

Company registration number: 03335128

Charity registration number: 1062826

# Surrey Welfare Rights Unit

(A company limited by guarantee)

Annual Report and Financial Statements

for the Year Ended 31 March 2024

## **Surrey Welfare Rights Unit**

### **Contents**

Trustees' Report	1 to 7
Independent Examiner's Report	8 to 9
Statement of Financial Activities	10
Statement of Financial Position	11
Notes to the Financial Statements	12 to 21
Detailed Statement of Financial Activities	22 to 24

## **Surrey Welfare Rights Unit**

### **Trustees' Report**

The Trustees who are also directors of the charity for the purposes of the Companies Act 2006, present their report with the financial statements of the charity for the year ended 31 March 2024. The Trustees have adopted the provisions of Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (effective 1 January 2019).

#### **Objectives and activities**

##### **Objectives**

Surrey Welfare Rights Unit exists to provide a welfare rights advice service within the county of Surrey and surrounding area. The service is accessed by voluntary and statutory sector professionals, who in most cases are the first point of contact for clients needing advice.

The Unit provides an independent and confidential service. This independent status allows membership of Citizens Advice (the operating name of the National Association of Citizens Advice Bureaux) and the Unit abides by the Aims and Principles of the Citizens Advice service. This also allows for flexibility to develop and change and gives the freedom to benefit from joint working projects. Furthermore, independent charitable status gives the Board of Trustees the power to seek alternative sources of funding to protect the level of service for the future. This will ensure that the range of welfare rights services can be developed and improved for the future.

The core tasks of the service are:

- To provide an advice line for the use of the professional staff from referral groups;
- To provide training courses on welfare benefits for, amongst others, Local Citizens Advice, statutory and Voluntary Organisations;
- To influence the development of social policies and services and to ensure individuals do not suffer through a lack of knowledge or an inability to express their needs effectively;
- To produce information and publicity on welfare rights issues for both professional staff and, when relevant, the people of Surrey;
- To promote the take-up of welfare benefits within the County especially among the frail and vulnerable;
- To provide a source of expertise on Community Care issues in Surrey;
- To take on a limited amount of casework as appropriate and provide Tribunal representation in complex cases; and
- To be a focal point of welfare rights work within Surrey through support groups, seminars and informal talks, Social Policy work and networking.



## **Surrey Welfare Rights Unit**

### **Trustees' Report**

#### **Objectives and activities (continued)**

##### **Charitable Activities**

During the 2023/24 year the long-awaited Managed Migration programme began its rollout across Surrey and the surrounding areas. We responded by writing a bespoke training course, and met with DWP colleagues to understand the impact on households moving from legacy benefits onto Universal Credit. Enquiries concerning sickness and disability benefits continued to dominate this year. The impact of the cost of living crisis was reflected in our client statistics; social housing tenants, people with disabilities or long-term conditions and non-white British citizens.

We delivered a number of projects during the year. Funding for No-One Left Behind allowed us to provide additional specialist support and training to the local Citizens Advice network. Our Parent Carer Moving into Adulthood project ran for a second year and saw an increase in client numbers and other activities. An Awards for All grant provided an additional 10 courses delivered to local organisations.

The County Council approached us asking for support in designing a policy for paying people with lived experience to get involved in shaping social care and health services. We now have new web content on our site that can be used to advise people on how these payments may affect their benefit entitlement.

Our research and campaigning work continued during this year. We drafted a consultation response to the planned changes to the Work Capability Assessment and we met with the Citizens Advice policy team several times. We kept our partners up to date with same day summaries of the benefit changes in the Autumn Statement and Spring Budget.

Surrey County Council continues to provide core financial support for the Unit, recognising the quality and cost effectiveness of work undertaken by the Unit. The Directors are very grateful for this support, along with the funding provided by Elmbridge and Woking Councils. Within the County Council, we support the Care Leavers Teams, Financial Assessments team and the Home School Link Workers network. We also support the Housing Team at Reigate and Banstead Council.

Apart from grant funding, we continued to generate vital income streams from training courses, consultancy and subscriptions. Over 50 local organisations continued to subscribe to the Unit's services, and in particular, for our advice support on individual complex benefit cases. 56 courses were delivered during the year.

We continue to hold 100% passes in all areas of our Citizens Advice Performance Quality Framework, including financial management and governance, and hold the Advice Quality Standard (AQS) Quality Mark in Casework.

##### **Public benefit**

The Trustees have paid due regard to the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit in deciding the activities undertaken by the Unit during the year. The Trustees are satisfied that the information provided in the report and accounts meets the public benefit reporting requirements.

The Trustees confirm that they have complied with the requirements of section 17 of the Charities Act 2011 to have due regard to the public benefit guidance published by the Charity Commission for England and Wales.



## **Surrey Welfare Rights Unit**

### **Trustees' Report**

#### **Financial review**

Incoming resources in the year were £293,450 (2023: £245,444). A surplus of £46,151 was made in the year (2023: £15,204). At 31 March 2024 total reserves were £244,782 (2023: £198,631) of which £141,432 represented unrestricted general funds (2023: £123,260).

The projected budget at the start of the 2023/24 financial year showed a modest surplus. The outturn was enhanced by unexpected additional grants from Woking Borough Council and Surrey County Council and increased training income.

#### **Principal funding sources**

The trustees extend their gratitude to Surrey County Council and those Borough and District Councils who continued to support the core operating capacity of the charity.

We should particularly like to thank Woking Borough Council, both for their grant and for providing premises at no financial cost to the charity except for charges for utility and other office services. The charity did not have any borrowings from either providers of funding or other sources at the statement of financial position date.

We received further year's funding to continue the Parent Carer project "Moving into Adulthood". We also received additional specific funding from Surrey County Council as detailed in the statement of charitable activities.

#### **Policy on reserves**

The Trustees have forecast the level of free reserves (that is those funds not tied up in fixed assets, designated and restricted funds) the Charity will require to sustain its operations. The Trustees consider that the most appropriate level of free reserves at 31 March 2024 is a minimum of six months' running costs. Whilst the current level of reserves may prove sufficient, it is the Trustees' view that it is prudent to ensure that there are sufficient free reserves to provide financial flexibility for future years and that identified needs in the County can continue to be adequately resourced.

The budgeted expenditure for the forthcoming year is currently adequately covered by the agreed sources of income. As with previous years, efforts will be made to secure additional funding. The current free reserves will be used if necessary to support the work of the Unit should they be needed in the unlikely event of change of circumstances.

When considering the level of free reserves the Trustees have considered the Charity Commission document "Charity reserves: building resilience (CC19)" and also the House of Commons Public Administration and Constitutional Affairs Committee report "The collapse of Kids Company: lessons for charity trustees, et al". It is recognised that by far the greater part of the Charity's activity and expenditure is of an "essential" rather than of a "discretionary" nature. This requires a greater degree of financial resilience than for many other charities. The Trustees are also aware that no service level agreements or contracts are in place for more than one year and income that might be considered "core" is in any case insufficient to provide a basic service to the community and reliance has to be placed on subscriptions, fundraising and the securing of project income that can share the Charity's fixed costs.

The reasons for holding particular reserves are outlined in **note 14**.

#### **Funds in deficit**

No funds were in deficit at the statement of financial position date.



