

REGISTERED COMPANY NUMBER: 03038147 (England and Wales)
REGISTERED CHARITY NUMBER: 1075040

**REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES AND
FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025
FOR
LEWISHAM CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAUX SERVICE
LIMITED**

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

**LEWISHAM CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAUX SERVICE
LIMITED**

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FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025**

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REFERENCE AND ADMINISTRATIVE DETAILS

Reference and Administrative Information

Company Number: 3038147

Charity Number: 1075040

Trustees/Directors

Rob Cope (Chair of Trustees - co-opted on 9th September 2024- elected on 14th November 2024)

Cosette Reczek (Chair of Trustees -resigned on 14th November 2024)

Dominic Gibb (Treasurer - co-opted on 6th March 2025)

Susan Hutton (Treasurer - resigned on 17th March 2025)

Ife Gidado (resigned on 7th August 2024)

Christine Mosedale (resigned on 9th May 2024)

Senthooran Ramachandran (resigned on 9th May 2024)

Aida Shoush

Alix Langley

Steve Baynes

Dominic Graham Gilchrist

Jacqueline Graveney (Tregear)

Edward Guy Pikett

Michael McKenna (elected on 14th November 2024)

Szandi Pankasz (elected on 14th November 2024)

Chief Executive/Company Secretary: Fiona Derbyshire (appointed 1st March 2022)

Registered Office and Business Address

Leemore Community Hub

Bonfield Road

London

SE13 5EU

Auditor

Hartley Fowler LLP

4th Floor Tuition House

27/37 St George's Road

Wimbledon

London

SW19 4EU

Tel 020 8946 1212

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Bankers

Co-operative Bank Plc 151 Lewisham High Street London SE13 6AA

CAF Bank
25 Kings Hill Ave Kings Hill
West Malling ME19 4JQ

Solicitors

Your Employment Settlement Service (YESS) Law
New Wing, Somerset House, Strand, London, WC2R 1LA
Tel 020 3701 7530

The Citizens Advice Lewisham Trustee board oversees the information security of all personal information of our clients, staff, funders and strategic partners that is processed. Citizens Advice Lewisham holds joint responsibility for client data that is held in our 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 UK General Data Protection Regulation and Data Protection Act 2018.

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Welcome

Lasting societal changes of the pandemic and the ongoing cost-of-living crisis have hugely affected our work at Citizens Advice Lewisham (CAL), both in a high demand from the vulnerable and in the ways we provide support.

As one of London's most densely populated and diverse areas*, we face ongoing challenges in meeting the growing needs of our clients, and particularly those with more complex problems.

Our borough is characterised by geographic and ethnic health inequalities and outcomes, such as childhood obesity. Census data shows that we support a significantly higher percentage of people with a long-term health condition and a higher percentage of women than national averages.

Our client stories (page 15) give a snapshot of their experiences – and how we were able to help.

In planning for the future, we know that money advice remains a priority for CAL with a potential need to expand our current service in this area.

Partnership working remains high on our agenda in developing and delivering effective services. This year we welcomed Action for Refugees in Lewisham to the Advice Lewisham Partnership and organised Advice First Aid training for local community and faith organisations, thanks to funding by the Greater London Authority in partnership with the London Citizens Advice Consortium. We will continue to build and foster our key relationships to develop our fundraising and focus on targeted projects based on identified client need.

While these continue to be challenging times, there is much to be proud of. We know that we are having a positive impact, albeit in the face of high and ever-increasing demand, and exceeding the majority of our targets.

Alongside our phone advice, 3,900 clients were assessed and offered advice and casework appointments. Over the last 12 months, we saw 130,823 total visits to the website.

Since I joined as Chair in November 2024, I have seen first-hand the skills and dedication that our staff, volunteers and Trustees bring to the charity. We are so grateful for their tireless commitment.

We never forget that what we do contributes to building a more inclusive and resilient society, as well as helping to improve general wellbeing for those of Lewisham.

Rob Cope, Chair of Trustees,
Citizens Advice Lewisham

***Lewisham at a glance:**

- Our estimated population of over 300,000 people has seen an increase of almost nine per cent in 10 years (2011 – 2021)
- Around 62 per cent of Lewisham residents were born in England
- Almost nine per cent of Lewisham resident identified as being disabled causing significant impacts on their lives (2021 census)
- Almost four per cent of Lewisham residents reported providing up to 19 hours of unpaid care each week – with almost two per cent providing between 20 and 49 hours

Source: <https://www.ons.gov.uk/visualisations/censusareachanges/E09000023>

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OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES

Citizens Advice Lewisham (CAL) provides free, independent, confidential and impartial advice and information to those who live and work in Lewisham. CAL is authorised and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority (FCA). We work in partnership with other advice providers in Lewisham and use data collected through our work to highlight structural inequalities that lead to people facing disadvantages and needing help. We give our people the skills and knowledge to build holistic responses with our partners and stakeholders, and effect change where it is most needed.

The Citizens Advice national network exists to provide free, impartial advice to those who need it across the UK and to highlight and champion issues and trends to those in power. As a member of Citizens Advice, we actively promote the principles underlying the Citizens Advice national network:

- We are independent, impartial and non-judgemental
- Our services are free and confidential
- We value diversity, promote equality and challenge discrimination in our service, our workforce and our partnerships
- We are a learning organisation, using evidence to improve our effectiveness and efficiency.

Our objectives are:

- Advice
 - Our advice will be accessible across different channels and locations
 - Our advice will support the most vulnerable
 - We will cement our position as the lead for the Advice Lewisham partnership
 - Our advice will be high quality and a trusted source of help and information.
- Advocacy
 - We will campaign on issues, using our data and evidence to influence social policies and potentially to improve people's lives
 - We will speak out against discrimination and unfairness in our society
 - We will demonstrate our impact so that we are providers of choice for funders, partners and stakeholders
 - We will work to support our clients in accessing advice appropriate to their language need
- Sustainability
 - We will seek responsible funding that supports our objectives and provides sustainable advice services
 - Our work will be valued internally and externally, helping us to secure funding and partnerships and attract staff and volunteers
 - We will control our finances and resources to ensure we work within our means and get the best value for our clients
- People
 - Our culture will support our people to give their best where their voices are heard and communication is open, honest and respectful of differing views
 - We will provide our people with the right support, training, and skills to help clients effectively with high quality advice
 - We will look out for each other and support our wellbeing at work.

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Our objectives are underpinned and enabled through supporting frameworks and plans:

- Our client and community profile analysis informs our future service provision and strategic and business development plan priorities
- Our Service Review looks at how best to meet client needs with available resources and outlines any new ways of working including use of all channels. It is under-pinned by an equity impact assessment to ensure our service remains as inclusive as possible
- Our Workforce Development Plan outlines staff and volunteer resources needed to deliver our objectives
- Our Training and Learning Plans show our commitment to learning and development for staff, volunteers and Trustees to meet advice standards and skills required for current and new services.
- Our Communication Plan sets out how we will manage relationships with our internal and external stakeholders
- Our Research & Campaign Plan details how we will develop social policy objectives, our campaigns and how we can meet the standards set for this aspect of our work
- Our Funding Plan sets out how we aim to manage our funding to sustain our core service and to secure funding to develop new services, which support our strategic priorities.

Achieving our objectives and aims

We achieve our aims by:

- Ensuring our training, feedback and accreditation deliver the right skills and knowledge
- Capturing our client data and ensuring it demonstrates our impact and addresses wider issues
- We leverage our relationships with stakeholders to achieve change
- We hold ourselves accountable to our board to review our performance against objectives quarterly
- We are also held to account annually by National Citizens Advice who assess us against nine areas of the Leadership Self Assessment (LSA).

Our framework to deliver

Our advice contributes to building a more inclusive and resilient society as well as improving general wellbeing. We want our service therefore to be accessible, supportive and inclusive to all those that need our help.

Citizens Advice Lewisham supports vulnerable clients, and its policies set out the principles of how staff and volunteers should deal with situations relating to these clients. The aim is to improve the experience and outcome for vulnerable clients regardless of the channels they use to access our services:

- We campaign and advocate on behalf of clients who cannot do this for themselves
- We encourage the reporting of abuse, discrimination and hate crimes
- We review the impact on all communities ([Community Needs Assessment](#)) when designing new services and when carrying out service reviews
- We ensure our staff and volunteers are trained to support all types of clients and adapt their communication styles to make the experience a positive one

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Forward planning

Our client and community profile shows the value and positive impact of CAL in meeting a high degree of demand. The data shows that many clients receive the help they need and that our multi-channel advice is enabling access for a wide representative demographic of Lewisham residents. There continues to be a need for face-to-face advice and we need to ensure that our objectives reflect this.

With an increase of debt enquiries and the challenge to be able to afford essentials evidenced in our local Cost of Living dashboard, we consider **money advice to remain a priority for CAL** and see a possible need to **expand CAL's existing money advice service**. The nationwide spike in energy enquiries suggests that an effort to secure **energy advice** funding would be particularly timely. Finally, we recognise that the steady nationwide increase in both demand, volume and complexity of enquiries renders any effort to single-handedly meet demand unrealistic. To reflect this, we need to prioritise our **partnership** working, an effort we started by welcoming AFRIL (Action for Refugees in Lewisham) to the ALP (Advice Lewisham Partnership) and by organising Advice First Aid training for local community and faith organisations to help orchestrate a shared response to the cost-of-living crisis.

Our one-year strategy is to:

- Maintain and expand our current contracts
- Diversify with additional contracts/grants in service areas where we have skills/experience (for example, income maximisation, tenancy support, debt, social prescribing)
- Look at options to secure funding and support from corporate donors
- Create a Friends offer to secure smaller monthly contributions.
- Generate funding applications to trusts and foundations for activities that augment the core funding from the Council.

