

Annual report and accounts

For the year ended 31 March 2025

VoiceAbility Advocacy: Charity number in England 1076630,

Charity number in Scotland SC050036, Company number 3798884.



Contents

Welcome from our Chair of Trustees	3
Welcome from our Chief Executive	4
Who we are	5
Why we're here	6
Our approach	7
What we do	8
Spotlight on Oliver McGowan training	9
Where we work	10
Delivering our 5 year strategy	12
Facing into challenges	13
What we achieved: 2019-2025	14
Spotlight on Advocacy in Scotland	15
Reflecting on 2024-2025	16
What we set out to do in 2024-2025	18
Spotlight on self-advocate Fahmina	20
Our next 5 year strategy	21
Built to last: VoiceAbility's strategy for change	22
Our commitment to progress over the next 12 months	23
Reference and administrative information	24
Governance structure and management	26
Financial review	31
Independent auditor's report to the members of VoiceAbility	34
Financial statement	38



Welcome from our Chair of Trustees

This is my first full year with VoiceAbility and it's been a busy one.

The challenges charities across the UK are facing through increased costs has been huge, with many having to reduce or cut services.

But thankfully, due to incredibly effective stewardship and forward thinking in financial management, VoiceAbility has a different story to tell.

We've been able to absorb these costs while growing our workforce and supporting more people across England and Scotland to be heard in decisions about their health, care and wellbeing.

This is some achievement, and I'm proud of how our teams have worked together with innovation and speed to make this a reality. A summary of these achievements, often involving the use of advancing technologies, are captured in this report.

Alongside this positive financial and operational picture, further stability has come through the appointment of Richard Jones as our new Chief Executive. Seeing Richard take up the role in September was a great delight.

Since then, the Board of Trustees has been meeting in person to work together on VoiceAbility's next 5-year strategy and set out our ambitions.

These are still centred around the belief that everyone should be able to live life to the full in the manner of their choosing, with a real focus at the end of this year's report on what these ambitions look out and the first steps we're taking to achieve them.

This starts with our own staff and volunteers, with a strengths-based approach to help everyone to give their best, and to build on their skills.

The trustees and leadership team have seen this first-hand through newly set up 'working groups', which bring together experts and support teams to have a clearer voice and greater influence over how things get done.

This approach is vital in supporting a vibrant and dynamic place to work, and has enabled trustees to better connect and engage with staff.

Times continue to be tough for so many, and I wish to thank everyone at VoiceAbility for their continued commitment, passion and expertise to make a positive difference in people's lives.

Ali Reid



Welcome from our Chief Executive

The past year has been big for VoiceAbility.

We've supported more people than ever before, we've delivered on a bold 5-year strategy, and we've built a financially stable model as we look ahead to an exciting future.

Significant investment from 2019-2025 has seen real, positive change for VoiceAbility; not just in what we set out to do, but how we did it. Thank you to everyone who has played their part in that.

In 2024-2025 we've continued to grow, supporting more people to be heard while still generating a surplus in funds.

The growth has been personal to me, too. 2024-2025 saw a controlled transition from my Chief Finance Officer role to Chief Executive, taking over from Jonathan Senker after many years' service. It's a privilege to lead this organisation.

The past year has also seen the strengthening of our leadership team, with the introduction of 3 new roles. Our new Director of Safeguarding ensures emphasis and focus in this essential area; our new Commercial Director recognises that while we are and always will be a purpose-driven organisation, we operate in a commercial environment; and our new Director of Innovation will help us navigate and maximise the opportunities available to us.

In this report we set out what we have achieved, and where we are heading.

Over the past year, we have:

- sharpened our sense of purpose
- named and owned the unique value that we bring as an organisation, through the outstanding work that our paid staff and volunteers do
- built on our operationally robust and financially sustainable platform
- through recognising the complex, uncertain world we operate in; prepare how to respond to its challenges and opportunities
- worked closely with our Board of Trustees to shape the next stage of our journey
- developed a bold new strategy with 3 clear areas of focus

2024-2025 marks a pivotal transition for VoiceAbility from one chapter to the next. While our purpose remains unchanged; to ensure everyone is able to live life to the full in the manner of their choosing, the path ahead demands renewed ambition.

Now, it's about **transforming our culture** so every member of our team feels empowered, valued and supported, to deliver their best for the people we support.

It's about **growing our impact** to reach more people, especially those who have been unseen and under-served.

It's about **changing the system**, so that the world in which we work, and our clients live, becomes more accessible and better equipped to support and respect their rights and choices.

Richard Jones

Who we are

We are VoiceAbility. We exist to ensure everyone's voice is heard and their rights are respected.

From community-based advocacy in the 1970s to becoming one of the UK's largest advocacy providers operating at a national level today, our work has always centred on ensuring that people have a voice, and that their voice matters.

The last 5 years have provided VoiceAbility with opportunities to embrace real and substantive change. We're facing into the future stronger, more resilient and more ambitious than ever.

We're able to respond quickly to internal and external challenges, work creatively, and deliver high-quality services, even in complex or tough environments. We've flourished under pressure, transforming our service delivery, adopting best practice and utilising innovation and technology to scale with consistency.

We've grown rapidly without compromising our values or quality, and continue to build the internal capability for agility and continuous improvement, through listening, taking action and investing for the future.

At our core, we believe everyone should be able to live life to the full in the manner of their choosing. Having your voice heard is not a privilege, it's a right.

However, many people experience obstacles and challenges to this being a reality.

That's where we come in, we build bridges across the gap.



Why we're here

We exist to support people to be heard in decisions about their health, care and wellbeing, especially when barriers like disability, mental health challenges or discrimination stand in the way.



Our aims

We believe everyone has a right to:

- be heard and respected
- have the same choice, control, and freedom as any other person
- be safe from violence, discrimination, harm or abuse



Our vision

Everyone has a voice which is heard and responded to. No-one has to face life-changing decisions alone.

This includes:

- delivering the best possible quality of support
- being the provider of choice for the services we offer
- being the source of authority for expert insight on voice and rights
- being the place to work or volunteer with, for anyone who shares our aim



Our values

Passionate.

We're dedicated to strengthening voice, supporting rights and changing lives.

Empowering.

We enable people to live life to the full.

Collaborative.

We listen and shape decisions with others.

Honest.

We work with integrity and we stick to our principles.

Resourceful.

We think ahead and find effective ways to achieve our mission.

Our approach

At VoiceAbility, our purpose drives everything we do. From how we work with clients, collaborate with partners and how we support our own people to thrive.

Client-centred

Across all our services, we are continually striving for a truly client-centred approach, amplifying the individual voices and lived experiences of the people we support, removing barriers where possible to help clients get what they need and ultimately, what they are entitled to.

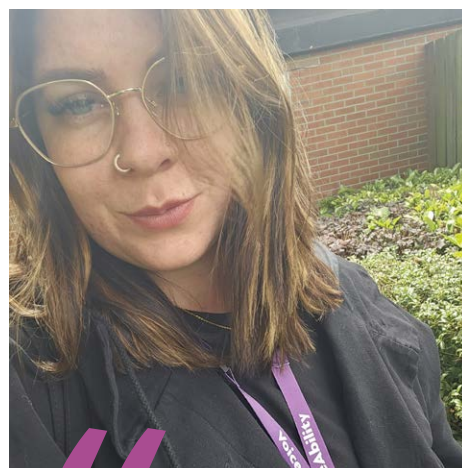
Deliver well

VoiceAbility is also committed to providing value for money alongside the safest, best practice delivery of service. Working in genuine partnership with commissioners, we're transforming contract management into a driver of insight, innovation and impact.

By capturing the right data at the right moment, building strong relationships, and working alongside local teams to understand real-world challenges, we offer recommendations that are informed, strategic and grounded in lived experience.

Every pound spent on advocacy should deliver more. More value. Better services. Stronger outcomes. And that's exactly what we're helping our partners achieve.

Whether we're re-imagining training or redesigning referral routes, we co-create what works and we do not settle for "good enough".



“

I have always wanted to be the person that I didn't have when I needed it and to be the person that others should have when they need it.

Advocate Lisa, whose own mental illness diagnosis has shaped her life and career – where she now specialises in statutory advocacy under the Mental Capacity Act and Mental Health Act.

What we do

Advocacy

Advocacy is at the heart of what we do at VoiceAbility. We provide free, independent advocacy across England and Scotland, ensuring children, young people and adults are involved in decisions that affect their lives.

We provide advocacy across a wide range of areas; including mental health, learning disability, benefits and healthcare complaints often under specific legislation.

Our team of advocates are skilled, specialist professionals who work with purpose, confidence and compassion to navigate often difficult and complex situations.

Whether we're helping to challenge a care decision, navigate a benefits tribunal, or raise concerns about treatment, our focus is always the same: helping people to be heard, understand their rights, and access the support they're entitled to.

Connections services

Through our Connections services, we create meaningful opportunities for people with lived experience to shape the support they receive and the systems they use.

We partner with local authorities, NHS trusts, care providers and national bodies to design and deliver bespoke projects that amplify the voices of people who could, should, or already do access services. By working together, we help shape those services to be more effective, accessible and inclusive.