## **Surrey Welfare Rights Unit**

### **Trustees' Report**

#### **Plans for future periods**

For 2024/25 we will be delivering a significant new contract called Work Wise, a Surrey based programme that aims to help people with a disability or health condition move into paid work. We will be delivering the advice service along with three sub-contracted partners from our local Citizens Advice network.

We also have funding from the Household Support Fund to provide an additional six months of support to the No-One Left Behind advice service. This will also be year 3 of the Moving into Adulthood project which has just published its comprehensive web content on our site, to inform Carers and Parents of young people aged 14-25.

Managed Migration onto Universal Credit has already moved on from Tax Credit households to Income Support claimants. We expect Employment and Support Allowance claims to follow, which will be a real test of whether vulnerable clients have access to good quality support during this process.

#### **Structure, governance and management**

##### ***Nature of governing document***

The charity is controlled by its governing document, a deed of trust, and constitutes a limited company, limited by guarantee, as defined by the Companies Act 2006.

Surrey Welfare Rights Unit is a registered charity and a company limited by guarantee. The maximum liability of each member is limited to £1. At 31 March 2024 the company had 9 members (2023: 8). Surrey Welfare Rights Unit is governed by a Memorandum and Articles of Association as amended in 1999, 2005, 2011 and 2019. Surrey Welfare Rights Unit was incorporated as a company limited by guarantee on 18 March 1997. The charity commenced operations on 12 June 1997.

##### ***Recruitment and appointment of trustees***

The Trustees have suitable policies to ensure the Board has adequate representation. They identify any need to recruit and what competences, backgrounds, personal or professional, are preferred so that the Unit's governance reflects the communities it serves. The Board takes account of equality and diversity issues and recognises that these rights are critical to the Unit's credibility and enhances the Unit's profile with stakeholders, funders and campaigners.

##### ***Induction and training of trustees***

Newly appointed Trustees are provided with a comprehensive induction to Surrey Welfare Rights Unit through the provision of training courses and mentoring by established Trustees and provision of a bespoke Trustee Handbook.



## **Surrey Welfare Rights Unit**

### **Trustees' Report**

#### ***Organisational structure***

A Trustee Board governs Surrey Welfare Rights Unit. The Board is responsible for setting the strategic direction of the organisation and the policy of the charity. The Trustees carry the ultimate responsibility for the conduct of Surrey Welfare Rights Unit and for ensuring that the charity satisfies its legal and contractual obligations. Trustees meet as a minimum quarterly and delegate the day-to-day operation of the organisation to senior management. The Trustee Board is independent from management. A register of members' interests is maintained at the registered office and is available to the public.

The Trustee Board regularly conducts internal skills audits, and annually reviews its performance. It has updated its approach to risk management and reviews critical risks at each meeting. The Trustees also meet annually to review the Charity's strategy, and before finalising this seek input from the staff. The Board is independently assessed by Citizens Advice using a comprehensive Performance Quality Framework that looks at areas of governance such as finance, strategic business planning and partnership working.

#### ***Internal control***

The Board oversees the information security of all personal information of our clients, staff, funders and strategic partners that is processed. The Unit holds joint responsibility for client data that is held in the case management system, with the national Citizens Advice service. An information assurance management team exists to ensure the confidentiality, integrity and availability of all personal and sensitive data is maintained to a level which is compliant with the requirements of the General Data Protection Regulation and Data Protection Act 2018.

#### ***Register of interests***

The Unit holds a register of interests for all Trustees. This is referred to and checked at each Board Meeting. During the year there were no declarations that impaired or conflicted with any Board decisions taken.

## **Surrey Welfare Rights Unit**

### **Trustees' Report**

#### **Relationships with related parties**

Surrey Welfare Rights Unit is a member of Citizens Advice, the operating name of the National Association of Citizens Advice Bureaux, which provides a framework for standards of advice and casework management as well as monitoring progress against these standards. Operating policies are independently determined by the Trustee Board of Surrey Welfare Rights Unit in order to fulfil its charitable objects and comply with the national membership requirements.

The charity also co-operates and liaises with a number of other advisory services, local charities and social services departments on behalf of clients. Where one of the Trustees holds the position of Trustee/Director of another charity they may be involved in discussions regarding that other charity but not in the ultimate decision-making process.

#### **Reference and Administrative Details**

Charity Registration Number:	1062826
Company Registration Number:	03335128
Registered Office:	Unit 14A Monument Way Depot Monument Way East Woking Surrey GU21 5LY



## Surrey Welfare Rights Unit

### Trustees' Report

#### Trustees and Officers

The Trustees and Officers serving during the year and since the year end were as follows:

Trustees:

Jane Vivien Bourgeois, (Chair)  
Anne Carroll Haigh  
Stephen John O'Sullivan, (Treasurer until 29 April 2024)  
Anne Mary Pirie  
Roger Stewart Hurcombe, (Interim Treasurer from 29 April 2024)  
Suja Sankarasubramanian  
Keith O'Neill, (Vice Chair)  
Daniella Jordan (resigned 26 January 2024)  
Patricia Louise Fisher (appointed 24 July 2023)  
Jan-Pieter Oosterom (appointed 24 July 2023)

#### Independent Examiner

Romit Basu FCA  
DSK Partners LLP  
Chartered Accountants and Statutory Auditors  
D S House  
306 High Street  
Croydon  
Surrey  
CR0 1NG

#### Bankers:

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

The annual report was approved by the trustees of the charity on 4/11/24 and signed on its behalf by:

  
Jane Vivien Bourgeois  
Chair

## **Surrey Welfare Rights Unit**

### **Independent Examiner's Report to the trustees of Surrey Welfare Rights Unit ('the Company')**

I report to the charity trustees on my examination of the accounts of the Company for the year ended 31 March 2024.

#### **Responsibilities and basis of report**

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

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

#### **Independent examiner's statement**

Since the Company's gross income exceeded £250,000 your examiner must be a member of a body listed in section 145 of the 2011 Act. I confirm that I am qualified to undertake the examination because I am a member of DSK Partners LLP, which is one of the listed bodies.

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

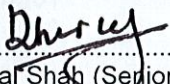
1. accounting records were not kept in respect of Surrey Welfare Rights Unit as required by section 386 of the 2006 Act; or
2. the accounts do not accord with those records; or
3. the accounts do not comply with the accounting requirements of section 396 of the 2006 Act other than any requirement that the accounts give a 'true and fair view' which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination; or
4. the accounts have not been prepared in accordance with the methods and principles of the Statement of Recommended Practice for accounting and reporting by charities [applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102)].

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



## Surrey Welfare Rights Unit

### Independent Examiner's Report to the trustees of Surrey Welfare Rights Unit (the Company')

  
.....  
Dhirajlal Shah (Senior Statutory Auditor)  
For and on behalf of DSK Partners LLP  
Chartered Accountants and Statutory Auditors  
D S House  
306 High Street  
Croydon  
Surrey  
CR0 1NG

Date: 4/11/24.....