In years two and three of the business plan 2023-2026, fundraising would develop to include:

- Partnership development with education/skills providers
- Community fundraising
- Pro bono support programme
- Explore corporate Friends and donors.

We will also focus our fundraising on targeted projects based on identified client need such as:

- Outreach and co-location especially targeting specific groups (young people, employment, housing, food banks)
- Training, Information, and Advice Group (IAG) network development
- Volunteering/apprenticeship programmes.

Public Benefit

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

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Contribution of Volunteers

The charity receives help and support in the form of voluntary assistance in advising the public and administering the charity. In 2024-2025, volunteer recruitment significantly improved and this will run alongside other training and development opportunities including internship programmes run through local Further Education (FE) organisations. We successfully recruited a high number of advice volunteers, and administration volunteers who are progressing to advice roles.

Generalist Casework, provided by highly experienced and expert Volunteer Advisors is supervised by paid staff. Caseworkers secure additional or new benefits in around 90% of the appeals they conduct.

CAL's Benefits Casework Accreditation attests to the high standards achieved and plans are in place for paid Advisors to be trained to work alongside volunteers to provide a more supportive learning environment.

The above are some of the ways in which volunteers enrich our organisation and substantially contribute to our service offer. We are grateful for their dedication and exceptional contribution.

Advice First Aid

In partnership with the pan-London Citizens Advice network and thanks to funding by the Greater London Authority, over the last year, we were pleased to deliver four Advice First Aid sessions to frontline workers across the voluntary and community sector and to key workers in libraries, doctor surgeries, family hubs and adult education organisations. More than thirty key Lewisham organisations have so far benefited from our programme.

Advice First Aid is a free introductory course, which aims to increase the capacity of faith, community, voluntary and statutory partners to identify advice issues, provide accurate and useful information and signposting and to learn how, and when, to refer to specialist advice providers. The sessions raise greater awareness across the sector, help us promote local networks, build stronger links with local groups and agencies and reduce the risk of people falling between the cracks in services.

Advice First Aid was introduced and is delivered alongside our established quarterly Advice Lewisham Forums, which have an attendance list spanning across the Lewisham Voluntary Community Sector (VCS) and support services sectors.

ACHIEVEMENTS AND PERFORMANCE

Charitable Activities

CAL continues to build capacity and efficiency in response to demand while ensuring its financial resilience. We have maintained our contracts and are actively looking to replace funding that has ended.

CAL's projects

CAL delivers a range of projects including **Debt Free London**, which is funded by the Money and Pension Service through Toynbee Hall. CAL has one of the largest contracts in London, with the aim of serving 1,200 clients annually.

For many years, CAL has delivered **Pound Advice** for the London and Quadrant (L&Q) Housing Association. We have always been the most productive of the delivery partners and generated the highest outcomes for clients. The team continues to handle complex casework for nearly 400 residents addressing rent arrears; making benefit claims and helping people take back control of their lives.

At the Green Man in Bellingham, CAL offers outreach services to the tenants of **Phoenix Housing Association**. In a friendly and familiar environment, tenants can seek help about their housing, managing their money and looking for ways to optimise their income. Last year CAL served 206 clients – a result which met our annual target. This is exceptional given the large number of more complex cases requiring multiple sessions – a common trend in money advice, as too many clients don't seek help until their situation becomes desperate. The team also delivers training workshops for the Phoenix communities on budgeting.

COL Yr 2 (Cost of Living)

Over the last year, we have established a range of satellite outreach locations across Lewisham, including locations such as Christ Church Bellingham (Our outreach at Christ Church is a coffee afternoon, which we hope will allow us to build stronger community ties). Further locations through The Jericho Project, Downham Foodbank, Clyde Family Hub, All Saints Community Centre (in partnership with LRMN), Forest Hill Foodbank, The South Lewisham Practice and The Waldron Health Centre have each enabled us to develop strong relationships with all our hosts. We are assisting a large number of clients (usually 130 per month).

KPI: 130 per month (incl. full appointments and contacts)

Trend: Exceeded targets, particularly in Feb (258) and Dec (164).

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Trust for London

CAL's key objective was to use the funding from the Trust for London to provide specialist housing advice and representation for vulnerable and disadvantaged clients residing in Lewisham. We developed an advice specialist to support clients with full advice on complex housing issues and access advocacy and legal support through collaboration with Southwark/Lewisham Law Centre. This funding ended on 2nd February 2025.

Focus: Outcomes, Feedback forms, partner surveys, and case studies.
208 achieved for the year.

Advising Londoners Partnership (GLA)

Our project has developed and grown. We triage clients via our core service, through two advisers, one to deliver a wrap-around service via telephone appointments and a second through outreach face-to-face. We have developed strategic partnerships throughout Lewisham including the St Mungo's and the Clyde Family Hubs through this funding. This has allowed us to reach more people and to assist with their complex queries. We ensure our service is tailored to the client's needs and is accessible.

KPI: 87 unique clients/month
Meeting the KPI's

Immigration Project

CAL, LMRN and AFRIL were awarded funding to provide support to people with immigration advice.

KPI: 14 per month per organisation over 12 months.
We exceeded the KPI for this project and served 360 clients

UKPN (UK Power Networks)

The project aimed to provide energy advice to people including options to reduce reliance on carbonised energy systems.

KPI: 40/month; reduced to 18/month due to lack of client engagement.
Trend: Due to regional low engagement, this project ended in March 2025.

Trussell Trust

In partnership with the Trussell Trust we deliver an income maximisation project with the objective of helping people out of food-bank dependency.

KPI: 26 new contacts/month and £1000 outcomes after 6 months.
Trend: Meeting contact KPIs; outcomes near expected (£997 per client).

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Advice Lewisham Partnership (ALP)

This partnership includes Age UK Lewisham and Southwark (AGE UKLS), Action for Refugees In Lewisham (AFRIL), Lewisham Multilingual Advice Service (LMLAS), Community Action Works (CAW), and Lewisham Refugee and Migrant Network (LRMN). ALP delivers tailored and holistic support through this alliance, which enables better services to residents with the diversity of offers involved.

Update on Lewisham Law Centre

We have discussed the potential involvement of a CAL trainee housing volunteer to support triage for the Law Centre. Due to several organisational transitions, the Law Centre is currently unable to proceed with this arrangement but remains committed to strengthening collaboration with Citizens Advice Lewisham (CAL) in the future.

Current focus and future plans on our arrangements with the Law Centre and how we are dealing with them:

Staffing Changes: this means the Law Centre does not have capacity to train our volunteers on housing specialist advice so we are looking to undertake this in house.

Current Referral Process: In the interim, all referrals will be handled directly by the remaining solicitor at the Law Centre. The number of referrals is currently manageable, so there is no immediate need for additional triage support.

Long-Term Collaboration: By winter 2025, both CAL and the Law Centre expect to have more clarity on their respective organisational plans and resources. At that point, there will be an opportunity to reassess joint working arrangements, including referral processes and volunteer involvement.

While formal training for a new triage adviser is not feasible at present, CAL's housing volunteer can still act as a point of contact for referrals from CAL to the Law Centre. In such cases, the Law Centre would provide initial guidance on triage steps and any follow-up information required.

The Law Centre remains committed to sharing relevant training and development opportunities for CAL's housing volunteers, particularly through free Shelter NHAS training modules.

Enquiry Line

CAL delivers the Enquiry Line in partnership with LMLAS, a Freephone front door advice service to quality information and advice. It provides access to appointments to help complete forms, home visits and drop-ins for the most vulnerable along with casework on welfare benefits, immigration and housing. Where necessary, a referral is arranged to a relevant local agency to provide wrap-around support for those that need it, especially those with poor mental health, disabilities and other health/social care needs.

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The partnership responded to the equivalent of 25,000 contacts in this year. CAL was directly responsible for responding to almost 75% of the total contacts. Most clients came through the Freephone EnquiryLine which answered 17,176 calls. Over the last year, we have also observed a marked increase in visits to our website and to the self- help section we have created.

Advice Lewisham Partnership Outputs	CAL	Partners	TOTAL
Total telephone contacts	16,616	560	17,176
Total adviser hours on telephone triage 6.5FTE	Currently not being monitored	0	N/A
Referrals to Adviceline	543	0	543
Number of appointments offered	2,658 total: 819 Generalist 1,305 Debt Free Advice 328 Pound Advice 206 Phoenix	198 AGEUK 33 LRMN	2,889
Number of home visits	N/A	248 AGEUK	248
Number of complex casework	453	33 LRMN	486
Number of residents queries responded to by email	73	0	73
Number of residents accessing services via drop in	636 (Drop in and Outreach)	7 AGEUK 378 LMLAS	1,021
Assisted information and signposting	4,186 and 33,659 self-help webpage	0	37,845

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The pandemic and the subsequent cost-of-living crisis changed the way we provide support, moving to mostly digital channels. The cost-of-living crisis has generated demand from more vulnerable clients, and more broadly with clients with more complex problems. Research shows that 5.1% of our clients are digitally vulnerable and it has become necessary to focus on developing other channels to deliver full support. We've worked collaboratively with our partners to develop and deliver support that works for people being impacted by the crisis. More self-reliant clients can self-help, freeing up Advice line and full advice resources to support those who most need more targeted support.

The [CAL Website](#) is designed to provide a 24-hour self-help portal of online information, tools and signposting to users. Our website sees a very high level of traffic which testifies how respected our service is within the community. In 2024-2025 we saw 130,823 total visits to our website. We know that the top clicked links for self-help information are related to Housing and Benefits.