Influencing policy

People's voices should shape not only their own care, but the systems and policies that affect their lives. At VoiceAbility, we remain committed to ensuring that the client voice reaches the heart of national decision-making.

Over the years, VoiceAbility has influenced significant policy reform, from access to advocacy in mental health settings to national safety investigations and disability payment reviews. This year, we built on that legacy.

Our **Use Your Power** campaign was showcased at the Labour Party Conference, calling on politicians to end long-term hospital detention for autistic people and people with a learning disability. We were commissioned by NHS England to produce a **lived experience report** on inpatient care for autistic people. We supported individuals to give direct **evidence to the Health Select Committee**, contributed to amendments to the **Mental Health Act**, and helped shape the independent **review of Adult Disability Payment** in Scotland.

At every opportunity, we use real stories, real data, and trusted relationships to influence.

Spotlight on...

Oliver McGowan training

Embedding person-centred and inclusive approaches is at the heart of everything we do, and in October 2024 we reached a significant milestone in our commitment to inclusivity and support for people with learning disabilities and autistic people when we were approved to deliver Tier 1 Oliver McGowan Mandatory Training.

We have since expanded our reach and are authorised to deliver Tier 2 training sessions and we now deliver both Tier 1 and Tier 2 training across England, working with organisations of all sizes to increase knowledge and understanding, build confidence and create change.

Why it's an important step for VoiceAbility

People with learning disabilities and autistic people continue to face preventable harm and exclusion, which ultimately lead to poorer outcomes. The training aims to save lives by ensuring the health and social care workforce have the right skills and knowledge to provide safe, compassionate and informed care to autistic people and people with a learning disability.

As we continue to invest in our capability to deliver Oliver McGowan training at scale, we're excited about the positive impact it will have both internally and among the broader community. This is a huge achievement for the team involved and moves us forward against our ongoing commitment to diversity, inclusion, and creating a supportive environment for all.

We continue to be trusted to deliver high-quality, high-impact partnerships that create real change, defining what services look like, how they're designed, governed and sustainable for the long term.



Where we work

Where we worked in Scotland in 2024-2025

We have included where our advocates are based currently but we service nationwide.

Aberdeen City
Aberdeenshire
Argyll and Bute
Ayrshire
Clackmannanshire
Dumfries and Galloway
Dunbartonshire
Dundee
Edinburgh
Falkirk
Fife
Forth Valley
Greater Glasgow and Clyde
Inverclyde
Highland
Kinross
Lothian and Borders
Morayshire
North and South Lanarkshire
Perth
Shetland
Stirling
Western Isles



8,484

cases opened

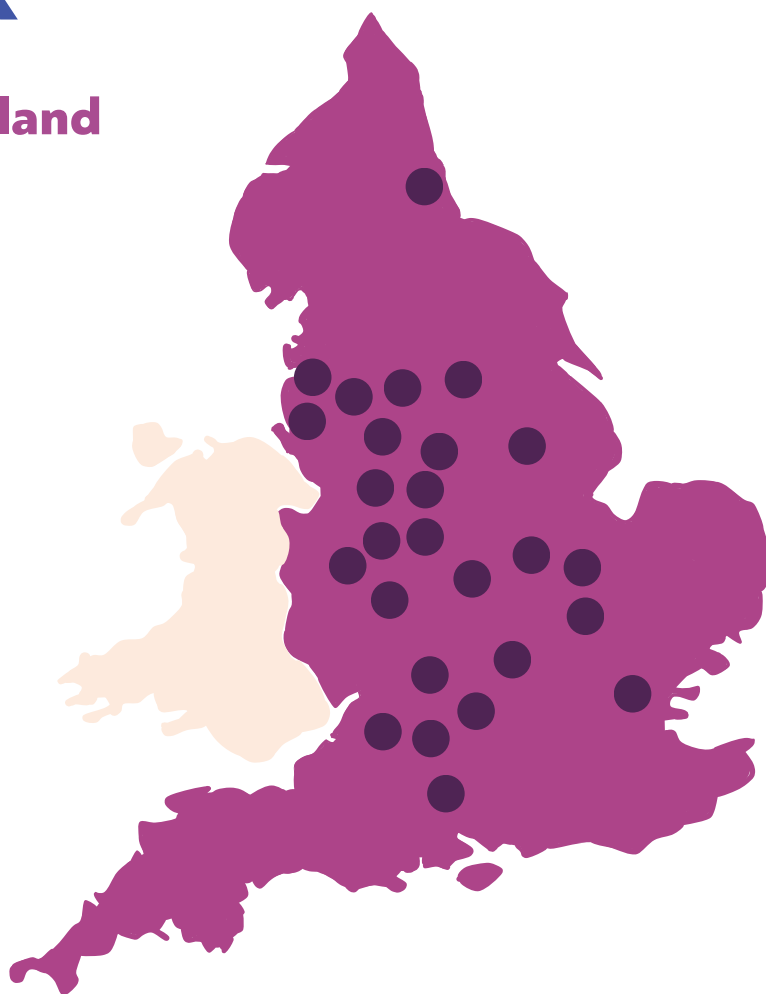
89%

increase in cases compared to last year due in part to stronger partnerships and more visibility of services

Where we work

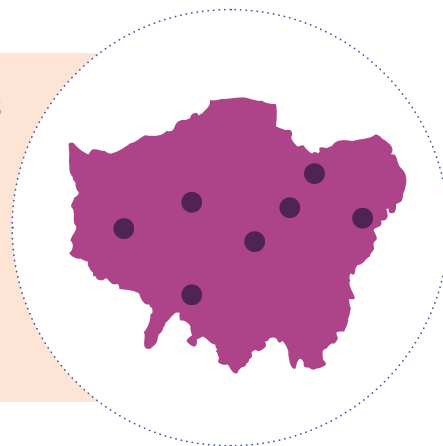
Where we worked in England in 2024-2025

Bedford / Central Bedfordshire
 Blackburn
 Bolton
 Bradford
 Cambridge
 Cheshire
 Coventry and Warwickshire
 Dudley
 East Riding of Yorkshire
 Essex
 Hampshire
 Lincolnshire
 Manchester
 North Northampton
 Oldham
 Oxfordshire
 Peterborough
 Preston (Guild Lodge setting only)
 Sefton
 Shropshire
 South Gloucestershire
 Sunderland
 Swindon
 Tameside
 Telford and Wrekin
 Wakefield
 Wiltshire
 Wolverhampton



London boroughs

Camden
 Ealing
 Merton
 Newham
 Redbridge
 Thurrock



35,393
 cases opened

10%

**increase in cases
 compared to last year**

Delivering our **5** year strategy



The past 5 years have been a time of bold ambition and real change for VoiceAbility, not just in what we set out to do, but how we did it.

In 2019, we launched a strategy to grow, professionalise and embed the client journey at the heart of everything we do. It was a decisive plan to reshape who we were and how we worked, focused around 5 pillars:

**Diversify
services**

**Value
our
people**

**Build
the
basics**

**Drive
quality**

**Lead the
market
and grow
authority**



“

As this period comes to an end, we want to take a moment to reflect and celebrate the substantial progress and impact VoiceAbility has made both internally and externally.

Sam Breckell, Chief Operating Officer

Facing into challenges

While the last 5 years have seen significant progress, it's not been without significant challenges.

What we could not have predicted was the extraordinary context that followed: a global pandemic, a political and economic reset, and seismic shifts in the way public services operate.

Like many in our sector, we've seen increasing demand for our services, with more complexity of need; particularly around mental health, autism and learning disabilities. This, combined with funding pressures, cuts and increased costs, continues to create a challenging backdrop in which to provide vital services.

There's been a continuously shifting and often uncertain political landscape, with the first 2 years of the strategy dominated by the unprecedented challenge of the COVID-19 pandemic.



We closed our final office just before the first lockdown, not out of necessity, but as part of our plan to deliver better value for clients. We had already invested in remote tech and home-based working, which meant we were ready when it mattered most. While others were furloughing staff, we were front-loading improvements, handing iPads through windows, sourcing protective gear, and continuing to be there for people whose voices might otherwise have been lost.

We challenged unfair discharges from hospitals, held local authorities to account when statutory protections were suspended, and kept advocacy active when the risks were greatest and the stakes were highest.

At the same time, we grew. We expanded our reach across England and Scotland, won new contracts, and launched innovative services. We introduced Connections services, delivered national benefits advocacy, became accredited providers of Oliver McGowan training, and built our own practitioner-led quality framework – setting a new standard for advocacy delivery.

As this strategic period ends, the scale of what's been achieved is clear. In the most difficult of circumstances, we did not just deliver; we transformed. **And we did it with purpose, clarity, and authenticity.**

What we achieved: 2019-2025

Diversify services

We have expanded our geographic reach and service offering across both England and Scotland, enabling us to support tens of thousands more people each year. By utilising the skills and experience we have, we've successfully 'diversified our services'; launching Connections services to shape and run involvement and participation projects, embedding Experts by Experience, delivering benefits advocacy as a national service in Scotland, and becoming accredited to deliver Oliver McGowan training.