## Surrey Welfare Rights Unit

### Statement of Financial Activities for the Year Ended 31 March 2024 (Including Income and Expenditure Account and Statement of Total Recognised Gains and Losses)

	Note	Unrestricted £	Restricted £	Total 2024 £	Total 2023 £
<b>Income and Endowments from:</b>					
Donations and legacies		205	-	205	141
Charitable activities	4	179,375	105,942	285,317	242,379
Investment income	3	7,928	-	7,928	2,924
Total income		<u>187,508</u>	<u>105,942</u>	<u>293,450</u>	<u>245,444</u>
<b>Expenditure on:</b>					
Charitable activities	5	(138,733)	(104,173)	(242,906)	(225,943)
Other expenditure		<u>(2,517)</u>	<u>(1,876)</u>	<u>(4,393)</u>	<u>(4,297)</u>
Total expenditure		<u>(141,250)</u>	<u>(106,049)</u>	<u>(247,299)</u>	<u>(230,240)</u>
Net income/(expenditure)		<u>46,258</u>	<u>(107)</u>	<u>46,151</u>	<u>15,204</u>
Net movement in funds		46,258	(107)	46,151	15,204
<b>Reconciliation of funds</b>					
Total funds brought forward		<u>196,903</u>	<u>1,728</u>	<u>198,631</u>	<u>183,427</u>
Total funds carried forward	14	<u>243,161</u>	<u>1,621</u>	<u>244,782</u>	<u>198,631</u>

The notes on pages 12 to 21 form an integral part of these financial statements.



## Surrey Welfare Rights Unit

### Statement of Financial Position as at 31 March 2024

	Note	2024 £	2023 £
<b>Current assets</b>			
Debtors	12	9,790	10,230
Cash at bank and in hand		<u>302,416</u>	<u>332,278</u>
		312,206	342,508
<b>Creditors: Amounts falling due within one year</b>	13	<u>(67,424)</u>	<u>(143,877)</u>
<b>Net assets</b>		<u>244,782</u>	<u>198,631</u>
<b>Funds of the charity:</b>			
<b>Restricted income funds</b>			
Restricted funds		1,621	1,728
<b>Unrestricted income funds</b>			
Unrestricted funds		<u>243,161</u>	<u>196,903</u>
<b>Total funds</b>	14	<u>244,782</u>	<u>198,631</u>

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

The members have not required the company to obtain an audit of its financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2024 in accordance with Section 476 of the Companies Act 2006.

The Trustees acknowledge their responsibilities for

(a) ensuring that the charitable company keeps accounting records that comply with Sections 386 and 387 of the Companies Act 2006 and

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

The financial statements on pages 10 to 21 were approved by the Trustees, and authorised for issue on 4.11.24 and signed on their behalf by:



Jane Vivien Bourgeois  
Chair

The notes on pages 12 to 21 form an integral part of these financial statements.

## **Surrey Welfare Rights Unit**

### **Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31 March 2024**

#### **1 Charity status**

The charity is limited by guarantee, incorporated in England and Wales, and consequently does not have share capital. The company's registered number and registered office address can be found within the report of the Trustees section.

#### **2 Accounting policies**

##### **Summary of significant accounting policies and key accounting estimates**

The principal accounting policies applied in the preparation of these financial statements are set out below. These policies have been consistently applied to all the years presented, unless otherwise stated.

##### **Statement of compliance**

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (effective 1 January 2019) - (Charities SORP (FRS 102)), the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102). They also comply with the Companies Act 2006 and Charities Act 2011.

##### **Basis of preparation**

Surrey Welfare Rights Unit meets the definition of a public benefit entity under FRS 102. Assets and liabilities are initially recognised at historical cost or transaction value unless otherwise stated in the relevant accounting policy notes.

The presentation currency of the financial statements is the Pound Sterling (£) rounded to the nearest Pound.

##### **Income and endowments**

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

##### **Deferred income**

Deferred income represents amounts received for future periods and is released to incoming resources in the period for which it has been received. Such income is only deferred when:

- The donor specifies that the grant or donation must only be used in future accounting periods; or
- The donor has imposed conditions which must be met before the charity has unconditional entitlement.



## **Surrey Welfare Rights Unit**

### **Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31 March 2024**

#### **Expenditure**

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

#### **Tangible fixed assets**

Depreciation is provided at the following annual rates in order to write off each asset over its estimated useful life.

Computer equipment - Straight line over 3 years

Fixed assets are included at cost and only items in excess of £500 are capitalised.

#### **Taxation**

The charity is exempt from corporation tax on its charitable activities

#### **Fund structure**

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

The Trustees allocate designated funds out of unrestricted funds for specific purposes. The use of such funds is at the Trustees' discretion.

Income received for the restricted purposes is included in a separate restricted fund against which appropriate expenditure is allocated.

#### **Pensions and other post retirement obligations**

The charity operates a defined contribution group personal pension plan for its employees. Payments are charged to the income and expenditure account in the period in which they are incurred.

## Surrey Welfare Rights Unit

### Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31 March 2024

#### Leases

Rental costs under operating leases are charged to the statement of financial activities in equal amounts over the period of the leases.

#### 3 Investment income

	Unrestricted funds General £	Total 2024 £	Total 2023 £
Interest receivable and similar income; Interest receivable on bank deposits	7,928	7,928	2,924

#### 4 Income from charitable activities

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total 2024 £	Total 2023 £
Grant Income				
Surrey County Council	136,405	73,452	209,857	184,869
Surrey Borough and District Councils	-	10,000	10,000	13,000
Grants - COVID-19 Cit A BEIS	-	300	300	1,000
Grants other	-	22,190	22,190	-
	136,405	105,942	242,347	198,869
Subscription Income	22,640	-	22,640	23,755
Training Income	16,670	-	16,670	16,095
Rent in Kind	3,300	-	3,300	3,300
Consultancy	360	-	360	360
	42,970	-	42,970	43,510
	179,375	105,942	285,317	242,379

Income from charitable activities include rent benefit of £3,300 (2023: £3,300).



## Surrey Welfare Rights Unit

### Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31 March 2024

#### 5 Expenditure on charitable activities

	Note	Unrestricted funds General £	Restricted funds £	Total 2024 £	Total 2023 £
Website costs		137	79	216	215
Trade subscription		1,258	1,032	2,290	2,861
Books and publications		1,222	756	1,978	1,941
Computer services and maintenance		1,841	1,891	3,732	3,928
Insurance		1,208	991	2,199	2,397
Training programme costs		395	229	624	416
Printing, postage and stationery		1,361	956	2,317	1,440
Telephone and fax		1,405	1,061	2,466	2,353
Office expenses		1,023	629	1,652	1,325
Trustee development		36	29	65	-
Staff costs		128,847	96,520	225,367	209,067
		<u>138,733</u>	<u>104,173</u>	<u>242,906</u>	<u>225,943</u>

## Surrey Welfare Rights Unit

### Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31 March 2024

#### 6 Analysis of support costs

##### Other resources expended

	Basis of allocation	Other funds £	Total 2024 £
Legal & professional		13	13
Independent examination fee		960	960
Finance cost		120	120
Nominal Rent		3,300	3,300
		<u>4,393</u>	<u>4,393</u>
	Basis of allocation	Other funds £	Total 2023 £
Legal & professional		13	13
Independent examination fee		840	840
Finance cost		144	144
Nominal Rent		3,300	3,300
		<u>4,297</u>	<u>4,297</u>

#### 7 Net incoming/outgoing resources

Net incoming resources for the year include:

	2024 £	2023 £
Other non-audit services	<u>960</u>	<u>840</u>

#### 8 Trustees remuneration and expenses

No Trustees, nor any persons connected with them, have received any remuneration from the charity during the year.