Working with our partners and stakeholders has enabled us to identify our clients and their needs. We will continue to update this information to inform our strategy and business planning and so that we know our service is guided by client needs.

Issues

Our aim is to help people deal with difficult situations, identify and tackle the underlying cause of their problems and to empower them with the tools and information to deal with the problems they face. We provide a holistic service through our work with stakeholders and partners and community organisations that share our objectives. Besides our high volume of phone advice, **3,900 clients** were assessed as in need of additional support and were offered advice and casework appointments.

Our clients

One of Citizens Advice Lewisham's key advice objectives is to support everyone, and particularly the most vulnerable in our community. The following chart which compares our client demographic data against the 2021 Census data for Lewisham illustrates that we meet this objective by supporting a significantly higher percentage of people who have a long-term health condition, a higher percentage of women and higher percentage of residents.

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Lewisham Client Comparison with 2021 Census Data – Summary Table

Category	Subgroup	Clients (%)	Census (%)
Disability	Disabled	62%	20%
	Not Disabled	38%	80%
Gender	Female	61%	53%
	Male	39%	47%
Ethnicity	PoC (People of Colour)	68%	49%
	White	32%	51%
Age Band	<25	3%	13%
	25–64	81%	75%
	65+	17%	12%

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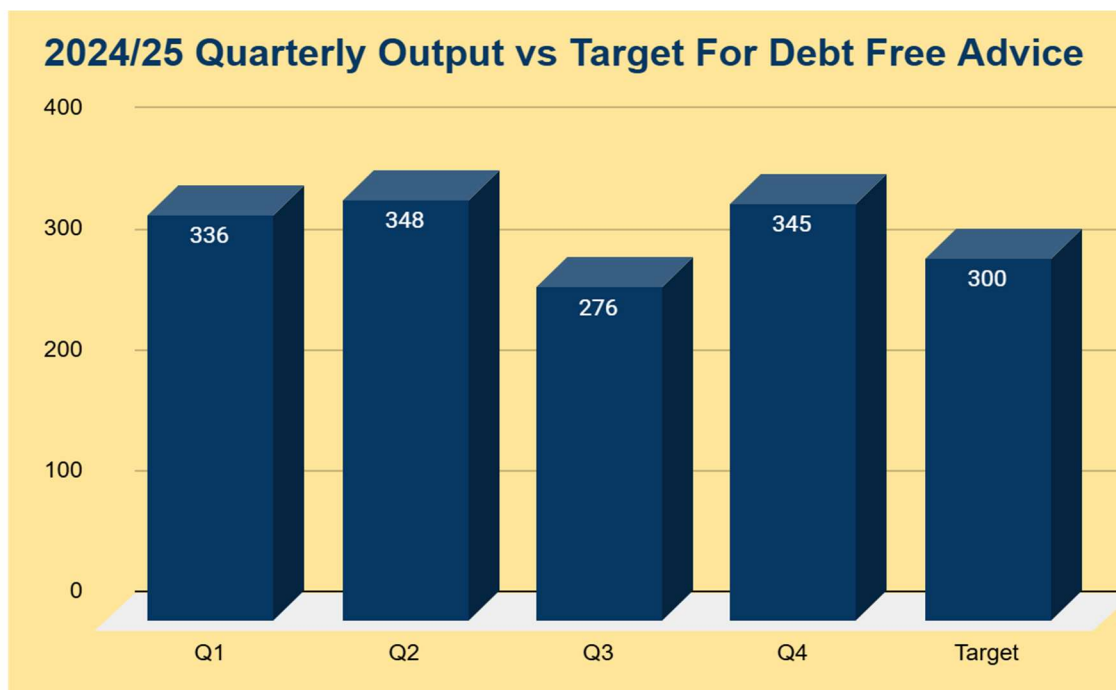
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Outcomes

Last year, our generalist service secured an average of £5,261 in benefits and debt relief per client, contributing to a total financial outcome of over £6.7m over the period. Our Enquiry line also consistently exceeded performance targets, handling the highest volume of calls in October 2024.



Targets column shown at the end



Our debt projects performed above targets as seen in the chart above (unique clients)

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The following stories give a flavour of our clients' varied experiences – and how we were able to help.

1) Helping with Council Tax arrears

We supported a single mother of three—one child living with disabilities—who was overwhelmed by arrears in rent, council tax, and water rates. With deductions being taken from her Universal Credit (UC). Despite receiving enhanced-rate Personal Independence Payment, she was not getting Council Tax Support (CTS).

We helped her apply for CTS and a Section 13A discretionary reduction. As a result, £1,000 of Council Tax debt was written off, UC deductions were stopped, and ongoing liability significantly reduced. Her arrears now total just £248.36, with an affordable repayment plan in place.

We also arranged an Alternative Payment Arrangement (APA) so her Housing Benefit is now paid directly to her housing provider—something she'd been requesting for months. This change has helped her manage rent arrears more effectively.

With increased financial stability, she is now in a much better position.

2) Protecting a vulnerable family from High Court enforcement

A mother and daughter were facing High Court enforcement over a £8,524.89 debt. The daughter, a full-time student, was the debtor; her mother, the guarantor, was medically unfit for work and already on a deficit budget.

After a Judgment in Default, the debt escalated to bailiffs. After the mother contacted us for help, we registered both as clients.

We quickly arranged Standard Breathing Space for both, pausing enforcement. Applying to suspend the High Court writ would likely fail and add costs. Instead, we completed a financial assessment, and the daughter was able to agree a payment of £104.83 a month, which was accepted. Bailiff action was stopped, protecting both clients from further harm.

3) A client's journey through financial hardship

The client was in her 60s and single, with some visual impairment. She attended our outreach advice sessions a number of times over a year and was helped in various ways, including a referral to our debt team for money advice. We carried out a full benefit check and identified a potential PIP claim but the client declined to apply. We also provided her with a food voucher and helped with a housing benefit claim.

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She had been provided with temporary accommodation by the local authority. She lost her job and accrued rent arrears of almost £7,000. She had come to an arrangement with the LA to repay the arrears over time, but due to her low income was struggling financially with making the extra payments. She had applied for a discretionary housing payment but had been turned down.

The outreach adviser identified a grant to pay off her rent arrears and put her on the waiting list due to demand levels at the grant organisation - the National Zatak Foundation. We helped her complete the application and she was awarded £6,000 towards her arrears, leaving her with a smaller and much more manageable amount to repay.

4) Stopping debt enforcement action for a vulnerable client

Our client was vulnerable, indebted and received Universal Credit as their sole income. A company purchased their debt from the original creditor and obtained a Judgment in Default for debts to mobile networks totalling approximately £450. The company also threatened enforcement action through bailiffs.

Our client had a deficit budget and some priority debts. They were advised to apply for Personal Independence Payment (PIP).

The adviser wrote to the solicitor instructed by the company, and as a result of our representation, the solicitor returned the case to the company, suggesting they communicate directly with our client.

The adviser then sent the same documents to the company, who agreed not to take any further legal action against our client, stating:

"However, due to the customer's circumstances, there will be no further legal action taken whilst the accounts are managed by us."

5) Council tax debt write-off thanks to our Debt Advice team

Our client contacted CAL after receiving a Notice of Enforcement regarding council tax arrears dating back to 2012. This was a distressing situation, especially as he had been unaware of these arrears until the enforcement notice arrived. This posed a significant emotional strain on our client and his wife, and highlighted a lack of communication from the council regarding previous reminders or notices.

Our client's wife had recently been diagnosed with cancer and was undergoing aggressive treatment. This treatment had severe side effects, contributing to a highly stressful situation. Our client was also struggling with his own mental health, exacerbated by the stress of his wife's condition and the impending threat of bailiff enforcement.

We reviewed the council tax account, focusing on the delays in enforcement and the lack of prior notification regarding the arrears. We helped the client by drafting a formal complaint to the council tax administration team, emphasising the unjust nature of the enforcement given the circumstances.

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We outlined the legal precedent indicating that significant delays in enforcing liability orders could impact their enforceability. Additionally, we highlighted the severe impact of the stress from this situation.

Following our intervention, David received confirmation from the Council that all enforcement actions would be halted. Furthermore, the council agreed to write off the outstanding council tax debt, recognising the undue stress and hardship caused by the delayed enforcement.

David expressed immense relief upon receiving this news. The decision not only alleviated the financial burden on his family but also removed a significant source of anxiety during a profoundly challenging time. David and his wife could now focus on her recovery. .

This case highlights the importance of timely intervention and advocacy for vulnerable clients facing financial difficulties. By addressing both the legal and emotional aspects of David's situation, we were able to secure a successful outcome that significantly improved his family's quality of life.

Advice Service Plan

In 2024-2025, the advice service expanded dramatically and we now have a satellite of outreach locations across f Lewisham. While the enquiry line continues to be the main route into our service, we need to consider if we could amend this model post 2026.