Drive quality

In 2019 we committed to 'drive quality'. In response to this challenge, we have bolstered our Outcomes Framework and reporting access, meaning we can robustly and confidently evidence our impact through data and facilitate continuous improvement. We're equipping commissioners, local authorities, devolved and national government with the insight needed to better understand people's needs and requirements, and make meaningful change.

Build the basics

Internally, we invested time and resource over the last 5 years into 'building the basics'. This includes launching a national advocacy helpline, building our central referrals system, introducing standardised case management tools, and aligning our service delivery under a single national model to ensure consistent, high quality and person-centred practice across all of our contracts.

Value our people

We have continued to invest in our people over the last 5 years, with specific focus on scaling our fantastic volunteer network. Their dedication has created strong connections within communities, amplifying the voices of those who are seldom heard. We are especially proud that 6 of our volunteers have gone on to become permanent members of staff, reflecting the powerful impact of volunteering as a pathway to personal and professional growth.

Lead the market and grow authority

We have taken a leadership role in influencing national policy, securing vital wins such as opt-out advocacy in Mental Health Act reform, and leading the call for improved advocacy for people with learning disabilities and autistic people.



Spotlight on...

Advocacy in Scotland

From a standing start, we have driven the development of a new national advocacy service so that over 10 times more disabled people across Scotland were supported in 2024 than in our launch year of 2022.

Commissioned by the Scottish Government and delivered by us, our independent service supports disabled people across the country to access Social Security Scotland benefits and is unique in a UK context.

If you identify as disabled in Scotland, our independent advocacy service provides free 1-1 support to access benefits from Social Security Scotland and is available from the moment anyone wants to start a benefits application. This support is also available to parents, guardians or carers accessing benefits for a disabled child.

In the 3 years from launch to the end of 2024, our advocacy service has received 11,385 referrals, leading to over 9,878 advocacy cases. In total, the service has supported 8,704 disabled people in Scotland (we have supported 1,174 disabled people with more than 1 case).

Much of that growth is attributable to the strong partnerships VoiceAbility has created with a wide range of community and statutory organisations in localities across Scotland. We have also successfully developed and trained a new workforce in Scotland, ensuring our service is accessible nationwide, from major cities to the Highlands and Islands.

That growth is predicted to continue during 2025, as more benefits are devolved to Scotland including the new Pension Age Disability Payment. This brings new groups of people to serve, demanding new partnerships and ways of working.

“

Paul, who's profoundly deaf, “didn't know who to turn to for help” for benefits support for himself and his son after Paul's father sadly passed away.

“Luckily, I came across VoiceAbility and had a 1-to-1 appointment with [my advocate] Lynn at home. I opened up and went through all the problems that I've had, the disabilities that I have and spoke about my son who's disabled as well. I got some help and information to move things forward.

“It's taken me 53 years to get benefits support, which I should have had from birth. I cannot thank VoiceAbility enough for what they've done for me and my son.”



Reflecting on 2024-2025

2024-2025 was a deliberate and decisive transition year. It marked a turning point that ensured VoiceAbility is well positioned for the future.

We moved from 2 years of planned investment from reserves into a financially sustainable model, generating a surplus while continuing to improve our services. With stabilised leadership through the appointment of our new Chief Executive, Richard Jones, and continued guidance from our Board of Trustees, we delivered confident, values-led growth.

We embedded cultural transformation, strengthened our operating model, and delivered steady, strategic improvements across teams, systems and services.

Since launching our volunteer programme in April 2021, we've created rewarding and inspiring opportunities for community members to get involved in our work. This was a continued focus in 2024-2025 as we expanded our volunteer network and deepened our engagement across communities.

Our 154 volunteers (and growing) are now supporting communities in 23 areas of England and Scotland, working in an impressive 11 different roles. Over the last 12 months we've created 7 distinct volunteer roles to offer diverse opportunities for involvement, implemented a new recruitment system, streamlining the process for prospective volunteers and enhanced our use of customer relationship management tool Salesforce to record volunteer hours and contributions across casework and non-casework, allowing us to better understand and celebrate the impact of our volunteers.

VoiceAbility has continued to deliver our mission despite the many external

challenges over the last 12 months. This includes ongoing financial pressures in public service funding, policy delays with Liberty Protection Safeguards, further political change and preparing for rising National Insurance costs.

Safeguarding progress

Safeguarding at VoiceAbility has undergone a transformative shift in 2024-2025, following a comprehensive audit. Moving beyond compliance, we have entered a phase of strategic implementation.

A new Director of Safeguarding was appointed to lead structural and cultural change, supported by the creation of a unified Safeguarding and Quality Assurance department and a cross-organisational Safeguarding Support and Protection group.



In December, 4 people who work with VoiceAbility shared their experiences of disability as part of an inquiry into the UK government's new 10-Year Health Plan for the NHS.

“What an amazing opportunity for people with lived experience to take their personal stories in their own words and in person to the heart of government. Well done to all and to VoiceAbility colleagues for facilitating.”

Toni Bawden, Commissioning Manager for Learning Disabilities and Autism at Cambridgeshire County Council.

Our year in numbers

In 2024-2025, we supported:

38,994
adults



4,883
children and
young people



Marking a

24%

increase in cases from
the previous year

This reflects the growing need, and the trust placed in us across the communities we serve.

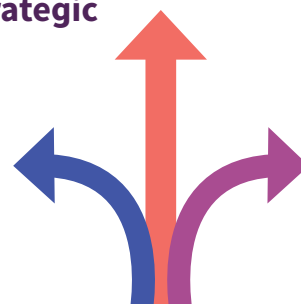


**Our growing
team of
664**

is made up primarily of **professional advocates and volunteers**, who bring **deep sector knowledge**, many with lived experience in health, care, disability rights and mental health. Their dedication and expertise ensure that people are supported effectively and compassionately every day.

We are governed by a Board of Trustees who bring diverse professional and lived experience.

They guide our **strategic direction**, ensure accountability, and uphold our mission and values.



What we set out to do in 2024-2025

Diversify services

What we said we'd do:

- improve outcomes for more people using a range of advocacy skills
- empower communities and the next generation of advocates
- extend our independent advocacy reach
- develop meaningful, reportable impact measurements
- create new tech and communication channels to support voice and rights

What we did:

- delivered national benefits advocacy in Scotland, expanding non-statutory reach
- scaled Connections services and created 7 new volunteer roles to support local communities
- increased involvement projects co-produced with people who use services
- began implementation of improved reporting and impact tracking via Salesforce and case management systems
- invested in digital platforms and comms to improve accessibility of rights-based information

Lead the market and grow authority

What we said we'd do:

- produce a new organisational strategy to 2030
- improve data collection and reporting
- acknowledge and reduce environmental impact
- strengthen our national and local influencing work

What we did:

- developed and prepared for launch our new 2025-2030 strategy
- continued improvements in data reporting and commissioner dashboards
- advocated for change through our Use Your Power campaign, calling for an end to long-term detention of people with a learning disability and autistic people
- facilitated lived experience input into NHS strategy and government reform consultations
- delivered Tier 1 and Tier 2 Oliver McGowan training nationally

Build the basics

What we said we'd do:

- continuously improve standards and processes using technology
- develop internal and external data analysis capabilities
- build a culture of learning and improvement in our operating model

What we did:

- embedded a more consistent operating model across services
- improved referral systems, case recording tools, and introduced tech-enabled volunteer tracking via Salesforce
- strengthened our data collection infrastructure to support real-time insight
- transitioned from 2 years of planned investment-funded deficit to a year-end surplus, while maintaining quality delivery

Drive quality

What we said we'd do:

- improve how we evidence outcomes and raise standards
- develop a strategy to increase involvement and co-production
- create a 3-year strategy to improve safeguarding through research and innovation

What we did:

- embedded our practitioner-led Quality Assurance Framework across operational teams
- increased involvement and co-production in Connections services and through campaign work
- strengthened use of outcomes data to evidence impact and support improvement
- took first steps in shaping a longer-term safeguarding improvement plan, including voice-led insights

Value our people

What we said we'd do:

- develop a new people strategy
- build on our CliftonStrengths model to support cultural transformation
- set out plans to eliminate race, gender and disability pay gaps
- improve our rewards strategy

What we did:

- strengthened supervision and development for staff, especially frontline teams
- continued embedding CliftonStrengths in team practice and leadership development
- expanded our volunteer programme to 154+ active contributors across 23 areas, using a new recruitment process and management tool to manage relationships
- continued internal equity work through the EEDI strategy rollout and practice review

Spotlight on...

Self-advocate Fahmina

Fahmina was looking for advocacy support, but learned she could become a self-advocate herself.

Here Fahmina tells her self-advocacy story, which started with a conversation with a VoiceAbility team leader in December 2022 and now sees her chairing working groups for the Hampshire Learning Disability Partnership and speaking at high-profile learning disability events.



More about me

I'm Fahmina, I live in Hampshire and have a learning disability. I like going to Mencap and the Friday Network with Speakeasy Advocacy, and when I'm at home I like watching TV and playing board games. I live independently with my partner Mehdi, who I married in 2023.

My story

I contacted social services after first moving to Hampshire because I was in search of an advocate. After social services said that I wasn't entitled to an advocate, they referred me to VoiceAbility because I was interested in advocacy.