##### Trustees' expenses

Trustees' expenses for the year ended 31 March 2024 were £65 and for the year ended 31 March 2023 were £Nil.



## Surrey Welfare Rights Unit

### Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31 March 2024

#### 9 Staff costs

The monthly average number of persons employed by the charity during the year was as follows:

	2024 No	2023 No
Employees	<u>8</u>	<u>8</u>

No employee received emoluments of more than £60,000 during the year.

#### 10 Comparatives for the statement of financial activities

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total Funds £
<b>INCOME AND ENDOWMENTS FROM</b>			
Donations and legacies	141		141
Charitable activities			
Charitable	184,831	57,548	242,379
Grants	2,924		2,924
Investment income		-	
Total	<u>187,896</u>	<u>57,548</u>	<u>245,444</u>
<b>EXPENDITURE ON Charitable activities</b>			
Charitable	(167,144)	(58,799)	(225,943)
Other	(3,446)	(851)	(4,297)
Total	<u>(170,590)</u>	<u>(59,650)</u>	<u>(230,240)</u>
<b>NET INCOME</b>	<u>17,306</u>	<u>(2,102)</u>	<u>15,204</u>
Transfers between funds			-
Net movement in funds	<u>17,306</u>	<u>(2,102)</u>	<u>15,204</u>
<b>RECONCILIATION OF FUNDS</b>			
Total funds brought forward	179,597	3,830	183,427
<b>TOTAL FUNDS CARRIED FORWARD</b>	<u>196,903</u>	<u>1,728</u>	<u>198,631</u>

## Surrey Welfare Rights Unit

### Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31 March 2024

#### 11 Tangible fixed assets

	Furniture and equipment £	Total £
<b>Cost</b>		
At 1 April 2023	18,543	18,543
At 31 March 2024	18,543	18,543
<b>Depreciation</b>		
At 1 April 2023	18,543	18,543
At 31 March 2024	18,543	18,543
<b>Net book value</b>		
At 31 March 2024	-	-
At 31 March 2023	-	-

#### 12 Debtors

	2024 £	2023 £
Trade debtors	9,790	10,230

#### 13 Creditors: amounts falling due within one year

	2024 £	2023 £
Trade creditors	1,253	495
Other taxation and social security	5,649	3,510
Other creditors	1,950	-
Accruals	18,565	18,860
Deferred income	40,007	121,012
	67,424	143,877



## Surrey Welfare Rights Unit

### Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31 March 2024

#### 14 Funds

	Balance at 1 April 2023 £	Incoming resources £	Resources expended £	Transfers £	Balance at 31 March 2024 £
<b>Unrestricted</b>					
General	123,260	187,508	(141,250)	(28,086)	141,432
Designated	73,643	-	-	28,086	101,729
<b>Total unrestricted</b>	196,903	187,508	(141,250)	-	243,161
<b>Restricted</b>	1,728	105,942	(106,049)	-	1,621
<b>Total funds</b>	198,631	293,450	(247,299)	-	244,782
	Balance at 1 April 2022 £	Incoming resources £	Resources expended £	Transfers £	Balance at 31 March 2023 £
<b>Unrestricted</b>					
General	113,859	187,896	(170,590)	(7,905)	123,260
Designated	65,738	-	-	7,905	73,643
<b>Total unrestricted</b>	179,597	187,896	(170,590)	-	196,903
<b>Restricted</b>	3,830	57,548	(59,650)	-	1,728
<b>Total funds</b>	183,427	245,444	(230,240)	-	198,631

## **Surrey Welfare Rights Unit**

### **Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31 March 2024**

**Redundancy fund** - Redundancy reserves have been designated by the Trustees for the purpose of covering potential redundancy costs in the event of a significant reduction in the income of the Unit that could result in closure. £3,086 has been allocated in the current year.

**Information Technology Fund** - An amount of £7,000 has been designated by the Trustees for the purpose of providing for replacement and upgrade of computer systems approaching the end of their working life and for the development of a replacement website.

**Contingency Fund** - An amount of £40,000 (2023 - £15,000) has been designated by the Trustees for the purpose of providing for possible relocation expenses and rental, business rates and service costs for one year should it be necessary to move from the existing offices currently provided at below current market rental values. The increase reflects the well-publicised financial pressures facing the current landlords.

#### **15 Pension and other schemes**

##### **Defined contribution pension scheme**

The charity operates a defined contribution pension scheme. The scheme is open to all employees at any time. The company contributes 6% of pensionable earning. The pension cost charge for the year represents contributions payable by the charity to the scheme and amounted to £11,264 (2023-£10,433).

#### **16 Commitments**

At the statement of financial position date there were no capital commitments.

The charitable Company has no annual commitments under non-cancellable operating leases.

#### **17 Related party transactions**

There were no related party transactions in the year.



## Surrey Welfare Rights Unit

### Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31 March 2024

#### 18 Deferred Income

Deferred income relates to amounts received for activities for which the donor has imposed restrictions on expenditure of resources, which are a precondition of use. This comprised the following:

Source of Income	2024	2023
	£	£
Subscriptions received in advance	24,100	23,055
Training Invoiced but not yet held	3,790	420
Borough Grants	2,000	-
CAS Training Fund	1,595	1,595
Clt A BEIS Grant	-	300
SCC Specialist Support COMF	8,522	20,000
SCC Training Poverty COMF	-	20,000
SCC Parent Carer Advice	-	33,452
Awards for All	-	7,190
Cit A Cost of Living Sub-Grant	-	15,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>40,007</b>	<b>121,012</b>

## Surrey Welfare Rights Unit

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

	Total 2024 £	Total 2023 £
<b>Income and Endowments from:</b>		
Donations and legacies (analysed below)	205	141
Charitable activities (analysed below)	285,317	242,379
Investment income (analysed below)	<u>7,928</u>	<u>2,924</u>
Total income	<u>293,450</u>	<u>245,444</u>
<b>Expenditure on:</b>		
Charitable activities (analysed below)	(242,906)	(225,943)
Other expenditure (analysed below)	<u>(4,393)</u>	<u>(4,297)</u>
Total expenditure	<u>(247,299)</u>	<u>(230,240)</u>
Net income	<u>46,151</u>	<u>15,204</u>
Net movement in funds	46,151	15,204
<b>Reconciliation of funds</b>		
Total funds brought forward	<u>198,631</u>	<u>183,427</u>
Total funds carried forward	<u><u>244,782</u></u>	<u><u>198,631</u></u>



## Surrey Welfare Rights Unit

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

	Total 2024 £	Total 2023 £
<b><i>Donations and legacies</i></b>		
Donations	205	141
	<u>205</u>	<u>141</u>
<b><i>Charitable activities</i></b>		
Surrey County Council - Other	40,000	40,000
Surrey County Council - Core	136,405	128,321
Surrey Borough & District Councils - Restricted	10,000	-
Surrey Borough & District Councils - Unrestricted	-	13,000
Surrey County Council - Parent Carer	33,452	16,548
Consultancy	360	360
Rent in Kind	3,300	3,300
Grants - BEIS	300	1,000
Other grants	22,190	-
Project, training and subscription	39,310	39,850
	<u>285,317</u>	<u>242,379</u>
<b><i>Investment income</i></b>		
Interest receivable	7,928	2,924
	<u>7,928</u>	<u>2,924</u>

