Bate, a founding trustee of POhWER and campaigner for the rights of people with disabilities, the Arthur Bate fund was created to provide support for people who:

- wish to become trustees of charities
- seek to set up self-advocacy groups
- want to set up peer support groups
- want to set up advocacy groups
- seek to start other kinds of advocacy activity

PR Fund

A seed fund to buy in specialist PR and media support to further develop the charity's campaigning activities.

Staff Training Development Fund

A fund to purchase supplementary advocacy training and materials over and above the general budget for NAQ-level training.

Technology Development Fund

A fund for investment in (1) automation development and (2) ongoing improvements to the charity's operational management system.

Community Fund

A fund to develop community advocacy and engagement.

Fixed assets fund

The fixed assets fund reflects the carrying net book value of the charity's tangible and intangible fixed assets and has been separated from the charity's general unrestricted funds in recognition of the fact that these assets are essential to the day-to-day operations of the charity and should not be considered realisable to meet future commitments.

16. Analysis Of Net Assets Between Funds

Current Year	General funds	Designated funds	Fixed assets fund	Restricted Funds	Total 2021
Intangible Assets	-	-	4,815	-	4,815
Tangible Assets	-	-	165,094	-	165,094
Cash	2,253,132	58,696	-	12,384	2,324,212
Debtors	1,693,160	-	-	-	1,693,160
Creditors	(1,731,466)	-	-	-	(1,731,466)
	2,214,826	58,696	169,909	12,384	2,455,815

Prior Year Comparison	General funds	Designated funds	Fixed assets fund	Restricted Funds	Total 2020
Intangible Assets	-	-	23,234	-	23,234
Tangible Assets	-	-	116,066	-	116,066
Cash	417,268	133,070	-	27,175	577,513
Debtors	1,993,706	-	-	-	1,993,706
Creditors	(1,319,880)	-	-	-	(1,319,880)
	1,091,094	133,070	139,300	27,175	1,390,639

17. Operating Lease Commitments

The total commitment under non-cancellable operating leases at 31 March 2021 is analysed according to the periods in which the leases expire:-

	2021 Land & Buildings £	2020 Land & Buildings £
Less than 1 year	126,199	17,251
2-5 years	202,725	3,280
	328,924	20,531

Lease costs expensed during the year amounted to £126,728. (2019/20: £54,456)

18. Related Party Transactions

During the financial year 7 trustees were reimbursed £1,702 (2019/20: 8 trustees reimbursed £7,989) for travel and incidental expenses which related to carrying out their duties as Trustees of the charitable company. Trustees are based in a wide geographical area in a reflection of the areas we work in.

Trustees made voluntary donations of £598 including Gift Aid (2019/20: £1,490).

There were no other related party transactions during the financial year (2019/20: none).

Expenditure includes £2,088 (2019/20: £1,986) in respect of trustees' indemnity insurance which provides cover of up to a maximum of £5,000,000.

19. Managed Funds

At 31 March 2021 the charity held as custodian, funds comprising cash at bank on behalf of beneficiaries of the charity totalling £19,431 (2019/20: £23,706). These funds are not included in the financial statements.