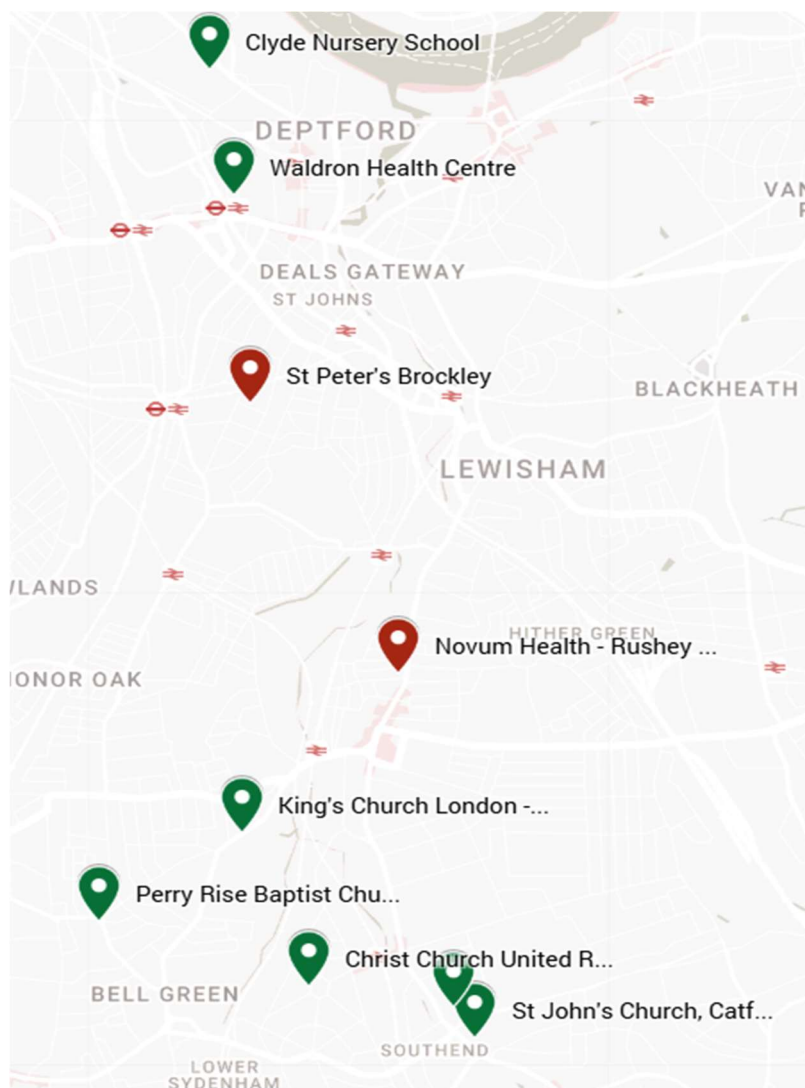
We are focusing on primary healthcare locations and we are in negotiations with Goldsmiths Community for an outreach at their NHS cafe. We are rotating the outreach locations so we maximise resources and build partnerships in many places.

CAL has attended many key events; one of our Supervisors has now taken the lead on Advice First Aid and will be delivering a presentation to the Positive Ageing Council. We will attend more events and will use our volunteers to maximise our presence.

LEWISHAM CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAUX SERVICE LIMITED

REGISTERED COMPANY NUMBER: 03038147

REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025



Delivery

We have paid staff and volunteers. We are developing our volunteers to deliver specialist roles as described in the flowchart below. Our volunteers all start as Telephone Assessors and this will allow us to develop our paid staff as Generalist Advisers and Supervisors. We are aiming to be delivering level 2 OISC advice by January 2027.

We will be developing our partnerships through these outreach locations, so we can provide a more holistic response for our clients. The advisers are key in developing relationships with our partners, and outreaches at primary health locations are ideal.

The Lewisham System Development Lead is heading up the integrated approach between health services, Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise (VCSE), and the local authority. CAL is developing a relationship with her through the Waldron Outreach and the CAL Head of Advice will work to develop this relationship.

LEWISHAM CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAUX SERVICE LIMITED

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REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

Plans for the future

We are seeking funding to develop an outreach which incorporates a Volunteer Training Academy. If we are successful, the project will be based in Bellingham and Downham. Training options for the volunteers will range from entry level Advice First Aid through to full accredited generalist advice. The process starts with shadowing certified advisers during client interviews and undertaking holistic assessments of clients' advice needs, covering income maximisation, benefit checks, benefit claims, budgeting, employment advice, and debt management.

This project will not only provide outreach advice services to the residents of Bellingham and Downham, but leave a lasting legacy by embedding advice services into the community.

FINANCIAL REVIEW

1. Financial Effect of Significant Events:

Citizens Advice Lewisham (CAL) has had another good year, continuing the stabilisation of our finances and increasing the charity's reserves with a surplus of £47,774.

Incoming resources in the year were £1,511,950 (2023-2024 - £1,881,090). Of this £525,242 (2023-2024 - £808,138) related to project restricted activities i.e. the purpose and application of funding was expressly defined by the funder.

A surplus of £47,774 was made in the year (2023-2024 - £181,839). At 31 March 2025 reserves were £585,759 all of which represent unrestricted funds (2023-2024 - £537,985).

2. Investment Policy and Objectives:

The charity generated £7,309 in investment income during the year, which represents an increase from £4,499 in 2023-2024. The investments were primarily deposit based, and no substantial changes in the investment strategy were made in the period. The investment policy aims to ensure funds not immediately required for operations are placed in secure, interest-earning accounts, balancing liquidity and risk.

3. Principal Risks and Uncertainties:

The Trustees have identified a range of risks impacting the financial health of the charity including funding risks and pension liabilities, particularly the pension liability arising from the National Association of Citizens Advice Bureaux Pension and Assurance Plan. The actuarial valuation carried out revealed that the deficit for this multi-employer scheme stands as a significant long-term risk. The charity's share of the liabilities associated with a National CAB Pension Plan is reflected in the CAL accounts. It is worth noting, though, that any crystallisation of this liability would be managed at a national level.

In response to these risks, the Trustees have implemented financial management strategies, including maintaining a stable reserve policy to manage potential financial shortfalls. Further details are included in the Explanation of the Financial Review below.

4. Factors Likely to Affect Future Financial Performance:

In the coming year, financial performance may be influenced by changes in grant funding and broader economic conditions affecting both charitable donations and operational costs. Inflationary pressures on service delivery could also weigh on financial outcomes. However, the charity's proactive reserves policy and approach to managing its funding and liquidity position offer a level of resilience.

LEWISHAM CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAUX SERVICE LIMITED

REGISTERED COMPANY NUMBER: 03038147

REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

Explanation of the Financial Review

1. Principal Funding Sources: The charity's principal funding sources during the period included grants from the London Borough of Lewisham, which amounted to £650,000 in unrestricted funding, and significant contributions from funders like Debt Free London, which provided £228,241. Additionally, contracts with Phoenix Community Housing, London Borough of Lewisham (Cost of Living funding), and others supported various advice and outreach projects. These funding streams directly support the charity's key objectives of providing free advice and advocacy for vulnerable populations.

2. Pension Liabilities: The charity continues to carry a pension liability linked to its participation in the National Association of Citizens Advice Bureaux Pension and Assurance Plan. Although the scheme is closed to new accruals, the liability persists and has decreased slightly in the year from £122,669 in the prior year to £111,571 at year end. This liability does pose a risk to the financial health of the organisation but is being actively managed at the national level, limiting direct financial exposure for the charity.

3. Investment Policy: As required in its Memorandum, in furtherance of its objects, and for no other purposes, the charity has the power to invest the monies of the charity not immediately required for its purposes in or upon such investments, securities or property as may be thought fit, subject nevertheless to such conditions and such consents as may for the time being be imposed or required by law.

Reserves Review

1. Total Funds and Restricted/Unrestricted Funds: At the end of March 2025, total funds stood at £585,759, an increase from £537,985 in 2023-2024. All reserves were held in unrestricted funds, while restricted funds amounted to £0, no change from £0 in the prior year.

2. Designated or Committed Funds: No specific funds have been designated or otherwise committed at the end of the reporting period. The unrestricted funds are readily available for general use, and there are no amounts tied up in tangible fixed assets.

3. Reserves Policy and Target: The Trustees have a policy of maintaining at least three months of operating costs in unrestricted reserves. As of March 2025, unrestricted reserves were £585,759, surpassing the target of £420,000. The achievement of our reserves target is significant in ensuring that our charity remains financially stable and capable of meeting its future obligations.

In conclusion, the charity has had a financially positive year, with a modest growth in both income and reserves. While challenges such as pension liabilities and the ongoing need for significant external funding remain, the financial position has improved, and the charity is well-prepared for the future.

LEWISHAM CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAUX SERVICE LIMITED

REGISTERED COMPANY NUMBER: 03038147

REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

Governing Document

Lewisham Citizens Advice Bureaux Ltd. is a registered charity and a company limited by guarantee. Lewisham Citizens Advice Bureaux Ltd. is known and referred to as Citizens Advice Lewisham (CAL). The maximum liability of each member is limited to £1. Citizens Advice Lewisham is governed by its Memorandum and Articles of Association as amended on 7 November 2013 and 1 June 2022 (National Association of Citizens Advice Bureaux (CitA) mass adoption).

CAL was incorporated as a company limited by guarantee on 27 March 1985. The charity commenced operations on 27 March 1985 at which date the assets and liabilities of the unincorporated CAL were acquired.

The Trustees who served during the period and up to the date of signing this report are:

Rob Cope (Chair of Trustees - co-opted on 9 September 2024 - elected on 14 November 2024)

Cosette Reczek (Chair of Trustees -resigned on 14 November 2024)

Dominic Gibb (Treasurer- co-opted on 6 March 2025)

Susan Hutton (Treasurer- resigned on 17 March 2025)

Ife Gidado (resigned on 7 August 2024)

Christine Mosedale (resigned on 9 May 2024)

Senthooran Ramachandran (resigned on 9 May 2024)

Aida Shoush

Alix Langley

Steve Baynes

Dominic Graham Gilchrist

Jacqueline Graveney

Edward Guy Pikett

Michael McKenna (elected on 14 November 2024)

Szandi Pankasz (elected on 14 November 2024)

Recruitment, Appointment of Trustees

Our Trustees, who are also directors of the charity, are elected at our Annual General Meeting (AGM). Trustees may co-opt up to six people onto the Trustee Board to ensure the Board is broadly representative of the community, and to fill any specific vacancy and skills needed to carry out our responsibilities effectively (e.g. Treasurer). Co-opted members must stand down at the Annual General Meeting following their co-option, but they are eligible to stand for election. One third of the elected Trustees (the longest serving since the previous election) stands down at each AGM and is eligible to stand for re-election. We invite nominations for Trustees through our annual mailing to stakeholders and local community organisations. Co-opted Trustees are recruited through a variety of methods, including direct advertising in the relevant media (e.g. the internet, local newspapers.)