## Surrey Welfare Rights Unit

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

	Total 2024 £	Total 2023 £
<b><i>Charitable activities</i></b>		
Wages and salaries	(200,809)	(186,612)
Social security costs	(12,542)	(11,702)
Pension costs	(11,264)	(10,433)
Staff Development and recruitment costs	(752)	(320)
Insurance	(2,199)	(2,397)
Website costs	(216)	(215)
Trade subscription	(2,290)	(2,861)
Books and publication costs	(1,978)	(1,941)
Computer services and maintenance	(3,732)	(3,928)
Printing, postage and stationery	(2,317)	(1,440)
Telephone and fax	(2,466)	(2,353)
Office expenses	(1,652)	(1,325)
Training programme costs	(624)	(416)
Trustee development	(65)	-
	<u>(242,906)</u>	<u>(225,943)</u>
<b><i>Other expenditure</i></b>		
Nominal rent	(3,300)	(3,300)
Independent Examiner's remuneration	(960)	(840)
Bank charges	(120)	(144)
Legal fees	(13)	(13)
	<u>(4,393)</u>	<u>(4,297)</u>



# Surrey Welfare Rights Unit Impact Report 2023/24



# This year

I am pleased to share another Impact Report for Surrey Welfare Rights Unit. 2023/24 was a year where we saw an increase in the complexity of the enquiries referred to us. For the staff and volunteers that we support across Surrey and the surrounding areas, we know how hard it is to keep up with constant legislative changes. During this year we saw the arrival of Managed Migration to Universal Credit. There was initial confusion regarding how the DWP were interpreting the transitional rules, and what that meant for the advice sector who strive to advise their clients fully and accurately. We anticipate further bumps in the road as Managed Migration picks up pace during 2024/25. Apart from dealing with complex queries, and delivering a significant number of training courses, we also upped our research and campaigning activity. We forged stronger links with the welfare policy team at Citizens Advice, and drafted targeted web information for people with lived experience who are involved in service development, and parents and Carers of children and young adults who are in transition age 14-25.

We responded to the Government's consultation on sickness benefits, and were pleased to see that many of the draconian proposals were dropped. There is still widespread concern that disability benefits will be targeted next. After the General Election we will be keeping a close eye of what social security proposals any new Government makes, and how these could affect local vulnerable people. My thanks go to all the hard-working SWRU staff, and the Board for all their support.



# A few words from the Trustee Board

Despite the ongoing cost of living impact on individuals and services, I am pleased to report that Surrey Welfare Rights Unit has had another successful year, owing largely to our dedicated staff and the continued support of our funders. We were delighted that following the ongoing success of our Parent Carer project, Moving into Adulthood, Surrey County Council has continued to fund this much needed service. It is an example of how the voluntary sector can provide preventative services to help alleviate the pressures on the statutory sector.

Our Chief Officer, Maria, working in collaboration with other local Citizens Advice Service was successful in tendering for the SCC led Work Wise project and we look forward to progressing this new advice service with our three local Citizens Advice partners.

Our workforce is a small team of highly specialist welfare advisers, and we were very sorry to have to say farewell to Sarah Fell who has been with SWRU for over 10 years. We wish Sarah a long and happy retirement. We are very pleased that Sarah will continue her association with SWRU by offering voluntary support for our Trustee Board.

My fellow Trustees have worked hard this year to develop our strategy, ensure we meet governance standards and support Maria. They all tell me how much they value the work of SWRU and enjoy working together. They all offer me great support which is key to our success. My thanks go to them and to Maria and, of course, our funders.

**Jane Bourgeois      Trustee Board Chair**

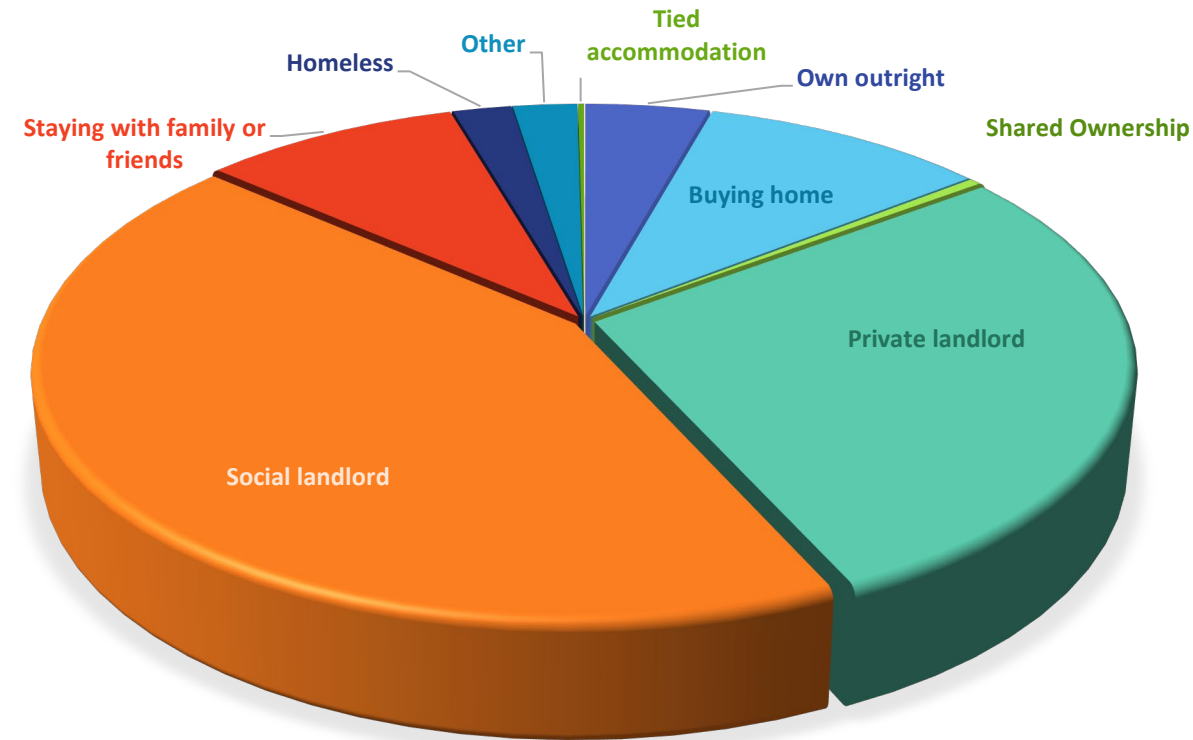
# We helped those most in need

Our case recording system, Casebook, captures housing status along with other profiling data. Compared to last year's statistics we saw another annual drop in enquiries from households who were owner occupiers or those with a mortgage. Social housing tenants endured benefit problems far more than any other household type.

48% of our clients declared they had a disability or long-term illness. 14% preferred not to say, and only 20% said they did not have an illness or disability. This is a clear indication of the enormous barriers faced by disabled residents and those coping with ill health when navigating the benefit system, and keeping benefits in payment.

28% of our clients self-declared as non-White British, reflecting the diversity of our local communities.