Making a difference

I decided that I would attend 2 working groups – the adult social care working group and the health and wellbeing working group.

I am finding out lots of good information that is really helpful to me, but also giving back my ideas to the working groups.

I find this very important, because I know that I am speaking on behalf of people that also have learning disabilities and that have no voice in Hampshire.

We know how we would like to be supported and to make things better, like all the information that we have provided to the website that we have been designing.

“

Since becoming a self-advocate, I have grown in confidence and use my voice to help others.

“I have now chaired an adult social care working group meeting, attended Hampshire Learning Disability Partnership meetings and spoken at Learning Disability Network London event during Learning Disability Week.”



Our next 5 year strategy



We are proud of who we are, and how far we've come, but we know the world around us is becoming even more challenging for the people we support.

We have spent the last 5 years transforming ourselves, culturally, structurally and operationally. We're here not just to survive, but to lead. Through investment, resilience and a relentless focus on client voice, we've built firm foundations. Now, while others are retreating, reducing quality or folding altogether, we are stepping forward.

Our 2025 to 2030 strategy sets a clear course, with 3 areas of focus. Each year will build on the last, from strong foundations in 2025 to scaled, transformational impact by 2030.

**Transform
our
culture**

**Grow
our
impact**

**Change
the
system**

We're not just here to do more of the same.
We're here to grow, not by asking for more, but by doing what truly matters.

We will listen carefully, partner differently and act boldly
to meet real needs in a fast-changing world.

VoiceAbility is built for this.

Built to last: VoiceAbility's strategy for change

Transforming our culture

Create a values-led, inclusive and high-performing environment that supports our people to do their best work.

By 2030 we'll have a culture where all our staff:

- can bring their whole selves to work, without needing to change, hide or over-perform to belong
- are equally valued and consistently recognised for their contribution, whatever their role
- are clear about their accountabilities, confident in their work, and trusts others to do the same

Growing our impact

Expand and improve what we do in advocacy, co-production and influence so we reach more people with greater effect. **By 2030 we will:**

- have an agreed, accepted and co-produced method for defining, measuring and monitoring impact that is recognised across the sector and underpins public trust in advocacy
- be operating with demonstrably increased levels of impact, both in terms of outcomes for individuals and influence on systems
- be positively supporting significantly more people every year, while maintaining or improving the quality of outcomes we achieve

Changing the system

Use insight, data and voice to push for change where it matters most, from care homes to cabinet meetings alone.

By 2030 we will:

- be actively supporting client-led, place-based advocacy services across the UK, enabling more responsive and context-specific support
- have led the creation of an independent professional body that raises the profile of advocacy, drives standards, and is working toward sector regulation to ensure trust, consistency and public accountability
- have contributed to a significant uplift in advocate salary levels across the sector; recognising advocacy as a professional, skilled and essential career
- be deploying cutting-edge innovation across the organisation, freeing up advocates to focus on critical thinking, rights-based action and person-led practice

Our commitment to progress over the next 12 months

Transforming our culture

What we'll do in 2025-2026:

- launch our Gallup Leadership Programme, including CliftonStrengths assessments and strengths-based development for all people managers
- embed a 'hothouse' approach to accelerate transformation, boost engagement and build a resilient, connected workforce
- create clear career pathways and retention strategies, making VoiceAbility a place where people can grow and thrive
- roll out structured feedback systems and role clarity, helping build trust, transparency and psychological safety at every level

Growing our impact

What we'll do in 2025-2026:

- design a co-produced, evidence-based framework for defining, measuring and reporting our impact, beginning the pathway to defining sector standards
- begin scoping for an independent quality and practice institute, aligned with our goal of setting a new bar for professional advocacy standards and supporting sector-wide improvement
- strengthen the use of outcomes data in our services, refining how we track, evidence and learn from client experiences
- embed impact and quality themes into internal governance through operational plans, performance reporting, and the Quality & Performance Committee
- prepare to scale service delivery without compromising quality, through investment in training, digital tools and streamlined processes

Changing the system

What we'll do in 2025-2026:

- strengthen our policy and influence work, amplifying the voice of people we support at both national and local levels through campaigns, lived experience involvement and direct engagement with decision-makers
- pilot regional models of place-based service design, working with commissioners and communities to reshape services around client needs
- lay the foundation for an independent professional body, bringing together individuals and organisations in a shared commitment to standards, credibility and sector-wide leadership
- review workforce data and pay structures, using this insight to begin closing gaps and prepare the ground for long-term salary improvement
- invest in scalable innovation, identifying where technology can streamline operational activity and free up advocates for more complex, high-impact work

Reference and administrative information

Trustees

Alison Reid – Chair / Investment Committee Member

Susan Brown – Safeguarding Governance Committee Chair (resigned 28/01/25)

Andrew Weston – Safeguarding Governance Committee Member (resigned 27/03/25)

Matthew Smith – Audit and Risk Committee Member / Remuneration Committee Member

James Alistair Schofield – Audit and Risk Committee Chair

Viral Shah – Audit and Risk Committee Member

Gavin Sumner – Safeguarding Governance Committee Member (resigned 27/03/25)

Izaro Arbelaiz-Teresa

Anthony Osijo – Audit and Risk Committee Member / Remuneration Committee Member

Mahua Nandi – Safeguarding Governance Committee Member

Fiona Beyer – Safeguarding Governance Committee Member

Liam Cunningham – Safeguarding Governance Committee Chair

Ria Davies – Remuneration Committee Member

Elizabeth Debnam – Audit and Risk Committee Member / Remuneration Committee Chair



Secretary

Richard Jones (resigned 02/09/24)

Kerry Duke (appointed 02/09/24 / resigned 09/06/25)

Kirsty Farrand (appointed 09/06/25)

Chief Executive Officer

Jonathan Senker (resigned 02/09/24)

Richard Jones (appointed 02/09/24)

Registered Office

c/o Sayer Vincent

110 Golden Lane

London, EC1Y 0TG

Incorporated in United Kingdom, Company Number

03798884 Registered in England and Wales, Charity Number

1076630 Registered in Scotland, Charity Number SC050036

Auditors

Sayer Vincent LLP

110 Golden Lane

London, EC1Y 0TG

Bankers

National Westminster Bank Plc

21 Petty Cury

Cambridge, CB2 3NE

Solicitors

Radar Limited

6 Beacon Way

Hull, HU3 4AE

Anthony Collins Solicitors LLP

134 Edmund Street

Birmingham, B3 2ES

Governance structure and management

Governing document

The organisation is a charitable company limited by guarantee, incorporated on 30th June 1999 and registered as a charity on 19th July 1999. The Company was established under a Memorandum of Association which established the objects and powers of the Company. It is governed by its Articles of Association which, following changes introduced by the Companies Act 2006, now also contain its objects and powers. The trustees present their report (including the strategic report) and audited financial statements for the year ended date. Reference and administrative information set out on page 24 forms part of this report. In the event of the company being wound up members are required to contribute an amount not exceeding £1.

The financial statements comply with current statutory requirements, the memorandum and articles of association and the Statement of Recommended Practice — Accounting and Reporting by Charities: SORP applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with FRS 102. This trustees' annual report includes a directors' report as required by company law.

Appointment of trustees

As set out in the Articles of Association, members of the Board of Trustees must be appointed by an ordinary resolution passed at a properly convened meeting of the trustees and must be appointed for a term of 3 years. On ceasing to be a trustee a person may be reappointed provided that no one may serve as a trustee for more than a maximum of 3 consecutive terms, after which they must cease to be a trustee for at least 12 months before they are eligible to be reappointed.

The Board members bring insight from their own lived experience of disability, understanding of the charity's social mission, and business and commercial skills. The range of experience is kept under review and in the event of any shortfalls, new trustees are sought to fill the gaps.

Trustee induction and training

New trustees undergo a period of induction to brief them on the values, direction and work of VoiceAbility, their legal obligations under charity and company law and good practice duties, the contents of the Articles of Association, the Board and decision-making processes, the business plan and recent financial performance of the charity. During the induction they view our services and meet with key employees and other trustees. Trustees are encouraged to participate in external and internally-run training and development where this will facilitate the undertaking of their role.

Organisational structure

The Board of Trustees administers the charity. The Board meets once per quarter with additional meetings when required to deal with issues of strategy in more depth. VoiceAbility also has within its constitution a number of Board sub-committees.

Audit and Risk Committee

Audit and Risk Committee members meet once per quarter in advance of the Board meetings to review and discuss matters such as management and statutory accounts, risk and governance.

Safeguarding Committee

The purpose of the Safeguarding Committee is to ensure quality safeguarding practices and approaches are developed and implemented, and to support the charity in discharging its statutory and good practice duties and responsibilities both as an employer and a provider in relation to safeguarding.

Remuneration Committee

The purpose of the remuneration committee is to ensure leadership succession planning and appraise organisational pay and benefit policies, ensuring pay equality. The committee was formed in 2024-25.

Day-to-day responsibility

The trustees have delegated the day-to-day responsibility for the provision of services to the Chief Executive Officer. The Chief Executive Officer is responsible for recommending strategy to the Board, for the management of its external profile and influencing work, ensuring that the charity delivers the services in line with its mission and requirements and ensuring that key performance indicators are met across the range of social and business objectives. The Chief Executive Officer leads an executive leadership team whose members are the executive managers of the charity.