Our Chair, Cosette Reczek and our Treasurer, Susan Hutton, both stood down this year and we want to thank them for their service and acknowledge the outstanding work they did in supporting the charity through COVID and other challenges.

The Board regularly reviews its membership to ensure there is a broad range of relevant skills and experiences sufficient to carry out its duties.

LEWISHAM CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAUX SERVICE LIMITED

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REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

A separate process agreed by the Trustee Board is followed for the election of the Chair. The reference and administrative details above identify the constituencies that elected each of the current Trustees, where applicable. No other persons or bodies external to the charity were entitled to appoint persons to the Trustee Board.

New Trustees

At the last AGM, a new Chair of Trustees (Rob Cope) was appointed, and two new Trustees — Michael McKenna and Szandi Pankasz — were elected. Both have been active members of the board since their appointment. This year we have also welcomed our new treasurer, Dominic Gibb. The board would like to extend its thanks to Cosette Reczek and Susan Hutton for their leadership.

Training of Trustees

All new Trustees are invited to attend an induction training session at Citizens Advice London office, to learn more about the Citizens Advice service nationally and the role of Trustees. They participate in a planned induction which includes:

- Access to key governance documents such as the governance manual, financial procedures and annual report.
- Good governance guidance – relevant Charity Commission guides and references to high performing boards including Harvard and ICSA reports.
- Service tour introducing the different aspects of the service and identifying key team members.
- Introduction to stakeholders and client profile with the CEO.
- Bi-annual review with the Chair to establish objectives and progress.
- Workshop with Citizens Advice nationally to understand the member relationship.

All new Trustees receive a Citizens Advice Lewisham email address, access to the Citizens Advice intranet and training system (Skill book) and complete their confidentiality and Declaration of Interests forms. DBS checks are carried out according to Citizens Advice guidance. All Trustees are invited to visit our office to meet our team, find out more about our work and to observe the service delivery and understand the nature of the enquiries presented by clients. Our annual away day brings together Trustees, paid staff and volunteers to collectively discuss and feedback on the charity's strategic goals.

Trustees are included in the Training and Development Plan for CAL which includes mandatory training in GDPR, Senior Managers and Certification Regime (SMCR) for the FCA, Equity and Diversity and Health and Safety obligations.

Organisational Structure

CAL is governed by its Trustee Board which is responsible for setting the strategic direction and policy of the charity. The Trustees carry the ultimate responsibility for the conduct of CAL 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 delegates some of its duties to its two subcommittees: finance (FSC) and people (PSC) subcommittees. The terms of board delegation can be seen [here](#).

The governance Terms of Reference reflects a clear delegation of tasks across finance, people management, and ad-hoc problem-solving, with the CEO responsible for operational execution and reporting.

LEWISHAM CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAUX SERVICE LIMITED

REGISTERED COMPANY NUMBER: 03038147

REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

Key Management Remuneration

We have in place national Citizens Advice benchmarking which we used to set up a Pay Framework and Pay structure approved last year. The Board approved the structure outlined which allows all but CEO role annual increments on completion of satisfactory appraisal for three years or until the top of the benchmarked range is reached. The pay of the remaining Senior Management Team, and staff is reviewed annually by the CEO, in line with both market conditions and affordability for the charity, and a proposal is submitted to the Board for their approval.

Matters Reserved for the Board:

- Approve actions taken by the Chair and address conflict of interests/confidentiality issues
- Oversee nominations for key roles such as Chair, Vice-Chair, Treasurer, Trustees, etc
- Set strategic goals and KPIs through a business plan
- Monitor organisational performance and approve policies, annual budgets, and reports
- Approve financial reporting and manage organisational risks
- Maintain a code of conduct.

Finance Sub-Committee:

- Recommends the business plan, annual budget, and financial policies for board approval
- Appoints auditors/bankers and recommends the annual report and accounts
- Evaluates organisational risks, financial performance, and continuity plans
- Makes recommendations on reserves policy and reviews quarterly forecasts.

People Sub-Committee:

- Recommends training and development plans, and reviews performance appraisals and remuneration
- Monitors volunteer recruitment, retention, and performance
- Provides recommendations on non-financial policies and addresses client feedback
- Focuses on organisational culture, performance quality, and other action items.

CEO Responsibilities:

- Coordinates agendas, drafts minutes, and reports in collaboration with the Board and Committee Chairs
- Manages finances, recruitment, and staff/volunteer performance
- Provides performance reports to the Board and committees
- Implements policies and escalates significant risks to the Board
- Reports to the Chair of Trustees
- Leads the development of organisation strategy
- Works to build key relationships and evidence CAL's impact

LEWISHAM CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAUX SERVICE LIMITED

REGISTERED COMPANY NUMBER: 03038147

REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

Related Parties/ PQF

CAL is a member of Citizens Advice (CitA), the operating name of the National Association of Citizens Advice Bureaux, which provides a framework for standards of advice and casework management. CitA sets and monitors performance through the Performance Quality Framework (PQF) assessed through periodic surveys, regular file checking and annual inspection with a three-year full inspection.

In February 2024, a full inspection took place with the CitA Assessor rating CAL's Leadership Self-Assessment against the core areas. The assessment concurred with CAL's own assessment and awarded Excellent/Good ratings across the service. The results are summarised below:

2024 LSA outcome for Lewisham	
Assessment Area	Outcome
Governance	All requirements met
Strategic Business Planning	All requirements met
Risk Management & Compliance	All requirements met
Financial Management	All requirements met
People Management	All requirements met
Operational Performance	All requirements met
Partnership Working	All requirements met
Research & Campaigns	All requirements met
Equity, Diversity & inclusion	All requirements met

Operating policies are determined by the Trustee Board of CAL to fulfil its charitable objectives and comply with the national membership requirements. The Charity also co-operates and liaises with other advisory services, local charities and local authority departments on behalf of clients. Where one of the Trustees holds the position of Trustee/director of another charity or is a decision maker within the local authority, they may be involved in discussions regarding that other charity or department but not in the ultimate decision-making process. Currently, none of our Trustees work for Lewisham Council or hold decision making roles in partner organisations.

Major risks

The Trustees recognise that any major risks to which the charity is exposed need to be reviewed and systems put in place to mitigate those risks. To that end CAL is regularly monitoring and managing its risk, reviewing the corporate risk register and ensuring action plans are in place to mitigate its key risks.

LEWISHAM CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAUX SERVICE LIMITED

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REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

Trustees also review risks relating to our financial strength, to ensure that there are reliable revenue streams and a live pipeline for the delivery of new income. The top four risks for the organisation, and our current risk management plans for each, are outlined below:

- Fundraising

Dependency on key funders and reduction to funding levels are key risk factors for CAL. We mitigate this by seeking and securing a wide range of funding on other projects. We also build relationships with funders and demonstrate our impact and value to ensure we are a partner of choice and have invested time in supporting the formation of the London Citizens Advice consortium to provide regional funding opportunities and shared services and costs.

- Staffing

Our team is committed and trained but our funding and cost constraints mean we operate on a very lean basis. We have experienced, like many organisations, extended sick leave which we are managing with support and sensitivity but this is an ongoing area of concern. Our employment offer including ongoing training and support and careful succession planning ensure we have a pipeline of able staff willing and able to fill key vacancies.

- Non-compliance

Accreditation standards are onerous to ensure we all deliver the right advice to clients and we rightly focus a lot of resources on training and feedback to manage this. Of equal importance is GDPR and cyber security compliance which we manage through annual training and lessons learnt as well as management horizon scanning for regulatory changes.

- Low client satisfaction

The pandemic and subsequent cost of living crisis have raised levels of demand on our services to unprecedented levels. Our funding and resources have not been able to keep up with this. As a result, we face an ongoing challenge with clients being unable to access our service or whose cases are so complex that they can impact our ability to completely resolve matters. This means that nationally, Citizens Advice is seeing increased levels of complaints from clients and this is exacerbated by the high ratio of deprivation in our borough. Where this reflects shortcomings in our service, we target training and feedback to improve advice as well as working to help advisers better manage client expectations. We are also seeking to expand our services with new funding applications and innovations.

**LEWISHAM CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAUX SERVICE
LIMITED (REGISTERED NUMBER: 03038147)**

**REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025**

STATEMENT OF TRUSTEES' RESPONSIBILITIES

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

Company law requires the trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year. Under that law, the trustees have elected to prepare the financial statements in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice (United Kingdom Accounting Standards and applicable law).