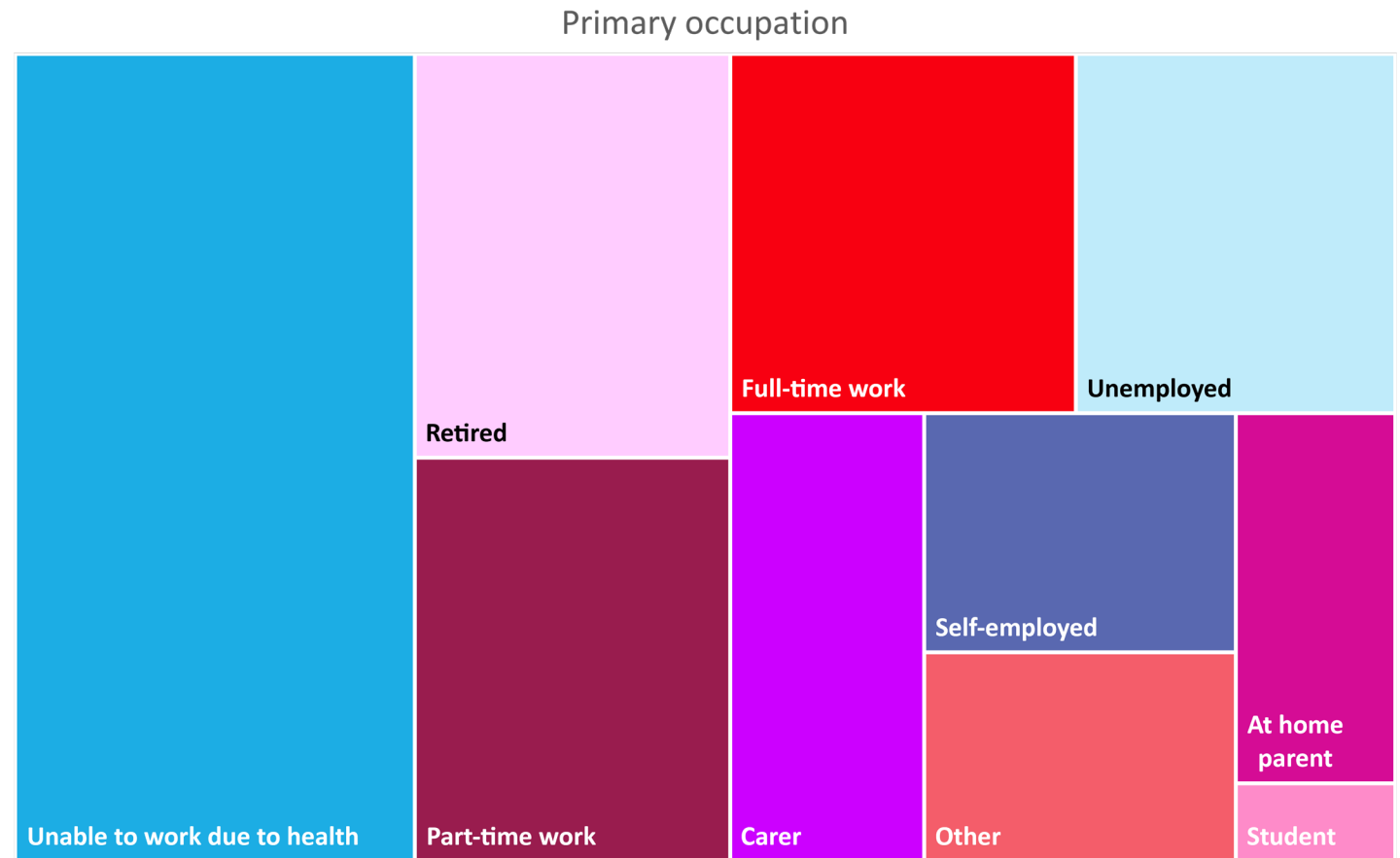
Over 30 different nationalities were recorded, from Afghanistan to Ukraine.





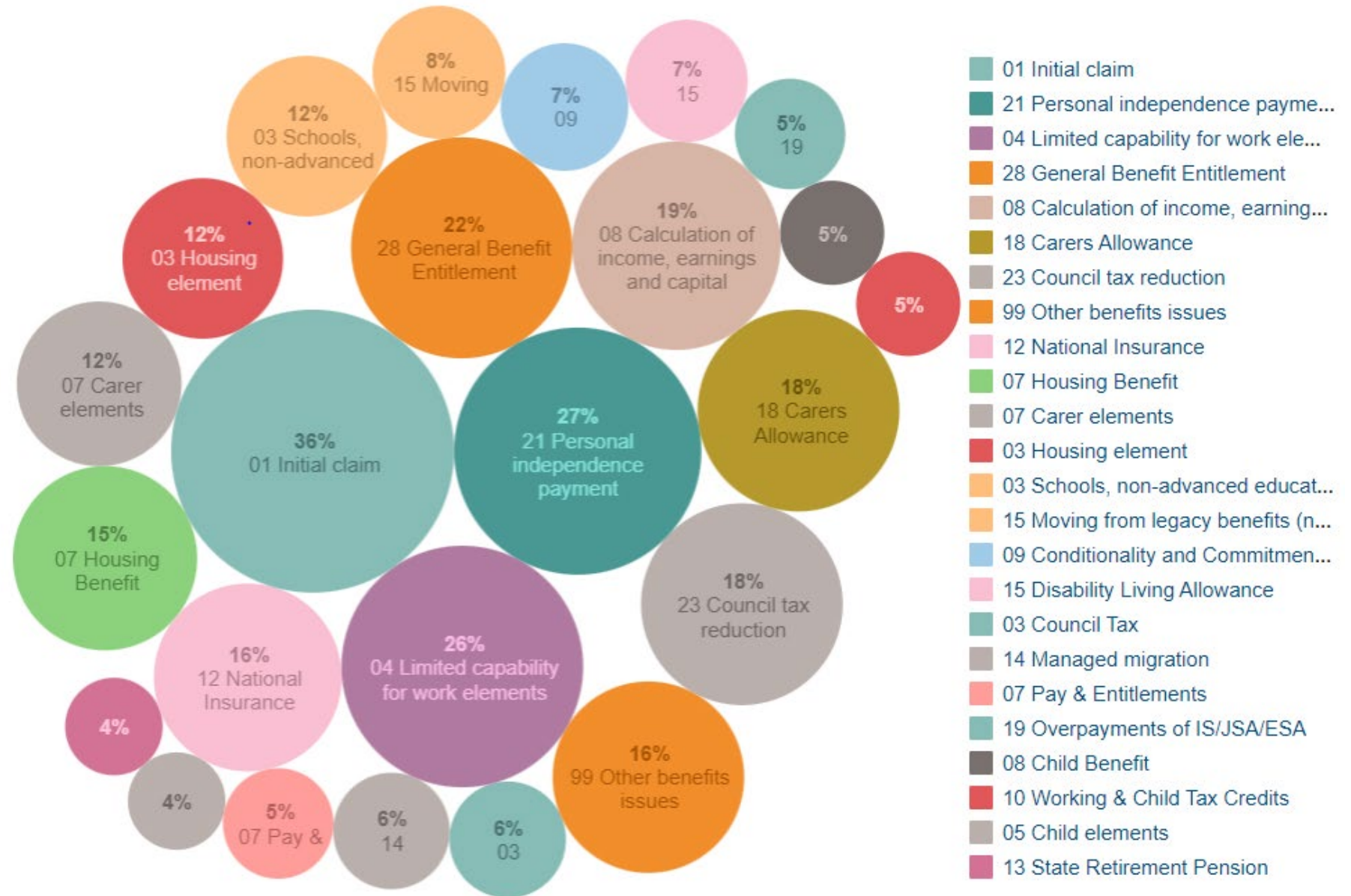
# We helped those most in need - continued

You can see from the adjacent chart that those unable to work due to disability or illness were the largest “occupation” group contacting us for help. We saw a slight decrease in Benefit Cap queries, predicted as the Cap rose in value in 2023/24, having been frozen for many years. We saw an increase in enquiries regarding obtaining a national insurance number, how to secure medical evidence for Employment and Support Allowance, and a 43% increase in Personal Independence Payment appeals. Queries relating to Universal Credit and pre/settled-status were up 233%, as well as UC queries regarding appointees, complex needs, and appealing incorrect decisions.