Risk management

The principal risks and uncertainties facing the organisation are centred around 5 key areas:

- **safeguarding** – we fail to adequately protect staff, volunteers or vulnerable people from harm or abuse
- **impact** – the desired impact of activities is not delivered or cannot be adequately evidenced

- **financial sustainability** – our ability to continue to make an impact in the medium to long term is threatened
- **compliance** – the organisation fails to meet regulatory, legal or contract compliance requirements or expectations
- **reputation** – we do not respond effectively to any incident that could result in damage to VoiceAbility's reputation

The steps to manage these risks are set out below.

The trustees are responsible for setting the tone and influencing the culture of risk management within VoiceAbility.

The executive leadership team have established a risk register, identifying the types of risks faced and prioritising them in terms of potential impact and likelihood of occurrence. Having due regard to the strength of the current internal controls and procedures already in place, a series of mitigating actions have been identified to appropriately address these risks.

The executive leadership team, the Audit and Risk Committee, and the Board of Trustees periodically review the risks and the risk management strategies to ensure they continue to meet the needs of the organisation.

Public benefit

We have referred to the guidance in the Charity Commission's general guidance on public benefit when reviewing our aims and objectives and in planning our future activities. In particular, the trustees consider how planned activities will contribute to the aims and objectives they have set.

Directors' liabilities

There are no specific provisions relating specifically to directors' liabilities to report.

There are no qualifying third-party indemnity provisions which are the direct responsibility of the charity.

There are no qualifying pension scheme indemnity provisions, due to the charity operating a Defined Contribution scheme.

Fundraising

We're not a fundraising charity, with our income deriving primarily from local government, NHS and central government contracts. We do not solicit donations, but do receive them from time to time and do approach grant-giving bodies. We're therefore registered with the fundraising regulator and follow their guidance. There were no issues of compliance with the guidance of the fundraising regulator. We received no complaints about fundraising activities carried out by the charity (2023-24: none). VoiceAbility does not use any professional fundraisers and no fundraising is undertaken on our behalf by third parties.

Disabled employees

We recognise the importance and benefits of having disabled people involved in and leading the organisation's work at every level including in governance roles, as employees and as volunteers. In relation to employment, the expertise in various aspects of our work which disabled people bring is valued strongly. Disabled applicants who meet the minimum essential criteria for posts are guaranteed interviews and we encourage applicants to identify any adjustments which are needed to ensure that they can participate equally in selection processes. Training has been provided to managers on equality and employment, including specifically on disability equality.

The organisation has a full policy on diversity and employment, which underlines our approach to exceed legal requirements in relation to diversity as we recognise the importance and value to the organisation and to people using our services of a workforce which is diverse in relation to all protected characteristics, including disability. We're continuing to work to improve the experience of and contribution by all employees, including disabled employees and are recognised as a Disability Confident employer. We have paid posts which specifically require personal insights that come from having a learning disability, particularly Expert by Experience posts and our Speak Out leaders. Additionally, we have roles of peer mentors and peer supporters which have provided work skills and therefore routes into employment for people who have used long-term mental health and substance use services.

Employee involvement

VoiceAbility's trustees and directors recognise employee engagement to be one of the most powerful drivers of organisational performance and of our success in enabling people who use our services to achieve their outcomes. It is central to our strategy, as outlined in this report.

The following are among the measures which we take to promote effective employee involvement and engagement, as well as to ensure that colleagues throughout the organisation are well-informed:

- cross sectional employee groups, who help to develop critical organisational policies and practices ranging from our pay policy and salary benchmarking to our approach to learning and development
- working groups, that bring together key personnel from across the organisation based on their expertise and strength, focusing on problem-solving, anticipating challenges, and driving continuous improvement. Working groups include People, Safeguarding, Finance and Performance, Commercial and Innovation
- a national forum, with the purpose of encouraging staff participation, and nurturing accountability to develop and implement strategies that ensure a culture of belonging is embedded throughout VoiceAbility
- a health, safety and wellbeing forum. The purpose of the forum is to represent, discuss and review how we keep everyone physically safe and mentally healthy at work
- an equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) forum. The EDI forum brings together colleagues across the organisation with interest and experience in a wide variety of EDI issues such as ethnicity, cultural awareness, LGBTQ+ equality, domestic violence, veteran's issues, neurodiversity and more

- a carers staff forum, to provide a supportive space where carers can share their experiences, highlight the realities they face, and work together to explore potential ways forward
- a disability, long term health conditions and differently abled staff forum, to raise awareness and understanding of disability throughout VoiceAbility. To promote peer to peer support, and a culture of shared values and belonging for those that identify as having a disability, are differently abled, or have a long-term health condition
- a menopause staff forum, mostly comprised of those with lived experience although allies are present and welcome. Its aim is to have a consistent profile within VoiceAbility as an organisation, and to be reachable by those that need support around the menopause and a safe space to talk about how they're feeling
- a neurodivergent staff forum, to increase awareness, education, and understanding of both neurodivergence and neurodiversity throughout VoiceAbility. And provide and encourage peer-to-peer support and celebrate/harness difference

Pay policy

VoiceAbility operates an objective outcome pay policy. Staff are placed within bandings dependent on skillset and experience and, upon successful completion of agreed annual objectives, have the opportunity to progress in the banding by way of incremental 'spine points'. Regular supervisions and appraisals ensure that pay progression is measurable within a band, ensuring greater transparency and understanding of pay-related decisions. Although the executive leadership team are covered by the banding pay, ultimately decisions regarding the remuneration of these roles, and that of the Chief Executive Officer, are made by the Board.

Financial review

Overview

The Trustees are delighted to report that the Charity delivered a surplus of £488,785, despite the challenging economic climate.

2024-25 saw another year of significant growth, generating a total income of £15,894,583 – a 18% increase on prior year (2023-2024: £13,503,953).

Despite significant growth, total expenditure increased only 3% on last year to £15,400,679 (2023-24: £14,913,705), demonstrating the benefits and efficiencies from the planned strategic investment in fit-for-purpose structures, systems, processes and equipment over the last five year strategy, and the Charity's ability to sustainably scale.

Having generated deficits the last two years due to planned strategic investment funded from reserves, the return to a surplus generating model with reserves replenished to policy compliant levels provides a financially stable platform on which the 2025-30 strategy can be driven forward.

Cash and cash equivalents held at the end of the year was £969,833 (2023-24: £61,370).

Reserves

The unrestricted reserves are those funds that are available to be used on the charitable objects, to be spent as the trustees see fit.

The trustees hold unrestricted reserves as either general reserves or designated reserves. General reserves are there to support the day-to-day operations of the organisation and to ensure that VoiceAbility can meet its future financial obligations. Designated reserves are held as unrestricted funds that have been earmarked for a particular purpose by the trustees.

The fixed assets replacement designated fund, which is in place to ensure that VoiceAbility has fit-for-purpose equipment and systems on a long-term basis, has been reassessed and now stands at £280,000. Laptop and mobile phone purchases are recorded against the designated fund and, upon review of the charity's equipment requirements, transfers are then made from general funds to ensure the correct level of funds have been designated.

The remaining £382,583 is the balance of the tangible fixed assets which are not liquid and therefore removed from the undesignated, unrestricted reserves in the interest of prudence when calculating our reserve cover requirements.

VoiceAbility adopts a risk-based approach to determine the value of general reserves necessary to meet its future financial obligations, taking into account the reliability of income streams and the extent to which expenditure is committed, as well as the major risks to which the charity is exposed.

To inform decision-making over the value of general reserves required in any one year, VoiceAbility places a financial value on facing the key unmitigated risks identified in the risk register.

The approach used is to aggregate the assessed financial impact of the key unmitigated risks identified in the VoiceAbility risk register and assume that these risks occur either concurrently or sequentially over a timeframe that does not allow recovery between events. The quantification of those risks is assessed by the executive leadership team and validated by the Audit and Risk Committee alongside the annual review of the risk register.

Based on the outcome, the Audit and Risk Committee will make recommendations to the Board of Trustees on the required value of the general reserves for each financial year as part of the approval of the annual budget. The level of general reserves required at 31 March 2025 is £1,000,000.

The total reserves carried forward as at 31 March 2025 stand at £2,089,470, of which £1,426,887 is held as free reserves, excluding fixed assets and designated funds (2023-24: £888,829).

Investments and bank accounts

VoiceAbility's Investment Committee manages its investment portfolio with the support of management company CCLA. In 2024-25, the charity sold units with disposal proceeds totalling £250,000. The performance of the portfolio in 2024-25 generated an unrealised loss of £5,119 (2023-24: gain £58,300).

Events since the balance sheet date

There are no significant post-balance sheet events to note.

Going concern

The trustees have assessed whether the use of the going concern basis is appropriate and have considered possible events or conditions that might cast significant doubt on the ability of the charity to continue as a going concern. The trustees have made this assessment for a period of at least 1 year from the date of approval of the financial statements. The trustees and the executive leadership team have reviewed all budgets and expected income and expenditure projections and have concluded that, together with the reserves established to help in such circumstances, there is a reasonable expectation that the charity has adequate resources to continue in operational existence for the foreseeable future. The charity, therefore, continues to adopt the going concern basis in preparing its financial statements.