Under company law the trustees must not approve the financial statements unless they are satisfied that they give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charitable company and of the incoming resources and application of resources, including the income and expenditure, of the charitable company for that period. In preparing those financial statements, the trustees are required to

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

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

In so far as the trustees are aware:

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

AUDITORS

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

Approved by order of the board of trustees on 04/12/2025 and signed on its behalf by:



.....
R Cope - Trustee

04/12/2025

REPORT OF THE INDEPENDENT AUDITORS TO THE MEMBERS OF LEWISHAM CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAUX SERVICE LIMITED

Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of Lewisham Citizens Advice Bureaux Service Limited (the 'charitable company') for the year ended 31 March 2025 which comprise the Statement of Financial Activities, the Balance Sheet, the Cash Flow Statement and notes to the financial statements, including a summary of significant accounting policies. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

In our opinion the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the state of the charitable company's affairs as at 31 March 2025 and of its incoming resources and application of resources, including its income and expenditure, for the year then ended;
- have been properly prepared in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice; and
- have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006.

Basis for opinion

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

Conclusions relating to going concern

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

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

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

Other information

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

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

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

Opinions on other matters prescribed by the Companies Act 2006

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

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

REPORT OF THE INDEPENDENT AUDITORS TO THE MEMBERS OF LEWISHAM CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAUX SERVICE LIMITED

Matters on which we are required to report by exception

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

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

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

Responsibilities of trustees

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

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

Our responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

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

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

We identify and assess risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error, and then design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks, including obtaining audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion. In identifying and assessing risks of material misstatement in respect of irregularities, including fraud and non-compliance with laws and regulations, we considered the following:

- the nature of the industry and sector, control environment and the charities activities;
- results of our enquiries of management about their own identification and assessment of the risks of irregularities;
- any matters we identified having obtained and reviewed the charitable company's documentation of their policies and procedures relating to:
 - identifying, evaluating and complying with laws and regulations and whether they were aware of any instances of non-compliance;
 - detecting and responding to the risks of fraud and whether they have knowledge of any actual, suspected or alleged fraud;
 - the internal controls established to mitigate risks of fraud or non-compliance with laws and regulations;
 - the matters discussed among the audit engagement team regarding how and where fraud might occur in the financial statements and any potential indicators of fraud.

REPORT OF THE INDEPENDENT AUDITORS TO THE MEMBERS OF LEWISHAM CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAUX SERVICE LIMITED

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

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

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

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

Our procedures to respond to risks identified included the following:

- reviewing the financial statement disclosures and testing to supporting documentation to assess compliance with provision of relevant laws and regulations described as having a direct effect on the financial statements;
- enquiring of management concerning actual and potential litigation and claims;
- performing analytical procedures to identify any unusual or unexpected relationships that may indicate risks of material misstatement due to fraud;
- reviewing minutes of meetings of those charged with governance, reviewing internal reports, and
- in addressing the risk of fraud through management override of controls, testing the appropriateness of journal entries and other adjustments, assessing whether the judgements made in making accounting estimates are indicative of a potential bias and evaluating the business rationale for any significant transactions that are unusual or outside the normal course of business.

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

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

Use of our report

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



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

9 December 2025

**LEWISHAM CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAUX SERVICE
LIMITED**

**STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES
(INCORPORATING AN INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT)
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025**

	Notes	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	2025 Total funds £	2024 Total funds £
INCOME AND ENDOWMENTS FROM					
Donations and legacies	3	154	-	154	5,500
Charitable activities	5				
Information and advice		976,653	525,207	1,501,860	1,867,969
Investment income	4	7,309	-	7,309	4,499
Other income		2,592	35	2,627	3,122
Total		<u>986,708</u>	<u>525,242</u>	<u>1,511,950</u>	<u>1,881,090</u>
EXPENDITURE ON					
Charitable activities	6				
Information and advice		<u>904,285</u>	<u>559,891</u>	<u>1,464,176</u>	<u>1,699,251</u>
NET INCOME/(EXPENDITURE)					
Transfers between funds	18	82,423 (34,649)	(34,649) 34,649	47,774 -	181,839 -
Net movement in funds		<u>47,774</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>47,774</u>	<u>181,839</u>
RECONCILIATION OF FUNDS					
Total funds brought forward		537,985	-	537,985	356,146
TOTAL FUNDS CARRIED FORWARD		<u><u>585,759</u></u>	<u><u>-</u></u>	<u><u>585,759</u></u>	<u><u>537,985</u></u>

The notes form part of these financial statements

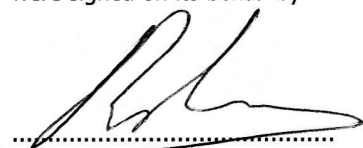
**LEWISHAM CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAUX SERVICE
LIMITED (REGISTERED NUMBER: 03038147)**

**BALANCE SHEET
31 MARCH 2025**

	Notes	2025 £	2024 £
CURRENT ASSETS			
Debtors	14	73,420	31,178
Cash at bank		943,232	834,355
		<u>1,016,652</u>	<u>865,533</u>
CREDITORS			
Amounts falling due within one year	15	(319,322)	(204,879)
		<u>697,330</u>	<u>660,654</u>
NET CURRENT ASSETS			
		697,330	660,654
TOTAL ASSETS LESS CURRENT LIABILITIES			
		697,330	660,654
PENSION LIABILITY	19	(111,571)	(122,669)
		<u>585,759</u>	<u>537,985</u>
NET ASSETS			
		585,759	537,985
FUNDS	18		
Unrestricted funds		585,759	537,985
TOTAL FUNDS		<u>585,759</u>	<u>537,985</u>

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

The financial statements were approved by the Board of Trustees and authorised for issue on 04/12/2025 and were signed on its behalf by:


.....
R Cope - Trustee

04/12/2025

The notes form part of these financial statements

**LEWISHAM CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAUX SERVICE
LIMITED**

**CASH FLOW STATEMENT
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025**

	Notes	2025 £	2024 £
Cash flows from operating activities			
Cash generated from operations	1	108,153	206,168
Finance costs paid		(6,585)	(7,167)
Net cash provided by operating activities		<u>101,568</u>	<u>199,001</u>
Cash flows from investing activities			
Interest received		<u>7,309</u>	<u>4,499</u>
Net cash provided by investing activities		<u>7,309</u>	<u>4,499</u>
Change in cash and cash equivalents in the reporting period		<u>108,877</u>	<u>203,500</u>
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the reporting period		<u>834,355</u>	<u>630,855</u>
Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the reporting period		<u><u>943,232</u></u>	<u><u>834,355</u></u>

The notes form part of these financial statements

**LEWISHAM CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAUX SERVICE
LIMITED**

**NOTES TO THE CASH FLOW STATEMENT
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025**

1. RECONCILIATION OF NET INCOME TO NET CASH FLOW FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES

	2025 £	2024 £
Net income for the reporting period (as per the Statement of Financial Activities)	47,774	181,839
Adjustments for:		
Interest received	(7,309)	(4,499)
Finance costs	6,585	7,167
Pension fund - interest unwind	5,496	5,654
Pension fund - deficit payments	(10,500)	(10,500)
Pension fund - movement in interest rate	(6,094)	(785)
Pension fund - extn. of contrib. period	-	17,969
(Increase)/decrease in debtors	(42,242)	143,009
Increase/(decrease) in creditors	114,443	(133,686)
Net cash provided by operations	<u>108,153</u>	<u>206,168</u>

2. ANALYSIS OF CHANGES IN NET FUNDS

	At 1/4/24 £	Cash flow £	At 31/3/25 £
Net cash			
Cash at bank	834,355	108,877	943,232
	<u>834,355</u>	<u>108,877</u>	<u>943,232</u>
Total	<u>834,355</u>	<u>108,877</u>	<u>943,232</u>

The notes form part of these financial statements

**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025**

1. GENERAL INFORMATION

The charitable company is incorporated and domiciled in England and Wales. The address of its registered office is Leamore Community Hub, Bonfield Road, London SE13 5EU. The registered number of the company is 03038147. The registered number of the charity is 1075040.

The financial information presented is for the year ended 31 March 2025 and 31 March 2024. The financial information is presented in sterling and rounding is to the nearest £1.

2. ACCOUNTING POLICIES

Basis of preparing the financial statements

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

Preparation of the accounts on a going concern basis

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

Significant judgements and estimates

The trustees consider that there are no areas of judgement or estimation which materially affect the financial statements.

Reclassification of comparatives

The comparative amounts for some expenditure items have been reclassified to ensure the comparability between both periods. The net assets in the prior period have not changed as a result of this reclassification.

Income

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

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

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

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

Expenditure

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

Charitable activities costs

Charitable activities costs comprises those costs incurred by the charity in the delivery of its activities and services for its beneficiaries. It includes both costs that can be allocated directly to such activities and those costs of an indirect nature necessary to support them.

**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS - continued
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025**

2. ACCOUNTING POLICIES - continued

Governance costs

Governance costs include those incurred in the governance of the charity and include the cost of the preparation of the statutory financial statements, the audit of the charity, legal costs, and the cost of trustee meetings.

Support costs

Support costs include all those overhead costs of office, utility services and other services and costs, which are in support of the activity. They have been allocated to activity cost categories on a basis consistent with the use of resources.

Tangible Fixed Assets

Depreciation is provided at rates calculated to write off the cost less residual value of each asset over its expected useful life, as follows:

Office and computer equipment over the cost of £1,000 - 33% on a straight line basis.

Fixtures and Fittings over the cost of £1,000 - 33% on a straight line basis.

Individual assets purchased and costing less than £1,000 are directly written off in the statement of financial activities and therefore not capitalised. Assets capitalised are held at historic cost.

Cash at bank

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

Debtors

Trade and other debtors are recognised at the settlement amount due. Prepayments are recognised at the invoiced cost prepaid. In relation to trade debtors, a provision for impairment is made when there is objective evidence that it is probable the charity will not be able to collect all the amounts due.