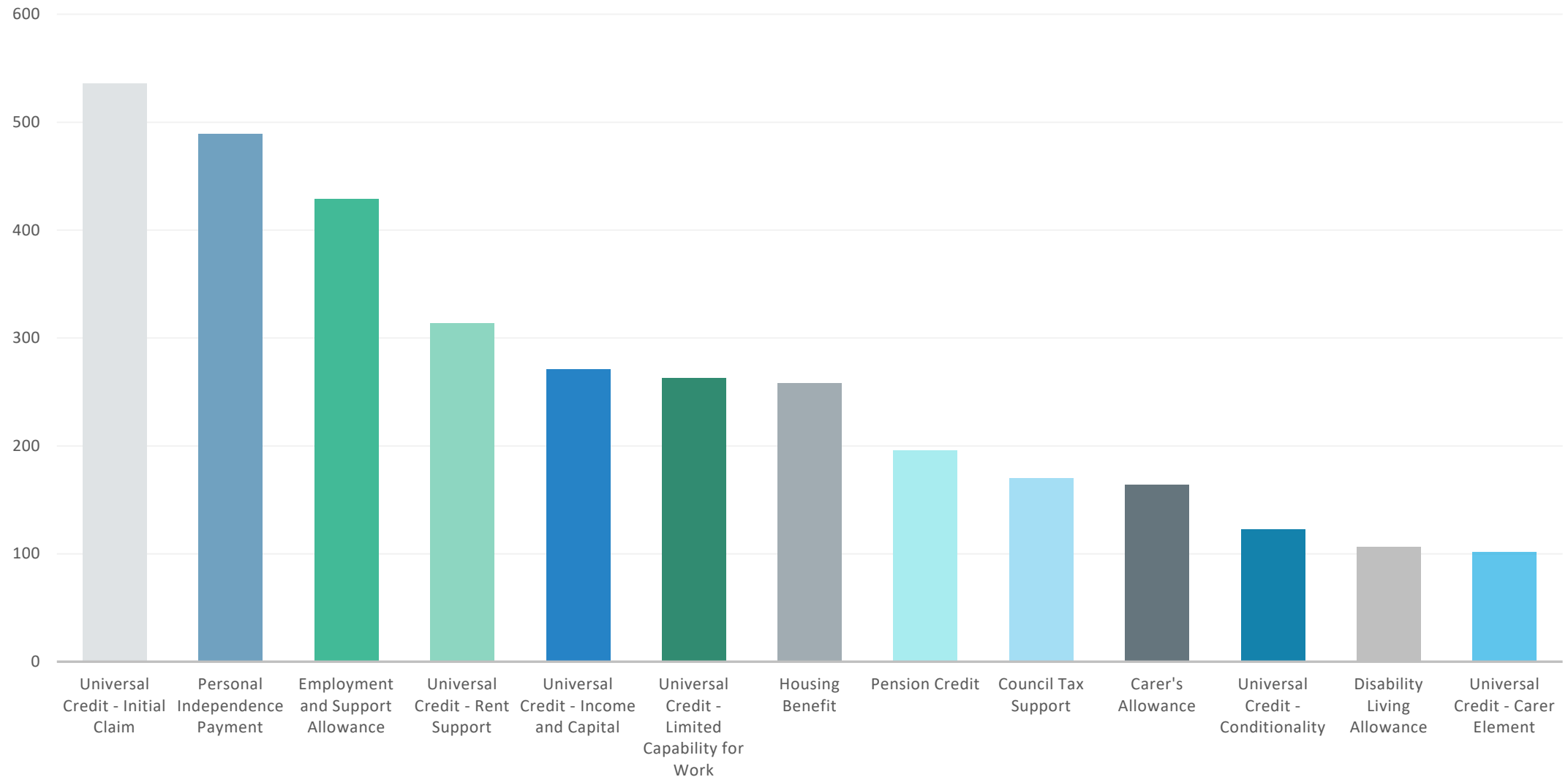
For every client that contacted us about Employment and Support Allowance, these were the other issues we helped the client navigate

## Complexity of enquiries

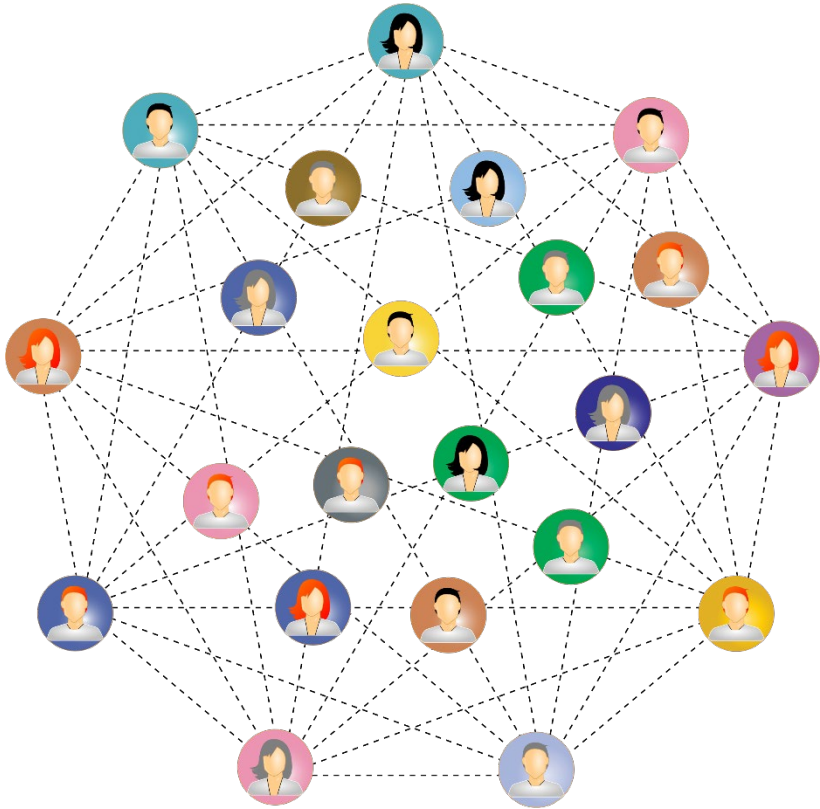




# Key benefit problems



# In total our advice had this much value



**Financial Outcomes direct and indirect**  
**£2,554,699**  
**£354,305** confirmed client benefit gain

**Our Fiscal Benefit was £207,943**  
Fiscal Benefit: Avoiding cost of evictions and temporary housing, avoiding costs of unemployment, and reducing use of NHS services by resolving problems that cause stress and anxiety and depression.