Statement of trustees' responsibilities

Company law requires the trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charitable company and of the incoming resources and application of resources, including the income and expenditure, of the charitable company for that period.

In preparing those financial statements, the trustees are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and 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 charity will continue to operate
- state whether applicable UK accounting standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements

The trustees are responsible for keeping adequate accounting records that disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charity and to enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 2006.

They are responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charity and hence taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities. The trustees are responsible for the maintenance and integrity of the corporate and financial information included on the charitable company's website. Legislation in the United Kingdom governing the preparation and dissemination of financial statements may differ from legislation in other jurisdictions.

Disclosure of information to the auditors

So far as each person who was a director at the date of approving this report is aware, there is no relevant audit information, being information needed by the auditor in connection with preparing its report, of which the auditor is unaware. Having made enquiries of fellow directors and the charity's auditor, each director has taken all the steps that they are obliged to take as a director in order to make themselves aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the auditor is aware of that information.

This report along with the financial statements was approved by the trustees on:
and signed on their behalf by:

James Alistair Schofield – Audit and Risk Committee Chair

17 July 2025

Independent auditor's report to the members of VoiceAbility

Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of VoiceAbility (the 'charitable company') for the year ended 31 March 2025 which comprise the statement of financial activities, balance sheet, statement of cash flows and notes to the financial statements, including significant accounting policies. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards, including FRS 102 The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

In our opinion, the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the state of the charitable company's affairs as at 31 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
- have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006, the Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005 and regulation 8 of the Charities Accounts (Scotland) Regulations 2006 (as amended)

Basis for opinion

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

Conclusions relating to going concern

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

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

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

Other information

The other information comprises the information included in the trustees' annual report, including the strategic report, other than the financial statements and our auditor's report thereon. The trustees are responsible for the other information contained within the annual report. Our opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and, except to the extent otherwise explicitly stated in our report, we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon. Our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements or our knowledge obtained in the course of the audit, or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If we identify such material inconsistencies or apparent material misstatements, we are required to determine whether this gives rise to a material misstatement in the financial statements themselves. If, based on the work we have performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, we are required to report that fact.

We have nothing to report in this regard.

Opinions on other matters prescribed by the Companies Act 2006

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

- the information given in the trustees' annual report, including the strategic report, for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements; and
- the trustees' annual report, including the strategic report, has been prepared in accordance with applicable legal requirements

Matters on which we are required to report by exception

In the light of the knowledge and understanding of the charitable company and its environment obtained in the course of the audit, we have not identified material misstatements in the trustees' annual report, including the strategic report.

We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters in relation to which the Companies Act 2006 and the Charities Accounts (Scotland) Regulations 2006 (as amended) require 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

Responsibilities of trustees

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

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

Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

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

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

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

Capability of the audit in detecting irregularities

In identifying and assessing risks of material misstatement in respect of irregularities, including fraud and non-compliance with laws and regulations, our procedures included the following:

- we enquired of management and trustees, which included obtaining and reviewing supporting documentation, concerning the charity's 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 related to fraud or non-compliance with laws and regulations
- we inspected the minutes of meetings of those charged with governance
- we obtained an understanding of the legal and regulatory framework that the charity operates in, focusing on those laws and regulations that had a material effect on the

financial statements or that had a fundamental effect on the operations of the charity from our professional and sector experience

- we communicated applicable laws and regulations throughout the audit team and remained alert to any indications of non-compliance throughout the audit
- we reviewed any reports made to regulators
- we reviewed the financial statement disclosures and tested these to supporting documentation to assess compliance with applicable laws and regulations
- we performed analytical procedures to identify any unusual or unexpected relationships that may indicate risks of material misstatement due to fraud
- in addressing the risk of fraud through management override of controls, we tested the appropriateness of journal entries and other adjustments, assessed whether the judgements made in making accounting estimates are indicative of a potential bias and tested significant transactions that are unusual or those outside the normal course of business

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

A further description of our responsibilities is available on the Financial Reporting Council's website at: www.frc.org.uk/auditorsresponsibilities. This description forms part of our auditor's report.

Use of our report

This report is made solely to the charitable company's members as a body, in accordance with Chapter 3 of Part 16 of the Companies Act 2006 and section 44(1)(c) of the Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the charitable company's members those matters we are required to state to them in an auditor's report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the charitable company and the charitable company's members as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.

Farrah Kitabi (Senior Statutory Auditor)

06 October 2025

for and on behalf of Sayer Vincent LLP, Statutory Auditor

110 Golden Lane, LONDON, EC1Y 0TG

Sayer Vincent LLP is eligible to act as auditor in terms of section 1212 of the Companies Act 2006

Financial statement

VoiceAbility Advocacy

Statement of financial activities (incorporating an income and expenditure account)

For the year ended 31 March 2025

	Note	General £	Designated £	Restricted £	2025 Total £	General £	Designated £	Restricted £	2024 Total £
Income from:									
Donations and legacies	2	3,587	–	–	3,587	1,192	–	–	1,192
Charitable activities	3	15,756,945	–	114,313	15,871,258	13,376,034	–	99,125	13,475,159
Investments		19,738	–	–	19,738	27,602	–	–	27,602
Total income		15,780,270	–	114,313	15,894,583	13,404,828	–	99,125	13,503,953
Expenditure on:									
Charitable activities	4a	15,286,366	–	114,313	15,400,679	14,062,405	752,174	99,125	14,913,705
Total expenditure	4	15,286,366	–	114,313	15,400,679	14,062,405	752,174	99,125	14,913,705
Net income / (expenditure) before net gains / (losses) on investments		493,904	–	–	493,904	(657,577)	(752,174)	–	(1,409,752)
Net gains / (losses) on investments		(5,119)	–	–	(5,119)	58,300	–	–	58,300
Net income / (expenditure) for the year	5	488,785	–	–	488,785	(599,277)	(752,174)	–	(1,351,452)
Transfers between funds		49,273	(49,273)	–	–	90,912	(90,912)	–	–
Net movement in funds		538,058	(49,273)	–	488,785	(508,366)	(843,086)	–	(1,351,452)
Reconciliation of funds:									
Total funds brought forward		888,829	711,856	–	1,600,685	1,397,195	1,554,942	–	2,952,137
Total funds carried forward		1,426,887	662,583	–	2,089,470	888,829	711,856	–	1,600,685

All of the above results are derived from continuing activities. There were no other recognised gains or losses other than those stated above. Movements in funds are disclosed in Note 17a to the financial statements.

VoiceAbility Advocacy

Balance sheet

Company no. 03798884

As at 31 March 2025

	Note	2025 £	2024 £
Fixed assets:			
Tangible assets	10	382,583	471,856
Investments	11	6,533	261,652
		389,116	733,508
Current assets:			
Debtors	12	1,561,955	1,551,632
Cash at bank and in hand		969,833	61,370
		2,531,788	1,613,002
Liabilities:			
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	13	(811,434)	(716,793)
Net current assets		1,720,354	896,209
Total assets less current liabilities		2,109,470	1,629,717
Provision for liabilities	15	(20,000)	(29,032)
Net assets		2,089,470	1,600,685
Funds:	16a		
Restricted income funds		-	-
Unrestricted income funds:			
Designated funds		662,583	711,856
General funds		1,426,887	888,829
Total unrestricted funds		2,089,470	1,600,685
Total funds		2,089,470	1,600,685

 Approved by the trustees on 17 July 2025 and signed on their behalf by

 James Alistair Schofield
Trustee

VoiceAbility Advocacy

Statement of cash flows

For the year ended 31 March 2025

	2025 £	£	2024 £	£
Cash flows from operating activities				
Net income / (expenditure) for the reporting period (as per the statement of financial activities)	488,785		(1,351,452)	
Depreciation charges	218,863		176,552	
Losses/(gains) on investments	5,119		(58,300)	
Dividends and interest from investments	(19,738)		(27,602)	
(Decrease)/increase in provisions	(9,032)		12,000	
(Increase) in debtors	(10,323)		(69,309)	
Increase in creditors	94,641		10,085	
Net cash provided by operating activities		768,315		(1,308,025)
Cash flows from investing activities:				
Dividends and interest from investments	19,738		27,602	
Sale of investment units	250,000		1,050,000	
Purchase of fixed assets	(129,590)		(163,466)	
Net cash provided by / (used in) investing activities		140,148		914,136
Change in cash and cash equivalents in the year		908,463		(393,890)
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the year		61,370		455,259
Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the year		969,833		61,370

VoiceAbility Advocacy

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2025

1 Accounting policies

a) Statutory information

VoiceAbility Advocacy is a charitable company limited by guarantee and is incorporated in England & Wales. The registered office address is c/o Sayer Vincent, 110 Golden Lane, London, EC1Y 0TG.

b) Basis of preparation

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (effective 1 January 2015) – (Charities SORP FRS 102), The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (September 2015) and the Companies Act 2006/Charities Act 2011.