Creditors

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

Voluntary help

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

Operating lease costs

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

Taxation

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

Fund accounting

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

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

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

**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS - continued
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025**

2. ACCOUNTING POLICIES - continued

Pension costs and other post-retirement benefits

Lewisham Citizens Advice participates in two pension schemes:

1) National Association of Citizens advice Bureaux Pension and Assurance Plan (1991)

This is a defined benefit pension scheme. The scheme is a multi-employer scheme and is accounted for as a defined contribution scheme since the charity is unable to identify its share of the underlying assets and liabilities on a consistent and reasonable basis in accordance with section 28 of FRS 102. As the charity has an agreed schedule of contributions (including deficit recovery contributions) in place, a liability has been included for the value of these future payments, discounted to their present value. The scheme was closed to future accrual with effect from 31 March 2008.

2) The Pension Trust

The Pension Trust Growth Plan has four different series within the one pension scheme. Lewisham Citizens Advice has active members enrolled in two of these series. It previously enrolled staff into a defined benefit series and it now enrolls new staff into the defined contribution series.

The defined benefit series is classified as a defined benefit scheme because of the guarantee within the scheme that the value attributed to each member will not be less than accumulated contributions. No provision has been made for the contingent liability as the trustees consider the likelihood of crystallisation to be remote. The pension contributions charged in these financial statements in respect of both series represent the amounts payable by the charity for the scheme in the year.

3. DONATIONS AND LEGACIES

	2025	2024
	£	£
Donations	154	5,500
	<u>154</u>	<u>5,500</u>

4. INVESTMENT INCOME

	2025	2024
	£	£
Deposit account interest	7,309	4,499
	<u>7,309</u>	<u>4,499</u>

**LEWISHAM CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAUX SERVICE
LIMITED**

**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS - continued
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025**

5. INCOME FROM CHARITABLE ACTIVITIES

Included in charitable activity income is the following income:

	2025	2024
	£	£
Grant income (unrestricted)		
London Borough of Lewisham - core funding	650,000	650,000
Total unrestricted grant income	650,000	650,000
Grant income (restricted)		
Debt Free London	228,241	238,642
National Citizens Advice - Help To Claim	-	488,792
Trust For London - Legal Team	36,416	35,714
Trussell Trust	7,258	-
Immigration Caseworker	200,000	-
Royal Court of Justice - Crisis Prevention	42,630	45,000
UK Power Networks	10,662	-
Total restricted grant income	525,207	808,148
Contract income (unrestricted)		
London Borough of Lewisham - Cost of Living	123,040	-
London Borough of Lewisham - crisis funding	-	171,300
Lewisham and Southwark Age UK - additional advice services	-	43,792
London Borough of Lewisham - advice outreach	85,262	85,262
Pound Advice	70,853	79,477
Phoenix Community Housing Association	45,000	30,000
Energy Advice Programme	998	-
Greater London Authority Grant	1,500	-
Total contract income	326,653	409,831
Total income from charitable activities	1,501,860	1,867,979

6. CHARITABLE ACTIVITIES COSTS

	Direct Costs (see note 7) £	Support costs (see note 8) £	Totals £
Information and advice	1,115,927	348,249	1,464,176

**LEWISHAM CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAUX SERVICE
LIMITED**

**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS - continued
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025**

7. DIRECT COSTS OF CHARITABLE ACTIVITIES

	2025 £	2024 £
Staff costs	914,634	1,350,909
Partner payments	178,748	83,624
Office costs	22,518	62,162
Other costs	27	333
	<u>1,115,927</u>	<u>1,497,028</u>

8. SUPPORT COSTS

	Management £	Finance £	Governance costs £	Totals £
Information and advice	<u>315,713</u>	<u>6,585</u>	<u>25,951</u>	<u>348,249</u>

Support costs, included in the above, are as follows:

Management

	2025 Information and advice £	2024 Total activities £
Staff and volunteer costs	214,666	88,578
Office costs	67,018	82,817
Premises costs	31,500	607
Other costs	2,529	1,100
	<u>315,713</u>	<u>173,102</u>

Finance

	2025 Information and advice £	2024 Total activities £
Pension fund interest unwind	5,496	5,654
Bank charges	1,089	1,513
	<u>6,585</u>	<u>7,167</u>

Governance costs

	2025 Information and advice £	2024 Total activities £
Auditors' remuneration	10,000	9,960
Legal and professional fees	4,969	9,332
Trustee board	810	264
Other governance costs	10,172	2,398
	<u>25,951</u>	<u>21,954</u>

**LEWISHAM CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAUX SERVICE
LIMITED**

**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS - continued
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025**

9. NET INCOME/(EXPENDITURE)

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

	2025	2024
	£	£
Auditors' remuneration	10,000	9,960
Office equipment lease	3,082	3,082
	<u>13,082</u>	<u>13,042</u>
The auditor's fee consisted of:	2025	2024
	£	£
Audit of the financial statements	6,300	6,300
Preparation of statutory financial statements, other services and VAT	3,700	3,660
	<u>10,000</u>	<u>9,960</u>

10. TRUSTEES' REMUNERATION AND BENEFITS

There were no trustees' remuneration or other benefits for the year ended 31 March 2025 nor for the year ended 31 March 2024.

Trustees' expenses

There were no trustees' expenses paid for the year ended 31 March 2025 nor for the year ended 31 March 2024.

11. STAFF COSTS

	2025	2024
	£	£
Salaries and wages	956,876	1,202,989
Social security costs	90,626	112,725
Pension costs	35,785	46,286
Pension fund - movement in interest rate	(6,094)	(785)
Pension fund - extension of contribution period	-	17,969
Termination payments	-	16,720
Ex-gratia payments	-	3,280
	<u>1,077,193</u>	<u>1,399,184</u>

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

	2025	2024
Senior Management Team	3	4
Charitable work and advisors	31	40
	<u>34</u>	<u>44</u>

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

	2025	2024
£60,001 - £70,000	1	1

The key management personnel of the charity are the senior management team, which for the financial year were the Chief Executive Officer, the Head of Advice and the Head of Business and Development. The key management personnel received benefits (including employer pension costs) during the year of £182,920 (2024: £250,385).

**LEWISHAM CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAUX SERVICE
LIMITED**

**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS - continued
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025**

12. STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES - FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	Total funds £
INCOME AND ENDOWMENTS FROM			
Donations and legacies	5,500	-	5,500
Charitable activities			
Information and advice	1,059,831	808,138	1,867,969
Investment income	4,499	-	4,499
Other income	3,122	-	3,122
Total	<u>1,072,952</u>	<u>808,138</u>	<u>1,881,090</u>
EXPENDITURE ON			
Charitable activities			
Information and advice	<u>883,452</u>	<u>815,799</u>	<u>1,699,251</u>
NET INCOME/(EXPENDITURE)	189,500	(7,661)	181,839
Transfers between funds	<u>(7,661)</u>	<u>7,661</u>	<u>-</u>
Net movement in funds	181,839	-	181,839
RECONCILIATION OF FUNDS			
Total funds brought forward	356,146	-	356,146
TOTAL FUNDS CARRIED FORWARD	<u><u>537,985</u></u>	<u><u>-</u></u>	<u><u>537,985</u></u>

13. TANGIBLE FIXED ASSETS

	Computer equipment £
COST	
At 1 April 2024 and 31 March 2025	<u>4,878</u>
DEPRECIATION	
At 1 April 2024 and 31 March 2025	<u>4,878</u>
NET BOOK VALUE	
At 31 March 2025	<u><u>-</u></u>
At 31 March 2024	<u><u>-</u></u>

**LEWISHAM CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAUX SERVICE
LIMITED**

**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS - continued
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025**

14. DEBTORS: AMOUNTS FALLING DUE WITHIN ONE YEAR

	2025	2024
	£	£
Trade debtors	47,857	17,844
Accrued income	12,537	-
Prepayments	13,026	13,334
	<u>73,420</u>	<u>31,178</u>

15. CREDITORS: AMOUNTS FALLING DUE WITHIN ONE YEAR

	2025	2024
	£	£
Trade creditors	64,488	10,564
Social security and other taxes	21,499	19,607
Other creditors	7,060	7,142
Accruals and deferred income	226,275	167,566
	<u>319,322</u>	<u>204,879</u>

	2025	2024
	£	£
<u>Deferred Income</u>		
Balance at 1 April 2024	99,731	65,875
Amounts released to incoming resources	(99,731)	(65,875)
Amount deferred in the year	193,408	99,731
	<u>193,408</u>	<u>99,731</u>

Deferred income comprises income received during the year which relates to the next financial year.