**Our Public Value was £2,338,614**  
Public Value: Improvements in health, well-being, participation and productivity.

## Headline figures:

Reducing use of NHS £53,989

Keeping people in work £74,672

Homelessness prevention savings  
£23,449

Fiscal benefit of supporting claimants  
with benefit debts £81,478

**For every £1 of funding we  
received our clients gained  
£8.71 and we created £7.97 of  
public value**



# How we work out our value

Citizens Advice help us calculate our value using a Treasury approved cost-benefit tool. Four key variables are considered.

- **Affected population:** Number of people receiving advice about a specific issue
- **Impact:** Impact of advice on a specific outcome
- **Deadweight:** What would have happened anyway without our advice
- **Optimism bias:** Accounting for best practice, timeliness and independence of research

In addition to our financial outcomes, we also try to record non-financial outcomes such as blue badges or a social care assessment, as well as “soft” outcomes such as a client reporting improved health, or resolution of a complaint.

The value of e-training is difficult to quantify. However, the more volunteers and staff are supported and have access to training, the more likely it is that they are satisfied at work, and will remain at the organisation. Each adviser that we train and support will, in turn, help hundreds more local residents.

Our research and campaigning work is equally important as helping individuals resolve their benefit problems. The value of this work is when we successfully raise an issue with key parliamentarians or decision-makers, and see changes happen that help those struggling to navigate the social security maze.

# Moving into Adulthood project



The project is entering its third year and is still picking up momentum. The web-tool created by SWRU staff for parent carers to access information is now live on the website: <https://www.swru.org/moving-into-adulthood/> It seems appropriate at this time to look back at the genesis of the project to explain how the reach of the project has extended to find and then provide support to this particularly disenfranchised group of benefit claimants.

In 2021 the government made changes to Universal Credit to stop most students from claiming Universal Credit, arguing that they should rely on student finance instead. At the time we were concerned that these changes would have unintended consequences for non-advanced students with health conditions and disabilities. This group had always been able to claim means tested benefits in their own right from the age of 16. At the time of the change we wrote to the Work and Pensions Committee and the Social Security Advisory Committee to highlight the additional impacts of the change in the law that had seemingly not been foreseen nor impact assessed. At that stage no one had yet been disadvantaged, so the response was very much wait and see.

One of the difficulties for the project was to get into contact with the people we wanted to help. Carers are often pulled in many directions at once. While young people are in education a lot of time and energy is spent on getting the help they need at school. Understandably the settings they visit do not have the skills or the resources to help with welfare benefits.



# Moving into Adulthood project



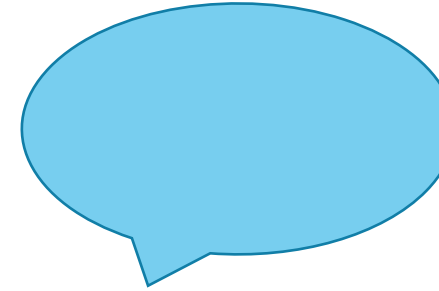
Bespoke advice was provided on an individual basis. As staff in the different settings were exposed to the benefit issues, they became aware of the need for more help in this area.

The evidence we gathered was invaluable in designing the approach for the different strands within the 14-25 year-olds we were targeting. This area of benefit law is hugely complex and it is not possible, or desirable, for Parent Carers to understand the entirety of the issue. Instead we wanted to allow them to access the slice of information that was relevant to their young person.

The MIA project was never conceived as the whole answer. A single part-time staff member could not possibly address the unmet need across Surrey. We are now entering phase 3 in which we have developed a focussed high-level training course to deliver to staff in the various settings that encounter the young people covered by the MIA project. The aim is to encourage staff in the settings to understand in more detail the issues that their young people and their Parent Carers are experiencing. It is hoped that with encouragement, support and training this will result in the individual organisations in closest contact with the Carers providing a permanent link to the benefit advice that is so sorely needed.

The final phase of the project is to return to the social policy side of the issue and once more approach government. We now have evidence of how this has affected vulnerable households. We plan to write once more to appropriate parties to explain who is being affected and what we think the solution or solutions may be.

# What they said.....



“I just wanted to say thank you so much for giving such a thought provoking talk at our conference”  
Voluntary Action organiser



“Thank you so much for your assistance and time spent on this case, that is very much appreciated.”  
Local Citizens Advice caseworker



“I wanted to pass on my gratitude for your advice and support in this matter and also to convey how relieved and grateful my client is now that this situation has been resolved in his favour.”  
Local Adviser



“ Thank you so much for delivering the training yesterday – I have had great feedback from the staff who loved it and found it very informative.”  
Local Charity



“ The training was a great help and much appreciated”  
Tenancy Sustainment Officer



“We much appreciate your time and know the Network members really welcomed your information and support.”  
SCC Adult Social Care – Carers’ Network Lead



“ It’s very reassuring to know we have your team of experts on hand when I come across a particularly complicated benefits case.”  
Local Citizens Advice volunteer

# Training the advice sector

SWRU courses delivered 29  
Local advice workers trained 383

Commissioned courses delivered 27  
Local staff and volunteers trained 486

New courses included:

Universal Credit – the tricky bits

Pension Credit

Managed Migration to Universal Credit

A significant part of this training activity was funded by Surrey County Council as part of their No-One Left Behind programme, and the National Lottery Awards for All grants scheme.





# Working with others for better client outcomes

Local Citizens Advice in Surrey,  
Hampshire, Merton and Lambeth,  
Berkshire and Sussex

Surrey County Council – Policy and  
Commissioning

HMCTS

Jobcentre Plus

Surrey District and Borough councils

Citizens Advice –National Office

No-One Left Behind

Department of Work and Pensions

Surrey Welfare Advice Group

SCC Adult Social Care

Cost of Living Partnership

SCC Information and  
Engagement Team

Surrey Warm Hubs network

SCC Carers Network

Surrey Work Wise IPSPC

# Who we are

## Staff

Maria Zealey – Chief Officer

Brigid Caffyn-Parsons – Welfare Rights Adviser

Karen Creeth – Welfare Rights Adviser

Carol Gibbs – Senior Welfare Rights Adviser

Lou Glencross – Parent and Carer Benefits Adviser

Helen Haws – Welfare Rights Adviser

Ray Savage – Administrator

Fernanda Tuozzo - Work Wise Benefits Adviser

## We would like to thank

Surrey County Council

Woking Borough Council

Elmbridge Borough Council

The National Lottery

Our subscribers

## Trustees

Jane Bourgeois – Chair

Louise Fisher

Anne Haigh

Roger Hurcombe - Treasurer

Keith O'Neill – Vice-Chair

Jan-Pieter Oosterom

Steve O'Sullivan

Anne Pirie

Suja Subramanian

**Surrey Welfare Rights Unit aims to provide the advice people need for the problems they face and improve the policies and practices that affect people's lives.**

**We provide free, independent, confidential and impartial advice to everyone on their rights and responsibilities. We value diversity, promote equality and challenge discrimination.**

**We are a member of the Citizens Advice service.**

Surrey Welfare Rights Unit  
Company Number: 3335128  
Charity Number: 1062826  
FCA Number: FRN 617760  
OISC Registered  
AQS Standards in Welfare  
Benefits Casework and  
Telephone Support