The Charity has a subsidiary, Advocacy Experience Limited. The subsidiary is currently dormant and therefore consolidated financial statements have not been prepared.

Assets and liabilities are initially recognised at historical cost or transaction value unless otherwise stated in the relevant accounting policy or note.

In applying the financial reporting framework, the trustees have made a number of subjective judgements, for example in respect of significant accounting estimates. Estimates and judgements are continually evaluated and are based on historical experience and other factors, including expectations of future events that are believed to be reasonable under the circumstances. The nature of the estimation means the actual outcomes could differ from those estimates. Any significant estimates and judgements affecting these financial statements are detailed within the relevant accounting policy below.

The trustees do not consider that there are any sources of estimation uncertainty at the reporting date that have a significant risk of causing a material adjustment to the carrying amounts of assets and liabilities within the next reporting period.

c) Public benefit entity

The charity meets the definition of a public benefit entity under FRS 102.

d) Going concern

The trustees consider that there are no material uncertainties about the charity's ability to continue as a going concern.

e) Income

Income is recognised when the charity has entitlement to the funds, any performance conditions attached to the income have been met, it is probable that the income will be received and that the amount can be measured reliably.

Income from government and other grants, whether 'capital' grants or 'revenue' grants, is recognised when the charity has entitlement to the funds, any performance conditions attached to the grants have been met, it is probable that the income will be received and the amount can be measured reliably and is not deferred.

Income received in advance of the provision of a specified service is deferred until the criteria for income recognition are met.

VoiceAbility Advocacy

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2025

f) Interest receivable

Interest on funds held on deposit is included when receivable and the amount can be measured reliably by the charity; this is normally upon notification of the interest paid or payable by the bank.

g) Fund accounting

Restricted funds are to be used for specific purposes as laid down by the donor. Expenditure which meets these criteria is charged to the fund.

Unrestricted funds are donations and other incoming resources received or generated for the charitable purposes.

Designated funds are unrestricted funds earmarked by the trustees for particular purposes.

h) Expenditure and irrecoverable VAT

Expenditure is recognised once there is a legal or constructive obligation to make a payment to a third party, it is probable that settlement will be required and the amount of the obligation can be measured reliably. Expenditure is classified under the following activity headings:

- Costs of raising funds relate to the costs incurred by the charity in inducing third parties to make voluntary contributions to it, as well as the cost of any activities with a fundraising purpose
- Expenditure on charitable activities includes the costs of delivering services undertaken to further the purposes of the charity and their associated support costs

Irrecoverable VAT is charged as a cost against the activity for which the expenditure was incurred.

Support and governance costs are re-allocated to charitable activities in full.

i) Expenditure and irrecoverable VAT (continued)

Governance costs are the costs associated with the governance arrangements of the charity. These costs are associated with constitutional and statutory requirements and include any costs associated with the strategic management of the charity's activities.

j) Operating leases

Rental charges are charged on a straight line basis over the term of the lease.

k) Tangible fixed assets

Items of equipment are capitalised where the purchase price exceeds £500 for an individual purchase. Depreciation costs are allocated to activities on the basis of the use of the related assets in those activities. Assets are reviewed for impairment if circumstances indicate their carrying value may exceed their net realisable value and value in use.

Depreciation is provided at rates calculated to write down the cost of each asset to its estimated residual value over its expected useful life. The depreciation rates in use are as follows:

- | | |
|--|----------------------------|
| • Leasehold improvements | over the life of the lease |
| • Furniture, Computer, Telephones and Software | 10% – 33% |

l) Listed investments

Investments are a form of basic financial instrument and are initially recognised at their transaction value and subsequently measured at their fair value as at the balance sheet date using the closing quoted market price. Any change in fair value will be recognised in the statement of financial activities. Investment gains and losses, whether realised or unrealised, are combined and shown in the heading "Net gains/(losses) on investments" in the statement of financial activities. The charity does not acquire put options, derivatives or other complex financial instruments.

Investments in subsidiaries

Investments in subsidiaries are at cost.

VoiceAbility Advocacy

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2025

m) Debtors

Trade and other debtors are recognised at the settlement amount due after any trade discount offered. Prepayments are valued at the amount prepaid net of any trade discounts due.

n) Cash at bank and in hand

Cash at bank and cash in hand 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.

o) Creditors and provisions

Creditors and provisions are recognised where 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 and provisions are normally recognised at their settlement amount after allowing for any trade discounts due.

p) Financial instruments

The charity only has financial assets and financial liabilities of a kind that qualify as basic financial instruments. Basic financial instruments are initially recognised at transaction value and subsequently measured at their settlement value.

q) Pensions

After three months of employment, employees are auto enrolled in the group stakeholder pension scheme (Aviva), via a salary exchange method. Employees are required to opt out should they not wish to be enrolled. The charity contributes 5% of gross salary and employees make a minimum contribution of 3% of gross salary. Employees joining the stakeholder pension contract directly with the insurance company. In addition to its own contribution the charity acts as agent in collecting and paying over employee pension contributions.

VoiceAbility Advocacy

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2025

2 Income from donations and legacies

	2025 Total £	2024 Total £
Donations (unrestricted)	<u>3,587</u>	<u>1,192</u>

3 Income from charitable activities

	Grants £	2025 Earned income contracts £	Total £	Grants £	2024 Earned income contracts £	Total £
Advocacy Services:						
Connections	31,538	604,974	636,512	31,350	702,615	733,965
London	–	1,164,386	1,164,386	–	1,318,360	1,318,360
Midlands & South East	60,000	3,016,924	3,076,924	45,000	2,265,977	2,310,977
North East	–	3,419,155	3,419,155	–	3,233,101	3,233,101
North West	–	2,794,763	2,794,763	–	2,164,650	2,164,650
Scotland	–	3,327,308	3,327,308	–	2,379,398	2,379,398
South West	–	1,421,054	1,421,054	–	1,310,440	1,310,440
	<u>91,538</u>	<u>15,748,564</u>	<u>15,840,102</u>	<u>76,350</u>	<u>13,374,541</u>	<u>13,450,891</u>
Support Services	22,775	8,381	31,156	22,775	1,494	24,269
Total income from charitable activities	<u>114,313</u>	<u>15,756,945</u>	<u>15,871,258</u>	<u>99,125</u>	<u>13,376,034</u>	<u>13,475,159</u>

All earned income is unrestricted and all grant income is restricted.

VoiceAbility Advocacy

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2025

4a Analysis of expenditure (current year)

	Advocacy Services £	Governance costs £	Support costs £	2025 Total £	2024 Total £
Direct staff costs	10,293,057	–	–	10,293,057	9,391,520
Indirect staff costs	–	–	2,264,368	2,264,368	2,632,950
Total staff costs (note 6)	10,293,057	–	2,264,368	12,557,425	12,024,470
Sub contractor Costs	69,386	–	–	69,386	206,609
Recruitment, Training and Welfare	170,758	–	–	170,758	139,409
Travel & Subsistence	541,220	–	–	541,220	466,374
Rent, Rates and Homeworking Allowance	153,991	–	–	153,991	148,720
Professional	27,704	–	–	27,704	199,066
Insurances	89,910	–	–	89,910	81,370
Depreciation	164,153	–	–	164,153	136,553
Software, Systems and Licensing	713,812	–	–	713,812	664,097
Other direct costs	310,157	–	–	310,157	343,963
Business Development	–	–	198,959	198,959	254,672
CEO and related expenses	–	–	48,260	48,260	42,096
Finance	–	–	28,560	28,560	32,073
Human resources	–	–	158,260	158,260	109,756
IT and Office Admin	–	–	139,662	139,662	19,473
Trustee and AGM costs	–	10,942	–	10,942	28,323
Audit and accountancy costs	–	17,520	–	17,520	16,680
	12,534,147	28,462	2,838,069	15,400,679	14,913,705
Support costs	2,838,069	–	(2,838,069)	–	–
Governance costs	28,462	(28,462)	–	–	–
Investment costs	–	–	–	–	–
Total expenditure 2025	15,400,679	–	–	15,400,679	–
Total expenditure 2024	14,913,705	–	–	–	14,913,705

VoiceAbility Advocacy

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2025

4b Analysis of expenditure (prior year)

	Advocacy Services £	Strategic Investment costs £	Governance costs £	Support costs £	2024 Total £
Direct staff costs	9,391,520	-	-	-	9,391,520
Indirect staff costs	-	456,599	-	2,176,351	2,632,950
Total staff costs (note 7)	9,391,520	456,599	-	2,176,351	12,024,470
Sub contractor Costs	206,609	-	-	-	206,609
Recruitment, Training and Welfare	137,528	1,881	-	-	139,409
Travel & Subsistence	432,637	33,737	-	-	466,374
Rent, Rates and Homeworking Allowance	146,079	2,641	-	-	148,720
Professional	13,071	185,995	-	-	199,066
Insurances	79,174	2,196	-	-	81,370
Depreciation	133,783	2,770	-	-	136,553
Software, Systems and Licensing	646,638	17,459	-	-	664,097
Other direct costs	295,066	48,897	-	-	343,963
Business Development	-	-	-	254,672	254,672
CEO and related expenses	-	-	-	42,096	42,096
Finance	-	-	-	32,073	32,073
Human resources	-	-	-	109,756	109,756
IT and Office Admin	-	-	-	19,473	19,473
Trustee and AGM costs	-	-	28,323	-	28,323
Audit and accountancy costs	-	-	16,680	-	16,680
	11,482,106	752,174	45,003	2,634,422	14,913,705
Support costs	2,634,422		-	(2,634,422)	-
Governance costs	45,003		(45,003)	-	-
Investment costs	752,174	(752,174)			
Total expenditure 2024	14,913,705		-	-	14,913,705

VoiceAbility Advocacy

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2025

5 Net income / (expenditure) for the year

This is stated after crediting / (charging):

	2025 £	2024 £
Depreciation	218,863	176,552
Operating lease rentals:		
Property	-	-
Auditor's remuneration (excluding VAT):		
Audit	14,600	13,900

6 Analysis of staff costs, trustee remuneration and expenses, and the cost of key management personnel

Staff costs were as follows:

	2025 £	2024 £
Salaries and wages	10,778,708	10,264,051
Redundancy and termination costs	115,805	101,676
Social security costs	857,722	841,649
Employer's contribution to defined contribution pension schemes	803,711	774,548
Other staff costs	1,479	42,546
	12,557,425	12,024,470

The redundancy and termination costs were accrued at the balance sheet date.