16. LEASING AGREEMENTS

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

	2025	2024
	£	£
Within one year	3,082	3,082
Between one and five years	3,853	6,934
	<u>6,935</u>	<u>10,016</u>

**LEWISHAM CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAUX SERVICE
LIMITED**

**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS - continued
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025**

17. ANALYSIS OF NET ASSETS BETWEEN FUNDS

	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	2025 Total funds £	2024 Total funds £
Current assets	1,009,874	6,778	1,016,652	865,533
Current liabilities	(312,544)	(6,778)	(319,322)	(204,879)
Pension liability	(111,571)	-	(111,571)	(122,669)
	<u>585,759</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>585,759</u>	<u>537,985</u>

2024 Comparatives for net assets between funds:

	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	2024 Total funds £
Current assets	855,005	10,528	865,533
Current liabilities	(194,351)	(10,528)	(204,879)
Pension liability	(122,669)	-	(122,669)
	<u>537,985</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>537,985</u>

18. MOVEMENT IN FUNDS

	At 1/4/24 £	Net movement in funds £	Transfers between funds £	At 31/3/25 £
Unrestricted funds				
General	660,654	71,325	(34,649)	697,330
Pension reserve	(122,669)	11,098	-	(111,571)
	<u>537,985</u>	<u>82,423</u>	<u>(34,649)</u>	<u>585,759</u>
Restricted funds				
Debt Free London	-	(33,312)	33,312	-
Trust For London - Legal Team	-	82	(82)	-
Royal Courts of Justice - Islington Crisis Management Project	-	(826)	826	-
Immigration Caseworker	-	(496)	496	-
Trussell Trust	-	(6)	6	-
UK Power Networks	-	(91)	91	-
	<u>-</u>	<u>(34,649)</u>	<u>34,649</u>	<u>-</u>
TOTAL FUNDS	<u>537,985</u>	<u>47,774</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>585,759</u>

**LEWISHAM CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAUX SERVICE
LIMITED**

**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS - continued
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025**

18. MOVEMENT IN FUNDS - continued

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

	Incoming resources £	Resources expended £	Movement in funds £
Unrestricted funds			
General	986,708	(915,383)	71,325
Pension reserve	-	11,098	11,098
	986,708	(904,285)	82,423
Restricted funds			
Debt Free London	228,276	(261,588)	(33,312)
Trust For London - Legal Team	36,416	(36,334)	82
Royal Courts of Justice - Islington Crisis Management Project	42,630	(43,456)	(826)
Immigration Caseworker	200,000	(200,496)	(496)
Trussell Trust	7,258	(7,264)	(6)
UK Power Networks	10,662	(10,753)	(91)
	525,242	(559,891)	(34,649)
TOTAL FUNDS	1,511,950	(1,464,176)	47,774

Comparatives for movement in funds

	At 1/4/23 £	Net movement in funds £	Transfers between funds £	At 31/3/24 £
Unrestricted funds				
General	466,477	201,838	(7,661)	660,654
Pension reserve	(110,331)	(12,338)	-	(122,669)
	356,146	189,500	(7,661)	537,985
Restricted funds				
Debt Free London	-	(303)	303	-
National Citizens Advice - Help To Claim	-	(7,330)	7,330	-
Trust For London - Legal Team	-	(2,895)	2,895	-
Royal Courts of Justice - Islington Crisis Management Project	-	2,867	(2,867)	-
	-	(7,661)	7,661	-
TOTAL FUNDS	356,146	181,839	-	537,985

**LEWISHAM CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAUX SERVICE
LIMITED**

**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS - continued
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025**

18. MOVEMENT IN FUNDS - continued

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

	Incoming resources £	Resources expended £	Movement in funds £
Unrestricted funds			
General	1,072,952	(871,114)	201,838
Pension reserve	-	(12,338)	(12,338)
	1,072,952	(883,452)	189,500
Restricted funds			
Debt Free London	238,642	(238,945)	(303)
National Citizens Advice - Help To Claim	488,782	(496,112)	(7,330)
Trust For London - Legal Team	35,714	(38,609)	(2,895)
Royal Courts of Justice - Islington Crisis Management Project	45,000	(42,133)	2,867
	808,138	(815,799)	(7,661)
TOTAL FUNDS	<u>1,881,090</u>	<u>(1,699,251)</u>	<u>181,839</u>

Where the cost of running a project exceeds its income resulting in a deficit, unless otherwise agreed with the funder, these deficits will be funded from unrestricted reserves.

Restricted Funds

Debt Free London - pan-London partnership project which receives funding from the government's Financial Inclusion Fund. This project enables an increased level of face to face debt service.

National Citizens Advice Help to Claim - This project offers end-to-end support to help people make a new Universal Credit Claim.

Trust For London Legal Team - Trust for London project supporting individuals with legal issues and providing access to specialist advice for disadvantaged residents.

Royal Court of Justice Islington Crisis Management Project - This project is between RCJ and Islington Citizens Advice Bureaux and CAL for the delivery of crisis prevention and specialist casework work for vulnerable Londoners and engaging in the delivery of training for community groups.

Immigration Caseworker - Grant between Lewisham Council and Citizens Advice Lewisham funding to provide support to people with an uncertain immigration status.

Trussell Trust - Agreement between Lewisham Foodbank and Citizens Advice Lewisham to work in partnership to have an outreach advisor in place to deliver financial inclusion advice at Lewisham Foodbank.

UK Power Networks - Agreement between Arun and Chichester Citizens Advice and Citizens Advice Lewisham as part of a consortium to deliver advice.

Unrestricted Funds

- London Borough of Lewisham - grant for core funding
- London Borough of Lewisham - contract for crisis funding
- London Borough of Lewisham - advice outreach delivery
- Lewisham and Southwark Age UK - contract for providing Winter Pressure advice
- Phoenix Community Housing Association contract for services
- We are Digital Limited (Pound Advice) contract for services
- Pension reserve - a designated reserve set aside to cover the liability for the obligation on the defined benefit scheme.

**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS - continued
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025**

19. EMPLOYEE BENEFIT OBLIGATIONS

Pension costs: The National Association of Citizens Advice Bureaux Pensions and Assurance Plan (1991)

The National Association of Citizens Advice Bureaux operates a defined benefit scheme ('the Plan') in the UK which provides both pensions in retirement and death benefits to members. Pension benefits are related to the members' final salaries at retirement and their length of service at the date they retired or left pensionable service. The Plan closed to future accrual on 31 March 2008. The Plan also contains some money purchase AVCs and protected rights funds, which are not included in these disclosures.

The Plan is a registered scheme under UK legislation. The Plan is subject to the scheme funding requirements outlined in UK legislation. The Plan is governed by the Plan's Trust Deed and Rules dated 4 April 2011. The Trustee is responsible for the operation and the governance of the Plan, including making decisions regarding the Plan's funding investment strategy (although they are required to consult the Principal Employer).

In accordance with the schedule of contributions agreed by the Principal Employer and Trustee in August 2023, the contributions to the Plan for the year ending 31 March 2025 have been £3,218,000, which includes £2,918,000 towards the deficit and £300,000 as an allowance for administration expenses and all scheme levies.

A full actuarial valuation of the Plan was carried out as at 31 March 2025 by a qualified independent actuary, based upon membership data as at 31 March 2022, allowing for assumed membership movements over the period from this date, and any material membership movements significantly different from those assumed (e.g. transfers out).

The most recent formal actuarial valuation of the Plan was as at 31 March 2022 and revealed a funding deficit of £53,536,000. In the recovery plan agreed following the valuation, the Principal Employer and other participating employers agreed to pay deficit reduction contributions of £2,918,000 per annum with the view to eliminating the deficit by 30 September 2040.

The liabilities of the Plan are based on the current value of expected benefit payment cashflows to members of the Plan over the next 60 or more years. The average duration of the liabilities is approximately 10 years. The Plan is exposed to actuarial risks such as market (investment) risk, interest rate risk, inflation risk, currency risk and longevity risk.

As the charity is unable to value its share of the multi-employer pension scheme assets and liabilities at the year end, the pension liability has been calculated based on the net present value of future contributions as noted above. The charity is making contributions of £10,500 to the pension scheme per year until September 2040.

	2025	2024
	£	£
Pension liability brought forward	122,669	110,331
Interest unwind	5,496	5,654
Movement in interest rate	(6,094)	(785)
Extended schedule of contributions	-	17,969
Payments against provision	(10,500)	(10,500)
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Pension liability carried forward	111,571	122,669
	<hr/>	<hr/>

Information relating to the National Association of Citizens advice Bureaux Pension and Assurance Plan (1991):

	Value at 31.3.2025 £000s	Value at 31.3.2024 £000s
Present value of funded obligations	96,535	107,082
Fair value of Plan assets	55,911	60,594
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Surplus/(deficit) in funded scheme	(40,624)	(46,448)
	<hr/>	<hr/>

**LEWISHAM CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAUX SERVICE
LIMITED**

**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS - continued
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025**

19. EMPLOYEE BENEFIT OBLIGATIONS - continued

The major assumptions used by the actuary were (in nominal terms) as follows:

	31.3.2025	31.3.2024
Discount rate	5.80%	4.90%
Inflation (RPI)	3.10%	3.20%
Inflation (CPI)	2.75%	2.80%
Revaluation of deferred pensions in excess of GMP	2.75%	2.80%
Pension in payment increases of:		
- CPI or 5% p.a. if less	2.70%	2.80%
- CPI inflation since retirement or 5% p.a. compound if less	2.70%	2.80%
- CPI or 3% p.a. if less	2.30%	2.50%
Commutation of pension for cash at retirement	75% of HMRC maximum	75% of HMRC maximum
	31.3.2025	31.3.2024
Assumed life expectancies on retirement at age 65 are:		
Retiring today - Males	20.6	20.6
Retiring today - Females	23.4	23.4
Retiring in 20 years time - Males	21.9	21.8
Retiring in 20 years time - Females	24.6	24.5

20. CONTINGENT LIABILITIES

Citizens Advice Lewisham has potential obligations in respect of pension entitlements for past and present staff arising under the Pensions Trust defined benefit pension scheme. It has been confirmed by the Pension Trust that Citizens Advice Lewisham's estimated debt on withdrawal at 30 September 2024 was £10,537. The charity has no plan to withdraw and therefore no provision has been made in relation to the contingent liability.

21. RELATED PARTY DISCLOSURES

There were no related party transactions for the year ended 31 March 2025.

22. LIMITED BY GUARANTEE

The charity is a private company limited by guarantee, without share capital.

The members of the company guarantee the sum of £10 whilst they remain members of the company and for one year thereafter, in accordance with the provisions of the Memorandum of Association.

The company is controlled by the members that include all of the trustees.