The following number of employees received employee benefits (excluding employer pension costs and employer's national insurance) during the year between:

	2025 No.	2024 No.
£60,000 – £69,999	2	4
£70,000 – £79,999	1	1
£80,000 – £89,999	1	1
£90,000 – £99,999	1	1

The total employee benefits (including pension contributions and employer's national insurance) of the key management personnel were £300,572 (2024: £285,758).

The charity trustees were neither paid nor received any other benefits from employment with the charity in the year (2024: £nil). No charity trustee received payment for professional or other services supplied to the charity (2024: £nil).

Trustees' expenses represents the payment or reimbursement of travel and subsistence costs totalling £2,280 (2024: £464) incurred by 8 members (2024: 10) relating to attendance at meetings of the trustees.

VoiceAbility Advocacy

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2025

7 Staff numbers

The average number of employees (head count based on number of staff employed) during the year was 481 (2024: 434) and based on full-time equivalent was 406 (2024: 377).

8 Related party transactions

There are no related party transactions to disclose for 2025 (2024: none).

There are no donations from related parties which are outside the normal course of business and no restricted donations from related parties.

9 Taxation

The charity is exempt from corporation tax as all its income is charitable and is applied for charitable purposes.

10 Tangible fixed assets

	Computer Equipment £	Telephones £	Software & Systems £	Total £
Cost				
At the start of the year	635,734	253,579	133,658	1,022,971
Additions in year	101,702	27,888	–	129,590
Disposals in year	–	(78,186)	–	(78,186)
At the end of the year	737,436	203,281	133,658	1,074,375
Depreciation				
At the start of the year	363,670	126,662	60,783	551,115
Charge for the year	105,770	87,196	25,897	218,863
Eliminated on disposal	–	(78,186)	–	(78,186)
At the end of the year	469,440	135,672	86,680	691,792
Net book value				
At the end of the year	267,995	67,609	46,978	382,583
At the start of the year	272,064	126,917	72,875	471,856

All of the above assets are used for charitable purposes.

VoiceAbility Advocacy

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2025

11	Investments held as fixed assets	2025	2024
		£	£
	Fair value at the start of the year	261,652	1,253,352
	Additions at cost	-	-
	Disposal proceeds	(250,000)	(1,050,000)
	Net gain / (loss) on change in fair value	(5,119)	58,300
		6,533	261,652
	Fair value at the end of the year	6,533	261,652
		2025	2024
		£	£
	Investments comprise:		
	COIF Charities Investment Fund	6,533	261,652
12	Debtors	2025	2024
		£	£
	Trade debtors	1,056,999	946,337
	Other debtors	103,791	89,589
	Prepayments	292,388	373,070
	Accrued income	108,778	142,636
		1,561,955	1,551,632
13	Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	2025	2024
		£	£
	Trade creditors	235,285	91,012
	Taxation and social security	197,340	227,242
	Other creditors	212,302	223,598
	Accruals	64,838	122,991
	Deferred income (note 14)	101,668	51,950
		811,434	716,793

VoiceAbility Advocacy

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2025

14 Deferred income

Deferred income comprises income invoiced in advance of work not undertaken by year end

	2025 £	2024 £
Balance at the beginning of the year	51,950	59,095
Amount released to income in the year	(51,950)	(59,095)
Amount deferred in the year	101,668	51,950
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Balance at the end of the year	101,668	51,950
	<hr/>	<hr/>

15 Provisions for liabilities

Provisions for liabilities comprises

	2025 £	2024 £
Balance at the beginning of the year	29,032	17,032
Increase/(decrease) in provision in the year	(9,032)	12,000
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Balance at the end of the year	20,000	29,032
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Dilapidations provision	–	1,750
Customer refund provision	–	7,282
Staffing provision	20,000	20,000
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	20,000	29,032
	<hr/>	<hr/>

Staffing Provision

To provide for HR issues identified pre 31st March 2025.

VoiceAbility Advocacy

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2025**16a Analysis of net assets between funds (current year)**

	General unrestricted £	Designated funds £	Restricted funds £	Total funds £
Tangible fixed assets	–	382,583	–	382,583
Investments	6,533	–	–	6,533
Net current assets	1,440,354	280,000	–	1,720,354
Provisions	(20,000)	–	–	(20,000)
Net assets at 31 March 2025	1,426,887	662,583	–	2,089,470

16b Analysis of net assets between funds (prior year)

	General unrestricted £	Designated funds £	Restricted funds £	Total funds £
Tangible fixed assets	–	471,856	–	471,856
Investments	261,652	–	–	261,652
Net current assets	656,209	240,000	–	896,209
Provisions	(29,032)	–	–	(29,032)
Net assets at 31 March 2024	888,829	711,856	–	1,600,685

VoiceAbility Advocacy

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2025

17a Movements in funds (current year)

	At 1 April 2024 £	Income & gains £	Expenditure & losses £	Transfers £	At 31 March 2025 £
Restricted funds:					
* Department of Health (via National Autistic Society)	-	22,775	(22,775)	-	-
** NHS Nene and Corby CCG	-	31,538	(31,538)	-	-
*** Voluntary Action Coventry	-	60,000	(60,000)	-	-
Total restricted funds	-	114,313	(114,313)	-	-
Unrestricted funds:					
Designated funds:					
Fixed Assets Replacement	240,000	-	-	40,000	280,000
Tangible Fixed Assets	471,856	-	-	(89,273)	382,583
Total designated funds	711,856	-	-	(49,273)	662,583
General funds	888,829	15,775,150	(15,286,366)	49,273	1,426,887
Total unrestricted funds	1,600,685	15,775,150	(15,286,366)	-	2,089,470
Total funds	1,600,685	15,889,463	(15,400,679)	-	2,089,470

* Complex Needs Consortium Grant.

** Quality Checker service that sees people with a learning disability employed to inspect local services and to provide advice on how they can better meet the needs of individuals with a learning disability.

*** Independent Health Complaints Advocacy service in Coventry

The **Fixed Assets Replacement** designated fund is to ensure that VoiceAbility has fit for purpose equipment and systems on a long term basis.

The **Tangible Fixed Assets** designated fund removes the non-cash element.

VoiceAbility Advocacy

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2025

17b Movements in funds (prior year)

	At 1 April 2024	Income & gains	Expenditure & losses	Transfers	At 30 March 2024
	£	£	£	£	£
Restricted funds:					
* Department of Health (via National Autistic Society)	-	22,775	(22,775)	-	-
** NHS Nene and Corby CCG	-	31,350	(31,350)	-	-
*** Voluntary Action Coventry	-	45,000	(45,000)	-	-
Total restricted funds	-	99,125	(99,125)	-	-
Unrestricted funds:					
Designated funds:					
Investment in Development	950,000	-	(752,174)	(197,826)	-
Fixed Assets Replacement	120,000	-	-	120,000	240,000
Tangible Fixed Assets	484,942	-	-	(13,086)	471,856
Total designated funds	1,554,942	-	(752,174)	(90,912)	711,856
General funds	1,397,195	13,463,128	(14,062,405)	90,912	888,829
Total unrestricted funds	2,952,137	13,463,128	(14,814,580)	-	1,600,685
Total funds	2,952,137	13,562,253	(14,913,705)	-	1,600,685

Investment in Development has now been concluded with the balance transferred back to general funds.

The **Fixed Assets Replacement** designated fund is to ensure that VoiceAbility has fit for purpose equipment and systems on a long term basis.

The **Tangible Fixed Assets** designated fund removes the non-cash element.

VoiceAbility

☎ 0300 303 1660

✉ helpline@voiceability.org

🌐 voiceability.org

🐦 [@VoiceAbility](https://twitter.com/VoiceAbility)



About VoiceAbility

We make sure you're heard when it matters most. We've been supporting people to have their say in decisions about their health, care and wellbeing for over 40 years. We're an independent charity and one of the UK's largest providers of advocacy and involvement services.